

APPROVED

DECEMBER 14, 2021

Item #F-2
December 14, 2021

**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

Submitted for: Action.

Summary: New independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions are also required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Action Requested: That the Illinois Board of Higher Education approves the recommendations to grant degree-granting authority and/or operating authority to the following institution:

Proprietary

Rasmussen University

- Operating Authority in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions
- Medical Assisting Diploma in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions
- Associate of Applied Science Health Sciences in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions
 - Associate of Science in Professional Nursing in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions
- Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions



STATE OF ILLINOIS
BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**NEW OPERATING AND/OR DEGREE-GRANTING AUTHORITY
FOR INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS**

The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) has responsibility for administration of The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010). Under these statutes, new independent institutions, institutions planning to operate at a new location, including a location outside the higher education region of original operating authority, and out-of-state institutions planning to operate in Illinois for the first time are required to obtain authorization to operate. These institutions also are required to obtain authorization for each new degree program.

Applications for new operating and degree-granting authority submitted by independent Illinois institutions and out-of-state institutions are reviewed by the staff. Recommendations are developed by applying criteria for operating and/or degree-granting authority, which are defined in the rules adopted for administration of the statutes and Board policies on assessment of student learning and specialized accreditation requirements for student licensure. These criteria encompass educational objectives, institution and degree titles, curricula, facilities, faculty and administrator qualifications, student policies, publications, records, compliance with pertinent laws, and fiscal stability. Staff recommendations are based on analyses of application materials, responses to questions, and site visits. Out-of-region sites are defined as sites located within an IBHE approval region other than the region within which an institution's original operating authority was granted. There are ten IBHE approval regions; each is coterminous with one or more community college districts. Approval to operate within a new approval region entitles an institution to operate throughout the region, and not solely at the site at which the institution initially applied.

Proprietary Executive Summary

Rasmussen University

- Operating Authority in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions

Rasmussen University requests authorization to operate in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions. Rasmussen University (Rasmussen or the University) is a private for-profit institution. Walter Rasmussen founded Rasmussen Practical School of Business in 1900 in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1945, Walter Rasmussen sold the institution to Walter Nemitz, a faculty member at the institution. Mr. Nemitz served as the Principal of the institution until 1965 when he sold what was then Rasmussen Business College to his sons. The College remained in the Nemitz family until 2003, when the institution was sold to a group of private shareholders who formed Rasmussen, Inc. and Rasmussen College, Inc. as the only wholly owned subsidiary of the parent corporation. In 2019, the College Rasmussen, Inc. ownership group was acquired by FAH Education, LLC, a part of Renovus Capital Partners and became Rasmussen College, LLC, which resulted in a change of control for the institution. In 2020, Rasmussen College changed its name to Rasmussen University and expanded its graduate school offerings.

As of September 1, 2021, Rasmussen University has been acquired by American Public Education, Inc. (APEI), the parent company of the American Public University System and Hondros College of Nursing. Rasmussen has taken steps with key stakeholders in preparation for the change of ownership as the transaction requires approval of multiple state and national regulatory entities including the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the U.S. Department of Education. The HLC has approved an extension of accreditation. The U.S. Department of Education has received and is reviewing the University's application for change of ownership. Rasmussen University's national headquarters are located in the state of Minnesota. The University confirmed its annual registration by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE) on August 9, 2021. Rasmussen's change of ownership application was approved by MOHE on November 16, 2021. Additionally, Rasmussen's change of ownership applications have been approved by state agencies in Kansas, Missouri, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. Similar review with a determination on January 11, 2022, is under way by the Commission for Independent Education within the Florida Department of Education's Board regarding the University's operations in Florida under this new ownership structure.

Due to the change of ownership, Rasmussen University is seeking Operating and Degree-granting authorization from IBHE under the new ownership structure of American Public Education, Inc. Rasmussen University currently has authorization to operate in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions. The operations of Rasmussen University in the Chicago region are limited to its Centro de Aprendizaje, a learning center enabling community access to the Internet, and dual credit offerings in area high schools. With this application, Rasmussen requests authorization to continue to offer to operate and offer instruction. Rasmussen University currently holds authorization to offer all the programs of study delineated in this report, and Illinois students are enrolled these programs. There are policies in place to ensure faculty members possess the training, credentials, and qualifications to provide instruction. The University has sufficient library, technology, staff, and financial resources in place to support the proposed operations.

