

**BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION**

BHE 23-51

BOARD DATE: June 20, 2023

**APPROVAL OF LETTER OF INTENT OF GREENFIELD COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO
AWARD THE ASSOCIATE IN SCIENCE IN HUMAN SERVICES AND
AUTHORIZATION FOR FAST TRACK REVIEW**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education (BHE) has evaluated the Letter of Intent of **Greenfield Community College** to award the **Associate in Science in Human Services** and has determined that the proposal aligns with BHE criteria. Accordingly, the BHE authorizes the Commissioner to review the program and to make a final determination on degree granting authority pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

VOTED: Motion approved and advanced to the full BHE by the Executive Committee on 6/12/2023; and adopted by the BHE on 6/20/2023.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b); AAC 18-40

Contact: Winifred M. Hagan, Ed.D., Senior Associate Commissioner for Strategic Planning and Public Program Approval

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
June 20, 2023
Greenfield Community College
Letter of Intent
Associate in Science in Human Services

DEGREE TITLE ABSTRACT ON INTENT AND MISSION OF PROGRAM

The purpose of Greenfield Community College's (GCC) proposed Associate in Science in Human Services (AS/HS) is to change existing offerings such that the options available to Human Services students at GCC are both broadened and focused. Currently, students interested in the helping professions must enroll in the Liberal Arts Advising Option titled Human Services. Because the advising option relies heavily on courses in the Liberal Arts General program, students are unable to focus their studies on the core elements of human services education. Additionally, students who graduate with the advising option in human services are not awarded a degree in human services, making it difficult for them to transfer or obtain entry-level employment in the field. This proposed AS/HS is expected to better facilitate student transfer and employment opportunities. Additionally, the proposed program has been re-designed to increase access to human services programs for individuals from underrepresented communities, and to ensure the curriculum prioritizes content knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion. GCC plans that the proposed AS/HS will provide resources and supports to students from diverse racial backgrounds; ensure success and well-being in the program; promote a culturally responsive and supportive learning environment; and foster mutual respect and understanding of diverse people and ideas.

The proposed Associate in Science in Human Services was approved by the Greenfield Community College Board of Trustees on March 22, 2022. The LOI was circulated on March 7, 2023. No comments were received.

A. ALIGNMENT WITH MASSACHUSETTS GOALS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Address Gaps in Opportunity and Achievement in Alignment with Campus-Wide Goals

GCC Human Services courses are currently offered as an Advising Option within the Liberal Arts General Associate in Arts program. Because of the high number of general education courses required for the Liberal Arts degree, The proposed AS/HS is planned as a distinct degree program, in which students will have increased human services course offerings that expand beyond foundational requirements in the field. GCC underscored that the program is informed by a n Proposed AS/HS is guided by principles that address cultural proficiencies and racial equity, as reflected in the GCC Statement of Inclusion¹.T As well, the National Organization for Human Services (NOHS) has Ethical Standards which guided the development of the proposal. These include responsibility to students as it relates to culturally sensitive knowledge, awareness and teaching methodologies and a commitment to the principles of access and inclusion. NOHS further defines the dimensions of cultural competence to include among others, self-awareness, and knowledge of others different from oneself. These concepts are significant to the development of the proposal. GCC intends to structure the proposed program in three dimensions. One is curriculum and pedagogy related to human service needs. A second is understanding the macro-view of human service delivery systems, and the third dimension involves critical inquiry gaps in human service designs related to equity and inclusion.GCC found that the regional labor market blueprint (further detailed below) indicates that the human services field, which includes areas of policy and clinical care, is currently experiencing a shortage in the workforce. The proposed AS/HS is designed to provide two distinct tracks for students, one in policy and programming, and the other in practitioner work.

Program or Department Supports to Ensure Student Retention and Completion

It is planned that GCC students in this program will be onboarded by a full-time Success Coach in GCC's advising center, paired with a faculty advisor who will also serve in the capacity of

¹ "...engage in intentional and ongoing reflection of diversity as we seek to create a culture that values, encourages, and embraces a wide range of individual and group differences."

program coordinator. Advising at GCC is augmented by institutional supports that include peer tutoring, a full-time math studio, and a wellness center. Faculty provide structured opportunities to meet with students regularly, and consulting and supervising them as they complete their practicum course and required, off-site hours.

Alliances and Partnerships with PK-12, Other IHE's, Community Employers

GCC reports that its alliances are centered on relationships with local and regional human services, mental health, and addiction treatment and recovery providers. Partnerships with these agencies are designed to provide practicum experiences for students and employment opportunities upon graduation. GCC intends to reconvene (on hold due to the pandemic) and reconstitute an advisory group comprised of human service, mental health, citizen advocacy, addiction treatment/recovery providers, alumni, current students and adjunct faculty. It is expected that advisors will support the programs with insights and expertise in the changing landscape of human services delivery, addressing education, skills, credentials and competency training, and client demographics and needs. In an addendum to the LOI, GCC provided the list of ten different affiliate organizations that will serve the proposed program, including the individuals who will serve in this capacity.

