

APPROVED
June 25, 2025

Melissa Bealon
Board Secretary Melissa Bealon

Item #F-3A
June 25, 2025

**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: New independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions are also required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approve the recommendations to grant degree-granting authority and/or operating authority to the following institution:

Not for Profit

Erikson Institute

- Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago Region

North Central University

- Operating Authority in the Southwestern Region

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Sciences

- Doctor of Medical Science in the North Suburban Region

STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has responsibility for administration of The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010). Under these statutes, new independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions also are required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Applications for new operating and degree-granting authority submitted by independent Illinois institutions and out-of-state institutions are reviewed by the staff. Recommendations are developed by applying criteria for operating and/or degree-granting authority, which are defined in the rules adopted for administration of the statutes and Board policies on assessment of student learning and specialized accreditation requirements for student licensure. These criteria encompass educational objectives, institution and degree titles, curricula, facilities, faculty and administrator qualifications, student policies, publications, records, compliance with pertinent laws, and fiscal stability. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials, responses to questions, and site visits. Out-of-region sites are defined as sites located within an IBHE approval region other than the region within which an institution's original operating authority was granted. There are ten IBHE approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts. Approval to operate within a new approval region entitles an institution to operate throughout the region, and not solely at the site at which the institution initially applied. In addition to the approval criteria in rules, each new program was reviewed for its contributions to the goals of *A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Pathways to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth*, which sets forth new priorities to guide Illinois higher education. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials and responses to staff questions.

This item includes recommendations to grant operating authority to one institution.

Not-for-Profit Executive Summary

Erikson Institute

- Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago Region

Erikson Institute (Erikson or the Institute) is seeking authorization to grant the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago region. Erikson Institute has administered a joint Doctor of Philosophy program in Child Development with Loyola University Chicago since 1986. The joint program has produced 54 graduates since 1991, with the degree being conferred by Loyola University Chicago. The proposed would replace the joint PhD program with Loyola University, which will be administered solely by Erikson. The overall purpose of the proposed program is to produce applied researchers across a variety of fields to improve outcomes and the

quality of life for children and families, particularly those affected by adversity. This 60-credit hour program includes 12 credits of theory, 9 credits of context and intervention, 12 credits of methods and analysis, and 11 hours of professional skills (including the dissertation, proseminar, scholarship, and teaching in higher education), 12 credits in the chosen specialization, and 4 total credits in advising/continuing studies. Credits in the required specialization include two of three internship experiences (teaching, research, or industry). Graduates typically secure employment as researchers and leaders in varied positions such as university professors, program evaluators, non-profit leaders, and advocacy organization leaders. There are policies in place to ensure faculty possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction in the proposed program. Erikson Institute has sufficient library, technology, and financial resources to support the program.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment A.

North Central University

- Operating Authority in the Southwestern Region

North Central University (NCU or the University) is seeking authorization to operate in the Southwestern region. Founded in 1930, North Central University is a coeducational, primarily residential college with a bible-based and Pentecostal foundation along with a commitment to academic excellence. The University is owned and operated by 11 Assemblies of God districts of the upper Midwest and prepares students to fulfill biblical models of leadership and ministry throughout the world. North Central University plans to expand its academic offerings in Illinois by partnering with Called College, a ministry training program owned and operated by the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God, to offer two of its existing associate degree programs in pastoral studies and global studies. NCU graduates will be prepared for entry-level positions in ministry with the necessary skills to lead and serve diverse communities throughout the world. Both degrees meet the requirements for ministerial credentialing with the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God. NCU has developed campuswide initiatives to systemically close persisting equity and opportunity gaps in student outcomes and faculty hiring. There are policies in place to ensure faculty possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction. The University has sufficient library, technology, and financial resources to support the proposed operation.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment B.

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science

- Doctor of Medical Science in the North Suburban Region

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (Rosalind Franklin or the University) is seeking authorization to offer a Doctor of Medical Science (DMS) in the North Suburban region. The 30-quarter hour DMS program offers an advanced education option for students who possess a master's degree from an accredited physician assistant (PA) program recognized by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physical Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). This program is for those who seek to earn a professional doctorate degree for advancement as well as leadership roles in academia or clinical practice. The proposed program requires four core courses and completion of one concentration series of courses from Lifestyle Medicine, Leadership and Health Administration, Nutrition, or Health Professions Education. Students will complete a practicum course series, and a practicum project related to their concentration. The DMS program will prepare

PA leaders to advance and expand healthcare to diverse and underserved populations through education and advocacy. The program is rooted in the professional competencies from national certification agencies, accreditation agencies, PA education, and professional organizations. The University is committed to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion which helps create well-trained, diverse healthcare professionals who reflect and serve diverse populations and work to reduce health disparities. These commitments are evidenced by initiatives to close equity gaps in student outcomes and in faculty hiring. There are policies in place to ensure faculty possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction in the proposed program. Rosalind Franklin University has sufficient library, technology, and financial resources to support the program.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment C.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolution:

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants to Erikson Institute authorization to grant the Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants North Central University authorization to operate in the Southwestern region subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants to Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science authorization to grant the Doctor of Medical Science in the North Suburban region, subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

Erikson Institute
451 N. LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654
President: Mariana Souto-Manning, PhD

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago Region

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
20	28	12

Institutional Accreditation: Erikson Institute is Accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Background and History

Erikson Institute (Erikson or the Institute) was founded in 1966 by child psychologist, Maria Piers; educator and activist, Barbra Taylor Bowman; social worker, Lorraine Wallach; and philanthropist, Irving B. Harris as the Chicago Institute for Early Childhood Education to provide training for the newly established Head Start program. In 1967, the Chicago Institute for Early Childhood Education became Erikson Institute for Early Education.

Erikson Institute is an independent higher education institution committed to ensuring that all children have equitable opportunities to realize their potential. As a research institution, Erikson Institute has been recognized for groundbreaking work in the field of early childhood while preparing child development, education, and social work leaders to improve the lives of young children and their families. Closely tied to Erikson's mission is a stable and cohesive set of values that are shared by the board of trustees, faculty, staff, and students including freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression; the centrality of relationships in all learning; an emphasis on social justice; a commitment to diversity; an appreciation for complexity; and an adherence to high standards and excellence. These values are infused throughout Erikson's academic programs, research, and community engagement.

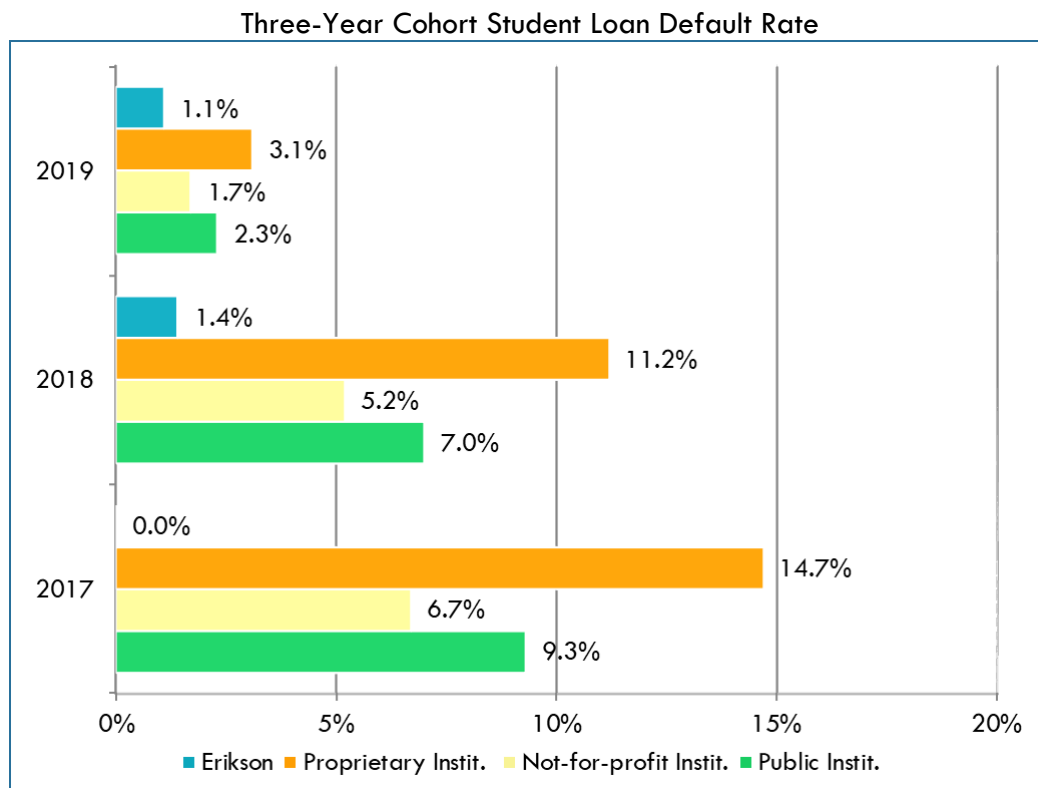
With this application, the Institute is seeking authorization to grant the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Child and Family Studies in the Chicago region. Erikson Institute has administered a joint Doctor of Philosophy program in Child Development with Loyola University Chicago since 1986. The joint program has produced 54 graduates since 1991, with the degree being conferred by Loyola University Chicago. The Institute would replace the joint PhD program with Loyola University which will be administered solely by Erikson. The overall purpose is to produce applied researchers across a variety of fields to improve outcomes and the quality of life for children and families, particularly those affected by adversity. Graduates typically secure employment as researchers and leaders in varied positions such as university professors, program evaluators, non-profit leaders, and advocacy organization leaders.