- Medical Assisting Diploma in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions

Rasmussen University requests authorization to continue to offer a Medical Assisting Diploma in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions. The Medical Assisting Diploma is a less than one year certificate program designed to prepare students for entry-level medical assistant positions and requires 51 quarter hours. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Medical Assistant certification through the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants and meet the educational requirements to sit for the Registered Medical Assistant certification awarded by the American Medical Technologists.

- Associate of Applied Science Health Sciences in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions

Rasmussen University requests authorization to continue to offer an Associate of Science in Health Sciences in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions. The Associate of Science in Health Sciences is a 91-93-quarter hour program that provides students with the skills to work in entry-level healthcare positions. Depending on the career track, graduates may choose from a variety of employment options involving patient care or related healthcare situations. Graduates of the program are trained to understand and apply a combination of real-world technical skills and general education concepts valuable for critical thinking and problem solving, written and interpersonal communication, customer service, diversity awareness skills, and medical ethics. Graduates of the Pharmacy Technician Specialization are eligible to apply for licensure in the State

of Illinois after meeting the licensure requirements set by the State and passing the board-approved licensure examinations.

- Associate of Science in Professional Nursing in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions

Rasmussen University requests authorization to continue to offer an Associate of Science in Professional Nursing in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions. The Associate of Science in Professional Nursing requires 103 quarter hours and was designed to provide the knowledge, clinical skills, nursing values, and experience necessary for an entry-level professional nursing position. Graduates of the program will be trained to be competent in the core components of professional nursing: professional behavior; communication; assessment; clinical decision-making; caring interventions; teaching and learning; collaboration; and managing care. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have met the educational prerequisites to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

- Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions

Rasmussen University requests authorization to continue to offer an Associate of Science in Surgical Technologist in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions. The Associate of Science in Surgical Technologist requires 92 quarter hours and prepares competent entry-level surgical technologists. Graduates of the program learn basic concepts of anatomy and physiology, pathology, microbiology, and pharmacology. Graduates learn surgical routine techniques, including to prepare, clean, and restock operating rooms; use and maintain surgical equipment; perform scrub and circulator duties in a number of surgical specialties; and contribute to pre- and post-operative patient care. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) certification through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

Approval request summary, including staff conclusion, follows in Attachment A.

The staff recommends adoption of the following resolutions:

The Illinois Board of Higher Education hereby grants authorization to Rasmussen University, under the ownership structure of American Public Education, Inc. to continue to operate in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions and to continue to grant the Medical Assisting Diploma, Associate of Applied Science Health Sciences, Associate of Science in Professional Nursing, and Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist in the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions subject to the institution's implementation and maintenance of the conditions that were presented in its application and that form the basis upon which this authorization is granted.

Rasmussen University
8300 Norman Center Drive, Suite 300
Bloomington, MN 55437
President: Mr. Tom Slagle

Seeking Operating Authority: Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Medical Assisting Diploma in the Fox Valley Region and South Metro Regions

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
125	152	122

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Associate of Applied Science Health Sciences in the Fox Valley Region and South Metro Regions

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
265	322	53

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Associate of Science in Professional Nursing in the Fox Valley Region and South Metro Regions

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
1,500	2,196	1,171

Proposed Program Title in the Region of Authorization: Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist in the Fox Valley Regions

Projected Enrollments and Degrees

First Year Enrollment	Fifth Year Enrollment	Degrees Awarded Fifth Year
60	70	30

Institutional Accreditation: Rasmussen University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Background and History

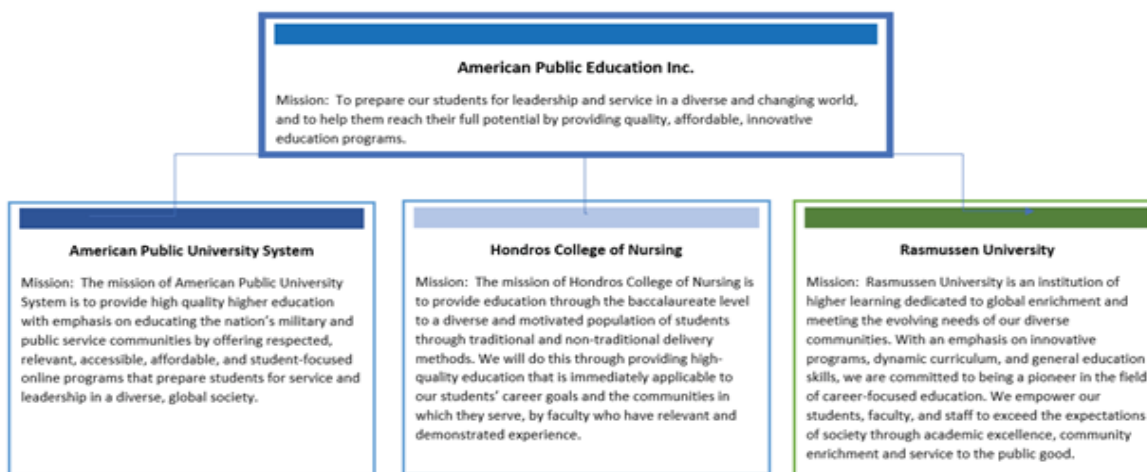
Rasmussen University (Rasmussen or the University) is a private for-profit institution. Walter Rasmussen founded Rasmussen Practical School of Business in 1900 in St. Paul, Minnesota. In 1945, Walter Rasmussen sold the institution to Walter Nemitz, a faculty member at the institution. Mr. Nemitz served as the Principal of the institution until 1965, when he sold what was then Rasmussen



