

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION

PRESENTED BY: Gordon Hill, Chair, Academic Programs Committee

DATE OF MEETING: June 18, 2009

SUBJECT: **CGSR: Post-Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate: Nurse Practitioner**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the Post-Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate: Nurse Practitioner.

PURPOSE:

The Post-Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate is a new academic program at the University of Saskatchewan. New programs and new fields of specialization in programs must be approved by University Council.

SUMMARY

The impetus for the creation of this post MN certificate originated with inquiries from College of Nursing graduates as to how they might obtain nurse practitioner training. The College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan is the only post-secondary institution in Saskatchewan to offer a Nurse Practitioner option within a Master of Nursing program. This certificate will provide a program for those students who have already completed a Master of Nursing degree from any recognized institution, thus allowing an alternate route of access to nurse practitioner training and certification.

Required courses in the Certificate will include:

- NURS 883.3 Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles and Primary Health Care
- NURS 884.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I
- NURS 881.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice I
- NURS 879.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning II
- NURS 886.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for advance Nursing Practice II
- NURS 885.3 Nursing Therapeutics I – Individual to Community
- NURS 888.3 Nursing Therapeutics II – Advanced Management
- NURS 887 Practicum I: Advanced Nursing Practice in Primary Health Care (480 hours)
- NURS 889 Practicum II: Advanced Nursing Practice with Vulnerable Populations (240 hours)

Because this was a graduate program already reviewed by the College of Graduate Studies & Research, the Academic Programs Committee established a lead reviewer to review the proposal and present a report to the Committee. At its June 2 meeting following discussion with CGSR and Nursing representatives, the Committee agreed to recommend approval to Council.

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposal documentation, memo and report from the College of Graduate Studies and Research, and reviewer report.

Proposal for Curriculum Change University of Saskatchewan

to be approved by University Council or by Academic Programs Committee

1. PROPOSAL IDENTIFICATION

Title of proposal: Post Graduate Degree Nurse Practitioner Certificate

Degree(s): Post Graduate Certificate

Field(s) of Specialization: Nurse Practitioner

Level(s) of Concentration: Graduate Level

Option(s):

Degree College: College of Nursing

Department:

Home College: College of Nursing

Contact person(s) (name, telephone, fax, e-mail): Dr. Lynnette Leeseberg Stamler
Assistant Dean, College of Nursing
University of Saskatchewan
Telephone: 966-1477
Facsimile: 966-6703
Email: lynnette.stamler@usask.ca

Date: April 15, 2009

Approved by the degree college and/or home college: March 31, 2009

Proposed date of implementation: September, 2009

2. Type of change

Requiring approval by Council

- A new Degree-Level program or template for program.
- A new Field of Specialization at the Major or Honours Level of Concentration or template for a major or honours program
- Conversion of an existing program from regular to special tuition program.
- A change in the requirements for admission to a program
- A change in quota for a college
- Program revisions that will use new resources
- A replacement program, including program deletion
- A program deletion (consult Program Termination Procedures, approved by Council in May 2001)
- X A subset of an existing program.**

Proposal Document

Attach a proposal document, usually two or more pages, which covers the following information. The length and detail provided should reflect the scale or importance of the program or revision. Documents prepared for your college may be used.

3. RATIONALE

This statement should include information about program objectives, need for the program, demand, uniqueness and the expertise of the sponsoring unit. Please specify how this proposal relates to department/college plans and to Systematic Program Review or other review recommendations.

The proposed Post Graduate Degree Nurse Practitioner Certificate (PGDNP Certificate) is intended to be a subset of the current NP option of the Master of Nursing Program offered by the College of Nursing. The creation of this program is necessary to allow maximum access to nurse practitioner training within the College of Nursing. University policy is such that no student can receive the same degree twice. Thus, students who have previously completed an MN from the College of Nursing cannot return to take the NP option (which was not available at the time they completed their degree). The impetus for the creation of this post MN certificate originated with inquiries from College of Nursing graduates as to how they might obtain nurse practitioner training. The College of Nursing at University of Saskatchewan is the only post-secondary institution in Saskatchewan to offer an NP option within an MN program. We would like to create a post MN certificate subset for those students who have already completed an MN degree from any recognized institution, thus allowing an alternate route of access to nurse practitioner training and certification.

In addition to removing barriers to entrance into the NP option, other factors should also be considered which would speak to the importance of establishing this certificate program.

The questions providing the format for the Letter of Intent note that a new program should meet the goals found within "A Framework for Planning" (1998), from the University of Saskatchewan. This document clearly states that a key goal for the University of Saskatchewan is to provide "a series of programs aimed at meeting social and economic needs" (1998, p.1). Nursing programs in general, and the NP program specifically, meet this goal, providing Saskatchewan with generalists and leaders to provide excellent health care within the province and beyond. Further, within that document are several goals. We believe this proposal speaks to the first goal "improving the quality of instructional programs" (1998, p.3) specifically. We also note the relationship of this proposal with the third goal of the Framework for Planning – "fostering the teacher-scholar model"(1998.p.4). We believe that advance practice nurses should be educated at the graduate level, with both the clinical skills for the NP credential, but also knowledge and experience with the scholarship expectations of a masters-prepared graduate. We believe that this certificate continues the tradition of the College of Nursing to use innovative programming to serve students, the profession and society.

