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Committee Meeting: 11/19/2025

Board Meeting: 11/20/2025
Austin, Texas

Christina Melton Crain, Chairman
Robert P. Gauntt
Jodie Lee Jiles
Janiece Longoria
Nolan Perez
Stuart W. Stedman

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Convene	2:30 p.m. <i>Chairman Crain</i>		
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Adjourn	3:00 p.m.		

1. **U.T. System Board of Regents: Discussion and appropriate action regarding Consent Agenda items, if any, assigned for Committee consideration**

RECOMMENDATION

The Board will be asked to approve the Consent Agenda beginning on [Page 99](#).

2. U.T. Austin: Approval to establish a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Clinical Nurse Specialist (DNP-CNS) degree program

RECOMMENDATION

Dr. John M. Zerwas, in his roles as Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, concurs in the recommendation of the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

- a. establish a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Clinical Nurse Specialist (DNP-CNS) degree program at U.T. Austin; and
- b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Program Descriptions

Following the recommendations of leading national professional nursing organizations (i.e., the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists) to move the level of preparation for entry-level clinical nurse specialists (CNS) from a master's-level degree to the doctoral-level Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, U.T. Austin proposes a new Doctorate of Nursing Practice in Clinical Nurse Specialist (DNP-CNS) program that would replace the current Master of Science in Nursing (MSN-CNS) program.

The program of study for the DNP-CNS will include courses required for CNS certification, which are currently offered in the MSN program, in addition to courses offered in the existing post-master's DNP. This new DNP-CNS degree program is designed to allow students to more efficiently acquire the education needed for CNS certification while concurrently completing requirements for the preferred DNP degree. What currently would require four years of study and more than 90 semester credit hours in two separate programs would, under the proposed DNP-CNS, instead allow students to complete the DNP program of study and meet the education requirements for CNS certification in three years with 72 semester credit hours.

The Institute of Medicine, The National Academies of Medicine, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation all promote streamlined pathways for nurses seeking advanced academic degrees. Because accreditors now expect nurse faculty to have a terminal doctoral-level degree (e.g., DNP or Ph.D.), this program also is designed to help address the nursing faculty shortage in Texas.

Need and Student Demand

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Labor Market Information (LMI) for Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, and Clinical Nursing graduates indicates a complex supply-demand landscape for advanced nursing degrees in Texas. While the LMI shows some regions with oversupply and others with undersupply, statewide data suggest that degree programs may not be producing graduates in proportion to demand, particularly for advanced practice roles such as CNSs.

Recent projections from the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies and the Texas Department of State Health Services highlight persistent and growing shortages in key nursing roles (e.g., nursing faculty). By 2032, Texas is expected to face a deficit of more than 57,000 Registered Nurse (RN) full-time equivalents, with 16.3% of projected demand unmet. The supply of CNSs is projected to exceed demand, but this surplus does not address the acute shortages of RNs and the need for advanced practice nurses in underserved regions.

The persistent nursing workforce shortages, national faculty workforce shortage, and significant healthcare access barriers for Texans underscore the urgent need for expanded CNS educational programs at the doctoral level. Efforts to expand educational programs are critical to meeting both current and future healthcare needs across Texas and the nation, and this new proposed program directly addresses these needs.

Based on current demand and enrollment in the existing MSN-CNS program that the proposed DNP-CNS program will replace, U.T. Austin projects enrollment of 32 students per year.

Program Quality

The DNP-CNS programs will be supported by highly qualified faculty with doctoral degrees, including 14 core faculty and 18 support faculty members. The U.T. Austin School of Nursing does not anticipate the hiring of any new core or support faculty as the current MSN-CNS programs faculty will transition to teach in the DNP-CNS curriculum.

Over the last five years, these faculty have been awarded more than \$48 million in federal research grants, received more than \$7 million in state and institutional grant awards, and account for 289 peer-reviewed publications. Twelve of the faculty have supervised dissertation research in each of the last five years, and an additional faculty member has done so for three years. The proposed DNP-NP programs also will meet the standards for continued Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation.

