



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 Syracuse

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse to offer the Master of Science degree in Behavior Analysis Studies in the disciplinary area of Social Sciences.

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 Syracuse to offer the Master of Science degree in Behavioral Analysis Studies in the disciplinary area of Social Sciences; 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 State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse (Upstate Medical University) to offer the Master of Science degree in Behavioral Analysis Studies. 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 Behavioral Analysis Studies program represents Upstate Medical University's first degree in the disciplinary area of Social Sciences.

Upstate Medical University's proposed Master of Science degree in Behavioral Analysis Studies will prepare students to provide therapeutic services for individuals with autism and related disorders and to seek licensure as Board-Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBA). In New York State alone, over 90,000 individuals (30,000 of them children) are identified to have autism. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends 25 hours of applied behavior analysis therapy per week for each child with autism. As a result, there is a critical shortage of qualified BCBAs, with roughly 1,400 BCBAs in the state, and only eight percent in the regions served by Upstate Medical University. Currently, no SUNY institution offers a graduate behavior analysis program. As a result, the proposed program will meet a significant and growing work-force demand.

Faculty at Upstate Medical University are well qualified to offer the proposed curriculum, not only in terms of their academic credentials but also because of their extensive clinical expertise. The proposed program leverages existing specializations in developmental pediatrics, child psychiatry, and social work. Applied behavior analysis is the primary evidence-based treatment for autism, but at present, only the Family Behavior Analysis Clinic at Upstate Medical University provides this service in central New York.

The 51-credit proposed program with 1500 contact hours is designed to comply with standards of the Behavioral Analysis Accreditation Board (BAAB) of the Association for Behavior Analysis International (ABAI) and the New York State Department of Education's standards for programs preparing Licensed Behavior Analysts. It also meets all criteria for a BACB verified course sequence and graduates will qualify to take the certifying exam and apply for a New York State license (and other state licenses) as a Behavior Analyst.

The proposed program anticipates an initial enrollment of approximately 10 students in the first year, leading to a steady roster of 16 students admitted per year, by year five. These projections are based on the current number of applications to Upstate Medical University's College of Health Professions (over 1,700 annually), on a series of informal surveys with community members and with undergraduate volunteers at a university-affiliated clinic that specializes in treatments based in behavior analysis, and on application and admission data collected from 12 existing behavioral analysis programs.

External reviewers praised the proposed program for its existing high-quality faculty, strong educational design and rich clinical settings for applied learning. The program is committed to improving access to needed care for diverse patients with autism spectrum disorders in central New York and to improving access to careers in behavior analysis for historically underserved students with diverse racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds to serve a diverse population across the state.

The proposed program expands degree offerings at Upstate Medical University, while increasing the use of clinical instruction sites for training. The program's curriculum, taught in a healthcare delivery setting, will increase student engagement and promote inquiry, service and scholarship. The program advances SUNY's mission "to provide to the people of New York educational services of the highest quality, with the broadest possible access" and Upstate Medical University's mission "to improve the health of the communities we serve through education, biomedical research and health care."

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