While this is the document suggested within the Letter of Intent, there have been subsequent documents from the University of Saskatchewan that outline our goals for university education. One of these is The Teaching and Learning Foundational Document (2008). While the document does focus on undergraduate education, this proposal is congruent with the goals found in that document. For example, the Foundational Document outlines eight core skills that should be developed in students. These include “analytical skills”, “a deep understanding of a particular area of academic work”, “developed capacity for collaborative problem-solving skills”, and “habits of mind that foster.. interdisciplinary thinking” (p. 28). The NP option of the MN program already fosters those core skills – this Certificate increases access to this program. Further, the Foundational Document exhorts the faculty to “explore alternative approaches to deliver programs and to support lifelong learning goals”. The College of Nursing has committed to a distributed learning model for the MN program. While the NP option is not the primary focus of the initial initiative, lessons learned will assist the College to strongly consider a blended model for the NP option, which would extend to PGDNP Certificate students. Further, the increased access will build opportunities for early- and mid-career nurses with MN degrees to change focus and accept the challenge of an NP designation and practice.

Additional important documents are the University and College Integrated Plans. These are discussed later in this proposal.

Increased Need for NPs Practicing in the Province

It is well documented that there exists a nursing shortage across the Canada, and indeed, around the world. In response to concerns raised by the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (SUN), the Government of Saskatchewan engaged in a partnership with SUN, outlined within a partnership document (Government of Saskatchewan/Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (2008). Within that document are references to the education and use of NPs within the province. Specifically, one Recruitment and Retention Target was to “increase the use of nurse practitioners. Immediately create positions and offer full time employment to all licensed Nurse Practitioners in Saskatchewan” (p.4). With the perceived shortage of physicians and nurses within the province, particularly in rural areas where the need is in some cases urgent, every effort must be made to provide as many health professionals as possible, as quickly as possible. Communications with the Chief Nursing Officer of Saskatchewan and other government officials have indicated a desire for increased nurse practitioner positions within the province. Canadian Institute for Health Information (CIHI) statistics state “there were a total of 1,026 licensed NPs registered in the jurisdictions of Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut in 2005” (2006, p.2). Although numbers have increased since that time, it is clear that a pressing need exists for advanced practice nurses, not only in Saskatchewan, but across Canada.

Age Demographics for NPs Currently Practicing in Canada

CIHI statistics indicate that “the average age of all licensed NPs was 45.2 years in 2005” (2006, p.2). These statistics are of concern for the continuity of NPs in future practice. If immediate plans are not implemented to graduate new nurse practitioners to practice in the province, a

worrisome gap could occur between the retirement of current NPs and the certification for practice of new NPs to take their place. The proposed PGDNP Certificate will directly address this issue, as it will increase enrollment opportunities.

Value for Resources Expended

The NP credential is desired and valued across the province & throughout Canada, as there is an increasing need for the skills and leadership provided by nurse practitioners. This proposal will add value by increasing uptake of students in the NP area of practice.

CIHI statistics also document “In comparison to the overall RN workforce, rates of full –time employment are substantially higher for licensed NPs, while rates of casual employment are substantially lower” (2006, p.15). Therefore, expediting the training of more NPs adds value. It will be of benefit to meeting the need for health care professionals, if those graduated work full time in practice. The proposed PGDNP Certificate will also encompass good stewardship of finite resources. This program is not a duplication of the NP option offered in the current MN program, but as a subset of the NP option of that program, opportunities to share resources are considerable.

The proposed PGDNPC subset is well positioned as a vehicle to meet the needs and address the goals of prospective students, the College of Nursing and the University. It will address the acute need for increasing the number of nurse practitioners within the province, and increase opportunities for students from other provinces, opening the door to increased enrollment and timely graduation of NPs. This program presents an opportunity to address these goals in a uniquely cost-effective fashion, while retaining high quality of the graduates.

4. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS

Please include a complete draft Calendar entry.

In particular, please indicate if a template is already in place for such a program (for example, if it follows the general requirements and standards of B.Sc. programs) or if new standards are being introduced for this program.

The proposed PGDNP Certificate subset is designed to emphasize specific areas of competence, as well as to provide the theoretical base and foundational underpinnings necessary to the understanding and performance of the nurse practitioner model of practice.

CIHI statistics indicate that “Examination of the Canadian legislation and regulation for NPs reveals that all provinces and territories have or are moving toward the enactment of legislation to support the regulation of NPs” (2006, p 4). Of these, “Twelve Canadian provinces and territories have NP legislation and regulations in place or in progress as of March 2006” (2006, p 2). The PGDNP Certificate is designed to meet or exceed provincial regulatory requirements across Canada. Therefore, graduates of the NP certificate subset will not be restricted to employment in the province of Saskatchewan. This quality of certification will not only benefit

the individual student but will attract and accommodate students from across Canada, allowing for a much wider pool of potential applicants.

Nurse practitioners, by definition, are able to autonomously 1) diagnose a disease, disorder or condition, 2) order and interpret diagnostic and screening tests, and 3) prescribe medication (Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI, 2006, p2). The proposed PGDNP Certificate will maintain this standard of training for students within the program, allowing for the RN(NP) designation to be conferred upon its graduates, following the national licensure examination.

Admission criteria for the current Nurse Practitioner option of the Master of Nursing degree follows general College of Graduate Studies and Research requirements. These include

- a relevant Bachelors degree with a 70% average in the last 60 undergraduate hours and 3 credit units in undergraduate research and statistics.