Institutional Data

1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i) Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

1030.30(a)(3)(G): Additional student success measures shall be considered in the review of applications for authorization. The Board shall establish minimum rates of success based on results for similar institutions or thresholds set by State or federal regulatory bodies. i) At a minimum these data shall include student loan default rates, student indebtedness rates, job placement rates, student learning measures and other success indicators. ii) Institutions that participate in Federal Student Loan programs shall have 3-year Official Cohort Default rates no higher than 25 percent. Institutions with Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Scores shall have a score that is no lower than 1.0. Institutions that fail to meet these thresholds may be restricted from implementing new certificate or degree programs. iii) The success rate shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

This section includes information about institutional and student success measures for Erikson Institute. The institution's rates will be compared to Illinois institutions from within a select comparison group and against the national standards or averages. For a proposed undergraduate program, this section will include undergraduate graduation rates, first to second year retention rates, student loan default rates, and any applicable licensure passage rates. For a proposed graduate program, this section will primarily focus on student loan default data since this measure also includes graduate students in the calculation.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), US Department of Education

Note: Due to the pause on federal student loan payments that began in March 2020, the cohort default rates for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 are zero percent for the institution and all institution types. The national cohort default rate for fiscal year 2019 was 2.3 percent and zero percent for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. A lower number is a positive indicator.

The three-year cohort student loan default rate is the percentage of a school's borrowers who enter repayment on certain Federal Family Education Loan Program or William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program loans during a particular federal fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, and default or meet other specified conditions prior to the end of the second following fiscal year.

Need

Public Act 102-1046, 110 ILCS 1005/4, Sec. 4 (7): That the proposed degree program is educationally and economically consistent with the educational priorities and needs of this State and meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and is supported by clear evidence of need. If the examination shows that the applicant has such qualifications a certificate of approval shall be issued

While doctoral research degrees provide a strong foundation for application in a variety of fields, the proposed program is designed for postsecondary educators. Based on data from the Illinois Department of Employment Security, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) and the National Center for Education Statistics, the need for postsecondary social science and social work educators will slightly rise over the next decade. As of May 2020, the BLS reports an annual mean wage of \$92,940 for postsecondary social science educators and \$81,880 for postsecondary social work

teachers, respectively. Data from the Institute of Educational Science's National Center for Education Statistics shows a four percent increase in the number of faculty positions at degree-granting postsecondary institutes of higher education between 2009 and 2021. This growth is higher for female faculty members (13 percent), which the overwhelming majority of graduates from this program will comprise. The proposed program will aid in addressing the early childhood workforce shortages to meet the demand for well-qualified faculty in the field.

The program will provide graduates with a wide range of employment opportunities in higher education, non-profit leadership, policy analysis, research, advocacy, and direct service. Additionally, an analysis of recent graduates from the joint Erikson-Loyola University Chicago program reveals that of the most recent 20 graduates, 100 percent have obtained positions within the field. Career stability is also well documented with 2015 cohort graduates remaining in such positions; 40 percent in faculty positions, 40 percent are in non-profit leadership positions, and the remaining 20 percent are in direct service positions (e.g., school principals, parenting coaches).

Illinois Employment Projections, 2022-2032			
Occupation Title	Employment 2022	Employment 2032	Employment Change (%)
Post-Secondary Social Science Educators	1,625	1,635	10 (0.62%)
Social Work Teachers, College	1068	1087	19 (1.79%)

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

Erikson Institute has submitted plans to support *Goal 1, Equity*, of *A Thriving Illinois* to close equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind. Erikson Institute has launched three critical offices focused on institution-wide internal and external initiatives on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion that directly align with its mission and values. The associate vice president of justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) works with students, faculty, and staff to develop programming and examine systems of accountability in curriculum, instruction, professional development and learning supports that improve Erikson's services and professional preparatory processes for students. The JEDI office interfaces with faculty offering instructional review and supports to ensure pedagogy reflects students' needs and traverses the demands students must meet in the 21st century. A significant component of recruitment and retention of diverse cultural, linguistic, familial, economic, and ethnic identities is to ensure the curriculum is both reflective and responsive to students' cultural frames of reference as well as addresses their specialized needs. Erikson is in its second phase of institute-wide course audits to review curriculum and instruction, content, learning modalities, and assessment.

The proposed program intends to continue the priority of recruiting and retaining underrepresented students. The most recent entering class of doctoral students in the joint program was 43 percent women of color. Erikson will target an overall 40 percent or greater rate of students of color in the proposed program, as well as 50 percent or greater rate of working adults and students from low-income backgrounds. Student Affairs at Erikson Institute encompasses a variety of student-facing departments, including the Dean of Students Office, that support doctoral students throughout their academic journey. These departments take a holistic approach to student wellness and well-being and strive to create a student-centered culture and community where all Erikson

students feel seen, heard, valued, and included. Student Affairs staff are committed to supporting students academically, socially, and emotionally from admission to graduation.

Retaining students in a doctoral program requires additional and unique supports beyond the institutional level. As such, Erikson has made a significant investment in fostering wellness, belonging, and a supportive campus climate and community. The Institute has also established several new seminars for supporting student progress, graduation, and employability, which are expected to be helpful for all students but particularly necessary for students from historically marginalized backgrounds. For example, the first-year seminar features topics such as the transition to graduate school, professional identity, impostor syndrome, academic jargon and “unwritten rules” to boost students’ confidence and sense of belonging.

The Institute has provided plans for recruiting and attracting male students. Erikson Institute’s enrollment is overwhelmingly female (97.1 percent). Since the 2024-25 academic year, Erikson has hired three male faculty members (a teaching postdoctoral fellow, a senior instructor, and a tenure-track faculty member) increasing the percentage of male faculty members from 4.5 percent in 2021-22 to 15.8 percent in 2024-25. Male faculty members are active in student recruitment, including marketing, virtual open houses, professional conferences, and community engagements. Erikson believes increasing the percentage of engagement of male faculty members is among the strongest strategies for increasing gender diversity among the student body and related professions. Additionally, to support the retention of male students, Erikson has hired male alumni as academic support coaches for current students. Academic support coaches provide a variety of online and on campus academic supports, including 1:1 tutoring focused on content and general strategies to support academic success, online paper review, and study groups.

The proposed program will contribute to *Goal 2, Sustainability, of A Thriving Illinois to build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions* by finding ways to reduce the financial burden of education on students and their families. Erikson’s Scholarship Committee has revised its scholarship application process, award determination, and timeline for informing students of financial aid packages offered. The scholarship application process is now fully integrated with the admissions application process in which all applicants complete two essays, one focused on the reason the student is seeking admissions into the program and the other on leadership experiences and goals. Faculty review each application, assess essays utilizing a standard rubric, and rate applicants’ overall application for admission using a rubric.

Applicants are eligible for affordability scholarships (up to 25 percent of the total tuition), leadership scholarships (up to 20 percent of the total tuition), and can apply for an additional \$10,000 Social Justice scholarship. Social Justice scholarships are awarded based on an essay submission which is assessed using the following criteria: cultural self-awareness, cultural worldview, and civic and professional action and reflection. All awards are cumulative and over 85 percent of Erikson students receive scholarship support. Awards range from 25-45 percent with the average award equal to 35 percent of tuition.

In addition to institutional scholarships, Erikson annually awards five full-time doctoral students with an assistantship (.5 FTE) which includes a competitive stipend (\$26,000 in 2023-2024) and a full scholarship. In the current joint program with Loyola, all students pay for their classes. Thus, the independent program will be more affordable given Erikson’s commitment to providing full-time doctoral students with a full scholarship. Flex-time students will also be eligible for institution-wide financial support, including the equity scholarship.

The proposed program will contribute to *Goal 3, Growth, of A Thriving Illinois to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth*. For the past two years, Erikson has engaged with a research group on a landscape analysis of all its degree programs which have resulted in informed decisions regarding sunseting, revisions, and development of new programs. The landscape analysis of similar types of doctoral programs nationally and internationally, credits required, graduates produced, and post-completion employment types and rates informed the development of this program. This program was also informed by current and former presidents and leaders of higher education institutions asserting the need for doctoral-level trained leaders in early childhood development, care, and education fields to engage in pre-service preparation of professionals and advance the field's knowledge base through research and dissemination. Given the nature of doctoral training and the projected number of graduates, the proposed program will spur the state's economy by promoting advanced education and workforce development.