Revenue and Expenses

Because almost all the required resources for the proposed DNP-CNS are already in place, no significant new expenses associated with the creation of this new DNP-CNS program are anticipated. Therefore, in lieu of specific budget projections, U.T. Austin provides this explanation of the proposed program's costs to the institution:

1. All faculty who will teach in this program are already full- or part-time faculty in the School of Nursing.
2. The School of Nursing currently provides financial support to graduate students in Nursing as teaching assistants and will continue to provide this student financial support when the new program is established in the School of Nursing.
3. The two graduate program coordinators who currently provide administrative support to the MSN-CNS students will now provide the same level of support for DNP-CNS students.
4. All facilities, equipment, technology, and resources needed to support the proposed DNP-CNS program already exist and will remain in place once it is established.

Coordinating Board Criteria

The proposed program meets all applicable Coordinating Board criteria for new doctoral degree programs.

3. **U.T. Austin: Approval to establish a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse Practitioner (DNP-NP) degree program**

RECOMMENDATION

Dr. John M. Zerwas, in his roles as Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, concurs in the recommendation of the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

- a. establish a Doctor of Nursing Practice in Nurse Practitioner (DNP-NP) degree program at U.T. Austin; and
- b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Program Descriptions

Following the recommendations of leading national professional nursing organizations (i.e., the American Association of Colleges of Nursing and the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties) to move the level of preparation for entry-level nurse practitioners (NPs) from a master's-level degree to the doctoral-level Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, U.T. Austin proposes a new Doctorate of Nursing Practice in Nurse Practitioner (DNP-NP) program that would replace the current Master of Science in Nursing (MSN-NP) program.

The program of study for the DNP-NP will include courses required for NP certification, which are currently offered in the MSN program, in addition to courses offered in the existing post-master's DNP. This new DNP-NP degree program is designed to allow students to more efficiently acquire the education needed for NP certification while concurrently completing requirements for the preferred DNP degree. What currently would require four years of study and more than 90 semester credit hours in two separate programs would, under the proposed DNP-NP, instead allow students to complete the DNP program of study and meet the education requirements for NP certification in three years with 70-77 semester credit hours.

The Institute of Medicine, The National Academies of Medicine, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation all promote streamlined pathways for nurses seeking advanced academic degrees. Because accreditors now expect nurse faculty to have a terminal doctoral-level degree (e.g., DNP or Ph.D.), this program also is designed to help address the nursing faculty shortage in Texas.

Need and Student Demand

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's Labor Market Information (LMI) for Registered Nursing, Nursing Administration, Nursing Research, and Clinical Nursing graduates indicates a complex supply-demand landscape for advanced nursing degrees in Texas. While the LMI shows some regions with oversupply and others with undersupply, statewide data

suggest that degree programs may not be producing graduates in proportion to demand, particularly for advanced practice roles such as NPs.

Recent projections from the Texas Center for Nursing Workforce Studies and the Texas Department of State Health Services highlight persistent and growing shortages in key nursing roles (e.g., nursing faculty). By 2032, Texas is expected to face a deficit of more than 57,000 Registered Nurse (RN) full-time equivalents, with 16.3% of projected demand unmet. The supply of NPs is projected to exceed demand, but this surplus does not address the acute shortages of RNs and the need for advanced practice nurses in underserved regions.

The persistent nursing workforce shortages, national faculty recruitment shortage, and significant healthcare access barriers for Texans underscore the urgent need for expanded NP educational programs at the doctoral level. Efforts to expand educational programs are critical to meeting both current and future healthcare needs across Texas and the nation, and this new proposed program is designed to directly address these needs.

Based on current demand and enrollment in the existing MSN-NP program that the proposed DNP-NP program will replace, U.T. Austin projects enrollment of 32 students per year.

Program Quality

The DNP-NP program will be supported by highly qualified faculty with doctoral degrees, including 14 core faculty and 18 support faculty members. The U.T. Austin School of Nursing does not anticipate the hiring of any new core or support faculty as the current MSN-NP program faculty will transition to teach in the DNP-NP curriculum.

Over the last five years, these faculty have been awarded more than \$48 million in federal research grants, received more than \$7 million in state and institutional grant awards, and account for 289 peer-reviewed publications. Twelve of the faculty have supervised dissertation research in each of the last five years, and an additional faculty member has done so for three years. The proposed DNP-NP programs also will meet the standards for continued Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation.

