



November 20, 2020

Dr. Mark Rudin  
President  
Texas A&M University-Commerce  
2600 West Neal Street  
P. O. Box 3011  
Commerce, TX 75428

Dear Dr. Rudin:

Thank you for submitting the following substantive change:

Substantive change:

**Significant Departure Program**

**Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Veterinary Biomedical Technology**

Submission date:

**12/19/2019**

Implementation date:

**1/3/2021**

Case ID:

**SC008635**

A decision regarding the original prospectus was deferred on April 13, 2020, pending the receipt of additional information. The requested information was received October 28, 2020, and has been integrated into this response.

The 123-credit hour Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Veterinary Biomedical Technology, which is consistent with the mission of Texas A&M University-Commerce, will prepare graduates to sit for state and national licensure examinations. The primary target audience is students who wish to become licensed veterinary technicians. As a rationale for the new program, the University cites U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data projecting employment of veterinary technicians to grow 19% between 2018-2028. The curriculum will be delivered through traditional face-to-face instruction, combined with distance education courses and clinical externship experiences. Administrative oversight will be provided by the Program Director with a projected initial cohort of 30 students. The program was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board on September 24, 2020.

A list of all other programs offered by the University was provided, as well as a list of approved off-campus instructional sites. The curriculum, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes were included. Admission and graduation requirements, plus a definition of credit



Dr. Mark Rudin  
November 20, 2020  
Page 2

hours, were also noted. Student learning will be assessed through discussions, projects, skills demonstrations, and exams. The new B.S. program will also be integrated into the University's ongoing institutional effectiveness process, which was described in detail. This annual process involves developing student learning outcomes, assessing the outcomes, collecting actionable results, and implementing modifications for improvement. In addition, each program is required to undergo a comprehensive academic review every ten years.

The Faculty Roster describes the qualifications of two full-time faculty members who will support the Veterinary Biomedical Technology program. The faculty members both have related doctoral degrees and appear qualified to teach the assigned courses. Qualifications for future faculty members to be hired were also provided and appear appropriate. Keep in mind that the ultimate determination of faculty qualifications is the responsibility of the peer review teams who will assess the faculty as part of the institution's next SACSCOC accreditation review.

Library and learning resources appear to be adequate. The Texas A&M University-Commerce Library has an extensive collection of over 500,000 print books; 55,000 print serials; 100,000 online journals; 335,000 eBooks; and 255 research databases in support of the veterinary sciences curriculum. Students will also have access to Animal Care Technologies, a cloud-based library of videos filmed on location at veterinary hospitals, and the Veterinary Support Personnel Network which is an interactive online community specifically for veterinary support staff. A complete list of discipline specific resources was included. These items are accessible in-person or remotely through the Library website. Additional resources are available through the statewide TexShare cooperative borrowing program, interlibrary loans, and a document delivery service. Reference and research assistance is provided by librarians through individual and group consultations. Students may also receive assistance from online LibGuides or via telephone, email, chat, and videoconferencing.

Student support services appear to be adequate. Along with standard academic support services such as financial aid, student records, and admissions, the University offers additional support through academic advising, student health services, and disability assistance. Supplemental instruction and tutoring services are available from the Academic Success Center. Students also have access to a Writing Center, a Math Lab, and a Career Development Office. The Veterinary Biomedical Technology program will develop a student chapter of the National Association of Veterinary Technicians in America organization to support students' professional growth.

Physical resources appear to be adequate. Face-to-face instruction for the new B.S. program will occur in existing facilities on the main University campus located in Commerce, Texas. Hands-on learning will take place at the Animal Science Educational Farm, the Sheep and Goat Center, the Equine Center, the Swine Center, and the Livestock Center. These areas will be used for



Dr. Mark Rudin  
November 20, 2020  
Page 3

teaching the care, feeding, and maintenance of livestock species. An Animal Science Lab is equipped with microscopes, centrifuges, and necessary tools for both clinical pathology and parasitology laboratory work. In addition to these existing facilities, a new Small Animal Center/Clinic will be constructed that will include examination rooms, treatment areas, a surgery suite, and laboratory/radiology areas.

Financial support for the program appears to be adequate; a five-year projected budget was provided. Revenues will come from student tuition, fees, and state appropriations generated through the Texas funding formula. Expenses will include personnel, supplies/materials, equipment, and library resources. Initial start-up costs for facility construction will be financed through reallocated institutional funds. Revenues are expected to outpace expenses each year of the program's operation. A contingency plan is in place to ensure financial stability of the program in the event anticipated resources are not available.

**The Board of Trustees of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges reviewed the materials seeking approval of the Bachelor of Science (B.S.) degree program in Veterinary Biomedical Technology. It was the decision of the Board to approve the program and include it in the scope of the current accreditation.**

Enclosed is an invoice for \$500 to help defray the cost of reviewing the prospectus.

Should you need assistance, please contact Dr. Mary P. Kirk at 404-679-4501 or via email at [mkirk@sacscoc.org](mailto:mkirk@sacscoc.org).

Please include the Case ID number above in all submissions or correspondence about this substantive change.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Belle S. Wheelan".

Belle S. Wheelan, Ph.D.  
President

BSW/SKO:lp

Enclosure (invoice with liaison's copy only)

cc: Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Associate Provost, Academic Foundations  
Dr. Mary P. Kirk