A large percentage of Erikson doctoral graduates are employed in research and tenure-track faculty roles at Illinois institutions, including the City Colleges of Chicago, Chicago State University, National Louis University, and Northwestern University. To continue this trend, the Institute plans to attract a higher proportion of mid-career professionals within the Chicago area and surrounding communities in Illinois.

Comparable Programs in Illinois

According to the IBHE Program Inventory, there are six programs in the 19.0706 Child Development Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) code in Illinois; two bachelor's programs at independent universities in the Central and South Metro regions; two post-baccalaureate certificates in the Chicago region at one independent university; and two master's degree programs, one public and one independent, in the Chicago region. There are no PhD programs listed in Illinois with the 19.0706 CIP code.

Institution	Degree	Sector
Bradley University	B.A. in Child Life Sciences	Independent
Olivet Nazarene University	B.A. and B.S. in Child Development	Independent
Erikson Institute	Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Infant Mental Health	Independent
Erikson Institute	Post Baccalaureate Certificate in Infant Specialist	Independent
Erikson Institute	Master of Science in Child Development	Independent
University of Illinois Chicago	Master of Education in Youth Development	Public

Source: IBHE Program Inventory

Mission and Objectives

Criterion 1030.60(a)(1) provides that the objectives of the degree program(s) must be consistent with what the degree program title(s) imply.

Criterion 1030.60(a)(2) provides that the requested degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

Erikson Institute's mission is to be a leading institution of higher education that prepares professionals to address the urgent challenges facing young children, their families and communities through innovative programs, transformative research and impactful advocacy to empower early childhood professionals to drive lasting change. Erikson strives to build a future where every child thrives. The program is consistent with the purpose, goals, objectives, and mission of the Institute. The requested degree title reflects the program's objectives and curriculum.

Curriculum and Assessment

1030.30(a)(3): The caliber and content of each course or program of instruction, training or study shall be reasonable and adequate for achieving the stated objectives for which the course or program is offered. An undergraduate curriculum shall include general education in alignment with the degree level and objectives.

1030.60(a)(4): The caliber and content of the curriculum shall assure that the stated certificate or degree objectives for which the program is offered will be achieved.

Admission Requirements

For admission to the proposed Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies program, students must have a bachelor's degree or master's degree in a related field (e.g., psychology, human development, education, counseling, or social work) and have completed an introductory research course. Students with a bachelor's degree will be required to apply to Erikson's Master of Science in Child Development on the "doctoral track". Admission requirements include a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4-point scale. Candidates must complete the application for admission, provide a research paper or academic writing sample, three short essays in response to questions, official transcripts, and three letters of recommendation. The GRE is not required for entry.

Curriculum

The Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies is a 60-credit hour program that includes 12 credits of theory, 9 credits of context and intervention, 12 credits of methods and analysis, and 11 hours of professional skills (including the dissertation, proseminar, scholarship, and teaching in higher education), 12 credits in the chosen specialization, and 4 total credits in advising/continuing studies. Credits in the required specialization include two of three internship experiences (teaching, research, or industry).

The proposed PhD in Child and Family Studies program will offer students the opportunity to engage with leading scholars who work in and across multiple disciplines impacting the well-being of children and families including education, child development, social work, and child life. The coursework is focused on developmental theory and research methods to support emerging applied developmental researchers and program leaders. The program emphasizes the specific child and family studies of knowledge and experiences needed by scholars, higher education educators, and program leaders studying and supporting the lives of young children and families.

Assessment of Student Learning

Erikson Institute has established formal policies and procedures for evaluating student progress and achievement in the PhD in Child and Family Studies. Students are required to

demonstrate competency in five major domains: theory, context, research methods and analysis, intervention programs and services, and professional praxis. These competencies will be assessed throughout the five program milestones/experiences in addition to traditional coursework. The five milestones include the developmental critique, qualifying paper, dissertation proposal and defense, final dissertation and defense, and internship evaluations.

After the first one to two years of coursework, doctoral students will submit a paper responding to a timely theoretical piece related to developmental science. This first, non-credit, non-coursework milestone is intentionally given early in the program to help students develop the skills for creating writing products outside the context of coursework. This milestone will demonstrate skills in the theory domain (critical thinking with respect to key theoretical frameworks in the field) and the ability to apply these skills to a topic of interest. A rotating panel of three doctoral faculty will be assigned to evaluate the developmental critiques each year. A final pass (after any revisions) is required prior to progressing in the program.

Doctoral students must also submit a qualifying paper after their second or third year. Unlike the first milestone, the qualifying paper is specific to the student's area of interest or specialty. This milestone is designed to test the student's scholarly ability to identify problems or issues in the field, analyze relevant literature critically and succinctly, and work independently. Students consult with an advisor on the qualifying paper and at least one additional reader (e.g., a faculty member who will serve on the student's dissertation committee). The group discusses the student's general area/s of interest and narrows the areas down to three manageable subtopics. The student then conducts a literature review related to the subtopics. Specific questions are released to the student based on these subtopics, and the student has 30 days to provide a ten-page response to each question.

The dissertation is a substantial original piece of research undertaken by the student under the guidance of a committee. The dissertation includes a statement of the problem being investigated, an overview of the relevant research literature, a statement of hypotheses and/or research questions, a description of the methodology (subjects, sampling procedures, intervention, or data collection process), and a description of the data analysis. The faculty member serving as dissertation chair will decide with the student when it is appropriate to call a committee meeting to discuss the proposal. Erikson holds an oral hearing on the dissertation proposal as part of the process for admission to doctoral candidacy. The proposal must have a unanimous consensus to be approved. Upon completion of this process, the student and the dissertation chair will decide when to schedule an oral defense. An oral defense is required for all dissertations.

Internships will be evaluated in part by internship supervisors required to complete an evaluation of the student's practice by the end of the semester in which the internship is conducted. Each evaluation will list goals, objectives, and related activities. Supervisors will provide written summaries of student accomplishments and skills gained. The Institute has provided a rubric assessing students across multiple domains of practice.

Program Assessment

The program will be assessed with the same procedures that Erikson's assessment committee utilizes for other graduate degree programs. All programs are evaluated by the assessment committee and program assessment is aligned with the requirements and standards of the Higher Learning Commission. Faculty are included in the evaluation and continuous improvement process to monitor program outcomes for student success.

Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030.60(a)(5): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

Existing facilities are sufficient to meet the needs of the program. Erikson Institute is housed in a custom-designed campus facility completed in 2008. The campus is located in the River North area of downtown Chicago, comprised of 75,400 square feet in a mixed-use office building. Erikson occupies the ground floor lobby as well as the second, third, and fourth floors of the building. The campus includes classrooms, seminar rooms, student lounges, the library, and office space for faculty, administration, and research staff. In an effort toward continuous improvement, Erikson is conducting a space needs assessment in concert with the development of a new institutional strategic plan. This assessment prioritizes the needs of academic programming, including the proposed PhD program.

Faculty and Staff

1030.60(a)(6): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

Erikson Institute has identified institutional policies that ensure faculty and staff possess the training, credentials, and other related qualifications to provide instruction at the institution. Faculty teaching in the proposed program have the appropriate qualifications. The Institute follows the Higher Learning Commission's guidelines for hiring all faculty. Additionally, the faculty teaching in the proposed program have a history of research and publication consistent with the ethos of the Institute.

The Institute has also implemented several strategies to support retention of administrators and faculty of Color. These include prioritizing tenured and tenure-track positions for all new faculty lines; increasing institutionally funded research and scholarship time for all tenured and tenure-track faculty; offering start-up packages for new faculty that includes \$10,000 for research funds; and annual professional development funds. Two new institutional positions were added specifically to support the recruitment and retention of administrators and faculty of Color. These include inaugural Dean of Faculty, a position which was previously held concurrently with the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and the inaugural Associate Vice President of Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion/Ombudsperson. Collectively, these initiatives are intended to promote a responsive organizational culture and uses a research-based approach to community, scholarship, accountability, and restorative justice practices that are rooted in equity and analytic processes.

Fiscal and Personnel Resources

1030.30(a)(11): The institution should be financially stable and capable of assuring the revenues needed for meeting stated objectives and fulfilling commitments to students; and

1030.60(a)(8): Fiscal and personnel resources shall be sufficient to permit the institution to meet obligations to continuing programs while assuming additional resource responsibilities for the new certificate or degree program.

The Institute has submitted five-year fiscal plans that project revenues will exceed expenditures beginning in the third year of operation.

Accreditation and Licensure

Erikson Institute's Master of Social work is accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) which is recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation as the sole accrediting agency for social work education in the United States. Erikson Institute is a member of the Association for Advancing Quality in Educator Preparation (AAQEP), a national accrediting organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The Master of Early Childhood Education (triple endorsement) has been awarded initial accreditation status by AAQEP through June 30, 2029.

Successful completion of the Master of Early Childhood Education (on campus), Master of Social Work (on campus and online), and Master of Science in Child Development - Child Life Concentration (on campus) fulfills the educational requirements for new licensure or advance practice recognition in Illinois. Additional states and territory accreditation and licensure information is posted on the Erikson Institute's website.

