ACADEMIC PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

DATE SUBMITTED: August 15, 2010

INSTITUTION: College of Southern Nevada

REQUEST TYPE: □ New Degree
□ New Major or Primary Field of Study
□ New Emphasis
□ New Certificate of Achievement (AAC approval only)

DEGREE (i.e. Bachelor of Science): Bachelor of Applied Science

MAJOR (i.e. Animal Science):

EMPHASIS (i.e. Equine Studies): Cardiorespiratory Sciences

CREDITS TO DEGREE: 121

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT:

PROPOSED SEMESTER OF IMPLEMENTATION: Fall 2012

Action requested:
Part of the Engelstad Family Foundation gift to CSN included a provision to study the feasibility of adding a bachelor's degree in cardiorespiratory science at CSN. This academic program proposal seeks consideration of the approval for such a degree.

A. Brief description and purpose of proposed program
This proposal is to create a Baccalaureate Degree in Cardiorespiratory Sciences. The Cardiorespiratory Sciences program exists as a multi-disciplined, multi-credentialed offering that includes respiratory therapy and cardiac technology. This Cardiorespiratory Sciences baccalaureate proposal represents an addition to the Cardiorespiratory Sciences Associates of Science degree, which has served the College of Southern Nevada, and the State of Nevada, since 1997. This expansion will give graduates the opportunity to become managers, educators, and cardiac specialists; all fields within the respiratory therapy profession that are high demand.
B. Statement of degree or program objectives
Graduates of this bachelor’s degree program in cardiorespiratory sciences will have the opportunity to:
• Demonstrate the ability to acquire and synthesize information in a critical, scientific and effective manner.
• Demonstrate the ability to interact with patients and families to provide educational services and strategies that promote and advance cardiorespiratory health.
• Demonstrate the understanding of the principles of effective supervision of human resources; scheduling, performance evaluation, budgeting, inventory, progressive discipline, etc.
• Demonstrate the ability to interact with students to provide an effective educational experience whether in the classroom, laboratory or clinical arena.
• Demonstrate the ability to perform advanced cardiorespiratory procedures on patients.

C. Plan for assessment of degree or program objectives
Pursuant to the academic program assessment requirements, the program faculty will utilize course evaluations, graduate and employer surveys to monitor the effectiveness of the program. These results will be reported annually to the Office of Resource Development and Assessment.

D. Plan for assessment of student learning outcomes and the use of this data for program improvement
The data gained from the assessment protocols will be shared with advisory committee, faculty, department chair and dean on an annual basis. Input from students, graduates and employers will be utilized to modify the program content and structure. Programs within the Ralph and Betty Engelstad School of Health Sciences rely on student, graduate and employer feedback to keep curricula relevant. This program will do likewise.

E. Contribution and relationship of program objectives to
i. NSHE Master Plan
This bachelor's program is a niche program; no other cardiorespiratory science programs exist within NSHE. In addition, this program gives Nevada's residents the opportunity to further their educational pursuits and adds to the competence of the Nevada workforce.

ii. Institutional mission
The College of Southern Nevada Mission Statement paves the way for offering a Baccalaureate of Science in the Cardiorespiratory field. This bachelor's degree has the potential to create opportunities and change lives of CSN's past graduates as well as other professionals within the state. It also offers a familiarity to students who have completed associates degrees; this may increase the number of students interested in continuing education who may not otherwise opt for an advanced degree from a university.

iii. Campus strategic plan and/or academic master plan
The current academic master plan of CSN states: Develop 2+2 and 3+1 programs in selected baccalaureate degree programs. Specifically, a new BAS in Cardiorespiratory Science to provide degree completion for AAS students and achieve an advanced degree option for currently licensed respiratory therapists in the state of NV is in the academic master plan. This bachelor's
degree proposal is also the outgrowth of the Engelstad Family Foundation gift which provided funding to "explore the feasibility of a bachelor's program".

iv. Department and college plan
The vision of the Ralph and Betty Engelstad School of Health Sciences is to be the premier provider of a healthcare workforce for Southern Nevada. This degree proposal offers the opportunity for licensed respiratory therapists to gain additional education for career advancement or personal enrichment.

v. Other programs in the institution
The CSN offers a bachelor of science program in Dental Hygiene. This degree would add to the wide array of degree opportunities throughout the institution. It also strengthens the mission of a community college to meet the demands of the local community. This degree strengthens the opportunities for the Nevada Health Science System to meet the continuing demand for an educated and competence workforce.

vi. Other related programs in the System
There are no other cardiorespiratory sciences programs in NSHE. This bachelor's proposal is a niche baccalaureate degree program.

