

## Request to Plan a Doctor of Nursing Practice Program at UNC Greensboro

### Introduction

The University of North Carolina at Greensboro requests approval to plan a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program (CIP 51.3818).

### Program Description

The Doctor of Nursing Practice program will prepare advanced practice registered nurses (APRNs) with two concentrations for nurse anesthesia and the adult/gerontological nurse practitioner – primary care, building on current concentrations in the master's program. Both the A/GNP and anesthesia master's concentrations have 50 credits. The DNP program would add an additional 30 credits for a total of 80 credits that would be completed at a post baccalaureate level. Both a post baccalaureate DNP program (80 credits) and a post master's DNP program (30 credits) are proposed to meet the future needs of baccalaureate prepared registered nurses and the existing needs of master's prepared nurses in practice who desire the post master's option. The DNP degree will be developed in accordance with educational standards and position statements such as *The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2006), the *Practice Doctorate Nurse Practitioner Entry-Level Competencies* (NONPF, 2006), and *Competencies for the CRNA Practitioner at the Clinical Doctorate Level* (AANA, 2007).

The educational objectives (program outcomes) for the Doctor of Nursing Practice program are to:

- Practice as Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to advance the discipline and nursing profession through clinical practice.
- Assume leadership roles in the delivery of optimal healthcare.
- Appraise evidence to improve nursing practice and healthcare outcomes.

The proposed DNP program includes the eight essentials of doctoral education identified for advanced practice nurses by the AACN (2006). These essentials are:

1. Scientific underpinnings for practice;
2. Organizational and systems leadership for quality improvement and systems thinking;
3. Clinical scholarship and analytical methods for evidence-based practice;
4. Information systems/technology and patient care technology for the improvement and transformation of health care;
5. Health care policy for advocacy in health care;
6. Interprofessional collaboration for improving patient and population health outcomes;
7. Clinical prevention and population health for improving the nation's health; and
8. Advanced nursing practice.

The DNP program will have two concentrations for nurse anesthesia and for the adult/

gerontological nurse practitioner. Both concentrations will require core course work including nursing theory; law, policy, and economics of healthcare; and research methods (9 credits). Additionally, pathophysiology, pharmacology, and physical assessment will be required as support courses for the specialty (9 credits). Specialty didactic and clinical courses will comprise an additional 32 credits. Over 1,000 hours of clinical practice will be integrated into the specialty courses to meet requirements for the degree and certification. Additional cognates will incorporate content related to leadership, evidence-based practice methods (including translational research methods), information systems/technology, and population health/epidemiology (12 credits). Students will have two electives (6 credits) and will complete an evidence based clinical project incorporating translational research (12 credits). Students who hold a baccalaureate degree in nursing will complete 80 credits for the DNP program; and students who hold a master's degree in nursing (or post master's certificate) for nurse anesthesia or the A/GNP will complete 30 credits in the proposed DNP program.

### **Relevance to Institutional Mission and Strategic Plan**

The proposed DNP program addresses two goals in UNCG's Strategic Plan (2009-2014) to:

1.8 Increase graduate enrollment; and

2.2 ...increase access to other ...graduate nursing programs to address the professional nursing shortage.

A major strategic area for UNCG is to “improve health, wellness, and quality of life for children, adults, families, and communities through scientific inquiry and application, workforce development, reduction of disparities, sustainability efforts, and recreational opportunities.” Educating nurse anesthetists and adult/gerontological nurse practitioners who are well prepared to deliver individual as well as population based care is important for improving the health of North Carolinians, developing the nursing workforce, and reducing healthcare disparities.

### **Projected Enrollments**

Estimated number of post-MSN students in the program during the first year of operation:

Full-time	84	Part-time	TBD
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Estimated number of post-MSN students in the program when it is fully operational (2015):

Full-time	252	Part-time	TBD
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(Part-time enrollment will be determined in accordance with resources.)

### **Graduate Council**

The Council heard a presentation introducing the five proposals to plan the six Doctor of Nursing Practice programs under consideration. This presentation addressed the background of the DNP degree, reasons for its currently being offered in 37 states, an overview of the curriculum, student demand for the program in North Carolina, opportunities for employment of DNP graduates in

North Carolina, and the relationship of the DNP program to the Master of Science in Nursing degree program.

Graduate Council members asked numerous questions, which were answered by the Deans and faculty members of the six Schools of Nursing in attendance. Questions addressed issues of the evolving relationship of the DNP degree and the MSN degree; which faculty members in what departments may be qualified to teach in the DNP programs; the effect of the DNP on the enrollment in Ph.D. in Nursing programs; student demand for the program in North Carolina; opportunities for employment of DNP graduates in North Carolina; the new role of DNPs in hospitals and other healthcare facilities; the budget implications of initiating these DNP programs; how these six campuses planned to implement, support, and sustain the DNP programs should enrollment growth funding not be available; and other areas. All questions were answered to the satisfaction of the Council members.

UNC Greensboro made a presentation on the specific details of its proposed DNP program, and answered questions about its program to the satisfaction of Council members.

After discussion, the Graduate Council voted, without dissent, to recommend approval of UNC Greensboro's Request to Plan the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program.

#### **Collaboration with Other Universities**

UNC Greensboro, with a later starting date of Fall 2015 than the other five institutions, continues to examine collaboration possibilities.

#### **Resource Implications**

If enrollment growth funding should not be available, UNCG would support the program internally through two efforts. First, all new and replacement nursing faculty positions would be directed to the DNP program. Second, the UNCG would use the proposed tuition differential to support new faculty lines as well as to support new graduate assistantships for students within the program.

Should the request to plan be approved, additional detailed budget information on the DNP program will be submitted with the Request to Establish document.

#### **Recommendation**

The staff of the General Administration recommends that the Board of Governors approve the request from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro to plan a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program.

#### **Approved to be Recommended for Planning to the Committee on Educational Planning, Policies, and Programs**

  
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Suzanne T. Ortega  
Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

May 31, 2012