



TO: Higher Education Committee

FROM: John L. D'Agati *John L. D'Agati*

SUBJECT: Elyon College Establishment: Associate in Science (A.S.)
in Judaic Studies and an Associate in Applied Science
(A.A.S.) in Accounting and Business Technology

DATE: March 12, 2012

AUTHORIZATION(S): *John L. D'Agati*
SUMMARY

Issue for Decision

Should the Board of Regents grant a provisional charter as an independent college to Elyon College, Brooklyn (Kings County) and approve a master plan amendment to offer programs in Judaic Studies and Accounting and Business Technology leading, respectively, to the degrees of Associate in Science (A.S.) and Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.)?

Reason(s) for Consideration

Required by State statute and State regulation.

Proposed Handling

The question will come before the Higher Education Committee at its March 2012 meeting, where it will be voted on and action taken. It will then come before the full Board at its March 2012 meeting for final action.

Background Information

The Department has received a petition for a provisional charter for Elyon College, seeking authorization to award the Associate in Science (A.S.) and Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degrees.

The application process began with the submission of its initial self-study in 2005. A peer-based review organized by the proposed institution took place in June 2007. The team members submitted reports which covered various aspects of the proposed

institution's resources, faculty, library, curriculum, administration, admissions and related policies. In February 2008, the applicant submitted updated materials, based on the recommendations from the June 2007 review. On February 26, 2009, a peer review team organized by the Department visited the proposed location again to assess the institution's progress in meeting expectations for functioning as a degree-granting institution in New York State. The Team toured the proposed facility, met with the proposed administrators and Chairman of the Board, and interviewed the proposed librarian and several proposed faculty members. The Team identified several areas in need of improvement, including financial resources, facilities, library resources, and faculty. The applicant subsequently provided clarification and additional commitments in these areas.

The proposed college is located in Brooklyn, Kings County, in a three story building that was formerly a synagogue and is currently used as a high school for girls, Merkaz Bnos High School, during the day. The proposed Elyon College would have a substantial portion of the high school facilities available for instruction to be offered entirely after the school day ends.

A canvass of all degree-granting institutions in the New York City region resulted in no objections to the proposed Elyon College or its programs.

The Department has determined that the proposed programs would meet registration standards. A summary of major components of the institution is attached. A recommendation regarding the provisional charter appears separately on the Board's agenda and will be voted on. If the charter is granted, and in keeping with Department policy, the Regents would award its degrees until the charter is made absolute.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Regents approve a master plan amendment to authorize Elyon College, Brooklyn, to offer A.S. and A.A.S. programs, respectively, in Judaic Studies and in Accounting and Business Technology as its first associate degree programs in the disciplinary areas of the humanities and business. The amendment will be effective until March 2013, unless the programs are registered prior to that date, in which case master plan amendment shall be without term.

Attachment

Information in Support of Recommendation

Academic Review

Mission

The mission of Elyon College, as stated by the applicant, would be two-fold: 1) to prepare individuals for service as Jewish community leaders; and 2) to prepare individuals for careers in the field of Accounting and Business Technology in an atmosphere that promotes self development and a commitment to social responsibility.

The proposed Elyon College plans to serve Yeshiva students and the general community located in the College's geographic area. The institution would be located at 1400 W 6th Street, Brooklyn, NY.

Curricula

The proposed curricula of the institution are Judaic Studies, leading to the Associate in Science (A.S.) degree and Accounting and Business Technology, leading to the Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree. The College also seeks registration of shorter term programs leading to certificates in each of these two fields.

Each program at Elyon College would require the minimum number of credits in the liberal arts for the degree to be awarded. Courses in this domain would advance student competencies in critical reading, and writing and other communication skills. Each curriculum would also foster skills in research methodology, problem solving, and decision making. A special feature of the program is a non-credit internship in the non-profit sector which would be a requirement for graduation in each proposed degree program, with the intent of providing students with the opportunity to apply their skills and experiences in a real-world setting and develop a commitment to community service.

The proposed program in Judaic Studies features preparation in the field of Judaica, and advances student knowledge of Jewish history, heritage, culture and tradition. The goal of the proposed program is to prepare students to be successful in a variety of occupational settings, including Jewish community organizations and associations, day schools, and general community centers.

The proposed program in Accounting and Business Technology is designed to enable graduates to be successful in a variety of business settings where accounting and technological skills are essential. Students would gain knowledge and skills in basic accounting procedures and technological applications. Graduates would be expected to have advanced computer skills and have acquired a general knowledge of business.