F. Evaluation of need for the program

i. Intrinsic academic value of program within the discipline
"Job prospects. Job opportunities are expected to be very good, especially for those with a bachelor’s degree and certification, and those with cardiopulmonary care skills or experience working with infants."8 "Job prospects. Job opportunities are expected to be very good, especially for those with a bachelor’s degree and certification, and those with cardiopulmonary care skills or experience working with infants." US Department of Labor. Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2010-2011 Edition. Many variables are impacting the need for baccalaureate degree prepared respiratory therapists. An aging workforce, an aging population coupled with advances in medicine allowing people to live longer, and additional medical diagnostics and therapeutics demanding a higher skilled practitioner are just a few examples of the need for more educated respiratory therapists. Some research suggests that qualified preceptors for Cardiorespiratory Sciences students could greatly benefit from more formal education; this is currently not met in the Cardiorespiratory Sciences associate degree program primarily due to programmatic time constraints, but would be incorporated in the Cardiorespiratory Sciences baccalaureate program.

ii. Evidence of existing or projected local, state, regional, national and/or international need for program
According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, the respiratory therapy profession is expected to grow about 21% by the year 2018. New proposed laws from the United States Congress to allow respiratory therapists to bill for Medicare services specifically identify baccalaureate degree trained respiratory therapists as the only members of the profession meeting the national standard for billing for reimbursement of home care delivered respiratory care. These bills are: House Bill 1077 and Senate Bill 343, both of which are known as the `Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative Act of 2009’.

iii. If this or a similar program already exists within the System, what is the justification for this addition
There are no other cardiorespiratory sciences programs within the System.
iv. Evidence of employment opportunities for graduates (state and national)

Data from prospective employers was collected not only anecdotally, but also through the distribution of a survey. The anecdotal information was received from members of the Southern Nevada Medical Industry Coalition as well as the Nevada Health Care Association. Both of these organizations represent the largest cross section of health care employers in Southern Nevada.

Response from the local hospital market, revealed a projected vacancy rate of over twenty respiratory therapists in the next 3-5 years. In one hospital alone, the projection is for 15 new respiratory therapists in the next 3-5 years. It is thought this projection is based on the increasing severity of the patient population needing cardiorespiratory support while confined to the acute care hospital. This increasingly sicker patient population in the hospital is also creating a strain on the skilled nursing facilities to provide continuing quality patient care. One director of a skilled nursing facility in Las Vegas replied: “I would say there is a definite need for qualified RT’s in long term care here in Nevada. As a facility with a ventilator unit, we face challenges of finding RT’s to staff the unit. We have seen an increase in referrals for vent patients not only from our local hospitals and LTAC’s but from California and Utah. The acuity of patients is growing and I don’t anticipate a decrease in need. As for a projection of need, I currently have 31 residents on ventilators and only 28 dedicated ventilator beds. We are adding additional rooms as needed and have also seen an increase in trach patient referrals. We now have to close 2 of our hallways specifically for respiratory needs.”

While these employer demands imply a continuing need for associate degree individuals, someone needs to supervise these respiratory therapists. Additionally, someone with an advanced degree needs to be available to serve as a clinical preceptor for associate degree students as well perform basic cardiopulmonary assessment and education of the patient and family.

v. Student clientele to be served (Explain how the student clientele is identified)

In the feasibility study for this bachelor's program, 82 licensed practitioners in Clark County were surveyed about interest in pursuing an advanced degree. 70% responded they would be interested in a bachelor's degree opportunity at CSN. 233 current CSN students, enrolled in biology prerequisite coursework, were also survey about the level of interest in a bachelor's degree in cardiorespiratory science. 65% of those currently enrolled CSN students expressed interest in pursuing such a bachelor's degree. CSN has graduated 95 associate degree cardiorespiratory science students in the past six (6) years. Those CSN graduates add to the solid base of potential student recruits for this program.