Business College to his sons. The College remained in the Nemitz family until 2003, when the institution was sold to a group of private shareholders who formed Rasmussen, Inc. and Rasmussen College, Inc. as the only wholly owned subsidiary of the parent corporation. In 2019, the College Rasmussen, Inc. ownership group was acquired by FAH Education, LLC, a part of Renovus Capital Partners and became Rasmussen College, LLC, which resulted in a change of control for the institution. In 2020, Rasmussen College changed its name to Rasmussen University and expanded its graduate school offerings.

As of September 1, 2021, Rasmussen, LLC was acquired by American Public Education, Incorporated (APEI), which is also the parent company of the American Public University System and Hondros College of Nursing. Pursuant to the Membership Interest Purchase Agreement, FAH Education sold 100 percent of the limited liability company units of Rasmussen, LLC to APEI. Upon consummation, the limited liability company units will transfer from Rasmussen, LLC to APEI. The ownership structure chart included illustrates the Transaction (see below):

Figure 1: Post-Transaction APEI Family of Institutions



This change of ownership transaction will require approval of various regulatory entities beyond the IBHE, including other state regulatory agencies, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) and the U.S. Department of Education (ED). Rasmussen has taken steps with key stakeholders in preparation for the change of ownership. Rasmussen University has its national headquarters in the state of Minnesota and confirmed its annual registration by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE) on August 9, 2021. Rasmussen's change of ownership application was approved by MOHE on November 16, 2021. Additionally, Rasmussen's change of ownership applications have been approved by state regulatory agencies in Kansas, Missouri, North Dakota, and Wisconsin. Rasmussen is currently on the January 11, 2022, meeting agenda for the Commission for Independent Education within the Florida Department of Education's Board regarding its operations in Florida under this new ownership structure.

Rasmussen is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission with the next Reaffirmation of Accreditation scheduled in 2025-26. According to HLC and in response to the Change of Control application, effective June 24, 2021, "The Board approved the extension of accreditation related to the application wherein Rasmussen University, through a Membership Interest Purchase Agreement, is acquired by American Public Education, Inc." As a result of the greater than 30-day delay in the closing date, on August 2, 2021, and August 31, 2021, HLC "voted to affirm the

extension of accreditation related to its approval of its approval of the Institution's application for Change of Control, Structure, or Organization wherein Rasmussen University, through a Membership Interest Purchase Agreement, is acquired by American Public Education, Inc." A focused visit will be held after six months from the date of the transaction which will be in February 2022.

On October 12, 2021, Rasmussen submitted a Change in Ownership application with the U.S. Department of Education (the Department). The application was accepted and determined to be materially complete by the Department on October 14, 2021. The Temporary Provisional Program Participation Agreement has been signed by Rasmussen and returned to the Department. The final Change in Ownership application materials were submitted by October 31, 2021, with the required same day balance sheet. The U.S. Department of Education is reviewing the Change of Ownership application materials to determine whether the University is eligible to continue with the Program Participation Agreement for Title IV funding at its campus locations.