In addition, the College of Nursing requires:

- a current RN license in good standing from any Canadian jurisdiction,
- 4500 hours clinical practice as an RN (approximately 2 years full time practice, required for NP option only).

Admission criteria for the PGDNP Certificate will be

- completion of Masters in Nursing (MN, MScN, MSN) from a recognized university with a 70% average within that degree
- a current RN license in good standing from any Canadian jurisdiction,
- 4500 hours clinical practice as an RN (approximately 2 years full time practice).

Currently, the NP requirements within the present Master of Nursing program includes 30 credit units of required courses and 700+ practicum hours, and is planned to be completed in five terms of full time study. The current MN (NP option) course requirements include the following:

- NURS 883.3 Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles and Primary Health Care
- NURS 884.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I
- NURS 881.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice I
- NURS 879.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning II
- NURS 886.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for advance Nursing Practice II
- NURS 885.3 Nursing Therapeutics I – Individual to Community
- NURS 888.3 Nursing Therapeutics II – Advanced Management
- NURS 892.3 Research
- NURS 993.3 Publishable Paper
- A graduate level Statistics course
- NURS 887 Practicum I: Advanced Nursing Practice in Primary Health Care (480 hours)
- NURS 889 Practicum II: Advanced Nursing Practice with Vulnerable Populations (240 hours)
- NURS 990

(Note: Please see appendix for course descriptions – as per the UofS calendar.)

Given that students admitted to PGDNP Certificate will have already completed an MN degree, they will need to complete 21 credit units of NP-specific courses and the 700+ supervised clinical hours – non-credit courses. With minor modifications of the final year to account for the courses already completed as part of the student's previous MN degree, the certificate program could be completed in four terms of full time study. Part -time study is an option for all students

with the exception of the periods of supervised clinical experience. Because all of the courses are required, continuous registration may not be possible or required as part-time students may need to wait for a specific course to be offered. All courses are offered each year.

Thus, required courses in the PGDNP Certificate will include:

- NURS 883.3 Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles and Primary Health Care
- NURS 884.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I
- NURS 881.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice I
- NURS 879.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning II
- NURS 886.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for advance Nursing Practice II
- NURS 885.3 Nursing Therapeutics I – Individual to Community
- NURS 888.3 Nursing Therapeutics II – Advanced Management
- NURS 887 Practicum I: Advanced Nursing Practice in Primary Health Care (480 hours)
- NURS 889 Practicum II: Advanced Nursing Practice with Vulnerable Populations (240 hours)

All of the courses listed are currently offered through the College of Nursing. There are no new courses for this certificate.

5. RESOURCES

Please describe what resources will be required by the new or revised program. Include information about the impact this proposal will have on resources used by existing programs. Please indicate whether the program be handled within the existing resources of the department or college (eg, faculty, secretarial support, equipment, information technology, laboratories, library resources, space, etc). If new resources will be needed, please describe how these will be found. Include any required memos from the Dean or department heads regarding resources.

This is a subset of an existing option of the MN program. Therefore, increasing enrollment through the vehicle of the proposed PGDNP Certificate would not be appreciably different in impact than if the number of students enrolled were to increase by any other strategy. Impact on faculty, or such support functions as secretarial or information technology would be minimal. Space needs or access to laboratories, equipment or library resources should remain well within the present resources of the College of Nursing and not be so large as to unduly strain these resources.

Should resources beyond these parameters be needed for the PGDNP Certificate, allocation of funds for this purpose will be determined as part of the overall College of Nursing budget.

6. RELATIONSHIPS AND IMPACT OF IMPLEMENTATION

Please describe the impact this program will have on department activities and on students, and on other departments or colleges. Describe the consultation process followed for this program, including any memos received.

The proposed PGDNP Certificate is a subset of an existing program. Relationships with other colleges, health regions or regulatory bodies are already in place and functional. Among these, some particular relationships relevant to the proposed NP Certificate subset include:

College of Nursing

The proposed PGDNP Certificate will increase access to College of Nursing programs. The College of Nursing Integrated Plan 2008-2012 states that “Education in nursing is a continuing, systemic process which provides for the development of the individual and for the realization of the potential for carrying out the nursing roles inherent in the health practices of our changing society”. (2007, p.7) The college intends to “provide graduate level education that prepares nurses for advance practice and research (2007, p 8) but also emphasizes the need to “maintain a balance of cost effectiveness, accessibility and quality in examining the demand for and impact of all our programs and services, modifying them when necessary” (2007, p.8). The proposed PGDNP Certificate builds on these goals and priorities.

University of Saskatchewan

The proposed PGDNP Certificate meets the University’s goals and objectives in several ways. The University of Saskatchewan’s Second Integrated Plan calls for “increasing the flexibility with which programs are assembled to match student interests” (2008, P.10). This certificate opens the NP program to additional students. Further, the Second Integrated Plan notes a priority of “engagement of students in community-based learning in Saskatchewan and Canada” (p.11). Nursing programs, by their clinical component, engage students in many communities across the province, benefitting the students and providing a visible presence for the University of Saskatchewan within these communities. The NP option is an excellent example of this. Supervised clinical experiences will take place in urban, rural and remote areas of the province, allowing students to gain skills such that they are able to apply and extend their knowledge in a way that supports the health care system and therefore the health and economy of Saskatchewan and beyond.

