



# The University of North Carolina

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

FROM: President Erskine Bowles

DATE: May 29, 2008

SUBJECT: Licensure of Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine or VCOM), Blacksburg, Virginia; William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital; and the Rowan Regional Medical Center

The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina is charged under North Carolina General Statute Section 116-15 with the responsibility for licensing nonpublic educational institutions to conduct post-secondary degree activity in North Carolina. In November 2004, the Board of Governors approved revisions to the document, *Rules and Standards: Licensing Nonpublic Institutions to Conduct Degree Activity in North Carolina*. This document provides the guidelines for interpreting the standards, and the rules, regulations, and procedures under which the Board issues licenses to institutions to conduct post-secondary degree activity in North Carolina.

Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) applied for licensure to conduct student clinical rotations in its Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) degree program at the William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital and the Rowan Regional Medical Center, both of which are located in Salisbury, North Carolina. The institution is a post-baccalaureate professional medical college located in Blacksburg, Virginia. The Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree is a first professional degree.

Dr. Harry Williams, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, reviewed the application and appointed a team of examiners to determine if VCOM complied with the licensure standards outlined in *Rules and Standards*. On March 4 and 5, 2008, the team of examiners visited the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine in Blacksburg, Virginia, and the clinical sites in Salisbury, North Carolina. Following the site visit, the team of examiners issued its report with suggestions and recommendations, and a final recommendation that VCOM be licensed for its students to do clinical rotations at the William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital and the Rowan Regional Medical Center, in Salisbury, North Carolina. Such clinical rotations are part of an educational program leading to the awarding of a Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree at the home institution in Blacksburg, Virginia. Dr. Williams agrees with the team's review and recommendations. For more details on the recommendations and the responses, please review the summary.

Thus, I recommend to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Program of the UNC Board of Governors that the regular license be issued to Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine to offer student clinical rotations at the above mentioned sites in Salisbury, North Carolina. This approval will be subject to annual reports and

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review at any time. After one year has elapsed, VCOM will be reviewed to judge whether the institution continues to maintain standards for licensure.

Enclosure: Summary

## **SUMMARY OF VISIT OF TEAM OF EXAMINERS FOR VIRGINIA COLLEGE OF OSTEOPATHIC MEDICINE**

### **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (the Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine or VCOM) was incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia on September 4, 2001. The institution is a post-baccalaureate professional medical college located in Blacksburg, Virginia. VCOM commenced organizational activities on December 22, 2000, exclusively for charitable, educational and scientific purposes, including providing programs of instruction and training in the art, science and practice of osteopathic medicine and in the conduct of medical and scientific research. VCOM admitted its first class of osteopathic medical students in the Fall of 2003, and that first class graduated on June 2, 2007. Currently, they have four classes, with approximately 150 students in each class.

The Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine was incorporated as a nonstock membership organization and has one member, the Harvey W. Peters Research Foundation (the Foundation), a private foundation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine has been accredited as a new college under the Commission on Osteopathic College Accreditation and has been approved by the State Council of Higher Education of Virginia. VCOM has a relationship with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) in that it shares some faculty, library, athletic facilities, recreational facilities, and nonacademic services pursuant to an affiliation and collaboration agreement.

### **THE APPLICATION AND SITE VISIT**

VCOM has applied for licensure and submitted documentation for licensure to conduct student clinical rotations in its Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D. O.) degree program at the William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital and the Rowan Regional Medical Center, both of which are located in Salisbury, North Carolina.

Accordingly, a team of examiners with expertise in the specific disciplines relating to the application was assembled by Dr. Harry Williams. The team included Dr. Richard E. Neel (Chair), Dean Emeritus, Belk College of Business, and Professor of Economics Emeritus, The University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina; Dr. Michael Cope, Former Associate Dean for Preclinical Education and Professor Emeritus of Physiology at the West Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (now retired), Frankford, West Virginia; Dr. Jonathan Leo, Assistant Dean of Students and Associate Professor of Neuroanatomy, DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine, Lincoln Memorial University, Harrogate, Tennessee; and Dr. Harry L. Williams, Interim Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, The University of North Carolina General Administration, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, *Ex Officio*.

The team's task was to review the compliance document and to participate in a site visit to determine if the institution demonstrated compliance with licensure standards. The March 4, 2008 visit to the Blacksburg, Virginia campus and clinic sites in Salisbury, North Carolina was

to evaluate its compliance with the *Rules and Standards: Licensing Nonpublic Institutions to Conduct Post-Secondary Degree Activity in North Carolina (revised November 2004)* (referred to in the rest of this summary as the *Rules and Standards*).