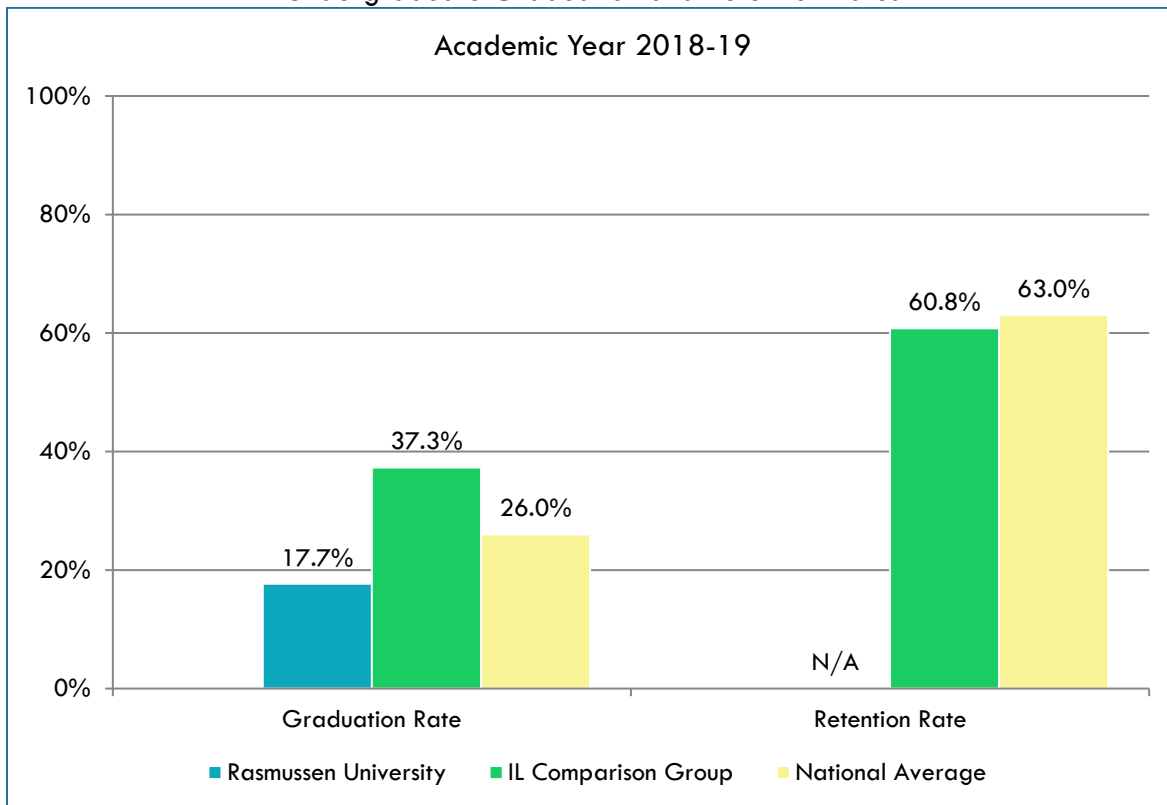
Due to the change of ownership, Rasmussen University is seeking Operating and Degree-granting authorization from IBHE under the new ownership structure of American Public Education, Inc. Rasmussen University currently has approval to operate in the Chicago, Fox Valley, and South Metro Regions. The operations of Rasmussen University in the Chicago region are limited to its Centro de Aprendizaje, a learning center enabling community access to the Internet, and dual credit offerings in area high schools. Rasmussen University currently holds authorization to offer all of the programs of study delineated in this report, and Illinois students are enrolled these programs.

Institutional Data

1030.30(a)(3)(F): Success in student progression and graduation across all existing approved programs, and success rates in programs preparing students for certification and licensure, shall be consistent with expectations in higher education and the appropriate related field of study. At a minimum, the Board shall consider the following factors, based on results for similar institutions: (i) Graduation rates, certificate and degree completion rates, retention rates, and pass rates for licensure and certification aligned with thresholds set by State or national regulatory bodies; and (ii) Success rate, which shall be, at a minimum, higher than that of the lowest quartile of these measures for similar Illinois institutions defined as open versus competitive enrollment institutions and primarily associate versus primarily baccalaureate granting institutions. Exceptions may be made to the lowest quartile if an institution is above the national average for these measures using the same comparison categories of institutions.

This section includes information about institutional and student success measures for each institution seeking program approval. The institution's rates will be compared to Illinois institutions from within a select comparison group and against the national standards or averages. For a proposed undergraduate program, this section will include undergraduate graduation rates, first-to-second year retention rates, student loan default rates, and any applicable licensure passage rates. For a proposed graduate program, this section will primarily focus on student loan default data since this measure also includes graduate students in the calculation.

Undergraduate Graduation and Retention Rates



Source: National System for Education Statistics (NCES), US Department of Education

Note: Rasmussen University is in the four-year, inclusive Illinois comparison group.
Higher percentages are positive indicators.