G. Detailed curriculum proposal

i. Representative course of study by year (options, courses to be used with/without modification; new courses to be developed)

The associate of applied degree program at CSN in Cardiorespiratory Sciences is an 87 credit associate degree. This bachelor of applied science degree program requires the development of the following upper division CRS coursework:

- CRS 312 Leadership Dynamics 3 cr.
- CRS 313 Education/Mentoring in CRS 3 cr.
- CRS 315 Advanced Clinical Practicum VI 4 cr.
- CRS 322 CRS Compliance and Regulations 3 cr.
In addition to the special program requirements, the bachelor of applied science students will also complete PHIL 302 and PHIL 311. These courses are already developed at CSN and incorporated into the BS in Dental Hygiene.

Once students have applied and been admitted to the bachelor of applied science program, it is anticipated the course sequence can be completed in 2-3 semesters. A projected course sequence for students seeking the advanced degree in cardiorespiratory sciences demonstrates possible completion in three (3) semesters:

Fall semester - CRS 312, 313, 315, 322
Spring semester - CRS 412, 421, 425
Summer semester - PHIL 302 and PHIL 311

ii. Program entrance requirements
The Admissions Policy for the Cardiorespiratory Sciences Baccalaureate Degree Program is as follows:
- Graduate of a CoARC accredited associated degree level respiratory care program from a regionally accredited institution of higher education
- Applicant must have an activeRegistered Respiratory Therapist (RRT) credential from the National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)
- Applicants must be a credentialed Certified Cardiographic Examination (CCT) from Cardiovascular Credentialing International
- Applicant must hold an active Nevada respiratory care license (from the Nevada Board of Medical Examiners) or obtain one within 6 months of beginning the advanced degree program or an active respiratory care license from another state and preapproval from the Program Director to accept this in lieu of the Nevada license

iii. Program completion requirements (credit hours, grade point average; subject matter distribution, preprogram requirements)
This bachelor of applied science program is 121 credits. These credits are distributed 41 in general education and 80 in special program requirements. Students admitted to the program with an active Nevada respiratory care license, but in possession of an out of state associate degree, will be required to complete the Nevada constitution requirement prior to graduation. Graduates of the bachelor of applied science program will be subject to all graduation requirements of CSN: 2.0 grade point average, complete a minimum of 15 semester credit hours in residence, cannot have a grade of D+, D, D- in the major occupational area, and have no financial obligations to a NSHE institution.

iv. Accreditation consideration (organization (if any) which accredits program, requirements for accreditation, plan for attaining accreditation - include costs and time frame)
The College of Southern Nevada's Cardiorespiratory Sciences associate degree program is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care. This accreditation is in good standing until September 30, 2018. This Body does not, nor does any other accrediting body, accredit degree advancement programs.
v. Evidence of approval by appropriate committees of the institution
The Ralph and Betty Engelstad School of Health Science curriculum committee reviewed this proposal on August 23, 2010. The CSN Curriculum Committee reviewed this proposal on August 25, 2010. Both groups were given the opportunity to review all supporting documentation and make inquiry of the program faculty. After discussion, the degree proposals were approved by the CSN curriculum review protocol.