Program Information

1030.30(e): Publications and Information. Institutions shall be scrupulously ethical in all communication with the public and with prospective students. School publications, advertisements and statements shall be wholly accurate and in no way misleading; and

1030.60(a)(7): The information the institution provides for students and the public shall accurately describe the programs offered, program objectives, length of program, schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course of study, cancellation and refund policies, and such other material facts concerning the institution and the program or course of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll. This information, including any enrollment agreements or similar agreements, shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.

Erikson Institute submitted its academic policies, tuition, fees, refund policies, admissions procedures, and other relevant information necessary for prospective students to make informed decisions on enrollment. Detailed information about the proposed program will be published on the Institute's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that Erikson Institute and the proposed Doctor of Philosophy in Child and Family Studies meet the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010), and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a postsecondary institution.

North Central University
910 Elliot Avenue
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55404

President: Dr. Darnell K. Williams, Sr., D.Min.

Seeking Operating Authority: Southwestern Region

Institutional Accreditation: North Central University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Background and History

North Central University (NCU or the University) is seeking authorization to operate in the Southwestern region. Located in the heart of Minneapolis, North Central University is a coeducational, primarily residential college that prepares students for global leadership and ministry. The University is owned and operated by 11 Assemblies of God districts of the upper Midwest. As a leading urban Christian university, NCU offers a transformative student experience with a focus on Christian scholarship, academic rigor, and professional competency.

Founded in 1930 as North Central Bible Institute, the institution originally enrolled 26 students where classes were held in the Minneapolis Gospel Tabernacle (currently named Christ Church International). With enrollment steadily increasing, North Central moved to its current location at 910 Elliot Avenue in downtown Minneapolis to provide housing, office, and classroom space for 500 students. In 1955, to meet the growing demand for more educational opportunities, North Central added four-year degree programs. The institution's name was changed to North Central Bible College in 1957 to reflect the new bachelor's degree offerings. In 1964, North Central was accredited by the American Association of Bible Colleges. Recognizing its commitment to the needs of its constituents, North Central continued expanding its academic offerings and was accredited in 1986 by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA).

In 1998, the institution's name was changed to North Central University. Over the years, enrollment has more than doubled from 401 students in 1975 to over 800 students in residence and distance education programs. The stability and strength of North Central have produced more than 24,000 alumni with 75 percent of NCU graduates presently working in ministry positions throughout the United States and around the world.

North Central University plans to expand its academic portfolio to the Southwestern region of Illinois by partnering with Called College to offer two of its existing associate degree programs in pastoral studies and global studies. Called College is a ministry training program owned and operated by the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God (IDCAG) and headquartered at Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville, IL. Through this partnership, NCU will provide students with a high-quality education rooted in scripture. NCU graduates will be prepared for entry-level positions in ministry with the necessary skills to lead and serve diverse communities throughout the world. Both degrees meet the requirements for ministerial credentialing with the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God.

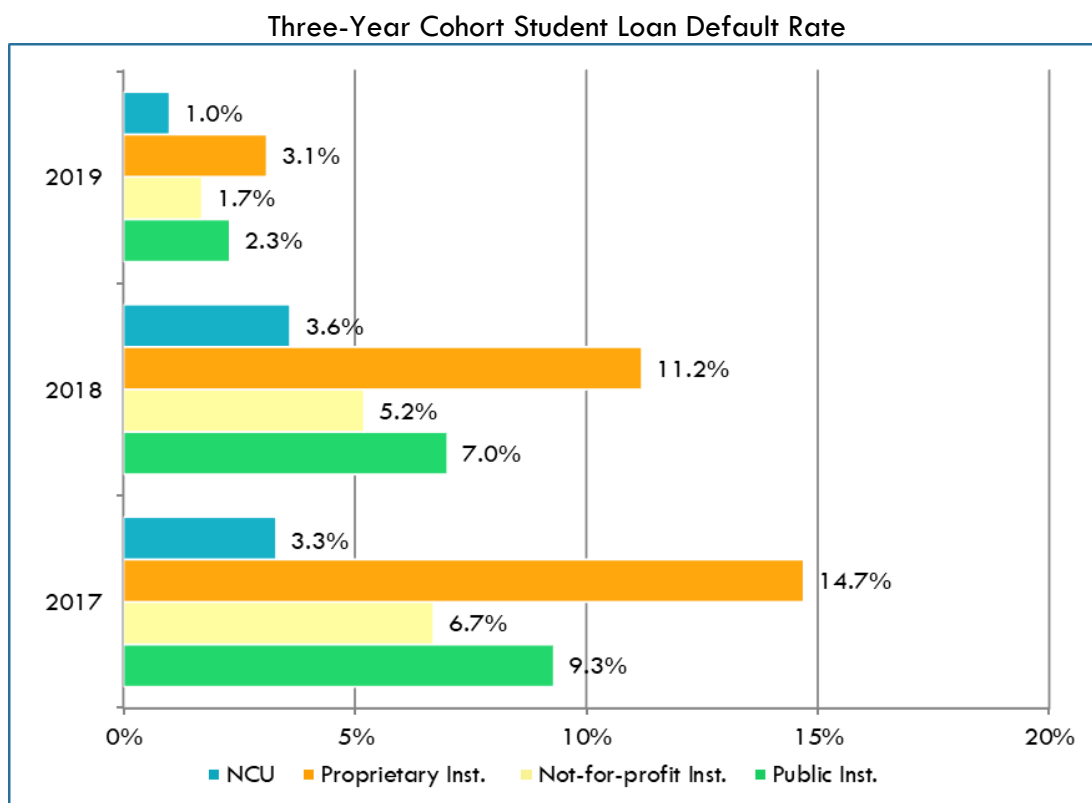
Institutional Data

1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i) Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar

Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

1030.30(a)(3)(G): Additional student success measures shall be considered in the review of applications for authorization. The Board shall establish minimum rates of success based on results for similar institutions or thresholds set by State or federal regulatory bodies. i) At a minimum these data shall include student loan default rates, student indebtedness rates, job placement rates, student learning measures and other success indicators. ii) Institutions that participate in Federal Student Loan programs shall have 3-year Official Cohort Default rates no higher than 25 percent. Institutions with Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Scores shall have a score that is no lower than 1.0. Institutions that fail to meet these thresholds may be restricted from implementing new certificate or degree programs. iii) The success rate shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

Undergraduate data is not provided for North Central University since the institution has not operated as a degree-granting institution in Illinois.



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), US Department of Education

Note: Due to the pause on federal student loan payments that began in March 2020, the cohort default rate for fiscal year 2020 is zero percent for the institution and all institution types. The national cohort default rate for fiscal year 2019 was 2.3 percent and zero percent for fiscal years 2020 and 2021.

A lower number is a positive indicator.

The three-year cohort student loan default rate is the percentage of a school's borrowers who enter repayment on certain Federal Loan Programs during a particular federal fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, and default or meet other specified conditions prior to the end of the second following fiscal year.

Need

1050.30(a)(6): A) The unit of instruction, research or public service is educationally and economically consistent with the educational priorities and needs of the State of Illinois. B) The unit of instruction, research or public service meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and units of instruction, research or public service.

The primary objective of the proposed operation is to train students to work in churches and Christian missionary organizations, particularly within the Assemblies of God denomination. The Associate of Arts (AA) programs in pastoral studies and global studies are targeted to traditional-age college students seeking full-time vocational ministry opportunities. The programs will feature experiential learning and job shadowing opportunities for students to engage in church services and interact with pastors and parishioners. Students will gain the foundational skills and biblical knowledge to effectively serve in various ministry and leadership roles within faith-based organizations and community service settings such as pastors, ministry leaders, ministry practitioners, and missionaries. The programs are designed to meet the academic requirements for ministerial licensing with the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a three percent employment growth rate for clergy from 2023 to 2033 with approximately 6,500 job openings projected each year over the decade. The 2024 median annual salary for clergy was \$60,820 with approximately 260,100 employed in various religious occupations. Locally, the Illinois Department of Employment Security estimates a 0.91 percent employment growth rate for religious workers (including clergy) from 2022 to 2032 with 2,280 job openings projected each year. There is also a shortage of clergy attributed to increasing retirement rates and a decline of new ministers under the age of 40 in the Assemblies of God. This signals a demand to train clergy and other religious workers who play a vital role in society by fostering a sense of faith, community, and moral integrity.

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

Supportive of *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 1, Equity, to close the equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind*, North Central University is committed to offering a high-quality, accessible postsecondary education that prepares diverse students for roles of service and leadership. Drawing students from a variety of rural, suburban, and urban areas across Minnesota and other Midwestern states, NCU's percentage of students of color has risen steadily over the years to 33 percent. NCU is making intentional strides to recruit a more ethnically diverse student body to fully embody core institutional commitments and respond to demographic and emerging market trends. These strategic efforts include the launching of a major urban leadership and scholarship initiative and hiring key recruitment personnel to increase student diversity on campus. Additionally, the University recently hired a dean of multicultural engagement with the primary responsibility of creating co-curricular experiences to prepare students to engage in a diverse global society. The dean works collaboratively with faculty, staff, and administration to facilitate growth opportunities through mentoring relationships, pastoral care, programming, and advocacy.