As part of the original NP option, consultations with the Library, ITS and other areas on campus were completed. Suggestions made at that time have been implemented. There has been consultation with the Registrar’s office regarding policies around the certificate, which has been appended, as this will be a new endeavor for the University of Saskatchewan at a graduate level.

Nursing Associations

The proposed PGDNP Certificate is also congruent with the goals of collective nursing. CIHI reports The Canadian Nurses Association’s assertion that “today, NPs in either acute care or primary health care are an important resource that can contribute to improved access to health care for Canadians. Decision makers at all levels recognize the contribution that NPs can offer in providing timely access to quality care” (2006, p.3). The Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association (SRNA) is supportive of this proposal, as it will increase opportunities for advanced practice nurses in Saskatchewan. A letter of support for this proposal is appended.

Other Universities

There is no duplication of the proposed PGDNP Certificate at other institutions of learning within the province. Across the country, McGill University, the University of Calgary and Athabasca

University currently offer a post degree NP diploma or certificate. Outside of the proposed certificate program, McGill and Athabasca are the only two post degree diplomas that currently require an MN for admission. The proposed PGDNP Certificate will be open to students from other provinces who may not have access to an NP certificate program, as well as to Saskatchewan residents.

First Nations Community

The College of Nursing has prioritized the need to “continue to increase our collaboration and partnership to health and education needs of the Aboriginal Community” (College of Nursing Integrated Plan, 2007, p.8). The University of Saskatchewan has also prioritized a goal of “aboriginal engagement” (University of Saskatchewan, the second Integrated Plan 2008/9 to 2011/12, p. 14), particularly in the area of increasing “accessibility programs for First Nations and Metis students towards graduate programs and enhancing its community based research” (p.14). The proposed PGDNP Certificate can only enhance this goal, as it allows First Nations or Metis students with a MN degree increased opportunity for access to NP training.

Other Saskatchewan Communities

Communities across the province, particularly in smaller cities, towns, rural or northern areas can derive substantial benefit from the implementation of the proposed PGDNP Certificate. More quality trained NPs practicing across the province can substantially enhance the timely accessibility of health care in these regions or in urban areas where the need is high. The graduates of this certificate would be welcomed across the province.

Health Regions

One of the influences in increased interest in NP prepared nurses is the desire of the health regions to increase access to primary health care. In addition to the increased graduates available for employment within the health regions, the College of Nursing is exploring additional innovations. For example, the possibility of shared hiring would benefit both the University and the health regions. College of Nursing faculty with NP certification could maintain their clinical practice, both an ongoing regulatory requirement and an enhancement to their teaching. The health regions benefit with additional volume of advanced practice nurses, and stronger clinical links. In this way the capacity of both the College and the health regions would be increased.

7. BUDGET

Please indicate if budget allocations within the department or the college will change due to this program. Consult with the College’s Financial Analyst (Financial Services Division) and submit the Budget Consultation form if allocations are required.

The PGDNP Certificate will be a subset of the current NP option offered by the College of Nursing, thereby increasing access for additional students to train as nurse practitioners. Funding for programs within the College of Nursing is presently under review by the Nursing Education Strategy of Saskatchewan. Allocation of funds for the Nurse Practitioner option (and PGDNP Certificate) will be determined as part of the overall College of Nursing budget.

As with the NP option of the MN program, costs related to the practicum portion of the PGDNP Certificate will be borne by the student.

References

Canadian Institute for Health Information/Canadian Nurses Association (2006). The regulation and supply of nurse practitioners in Canada: 2006 update. Ottawa, ON: Author

Government of Saskatchewan/Saskatchewan Union of Nurses (2008). Partnership between the Government of Saskatchewan and the Saskatchewan union of nurses. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from

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http://www.usask.ca/university_secretary/council/committees/planning_priorities/report_files/LTPlan3-98.php

College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan (2007). College of nursing integrated plan, 2008-2012, Part 1. Retrieved March 20, 2009 from

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University of Saskatchewan (2008). The second integrated plan – Toward an engaged university. Saskatoon, SK: Author.

University of Saskatchewan (2008). The teaching and learning foundational document. Saskatoon, SK: Author

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April 14, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

RE: College of Nursing statement in support of the proposal for a Post Graduate Degree Nurse Practitioner Certificate.

The College of Nursing Graduate Studies Committee and the College of Nursing Faculty have approved this proposal. The following process was followed to reach this determination.

Discussions about this certificate have been continuing within the Graduate Studies Committee for some time. Issues which generated the discussion included questions from current students about transferring among the options within the MN program, and inquiries from former students who now wished to complete NP certification. As part of the discussions, inquiries were made with the regulatory body, the Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association, as to the process we would need to meet their requirements. They indicated that as long as the students had a completed MN degree, and the NP-specific courses completed (even as non-degree students after MN graduation) as demonstrated by their transcript, the SRNA would accept these individuals for approval to write the national NP licensure examination.

Faculty felt strongly that if students completed 21 c.u. and the clinical practica (720+ hours) in addition to an existing MN degree, they should receive some academic recognition for their outstanding efforts. Simultaneously, faculty were not willing to create a specific degree for the NP, but wished to retain it as an option within the MN degree program(s).

In consultation with the College of Graduate Studies and Research, and the Registrar's Office, the possibility of creating a post degree certificate was raised. The discussion from the Graduate Studies Committee, and their recommendation, was brought forward to the Faculty. While the certificate designation has been used only for post undergraduate degrees in the past, the College of Nursing Council agreed that they wished to create this subset of the NP option of the MN program. Approval for putting the proposal forward was passed on March 31, 2009 at the College of Nursing Faculty meeting.

