

**BOARD OF REGENTS
BRIEFING PAPER**

**HANDBOOK Revision, Development of Baccalaureate Degree Proposals
at the Community Colleges: Review by the Council of Presidents**

BACKGROUND & POLICY CONTEXT OF ISSUE:

Board policy authorizes community colleges to offer select “niche baccalaureate degrees” to satisfy the needs of a wide range of Nevada students while promoting the goals of the NSHE Master Plan. Under the process for development, review and approval of such degrees, a community college wishing to offer a baccalaureate degree must include the proposal in the *NSHE Planning Report* that is approved every two years by the Board and discuss the proposal with the Chancellor, who is then required to review the initial proposal with the Council of Presidents (COP). After the review and approval by the COP, the community college may then prepare the formal written proposal for next steps, which include review by the NSHE Academic Affairs Council (AAC) and submission to the Board of Regents for final approval (*Handbook*, Title 4, Chapter 14, Sections 7 and 9).

To improve the efficiency of the approval process, the COP and Chancellor’s Office recommend removing the policy requirement for formal approval from the COP but adding a requirement for the submission any recommendations from the COP to be provided directly to the community college before the college moves forward with submitting the written proposal to NSHE’s AAC and the Board of Regents for consideration and approval. In addition, the COP and Chancellor’s Office recommend clarifying that proposals for Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees, which are uniquely offered by community colleges as four-year occupationally specific degrees responding to workforce needs, are not subject to this additional review process.

SPECIFIC ACTIONS BEING RECOMMENDED OR REQUESTED:

Amend Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 9 of the *Handbook* to require the Chancellor to submit any recommendations from the Council of Presidents regarding the proposal for a baccalaureate degree back to the community college wishing to offer the degree; remove the requirement for approval of the degree proposal by the Council of Presidents; and clarify that the review process does not apply to Bachelor of Applied Science degree proposals. See the attached policy proposal.

IMPETUS (WHY NOW?):

The Council of Presidents and Chancellor recommend this policy revision to streamline the approval process for new degree programs.

CHECK THE NSHE STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL THAT IS SUPPORTED BY THIS REQUEST:

- Access (Increase participation in post-secondary education)
- Success (Increase student success)
- Close the Achievement Gap (Close the achievement gap among underserved student populations)
- Workforce (Collaboratively address the challenges of the workforce and industry education needs of Nevada)
- Research (Co-develop solutions to the critical issues facing 21st century Nevada and raise the overall research profile)
- Not Applicable to NSHE Strategic Plan Goals

INDICATE HOW THE PROPOSAL SUPPORTS THE SPECIFIC STRATEGIC PLAN GOAL

The policy revision is not applicable to the strategic plan goals. It is a revision designed to streamline existing procedures governing degree proposals.

BULLET POINTS TO SUPPORT REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

- The review process for a community college to offer a baccalaureate degree is comprehensive and includes numerous steps that ensure the proposal is fully vetted before it is presented to the Board of Regents for consideration and approval. Submission to the Chancellor and COP is important as it provides all institutions the opportunity to review and consider the proposal for a baccalaureate degree at a community college and submit any concerns they have, but formal approval is not necessary for the proposal to move forward through the review process.

POTENTIAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE REQUEST/RECOMMENDATION:

None have been presented.

ALTERNATIVE(S) TO WHAT IS BEING REQUESTED/RECOMMENDED:

Retain existing policy.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE:

The Chancellor's Office supports the proposed policy revision.

COMPLIANCE WITH BOARD POLICY:

- Consistent With Current Board Policy: Title # _____ Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Amends Current Board Policy: *Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 9*
- Amends Current Procedures & Guidelines Manual: Chapter # _____ Section # _____
- Other: _____
- Fiscal Impact: Yes _____ No X _____
Explain: _____

POLICY PROPOSAL
TITLE 4, CHAPTER 14, SECTION 9
Community College: Baccalaureate Degree Proposals –
Review by Council of Presidents

Additions appear in *boldface italics*; deletions are [~~stricken~~ and bracketed]

Section 9. Community College Baccalaureate Degree Proposal Development and Review Process

1. The NSHE Master Plan provides for “selected niche baccalaureate degrees” at community colleges in order to satisfy the needs of a wide range of Nevada students while promoting the goals of the Master Plan. However, it is not the intention of the NSHE for community colleges to abandon their community college mission to transform into State Colleges. Each proposal must address this issue in both a cultural and organizational context.
2. At an early stage of development, a community college wishing to offer a baccalaureate degree shall discuss the proposal with the Chancellor, primarily in terms of the program’s relationship to the NSHE Master Plan and other institutional planning that may be occurring. The proposal must be included in the NSHE Planning Report required pursuant to Nevada Revised Statutes 396.505 and Title 4, Chapter 14, Section 3 of the Handbook before proceeding to the Council of Presidents.
3. The Chancellor shall review the initial proposal with the Council of Presidents *and submit any recommendations from the Council of Presidents to the community college wishing to offer the baccalaureate degree.*
4. After the review [~~and approval has been completed~~] by the Council of Presidents, the sponsoring institution shall prepare a formal written program proposal with supporting data and evidence that responds to criteria established by the Office of the Chancellor. The review of the proposal will follow established NSHE procedures for new program proposals.
5. *This section does not apply to a proposal for a Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degree, which is four-year occupationally specific degree intended to respond to the needs of the workforce.*