Revenue and Expenses

Because almost all the required resources for the proposed DNP-NP program are already in place, no significant new expenses associated with the creation of this new DNP-NP program are anticipated. Therefore, in lieu of specific budget projections, U.T. Austin provides this explanation of the proposed program's costs to the institution:

1. All faculty who will teach in this program are already full- or part-time faculty in the School of Nursing.
2. The School of Nursing currently provides financial support to graduate students in Nursing as teaching assistants and will continue to provide this student financial support when the new program is established in the School of Nursing.
3. The two graduate program coordinators who currently provide administrative support to the MSN-NP students will now provide the same level of support for DNP-NP students.

4. All facilities, equipment, technology, and resources needed to support the proposed DNP-NP program already exist and will remain in place once it is established.

Coordinating Board Criteria

The proposed program meets all applicable Coordinating Board criteria for new doctoral degree programs.

4. **Stephen F. Austin State University: Approval to establish a College of Health Professions**

RECOMMENDATION

Dr. John M. Zerwas, in his roles as Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, concurs in the recommendation of the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

- a. establish a College of Health Professions at Stephen F. Austin; and
- b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Pursuant to Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40601 (Institutions Comprising the University of Texas System), Stephen F. Austin proposes the establishment of a College of Health Professions. The establishment of the College of Health Professions represents Stephen F. Austin's next step in meeting the region's growing demand for skilled professionals. The college will aim to prepare students and researchers for the evolving landscape of these fields and to increase visibility and synergies among programs. The new College will be comprised of the following components: (1) School of Nursing, (2) pre-health programs, (3) allied health programs, (4) audiology, (5) speech language pathology, (6) kinesiology, (7) dietetics/nutrition, (8) psychology, (9) counseling, and (10) the School of Social Work. This new college will allow cross-disciplinary collaboration that will poise Stephen. F. Austin to respond more nimbly to high-demand fields of study to help meet the healthcare needs of East Texas. Upon approval by the Board of Regents, the Office of Academic Affairs will notify the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of the change so that the Stephen F. Austin administrative unit structure may be updated.

5. U.T. Southwestern Medical Center: Approval to establish a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Medical Physics degree program

RECOMMENDATION

Dr. John M. Zerwas, in his roles as Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, concurs in the recommendation of the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

- a. establish a Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Medical Physics degree program; and
- b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Program Description

The proposed Ph.D. in Medical Physics program at U.T. Southwestern Medical Center (UTSWMC) is designed to offer rigorous and interdisciplinary education in the application of physics to medicine. The program requires 107 semester credit hours and combines advanced coursework with hands-on clinical and research training, preparing students for careers in medical imaging, radiation therapy, nuclear medicine, and health physics. Students will benefit from access to state-of-the-art clinical facilities and mentorship from leading experts in the field.

Graduates of the program are expected to:

- Demonstrate a strong foundation in the physical and mathematical principles underlying medical physics.
- Be well-prepared for residency programs in medical physics.
- Apply their knowledge to solve complex clinical and research problems in areas such as medical imaging and radiation therapy.
- Communicate effectively with interdisciplinary healthcare teams.
- Pursue successful careers in clinical practice, academic research, or industry.

Need and Student Demand

Medical physicists are essential members of the healthcare team, ensuring the safe and effective use of radiation in patient care. Their work supports compliance with strict regulatory standards, quality assurance in radiological procedures, and implementation of cutting-edge technologies such as proton therapy, magnetic resonance-guided adaptive radiation therapy,

and AI-enhanced imaging. These niche roles are not easily filled by general physicists or engineers, further underscoring the need for targeted educational pathways.

A significant proportion of currently practicing medical physicists are nearing retirement age. Using the domestic demographic workforce data, an American Society of Radiation Oncology analysis shows that the medical physicist retirement results in a 2.2% drain on workforce supply per year. The attrition rate is accelerating, due to the retirement of baby boomers (rate of retirement during 2010-2020 triples that during 1990-2000). American Association of Physicists in Medicine workforce studies have predicted an ongoing need for new graduates to replace retiring professionals, sustain clinical services, and advance research and teaching in academic medical centers. UTSWMC's program is designed not only to meet clinical demand but also to cultivate future leaders in research and academia.

