



Item: VI. AS: A-2

Wednesday, January 30, 2008

**SUBJECT: New Doctoral Program**

---

**PROPOSED BOARD ACTION**

Approval of the new Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree (51.1601)

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree, being proposed by the Christine E Lynn College of Nursing, will prepare nurses for the highest level of professional practice in the discipline. Graduates will be prepared for advanced practice in specialty areas, leadership roles in health care delivery systems and policy development, and research on practice and the evaluation of outcomes of care. The program will emphasize the core nursing values of caring, a holistic perspective on personhood and health, innovation, diversity, and leadership. The DNP at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing will emphasize caring for an aging population in a diverse society.

The new Doctor of Nursing Practice supports the strategic planning goals of the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, the FAU Board of Trustees, and the Florida Board of Governors. According to the State of Florida Department of Health, the entire state is experiencing a shortage of primary healthcare providers. Educating advanced practice nurses to meet national requirements and to meet the needs for health care re-design will positively influence the health of the South Florida community. Educating nurse administrators in advanced practice at the DNP level will enable the development of nursing leaders better able to promote quality patient care in a variety of health care delivery systems.

There are currently four DNP programs in Florida, and none in South Florida. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing has mandated that by 2015 entry into advanced nursing practice roles will require the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree, replacing most of the current tracks in the Masters program. In April of 2006 the Florida Board of Governors passed a resolution in support of elevating advanced practice nursing programs from the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and permitting universities that currently offered a research doctorate in nursing to implement the DNP, with appropriate BOT and BOG approvals.

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN/DATE**

Fall 2008

### FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The Doctor of Nursing Practice program will be supported by reallocating resources from the MS program to the DNP program and by the FTE of DNP students enrolled in the program.

---

**Supporting Documentation:** Executive Summary of Doctorate in Nursing Practice  
**Presented by:** Dr. Anne Boykin, Dean **Phone:** 561.297.3207  
Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing



**Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing**

**New Degree Proposal - Doctor of Nursing Practice**

**Dr. Anne Boykin, Dean**

**Submitted November, 2007**

**Executive Summary**

**Program Overview.** The Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing is proposing a new degree program, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP). The DNP prepares nurses for the highest level of professional practice in the discipline, similar to the professional doctorates in medicine (MD), dentistry (DDS), pharmacy (PharmD), and physical therapy (DPT). Graduates are competent in an advanced practice specialty area, are prepared as leaders able to design state-of-the-art nursing theory-guided and evidence-based models of care, conduct research to evaluate outcomes of care, develop policies and programs to promote population health, use technology and information to transform healthcare systems, and collaborate in interprofessional teams to improve patient and population health across a continuum of care. The program emphasizes core nursing values of caring, a holistic perspective on personhood and health, innovation, diversity, and leadership. Caring for an aging population is the special focus of this DNP program. Graduates of the DNP program may work in a variety of settings and roles depending on their areas of advanced practice in nursing. They may assume positions as primary care providers, patient care coordinators, clinical nurse specialists in acute or long term care, nursing faculty, nursing or healthcare administrators, innovative designers of health information systems or complementary care models and planners/policymakers in national/international healthcare. There are two entry options for the program: post MS or post BS in Nursing. At this time only the post-MS entry option will be developed, with plans to initiate the post-BS entry as the College phases out most of the MS degree tracks for advanced practice preparation in accordance with national standards.

**Impetus.** The American Association of College of Nursing (AACN) has mandated that by 2015 entry into advanced nursing practice roles will require the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree. Currently, entry into advanced practice requires preparation at the Master's level. Graduate education in nursing occurs within the context of societal demands and needs as well as the interprofessional practice environment. The Institute of Medicine and the National Research Council of the National Academies have called for health professions education for the future that is evidence-based, interdisciplinary, patient-centered, and focused on information systems and quality improvement. These areas of preparation will be the cornerstones of the DNP.

**Relationship to Institutional Mission.** This proposed program is consistent with all four of the current State University System Strategic Planning Goals and the FAU Strategic Planning Goals. The development of the DNP was included in the College of Nursing's Strategic Plan developed in 2006.

**Need and Demand.** Advanced practice nursing education will be phased out at the Masters level by 2015. Because Florida is a state that has identified a shortage of primary care physicians, nurse practitioners are more in demand than ever before. With the advent of local clinics in many retail stores staffed by nurse practitioners to care for persons in the community with acute illnesses, the need for an increased number of advanced practice nurses is evident. This has occurred along with the call for increased educational preparation to enter advanced practice. DNP programs are a direct outcome of nursing's plan to address the challenges identified in key publications by the Institute of Medicine related to improving safety and quality health outcomes and recommending changes needed in health professions education. Nurses prepared in DNP programs have a blend of practice, organizational, economic, and leadership knowledge and skills to enable them to critique nursing and other clinical scientific findings and design programs of care that are locally acceptable, economically feasible, and have significant impact on healthcare outcomes. A needs assessment revealed a high demand for the program. Currently, the DNP is offered in four universities in Florida. If approved, this program would be the only one offered in Southeastern Florida from Miami to Orlando. There are over 6000 advanced practice nurses in the State of Florida who are potential students. More programs are needed to accommodate this group and by 2015, all those pursuing advanced practice education currently offered in Masters programs.

**Program Structure and Budget.** The proposed program is two full years in length (fall, spring and summer), and students will enroll in an average of 7 credit hours/term or 21 credit hours/year. These students are classified as Grad 2. The College plans to admit 12 students in Fall 2008, 15-17 new students in 2009 and 20 in 2010 and beyond. A total of 40 students will be enrolled at any time, and we will shift enrollment down in the MS program by this number of projected student FTEs. The DNP program will be supported by reallocating resources from the MS Program to the DNP program. We plan to decrease the number of sections taught in the MS program to the same extent that we are increasing the number of sections needed for the DNP.

**Projected Benefit.** The Doctor of Nursing Practice program at the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing will benefit the University by providing access to this highly sought-after degree program to a substantial pool of graduates from FAU and other colleges and universities; by meeting future projected workforce needs; by building a unique academic program reflecting the strengths of the College faculty; and by increasing the University's visibility by preparing practitioners who will provide a higher level of health care to the community.

**Curriculum and Program Delivery.** The curriculum was modeled after the AACN curriculum standards for the DNP, and the College will seek program accreditation through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education after the first cohort graduates

in 2010. A nationally-recognized expert provided consultation on the development of the curriculum. The program is 39-45 credit hours and will be offered in a variety of formats including on-line courses using the E-College platform and live courses on all campuses with Blackboard components. Live courses will be offered during times that convenient for doctoral students who are in practice such as evenings and weekends.

**Resources.** The College has faculty prepared to teach the courses in the DNP curriculum including three faculty who are prepared at the DNP level. The program will be administered by a qualified faculty member who has a DNP, is a nurse practitioner, and a productive researcher and scholar. Resources currently used in the Masters and PhD programs will support the DNP. This includes library resources and clinical sites. Additional clinical sites will be developed. Several large healthcare organizations including the Veteran's Administration are interested in offering clinical placements for DNP students. Classroom space is sufficient and technology for simulated practice is available.