In 2021, North Central University created a diversity action council to implement campus-wide diversity and equity initiatives. The council is comprised of faculty, staff, and student representatives with the goal of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University and providing input on the campus climate, recruitment and retention of underrepresented students, and curricular and co-curricular programming. The council also advocates for more intentional efforts in hiring diverse faculty and staff. The proposed operation will administer campus climate surveys at the end of each semester to capture the experiences of underrepresented students and host faculty orientation sessions on cultural competency training with a trauma-informed lens.

During the past two years, a consulting firm, Global Bridgebuilders, has aided the diversity action council in administering an all staff and faculty assessment on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Using this data, five subcommittees were created: leadership, communications, external relations, organizational processes, and systems/criteria management. These subcommittees use assessment data to create action plans and engage the University in systemic change efforts. Furthermore, the council offers training for faculty, staff, and student leaders on diversity, equity, and inclusion, including topics on The Language of Diversity, From a Student Perspective, and Diversity Q&A time with the Dean of Multicultural Programs and the Associate Vice President of Academics.

The proposed operation will contribute to *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 2, Sustainability, to build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions* by finding ways to reduce the financial burden of education on students and their families. North Central University offers a scholarship of \$500 per year to increase college accessibility and affordability for students. All full-time students are eligible to receive the scholarship which is funded by the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies

of God. Merit-based scholarships are also available through the generosity of private donors, including churches and parishioners within the Assemblies of God.

In 2016, the University launched the ActSix program to support emerging young urban leaders by offering a full tuition, need-based scholarship. In partnership with Urban Ventures, a Minneapolis-based community development organization, the ActSix program provides college readiness training, leadership preparation, and holistic student success support for students. The purpose of the program is to provide an accessible and effective education for ethnically and socioeconomically diverse students who are equipped to serve their diverse urban communities upon graduation from NCU.

In alignment with *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 3, Growth, to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth*, North Central University provides students with a foundation for Christian leadership and service, building their theological knowledge, pastoral skills, and communication abilities to excel in various roles at faith-based organizations and community service settings. The associate degree programs in pastoral studies and global studies will feature a practicum which integrates theological principles and hands-on ministry experience at local Assemblies of God churches with oversight by lead pastors. During the practicum, students will perform various ministerial duties including sermons, marriage ceremonies, funerals, hospital visitations as well as lead worship services and teach bible lessons. Clergy will serve as mentors to provide students with spiritual guidance and support. NCU has also engaged with the Lake Williamson Christian Center, where the proposed operation will be located, to form a cooperative work program offering employment opportunities for full-time, residential students. The University has developed a 13-week summer program for students to obtain seasonal employment at Lake Williamson.

Graduates of both programs will be eligible to apply for ministerial credentials with the the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God. IDCAG aims to license 20 graduates each year, which will increase the number of new ministers in Assemblies of God under the age of 40.

Comparable Programs in Illinois

Currently, four independent institutions in Illinois offer bachelor's degree programs in pastoral studies and pastoral ministry, but there are no comparable programs at the associate degree level designed to provide ministerial leadership training and enhance pastoral skills. Moreover, the global studies program is only offered at the baccalaureate level among 11 institutions in Illinois (eight independent and three public) in which two institutions, McKendree University and Principia College, are located in the Southwestern region. However, North Central University's proposed AAS in Global Studies has a particular focus on biblical knowledge, theological competency, language ability, and cultural competency preparing students to work internationally or within cross-cultural environments. Thus, NCU is poised to make a significant impact within the Assemblies of God churches and other faith-based organizations by enlarging the pool of graduates with specific ministry and church leadership skills.

Comparable Undergraduate Programs Pastoral Studies			
Institution	Degree	Region	Sector
Christian Life College	B.A. in Pastoral Studies	North Suburban	Independent, Not-for-profit
Loyola University of Chicago	B.A. in Pastoral Studies	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit
Moody Bible Institute	B.A. in Pastoral Studies	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit

Olivet Nazarene University	B.S. in Pastoral Ministry	South Metro	Independent, Not-for-profit
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Source: IBHE Program Inventory

Comparable Undergraduate Programs Global Studies			
Institution	Degree	Region	Sector
Benedictine University	B.A. in Global Studies	West Suburban	Independent, Not-for-profit
Illinois College	B.A. in Global Studies	Central	Independent, Not-for-profit
Illinois Institute of Technology	B.S. in Global Studies	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit
Loyola University of Chicago	B.A. in International/ Globalization Studies	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit
McKendree University	B.A. in Global Studies	Southwestern	Independent, Not-for-profit
North Central College	B.A. in Global Studies	West Suburban	Independent, Not-for-profit
North Park University	B.A. in Global Studies	Chicago	Independent, Not-for-profit
Northeastern Illinois University	B.A. in Global Studies	Chicago	Public
Principia College	B.A. in Global Studies	Southwestern	Independent, Not-for-profit
University of Illinois Springfield	B.A. in International and Global Studies	Central Prairie	Public
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign	B.A.L.A.S. in Global Studies	Prairie	Public

Source: IBHE Program Inventory

Mission and Objectives

Criterion 1030.60(a)(1) provides that the objectives of the degree program(s) must be consistent with what the degree program title(s) imply.

Criterion 1030.60(a)(2) provides that the requested degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

North Central University's mission is to educate students for lives of service throughout society, the marketplace, and the church. The proposed operation is consistent with the mission, goals, and objectives of the University.

Curriculum and Assessment

1030.30(a)(3): The caliber and content of each course or program of instruction, training or study shall be reasonable and adequate for achieving the stated objectives for which the course or program is offered. An undergraduate curriculum shall include general education in alignment with the degree level and objectives.

1030.60(a)(4): The caliber and content of the curriculum shall assure that the stated certificate or degree objectives for which the program is offered will be achieved.

Admission

Prospective undergraduate students seeking admission to North Central University must possess a high school diploma with a minimum GPA of 2.2. NCU will waive the test score (ACT or SAT) requirement for applicants with a high school GPA of 2.5 or above. Students with a GED or a high school GPA lower than 2.5 must submit a test score or an academic essay for admittance consideration.

Curriculum

As a leading urban Christian university, NCU prepares students for global leadership and ministry. Upon approval of the proposed operation in the Southwestern region, the University will seek authorization to offer two academic programs, the AA in Pastoral Studies and the AA in Global Studies. The pastoral studies program is 60 credit hours and designed to prepare students for pastoral ministry and leadership. Students will learn biblical knowledge, theological principles, and pastoral skills to prepare for full-time, part-time, and volunteer ministry roles in a local church. The global studies program has a broader focus on equipping students with comprehensive theological knowledge and cultural competencies to work internationally or within cross-cultural environments. Both programs meet the educational requirements for credentialing with the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God.

A core component of the curriculum is to provide students with experiential learning opportunities to gain experience working within church settings. All students will participate in field experiences to practice church leadership skills under the guidance of lead pastors at local Assemblies of God churches. During the field experiences, students will engage in church services, perform various types of ministerial work, and shadow pastors as they interact with the congregation. Students will also have the option of participating in a mentoring program where they will be matched with professional ministers to provide spiritual guidance and support. Additionally, NCU will offer summer internships to students. Many of the internships will occur at local churches within the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God as well as missionary organizations affiliated with the Assemblies of God. The internships will provide a pathway for students to transition directly into job opportunities at local churches after graduation.

Furthermore, North Central University is dedicated to offering comprehensive support services to help students achieve their academic and career goals. The academic success staff will provide a variety of support services to students at the proposed operation including tutoring, academic coaching, study skills workshops, and career development. An academic coach/advisor will provide one-on-one advising to students, set and monitor academic and personal goals, develop individualized learning strategies, and address any academic challenges. The campus pastor will conduct weekly small group meetings focusing on spiritual life and provide pastoral counseling to students.

Assessment of Student Learning

North Central University is committed to the assessment of student learning as a means of improving educational quality. Student learning outcomes are [established through](#) a collaborative process in academic units under the leadership of school directors, college deans, and program faculty. Assessment processes reflect higher education best practices and involve faculty and staff across the University. Formative and summative assessment measures include research papers, writing assignments, speeches, and presentations. Students engage in a course-level assessment process at the end of each semester by completing course evaluations. Results are reviewed and utilized by faculty and academic leaders to improve course content and instruction.

Program Assessment

Program assessment at North Central University occurs regularly, consisting of a three-year review of curriculum, learning objectives, faculty qualifications, and assessment tools. The program review process includes admission data and enrollment trends, graduation and retention rates, student satisfaction ratings, alumni surveys, and employment outcomes of graduates. This process is overseen by the NCU Curriculum Committee under the auspices of the vice-president for academic affairs. Data is compiled into an annual report to document program improvement in the areas of teaching, quality of learning, and curriculum delivery.

Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030(a)(4) and 1030.60(a)(5): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

The proposed operation will be located at the Lake Williamson Christian Center in Carlinville. Comprised of 400 acres, Lake Williamson includes an Activities Center, Office Building, and Student Housing. All buildings are owned by the Illinois District Council of the Assemblies of God and meet all appropriate local, state, and federal ordinances for use as an educational facility, including the Americans with Disabilities Act. IDCAG will provide all the facilities necessary for in-person instruction and residential housing accommodations. Four classrooms will be used for instruction and housed in the Activities Center. These classrooms are equipped with tables, office chairs, televisions, and video conferencing equipment. In addition to the classroom spaces, students can access two gymnasiums, an indoor pool, and a fitness room. Staff supporting the proposed operation will be located in the Office building occupying a suite on the second floor which includes four private offices, a conference room, and several cubicles. Two on-site information technology staff will provide technical support, and the service desk will manage issues related to the Learning Management System (LMS), a digital platform that provides access to student schedules, assignments, course syllabi, discussion forums, and grades.

Students will have access to on-site library services through the Preaching Resource Library with volumes dedicated to biblical and theological research as well as sermon and study preparation materials. The Preaching Resource Library contains three complete commentary sets, multiple Bible dictionaries and encyclopedias, Greek and Hebrew lexicons, and research works dedicated to ancient church history. Students can also access North Central University's T.J. Jones Library resources electronically with a collection of over 26,000 eBooks and over 50,000 eSerials including electronic journals and magazines. T.J. Jones Library participates in the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service that allows students to borrow materials from other institutions, expanding access to academic resources.

Faculty and Staff

1030.30(a)(5) and 1030.60(a)(6): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

North Central University has established policies to ensure faculty members possess the training, credentials, and other required qualifications to provide instruction to students. Faculty qualifications and contracts are reviewed and approved by the Office of the Provost. In the selection of faculty candidates, the University adheres to guidelines from the Alliance for Assemblies of God Higher Education, the Higher Learning Commission, and other state regulatory requirements.

Faculty are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure quality of instruction. Course evaluations are conducted each semester, and the results are used to identify areas of strength and weakness, celebrate areas of growth and excellence, and address areas for development. Course evaluation results and trends are regularly reviewed by the vice president of academic affairs and the dean's council. The University has a faculty evaluation process to improve performance in teaching, scholarship, and service and enhance institutional outcomes. This yearly review is separate from the formal review process undertaken by the faculty promotion and review committee for consideration of promotion in rank.

Recruitment, marketing, and academic student support services for the proposed operation in Illinois will be supported by the campus director, student life director/campus pastor, student life assistant/recruitment coordinator, marketing director, and academic success staff, including an academic coach/advisor. All staff possess qualifications appropriate to the services provided. The University provides ongoing professional development to staff through departmental training, peer networking, and conference participation.

North Central University recently created a diversity action council to implement campus-wide diversity and equity initiatives. The council is comprised of faculty, staff, and student representatives with the goal of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion at the University and providing input on the campus climate, recruitment and retention of underrepresented students, and curricular and co-curricular programming. The council also advocates for more intentional efforts in hiring diverse faculty and staff. The proposed operation will administer campus climate surveys at the end of each semester to capture the experiences of underrepresented students and host faculty orientation sessions on cultural competency training with a trauma-informed lens.

Fiscal and Personnel Resources

1030.30(a)(11): The institution should be financially stable and capable of assuring the revenues needed for meeting stated objectives and fulfilling commitments to students; and

1030.60(a)(8): Fiscal and personnel resources shall be sufficient to permit the institution to meet obligations to continuing programs while assuming additional resource responsibilities for the new certificate or degree program.

North Central University has adequate faculty, staff, and other instructional resources for the proposed operation. The University has submitted fiscal plans indicating revenue will exceed operating expenditures over the next five years. The institution's operational costs for staffing,

space, and equipment will be mainly supported by tuition revenue. In addition, non-tuition revenue will include fees paid for student housing and donations from private sources. The projection for donations is based on existing commitments totaling \$40,000 per year from IDCAG churches, pastors, and other donors. NCU projects a modest increase of three percent for donations each year.

Accreditation and Licensure

North Central University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. The University plans to seek approval from HLC to open an additional location in Illinois pending Board authorization.

Program Information

1030.30(e): Publications and Information. Institutions shall be scrupulously ethical in all communication with the public and with prospective students. School publications, advertisements and statements shall be wholly accurate and in no way misleading; and

1030.60(a)(7): The information the institution provides for students and the public shall accurately describe the programs offered, program objectives, length of program, schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course of study, cancellation and refund policies, and such other material facts concerning the institution and the program or course of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll. This information, including any enrollment agreements or similar agreements, shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.

Detailed information about the proposed operation, including a description of the admission policies, institutional policies, tuition, fees, and curriculum will be published on the University's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that North Central University meets the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010) and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a postsecondary institution.

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science
3333 Green Bay Road
North Chicago, IL 60064
President: Dr. Wendy Rheault

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Doctor of Medical Science in the North Suburban Region

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
5	20	15

Institutional Accreditation: Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

Background and History

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (Rosalind Franklin or the University) was founded in 1912 as the Chicago Hospital-College of Medicine, later named the Chicago Medical School, to expand access to the medical profession for women, African Americans, and the working class. The institution moved to its current location in North Chicago in 1980. The institution changed its name in March 2004 to Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science, in honor of Rosalind Franklin, PhD, a pioneer in the field of DNA research. Today, the University offers 15 doctoral and 19 master's programs in various areas of health sciences and medicine.

The proposed Doctor of Medical Science (DMS) is a 30 quarter-credit hour program designed for graduates with a physician assistant (PA) degree accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physical Assistant, Inc. (APC-PA) who are already licensed and practicing in the field seeking to advance their education while continuing to work. According to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), the United States will face a physician shortage of up to 55,200 general care physicians by 2033. As the United States continues to face significant shortages in primary care, PAs are uniquely positioned to address the demand as well as meet the needs of underserved communities. Doctoral programs for PAs have grown in the United States during the past ten years as a new higher education area. This proposed program, in an evolving area, provides the more than 4,000 licensed PAs in Illinois with an opportunity to continue their education in order to pursue roles in areas of leadership, education, or clinics. Rosalind Franklin's proposed DMS program is aligned with initiatives from the Physician Assistant Education Academy (PAEA) to help PAs align their education with expectations of the industry, which helps move healthcare toward a preventive perspective. The proposed program in the North Suburban Region should help enhance opportunities for PAs in Illinois and should not impact the other established program in the state.

Institutional Data

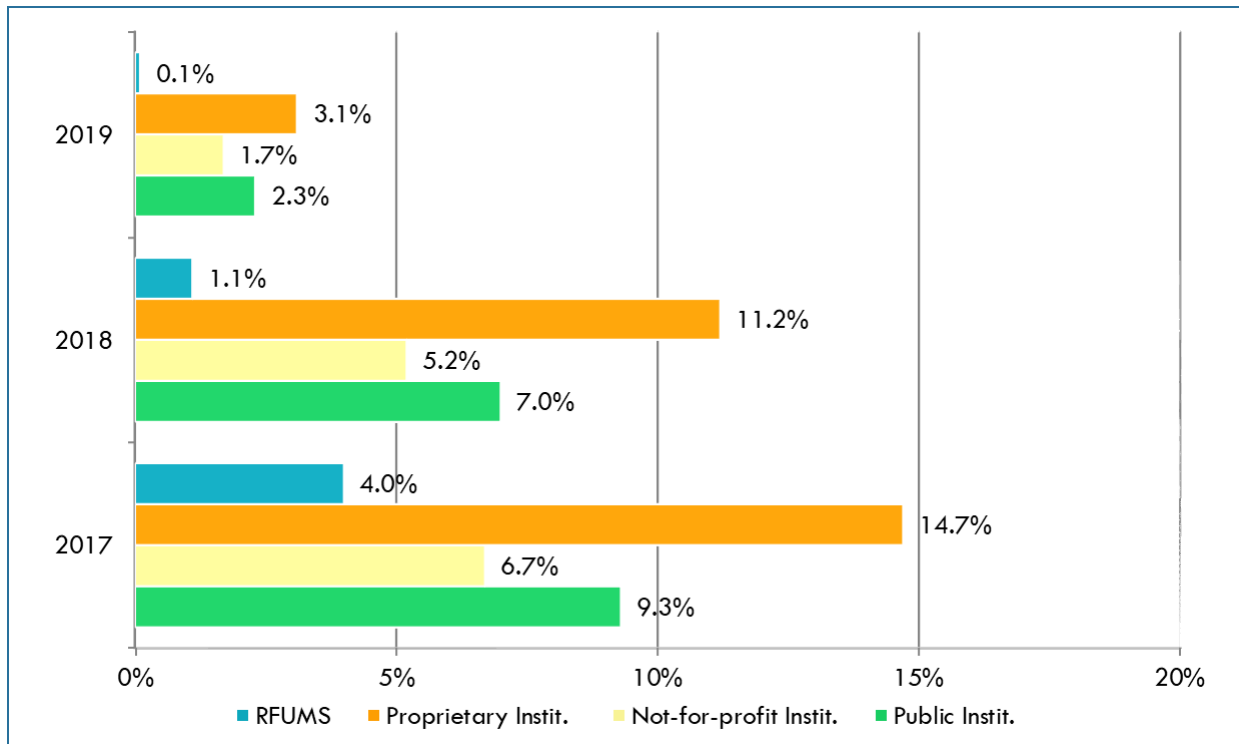
1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i)

Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

1030.30(a)(3)(G): Additional student success measures shall be considered in the review of applications for authorization. The Board shall establish minimum rates of success based on results for similar institutions or thresholds set by State or federal regulatory bodies. i) At a minimum these data shall include student loan default rates, student indebtedness rates, job placement rates, student learning measures and other success indicators. ii) Institutions that participate in Federal Student Loan programs shall have 3-year Official Cohort Default rates no higher than 25 percent. Institutions with Federal Financial Responsibility Composite Scores shall have a score that is no lower than 1.0. Institutions that fail to meet these thresholds may be restricted from implementing new certificate or degree programs. iii) The success rate shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

This section includes information about institutional and student success measures for Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. The institution's rates will be compared to Illinois institutions from within a select comparison group and against the national standards or averages. For a proposed undergraduate program, this section will include undergraduate graduation rates, first to second year retention rates, student loan default rates, and any applicable licensure passage rates. For a proposed graduate program, this section will primarily focus on student loan default data since this measure also includes graduate students in the calculation.

Three-Year Cohort Student Loan Default Rate



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), US Department of Education

Note: Due to the pause on federal student loan payment that began in March 2020, the cohort default rates for fiscal years 2020 and 2021 are zero percent for the institution and all institution types. The national cohort default rate for fiscal year 2019 was 2.3 percent and zero percent for fiscal years 2020 and 2021. A lower number is a positive indicator.

The three-year cohort student loan default rate is the percentage of a school's borrowers who enter repayment on certain Federal Loan Programs during a particular federal fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, and default or meet other specified conditions prior to the end of the second following fiscal year.

Need

Public Act 102-1046, 110 ILCS 1005/4, Sec. 4 (7): That the proposed degree program is educationally and economically consistent with the educational priorities and needs of this State and meets a need that is not currently met by existing institutions and is supported by clear evidence of need. If the examination shows that the applicant has such qualifications, a certificate of approval shall be issued.

According to AAMC, the nation will continue to face significant shortages of primary care healthcare practitioners, up to 55,200 by 2033. During the past ten years, PA doctoral programs have increased due to student demand and there have been national conversations about the level of education needed to be a PA. In October 2023, after four years of work, the PAEA (the only national professional organization representing PA educational programs in the nation) reaffirmed that a master's degree is an entry-level degree for physician assistants but will explore how a doctoral degree can optimally contribute to PA education.

In January 2025, according to research published by BMC Medical Education, there were 24 doctoral PA-specific programs in the nation (generally awarded as a Doctor of Medical Science degree) with many programs established over the last three years. The proposed DMS degree, similar to other established DMS degrees, would help augment the skills of practicing PAs to enhance their clinical practice skills and expand their roles for leadership within the healthcare system and the community. The proposed program will also facilitate a pathway for clinicians to enter academia.

The level of expected growth in the PA field, for Illinois and the nation, far outpaces the average rate of growth. Illinois is expected to have a 20.25 percent PA employment change through 2032, in comparison to a 2.66 percent overall average, according to the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES). The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) also projects that the nation is expected to have a PA occupational growth rate of 28.5 percent through 2033, in comparison to the national average of four percent.

Illinois Employment Projections, 2022-2032 Physician Assistants						
Occupation Title	Employment 2022	Employment 2032	Employment Change (%)	Average Annual Job Openings due to...		
				Growth	Replacements	Total
Physician Assistants (29-1071)	4,959	5,963	1,004 (20.25%)	100	269	369
All occupations	6,369,370	6,538,492	169,122 (2.66%)	16,912	691,808	708,720

Source: Illinois Department of Employment Security

U.S. Employment Projections, 2023-2033 Physician Assistants				
Occupation Title	2023 Median Annual Wage	Employment, 2023	Employment, 2033	Employment Change (%)
Physician Assistants (29-1071)	\$133,260	153,400	197,100	43,700 (28.5%)
All Occupations	\$48,060	167,849,800	174,589,000	6,739,200 (4.0%)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Projections from IDES AND BLS only consider those individuals working in the profession, but the data is not disaggregated by level of education. In October 2023, the Journal of PA Education conducted a secondary analysis of the 2021 Salary Survey of the American Academy of PAs and found that physician assistants with doctoral degrees were employed with their current employer longer than those without a doctorate. In addition, most of the PAs with doctoral degrees held leadership roles and 62.3 percent had a salary above the median PA wage. Initial findings suggest statistically significant differences in career trajectory and compensation for those with a doctoral degree.

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) found that there were 4,444 certified PAs in Illinois in 2022 with an additional 355 earning their credentials that year. NCCPA also reported that only 2.3 percent of the certified PAs possessed a doctoral degree. Rosalind Franklin completed a market demand analysis from alumni and clinical partners and found that 56 percent were interested in pursuing the proposed degree. In 2022, NCCPA found that 22.8

percent of recently certified PAs indicated plans to seek additional education or clinical training (excluding on-the-job training or required continuing education).

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

Rosalind Franklin supports *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 1, Equity, to close equity gaps for students who have historically been left behind*, through various efforts, including the recruitment of students from underrepresented groups. The University has a history of striving for equity through its institutional efforts. This commitment is seen in the University's mission statement, "To improve the wellness of all people through innovative, interprofessional education of health and biomedical professionals and the discovery of implementation of knowledge." The University participates in inclusive college fairs such as the National Hispanic Medical Association Pre-Health Conference and Recruitment Fair, AAMC Minority Medical Career Fair, and the National Diversity College Fair. The University's Office of Admissions and Enrollment targets recruitment efforts to diverse clubs and organizations with sizeable populations of underrepresented students with the goal of increasing enrollment of students from diverse backgrounds. In July 2020, Rosalind Franklin formed a Task Force for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). The taskforce recommended plans for facilitating the practice of DEI for faculty, integrating DEI learning outcomes across all programs, and fostering opportunities for students to explore DEI topics in the curriculum and co-curricular activities.

In 2022, the University created a new position for managing Equity, Education, and Outreach, which is responsible for designing and implementing institution-wide comprehensive education and training initiatives to cultivate a campus climate of inclusion and respect for all employees and students with a goal of increasing and retaining a diverse group of employees. Institutional efforts to build a more inclusive culture include establishing a diversity advocate pool. Diversity advocates serve on faculty searches to educate the campus community on topics such as implicit bias and ways to be more inclusive.

In alignment with *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 2, Sustainability, to build a stronger financial future for individuals and institutions* by finding ways to reduce the financial burden of education on students and their families, Rosalind Franklin University has established more than 20 donor-funded scholarships which focus on students from underrepresented populations in medicine. The University is also embarking on a \$20 million scholarship fundraising effort to reduce financial barriers, so students are not hindered by their circumstances as they seek careers in healthcare education. The proposed DMS program is designed for working PAs, who tend to have a higher-than-national average salary, to allow them to pay for the program while still earning an income.

The proposed DMS program will contribute to *A Thriving Illinois: Goal 3, Growth, to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth*. The program is designed to help practicing PAs earn additional credentials to enhance their clinical skills and career prospects, which will help address shortages in the healthcare industry. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 28.5 percent growth for physician assistants through 2033. The proposed program will help PAs fill leadership positions in healthcare settings and improve access to quality medical services in disenfranchised communities. As part of a market demand survey, Rosalind Franklin University engaged with NorthShore University Health System to assess employer needs and received positive feedback on employee demand. The University also surveyed alumni and 56 percent of respondents were interested in pursuing the proposed DMS degree, with 74 percent of the positive responses being most likely to enroll within the next five years. The University is well-positioned to provide advanced education to PAs in an emerging and evolving area while making a significant contribution to the

state's economy and addressing critical healthcare needs and disparities.

Comparable Programs in Illinois

Presently, there is one institution with a comparable Doctor of Medical Science program in Illinois, Southern Illinois University School of Medicine (SIU SOM). The national landscape for doctoral PA programs is still emerging. The established programs generally have concentrations focused on leadership, education, or clinical practice, with components of research or scholarship in most programs. Similar programs require a scholarly or capstone project rather than a dissertation. At SIU SOM, the program requires 37 semester hours and includes core components of leadership, health care administration, health care law, global health, and disaster medicine. The program also requires a scholarly evidence-based research project and a practicum with a clinical or educational focus. The proposed program is designed for students who have a master's degree from an ARC-PA accredited physician assistant program, similar to SIU SOM and other national programs. The Rosalind Franklin curriculum is centered around the seven ARC-PA competencies with core courses in digital health and informatics, lifestyle medicine, nutrition, and public health. Students will have the opportunity to select a concentration in Lifestyle Medicine, Leadership and Health Administration, Nutrition, or Health Professions Education. All students will be required to complete a practicum experience.

