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March 22, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: ~~Lisa~~  
Lisa Plowfield, Chair  
School of Nursing

FROM: ~~Robbing~~  
Conrado M. Gempesaw  
Vice Provost for Academic and International Programs

SUBJECT: Faculty Senate - Permanent Status Program Review (PSPR)

Attached is the PSPR internal review for the M.S. in Health Services Administration. As part of the PSPR process (see <http://www.udel.edu/facsen/course/index.html#Final>, Timeline for PSPR), we request that the department write a brief response to this review and forward the documents to the appropriate college committee and/or the Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will then forward all the documents to the Faculty Senate (c/o Karren Helsel-Spry) so it can be considered for approval by the University Faculty Senate.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

dld  
Attachments

cc: Avron Abraham, Faculty Senate President  
Karren Helsel-Spry, Faculty Senate Office  
Dean's Office, College of Health Sciences

**Permanent Status Program Review  
Masters of Science Program in Health Services Administration**

Reviewers: Dr. Adele Hayes, Associate Professor, Director of Clinical Training,  
Department of Psychology  
Dr. Ali Poorani, Associate Professor, Hotel and Restaurant Management

Date: March 21, 2006

**Objectives, Strengths, and Weaknesses**

**1. Does the program meet its originally stated goals and objectives?**

The program is designed to develop the knowledge, understanding, and skills for management and administrative roles in healthcare systems, hospitals, long-term care institutions, alternative delivery systems, ambulatory care facilities, managed care organizations, consulting firms, and other health-related organizations. A table of competencies is provided in Appendix F of the self-study report. These are based on competency guidelines provided by the American Organization of Nurse Executives, American Nurses Association, and the American College of Healthcare Executives. Each competency is associated with specific coursework or practicum experiences that teach skills and develop knowledge related to that competency. The courses, practica, and student projects seem to adequately address the range of competencies listed.

A second objective is to accommodate the needs of working professionals by providing classes on campus at 4 p.m. and later and by using distance education delivery modes and providing both full-time and part-time programs of study. The distance education and part-time options seem to be the most attractive to students, so the program appears to be meeting this goal. A program that allows students to work while attending school is important and can make the program attractive to potential students. The College of Health and Nursing Sciences has an excellent track record with distance delivery modes, and the Health Services Administration program is building on this. The program seems to be meeting this objective.

**2. Is the program compatible with the Academic Priorities of the University?**

The self-study did not include a presentation of the academic priorities of the university and did not present information on how the program considers these priorities.

**3. What are the strengths and weaknesses of this program?**

***Strengths:***

The program is timely and serves an important need for working professionals. The Department of Nursing has a strong distance learning component to their training, and providing the Health Services Administration Program in this format seems a potentially fruitful addition. There seems to be a growing market for distance-based programs that

are convenient for working professionals and also provide rigorous programs of study. A notable strength is that the program is interdisciplinary in that it includes classes from Individual and Family Studies, the School of Urban Affairs and Public Policy, the Department of Communication, Department of Psychology, the Department of Political Science, and the College of Business and Economics. The Director of the program, Dr. Purnell, has a strong background in multiculturalism that can be a significant strength, if integrated into the training program. Another strength is the inclusion of research design and statistics in the training, which can prepare students for program evaluation research. The website for the program has been improved and is now clear and easy to navigate. This might improve recruitment. Overall, there seems to be a market for the program, and it is offered in a format that can be a useful addition to the university and community. The courses provided seem to provide training in the competencies outlined in Appendix F.

