

## VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

## A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

MEDEX Northwest Division of Physician Assistant Studies–Establishment of the Master of Clinical Health Services and Extended Master of Clinical Health Services DegreesRECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the MEDEX Northwest Division of Physician Assistant Studies within the Department of Medical Education and Biomedical Information, in the School of Medicine, to offer the Master of Clinical Health Services (MCHS) and Extended Master of Clinical Health Services (EMCHS) degree programs, effective immediately. The degree programs will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled in the 2014-2015 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, a ten-year review cycle would begin.

BACKGROUND

In February 2008, the Graduate School received proposals from the graduate faculty in the MEDEX Northwest Division of Physician Assistant Studies requesting authority to offer the Master of Clinical Health Services and the Extended Master of Clinical Health Services degree programs. Both degree programs will be self-sustaining. MEDEX trains physician assistants to practice medicine under physician supervision which historically has been offered at the undergraduate level. The Bachelor of Clinical Health Services (BCHS), offered currently at Seattle, Yakima, and Spokane classroom sites, would continue to be offered in Yakima and extended to Anchorage, Alaska.

The new graduate programs reflect the national trend in the field toward graduate-level education. The MCHS program in 2009 summer will enroll 75 students (122 FTE) with full enrollment in 2010 of 150 students (270 FTE), while in summer 2009 the EMCHS will enroll 30 students (27.8 FTE) and reach full enrollment of 40 students (33.6 FTE) in 2010. The programs offer a decentralized clinical component at its clinical training sites, providing training to place-bound students and consistent with the regional nature of the School of Medicine.

The MCHS is a cohort designed program to prepare students for licensure and entry-level clinical practice. Prospective students include those with prior healthcare experience, e.g., military medics, corpsmen, paramedics and EMTs, nurses at various levels, and other allied health professions. The MCHS replaces the bachelor's degree program that MEDEX currently offers at its Seattle and Spoken sites and reflects an expanded curriculum of the bachelor's degree program.

The EMCHS is also a cohort program designed for practicing physician assistants who are graduates of the BCHS to earn a graduate degree and practicing physician assistants from other programs. The on-line curriculum will include research, leadership and health policy, administration and public health, rural and underserved healthcare, and clinical residencies related to specialized topics.

MEDEX Northwest Division of Physician Assistant Studies – Establishment of the Master of Clinical Health Services and Extended Master of Clinical Health Services Degrees, cont.

On January 23, 2009, the Higher Education Coordinating Board in Resolution NO. 09-02 approved the proposals to establish the MCHS and EMCHS degree programs. The HECB noted the proposed programs support the higher education Strategic Master Plan by expanding graduate education in the health sciences and would meet student and community demand and would not be duplicative of existing degree programs.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the Vice Dean of the School of Medicine, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will be informed of the Board of Regents' action on the MCHS and EMCHS degree programs.