H. Readiness to begin program

i. Faculty strengths (specializations, teaching, research, and creative accomplishments)
CSN currently has a program director, director of clinical education and a medical director for the associate degree cardiorespiratory sciences program. The program director has been employed by CSN for over 10 years, is currently licensed to practice cardiorespiratory therapy in the state in Nevada. She has a master's in education. The director of clinical education has been employed by CSN for over three years. She is currently licensed to practice cardiorespiratory therapy and possesses several speciality certifications. She is currently pursuing a doctorate in higher education leadership. The medical director is a board certified pulmonologist in private practice in Las Vegas.

ii. Contribution of new program to department’s existing programs (both graduate and undergraduate) and contribution to existing programs throughout the college or university
This bachelor's program offers degree completion opportunities to CSN associate degree graduates. It also provides degree completion abilities to other licensed practitioners throughout the state of Nevada.

iii. Completed prior planning for the development of the program (recent hires, plans for future hires, securing of space, curricular changes, and reallocation of faculty lines)
The planning for this program was initiated through the generous gift from the Engelstad Family Foundation. Planning money to evaluate the feasibility of this program was included in that $8.2 million gift. The bulk of the Engelstad Family Foundation gift resulted in a 10,000 square foot addition to the Health Sciences Building on the Charleston campus. Included in that space are two (2) state of the art cardiorespiratory laboratories and classrooms. The design of this space included the potential of the addition of a bachelor's degree option at CSN. The Foundation gift also provided $500,000 for the purchase of cardiorespiratory therapy equipment. The space will open in fall 2010 and is prepared to handle an influx of bachelor's degree students. The gift was used to hire a curriculum and workforce consultant, reports included. In addition, surveys of current students, past graduates and prospective employers was conducted in the spring 2010.

iv. Recommendations from prior program review and/or accreditation review teams
There have been no recommendations from prior program review and/or accreditation review teams. It should be noted that CSN has been authorized by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities to offer programs at the associate and baccalaureate program, effective 2007.

v. Organizational arrangements that must be made within the institution to accommodate the program
This bachelor's program will reside, with the associate degree program in the Department of Health Related Professions. No organizational arrangements need to be made.
I. Resource Analysis

i. Proposed source of funds (enrollment-generated state funds, reallocation of existing funds, grants, other state funds)
Funding for this program will be enrollment-generated state funds.

ii. Each new program approved must be reviewed for adequate full-time equivalent (FTE) to support the program in the fifth year. Indicate if enrollments represent 1) students formally admitted to the program, 2) declared majors in the program, or 3) course enrollments in the program.

a. (1) Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment in the Fall semester of the first, third, and fifth year.

   1st Fall semester 10.0
   3rd Fall semester 10.0
   5th Fall semester 10.0

   (2) Explain the methodology/assumptions used in determining projected FTE figures.
   Assumptions are that a cohort of 12 students will be formally admitted to the program every fall. With a cohort completion of 2-3 semesters, each fall would be a new cohort of students formally admitted to the program.

b. (1) Unduplicated headcount in the Fall semester of the first, third, and fifth year.

   1st Fall semester 12
   3rd Fall semester 12
   5th Fall semester 12

   (2) Explain the methodology/assumptions used in determining projected headcount figures.
   Assumption is to launch this program with an cohort enrollment of 12 new students every fall semester. As the program should be completed in 2-3 semester, this cohort of 12 new students should remain constant every fall semester.

iii. Budget Projections – Complete and attach the Five-Year Budget Projection Table.

J. Facilities and equipment required

i. Existing facilities: type of space required, number of assignable square feet, space utilization assumptions, special requirements, modifications, effect on present programs
With the gift from the Engelstad Family Foundation, the 10,000 square foot addition to the health sciences building on the Charleston campus opens in fall 2010. This space includes two
The state of the art cardiorespiratory sciences classrooms and laboratories. The design of this space included the possibility of adding a bachelor's degree program so space relevant to advanced cardiorespiratory science practice has been included.

**ii. Additional facilities required: number of assignable square feet, description of space required, special requirements, time sequence assumed for securing required space**

No additional facilities are required. The 10,000 square foot addition provided through the generous gift from the Engelstad Family Foundation gift allocates adequate space for the associate and potential bachelor's degree program in cardiorespiratory sciences. Also included in this space are faculty offices and computer lab for cardiorespiratory science students. Unique in the design are two (2) glass cubicle simulation rooms in the lobby of the building. These rooms will allow cardiorespiratory science students to "practice" skills in a critical care unit simulation. Close circuit monitoring by faculty has also been included in the design. This offers the opportunity to recruit potential students as well as place health science students in "real world" environments during critical care scenarios.

