

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Fiscal Affairs and Administrative Policy **NO.:** FAAP 07-27

COMMITTEE DATE: June 6, 2007

BOARD DATE: June 14, 2007

**APPROVAL TO PROCEED WITH A NORTHERN ESSEX COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PROGRAM STUDY**

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby gives Northern Essex Community College approval to proceed with a program study to add academic and specialized instructional space capacity in Lawrence. This approval is given with the understanding that Northern Essex Community College is responsible for all costs related to the study and that it will not proceed with design and construction until the Board of Higher Education gives its approval to proceed.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9

Contact: Sue Wolfe, Associate Vice Chancellor for Fiscal & Administrative Affairs

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Northern Essex Community College seeks approval to undertake a program study to add academic and specialized instructional space in the City of Lawrence. This program study will be self-funded by the College.

The additional capacity is driven by enrollment growth in Lawrence and in particular, enrollment growth in allied health programs. Allied health program enrollment has more than doubled over the past five years. Total student enrollment at Lawrence for 1997 was 1,476 students; the total for fall 2006 was 2,384, an increase of 908 students. Based on 2006 data, 31% of the total were full-time students, 75% female, and 45% minority; the average age was 29 years. Total Lawrence campus Latino enrollment in 1997 was 605 students; the total for fall 2006 was 902, an increase of almost 50%.

The additional capacity is expected to result in the construction of a new facility. The new facility is intended to complement the existing 60,000 gross square feet of space at the main Lawrence campus located at 45 Franklin Street. This project is on the Eva Klein study completed in 2003 and will be a high-priority project coming out of the current master planning initiative.

The College anticipates both expanding existing programs and creating new certificate and degree programs in high-demand areas – *Phlebotomy Technician, Pharmacy Technician, Therapeutic Massage, Health Information Technology, Perioperative Nursing, Surgical Technician, Complementary Health, Dental Hygiene, Radiologic Technology, Mammography, Ultrasonography*. Proposed Health Specialty Computerized Laboratory Units will be organized to simulate a medical center environment. For example, one unit will be denoted as the operating room; another unit may be a simulated outpatient clinic. Each unit will offer a simulation training system. This will provide increased training opportunities for students who are currently enrolled in the health professions programs and enhance professional development for critical care and emergency department nurses, respiratory therapists, and other health professionals. In addition, the Allied Health and Technology Center will provide enhanced training opportunities for area emergency responders, including police and firefighters, and emergency medical personnel, such as EMTs and paramedics.

The College's Criminal Justice Program, with a focus on Homeland Security issues, will also share center stage, with new dedicated labs to support courses in *Computer Forensics, Mediation, Crime Scene Investigation, Criminalistics, Homeland Security, Ballistic Investigation, Digital Crime Scene Photography, and Law Enforcement Regional Training in Crime Scene Investigation*. This will provide enhanced training opportunities for local and state police units as well as Homeland Security first responders.

Other areas of the new facility will provide necessary classroom space for students in need of ESL coursework and other academic support. State-of-the-art smart classrooms will provide students, residents, and incumbent workers with training in technology-related disciplines.

This capital project holds tremendous promise as a much-needed, long-term solution to solving the overcrowding issues at the Lawrence campus and addressing the training and labor needs of the region. The project will play a significant role in sustaining the economic progress of the City of Lawrence by offering high-quality, affordable and readily accessible higher education programs.

DCAM and BHE staff support the feasibility study to determine the best course of action for Northern Essex Community College in adding capacity in downtown Lawrence.