

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

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The University of Southern California (USC) is a leading private research university. Located in Los Angeles, it is a global center for arts, technology, and international business, with “extensive opportunities for interdisciplinary study and collaboration with leading researchers in highly advanced learning environments.” In 2017, the Wall Street Journal/Times Higher Education ranking had USC 15th among 1,061 public and private universities. Representing California, only USC, Stanford, and Caltech appear in the top 25, and among 150 colleges and universities in the western United States, USC ranks third. In student and faculty diversity, USC tied for second among the top 25 nationally ranked universities. USC’s faculty numbers 4,000 scholars, researchers, teachers, and mentors. Student enrollment (2016-2017) totals 44,000, almost 60% of whom are graduate and professional students.

**THE APPLICATION AND SITE VISIT**

The University of Southern California is proposing to offer the following online programs to North Carolina residents:

- Master of Science in Applied Psychology
- Master of Science in Nursing – Family Nurse Practitioner
- Master of Public Health

In accordance with the Rules and Standards: Licensing Nonpublic Institutions to Conduct Post-Secondary Degree Activity in North Carolina, a team of examiners was appointed to review the application, visit the institution, and evaluate compliance with the licensure standards.

The team of examiners with expertise in the specific disciplines related to the proposed degree programs was comprised of:

- Dr. Laurel A. Files (Chair), Emeritus Professor of Health Policy and Management, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- Dr. Borree Kwok, Assistant Provost for Administration, and Dean of Library; Campbell University; Buies Creek, North Carolina
- Ritesh Matta, Certified Public Accountant, Washington, D.C. (In Absentia)
- Dr. Stephanie Lusk, Assistant Professor of Rehabilitation Education and Research Rehabilitation, Human Resources and Communication Disorders, College of Education and Health Professions, University of Arkansas; Fayetteville, Arkansas
- Jean DeMartinis, Associate Professor and DNP Program Director, College of Nursing, University of Massachusetts; Amherst, Massachusetts
- Julia Shaw-Kokot, Assistant Department Head for User Services (Retired), Health Sciences Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Chapel Hill, North Carolina
- Dr. Francine Anderson, Chair, Anatomy Department, School of Osteopathic Medicine, Campbell University (Retired); Buies Creek, North Carolina

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- Kaity McNeill, Interim Director of Licensure, University of North Carolina General Administration; Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Ex-Officio

The Team of Examiners conducted a site visit at USC in Los Angeles, California on April 26, 2017. The Team evaluated the facilities and resources of the university during its site visit, and reports and documents before, during, and after the visit, including the following: USC's licensure/compliance application and the accompanying exhibits, course syllabi, faculty credentials, library resources, budget data, annual financial reports, academic catalog, and faculty and student handbooks.

During the visit, the team of examiners met with numerous administrators, students, and faculty and staff members of the University. The team also reviewed previously licensed degree programs.

### **PROPOSED DEGREE PROGRAMS**

#### Master of Science in Applied Psychology

USC's Master of Science in Applied Psychology program requires 34 credit hours, a 240-hour internship (including internships abroad), the completion of a thesis, and a capstone project. It is important to emphasize that the program is not a clinical program and does not prepare students for careers as clinical psychologists (e.g., diagnosing and treating psychopathologies, conducting psychotherapy, completing clinical testing and assessment). As such, coursework does not include that which would be required for licensure through state examination and licensing boards. The program boasts a 96% retention rate and notes an online completion rate of 75% by year five.

#### Master of Science in Nursing – Family Nurse Practitioner

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree program with a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) role concentration from within the Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work, Department of Nursing, is a new academic program at The University of Southern California (USC), slated for an accreditation site visit by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) in fall 2017. The plan of study total 49 credits, or 51 credits with the Bridge Course, which can be accomplished in 21 months (full-time) or 33 months (part time). There are four required, 14-week clinical placement rotations, with (1) adult patients, (2) child-bearing and pediatric patients, (3) adults with complex conditions, and (4) in an integrated family practice experience. Students complete a total of 784 clinical contact hours over the four placements. All MSN program courses are delivered online, with students required to come to Los Angeles twice in their plan of study for in-person campus meetings called On-Campus Intensives (OCIs).

#### Master of Public Health

USC's Master of Public Health (MPH) program is offered through the Department of Preventive Medicine, in the Keck School of Medicine. It began enrolling online students in 2013, and is accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH). The program ranks second nationally in research funding. The program has a clearly defined mission "to prepare graduates to lead and collaborate with others to promote public health, eliminate health disparities, and improve the welfare of diverse communities at the local, national, and global levels." The program is guided by values that are derived from the public health profession and are reflected in the program's goals and objectives. The rigorous curriculum and the faculty are the same for the MPH online and on-campus programs, with two-thirds of the online coursework developed and delivered by full-time MPH faculty. The program requires a minimum of 47 credits, which exceeds master's degree, and CEPH, minimum requirements and can be completed in two, but no longer than five, years. A series of core (foundational) courses (27 units) is followed by coursework

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and electives specific to a distinct area concentration (20 units) and to include a practicum, done in the final stage of program.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

After the site visit, the team of examiners submitted its *Report to the President of The University of North Carolina from the Team of Examiners to Review The University of Southern California's Proposed Programs to be Offered in North Carolina*.

In the report, the team of examiners included 25 recommendations and 4 suggestions addressing the degree programs. Suggestions, which are offered as best practices, 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. However, the team recommendations must be implemented by the institution. The recommendations addressed issues of program curricula and content, information to be provided in course syllabi, faculty credentials, field placement oversight, and information to be provided in the university's catalog/materials for North Carolina students.

The team of examiners ended its report by stating it will make its concluding recommendations to the General Administration of The University of North Carolina regarding the licensing of the proposed degree program after it has received and reviewed USC's response to the recommendations and suggestions contained in the report.

After receiving the team of examiners' report, USC responded to the recommendations and suggestions. After reviewing the institution's response, the team agreed that recommendations have been implemented to the satisfaction of the team of examiners to recommend the degree programs.

Dr. Kimberly van Noort, Vice President for Academic Programs, Faculty, and Research, agrees with the team's review and recommendations. Thus, General Administration recommends licensure of the proposed degree programs, to be offered by The University of Southern California.

A review of the degree programs will be performed within two calendar years of the initiation of the new degree program, by a team of examiners with expertise in the field, to ascertain the institution's compliance with the *Rules and Standards*, including the recommendations contained in the report.

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recommendations have been implemented to the satisfaction of the team of examiners to recommend the degree programs.

Dr. Kimberly van Noort, Vice President for Academic Programs, Faculty, and Research, agrees with the team's review and recommendations. Thus, General Administration recommends that Mount Eagle be issued a full license to offer the proposed degree programs.

A review of the degree programs will be performed within two calendar years of the initiation of the new degree program, by a team of examiners with expertise in the field, to ascertain the institution's compliance with the *Rules and Standards*, including the recommendations contained in the report.