The State of Texas, and specifically the Dallas-Fort Worth region, continues to see expansion in healthcare services and the development of advanced cancer centers and imaging facilities. UTSWMC, as a leading academic medical institution, is uniquely positioned to train students who will contribute directly to the healthcare workforce in Texas.

UTSWMC projects enrollment of two students in the first year and four students in each of the next four years based on the sustained growth in applications of the existing Medical Physics program track within the Biomedical Engineering program. Notwithstanding a "Covid drop" in 2021, the Medical Physics track application pool has grown by 94% since 2020. The number of current applicants to the Medical Physics track provides a powerfully accurate basis to project admission of at least four highly qualified students each year. This rate of enrollment will facilitate the program's goal for steady-state aggregate enrollment of 15 students.

Program Quality

The proposed Medical Physics Ph.D. program is built upon the resources and expertise of the Department of Radiation Oncology at UTSWMC, one of the largest and most research-active departments in the country. The department includes more than 35 board-certified medical physicists, many of whom will serve as faculty mentors and instructors for this Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs (CAMPEP)-accredited Medical Physics Ph.D. program. Specifically, the Ph.D. program in Medical Physics will have eight core faculty members. Current core faculty account for more than \$23 million in state and federal grant funding over the last five years. Over the same period, core faculty have published 373 peer-reviewed publications. All core faculty have experience in supervising dissertation research, with an average experience exceeding four years. The program will have approximately 30 support faculty members and has plans to hire an additional core faculty member in 2027. All core faculty will have a 1:1 teaching load, resulting in a 2:1 faculty-to-student ratio over the first five years, which is a strong indicator of high program quality.

The department hosts a long-standing CAMPEP-accredited residency program in therapeutic medical physics (since 2009), providing a robust infrastructure for clinical training. Faculty members are actively engaged in mentoring graduate students, clinical residents, postdoctoral fellows, and medical trainees across a wide array of projects in adaptive therapy, artificial intelligence in radiation oncology, image-guided radiation therapy, magnetic resonance-guided linear accelerator technology, proton therapy, and radiobiological modeling. The department's faculty has developed and implemented pioneering clinical protocols, including some of the first clinical applications of magnetic resonance-guided adaptive therapy and AI-driven treatment

planning. The Medical Artificial Intelligence and Automation Lab provides dedicated research infrastructure to support big data analytics and translational AI research. These clinical and research strengths have helped attract top-tier students and trainees, and the faculty's experience in education and interdisciplinary collaboration provides a robust foundation for the continued development of the graduate program.

Overall, the program emphasizes cross-disciplinary integration, drawing from expertise across Radiation Oncology, Radiology, Biomedical Engineering, Mathematics, and Computational Sciences. Students benefit from team-based learning and exposure to real-world translational projects at the intersection of clinical care and scientific innovation. Rather than remaining confined to a single area, students engage in group seminars, collaborative labs, and joint research initiatives that foster broad skill development relevant to modern medical physics, in both academic and clinical environments.

Revenue and Expenses

Expenses	5-Year Total
<i>Faculty</i>	
Salaries	\$ 1,119,741
Benefits	\$ 21,106
<i>Graduate Students</i>	
TA Salaries	\$ 2,400,000
TA Benefits	\$ 44,400
GRA Salaries	\$ 754,675
GRA Benefits	\$ 14,226
<i>Staff & Administration</i>	
Graduate Coordinator Salary	\$ 198,824
Administrative Staff Salaries	\$ 121,777
Staff Benefits	\$ 6,042
<i>Other Expenses</i>	
Travel per incoming student, marketing, program event, graduation	\$ 171,400
Total Expenses	\$ 4,852,191
Revenue	5-Year Total
<i>From Student Enrollment</i>	
Formula Funding	\$ 394,536
Tuition and Fees	\$ 81,216
<i>From Institutional Funds</i>	
Institutional Support	\$ 1,140,847
<i>From Grant Funds</i>	
Grant Funds	\$ 4,713,300
<i>From Other Revenue Sources</i>	
Radiation Oncology Funds	\$ 91,343
Total Revenue	\$ 6,421,242

Coordinating Board Criteria

The proposed program meets all applicable Coordinating Board criteria for new doctoral degree programs.

