

May 3, 2007

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Dr. Layton R. McCurdy, Chair, and Members, Commission on Higher Education

**From:** Dr. Bettie Rose Horne, Chair, and Members, Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing

**Consideration of Request to Amend License**  
**South University, Savannah, GA, at Columbia**  
**R.N. to B.S.N.**

**Summary**

South University <<http://www.southuniversity.edu>> requests approval of an amendment to its license to offer at its Columbia campus a program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree completion option in Nursing for registered nurses.

South University of Carolina, Inc., a South Carolina corporation, is a 100 percent owned subsidiary and branch campus of South University, Inc., in Savannah, Georgia, which, in turn, is owned by Education Management Corporation (EDMC), a Pennsylvania company. Other branches of South University are in Montgomery, Alabama; Tampa, Florida; and West Palm Beach, Florida.

The Commission licenses South University to offer at the Columbia location programs leading to the associate, bachelor, and master degrees in business, legal, information technology, and counseling majors.

Previously in the Eau Claire community, in August 2006 the institution relocated its Columbia branch to Carolina Research Park (near I-277 at Parklane Road), #9 Science Court, Columbia. The facility is approximately 40,000 square feet of space for 13 lecture classrooms, a medical lab, a drawing classroom/lab, three computer labs,

psychology/counseling lab, student services, library, and administrative and faculty offices.

South University is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) to award associate, bachelor, master, and doctoral degrees. The institution will seek programmatic accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) as soon as the program is eligible.

South University Savannah (on-line division) offers the program on-line; the West Palm Beach and Tampa campuses offer the program on-ground. Institution officials project enrolling eight new students in the first year and 15-20 new students each year thereafter. In Columbia classes will be offered on-ground in a traditional classroom setting with a projected instructor/student ratio of one-to-eight. Tuition will be \$375 per credit hour.

The target audience is registered nurses who hold an associate degree from an accredited institution or a diploma from a school of nursing accredited by the National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC). The program leading to the B.S.N. is designed to provide professional knowledge and skills, support educational mobility, and strengthen community health and leadership abilities of nurses.

The curriculum consists of 180 quarter credit hours. Of these, 90 are in general education, 45 nursing credits will be accepted based on state licensure, and 45 hours are advanced core courses. The clinical element of the program is interwoven into each class through class assignments. The six-quarter-hour capstone course is predominately clinical with preceptor guidance.

Faculty members must hold a Master of Science degree in nursing. A search is underway for a full-time program director and faculty with appropriate credentials who will be on staff prior to the implementation of the program. Columbia personnel will work closely with Dan Coble, R.N., Ph.D., head of nursing and president at the Tampa campus. Dr. Coble previously served as executive director of the Florida Board of Nursing where he was responsible for planning, organizing, and coordinating licensure of nurses and certified nursing assistants, regulation of nursing practice, and other functions of the Board of Nursing.

The existing learning resources will be the foundation on which to build the program. The librarian at the Columbia campus is in the process of ordering the same library databases and hardbound collection for nursing as are available for the CCNE-approved programs at the West Palm Beach and Tampa campuses. Included is a collection of nursing periodicals published by Sage Publications which provides access to approximately 15 nursing journals with 20 years of backfiles. Also the Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) will be added.

To qualify for admission to the program leading to the B.S.N., an individual must have (1) a current unencumbered R.N. license, (2) A.S.N. or diploma from an accredited nursing program, (3) a grade of C or better in specified general education courses, (4) an overall grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale for all nursing college courses attempted, and (5) ability to perform core performance standards for admission and progression (as evidenced by graduation from an approved nursing program and by state licensure.). Students may qualify for provisional admission if they have an overall GPA of 2.0 to 2.49. Final admission requires completion of at least four general education courses with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.

Licensing staff has documented that the institution has the resources necessary to offer a program leading to the R.N. to B.S.N. Specifically, it has met bonding, library, faculty, facility, and financial requirements.

South Carolina public institutions that offer a R.N. to B.S.N. completion program are Clemson University, Francis Marion University, Lander University, Medical University of South Carolina, South Carolina State University, U.S.C.-Aiken, U.S.C.-Beaufort, U.S.C.-Columbia, and U.S.C.-Upstate.

<b>South University R.N. to B.S.N. Curriculum Outline</b>	
Prerequisites	
Humanities: English composition (3), public speaking, electives (2)	24
Math and science: electives (2), statistics, anatomy and physiology (with lab) (2), microbiology (with lab), general chemistry, nutrition, elective	42
Social science: human growth and development, general psychology, sociology	12
Other electives	12
<b>Total prerequisites</b>	<b>90</b>
<b>Basic nursing via R.N.</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Upper-division course requirements:</b>	
NGS 3305 Transition into Professional Nursing for RN's	4
NSG 3016 Caring for a Multicultural Society	2
NGS 3012 Principles of Assessment For Registered Nurses	4
NSG 3028 Caring for the Community	4
NSG 3036 Introduction to Nursing Research	3
NSG 4070 Legal and Ethical Issues in Nursing	2
NSG 4028 Concepts of Teaching and Learning	4
NSG 4029 Leadership in a Diverse Society	4
NSG 4045 Health Promotion Across the Life Span	4
NSG4055 Illness and Disease Management Across the Life Span	4
Elective choose from: NSG4064 Financial Management for Nurses NSG4065 Complementary and Alternative Methods in Nursing NSG4066 Palliative Care NSG4067 Gerontology	4
NSG4075 Capstone Course	6
<b>Upper-division course requirements</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Total R.N. to B.S.N. quarter credit hours</b>	<b>180</b>

## **Recommendation**

The Committee on Academic Affairs and Licensing recommends that the Commission approve South University's request to amend the license to offer at its Columbia location the program leading to the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing, to be implemented in January 2008.