Relationship to MassHire Regional Blueprints

GCC found the MassHire Pioneer Valley Blueprint to list Social and Human Service Assistants as priority occupations and to report a labor shortage in the Healthcare and Social Assistance Occupational Groups. GCC has further found local field experiences and employing agencies to have noted these shortages and the impact on individuals and communities when there is a shortage of human service providers to meet the existing needs. *GCC expects that* career options will be significant as students are introduced to and examine options in human services courses, in service-learning and field placement experiences, and through capstone projects.

Duplication

GCC reports three institutions offer a similar degree: Holyoke Community College A.S. in Human Services, Berkshire Community College A.S. in Human Services (Social Work

Transfer Concentration), and Mt. Wachusett Community College A.S. in Human Services. GCC expects that offering an A.S. in Human Services will bring them into alignment with the field and with other community colleges. GCC noted that Berkshire BCC is focused on social work transfer while GCC's focus is on human services generalist transfer and a special concentration in addiction counselor preparation. GCC expects that the proposed AS/HS is distinct in providing multiple avenues for employment or transfer, and in utilizing specialized advising tools to help students determine their best path. The proposed program includes a language requirement (Spanish or ASL) and statistics and economics courses. It is designed to have a transfer pathway to public policy and public health degree programs in addition to human services and social work bachelor degree programs.

Innovative Approaches to Teaching and Learning

The proposed AS/HS includes experiential opportunities and requirements including course-embedded service learning and a generalist practicum. GCC anticipates the service-learning coursework will make explicit for students, the connection between course concepts and applied practice. Students will participate in a one-semester 100-hour practicum that culminates in a capstone project. Students will work with a field-placement supervisor on their placement education plan and attend a weekly seminar course. GCC has incorporated the knowledge, theories, skills and values standards developed by the Council on Standards in Human Services Education (CSHSE) and focused on skills for the direct service worker.

GCC also plans to include a standalone course in case management to provide training in both theory and practice in case management. This is planned to include skills development in the use of cloud-based human services software for managing client documentation and agency reporting.

B. ALIGNMENT WITH CAMPUS STRATEGIC PLAN AND MISSION

The proposed AS/HS program addresses GCC's mission of "... *providing an education that effects positive change in students' lives, communities and the world and its vision of a more equitable, just, vibrant and resilient world.*" GCC expects to accomplish this by broadening the curricular focus to include practice settings and job roles beyond direct

care work and applying the NHOS equity principles (detailed in Section A of this motion) to the program design). GCC holds that producing human service practitioners who are well-versed in policy-level thinking and evidence-based program design can serve as significant social justice change agents in the field.

LOI Program Goals and Objectives (Form B)

GCC plans that program graduates will be able to examine and question the human services delivery systems using a systemic lens. This will include being able to explain how public and private attitudes influence legislation and the interpretation of policies related to human services, as well as the broader sociopolitical issues that affect human services delivery systems. It is also expected the graduates will demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and theory of the interaction of human systems; demonstrate knowledge of individual, interpersonal, group, family, organizational, community, and societal dynamics; and use a diversity lens to examine and solve problems. GCC expects that graduates will apply contextual knowledge to program planning and delivery; be able to explain the conditions giving rise to human service needs; and apply accepted models to plan appropriate strategies, services, implementation, and evaluation of outcomes. They will be able to design and implement appropriate interventions in service delivery such as assess and analyze the needs of clients and groups; demonstrate good case management practice and effective basic counseling and interpersonal skills; facilitate client groups and demonstrate the skills and attitudes to function as an effective human services professional. GCC also anticipates that the proposed AS/HS will enable its graduates to incorporate client-related values and attitudes and to develop a professional identity.

C. ALIGNMENT WITH OPERATIONAL AND FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES OF INSTITUTION

Enrollment Projections (Form C)

As the proposed program presents a shift from a liberal arts degree to an AS/HS degree, current students in the advising option will be notified of the opportunity. With their permission, students will move into the proposed AS program. Students will also

have the option to complete the existing AA Human Services Liberal Arts degree within two years of the new program's beginning as needed and desired by the student. GCC does not expect this shift will impact program enrollment in other areas.

*Resources and Financial Statement of Estimated Net Impact on Institution
(Form D, Appendices)*

Because the proposed AS/HS redefines an existing program option, GCC does not expect additional fiscal or human resources. These will shift from the existing option to the improved one. GCC intends to continue with a single full-time faculty member, supported by adjunct faculty when necessary.

STAFF REVIEW AND VALIDATION

Staff thoroughly reviewed the **LOI** proposing full degree granting authority for the **Associate in Science in Human Services** submitted by **Greenfield Community College**. Staff validate that the **LOI** includes all data required by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education. Staff recommendation is for BHE authorization for the Commissioner to review the program pursuant to the Fast-Track review protocol.

