

April 17, 2024

California Board of Registered Nursing
Education/Licensing Committee
Sacramento, CA 95834

RE: Public Comment in Letter for Agenda item 8.6.1 Samuel Merritt University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program (alternate campus in Fresno, CA)

Dear California Board of Nursing Education/Licensing Committee,

In January, Samuel Merritt University (SMU) submitted a request for an alternative campus in Fresno, CA. We commend the ELC for prompting SMU to engage with local nursing programs and the regional academic/service partnership consortium.

Following the ELC session, Dr. Steven Rush, Dean of the College of Nursing, promptly initiated discussions, resulting in several productive meetings. On February 14th, Dr. Rush and Dr. Jeanette Wong, interim Associate Dean and Executive Director for Simulation at SMU, met with leadership from local nursing programs.

SMU has been actively participating in monthly academic/service partnership meetings, consistently updating stakeholders on their clinical placement strategy. Although forecasting clinical placement capacity is inherently challenging, SMU has shown a commitment to establishing a non-conflicting clinical schedule across all specialties, including medical-surgical, mental health/psychiatric nursing, obstetrics, and pediatrics, while closely collaborating with local nursing programs.

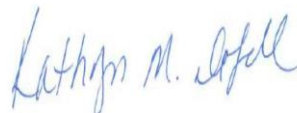
Addressing concerns raised previously, SMU's initial proposal suggested recruitment efforts targeting out-of-state candidates and considering offering placements at the Fresno Campus to waitlisted students from other regions. This matter has been discussed in our regional meetings, with assurances documented in Dr. Rush's letter to the ELC, identifying that enrollment and marketing endeavors will be tailored to residents in the local region.

Since the January ELC meeting, Dr. Rush and Dr. Wong have demonstrated responsiveness and collegiality. We remain hopeful that their ongoing collaboration and transparency will continue, to ensure non-displacement, equity, and quality clinical experiences for all nursing students in the Central Valley.

Sincerely,



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