**iii. Existing and additional equipment required**

The Engelstad Family Foundation gift provided $500,000 for the purchase of cardiorespiratory equipment. When the space opens in fall 2010, new equipment will be prevalent throughout this space. In addition, the CSN associate degree program has received over $200,000 in Perkins funding over the past five years. The cardiorespiratory science program is well positioned to offer patient simulation experiences to associate and degree seeking students.

**K. Student services required – Plans to provide student services, including advisement, to accommodate the program, including its implications for services to the rest of the student body**

Contact was made with CSN's offices of admission and records, retention and tutoring, and advising. Based on the projected number of students, these areas of the college did not anticipate any additional services to accommodate these students.

**L. Consultant Reports – If a consultant was hired to assist in the development of the program, please complete subsections A through C. A copy of the consultant's final report must be on record at the requesting institution.**

**i. Names, qualifications and affiliations of consultant(s) used**

The Southern Nevada Medical Industry Coalition was contracted to conduct a workforce analysis. Surveys were distributed electronically to healthcare employers in Southern Nevada. A total of 29 responses were collected; however, seven surveys had to be discarded due to incomplete responses. A total of 22 surveys were analyzed and the results are attached to this proposal.

Joseph Sorbello, MSEd., RT, RRT was contracted to review the relevancy and organization of the associate and bachelor's degree. Mr. Sorbello is recognized as a national expert in cardiorespiratory curriculum.

**ii. Consultant’s summary comments and recommendations**

The Southern Nevada employers demonstrated a current demand for cardiorespiratory therapists. In addition, these employers (4/7) responded they would be very likely to hire people with the advanced cardiorespiratory skills (included in this BAS degree proposal). These prospective employers also that teaching skills (patients, families, students, etc.) would be very important to
them in making hiring decisions. In effect, these prospective employers validated the intent of this BAS degree proposal at the 300 and 400 course level. These prospective employers also provided critically important information on the skill sets needed in today's environment.

Mr. Sorbello was also critical in providing an outside review of the associate and bachelor's curriculum with relation to sequencing, content, etc. Mr. Sorbello also assisting with the national environmental scan on the future of cardiorespiratory education.

iii. Summary of proposer's response to consultants
Both of these external consultants provided the review and data that was requested. Attached to this program proposal are the complete reports of both external consultants.

M. Articulation Agreements

i. Articulation agreements were successfully completed with the following NSHE institutions. (Attach copies of agreements)
Since CSN is the only NSHE institution offering an associate degree in cardiorespiratory sciences, no articulation agreements were needed.

ii. Articulation agreements have not yet been established with the following NSHE institutions. (Indicate status)
/N/A

iii. Articulation agreements are not applicable for the following institutions. (Indicate reasons)
TMCC - no associate degree program
GBC - no associate degree program
WNC - no associate degree program

N. Summary Statement
This bachelor's degree proposal is offered as a result of:
CSN's designation by Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities as eligible to offer associate and baccalaureate programs;
The generous gift from the Engelstad Family Foundation providing 10,000 square feet, state of the art cardiorespiratory laboratories and equipment and the seed money to study the feasibility of a bachelor's program;
Healthcare reform legislation in the United States provides incentives for health care providers and organizations to engage in health promotion and wellness education. With the rising incidence of asthma, tuberculosis, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, lung cancer and other cardiorespiratory illnesses, the need for advanced educational practitioners is looming;
Employers in southern Nevada projecting an ever increasing demand for competent cardiorespiratory therapists. This demand is created, in part, by the shifting demographics of patient population which is placing demand on skilled nursing facilities to employ cardiorespiratory therapists to manage the growing ventilator patient load;
An associate degree program providing feeder of students into an advanced degree.

