



The University of North Carolina

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

FROM: President Erskine Bowles

DATE: October 29, 2007

SUBJECT: Licensure of Winthrop University to offer degree programs in Charlotte, NC

The Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina is charged under North Carolina General Statute Section 116-15 with 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.

Winthrop University applied for licensure to offer the following degree programs at a site in Charlotte: Master of Education in Educational Leadership; Master of Education in Middle Level Education; and Master of Education in Special Education.

Dr. Laurel Files, special assistant to the vice president for academic planning for licensure, reviewed the application and appointed a team of examiners to determine if Winthrop University complied with the licensure standards outlined in *Rules and Standards*. On September 6, 2007, the team of examiners visited the Rock Hill, South Carolina, campus of Winthrop University. Following the site visit, the team of examiners issued its report with suggestions and recommendations, and a final recommendation to grant licensure to the proposed degree programs. Dr. Files agrees with the team's review and recommendations. For more details on the recommendations and the responses for the proposed degree programs by Winthrop University, 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 Winthrop University to open a site in Charlotte, North Carolina, to offer the previously mentioned proposed degree programs, subject to annual reports and review at any time. After one year has elapsed, Winthrop University will be reviewed, to judge whether the institution continues to maintain standards for licensure.

Enclosure: Summary

## SUMMARY OF VISIT OF TEAM OF EXAMINERS FOR WINTHROP UNIVERSITY IN CHARLOTTE, NC

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Winthrop University, located in Rock Hill, South Carolina, is a public institution chartered in the State of South Carolina. It was established in 1886, has been in continuous operation since then, and is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The Teacher Education Program at Winthrop University is accredited at the graduate level by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for its Master of Science, Master of Education, and Master of Arts in Teaching degrees. All teacher education programs are approved by the South Carolina State Board of Education.

### THE APPLICATION AND SITE VISIT

On February 23, 2007, Winthrop University submitted an application and supporting documentation to offer the following three Master of Education (MEd) degree programs for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools (CMS), at a site in Charlotte:

- Master of Education in Educational Leadership
- Master of Education in Middle Level Education
- Master of Education in Special Education

The proposed degree programs are a part of the Charlotte Equity Plus Program, which focuses on schools in high poverty areas, and were developed in response to requests from CMS.

Accordingly, a team of examiners with expertise in the specific disciplines relating to the application was assembled by Dr. Laurel A. Files, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Planning for Licensure of The University of North Carolina General Administration. The team included Dr. Richard E. Neel (Chair), Dean Emeritus, Belk College of Business, and Professor of Economics Emeritus, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina; Karen Gavigan, Director, Teaching Resources Center, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina; Dr. John A. Swope, Interim Dean, College of Education, and Associate Professor of Education, East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina; and Dr. Laurel A. Files, *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 September 6, 2007 visit to the Rock Hill, South Carolina campus 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 Rock Hill campus of Winthrop University. These meetings included Dr. Karen C. Jones, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dr. Patricia L. Graham, Dean, College of Education; Dr. Mark DeWalt, Director of Graduate Studies, College of Education; Dr. Sue Peck, Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Jonatha W. Vare, Director of the

Center for Pedagogy; Dr. Barbara R. Blackburn, Assistant Professor of Middle Level Education; Dr. Debra Leach, Assistant Professor of Special Education; Dr. Mary Martin, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership; Dr. Mark Mitchell, Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership; Dr. Brad Witzel, Assistant Professor of Special Education; Dr. Mark Y. Herring, Dean, Library Services; Timothy A. Druke, Registrar; Betty C. Whalen, Director, Financial Aid; and seven students

## **DEGREE PROGRAMS**

The master's degree programs to be offered each require a minimum of 36 semester credit-hours (Middle Level, 36-39 credit-hours; Special Education, 36 credit-hours; Educational Leadership, 42 credit-hours). Upon the completion of the required program of study, in addition to receiving a diploma, each student receives from Winthrop's Certification Officer a verification form for the student to submit to the appropriate state agency (Form-V for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction). The majority of instruction will be provided through face-to-face classroom delivery by Winthrop University faculty at the Charlotte site, although some of the courses may have components that will be delivered via WebCT. Any electronic instructional activity would originate in the State of South Carolina, where Winthrop University is authorized to operate.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the visit, the team submitted to General Administration, on September 30, 2007, a Preliminary Report to the President of The University of North Carolina from the Team of Examiners for the Licensure Visit to Winthrop University's Proposed Master's Degree Programs at a Site in Charlotte, North Carolina. The preliminary report of the team's findings was forwarded to Winthrop University for correction of factual errors and/or significant omissions. Included in the report were nine recommendations and one suggestion. Recommendations must be addressed by the institution. Suggestions, however, are written for the institution's benefit, and do not need to be addressed by the institution; they reflect the professional judgment of team members, and do not signify that the institution is not in compliance with the *Rules and Standards*.

The recommendations for Winthrop were as follows: Three recommendations had to do with the publication of specific information in the school catalog or other noted publications, including making clear that receiving a degree is distinct from licensure for either teaching or administration. One recommendation required documentation of specific compliance requirements; another addressed attention to faculty qualifications, once the new programs are in place. And, finally, there were three standard requirements—regarding provision for archiving records, providing a copy of the tuition guaranty bond prior to the start of classes in North Carolina, and a statement by an independent certified public accountant, at the end of the first fiscal year at its North Carolina site, specifying the existing principal amount of the tuition guaranty bond. The suggestion was for a library resources handout to be distributed at orientation and made available on the library website.

Winthrop University reviewed the team's report for accuracy and also responded to the team's recommendations and suggestion. The team reviewed Winthrop's response, and reported on October 9, 2007 that their responses were satisfactory.

The team of examiners recommends that Winthrop University be licensed to offer the following new degree programs in Charlotte, subject to compliance with all of the recommendations contained in the report: Master of Education (MEd) in Educational Leadership; Master of Education (MEd) in Middle Level Education; and Master of Education (MEd) in Special Education.

If licensure is granted, a further recommendation is that a team of examiners visit the Charlotte site of Winthrop University one year from the date of licensure to review compliance with all of the Recommendations contained in this report, as well as overall compliance with the fifteen licensure Standards.

Dr. Laurel Files, Special Assistant to the Vice President for Academic Planning for Licensure, agrees with the team's review and recommendations. Thus, General Administration recommends licensure of the three proposed degree programs, as indicated above, to be offered in Charlotte, NC.