Sincerely,



Lorna Butler, RN PhD
Dean, College of Nursing

March 11, 2009

Dr. Lynnette Leeseberg Stamler, RN, PhD
Assistant Dean, Graduate Studies, Continuing
Nursing Education & Information Technology
College of Nursing, University of Saskatchewan
107 Wiggins Road
Saskatoon, SK S7N 5E5



2066 Retallack Street
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Saskatchewan Registered
Nurses' Association

Dear Dr. Leeseberg Stamler, *Lynnette*

**Graduate of a Master's in nursing Program
(non-nurse practitioner who completes the nurse practitioner courses)**

You have asked whether a graduate of a Master's of nursing program, who then returns to take the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, will be eligible to write the national exam for her nurse practitioner licence. I reviewed the bylaws and *The Registered Nurses' Act, 1988*. In addition, legal counsel advises that the current bylaw clearly allows a graduate of a Master's in nursing program, who returns to later complete the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, to be licenced. Bylaw 6, section 3(5)(d) is the relevant section and reads as follows:

- (5) To obtain initial licensing in the nurse practitioner category, a registered nurse must:
 - (d) have satisfactorily completed:
 - (i) a nurse practitioner category registered nursing program approved or recognized by council.

It is apparent that the Master's in nursing program of the College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan and, more specifically, the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program is a recognized and approved nurse practitioner category nursing program. As such, upon successful completion of the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, the member would be entitled to challenge the national exam and obtain a nurse practitioner licence. I trust this will be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shirley McKay".

Shirley McKay, RN
Director of Regulatory Services

"Competent, caring, knowledge based nursing for the people of Saskatchewan"



Appendix C – Calendar Descriptions – NP option – MN Program – Required Courses

NURS 879.3 – Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning II

Building on Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I, this course completes the assessment process for advanced nursing practice. Utilizing seminars, lab, and clinical experiences, students will further build skills for health assessment across the life span.

NURS 881.3 – Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice I

Students will integrate pathophysiology and drug therapy concepts as a basis for advanced primary health care nursing practice. Students will develop diagnostic reasoning based on understanding the pathophysiology of acute and chronic disorders in adults and children, and make therapeutic decisions based on pharmacotherapeutic principles, professional, ethical, regulatory, and practical aspects of prescribing.

NURS 883.3 – Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles and Primary Health Care

This course will explore and evaluate theoretical aspects, issues and roles in Advanced Nursing Practice within the context of Primary Health Care.

NURS 884.3 – Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I

This course builds on participants skills and knowledge in the conduct of comprehensive and focused health assessment across the life span. Seminars introduce concepts, frameworks, and techniques integral to advanced health assessment and diagnosis. Labs and clinical experience will provide opportunities to practice comprehensive and focused health assessment.

NURS 885.3 – Nursing Therapeutics I: Individual to Community

Focuses on therapeutic approaches of advanced nursing practice with individuals, families, groups, and communities as they apply to primary health care nursing. The emphasis will be on the integration of theories and interventions with clients (individual, families, groups, and communities) who have mental health needs and common medical disorders in an interdisciplinary primary health care nursing context.

NURS 886.3 – Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice II

Students will integrate pathophysiology and drug therapy concepts as a basis for advanced primary health care nursing practice. Students will develop diagnostic reasoning based on understanding the pathophysiology of acute and chronic disorders in adults and children, and make therapeutic decisions based on pharmacotherapeutic principles, professional, ethical, regulatory, and practical aspects of prescribing.

NURS 887 – Practicum I: Advanced Nursing Practice in Primary Health Care (480 hours)

The student will provide direct care in selected primary health care settings. Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate primary health care skills and advanced practice clinical judgment. Scholarly activities in this clinical practicum will be designed so that the student will gain experience in consultation, education, integration of theory, research and clinical knowledge related to the goals of multidisciplinary health services and systems.

NURS 888.3 – Nursing Therapeutics II: Advanced Management

This course focuses on concepts of primary care management of complex, multidimensional health problems experienced within family, community and population contexts. The selection of clinical interventions, clinical decision making and evaluation of strategies will be stressed in relation to the primary health care nurse practitioner role.

NURS 889 – Practicum II: Advanced Nursing Practice with Vulnerable Populations (240 hours)

Students will have the opportunity to demonstrate primary health care skills and advanced practice clinical judgment with a selected vulnerable population. Scholarly activities in this clinical practicum will be designed so that the student will gain experience in consultation, education, integration of theory, research and clinical knowledge related to the goals of multidisciplinary health services and systems.

NURS 892.3 – Research Methods

Focuses on research methodology with application to clinical nursing problems. Major emphasis will be placed on elements of the research process, critical analysis and evaluation of nursing research, quantitative and qualitative research design, and developing proposals for nursing research investigations.

NURS 990 - Seminar

This departmental seminar includes reports and discussion of current nursing research. Graduate students are required to attend and participate throughout their program.

NURS 993.3 – Publishable Paper

Provides assistance with writing a publishable paper. Students in the course-based option will be given credit for this course upon presentation of a paper that is suitable for peer review in a professional journal.



