

APPENDIX N

Request for Authorization to Establish a Bachelor of Science Degree in Clinical Research at The University of North Carolina at Wilmington

Introduction

The University of North Carolina at Wilmington notified the Office of the President of its intent to plan a new degree program, the Bachelor of Science in Clinical Research, on June 5, 2003. UNCW seeks authorization to establish the degree program effective August 2004.

Program Description

The Bachelor of Science in Clinical Research will prepare health science professionals to participate in the science and business of developing health care products and protocols, from discovery to market and human utilization. The School of Nursing has developed the clinical research program and will offer an interdisciplinary program with collaborative partners that include the Center for Marine Science, New Hanover Regional Medical Center, and Pharmaceutical Product Development, Inc. (PPD). The curriculum is designed to provide competency in methodologies, including protocol development and regulatory compliance; data collection, analysis and synthesis derived from human oriented research; research ethics; assessment and evaluation of the safety and efficacy of investigational products; application of knowledge and skills to clinical situations; oral and written scientific presentation; and collaborative team membership. Graduates will be prepared for entry positions in a variety of setting such as pharmaceutical companies, government regulatory agencies, contract research organizations, biotechnology device companies, academic institutions, physicians' offices, or graduate level education.

Program Need

The proposed clinical research program is coherent with the strategic plan of UNCW to become more active in the expanding biotechnology industry and to enhance its potential for technology transfer. PPD, a collaborator and local research organization, hires about 70 clinical research professionals annually. Even though society continues to be challenged by healthcare issues, the shortage of nurses has also limited the supply for companies that employ them as clinical researchers. The School of Nursing responds to numerous requests for a clinical research program in a region that is expanding a pharmaceutical industry. Industry demands and enrollment projections indicate that the demand for the bachelors of science in clinical research will be extremely high. Additionally, the clinical research program will provide an option for qualified students who cannot be accommodated in the baccalaureate program in nursing.

Resources

Faculty expertise and resources are available to support the clinical research program. The School of Nursing will house the Clinical Research Program and is scheduled to move into larger facilities summer 2005. As the program grows, additional space might be required.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request from UNCW to establish a Bachelors of Science degree in Clinical Research effective August 2004.