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CCNEACCREDITATION.ORG

June 3, 2019

Lucy J. Graham, PhD, MPH, RN  
Director of Nursing Education Programs  
Department of Health Sciences  
Colorado Mesa University  
1100 North Avenue  
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Dear Dr. Graham:

On behalf of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), I am writing to advise you that the CCNE Board of Commissioners acted at its meeting on May 7-10, 2019, to grant accreditation to the **master's degree program in nursing** at Colorado Mesa University for 3 years, extending to June 30, 2022. The program was eligible for an accreditation term of up to 10 years. After its review of the special report described below, the Board may act to extend the term of accreditation for up to an additional 7 years, resulting in a 10-year term of accreditation.

The accreditation action is effective as of September 12, 2018, which is the first day of the program's recent CCNE on-site evaluation. You should plan for the next on-site evaluation to take place in the fall of 2021.

The *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (2018) went into effect January 1, 2019. As the on-site evaluation occurred in 2018, the program was considered using the *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (2013).

At its meeting, the Board determined that the program met Standards I and II, but that it did not meet Standards III and IV. The Board additionally determined that there are compliance concerns with respect to Key Elements III-E, IV-E, and IV-H.

A special report must be submitted to demonstrate the program's compliance with Standards III and IV focusing, in particular, on the following key elements:

1. Demonstrate that the curriculum includes planned clinical practice experiences that:
  - enable students to integrate new knowledge and demonstrate attainment of program outcomes; and
  - are evaluated by faculty (Key Element III-E, 2013 *Standards*; Key Element III-H, 2018 *Standards*).

Specifically, the program must demonstrate that students in the nurse educator track complete clinical practice experiences consistent with *The Essentials of Master's Education in Nursing (Master's Essentials)* definition of the direct-care role, including "sustained clinical experiences designed to strengthen patient care delivery skills" at the master's level (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2011, pp. 8-9). In its Glossary, the *Master's Essentials* defines direct care as "nursing care provided to individuals or families that is intended to achieve specific health goals or achieve selected health outcomes. Direct care may be provided in a wide range of settings, including acute and critical care, long term care, home health, community-based settings, and educational settings" (*Master's Essentials*, AACN, 2011, p. 33). Direct care experiences are not designed to prepare students for the nurse educator role, but rather to

prepare them for advanced nursing practice care. In addition, the master's degree program provided insufficient documentation of direct and indirect clinical practice experiences and evidence of student attainment of clinical outcomes.

2. Provide evidence that program outcomes demonstrate program effectiveness (Key Element IV-E, 2013 *Standards*; Key Elements IV-I and IV-J, 2018 *Standards*). Specifically, program outcomes (exit survey, alumni survey, employer satisfaction) have not met the benchmarks set by the program. In addition, no exit survey or employer satisfaction data were available from Fall 2016 through Spring 2018, though these are identified by the program as other program outcomes.
3. Demonstrate that data analysis is used to foster ongoing program improvement (Key Element IV-H, 2013 *Standards*; Key Elements IV-F and IV-J, 2018 *Standards*). Specifically, several outcomes in the systematic evaluation plan have not been not measured in the last two years, and there was a lack of evidence that data are used to evaluate and improve the program.

**Please note that the special report will need to address the 2018 Standards.** For this reason, the compliance concern(s) noted above have been crosswalked to the appropriate key element(s) in the 2018 *Standards*. A complete crosswalk table comparing the 2013 *Standards* to the 2018 *Standards* is available at <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/CCNE/PDF/Crosswalk-2013-2018-Standards.pdf>. The 2018 *Standards* are available at <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/CCNE/PDF/Standards-Final-2018.pdf>.

The deadline for submitting the special report to CCNE is June 1, 2020. Please email the report, along with appendices, if any, as a PDF attachment to [ccnereports@ccneaccreditation.org](mailto:ccnereports@ccneaccreditation.org).

As is required for all accredited programs, a continuous improvement progress report (CIPR) must be submitted at the mid-point of the accreditation term. The deadline for submitting the CIPR to CCNE is December 1, 2020.

Please note that each aforementioned report needs to demonstrate the program's compliance with the CCNE standards that are in effect at the time of the report's submission. As a courtesy, CCNE will send a reminder letter to the chief nurse administrator informing the program of the specific standards and/or key elements to be addressed in the report and will provide guidance for the preparation of the report. The Report Review Committee, and then the Board of Commissioners, review each report. For more information about reports and the report review process, please refer to the CCNE *Procedures for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (2019), available at <https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/CCNE/PDF/Procedures.pdf>.

As you know, the team report and the program's response to the team report are available to the institution in the CCNE Online Community. We hope that the results of the self-study process and the team report will be useful to the continued growth and development of the nursing program. A certificate of accreditation is enclosed.

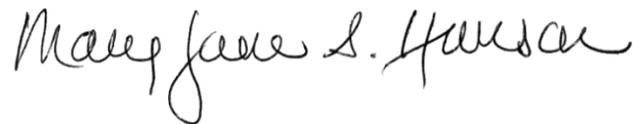
In accordance with CCNE policy, if a program or institution elects to make a public disclosure of a program's accreditation status with CCNE, the program or institution

must disclose that status accurately. The program or institution disclosing the information must identify the nursing program and its affiliation with CCNE. Please refer to CCNE's disclosure policy and the statements CCNE has approved for use, as well as information on use of the CCNE accreditation seal, at <http://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE/Seal-Policy/Baccalaureate-Graduate>. **Please ensure that the institution's website and other materials are updated to reflect this language, as appropriate.**

As a reminder, all programs are expected to comply with the CCNE standards and procedures that are in effect throughout the period of accreditation. This includes advising CCNE in the event of a substantive change affecting the nursing program. Substantive change notifications must be submitted to CCNE no earlier than 90 days prior to implementation or occurrence of the change, but no later than 90 days after implementation or occurrence of the change. These reporting requirements are described further in the CCNE procedures.

Thank you for your participation in the CCNE accreditation process. The Commissioners join me in expressing our very best wishes as you continue to promote excellence in nursing education.

Sincerely,



Mary Jane S. Hanson, PhD, CRNP, CNS, FNP-BC, ACNS-BC, FAANP  
Chair, Board of Commissioners

cc: President Tim Foster  
CCNE Board of Commissioners  
CCNE Accreditation Review Committee  
CCNE Evaluation Team