***Weaknesses:***

The program in concept is reasonable and timely. What is less clear is the overall mission or vision for the program. There are well-selected components, but the integration of the plan for training is not apparent. A strength is the interdisciplinary aspect of the program, but this also necessitates an integration of the different components of training. The program is heavily dependent on the program director to deliver and coordinate most aspects of the program. This concern was mentioned by the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and also in the letter of support from the Chair (Director) of Nursing, and it remains a concern. For the program to be sustainable, there should be a core (even if small) of faculty committed to coordinating the program and providing a significant portion of the training. Related to this, it is important to have an infrastructure for monitoring progress and helping students through the program. The webpage states that "each student receives personalized advisement by a faculty member" assigned at the time of admission, but in the self-study report, it is not clear how students are mentored and by whom. Student evaluations raised the need for more interactive learning experiences, and this feedback has been incorporated into the program. However, the program could benefit from at least some face-to-face contact to facilitate learning from each other, networking, and contact with the professors. There was no information on the faculty participating in the program and no details on the external practica or practicum supervisors, so it is difficult to evaluate the quality of the training. The ideas and general concepts behind the program are good, and the program is progressing. In the next stage of development, it seems important to devote time and resources to developing a strong and clear infrastructure so that the program can grow and be sustainable.

**Impact and Demand**

- 1. Describe any significant impact the proposed curriculum might have on other instructional, research, or service programs of the University.**

A significant strength of the program is that it brings together faculty and students from different disciplines. This can provide a stimulating and rich training environment. Because of this potential, it might be important to provide at least some face-to-face

interactions, perhaps in a workshop format or monthly meetings. Offering the masters program in Health Services Administration might be a feature that attracts students to the nursing program. The distance learning format of training helps to connect the university to the community and also to health-care facilities.

**2. Are the admissions requirements for this program clearly stated and fairly implemented?**

Admissions decisions are based on the applicant's scholastic record, standardized test scores, references, personal statement, work experiences, and an interview. These requirements are clear and seem appropriate. An interview is mentioned, but there is no clear admissions committee or interview team.

**3. Is there sufficient demand for this program to warrant granting permanent status? Are enrollments strong?**

Enrollment and recruitment efforts were mentioned as concerns in one of the letters of support. Enrollments are approaching the projections presented on page 3 of the report. Enrollments are expected to increase as nursing provides a Ph.D. program and the old masters of science program is phased out. Minority enrollments appear to be increasing. Given the importance of increasing enrollments in the program, it would help to have a clear and concerted effort and plan for recruitment. This was not presented in the self-study report. The improvements to the webpage should help to bring attention to the program.

**4. Do the students in the program receive appropriate advising and mentoring?**

This part of the program is not clearly presented. Faculty participating in the program will be expected to carry an advising load and to meet with students each semester to evaluate progress. It is not clear who these advisors are and whether they are involved in helping the students to shape their program of study. There was no discussion of advising related to the practicum rotations. Students are expected to complete a student project, but the mentoring process for this is not described.

**5. Does the program require additional student expenses beyond the traditional books and supplies, such that additional need for financial aid can be expected?**

There is no information to suggest that this is the case.

**6. Does the program have the support of departmental and affiliated faculty?**

There are no letters of continued participation and support from the other departments with faculty teaching some of the courses. The letters of support from the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and from the Director of the School of Nursing are tempered

by concerns related to low enrollment, the need for more interdisciplinary support, and overreliance on the program director for teaching, advising, and administration.

**7. Are resources available to support and maintain the program?**

The needs of the program are clear, but there does not appear to be an explicit plan for supporting the program. It seems an important program, given that the previous masters of science in health services administration is being discontinued, and the program can serve an important need in the community. However, the sustainability of the program is at risk if there is only one faculty member coordinating and administering the entire program. This situation will need to be remedied, and it will be important to have clear support from the nursing program and the affiliated departments. In the section of the report on future considerations (p.4), there is a recommendation that the School of Nursing recruit at least one faculty member with administrative expertise who would help teach in the health services administration program. This is critical, but there was no statement of support for this.

**Evaluation**

1. N/A
2. **Has the program clearly delineated the knowledge, values, skills, and other learning outcomes that their graduates will be expected to have acquired?**

The goals of the training program are listed on page 3 of the self-study report, and the specific competencies addressed in the coursework are presented in Appendix F. It would be useful to present the goals of the training program on the website and in materials given to students when they are admitted. There was no mention of a student orientation, but if there is, this material should be presented there. A mission statement or statement of the skills students will learn might help in recruitment.

