



SAN DIEGO MESA COLLEGE ACADEMIC SENATE

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Resolution 14.5.1 - Baccalaureate Degrees – School of Health Sciences & Public Service: Lori Covington (Allied Health Department Chair and Radiologic Technology Program Director), Dr. Connie Renda, (Health Information Technology Program Director) and Dr. Tina Recalde (Physical Therapy Assistant Program Director)

1st Reading: May 5, 2014

Mover: Parsons

Second: Hinkes

Whereas, certain career technical programs have been considered to offer Baccalaureate degrees by the recent Senate Bill 850 presented by Senator (and former District Board of Trustees member) Marty Block and supported by our Chancellor, Dr. Constance Carroll, the School of Health Sciences and Public Service would like to propose offering baccalaureate degrees in the areas of Health Information Technology, Physical Therapist Assistant, and Radiologic Technology.

Whereas, the industry trends in these fields are moving toward requiring the baccalaureate degree for licensure and certification within these respective fields of study; and whereas the complexity of these professions continues to evolve with higher level degrees are expected by employers to ensure that graduates are competent for entry-level employment; and whereas following this trend at this point in time is imperative as growth within healthcare fields is expected to grow 30% over the next twenty years as a result of the Affordable Health Act and the aging of our population;

Whereas, for the Health Information Technology program the ability to provide these higher level degrees would enable students to qualify for higher level credentials and provide students with the opportunity to gain employment in positions for which they do not currently qualify with the associate degree credential; and whereas there are currently no public baccalaureate programs for Health Information Management within the state of California (there is one private program offered at Loma Linda University); and whereas with the absence of local baccalaureate programs within this field, employers currently conduct nationwide searches to identify qualified candidates for local positions within the community;

Whereas, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) the governing body for professional standards within the industry, is currently investigating the feasibility of shifting the Physical Therapist Assistant program accreditation requirements from an associate's degree level to a baccalaureate level within the next

few years; and whereas the consideration for this change is based on the fact that physical therapy licensure has moved to the doctorate level; and whereas most states now allow patients to have direct access to physical therapy and as a result, there is a growing need for increased educational standards to produce highly qualified assistants that will meet the needs of employers to protect the health and welfare of patients; and whereas with the possibility of physical therapist assistant credentialing requiring baccalaureate degrees, the viability of San Diego Mesa College's program would be threatened if we were not able to provide an education that meets the new standards within the profession;

Whereas the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT), the national certification body for our profession, mandates educational requirements and academic degrees for certification eligibility of Radiologic Technology program graduates; and whereas the ARRT has implemented an associate degree mandate for prospective examinees (effective 2015) and continues to add educational requirements every few years with the eventual plan to require baccalaureate degrees; and whereas there are already academic institutions in other parts of the state offering such degrees; and whereas the San Diego region has over 15 major medical centers with Radiologic Technologist employment needs served by our graduates; and whereas our program is the only public academic institution in the San Diego and Imperial Valley regions;

Therefore, be it resolved that San Diego Mesa College supports Senate Bill 850 to offer baccalaureate degrees in certain Career Technical Education (CTE) programs in order to provide students with access to affordable public programs that meet the higher credentialing standards required in health care and other professions today. The CTE programs being considered for baccalaureate conference at a community college should undergo regional labor market scrutiny that includes industry and employment workforce needs, as well as student access to and availability of a baccalaureate program in the educational service area.

Presented to the Academic Senate: May 5, 2014

Approved by the Academic Senate: May 5, 2014