UNIVERSITY OF
SASKATCHEWAN

College of Graduate Studies and Research

MEMORANDUM

To: Cathie Fornssler, Secretary
Academic Programs Committee of University Council

From: Trever Crowe, Associate Dean
College of Graduate Studies and Research

Copies: Lynnette Leeseberg-Stamler, Assistant Dean, College of Nursing
Lorna Butler, Dean, College of Nursing

Date: May 07, 2009

Re: Graduate Program: Post Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate – Nurse Practitioner

Consistent with the agreement between the College of Graduate Studies and Research (CGSR) and the Academic Programs Committee (APC) of Council, attached is a report that describes the review of the proposed graduate certificate in the College of Nursing. Students enrolling in this certificate will hold a Master's degree in Nursing, but will not have completed the Nurse Practitioner option. The combination of the Master's degree and completion of the course work and practica in this certificate is intended to enable students to challenge the national exam and if successful obtain a nurse practitioner license.

If questions arise during the review by APC, representatives from the College of Nursing and I would be happy to respond.

Executive Summary

The proposed Post Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate - Nurse Practitioner is intended to be a subset of the current NP option of the Master of Nursing Program offered by the College of Nursing. The creation of this program maximize student access to nurse practitioner training within the College of Nursing. The impetus for the creation of this post MN certificate originated with inquiries from College of Nursing graduates as to how they might obtain nurse practitioner training. The College of Nursing at University of Saskatchewan is the only post-secondary institution in Saskatchewan to offer an NP option within an MN program. The College of Nursing and the College of Graduate Studies and Research propose to create a post MN certificate for those students who have already completed an MN degree from any recognized institution, thus allowing an alternate route of access to nurse practitioner training and certification.

Students enrolling in the Post-graduate Degree Specialization Certificate – Nurse Practitioner will hold a Master of Nursing (MN) degree. In combination with the MN, this certificate will enable students to challenge the national exam and if successful obtain a nurse practitioner license. The certificate, based on the MN degree at the U of S, will consist of 21 cu of required course work and 720 hours of practica training (Table 1). It's expected that students may have completed the MN degree at an institution other than the U of S, and in these cases, the student's background would be assessed to customize the course load and practica training required.

Table 1. Required course work and practica training for the Post-graduate Degree Specialization Certificate – Nurse Practitioner.

NURS 883.3 Theory for Advanced Nursing Practice Roles and Primary Health Care
 NURS 884.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning I
 NURS 881.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for Advanced Nursing Practice I
 NURS 879.3 Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning II
 NURS 886.3 Pathophysiology-Pharmacotherapy for advance Nursing Practice II
 NURS 885.3 Nursing Therapeutics I – Individual to Community
 NURS 888.3 Nursing Therapeutics II – Advanced Management
 NURS 887 Practicum I: Advanced Nursing Practice in Primary Health Care (480 hours)
 NURS 889 Practicum II: Advanced Nursing Practice with Vulnerable Populations (240 hours)

The U of S offers a Master of Nursing (Nurse Practitioner Option) and the courses included in this certificate represent a subset of the required courses for the Nurse Practitioner Option. While it's expected that the number of students in these courses will increase, the impact of these greater numbers will be manageable given the current resources available. If necessary, the College of Nursing is committed to re-assign resources within the college.

Program Review Process

The proposal for the Post-graduate Degree Specialization Certificate – Nurse Practitioner was approved by the College of Nursing March 31, 2009. The Planning and Priorities Committee of University Council considered the Notice of Intent, and the Master's Committee and Executive Committee reviewed the proposal for the new program. The following questions were posed, with responses from the proponents in italic font.

- 1) Will these students be eligible for scholarships? Will they be admitted on a full-time basis? What will be the background of these students; will they be only graduates from the U of S MN program? Will students have the same admission requirements as other graduate students? What are the projected numbers of students?
Students in the certificate program will be eligible for all College of Nursing scholarships. This will be a course-based program and students may be registered on a full-time or part-time basis. Flexibility has been worked into the program to allow students with an MN from elsewhere to be admitted; the program would welcome any students who meet the admission requirements, regardless of where the MN was completed. All students would be required to satisfy the same admission requirements of other graduate students. It's expected that 4-5 new students will be admitted per year.
- 2) It's clear that this program fits within the University's commitment to innovative programming, but how does this fit within the College of Nursing's strategic plan?
The College of Nursing is committed to increasing its research intensity. This is broadly translated into more graduate student involvement. The College of Nursing is also committed to the institution's challenge to increase graduate student numbers. The College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan is the only institution in Saskatchewan delivering graduate programs. We must also meet our commitment to the province.
- 3) What is the background for the certificate? Is the naming appropriate?
The concept of a post-degree specialization certificate originated at the undergraduate level, but such a program does not currently exist at the graduate level. The certificate is intended to allow students to complete some additional courses within a concentrated area following completion of a degree. While this is the first post-graduate degree specialization certificate, the concept is not entirely foreign to the University of Saskatchewan. There is a variety of post-degree specialization certificates that may be completed by students who hold an undergraduate degree. Consultation with the Registrar concluded with the understanding that this would be a Post-graduate Degree Specialization Certificate.
- 4) How will certificate students be counted? Are student numbers expected grow or decline? How will the College of Nursing manage if student interest grows to 12-15 students per year?
Proponents were uncertain about how the students in this certificate program would be counted, but it was assumed that they would be treated the same way as students in other certificate programs on campus. The easiest way to address excess demand would be to place an enrollment limit on the program. However, the College of Nursing and the University administration regularly consult about funding for a group of health-related programs of which this would be one. There is a variety of fund sources that could be used to support these programs, if necessary.
- 5) The proposal doesn't include a draft calendar entry.
Proponents prepared and submitted this.