6. U.T. Health Science Center - Houston: Approval to establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in Nursing Leadership and Administration degree program

RECOMMENDATION

Dr. John M. Zerwas, in his roles as Chancellor and Executive Vice Chancellor for Health Affairs, concurs in the recommendation of the institutional president that authorization, pursuant to the Regents' *Rules and Regulations*, Rule 40307, related to academic program approval standards, be granted to

- a. establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) in Nursing Leadership and Administration degree program at U.T. Health Science Center - Houston (UTHealth Houston); and
- b. submit the proposal to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and appropriate action.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Program Descriptions

The proposed BSN to DNP in Nursing Leadership and Administration (BSN-DNP NLA) program at the Cizik School of Nursing builds on foundational knowledge of the BSN education and is designed to provide substantive guidance and new knowledge that will underpin a career in nursing leadership, while also aiding the graduates to contribute significant leadership that will benefit patients, families, and communities by influencing changes in healthcare. The BSN-DNP NLA program is ideal for learners who desire to become, or are currently, nurse leaders with a passion to advance the nursing profession. Graduates will be prepared to practice across the continuum of care in a variety of roles such as nurse managers, nurse directors, and nurse executives as well as change agents and innovators in settings such as hospitals, clinics, community health centers, and other healthcare facilities.

A baccalaureate degree-holding registered nurse can complete the proposed BSN-DNP NLA program in 69 semester credit hours (SCH) compared to current DNP programs that require a Master of Science in Nursing and an additional 80 semester credit hours for the DNP. The proposed BSN-DNP NLA program is planned for implementation in Fall 2026.

Need and Student Demand

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) anticipates a 29% growth in positions for managers in Medical and Health Services by 2033 (BLS, 2023), demand that will continue to grow driven by an aging population and increased need for healthcare services. The American Organization for Nursing Leadership Longitudinal Nursing Leadership Insight Study (2024) found nationally 12% of nurse leaders said they plan to leave their position within the next six months, and another 23% said they are considering leaving. The increase in organization leadership positions and the anticipated turnover support the need for formal educational programs for nursing leaders.

A needs assessment conducted by the UTHealth Houston Cizik School of Nursing in October 2024 supports the need for the BSN-DNP NLA program. Three surveys were distributed to community nurse leaders, MSN Nursing Leadership alumni, and currently enrolled undergraduate students. Results from all three groups strongly supported the development of a BSN-DNP NLA program. Additionally, a majority of community nurse leaders indicated they had potential candidates for the program once available.

UTHealth Houston projects enrollment of twelve students per year for each of the first five years of the program implementation. This aligns with current enrollment at the UTHealth Houston Cizik School of Nursing for graduate level nursing leadership programs.

Program Quality

The BSN-DNP NLP program will be supported by highly qualified faculty with doctoral degrees, including eight core faculty and four support faculty members. The Cizik School of Nursing does not anticipate the hiring of any new core or support faculty as the current Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Leadership program faculty will transition to teach the BSN-DNP NLA curriculum. These faculty members teach across all graduate level courses and tracks. The proposed BSN-DNP NLA program also will meet the standards for continued Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accreditation.

Revenue and Expenses

The table below summarizes the five-year projection of revenues and expenses.

Expenses	5-Year Total
<i>Faculty</i>	
Salaries	\$ 2,397,601
Benefits	\$ 719,280
<i>Staff & Administration</i>	
Administrative Staff Salaries	\$ 81,421
Staff Benefits	\$ 30,126
<i>Other Expenses</i>	
Operating Infrastructure: Instructional technology, supplies, materials, faculty professional development and program administration	\$ 73,100
Total Expenses	\$ 3,301,528
Revenue	5-Year Total
<i>From Student Enrollment</i>	
Formula Funding	\$ 1,425,427
Tuition and Fees	\$ 1,939,420
Total Revenue	\$ 3,364,847

Coordinating Board Criteria

The proposed program meets all applicable Coordinating Board criteria for new doctoral degree programs.