

BACKGROUND AND REQUEST

WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY/UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO

Joint Doctor of Nursing Practice

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATION

This program clearly meets Regents' standards for graduate degree programs. The Regents' Advisory Committee on Graduate Study voted unanimous approval for the new joint professional doctorate program. There were no serious concerns raised in the review.

Request: Wright State University and the University of Toledo seek approval for a Joint Doctor of Nursing Practice degree.

Program Purpose/Mission: The proposed joint professional doctorate program will be an online post-master's curriculum and is designed for nurses seeking a terminal degree in nursing practice. The Doctor of Nursing Practice is a clinical practice degree, not a research degree. This new professional doctorate degree offered jointly by Wright State University and the University of Toledo will leverage the resources of the Wright State University-Miami Valley College of Nursing and Health, and the University of Toledo College of Nursing. Students in the program will focus on advanced practice in direct nursing care (i.e., nurse practitioner and clinical nurse specialist) or indirect nursing care (i.e., nursing administration). The program offers an alternative to research focused doctoral programs (i.e., Ph.D. programs). Though only a few practice doctorates currently exist, many new programs are taking shape nationwide. Both programs have well established master's programs and have demonstrated expertise in online education. The DNP is the result of a task force sponsored by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the national organization of deans and directors of baccalaureate and higher degree nursing programs. On October 25, 2004, the members of the AACN endorsed the Position Statement on the Practice Doctorate in Nursing which was brought forward by the Task Force on the Practice Doctorate. AACN member institutions voted to move the current level of preparation necessary for advanced nursing practice from the master's degree to the doctorate level by the 2015.

Enrollments: Admission to the DNP program will be competitive and decisions will be made by a standing committee according to usual process and procedure. The program will start with a cohort of 20 students in spring 2008. Additional cohorts will be admitted each year. As the year 2015 approaches, it is anticipated that DNP enrollment will include those students who would otherwise have enrolled in advanced nursing practice masters' programs.

Curriculum: The entire curriculum is guided by *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (AACN July 2006) and builds on the *Essentials of Masters Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* (AACN, 1996). The initial curriculum is proposed as a post-master's option consisting of 54 quarter credits or 36 semester credits. Students choose the role of either direct care giver or indirect care giver. All courses are online and the courses are accepted towards the degree in both programs regardless of which site offers the course. Field/clinical experience will be conducted within four courses, including a capstone practicum.

Faculty, Facilities and Resources: Cross-utilization of faculty from WSU and UT will not only provide an efficient use of faculty but also will allow students to learn from a broad spectrum of faculty interests, philosophies, and practices. One new faculty member will be needed at UT in Years 1 and 3 and at WSU in years 2 and 4 in order to accommodate when both DNP APN and MSN APN students will be enrolled. No additional facilities are needed immediately, but the universities will have to continue their commitment to state-of-the-art online technology and staff support. Few new faculty would immediately be required as both universities have well qualified faculty to begin the program. In anticipation of the AACN 2015 deadline, Masters-prepared faculty would need to be replaced with DNP and Ph.D. faculty members.

Evidence of Need: Graduates of the DNP program proposed will be prepared to be the leaders in clinical practice and nursing administration for Ohio and the region. They will collaborate with many health care professionals also with clinical doctorates (MD, DO, PharmD, OTD, DPT, PsyD) to provide expert care for the citizens of the state, and will provide innovative solutions to the delivery of health care. Graduates of the program will be in great demand as the need for nurses who are prepared at the highest level of clinical expertise continues to be unmet.