Undergraduate Graduation Rate

The graduation rate measures the rate at which entering freshmen graduate within 150 percent of normal program length. Data are provided for six-year graduation rates for first-time, full-time bachelor's degree-seeking students and three-year graduation rates for full-time associate degree-seeking students. The national standard for graduation rates is reported annually by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Undergraduate Retention Rate

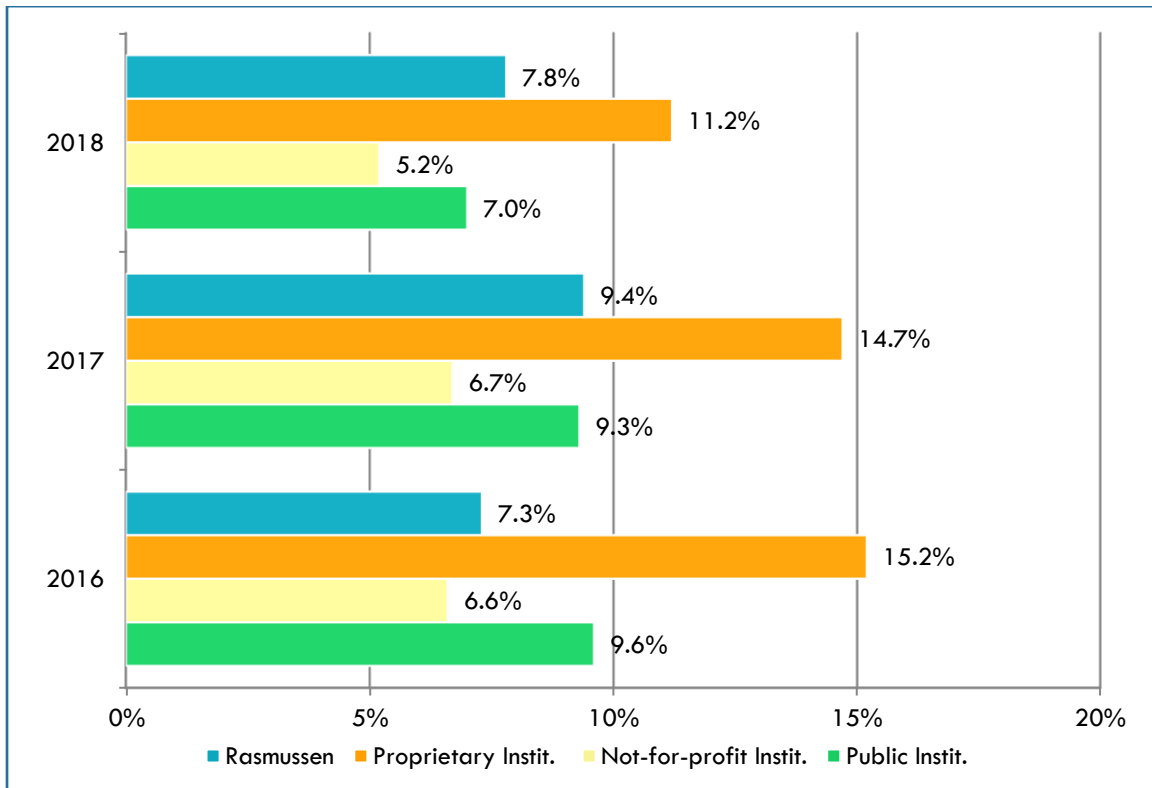
Retention rates examine the percentage of first-time degree seeking students enrolled in the fall of the prior year that are still enrolled in the fall of the current year. The national standard for retention rates is reported annually by NCES. Rasmussen University did not have any entering first-time full-time students in its more recent cohorts (all transfers) so retention rates are not applicable.

Undergraduate Completions per 100 FTE

Academic Year	Rasmussen University	Comparable Illinois Institutions
2018-19	55	35.4

The full-time equivalent (FTE) data is a unit of measurement intended to represent one student enrolled full-time for one academic year. The calculation is based upon credit/contact hours offered at an institution divided by a standard minimum (12 credit hour) full-time course load. The completions per 100 FTE data are included to provide a holistic view of completion across different student populations.

Three-Year Cohort Student Loan Default Rate



Source: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), US Department of Education

Note: The national cohort default rate for fiscal year 2018 is 7.3 percent.

A lower number is a positive indicator.