3. **Has the program implemented a plan to evaluate and assess the learning outcomes of its students?**

Students are monitored each semester as they progress through the program. The quality and commitment to mentoring are not presented in any detail, but there is an attempt to monitor progress. Grade point average criteria are presented, and the competencies to be obtained are outlined in Appendix F. There is no masters thesis, and students do not take a comprehensive exam. Instead, there is a student project. The details of this important milestone are not presented, and there are no criteria for evaluation.

4. **Please comment on completion and job placement of students who completed the program.**

There are two graduates of the program. One is the Director of Disaster Planning for the State of Delaware, and the other is the Director of Nursing at Hunterdon Health in New Jersey. The responsibilities of these positions are not described, but they seem in line with the goals of the program.

## **Additional Comments**

Overall, the Masters of Science in Health Services Administration seems to address a community need and to provide a convenient yet rigorous and interdisciplinary training program for working professionals. As the nursing program eliminates the previous masters program in this area, enrollments in this distance-based program are predicted to increase. This would address a serious concern related to program viability. In addition, it will be important to develop a clear plan for recruitment.

Another set of concerns relate to the infrastructure of the program. The program could benefit from a clear mission statement and set of training goals. This could help in recruitment of students and faculty. There is one program director responsible for most aspects of the program, and this is a problem that has been noted before. As the program grows, this will present even more of a problem. There was mention of recruiting another faculty member to help, but the plan, time frame, and support for this were not detailed. This seems essential. Related to this, the program will need clear commitments and support from faculty in other disciplines contributing to this program. The procedures for mentoring and monitoring students should also be clarified, as should the expectations for the Student Project (which replaces a masters thesis requirement or comprehensive exam). Finally, the program has responded to students' recommendation for more interactive exercises, but it might also be helpful to include at least some face-to-face interaction in the training program.

The concepts behind this program are reasonable and sound, but further growth of the program will require a solid infrastructure for student training, faculty involvement, and integration of the multiple facets of the program.

From: "Larry Purnell" <[LPurnell@UDel.Edu](mailto:LPurnell@UDel.Edu)>

To: <[mason@UDel.Edu](mailto:mason@UDel.Edu)>

Sent: Monday, October 30, 2006 7:40 AM

Subject: More documents

> Here is the original document for the HSAD program. Just as a point of clarification: We have the MS and the MSN in Health Services Administration. The curricula are identical except for one course. Students from both programs are in the same courses.

>

> I was never asked to give a response to Faculty Senate's review last year but I wrote one in case someone was interested. I have attached this as well.

>

> Currently, **we have 6 students in the MS-HSAD and 19 in the MSN-HSAD**, making it the second largest graduate program in the School of Nursing.

> Larry Purnell PhD, RN, FAAN

> Professor Nursing

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[Note from C. Mason: These are the comments made by Larry Purnell after the PSPR report of the HSAD MS program was sent to the department, which he refers to in his Oct 30, 2006, email to me.]

1. The self study did not include information on how the program considers academic priorities because the question was not part of the evaluation criteria.
2. Under program **Weaknesses**, the document indicates that the program Director delivers the majority of the training. This is not the case. The program director only teaches 2 courses in the program (619 and 637) and some scholarly projects (868) and practicum (664); however, he does coordinate the program. The practicum experience was approved by the faculty Senate at the time of the development of the program and guidelines were given. They are also on the web.
3. The report suggests face-to-face class meeting times. The program was originally developed to be presented in an online format. Face-to-face class times would probably mean that we would not have our students from FL, CT, AZ, MN, and other states.
4. The review criteria did not ask for letters of support from other Departments except for the School of Nursing; therefore, the letters were not requested from other departments.
5. The review guidelines did not ask about student advising and mentoring but were in the evaluation report.
6. The HSAD Governance Committee is in agreement that faculty who are interested in the program need to be recruited.
7. A program to access learning outcomes of students has been implemented and was part of the Senate approved original document.
8. The School of Nursing has, since this report, hired a part-time recruiter for all graduate programs in the School of Nursing.
9. Since submission of the evaluation report, the MS program has been added to the College of Health Sciences Homepage. This addition has resulted in at least 2 requests for information on a weekly basis.



