

May 2, 2002

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Dalton B. Floyd, Jr., Chairman, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

From: Ms. Dianne Chinnes, Chairman, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

Consideration of License Renewal Request
Webster University, St. Louis, MO, at Charleston, Columbia, Greenville, and Myrtle Beach
M.A., Business, Computer Resources and Information Management, Counseling, Health Services Management, Human Resources Development, Management
M.B.A., Computer Resources and Information Management, Health Services Management, Human Resources Development, Management

Summary

Webster University <<http://www.webster.edu>> requests renewal of its license to offer programs leading to the M.A. degree in Business, Computer Resources and Information Management, Counseling, Health Services Management, Human Resources Development, and Management; the M.B.A. in Computer Resources and Information Management, Health Services Management, Human Resources Development, and Management.

The Commission has licensed Webster University to operate in Charleston since 1983, in Myrtle Beach and Greenville since 1992, and in Columbia since 1999. The Commission renewed the license for five years in February 1997. Review teams examined Webster's operations in the State in 1984, 1987, 1992, and 1997.

North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has accredited Webster University since 1925. The accreditation includes undergraduate and graduate levels at all locations where the University offers programs. Webster offers graduate programs in 15 states, the District of Columbia, Austria (Vienna), Bermuda (Hamilton), China

(Shanghai), Thailand (Cha-am), The Netherlands (Leiden, Holland), Switzerland (Geneva), and the United Kingdom (London).

Students who enroll in Webster programs are usually working adults. The average age of students in South Carolina is 32. These non-traditional students are attracted to the accessible schedule, the working/teaching faculty, and the small classes.

All applicants considered for admission to Webster University's graduate programs must have earned a recognized baccalaureate degree. A regional accrediting agency must have accredited institutions in the United States, and degrees from institutions located abroad must be equivalent. Other matters taken into consideration for admissions are: a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or better on a 4.0 scale, grades on prerequisite courses, an essay, recommendations, school/community achievements, and professional work experience. Students enrolled in the M.A. programs may transfer a maximum of 12 graduate credit hours (nine for the M.B.A.) from other regionally accredited graduate institutions.

Students are provisionally admitted upon completion of all admission requirements. Students are advanced to candidacy status after successfully completing 12 credit hours with a grade of B or better within the first 15 credit hours of enrollment in courses required for the degree (excluding program prerequisites). Students who do not meet the requirement for advancement to candidacy status will be automatically dismissed from the program.

Students must receive written authorization to enroll in more than six credit hours per term. Courses are scheduled in five nine-week terms per year: Summer, Fall 1, Fall 2, Spring 1, and Spring 2. Classes meet for four hours and 15 minutes one night a week for eight weeks or for four alternate weekends on Saturdays from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a half-day final, so each course meets for a total of 36 contact hours. To comply with the requirements for state licensure, each course in the counseling program meets for 45 contact hours.

The institution employs at least one full-time faculty for each major, curricular area, or concentration. Faculty members who teach for Webster in South Carolina typically hold a terminal degree in the field in which they teach from regionally accredited universities. They usually work in the profession in which they teach, bringing a blend of academic theories and real-life experiences to the classroom. Department chairpersons, the chief academic officer, and the South Carolina regional director are credentialed at the doctoral level. Each site director holds at least a master's degree and has the local responsibility for student services (recruiting, orientation, registration, certification for veteran's benefits, record-keeping, collection and recording of fees), instructional program (faculty recruiting, interaction and evaluation), and general administration (communication with the regional director and main campus,

reporting, public relations, and marketing). Other local staff include a faculty coordinator, academic advisor, community relations coordinator, counseling coordinator, and a computer lab technician.

All Webster facilities are equipped with appropriately furnished administrative offices, classrooms with audio-visual equipment, computer laboratories with Internet connection, and a library containing professional journals, appropriate subject periodicals, and basic subject reference materials. Students have access to Webster University's PASSPORTS library on the Internet. Students can use their student identification to log on to access several research databases and request articles and books through the system.