Form A: Curriculum Outline

Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 15)		
<i>Course Number</i>	<i>Course Title</i>	<i>Credit Hours</i>
ENG 101	English Composition I	3
ENG 112, 114, or 116	English Composition II	3
HSV 101	Introduction to Human Services	3
PSY 101	Principles of Psychology	3
SOC 106	Social Inequality	3
SPA 101 or ASL 101	Elementary Spanish or American Sign Language	3
PHI 104	Introduction to Ethics	3
	Any 3 or 4 credit courses from the list of Humanities and Fine Arts General Electives	3-4
BIO 132	Lifestyle, Health, and Medicine	4
	One 3 or 4 credit course from the list of Natural and Physical Science General Electives	3-4
MAT 114	Introduction to Statistics	4
HSV 115	The Helping Relationship	3
HSV 168	Case Management Practices	3
HSV 215	Counseling Skills	3
HSV 271 or 272	Practicum in Human Services or Practicum in Addiction Studies II	4
	Sub Total Required Credits	48-50
Elective Courses (Total # courses required = 7) (attach list of choices if needed)		
	Any four, 3 credit classes from the list below: ECO 101, POL 101, POL 116, HSV 216, PSY 209, PSY 217, and any 3 credit course coded HSV, PSY, or SOC	12
	Sub Total Elective Credits	
Distribution of General Education Requirements Attach List of General Education Offerings (Course Numbers, Titles, and Credits)		# of Gen Ed Credits
See Attached for list of distribution requirements and program page		33-35

<i>Sub Total General Education Credits</i>		33-35
<i>Curriculum Summary</i>		
Total number of courses required for the degree	19	
Total credit hours required for degree	60-62	

GCC reported that the majority of the courses listed on this form include content and pedagogical approaches that recognize DEI principles and practices as critical components for addressing equity gaps. Highlighted courses are particularly rich in this content.

Form B: LOI Goals and Objectives

Goal	Measurable Objective	Strategy for Achievement	Timetable
To create A.S. degree pathways in human services that allows for student exploration in the helping professions.	Matriculated students moving between pathways determining what area of human services is most aligned with their vision for their future.	<p>Providing clear pathways for students to explore.</p> <p>Students will be advised to use program-specific advising plans with a focus on applied human services or nonprofit management.</p> <p>Core degree required courses expose students to a broad range of studies in human services populations and practice settings to refine the focus as they move through their degree.</p>	Ongoing specialized advising. Timely program level and course level curricular revisions that address the dynamic nature of the human services field, e.g., emerging needs of specific populations or changes in funding requirements.
The degree prepares students for transfer with junior standing to four-year institutions.	Students fulfill all requirements outlined in their program pathway.	The creation of a degree program that satisfy the Mass Transfer General Education Foundation. Directed advising from faculty with expertise in the concentration area.	Careful advising of students that choose to matriculate into HSE from other programs to ensure a seamless transition. As HSE develops, advising will be concentration and population/practice setting specific.
Diversify cohorts of emerging helping professionals that reflect the populations and practice settings where human services are delivered.	Enrolled students and program graduates include a mixture of diverse ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, abilities, and gender identifying groups.	Collaboration with the GCC Director of DEI, the Diversity Standing Committee, and the Racial Justice Working Group, consult with the Racial Equity and Justice Institute.	Regular review of enrollment demographics and corrective actions taken as needed.
Provide students with a solid foundation in the human services field, while equipping	Graduation requirements include the Mass Transfer General Education Foundation courses along with subject-specific courses that address competency areas of knowledge	Consistent and regular meetings with advisors to ensure students are on the path to graduate.	Ongoing

them with the academic and social skills necessary for professional success.	specific to the program.		
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Form C: LOI Program Enrollment

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
New Full-Time	15	15	15	15	15
Continuing Full-Time	10	10	10	10	10
New Part-Time	15	15	15	15	15
Continuing Part-Time	10	10	10	10	10
Totals	50	50	50	50	50

Form D: LOI Budget

<i>One Time/ Start Up Costs</i>		Annual Enrollment				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	<i>Cost Categories</i>					
	Full Time Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$59,000	\$60,770	\$62,593	\$64,470	\$66,405
	Part Time/Adjunct Faculty (Salary & Fringe)	\$13,500	\$13,500	\$13,500	\$13,500	\$13,500
	Staff					
	General Administrative Costs	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500
	Instructional Materials, Library Acquisitions					
	Facilities/Space/Equipm ent					
	Field & Clinical Resources					
	Marketing					
	Total	\$74,500.00	\$76,270.00	\$78,593.10	\$80,470.89	\$82,905.02
<i>One Time/Start- Up Support</i>		Annual Income				
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	<i>Revenue Sources</i>					
	Grants					
	Tuition	\$31,200.00	\$31,200.00	\$31,200.00	\$31,200.00	\$31,200.00
	Fees	\$312,100.00	\$312,100.00	\$312,100.00	\$312,100.00	\$312,100.00
	Departmental					
	Reallocated Funds					
	Other (specify)					
	TOTALS	\$343,300.00	\$343,300.00	\$343,300.00	\$343,300.00	\$343,300.00