Initial Program Approval for New Program Sponsors Stage IV of the Initial Institutional Approval Process January 2024

Overview

This report consists of a recommendation for the Initial Program Approval of an educator preparation program which will be offered by Mills College at Northeastern University (MC:NU).

MC:NU is an institution of higher education currently in the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process which was granted Provisional Approval as a new program sponsor in California at the Commission's June 2023 meeting. For context, Mills College, which offered educator preparation programs in California for decades, closed recently. Northeastern University has assumed many of the academic programs and the facilities of the Oakland, California campus and seeks to offer educator preparation in California. MC:NU, as part of Stage IV of the IIA process, now seeks Initial Program Approval from the Committee on Accreditation (COA) to offer a Preliminary Multiple Subject program and a Preliminary Single Subject program. It bears noting that the proposed Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs under consideration in this item have demonstrated alignment to the new literacy standard.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that after discussion with the program sponsor, review of the Board of Institutional Review (BIR) team members' feedback, and review of the Stage IV documentation, the COA grant Initial Program Approval to MC:NU's proposed multiple and single subject programs. Should the COA approve the programs, the programs may begin operating, and in accordance with Commission action to grant the institution Provisional Approval at the conclusion of IIA Stage III, a provisional site visit will be scheduled in three years from the date of COA approval.

Background

The Commission requires that an institution seeking to offer new educator preparation program(s) must first be approved as a new program sponsor and must do so by satisfactorily completing all five stages of the Commission's IIA process. A chart detailing the five stages of the IIA process is provided at the end of this agenda item.

Mills College at Northeastern University

MC:NU has completed the first three stages of the Initial Institutional Approval process as follows:

Stage	Date	
Stage I: Prerequisites	March 2022 – Attended Accreditation 101	
Stage II: Eligibility	February 2023 – Granted Eligibility	
Stage III: Provisional Approval	June 2023 – Granted Provisional Approval	

Stage	Date	
Stage IV: Initial Program Approval	August 2023 – Preliminary Administrative Services	
Stage IV: Initial Program Approval	October 2023 – Early Childhood Special Education	

MC: NU's responses to the Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject program standards were reviewed by a team of BIR members who collaborated on the feedback and found all standards to be met. MC:NU's responses to the Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject preconditions were reviewed by Commission staff and were determined to be aligned. The following hyperlink provide access to MC:NU's complete Stage IV MS and Stage IV MS and Stage IV MS and reviewer feedback.

Institution's Summary

The Educators for Liberation, Justice, and Joy (ELJJ) programs at Mills College at MC:NU provide accessible options for teacher candidates. The Preliminary Multiple and Single Subject programs are founded on a mission to critically examine the roles of educators within varied sociopolitical and cultural contexts. They emphasize culturally sustaining, anti-racist, and universally designed practices. The core goal is to develop a community of transformative teacher leaders who are committed to critical reflection and practice, with the aim of challenging dominant ideologies and advancing educational equity.

The Preliminary Multiple Subject and Single Subject programs are designed to prepare educators to teach effectively in kindergarten through grade 12 classrooms. The Preliminary Single Subject program will be offered in art, English, social sciences, world languages, science, and mathematics. Central to these programs is the emphasis on educational equity and access. The curriculum is built upon an integration of theory with practice. This includes a cognitive apprenticeship model that combines coaching and inquiry in real classroom settings. The programs incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy, humanizing education, and academic rigor, all tailored to equip teacher candidates for diverse teaching roles in California's varied cultural, linguistic, and social landscapes. Offering both traditional and internship pathways, these programs provide flexible professional learning options. They require a summer session dedicated to preparing candidates for full-time teaching responsibilities, with a strong focus on classroom inquiry, reflection, and collaboration. Combining synchronous and asynchronous components, the programs offer accessible opportunities for candidates from diverse backgrounds to complete credential requirements within the complexities of modern life. Graduates are thus well-prepared for roles in diverse California classrooms, embodying the programs' commitment to anti-racist, gender-inclusive, and culturally responsive teaching principles.

MC:NE states that both the multiple and single subject programs are intended to be true reflections of the ELJJ's mission. They will demonstrate a dedication to cultivating educators who are proficient in their respective fields and who champion social justice and educational transformation. According to MC:NE, the ELJJ programs are envisioned as groundbreaking

educational initiatives, set to significantly influence the field of education through their focus on liberation, justice, and joy.									

Five Stages of the Initial Institutional Approval Process

Mills College at Northeastern University is seeking initial program approval as indicated in the Stage IV column of the chart below.

IIA Process	Stage I -	Stage II –	Stage III –	Stage IV –	Stage V – Provisional Site
	Prerequisites	Eligibility Requirements	Provisional Approval	Initial Program Approval	Visit and Full Approval
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards and program-specific preconditions	Program operates for 2-4 years and hosts a provisional accreditation site visit
	Commission's accreditation system				
Institutional Requirements	 Must: Have legal eligibility Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team 	 Submit responses to: 12 Eligibility Criteria Initial Program Preconditions General Precondition #9 	Submit responses to: • Common Standards	 Submit responses to: Program-Specific Preconditions Program Standards 	Must:Collect dataHost provisional site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	BIR	Preconditions: Staff Program Standards: BIR	Site Visit Team & COA
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	 Grant Full Approval Grant Full Approval & Remand to COA to Address Stipulations Continue Provisional Status for 1 Year to Address Stipulations Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

^{*}At conclusion of stage

^{**}Institutionally approved but cannot offer programs

^{***}May begin offering approved program