



Department of
Higher Education

John R. Kasich, Governor
John Carey, Chancellor

March 20, 2018

President Marcia Ballinger
Lorain County Community College
1005 N Abbe Rd
Elyria, OH 44035

Dear President Ballinger,

I am pleased to inform you that the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) is approving Lorain County Community College to proceed with its application to the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) for the Bachelor of Applied Science in Microelectronic Manufacturing. Our process for considering requests and reaching this decision is described in this letter.

As you know, Ohio Revised Code (ORC) 3333.051, enacted pursuant to Amended Substitute House Bill 49 of the 132nd General Assembly, directs the Chancellor of Higher Education to establish a program under which community colleges, state community colleges, and technical colleges may apply to offer Applied Bachelor's Degrees.

ODHE is committed to establishing a fair and equitable process by which to evaluate Applied Bachelor's Degree applications, characterized by an unquestionable commitment to standardization and transparency. In pursuit of this objective, ODHE published Directive-098 on November 7, 2017, delineating the process and program requirements that ODHE will adhere to when considering all such requests.

In accordance with Directive-098, the deadline for the first Request for Information (RFI) process was October 31, 2017; ODHE staff reviewed all RFI submissions and found nine applications to be consistent with the minimum requirements identified in ORC 3333.051. These nine applications were posted online in their entirety for a ten business day public comment period, which concluded on Friday, December 22, 2017.

In addition to the feedback that was received during the public comment period, ODHE conducted public stakeholder meetings in Columbus on Friday, January 19, 2018 and on Monday, January 22, 2018.

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ODHE evaluated the Bachelor of Applied Science in Microelectronic Manufacturing against the requirements identified in ORC 3333.051, the comments posted online during the ten business day public comment period, and the comments shared during the public stakeholder meeting.

Applied Bachelor's Degrees approved by ODHE to proceed to HLC for further consideration were found to be compliant with all requirements identified in ORC 3333.051 and devoid of compelling evidence to delay, defer or deny the program as shared via the public comment period and/or the public stakeholder meeting(s).

Alternatively, Applied Bachelor's Degrees that were not recommended by ODHE to proceed to HLC for further consideration require further review and analysis before a final decision can be made. Further review and analysis will occur in two primary areas, as follows:

1. The extent to which the proposed Applied Bachelor's Degree is duplicative with other higher education offerings in the region.

ORC 3345.35 requires that all courses and programs offered by an Ohio state institution be evaluated regularly based on enrollment and duplication of courses and programs. Further, ORC 3345.59 requires the establishment of regional compacts. Among other requirements, regional compacts should ensure that resources between institutions are shared, educational pathways are aligned, and unnecessary duplication of academic programs is avoided. In the spirit of this legislation, extra effort will be devoted to ensure that all appropriate options are explored within a region to avoid unnecessary duplication.

2. The extent to which the workforce need of regional business or industry as identified in the program application can be addressed by leveraging existing higher education offerings within a reasonable geographic proximity.

In particular, ODHE is looking to ensure the proposed Applied Bachelor's Degree is the only realistic option that meets the workforce need of regional business or industry in a manner that is accessible to students who would enroll in the Applied Bachelor's Degree program. Extra effort will be devoted to connect regional business or industry to existing higher education offerings within a reasonable geographic proximity to determine if the workforce need can be satisfactorily addressed.

In the case of Lorain County Community College's request, ODHE observed exceptionally strong evidence of workforce need in the field of microelectronic manufacturing. Although there are other engineering technology programs in the region, there was no evidence of duplication with regard to microelectronic manufacturing. There was clear evidence of collaboration and agreements with multiple employers, including a paid internship program with employer commitments to hire interns and graduates of the program. Five registered

stakeholders spoke in favor of the program during the public stakeholder meeting as compared to one registered stakeholder who spoke against.

Congratulations on reaching this point in the process. Please do not hesitate to contact me if ODHE staff members can be of service to you and your team as you move forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Carey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

John Carey
Chancellor

Attachments: ODHE Directive-098

25 South Front Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215

phone 614.466.6000
fax 614.466.5866
web www.OhioHigherEd.org