This bachelor's degree program also offers Health Science System of NSHE the opportunity to be proactive in meeting the workforce demand for a competent and well educated workforce.
## New Academic Program Proposal

### Five-Year Budget Projection

#### Institution: CSN  
#### Program: BAS Cardiorespiratory Sciences  
#### Semester of Implementation: Fall 2012

**DIRECTIONS:** Complete the following cost estimates for the first, third, and fifth year budget projections for the proposed new program in Section A. Costs for the third and fifth year are cumulative. If the total budget for the program is not reflected in the “Existing” or “New” categories, please provide further explanation in the space provided below (EXPLANATION). Any "new" costs must be noted by source in Section B.

### STUDENT FTE

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<th>Year</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>10</th>
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### Section A.

#### PERSONNEL

- **Faculty (salaries/benefits)**
  - Year 1: $75,000
  - Year 3: $78,800
  - Year 5: $81,912

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<th>Existing 1</th>
<th>New 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>FTE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>81,912</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>81,912</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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</table>

#### OTHER RESOURCES

- **Library Materials (printed)**
  - Year 1: $0
  - Year 3: $5,000
  - Year 5: $5,000

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<tr>
<th>Year 1/Start-up</th>
<th>Existing 1</th>
<th>New 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>FTE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 3</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 5</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>5,000</td>
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#### PHYSICAL FACILITIES

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<th>New 2</th>
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<td>Year 5</td>
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### Section B.

#### EXPLANATION OF "NEW" SOURCES

- **State Support**
  - Federal Grants/Contracts
  - State Grants/Contracts
  - Private Grants/Contracts
  - Private Gifts
  - Other (please specify)

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Amount</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Year 3          | 0      | 0.0%
| Year 5          | 0      | 0.0%

### EXPLANATION (Please provide any additional information pertinent to the budget projection, including for example, explain for any new funding sources that are not guaranteed receipt by the institutions how the program will make-up for the potential loss in expected new funding.):

Capital investment for this program was included as part of the Engelstad Family Foundation gift to CSN. This gift included a 10,000 square foot addition to the health sciences building at the Charleston campus. The gift also included $500,000 for purchase of state of the art cardiorespiratory equipment. Implementation of the bachelor's degree requires the addition of one (1) FTE faculty member and library support materials. The financial support for this BAS program will come from existing college savings; no new state support dollars will be required.

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(ACADEMIC, RESEARCH AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE 12/02/10) Ref. ARSA-6, Page 10 of 13
Introduction/Purpose: This is a Preliminary Report to the College of Southern Nevada (CSN) in order to provide advice and council to assess the feasibility of creating a Baccalaureate in Applied Science degree in Cardiorespiratory Sciences.

Methods: I have reviewed the institution’s current Cardiorespiratory Sciences Program offerings for both the existing Associates of Applied Science (AAS) and Bachelor of Applied Science (BAS) degrees. I have also reviewed the following documents sent to me by Cardiorespiratory Sciences Program Director Tracy Sherman: Academic Program Proposal Form, BAS Course Descriptions. I have also had a number of telephone conversations with Tracy and have corresponded with her regarding the proposed curriculum, course sequencing, course changes and other plans for implementation of the curriculum.

Findings/Discussion: I agree with the proposal to remove four credits of the phlebotomy (the lab and practicum portions) to allow for the transformation of those four credits into a required Physics course. I also agree with leaving in the didactic portion of phlebotomy since it does offer the opportunity to provide education on several topics such as infection control and HIPPA.

I find that the BAS degree appears to be sequenced well and that it is educationally sound in design. This design is somewhat similar to our own and other institutions’ Bachelor of Science degree programs in Respiratory Care in its sequencing and content areas.

The proposed courses for this stage, including course credit load, in their development as proposed are satisfactory. More specificity in course descriptions is suggested for the future, such as for publishing in the College’s Academic Catalog, without changing course intent. Each course's viability and description appropriateness and assigned credit load. I have not yet seen course syllabi or learning objectives.

