

## **Request for Authorization to Establish a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) at Appalachian State University**

### **Introduction**

Appalachian State University notified the Office of the President of its intent to plan a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (RN to BSN) (51.1601) on May 11, 2005.

### **Program Description**

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing is designed for registered nurses who seek to complete their bachelor's degree to continue their professional education and development. The proposed program will help nurses develop the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for professional nursing practice as a practitioner and as a manager in a variety of settings. The proposed program will be housed in the College of Fine and Applied Arts. The program is structured to conform to the accreditation standards for nursing education of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The projected student clientele for this program are registered nurses (RNs) located in the surrounding nine county region of Northwestern North Carolina. It is expected that most students will be working professionals, and they will be enrolled part-time. Graduates of the proposed BSN program will be able to exhibit a client-centered, caring approach; fill the role of provider of care and coordinator of care; communicate effectively with members of health care teams; adhere to legal and professional standards; and demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning.

### **Program Need**

Data compiled from surveys conducted in March 2005 in eight regional community colleges, illustrate the severe shortage of nurses, and further requests for the RN/BSN program helped to establish the impetus for the proposed degree program. In 1998, ASU developed a vision that would guide its development in the ensuing decade. The proposed BSN program adheres to the university's vision statement. It enables ASU to respond to the regional health care provider needs and the needs of associate degree registered nurses. Increasing the overall educational level of the RN workforce and providing individual nurses the options for career development is also one of the strategic priorities identified in the recent North Carolina Nursing Workforce Report. This report highlighted the need to prepare nurses for a level of practice that encompasses health education and promotion, health problems, and both acute and chronic illnesses. Moreover, the proposed program will not only allow ASU to serve the needs of the region; it will also prepare students to pursue careers that require an undergraduate degree; and it will prepare graduates to pursue master's level study in nursing. It is anticipated that after four years, the proposed program will attain a head count of 90 students; 20 of those students would be pursuing the program full time.

### **Resources**

Appalachian State University has provisionally engaged a department chair and will hire two faculty members and a clinical and site coordinator within the first two years, if the proposed program is authorized. These personnel will be required to teach the 11 new required courses in the program. The RN/BSN program will be offered both on-campus and off-campus. Existing

facilities are being provided by the Department of Health, Leisure and Exercise Science for classroom and laboratory space. The arrangement of off-campus space will be coordinated by the Office of Extension and Distance Education. The library will be improved to meet program requirements for the next five years. There will be one-time start-up funds to build nursing resources (books, periodicals, reference books, and other needed resources). Additionally, it is anticipated that there will be a sharing of facilities between AHEC and ASU. Other faculty and resources will be secured from enrollment growth funds.

**Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve the request to establish the Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Appalachian State University (RN to BSN) effective January 2006.