MEMORANDUM

May 8, 2019

TO: Members of the Board of Trustees

FROM: Kristina M. Johnson, Chancellor

SUBJECT: Master Plan Amendment for the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute

Action Requested

The proposed resolution authorizes the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute to confer the Doctor of Nursing Practice 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 amended to authorize the State University of New York Polytechnic Institute to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice 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 Polytechnic Institute (SUNY Poly) to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) degree in Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. 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 Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program represents the college’s first degree program to be offered in the discipline of the Health Professions.
The proposed program will prepare nurses with specialized knowledge to meet the complexities of behavioral and mental health issues, shape healthcare policy, and improve the stabilization, management and rehabilitation of children, adults, families, and populations experiencing psychological challenges and disorders. The program will build on SUNY Poly’s existing baccalaureate and master’s nursing curricula to offer doctoral level, nurse practitioner education with an emphasis on designing mental health policy and programs to address issues associated with mental-health chronic illnesses; recognize and address health disparities; address healthcare needs related to global migration and emerging diseases, and support health promotion and disease prevention programs that are economically feasible and culturally acceptable.

The proposed program is primarily online to better address the needs of adult learners and requires only an onsite orientation and two onsite residencies. It expands on SUNY Poly’s long-standing programs in nursing, including an online Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to B.S.); combined B.S. to M.S. programs in Nursing/Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing/Transformational Leadership, and Nursing/Nursing Education; and Master of Science programs, including Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing Education, and Transformational Leadership. SUNY Poly also offers three related advanced certificates: Family Nurse Practitioner, Nursing Education, and Transformational Leadership. The institution will leverage existing high-quality faculty, with only one new additional full-time hire needed to meet the needs of the new program.

The proposed D.N.P. program anticipates an initial enrollment of approximately 10 students, leading to a steady state of 40 doctoral students per year by the fifth year. The program will meet all criteria for the Doctor of Nursing Practice from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. It will also meet the requirements for Psychiatric Mental Health practice, as established by the American Nurses Association. The proposed curriculum complies with the standards of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the New York State Department of Education for preparing advanced-practice registered nurses (APRN). D.N.P graduates will be prepared to sit for the APRN national certification examination, and the national, advanced specialty certification.

The program is committed to improving access to needed care for diverse patients and to careers in nursing for historically underserved students. Oneida and surrounding counties have long-welcomed resettled refugees and special immigrant visa holders, with substantial populations from Burma, Bhutan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Ukraine, Russia, and Afghanistan. According the 2012 census, 26 percent of Oneida households speak a language other than English. The faculty is also committed to serving the community’s strong military presence of approximately 7,500 veterans.

External reviewers found an “experienced administration and faculty who understand how to interface and engage rural students;” “interesting, unique courses around leadership and population health;” and a “good system for
evaluating clinical practicum experiences.” Reviewers noted in particular that the program will “make a unique contribution to the specialty via explicating approaches to rural mental health.” Likewise the reviewers complimented the use of an “online platform to structure faculty/learner engagement in both synchronous and asynchronous modalities,” incorporating “students’ discussions, blogs, journals, and wikis. Thus the system has all the tools to create an engaging, supportive on-line learning community.” Given the strong need, SUNY Poly’s strong faculty and well-designed program, external reviewers noted that SUNY Poly should “have no problem attracting students.”

The proposal has been carefully reviewed and found to be sound from an academic and financial perspective.