Elyon has articulation agreements with CUNY Brooklyn College, Mercy College, New York Institute of Technology and Touro College.

Students

In order to qualify for admission to the proposed Elyon College, applicants will need to be high school graduates or the equivalent. In addition, Elyon College would also offer its courses to advanced upper high school students, thus encouraging them to pursue college studies upon high school graduation as well as preparing them for success in college studies. The applicant estimates that up to one-third of estimated first year enrollees may be advanced high school students.

Total projected full-time enrollment for the first year of operation is 30-40 students (15-20 in each proposed program). It is anticipated that enrollment will increase to 100-150 by the fifth year of operation. Because the College's location is in Brooklyn, it is expected that the majority of its students will reside primarily in the Boroughs of Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island.

Faculty

The initial faculty for the Judaic Studies program and general liberal arts courses includes a program chair, two full-time faculty and five part-time faculty. Five proposed faculty have an earned doctorate directly related to their proposed areas of instruction.

The initial faculty for the Accounting and Business Technology Program would consist of a program chair and three faculty members, two of whom are designated as full-time. Among this group, two have master's degrees related to their field of instruction and one has both an earned doctorate and two master's degrees in his field of instruction.

Facilities

The proposed college would be in a three story building that was formerly a synagogue and is currently used as a high school for girls, Merkaz Bnos High School, during the day. The proposed Elyon College would have a substantial portion of the high school facilities available for instruction to be offered entirely after the school day ends.

The applicant states that state-of-the-art computers will be available for students for study and research purposes. The applicant states that students will have access to an on-line library with an extensive collection of over 30,000 scholarly books and journal articles. To complement the proposed college's limited print collection, the applicant has agreements with local libraries and the libraries at CUNY Brooklyn College to enable its students to conduct research and other learning opportunities.

Finances

The applicant has attested that it has cash reserves deposited in a New York bank that exceeds the expenses estimated for a first year of operation, exclusive of any income from tuition or fund raising. This condition meets a basic requirement of the Department. The President of the proposed Elyon College also states that he and other proposed board of trustee members have the experiences needed for fund raising as a supplement to revenues from tuition.

Planning Review

Need

The applicant indicates the Jewish population of New York City and vicinity is approximately 1,900,000. The applicant believes that the size of this population and the myriad organizations, federations, and associations established to serve that population, will provide the graduates of Elyon College's program in Jewish Studies with excellent employment opportunities. Students prepared in the Accounting and Business Technology program are expected to have substantial job opportunities and prospects in business fields. The applicant reports that this conclusion was reached through cumulative formal research and extensive discussions with community leaders throughout Brooklyn and beyond, and analysis of the employment sections in local newspapers. A review of labor market data from the Occupational Outlook Handbook indicates moderate prospective demand for book-keeping accounting and auditing clerks (median salary, \$32,500) and strong continuing demand for accountants who have a baccalaureate or higher degree (median salary, \$61,000).

Effect on Other Institutions

The Department's canvass of institutions in New York City resulted in five responses. No institution expressed an objection or concern.

Summary of Review Process for a New Institution

The review of a proposal for a new degree-granting institution in New York includes the following:

- Applicant and staff meet to consider New York's standards and review processes.
- Applicant prepares a detailed self-study that addresses all requirements for the requested degree powers and program registrations
- A site visit is conducted by a highly qualified group of peer reviews, with attendant reports on compliance and on adherence to best practices at the institution and program levels.
- Applicant officially submits self-study and reports and responses to them to the Department.
- Staff complete review of the self-study and related documents; including the peer review reports on the individual programs, the overall institution, and the applicant's response to them, providing clarification of all concerns and questions raised by peer reviewers and Department staff.

- Canvass of institutions in the region to consider the proposed programs “in terms of need and demand and their effect on similar existing programs in the State.
- Following the institution’s response to concerns raised in the canvass, the Department reviews all materials, reports, and responses, and determines whether the applicant demonstrates substantial or prospectively substantial compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and Commissioner’s regulations.
- Based on this information a Regents item is prepared and a recommendation is made to the Regents.
- The item comes before the Higher Education Committee at its regular public meeting where it is voted on and action taken.
- A recommendation regarding the provisional charter appears separately on the Board’s agenda. If the charter is granted, and in keeping with Department policy, the Regents award its degrees until such time as the charter is made absolute, usually within five years. A provisional charter is a form of incorporation granted for a probationary period up to five years to educational institutions that have reasonable prospects of meeting Regents standards.
- The institution is asked to submit a progress report in one year.
- Within two years, a follow-up visit to the new college will be conducted.