**POST GRADUATE DEGREE NURSE PRACTITIONER CERTIFICATE
CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION**

Discussion Leader: Fred Rémillard

Date: May 21, 2009

1. Proposal Identification: Post Graduate Degree Specialization Certificate - Nurse Practitioner (PGDSC)
2. Type of Change: new certificate
3. Rational

This is a well written and clear submission which followed the guidelines required for evaluation of program proposals.

Rational is clearly stated:

- N essentially nurses wishing to become nurse practitioners (NP) must complete a Masters in Nursing (MN) with a subspecialty in NP following the Bachelors in Nursing degree
- N nurses who already have a MN cannot enter another MN (i.e the university does not allow individuals to receive the same degree twice)
- N PGDSC program will allow those individuals with a previous MN degree (here and abroad) the credentials to become eligible for licensure as a NP

Other information:

- N the proposal includes the usual buzz words from the “The Framework for Planning” and “The Teaching and Learning Foundation” document for program justification
- N there is an increased need for NPs to provide primary care especially with the perceived concern for physician shortage, while the current nurse practitioners are approaching retirement (Note: discussion of need reported but no convincing statistics provided)
- N allow opportunities for career change in those currently holding a MN other than NP

Question: Do you have some actual statistics to support the need for this proposal such as number of NP positions needing to be filled or number of MN nurses who wish to

obtain NP credentials?

In consultation (May 25, 2009), with Ms. Lynn Digney Davis, Chief Nursing Officer for the province of Saskatchewan, the following information was revealed:

- provincial vacancy report statistics for the end of April, 2009, indicate 21 vacant NP positions within the province. These do not include positions where the health region advertises on a sporadic basis within this report because of difficulty filling the positions. Ms. Davis was able to identify at least 2-3 positions immediately that have been vacant for over a year and would fall into the latter category.
- In 2008, the Ministry of Health and the Saskatchewan Union of Nurses signed an agreement leading to more than 680 additional full time nursing positions across the province. Ms Davis indicated that some of those would be NP positions, but could not specify a number at this time.
- We acknowledge that these data do not consider other rural/urban areas/clinics where additional NP positions are under consideration as the role becomes more common within the province.
- Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association (SRNA), at its annual meeting in May, 2008, announced expansion of the regulatory streams for practice as an NP. In addition to the current primary health stream, pediatrics and adult streams will be added in the very near future. We anticipate expansion of positions and our program in response to this.

4. Program Description

- N 21 cu course work and 720 h practical training
- N the calendar description, program template and consultation form with the registrar was attached
- N goals for the program, admission criteria and time lines are clearly stated. Students apply to CGSR.
- N although this is a new program proposal, the actual courses (which will be offered every year), program and experience is already in place. The PGDSC will be a subset of the required course for the NP option of the MN program.
- N enrollment not stated in submission - reported later in the CGSR response (4-5/yr)

Questions: Compared to the UofS, how do other provinces offer the necessary training for nurse practitioners? Are they all MN-based and if so how do they accommodate those nurses already with an MN degree?

Please see following table for NP education. Unless noted otherwise, NP

education is at the Master's level.

Program	Situation
UBC	Masters designation up to 2003 was MSN, now MN, therefore no duplication of degrees. Since MN is very new, situation of student with prior MN degree has not yet arisen
U Victoria	Will not allow a second degree in the same discipline. Will allow students to complete courses as non-degree, and with the results of the courses on the transcript, the regulatory body will allow writing of the NP examination and licensure.
UNBC	NP very new program, no one with MN has applied so question has not been considered.
U Alberta	MN graduates come back and take specific courses, no university certificate, but a faculty of nursing certificate in recognition of completion.
U Calgary	Offers a post masters certificate program which is open to graduates of masters programs in other disciplines than nursing.
U Athabasca	Offers a post masters certificate program
U Manitoba	Will not allow second MN program. Regulatory body will not allow licensure unless courses can be seen to be part of a master's program or higher.
Consortium in Ontario (includes 11 Ontario universities offering the NP program)	A certificate is offered post baccalaureate – some schools indicate preference for applicants with MN degrees. Currently government does not support NP program within a master's program (funding issue).
McGill U	Offers Diploma NP program for students with completed prior graduate education in nursing.
Dalhousie	Students with previous MN get a post-masters NP certificate.
UNB	They have had only one student with an MN from another program. She took the NP specific courses, was given credit for the core courses and was given a certificate – not another degree.
Memorial	There is a transitional post RN NP program which is ending, and NP program will move to masters level. There is also a post Master's NP diploma.

Please confirm expected enrollment

We are projecting an intake of approximately 8/year into the NP option of the MN program. The certificate program could add another 3-4/year.

As per the consultation with registrar form, the goal is to implement the program in the fall of 2009 and graduate the first class in the spring of 2010. However the length of the program is described as 4 terms of full time study. Please clarify the discrepancy.

The original program, if taken on a full time basis can be completed in five consecutive terms – e.g. two academic years, and the summer between for one of the practicum courses. With the courses removed for the certificate program (because those course have already been completed), the student could complete in four terms. Thank you for noticing the error in our registrar’s form. The first students would complete their program in December, 2010 at the very earliest. Several students choose to complete the program on a part-time basis, thereby extending the date of completion which varies by student.