The three-year cohort student loan default rate is the percentage of a school's borrowers who enter repayment on certain Federal Family Education Loan Program or William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program loans during a particular federal fiscal year, October 1 to September 30, and default or meet other specified conditions prior to the end of the second following fiscal year.

A Thriving Illinois: Higher Education Paths to Equity, Sustainability, and Growth

IBHE is charged to develop a strategic plan to address the present and future aims and needs and requirements of higher education in Illinois (110 ILCS 205/6) (from Ch. 144, par. 186) Sec. 6).

The proposed programs will contribute to Goal 3, *Growth, to increase talent and innovation to drive economic growth*. Rasmussen University looks to industry and employers for input of the continued viability of careers. Rasmussen has established programmatic Advisory Boards comprised of members from the healthcare industry as well as both internal and external program specific members to receive input on the trends in healthcare, careers and workforce needs, and recommendations for programs which may fit those evolving needs as well as the success in the current program(s) to meet those needs. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the proposed programs show ten-year job growth between 2020 and 2030. Job growth for medical assistants is 18 percent, pharmacy technicians is four percent, surgical technologists is nine percent, and registered nurses is a nine percent projected job growth rate. The 2020 median pay for medical administrative assistants was \$37,350; \$35,850 for medical assistants; \$35,100 for pharmacy technicians; \$41,950 for surgical technologists and \$75,330 for registered nurses. Many of the programs have a residential component through classes on campus, as well as an externship component. Students are exposed to an employer or multiple employers in their community through externship experiences. Additionally, some students are offered jobs locally coming out of their externships, which incentivizes staying in Illinois.

Mission and Objectives

1030.60(a)(2): The objectives of the certificate or degree program must be consistent with what the degree program title implies.

1030.60(a)(3): The requested certificate or degree program shall be congruent with the purpose, goals, objectives and mission of the institution.

The proposed operations and programs are consistent with the purpose, goals, objectives, and mission of the University. With this change of ownership, Rasmussen University will continue to “offer market-relevant career programs that produce graduates with the skills necessary” to meet the demands of continually evolving workplaces.

Curriculum/Assessment

1030.60(a)(4): The caliber and content of the curriculum shall assure that the stated certificate or degree objectives for which the program is offered will be achieved.

Admission

All applicants must submit an attestation of high school graduation or equivalency. All new students who enroll in a degree, diploma, or certificate program are required to take the English and Math placement assessments unless they provide a college transcript indicating a grade of C or higher in college-level English and/or Mathematics to prove proficiency. To enroll in dual credit courses, students must be in their junior or senior year of high school and maintain a cumulative high school GPA of 2.0 or higher.

In addition to meeting all general admissions requirements, applicants must satisfy program-specific admissions requirements as relevant to the program for which they are applying. For the School of Health Sciences and School of Nursing applicants, students will be exempt from taking placement examinations if the entrance exam composite scores threshold is met.

Curriculum

Medical Assisting Diploma

The Medical Assisting Diploma program is a 51-quarter hour program designed to prepare students for entry-level medical assistant positions. Students learn the skills to support and assist healthcare providers in delivering effective and efficient quality healthcare services.

- Core Courses – 39 quarter hours
- General Education – 12 quarter hours

Students also complete a capstone course and experiential externship where they perform medical assisting job duties in both the front-office administrative and the back-office clinical areas. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Medical Assistant certification through the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants and meet the educational requirements to sit for the Registered Medical Assistant certification awarded by the American Medical Technologists.

Associate of Applied Science Health Sciences

The Associate of Science in Health Sciences is a 91-93-quarter hour program that provides students with the skills to work in entry-level healthcare positions. Students are trained to understand and apply a combination of real-world technical skills and General Education concepts valuable for critical thinking and problem solving, written and interpersonal communication, customer service, diversity awareness skills, and medical ethics.

- Core Courses – 43-45 quarter hours depending on specialization area
- General Education – 48 quarter hours

Students have the option to specialize in one of four areas: Healthcare Specialization; Medical Administrative Assistant Specialization; Medical Assisting Specialization; and Pharmacy Technician Specialization. For the Medical Assisting Specialization, students complete a capstone course and experiential externship where they perform job duties in both the front-office administrative and the back-office clinical areas. The Pharmacy Technician Specialization requires a capstone which is an overview of all the program courses and concepts, with an emphasis on review and preparation of materials for the Pharmacy Technician Certification Board examination. Graduates of the Pharmacy Technician Specialization are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois after meeting the licensure requirements set by the State and passing the board-approved licensure examinations.

