

Connecticut State University System

Developing a State of Minds

BR#02-51

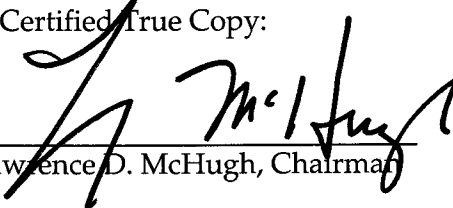


RESOLUTION
 concerning
 LICENSURE AND ACCREDITATION
 of a program in
 PROFESSIONAL WRITING
 leading to a
 MASTER OF FINE ARTS DEGREE
 at
 WESTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
 October 3, 2002

RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees for the Connecticut State University System approves Western Connecticut State University's proposal to offer a Master of Fine Arts degree program in Professional Writing, and be it further

RESOLVED, That under the authority granted to the Board of Trustees for Connecticut State University System in Chapter 185b, Section 10a-87 and 10a-149 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the Chancellor of the Connecticut State University System is authorized to seek licensure and accreditation for this program from the Connecticut Board of Governors for Higher Education.

A Certified True Copy:


 Lawrence D. McHugh, Chairman

ITEM

Licensure and Accreditation of a Master of Fine Arts degree program in Professional Writing at Western Connecticut State University

BACKGROUND

Businesses and institutions in WestConn's area have expressed interest in employing skilled professional writers. This program has been developed to address the demand for graduates with the terminal degree (MFA) recognized in the performing and visual arts and creative writing.

ANALYSIS

The proposal is well written and the program is supported by WestConn's mission. The program responds to the employment needs of graduates by preparing them at the proficient professional level in one creative and one practical genre of writing. The creative/practical approach is grounded in new knowledge about the creative process. There is a good case for student demand, with numerous inquiries coming into WestConn's graduate school and a considerable number of CSU baccalaureate graduates (over 60) and many others from universities in the region and writers in the field likely to consider this program to further their education. The program makes use of the intellectual capital of writers in the northeast by using them as mentors, lecturers, adjuncts etc. The program plans to admit its first students in summer 2004; its first graduates are expected in spring 2006.

There are only seven other MFA programs in writing in all six New England states (242 four-year colleges and universities); this program is unique in Connecticut. The program is designated as Low Residency, meaning most of the work is done away from the campus, with students and faculty/mentors communicating online and via email and convening for summer seminars and workshops. It is this last factor that could prevent the program from being offered as a complete distance learning program. Learning outcomes are defined for all instruction aspects of the program. Provisions exist for overall program review and evaluation.

The proposal indicates that a new faculty/program coordinator position will be required, as well as an administrative assistant. University funds have been committed to securing these personnel, as well as other necessary resources for the program.

CHANCELLOR'S RECOMMENDATION

Approve the proposal from Western Connecticut State University to offer a Master of Fine Arts degree program in Professional Writing.