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January 6, 2009

Memorandum

To: Superintendent/Presidents
Associate Degree Nursing Program Directors
Chief Instructional Officers

From: José Millan, Vice Chancellor
Economic Development and Workforce Preparation Division

Subject: Model for Implementation of AB 1559 Multicriteria Screening Process

On October 14, 2007, AB 1559 was signed by the governor and chaptered. The bill encouraged the Chancellor to develop a model admissions process based on this section and to make it available to the nursing programs. This memo is in response to that request. The model and three samples for assigning point values presented here were developed in collaboration with the California Community College Nursing Advisory Committee. AB 1559 requires a community college registered nursing program that **elects** to use a multicriteria screening process on or after January 1, 2008, to evaluate applicants for admission to nursing programs to include specified criteria relating to the academic performance, work or volunteer experience, foreign language skills, life experiences, and special circumstances of the applicant. The bill authorizes a community college registered nursing program using a multicriteria screening process to use an approved diagnostic assessment tool before, during, or after the multicriteria screening process. The bill requires a district that uses multicriteria screening measures to report its nursing program admission policies to the chancellor annually, in writing.

Section 78261.5 was added to the Education Code, to read: "A community college registered nursing program that determines that the number of applicants to that program exceeds its capacity **may** admit students in accordance with **any** of the following procedures:

1. A random selection process
2. A blended combination of random selection and a multicriteria screening process
3. A multicriteria screening process.

When using the multicriteria screening process, the following criteria shall be included, but not necessarily be limited to, all of the following:

1. Academic degrees or diplomas, or relevant certificates, held by an applicant
2. Grade-point average in relevant course work
3. Any relevant work or volunteer experience
4. Life experiences or special circumstances of an applicant, including, but not necessarily limited to, the following experiences or circumstances
 - a. Disabilities
 - b. Low family income

- c. First generation of family to attend college
 - d. Need to work
 - e. Disadvantaged social or educational environment
 - f. Difficult personal and family situations or circumstances
 - g. Refugee or veteran status
5. Proficiency or advanced level coursework in languages other than English. Credit for languages other than English shall be received for languages that are identified by the chancellor as high-frequency languages, as based on census data.

Additional criteria, such as a personal interview, a personal statement, letter of recommendation, or the number of repetitions of prerequisite classes, or other criteria, as approved by the chancellor, may be used but are not required.

A community college registered nursing program using a multicriteria screening process may use an approved diagnostic assessment tool before, during, or after the multicriteria screening process.

A community college registered nursing program that uses a multicriteria screening process shall report its nursing program admissions policies to the chancellor annually, in writing. The admissions policies reported shall include:

- 1. the weight given to any criteria used by the program
- 2. demographic information relating to both the persons admitted to the program and the persons of that group who successfully completed the program

This section of the Education Code provided by AB 1559 shall remain in effect until January 1, 2016 unless a bill is enacted that deletes or extends this date.

Definitions provided in the bill

Disabilities The same meaning as used in Section 2626 of the Unemployment Insurance Code

Disadvantaged social or educational environment
Includes but is not limited to the status of a student who has participated in EOPS

Grade-point average
The same fixed set of required prerequisite courses that all applicants to the nursing program administering the multicriteria screening process are required to complete

Low family income
Measured in terms of a student's eligibility for, or receipt of, financial aid under a program that may include, but is not necessarily limited to, a fee waiver from the Board of Governors, the Cal Grant Program, the federal Pell Grant program or CalWORKS

Need to work
the student is working at least part time while completing academic work that is a prerequisite for admission to the nursing program

MODEL

**USE OF MULTICRITERIA FOR ENROLLMENT IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAMS AS DEVELOPED BY THE CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITY COLLEGES NURSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MAY 2008**

The multicriteria selection process is intended to be used to determine enrollments for associate degree nursing programs that have too many applicants to accommodate all students that have submitted applications and have met initial enrollment criteria. Hence the enrollment process programs use may be in two phases. The initial phase consists of determining whether or not the applicant has met prerequisite criteria. This may include a validated selection process or a process whereby the student demonstrates that they have taken the required prerequisite courses and passed them with a grade of “C” or better. The validated selection process may consist of a process similar to the Chancellor’s Office Model Prerequisites for Enrollment in Associate Degree Nursing Programs. If the initial process results in too many students to accommodate enrollment, programs may use an additional process such as multicriteria screening as described here or the lottery or a combination of both. Based on the requirements of AB 1559, and Section 78261.5 added to the Education Code, five categories were developed with a recommendation for the number of points assigned to each. The five categories are summarized below. When using these categories for selection purposes please refer to the definitions noted above.

- 1. GPA = Determine an appropriate number of points**
 - a. 2.5 minimum GPA in anatomy, physiology, and microbiology
 - b. 2.5 minimum GPA in remaining prerequisite courses for the nursing program
- 2. ASSESSMENT/READINESS TEST RESULTS = Determine an appropriate number of points**
- 3. DEGREES/WORK EXPERIENCE = Determine an appropriate number of points**
- 4. LIFE EXPERIENCES = Determine an appropriate number of points**
- 5. LANGUAGE = Determine an appropriate number of points**

Nursing programs may determine points as they wish as long as the criteria required by AB 1559 are met. Please note in the law, there are examples of what must be considered in the various categories.

Attached are three sample documents of how point assignments might be used by a community college associate degree nursing program. Please keep this memo, the model and the samples together for easy reference.