Associate of Science in Professional Nursing

The Associate of Science in Professional Nursing is a 103-quarter hour program designed to provide the knowledge, clinical skills, nursing values, and experience necessary for an entry-level professional nursing position. Students will be trained to be competent in the core components of professional nursing: professional behavior; communication; assessment; clinical decision-making; caring interventions; teaching and learning; collaboration; and managing care.

- Core Courses - 56 quarter hours
- General Education -- 47 quarter hours

The program includes clinical requirements to help students to apply classroom knowledge to the medical environment and demonstrate proficiency in a variety of clinical skills and attitudes. There is also a capstone course for students to reflect on their nursing journey through the program, prepare for licensure, and receive mentorship with the transition to practice. Upon successful completion of the program, graduates will have met the educational prerequisites to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist

The Associate of Applied Science Surgical Technologist is a 92-quarter hour program designed to prepare competent entry-level surgical technologists. Students learn surgical routine techniques, including to prepare, clean, and restock operating rooms; use and maintain surgical equipment; perform scrub and circulator duties in several surgical specialties; and contribute to pre- and post-operative patient care.

- Core Courses - 60- quarter hours
- General Education -- 32 quarter hours

The program includes two practicum experiences to introduce students to the operating room as well as scrub and circulating routines in a supervised setting. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) certification through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

Assessment of Student Learning

The University has established policies for assessment of student learning outcomes. Students' learning outcomes will be assessed using several methods including quizzes, midterm and final exams, classroom presentations, lab-experiments, projects, and written assignments. The University relies on a system of incoming, ongoing, and end-of-program assessment to measure student learning. The academic assessment plan is used to evaluate and improve the quality of learning and teaching, and curriculum delivery.

Program Assessment

The University has established policies for reviewing programs for continuous improvement. Academic programs undergo a review process at regular intervals and as determined by need based upon several indicators, including:

- Retention rates;
- Student satisfaction surveys;
- Employment data;
- Professional certification examination requirements;
- Success of graduates;
- Student and graduate evaluations;
- Faculty input; and
- Employer surveys

Market changes and the relevance of the curriculum are components of Rasmussen's program assessments. The curriculum review cycle is comprised of four phases: constituent input; curriculum proposals; internal and external approvals; and final curriculum implementation. These phases ensure that policies, structures, and curriculum will be developed appropriately.

Facilities (space, equipment, instructional materials)

1030.60(a)(5): The institution shall have adequate and suitable space, equipment and instructional materials to support institutional programs.

The University operates five existing campus locations in the State of Illinois. In the Fox Valley region, Rasmussen is located at 2363 Sequoia Drive, Aurora, Illinois; 6000 East State Street 4th Floor, Rockford, Illinois. In the South Metro region, Rasmussen is located at 8650 West Spring Lake Road, Mokena, Illinois, and 1400 West Normantown Road, Romeoville, Illinois. The operations of Rasmussen University in the Chicago region are limited to its Centro de Aprendizaje, a learning center enabling community access to the Internet, and dual credit offerings in area high schools. Centro de Aprendizaje is located at 3948 West 55 Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The University has adequate space, equipment, and instructional materials to support the proposed operations including classrooms, offices, library, resource center, laboratories and student lounge. The library facilities at the University are sufficient to support existing programs. Rasmussen University students and faculty have access to library services and resources through the fully online Rasmussen University Library and Learning Services. Students and faculty may access the library and learning resources and services through any of their online courses, the student and faculty portals, or directly at the library home page. The library collection includes 24/7 access to web-based scholarly journals, newspapers, magazines, eBooks, image and video collections through a variety of general and subject-specific academic databases and reference collections. Additionally, the library provides access to over 250,000 eBooks that users can view, print, and download to computers and tablets. The Rasmussen University library is a member of Online Computer Library Center (OCLC), an international cooperative of libraries that supports interlibrary loan; Reaching Across Illinois Library System (RAILS); and Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI). Through these memberships, the University has access to WorldCat and FirstSearch, various bibliographic catalogs containing the records of millions of books, journals, and other resources made available for sharing or duplication by member libraries.

Faculty and Staff

1030.60(a)(6): The education, experience and other qualifications of directors, administrators, supervisors and instructors shall ensure that the students will receive education consistent with the objectives of the program.

The University has identified institutional policies that ensure faculty and staff possess the training, credentials, and other related qualifications to provide instruction at the institution. Faculty teaching in the proposed programs will have the appropriate qualifications. A formal faculty evaluation process is in place.