As a part of the review for renewal of the license of Webster to operate in South Carolina, the staff conducted a survey of the graduates of the programs Webster offers in the State. The survey notification was mailed to 399 graduates; 52 graduates completed the survey. All but four of the respondents accessed and returned the survey electronically. The results of the survey are shown on the attached table. Comments that accompanied the responses were primarily positive. Many graduates commented that they most value the accessibility of the program (schedule); knowledgeable, professional faculty; applicable and current course content; and networking opportunities with other students and faculty. Thirty-three (63.5 percent) of the graduates experienced a salary increase as a result of completion of their programs and 22 (42.3 percent) received promotions. Several graduates commented that upgraded computer technology would enhance course delivery. Webster University officials have committed to evaluating the existing equipment and dedicating appropriate resources to upgrade technology in the classrooms and the learning resources centers.

The following table shows the programs Webster offers:

Program	Degree/Cr Hours	Brief Description
Business	M.A. 36	Various facets of decision making for business; theoretical knowledge and models for problem solving in business, and experiences in the business sciences.
Computer Resources & Information Management	M.A. 36 M.B.A. 48	Information technology as a management tool; applications of computer technology to business operations and development of effective communication and management strategies.
Counseling	M.A. 48	For individuals pursuing a career in professional counseling/mental health counseling; theory and skills in counselor training recommended by the American Counseling Association; satisfies the educational requirements for the National Board for Certified Counselors.
Health Services Management (currently offered only in Columbia)	M.A. 39 M.B.A. 48	Management or administration in the health field (nonclinical); focuses on issues most frequently encountered as administrative staff of a health care facility.
Human Resources Development	M.A. 36 M.B.A. 48	Designed to help the student understand human relations issues confronting individuals and organizations; combines human relations training and development with organizational development training; and focuses on maximizing the importance of the human element in organizational structures.
Management	M.A. 36 M.B.A. 48	Tools of management and experiences in simulations of decision-making situations; analytical techniques of management decision-making and ability in application of the techniques in actual problem solving.

Recommendation

The Committee recommends that the Commission approve renewal of the license for five years of Webster University to offer the programs leading to the M.A., in Business (except Greenville); Computer Resources and Information Management; Counseling; Health Services Management (Columbia campus only); Human Resources Management; Management; and the programs leading to the M.B.A. in Computer Resources and Information Management; Health Services Management (Columbia campus only); Human Resources Development; and Management.

Compiled Results of Student Survey – Webster
Spring 2002; 52 total responses

	Yes	No
1. Do you feel good about your decision to attend this institution?	52	
2. Would you recommend this institution to others?	52	
3. Did you receive adequate opinions on your progress through the course?	51	1
4. Were course materials up-to-date?	52	
5. Were course materials adequate?	52	

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
6. Instructors were knowledgeable of the subjects taught	0	0	7	45
7. Instructors were prepared for classes	0	0	6	46
8. Instructors explained materials so I could understand them	0	0	2	50
9. Instructors were available for me to ask questions	0	0	6	46
10. Instructors encouraged me to ask questions	0	0	3	49
11. Instructors answered questions in a clear, understandable way	0	1	3	48
12. The curriculum content was as I expected	0	1	3	47
13. The curriculum content was appropriate	0	0	5	47
14. The curriculum content was useable	0	0	4	48
15. The schedule and pace of the courses were comfortable	0	0	6	46
16. Grading was fair	0	1	3	48
17. Building and equipment were satisfactory	0	2	7	43
18. The library resources available were adequate for my research needs for the courses	2	3	9	38
19. The administrative support was adequate	0	0	4	48
20. The class structure format	0	0	4	48

allowed enough research and reflection time between class meetings				
21. You were given opportunities to provide feedback and evaluations on the courses as you progressed through the program?	0	0	1	51
22. You were given adequate opportunities to provide feedback and evaluations on the program since you completed your program	0	2	3	47