



The State University
of New York

Office of the Chancellor

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MEMORANDUM

November 15, 2017

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

**SUBJECT: Master Plan Amendment for the State University of New York
Health Science Center at Brooklyn**

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn to offer the Doctor of Midwifery degree in the disciplinary area of Health Professions.

Resolution

I recommend that the Board of Trustees adopt the following resolution:

Resolved that the State University of New York Master Plan be, and hereby is, amended to authorize the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn to offer the Doctor of Midwifery degree in the disciplinary area of Health Professions; and, be it further

Resolved that the Chancellor be, and hereby is, authorized to transmit this amendment to the Board of Regents and the Governor for incorporation into the State University of New York Master Plan.

Background

Approval of this resolution will authorize the State University of New York Health Science Center at Brooklyn to offer the Doctor of Midwifery (DM) degree. New York State Education Law § 237 and the regulations of the Commissioner of Education (Title 8 NYCRR §52.1 and Part 54) require that a master plan amendment be submitted and approved in order for an institution of higher education to offer a new program in a disciplinary area where it does not currently have a registered program. The proposed Doctor of Midwifery program represents SUNY Downstate's first doctoral degree program in the professional discipline of Midwifery.

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SUNY Downstate's proposed Doctor of Midwifery will be the first doctor of midwifery degree in New York State and only the second in the country. It is a program that builds on extensive relevant expertise at the institution as SUNY Downstate currently offers a Master of Science in Nursing with a concentration in nurse-midwifery and an advanced certificate in midwifery. Students in the proposed doctor of midwifery program will focus on the healthcare of women and newborns, improving quality and safety and promoting positive change within the profession.

The program is designed to meet the accreditation standards of the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME). The curriculum was developed by an international group of midwifery experts as well as professionals in other related fields, and it was approved by SUNY Downstate's Curriculum Committee. The core of the program introduces students to midwifery theory, methods of inquiry and epidemiology, global maternity, and women's health, allowing them to concentrate in administration, teaching, policy and ethics, or education. In each concentration, students may focus on global health or women's health. Courses in the proposed program will be hybrid, making use of both synchronous and asynchronous formats, and each course will meet face-to-face for an eight-hour training session each semester.

Graduates of the DM program will be able to: interpret and apply research related to the national and international distribution and determinants of health and disease in women and newborns; translate expert clinical knowledge and research relevant to midwifery into best practice models; develop, implement and evaluate projects to improve women's health care; and demonstrate the ability to develop remedies to promote health improvement for women and newborns. Graduates will analyze and compare health care delivery and finance models and ultimately assume roles of leadership within the midwifery profession.

Downstate faculty members are well qualified to offer the proposed curriculum, based on their academic credentials and extensive experience as licensed nurse-midwives. The external reviewers acknowledged the importance of this program as the first in New York State and praised SUNY Downstate for its outstanding reputation in midwifery education as well as its leadership in advancing the profession.

The program will initially enroll 22 full-time students, increasing to a steady roster of 33 by year five. These projections are based on email, telephone, and in-person inquiries that the SUNY Downstate Midwifery Program fields each year; by an informal survey conducted at the Annual Meeting of the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM); by the many support letters the Downstate Midwifery Program has gathered, including one from the national Directors of Midwifery Education (DOME); and by the action of the national midwifery organization in developing doctoral competency guidelines for midwives. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, growth for nurse-midwives was at the top level of professions for 2016. With 6,270 nurse-midwives in the 2015 national labor force and 1,159 licensed midwives in New York State

as of July 2017, the pool of practicing midwives eligible for the proposed doctor of midwifery program is large.

Midwives wanting doctoral preparation now must go outside their discipline and do doctoral studies in nursing, public health, health administration or medical anthropology. The proposed doctorate meets the needs of certified midwives to gain doctoral preparation consistent with the trend in other healthcare professions, such as pharmacy, physical therapy, and audiology, which have moved to require the doctorate for entry into practice.

SUNY Downstate's proposed DM will advance the institutional goals of the College of Health Related Professions, as stated in the 2016-2020 strategic plan, to "develop and expand educational programs and related educational opportunities to meet the evolving and varied needs of each discipline." SUNY Downstate's commitment to advancing clinical doctoral education in midwifery aligns well with the strategic goal identified by the Power of SUNY's A Healthier New York "to be recognized for the best thinking in health care." The proposed DM program will enable the profession to maintain its stature within the health care system, appeal to highly qualified candidates, contribute to the ever increasing knowledge base of the profession, and develop leaders within the profession.

The proposed program has been carefully reviewed and was found to be sound from both an academic and financial perspective.