During the visit, the team of examiners met with numerous faculty, staff, and students at the Blacksburg campus and Salisbury clinical sites of VCOM. These meetings included Dr. James F. Wolfe, President and Professor of Biomedical Sciences; Dr. Dixie Tooke-Rawlins, Vice President and Dean; Dr. Jan M. Willcox, Associate Dean for Clinical Academic and Research Affairs and Interim Core Clinical Chair, Pediatrics; Cathleen Callahan, M.D., Core Clinical Chair, Obstetrics/Gynecology; Linda Frasca, M.D., Chair, Appalachian Medical Missions; John Kauffman, Jr., D.O., Interim Core Clinical Chair, Internal Medicine; Donald Robert Noll, D.O., Core Clinical Chair, Geriatrics; Harry Simmons, D.O., Core Clinical Chair, Surgery; Michael D. Soroka, D.O., Core Clinical Chair, Family Medicine; Frederic Rawlins, D.O., Core Clinical Chair, Emergency Medicine; Brian Wood, D.O., Core Clinical Chair, Psychiatry; Elaine Powers, Director of Library Services; Stephanie Gardner, Assistant Medical Librarian; William King, Assistant Vice President for Student Services; Daniel Hewitt, Director of Financial Aid; Megan Price, Director of Admissions; Susan L. Sweet, Director of Institutional Outcomes and Accreditation; Robert C. Brazis, M.D., Staff Physician, Primary Care Service, Emergency Department (Preceptor); David W. Crist, M.D., Staff Physician, Surgery Service (Preceptor); Frank A. Labagnara, D.O., Staff Physician, Primary Care Service, Interim Clinical Coordinator/Director of Student Medical Education, Primary Care (Preceptor); Thomas B. Rapisardo, M.D., Staff Physician, Primary Care Service, Family Medicine (Preceptor); Joseph B. Sutter, Ph.D., Associate Chief of Staff for Research & Education, Research & Education Service Line; Virginia W. Jeffries, Affiliations Coordinator/Manager, Research & Education Service Line; Katy B. Veal, Administrative Officer for Research & Education, Research & Education Service Line; David Smith, M.D., Chief Medical Officer at Rowan Regional Medical Center; Michael K. Mills, M.D., Salisbury OB/GYN, PLLC, Obstetrics/Gynecology (Preceptor); James A. Murphy, M.D., Carolina Women's Health Associates, Salisbury, Obstetrics/Gynecology (Preceptor).

## DEGREE PROGRAMS

The Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine's degree program of study is for the first professional degree, the Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (D.O.) The curriculum for the D.O. degree program delivered through the Core Rotation Sites at Salisbury are appropriate to the course of study for the degree Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine. The objectives for each clinical rotation are clearly delineated and provided to the students as well as the entire faculty participating at the Core Rotation Site and all affiliated Out-Rotation Sites. The procedures for faculty evaluation of the student's performance in the rotation, as well as the procedures for the student's evaluation of the faculty and the rotation, are clearly delineated. The evaluations by the students are reviewed by the administration and have been used to make changes for the improvement of the program.

The D.O. degree program is four academic years in length and offers 165 weeks of instruction. The curriculum includes basic biological, behavioral, and clinical sciences that prepare students

for post-graduate training. VCOM states that the current curriculum was designed to meet all the nationally recommended guidelines for medical student education that have been adopted by the various biomedical and clinical discipline teaching associations, as well as the five-year HRSA study. The curriculum is broken out into two parts. Years one and two focus on preclinical curriculum with biomedical sciences and early clinical experiences. Years three and four clinical curriculum consists of clinical rotations. Year three consists of all core rotations, whereas year four includes medical and surgical selectives and elective rotations. The portion of the degree program delivered in Salisbury is the last two years of the curriculum and consists of clinical rotations in all of the major areas of medicine.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the visit, the team submitted to General Administration, a Preliminary Report to the President of The University of North Carolina from the Team of Examiners for the Licensure Visit to Review the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine's Student Clinical Rotations in its Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine Degree Program at the William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital and the Rowan Regional Medical Center. The preliminary report of the team's findings was forwarded to VCOM for correction of factual errors and/or significant omissions. Included in the report were two recommendations. Recommendations must be addressed by the institution.

The recommendations for VCOM were as follows: that the institution publish in its Catalog the location and accessibility of the tuition guaranty bond for its students who have clinical rotations in North Carolina; and that the institution make provision with the Office of Archives and History, for the disposition of permanent and other critical records for its students who have clinical rotations in North Carolina should the institution discontinue operation.

VCOM reviewed the team's report for accuracy and also responded to the team's recommendations. The team reviewed VCOM's response, and reported on April 23, 2008 that their responses were satisfactory.

The team of examiners recommends that the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine be granted licensure to conduct student clinical rotations in its Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine degree program at the William G. "Bill" Hefner Veterans Hospital and the Rowan Regional Medical Center, both of which are located in Salisbury, North Carolina, subject to compliance with the two Recommendations contained in this report.

If licensure is granted, a further recommendation is that, one year from the date of the granting of licensure, a team of examiners visit the two sites in North Carolina to review compliance with the Recommendations contained in this report, as well as overall compliance with the fifteen licensure Standards.

Dr. Harry Williams agrees with the team's review and recommendations. Thus, General Administration recommends licensure of VCOM to conduct student clinical rotations at the two sites, to be offered in Salisbury, North Carolina.