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## MEMORANDUM

APR 3 2006

March 31, 2006

**TO:** Betty J. Paulanka, Dean  
College of Health Sciences

**FROM:** Lisa Ann Plowfield, Director *LP*  
School of Nursing

**SUBJECT:** Response to Faculty Senate's Permanent Status Program  
Internal Review for the MS in Health Services Administration

The report from the Faculty Senate dated March 21, 2006 reflects accurately the status, challenges, and characteristics of the MS in Health Services Administration. Clearly the reviewers have captured the difficulties inherent in operating a program that a single faculty member has established and serves as an advisor of all the students enrolled and instructor of many of the courses required for completion of this program. During the past five years of the program's implementation, the School of Nursing has had to take on greater responsibilities for this program as many of the collaborative efforts from other programs across campus have not been fully realized.

I would make two clarifications to the report. First, the program was established as a completely online degree program; therefore, on-campus interactions would be extremely difficult to build into the program. In addition, a number of the students live farther than 100 miles from campus making campus activity a potential deterrent to their interest and enrollment in this program unlikely. The program is a part-time program that was established to fit into the lives of busy healthcare professionals.

Second, the report indicated the School of Nursing's plans for a "PhD" program, which would potentially eliminate the MSN in Health Services Administration. The School of Nursing is working to develop doctoral level education program plans. The first phase of this plan is to establish a Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP), which is a clinical professional doctorate. The DNP program would replace our existing MSN programs. This change would include eliminating the MSN in Health Services Administration. The focus of the DNP is clinical practice and not nursing administration. A second phase of doctoral education would also be pursued and include a PhD program, but resources at the current time are not sufficient to build the programs simultaneously.

In summary, I would propose that the MS in Health Services Administration be given another year to establish the interdisciplinary collaboration and foundation that has not yet been realized. Too few faculty are involved or invested in this program. Commitments of time and faculty workload in online education must be provided to continue this program. At this time no other faculty in the School of Nursing have expressed any interest in assisting in the coursework or advisement of students; therefore,

faculty interest from outside the School of Nursing must be elicited. While recent attempts to seek faculty support across the College of Health Sciences to help support this program have been unsuccessful, the program has had past participation from nutrition faculty and faculty external to the college. This past interest and participation needs to be revived and expanded in order to meet the original interdisciplinary intent of the program. In addition, the dedicated work and creativity of Dr. Larry Purnell in establishing and independently maintaining this program should be recognized and supported by providing an additional year to ascertain fully the sustainability of this program. Without his work and additional interdisciplinary support, this program would not be able to continue.

I hope these comments in response to the internal report are helpful as the MS in Health Services Administration is examined carefully prior to a final decision regarding permanent status.

cc: Larry Purnell, Professor



COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

OFFICE OF THE DEAN

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**MEMORANDUM**

**DATE:** April 6, 2006

**TO:** Faculty Senate Office

**FROM:** Betty J. Paulanka *BJP*  
Dean, College of Health Sciences

**RE:** **Response to Faculty Senate's Permanent Status Program  
Internal Review for the MS in Health Services Administration**

I have reviewed the findings of the Permanent Status Program Review Committee for the MS in Health Services Administration and Dr. Lisa Ann Plowfield's response and recommendation regarding this program. I believe providing an additional year in which stronger interdisciplinary collaborations can be developed is an appropriate step. I have discussed this suggestion with Dr. Larry Purnell and he has agreed to think creatively in developing the interdisciplinary support needed to continue this important program.

BJP:jrb

cc: Lisa Ann Plowfield  
Larry Dale Purnell  
Karren Ann Helsel