The creation of a BAS degree program at CSN is following a trend in the community college sector in gaining legislative favor of allowing the granting of baccalaureate degrees. In Florida, where the community college baccalaureate movement is strongest, a small number of community colleges won approval to offer select four-year degrees in 2001 when the legislature enacted laws allowing community/junior colleges to offer Baccalaureate degrees in specific occupations/professions. In 2008 Florida Governor Charlie Crist signed a controversial bill rebranding the state’s community college system in order that its community colleges could more readily offer baccalaureate degrees (see Attachment I and... In that year, 10 of the state’s 28 community colleges offered 70 baccalaureate...
degrees. In 2010, 18 Florida community colleges now offer 111 four-year degrees. In July, of this year, another change in Florida law took effect giving community college already successfully granting baccalaureate degrees the ability to petition the state for local autonomy in pursuing additional baccalaureate degrees.

The original Florida legislation seen in Attachment I should have particular areas of interest to those authorities in Nevada in whose hands rests the CSN proposal. On lines 154 – 158, it states, “the funding model must ensure that the programs and services offered by institutions in the Florida College System in providing associate and baccalaureate degrees are delivered in a cost-effective manner that demonstrates substantial savings to the student and to the state over the cost of providing the degree at a state university”. CSN’s present AAS Cardiorespiratory Sciences Program is 91 credit hours and the proposed BAS degree only 29 more credits. It is clear that the program has a great commitment to the education of respiratory therapists by allowing such a large of amount of credit hours for its AAS program. Extending the program by only 29 more credits only makes sense both professionally and financially. The proposal seems to be quite in line with the already existing legislation in giving the students, consumers and stakeholders a very cost-effective model that already works. Data from the Nevada Department of Employment, Training and Rehabilitation shows a steady growth rate in the employment of Respiratory Therapists each year. The latest data shows a modest 4.4% increase from 678 Respiratory Therapists in 2008 to 708 therapists in 2010. While not a monumental growth rate, it does reflect the steady and growing need for Respiratory Therapists in the State of Nevada. There are no statistics or projections on the attrition rate that I have uncovered that will occur in the State of Nevada. It is crucial to note that a growing number of respiratory therapists will begin retiring at the bedside and in other critical positions. According the American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) 2009 Human Resources Survey, the average age of Respiratory Therapists nationwide is 49 years. A good number of these therapists are in leadership positions, primarily in management and education. Informal estimates indicate that the 30-40% of the program directors of the more than 450 accredited Respiratory Care programs will reach retirement age in the next 5-10 years. The simple fact is that our profession will need replacements for these leaders many of whom have earned their graduate degrees at both the Masters and Doctoral level.

It is increasingly apparent at a national level that the entry-level in Respiratory Care needs to be at the Baccalaureate Level. The profession itself recognizes this fact and has, in fact, sponsored three Consensus Conferences over the past 3 years. The proceedings of the first two of these conferences have been published in Respiratory Care (See Attachments II and III). In the first article’s introduction the authors state that the AARC’s the professional “2015 and Beyond” project has brought together stakeholders representing employers, insurers, professional organizations, foundations, state and federal government agencies, patients and consumers, the education community, accrediting and credentialing agencies, and state licensure. This process is examining how the profession needs to change to meet the demands of patient care in the future. The 2015 conferences have assumed the difficult task of identifying changes needed to enable the current education system to produce RTs with the skills, knowledge, and competencies necessary to provide optimal care in 2015 and beyond. To achieve these goals, three conferences were developed. The first conference, Creating a Vision for Respiratory Care in 2015 and Beyond, held in March 2008, created a foundation for the following 2 conferences by projecting how the changing healthcare delivery system will need to respond to patient needs within the context of diagnosis, treatment, and management of patients with acute and chronic respiratory disorders.’ The sheer increase in the amount of knowledge and skills - particularly in the areas of
research, education and evidence-based practice – has grown exponentially in the recent past. It is clear to those with the vision and courage to see it that the community college movement in Florida to offer baccalaureate degrees is answering a growing need in many professions and areas to provide the type of education and training needed to satisfy stakeholders and consumers alike. The program proposal by CSN is absolutely timely and cutting edge. With the trends in consumer needs alone to have health care practitioners receiving increased amounts of education and training needed and being dictated by actual consumer needs at the bedside, it is clear to this consultant that the proposal by CSN to offer the BAS in Cardiorespiratory Science is needed and should be granted.