Mission and Objectives

Criterion 1030.60(a)(1) provides that the objectives of the degree program(s) must be consistent with what the degree program title(s) imply.

Criterion 1030.60(a)(2) provides that the requested degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

The proposed Doctor of Medical Science program's mission is "to prepare physician assistant leaders to advance and expand healthcare to diverse and underserved populations through education and advocacy." This directly supports the mission of the University which seeks "to improve the wellness of all people through innovative, interprofessional education of health and biomedical professionals and the discovery and implementation of knowledge."

Curriculum and Assessment

1030.30(a)(3): The caliber and content of each course or program of instruction, training or study shall be reasonable and adequate for achieving the stated objectives for which the course or program is offered. An undergraduate curriculum shall include general education in alignment with the degree level and objectives.

1030.60(a)(4): The caliber and content of the curriculum shall assure that the stated certificate or degree objectives for which the program is offered will be achieved.

Admission Requirements

Rosalind Franklin practices a holistic review process of applicant information to ensure equitable access to degree programs. The proposed program's administrative home, the College of Health Professions, recently adopted an equity-minded holistic admissions statement.

In addition to the basic University admission requirements, applicants will need to meet the following criteria to be considered for admission to the proposed DMS program:

- Master's degree from an ARC-PA accredited program prior to matriculation
- Current NCCPA certification
- Current, unencumbered license as a PA in the United States, its territories, or protectorates
- Transcripts from graduate level coursework
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale upon completion of a PA program (students with less than the minimum GPA may still be considered on an individual basis)
- Current resume or curriculum vitae
- Meet computer competency and technical standards for the program

Curriculum

The proposed 30-quarter hour Doctor of Medical Sciences program is designed to build on the established educational experience of physician assistants to help create a flexible, online, one-year program for working professionals. It is structured around the seven ARC-PA competencies featuring 13 quarter hours of core courses in digital health and informatics, lifestyle medicine, nutrition, and public health. Students may select a concentration for seven quarter hours in Lifestyle Medicine, Leadership and Health Administration, Nutrition, or Health Professions Education, and then participate in a practicum for ten quarter hours.

The ARC-PA student competencies are professional abilities recognized by leading PA professional associations including the NCCPA, ARC-PA, PAEA, and the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA). The seven competencies include: knowledge for practice; interpersonal and communication skills; person-centered care; interprofessional collaboration; professionalism and ethics; practice-based learning and quality improvement; society and population health. Rosalind Franklin will also seek approval for specified DMS courses for Continuing Medical Education credits through the Council for Continuing Medical Education.

Assessment of Student Learning

The proposed DMS degree will utilize an electronic portfolio system as the basis for assessment of student learning outcomes. The portfolio system will be comprised of integrative assignments completed as part of the required courses and used as evidence that identified learning outcomes related to student competencies as well as program goals achieved by each student. Each portfolio will be evaluated by a faculty review committee to ensure that students meet or exceed standard program expectations. Assessment in the portfolio will include course projects, reflection statements, a resume or curriculum vitae, introduction/conclusion statements, and the practicum project report. The practicum report will entail a detailed written report, learning project summary, project outcomes, and a summary of the presentation.

The student competencies are aligned with the following key professional competencies that embrace the proposed program's mission and standards:

- Knowledge for Practice – Demonstrate knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care.

- **Interpersonal and Communication Skills** – Demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in the effective exchange of information and collaboration with patients, their families, and health professionals.
- **Person-centered Care** – Provide person-centered care that includes patient and setting specific assessment, evaluation, and management and healthcare that is evidence-based, supports patient safety, and advances health equity.
- **Interprofessional Collaboration** – Demonstrate the ability to engage with a variety of other healthcare professionals in a manner that optimizes safe, effective, patient, and population-centered care.
- **Professionalism and Ethics** – Demonstrate a commitment to practicing medicine in ethically and legally appropriate ways and emphasizing professional maturity and accountability for delivering safe and quality care to patients and populations.
- **Practice-based Learning and Quality Improvement** – Demonstrate the ability to learn and implement quality improvement practices by engaging in critical analysis of one's own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self-evaluation, lifelong learning, and practice improvement.
- **Society and Population Health** – Recognize and understand the influences of the ecosystem of person, family, population, environment, and policy on the health of patients and integrate knowledge of these determinants of health into patient care decisions.

Program Assessment

The University has intentional and systematic requirements for ongoing program evaluation and process improvement. The academic program assessment process includes reviewing the program mission and strategic direction, curriculum framework, program resources and finances, admissions and enrollment profiles, program performance and outcomes, and external environment and influences. Programs without specialized accreditation, which would include the proposed DMS program, are required to perform a substantive self-study every ten years. This in-depth review would support the core component and criteria established by the Higher Learning Commission.

The proposed program will utilize various assessment tools such as graduation rates, continuous enrollment, student and graduate surveys, course evaluations, practicum site feedback, and student portfolio evaluations. The program-specific educational metrics and outcome reports are evaluated on an annual basis by the vice president and associate vice president for academic and faculty affairs. The reports are shared publicly on the University website.

Program goals outlined with corresponding benchmarks include excelling and leading in post-entry level education and preparation for physician assistants; providing advancement opportunities for physician assistants as leaders, educators, and clinicians; and advancing societal well-being through integration and application of program learning to clinical practice and community-based programming. An external advisory board will provide guidance on the curriculum and an analysis of the evaluation findings. Faculty are evaluated at the end of each course by students. In the College of Health Professions, faculty are evaluated annually. The process incorporates self-evaluations and takes into account accomplishments, goal attainment, teaching assignments, research, scholarship, and service.

Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030(a)(4) and 1030.60(a)(5): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

The Rosalind Franklin facilities are located at 3333 Green Bay Road in North Chicago. The facilities are in compliance with all local, state, and federal ordinances and laws. Instructional facilities are not required to launch the proposed program as it will be delivered online. The Informational Technology Services (ITS) group has 32 employees, including seven members who serve on the academic technology support team. The technological environment of Rosalind Franklin is structured to provide electronic learning resources as efficiently as possible.

The Boxer Library has a variety of existing information resources and interlibrary loan materials to support graduate programs in health administration, nutrition, lifestyle medicine, population health, and physician assistant practice, which are the core areas of the proposed DMS degree. The library subscribes to approximately 25 databases and online tools related to healthcare research and health professions education, including Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature Complete, PubMed, Ovid Medline, Embase, Cochrane Library, Ovid Emcare, Health Sources: Nursing/Academic Edition, JoVE, and Isabel PRO. Students will have access to approximately 3,000 journals such as the Journal of the American Medical Association, New England Journal of Medicine, Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Journal of Health and Human Services Administration, Critical and, Care Medicine. The Boxer Library has professional staff, including an associate vice president, manager of library operations, four librarians, three paraprofessional staff, ten student workers.

Faculty and Staff

1030.30(a)(5) and 1030.60(a)(6): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

Existing full-time faculty will provide instruction for the proposed program. Additional compensation will be required for a quarter-time program director and a half-time administrative coordinator. Two to four adjunct faculty members will be hired to support the delivery of practicum courses. The University has identified institutional policies that ensure faculty and staff possess the training, credentials, and other related qualifications to provide instruction and program implementation. A formal faculty evaluation process is in place which includes student evaluations of faculty at the end of each course and an annual evaluation conducted by the College of Health Professions.

Fiscal and Personnel Resources

1030.30(a)(11): The institution should be financially stable and capable of assuring the revenues needed for meeting stated objectives and fulfilling commitments to students; and

1030.60(a)(8): Fiscal and personnel resources shall be sufficient to permit the institution to meet obligations to continuing programs while assuming additional resource responsibilities for the new certificate or degree program.

Rosalind Franklin University is expecting the proposed program to have a moderate positive impact on the institution's overall finances. The proposed program will compensate a faculty member as a quarter-time program director and a half-time administrative coordinator. Two to four additional adjunct faculty members will be hired to support practicum courses. Even with a moderate increase in operational expenses, the program is expected to generate a surplus in the second year of operation. At a steady enrollment of 20 students, the program is expected to produce a net revenue of approximately \$176,000 to \$189,000 per year. In review of the institution's financial position, the University has a slight increase in revenue, however, the budget is not sufficient to offset rising expenses, resulting in operating deficits. The addition of a revenue generating program should be an asset to address the negative net operating margins.

Accreditation and Licensure

Specialized accreditation is not required for the proposed DMS program.

Program Information

1030.30(e): Publications and Information. Institutions shall be scrupulously ethical in all communication with the public and with prospective students. School publications, advertisements and statements shall be wholly accurate and in no way misleading; and

1030.60(a)(7): The information the institution provides for students and the public shall accurately describe the programs offered, program objectives, length of program, schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course of study, cancellation and refund policies, and such other material facts concerning the institution and the program or course of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll. This information, including any enrollment agreements or similar agreements, shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.

Detailed information about the proposed program, including a description of the admission policies, institutional policies, tuition, fees, and curriculum will be published on the University's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science and its proposed Doctor of Medical Science meet the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010) and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a postsecondary institution.