5. Resources

N proposal states since this is a subset of an existing option of the MN program and enrolment is not expected to be high, impact on faculty, staff and other resources (library, space, equipment) are expected to be minimal. It adds that should resources beyond these parameters be needed for the PGDSC, allocation of funds will be determined as part of the overall College of Nursing budget.

N since the number of students currently enrolled in the MN - nurse practitioner program were not provided, unable to determine if an additional 4- 5 students per year will or will not stretch faculty workload and/or ensure enough qualified faculty

Question: How many students are currently registered in the MN-NP option program?

The first intake of students had 7 admissions (September 2006). To evaluate the program and respond to recommendations from the initial program approval process, we chose not to admit to the program in 2007. Four students were admitted in 2008. We have offered admission to 10 students so far for 2009.

6. Relationship and Impact of Implementation

N Other Colleges: Since the program is totally offered “in-house” by the College of Nursing faculty, no correspondence with other Colleges were deemed necessary

N General statements made about support from nursing associations and potential benefits for the First Nation Community, other Saskatchewan Communities and the Health Region, but no consultation memos were provided.

Question: Are any official letters of support available?

This is not a new master’s degree, therefore official letters of support were not required. The original MN/NP program received support from SRNA. SRNA has also supported this proposal, and their letter, which was part of the proposal, is included here.

7. Budget

N report states that funding for this program as well as the MN- nurse practitioner option is presently under review by the Nursing Education Strategy of Saskatchewan

N also see resources section

Question: Please clarify budget/resources. Will you be implementing a cap on enrollment to ensure adequate resources?

At this time we envision an annual enrollment of no more than 12 students, some MN/NP and some certificate students (full and part time). Funding for the MN program (all streams) has been included in the budget submitted as part of the Nursing Education Strategy to government, but the University has not yet been notified of the result.

8. Overall

The program submission meets the University and College of Nursing objectives, plans and priorities. It will increase enrolment in their graduate program, albeit more in the area of professional training rather than research (teacher-scholar). It will attempt to address the issue and needs of our healthcare service especially in the rural and northern communities and provide opportunities for nurses currently with an MN for career change as a nurse practitioner.

9. Other issues:

College of Graduate Studies and Research:

- N Please clarify how this proposal may effect the devolved and non-devolved scholarship program as well as eligibility for GTFs and GTAs?*
- N As we are witnessing an influx of Master's programs (and now Post Graduate certificates) which are professional designations rather than the traditional thesis-based research degrees, should the CGSR consider shifting the application and admission responsibilities to those host Colleges?*

March 11, 2009

Dr. Lynnette Leeseberg Stamler, RN, PhD
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Saskatchewan Registered
Nurses' Association

Dear Dr. Leeseberg Stamler, *Lynnette*

**Graduate of a Master's in nursing Program
(non-nurse practitioner who completes the nurse practitioner courses)**

You have asked whether a graduate of a Master's of nursing program, who then returns to take the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, will be eligible to write the national exam for her nurse practitioner licence. I reviewed the bylaws and *The Registered Nurses' Act, 1988*. In addition, legal counsel advises that the current bylaw clearly allows a graduate of a Master's in nursing program, who returns to later complete the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, to be licenced. Bylaw 6, section 3(5)(d) is the relevant section and reads as follows:

(5) To obtain initial licensing in the nurse practitioner category, a registered nurse must:

(d) have satisfactorily completed:

(i) a nurse practitioner category registered nursing program approved or recognized by council.

It is apparent that the Master's in nursing program of the College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan and, more specifically, the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program is a recognized and approved nurse practitioner category nursing program. As such, upon successful completion of the nurse practitioner courses of the Master's program, the member would be entitled to challenge the national exam and obtain a nurse practitioner licence. I trust this will be of assistance to you.

Sincerely,

Shirley McKay

Shirley McKay, RN
Director of Regulatory Services



From: [Crowe, Trever](#)
To: [Fornssler, Cathie](#);
cc: ["darrell.mousseau@usask.ca"](#); [Stamler, Lynnette](#); ["fred.remillard@usask.ca"](#);
Subject: Nursing certificate
Date: Wednesday, May 27, 2009 1:13:47 PM

Hi, Cathie

My responses to Fred's questions follow. Recall that I won't attend the meeting on Tuesday.

1) Please clarify how this proposal may effect the devolved and non-devolved scholarship program as well as eligibility for GTFs and GTAs?

This certificate will not affect the devolved funding or the demand on the non-devolved funding pool. This is a certificate, and is not a degree-level program. Thus, these students would not be included in the tally to set the amount of scholarship funding available to the College of Nursing. These students would also not be eligible for devolved funding for the same reason.

2) As we are witnessing an influx of Master's programs (and now Post Graduate certificates) which are professional designations rather than the traditional thesis-based research degrees, should the CGSR consider shifting the application and admission responsibilities to those host Colleges?

As a point of clarification, this certificate is not a professional designation. Completing this certificate would allow the individual to write the licensing exam; it doesn't automatically provide professional registration.

I don't believe that the current system is much different from that which is being proposed. Online admission applications are considered by the individual colleges/units and recommendations for qualified students are admitted without question. The CGSR engages when a potential student doesn't meet the minimum requirements.

Trever Crowe
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