Fiscal and Personnel Resources

1030.60(a)(8): Fiscal and personnel resources shall be sufficient to permit the institution to meet obligations to continuing programs while assuming additional resource responsibilities for the new certificate or degree program.

The University has adequate faculty, staff, and other instructional resources to administer operations. In terms of financial stability, American Public Education, Incorporated (APEI) audit, year ending December 31, 2020, shows that APEI is profitable, has 0.9 years of reserve, and limited long-term debt. Additionally, the U.S. Department of Education's most recent publicly available financial composite score (2018-2019) for APEI is 3.0 and the financial audit year ending December 31, 2020, yields a 3.0 for APEI's financial composite score. More specifically, APEI experienced a 12.4 percent gain in revenue from Fiscal Year 2019 (\$286,270,000) to Fiscal Year 2020 (\$321,785,000). The net operating revenue margin for APEI was at 6.2 percent and the return on assets was at 6.1 percent for Fiscal Year 2020.

Rasmussen College, LLC's publicly available financial composite scores from the U.S. Department of Education have ranged from 2.3 in 2014-2015 to 3.0 in 2018-2019. For Fiscal Year 2019, the composite score dropped to 0.1 and for Fiscal Year 2020, Rasmussen changed its fiscal year to the calendar year in anticipation of the transaction with APEI. Rasmussen's financial audit statements ending September 30, 2020, yielded a composite score of 1.4, and the financial statements ending December 31, 2020, yielded a score of 1.7. The 1.7 composite score was accepted by the Minnesota Office of Higher Education for continued participation in State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) for distance education authorization. However due to the initial Fiscal Year 2020 composite score of 1.4, Rasmussen was placed by the U.S. Department of Education on Heightened Cash Monitoring One (HCM1) and remains on HCM1 due to the initial Fiscal Year 2020 score of 1.4. Consequently, the University is required to have a line of credit to continue with its temporary provisional program participation agreement for Title IV eligibility.

Accreditation/Licensure

Rasmussen University is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. Program specific accreditation and licensure details are listed below.

Medical Assisting Diploma

The Medical Assisting Diploma program offered at the Fox Valley and South Metro Regions are accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Medical Assistant certification through the Certifying Board of the American Association of Medical Assistants. Graduates also meet the educational requirements to sit for the Registered Medical Assistant certification awarded by the American Medical Technologists. Licensure is not required.

Associate of Science in Health Sciences

Programmatic accreditation is not required for the Associate of Science in Health Sciences program. However, graduates of the Pharmacy Technician Specialization are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois after meeting the licensure requirements set by the State and passing the board-approved licensure examinations.

Associate of Science in Professional Nursing

In July 2020, Rasmussen received candidacy status with the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing for the Associate of Science in Professional Nursing program. Rasmussen's candidate status is valid for two years, expiring in July 2022; therefore, the initial accreditation site visit must take place before July 28, 2022. Rasmussen has a scheduled site visit for initial accreditation scheduled for March 8-10, 2022. If this candidacy period leads to initial accreditation, the effective date of that initial accreditation is retroactive to July 28, 2020.

Rasmussen has approval from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation's (IDFPR) Board of Nursing to offer the program. Graduates of the program are eligible to sit for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses examination and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

Associate of Science in Surgical Technologist

The Associate of Science in Surgical Technologist is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) and recognized by the Commission on Accreditation Review Council on Education in Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting. Graduates of the program meet the educational requirements to sit for the Certified Surgical Technologist (CST) certification through the National Board of Surgical Technology and Surgical Assisting (NBSTSA) and are eligible to apply for licensure in the State of Illinois.

Program Information

1030.60(a)(7): The information the institution provides for students and the public shall accurately describe the programs offered, program objectives, length of program, schedule of tuition, fees, and all other charges and expenses necessary for completion of the course of study, cancellation and refund policies, and such other material facts concerning the institution and the program or course of instruction as are likely to affect the decision of the student to enroll. This information, including any enrollment agreements or similar agreements, shall be available to prospective students prior to enrollment.

Detailed information about the proposed programs, including description of the admission policies, university policies, tuition, fees, and curriculum are provided in the proposal and will be published on the University's website.

Staff Conclusion

The staff concludes that Rasmussen University and its proposed programs meet the criteria in Sections 1030.30 and 1030.60 of the rules to implement The Private College Act (110 ILCS 1005) and The Academic Degree Act (110 ILCS 1010), and the relating Illinois Administrative Code (Title 23 Section 1030) pertaining to the assessment and licensure of a post-secondary institution.