



# The University of North Carolina

Post Office Box 2688, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-2688

THOMAS W. ROSS, President

Telephone: (919) 962-1000 Fax: (919) 845-9695

E-mail: tomross@northcarolina.edu

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs

FROM: President Thomas W. Ross

DATE: October 26, 2011

SUBJECT: Licensure of the University of Southern California

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 for Licensing Nonpublic Institutions to Conduct Post-Secondary 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.

The University of Southern California (USC) has applied for licensure to offer exclusively online the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree program with the following five advanced practice concentrations:

- Community Organization, Planning, and Administration;
- Families and Children;
- Health;
- Mental Health; and
- Work and Life

Dr. Frank Prochaska reviewed the application and appointed a team of examiners to determine if USC complied with the licensure standards outlined in the *Rules and Standards*. Because a team of examiners had recently visited the University of Southern California on June 15, 2010, it was decided to conduct a virtual site visit in evaluation of the Master of Social Work application. The virtual site visit allowed the team of examiners to experience the online platform utilized by USC to deliver its online programs. The six-hour virtual visit to the University of Southern California took place on April 4, 2011. Following the visit, the team of examiners issued its report which contained recommendations. For more details on the degree program and report, please review the summary.

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Thus, I recommend to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs of the UNC Board of Governors that a regular license be issued to the University of Southern California to offer the above-named online degree program with five advanced practice concentrations, subject to annual reports and review at any time. The program will be reviewed within two calendar years of its initiation in North Carolina to judge whether the institution continues to maintain standards for licensure.

Enclosure: Summary

## SUMMARY OF VISIT OF TEAM OF EXAMINERS FOR THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The University of Southern California (USC), located in Los Angeles, is a private, not-for-profit institution currently enrolling approximately 35,000 students. Since its establishment in 1880, it has conferred degrees on more than a quarter-million graduates. USC is authorized to operate in the State of California, where all instructional activity originates.

The University of Southern California is regionally accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). USC is currently licensed in North Carolina to offer exclusively online the Master of Arts in Teaching (M.A.T.) degree program.

### THE APPLICATION AND SITE VISIT

The University of Southern California has applied for licensure to offer exclusively online the Master of Social Work (M.S.W.) degree program with the following five advanced practice concentrations:

- Community Organization, Planning, and Administration
- Families and Children
- Health
- Mental Health
- Work and Life

Dr. Frank Prochaska, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs of The University of North Carolina General Administration, appointed the team of examiners to evaluate the University of Southern California's application and compliance with the licensure Standards contained in The University of North Carolina Board of Governors Rules and Standards: Licensing Nonpublic Institutions to Conduct Post-Secondary Degree Activity in North Carolina. Because a team of examiners had recently visited USC on June 15, 2010, it was decided to conduct a virtual site visit in evaluation of the Master of Social Work application. The virtual site visit allowed the team of examiners to experience the online platform utilized by USC to deliver its online programs. The six-hour virtual visit to the University of Southern California took place on April 4, 2011.

The team of examiners with expertise in the subject matter of this application was comprised of:

- 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
- Angela Bardeen, Behavioral and Social Sciences Librarian, Davis Library, Research & Instructional Services, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- Dr. Mimi V. Chapman, Associate Professor, School of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- Dr. Cathryne L. Schmitz, ACSW, Professor, Program in Conflict Studies, Department of Social Work, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, Greensboro, North Carolina

- Dr. Frank T. Prochaska, 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 application and accompanying exhibits and to participate in the site visit to determine if the institution demonstrated compliance with licensure standards. Either prior to the visit or during the visit, many additional items of documentation were reviewed by the team including course syllabi, library resources, instructional resources, faculty curriculum vitae, audited financial statements, promotional brochures, the 2010-2011 University of Southern California Catalogue, the USC *Faculty Handbook 2010*, the USC *School of Social Work Handbook 2009-2010*, and the USC *School of Social Work Bulletin 2008-2010*.

During the virtual visit, the team of examiners met with numerous administrators, faculty, staff, and students of the University of Southern California.

### **PROPOSED DEGREE PROGRAM**

#### Master of Social Work

This online M.S.W. program prepares students for social work practice in specialized areas such as families and children, mental health, and community organization. The curriculum is divided into two sections: foundation courses and concentration courses. The foundation curriculum is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills to develop a generalist perspective of social work practice with diverse, vulnerable, and at-risk individuals and families across the life span as well as with groups, organizations, and communities in diverse settings. The concentration curriculum prepares students for effective social work practice in specialized advanced areas. The proposed M.S.W. degree program requires a minimum of 63 semester credit hours, comprised of 49 semester credit hours of didactic course work and 14 semester credit hours of field practicum.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

After the site visit, the *Preliminary Report to the President of The University of North Carolina from the Team of Examiners for the Licensure Review of the University of Southern California's Proposed Online Master of Social Work Degree Program* was submitted. In the report, the team of examiners included three recommendations and one suggestion. Suggestions, which are offered as suggested best practices by team members, do not indicate a lack of compliance with the *Rules and Standards*. A suggestion is written for the institution's benefit, and it does not need to be implemented; the recommendations, however, must be implemented by the institution. The recommendations addressed issues of faculty credentials and the tuition guaranty bond.

The team of examiners concludes its report by stating it would make its recommendation to the General Administration of The University of North Carolina regarding the licensure of the proposed degree program after it received the response from USC to the recommendations and suggestion contained in the report.

After receiving the team of examiners' report, the University of Southern California responded to the recommendations and suggestion. All of the recommendations have been implemented to the satisfaction of the team of examiners.

After reviewing the institution's response, the team of examiners recommends that USC be licensed to offer the online Master of Social Work program in North Carolina.

Dr. Frank Prochaska agrees with the team's review and recommendations. Thus, General Administration recommends licensure of the University of Southern California's online Master of Social Work program with the following five advanced practice concentrations: Community Organization, Planning, and Administration; Families and Children; Health; Mental Health; and Work and Life.

The program will be reviewed within two calendar years of its initiation in North Carolina, by a team of examiners with expertise in the field, to ascertain the University of Southern California's compliance with the *Rules and Standards*, including the recommendations contained in the report.