

New Academic Degree Program: Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN)

BACKGROUND

Program Proposed Start Date

Fall 2019 (or possibly as late as Fall 2020)

Program Description

The new degree program proposed is a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). Specifically, this is a Registered Nurse (RN) to BSN program.

The full proposal is available at: <https://secure.oregonstate.edu/ap/cps/proposals/view/101363>

OSU-Cascades is proposing a BSN degree designed to allow licensed Oregon RN-level nurses with an associate's degree an opportunity to complete their bachelor's degree in nursing. The program will initially be launched as a part-time, fully-online program that can be completed in as few as 8 quarters (2 years), depending on transfer coursework, with two classes each term (5 to 7 credits per term). When demand warrants the full-time program, and/or a face-to-face program, we will offer this option as a one-calendar-year program (13 to 15 credits per term). The fully online program that we will launch initially is designed for working nurses who desire to advance their careers while maintaining employment.

Program Context

This program meets two needs: producing qualified nurse leaders to meet the nursing shortage and creating a mechanism to increase the diversity of the nursing workforce. OSU-Cascades will help move Oregon toward the Institute of Medicine's (2010) recommendation for an 80% BSN-trained workforce by providing a high-quality education at an affordable price¹. The proposed BSN is about half the price of many other programs in the state, making this degree attainable for Oregonians who may not otherwise have that opportunity.

The RN to BSN program is purposefully designed to attract and prepare diverse nurses in Oregon. The admissions criteria, based on a point structure, will award bonus points to candidates with second language competency and those who currently work in a rural nursing setting or other high need areas of Oregon. In addition, the online program will be initially launched as a part-time program which caters toward working nurses who could not otherwise afford to relocate for a more traditional face-to-face or full-time program. Toward the goal of diversifying the nursing workforce, this program, which emphasizes public health and service to rural communities, will also support the goal of promoting economic growth and social progress in Central Oregon and more broadly in Oregon.

The RN to BSN program will help meet the shortage of BSN-trained nurses in Oregon and address this need in Central Oregon. St. Charles Healthcare System (SCHS) in Central Oregon is committed to increasing the percentage of BSN-trained nurses in its workforce. As of 2016, less than 40% of nurses working in an acute care setting in Central Oregon enter the workforce with a BSN degree. This number drops to 30% for nurse leaders, nurses at critical access

¹ Institute of Medicine. (2010). The future of nursing: Leading change, advancing health. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

hospitals, and nurses in long-term care facilities. Overall, over 700 acute care nurses in Central Oregon do not have a BSN.

The OSU-Cascades RN to BSN program is designed to be distinctive and complementary to existing offerings in the state:

- It is a partnership between OSU-Cascades, Central Oregon Community College (COCC), and St. Charles Healthcare System that capitalizes on an existing, vibrant RN program. COCC does not wish to follow the Oregon Consortium on Nursing Education model that would allow students to complete OHSU's reduced credit hour online Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science (RNBS). Therefore, this new program creates a viable alternative for Central Oregon nurses.
- It does not replicate a clinically intensive RN program because our region cannot support clinical placements in excess of those currently provided to COCC's RN program. Instead, the RN to BSN capitalizes on an excellent RN program already available in Central Oregon.
- It draws on the unique strengths and diversity of expertise in the College of Public Health and Human Sciences and has a strong public health focus.
- It places special emphasis on rural health issues.
- While the program is open to any nurse with Oregon licensure, the program will focus on recruiting students from COCC and nurses in Central Oregon. Currently, BSN options for Central Oregon nurses are limited to private schools with fully online programs (Linfield, Northwest Christian College, University of Portland), or Oregon Health & Science University's (OHSU) online Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Science (RNBS).
- The program will launch initially as a fully online program with onsite academic advising at OSU-Cascades. This is in contrast to other programs that have intensive face-to-face requirements for portions of their program, which may present a barrier for some working nurses and their families.
- The program is a less expensive option. While most RN to BSN programs are approximately 40 quarter credits (OSU-Cascades, 42 credits; OSHU, 39 credits; Linfield, 24 semester credits; Northwest Christian College, 30 semester credits), the cost per credit hour varies, creating vastly different costs per program as outlined below:
 - OHSU's RNBS 39-credit hour completion program for the 2017-18 academic year was \$459 per credit plus \$260 in fees per term, for a total estimated cost of \$18,941.
 - The online private programs range in price from \$465 to \$1,368 per credit hour.
 - OSU's proposed 42-credit RN to BSN program will use the standard tuition rate of \$208 per credit hour and \$80 per credit Ecampus fee, plus fees of \$410, for a total estimated cost of \$12,506. We do not plan to charge differential tuition at this time. This allows us to provide a low-cost, high-value program to students while still offering nationally competitive salaries to instructors to deliver a high-quality program supported by Ecampus.
 - All RN to BSN programs require that students have met all graduation requirements so additional courses may be required. Ecampus does offer BACC core and supporting courses for this program online.

Program Purpose/Relationship to University Mission and Strategic Plan

The BSN degree supports the land grant mission of affordability and access to students throughout the state of Oregon and helps diversify the nursing workforce. Improving human health and wellness is a signature area of distinction for Oregon State University. As such, the RN to BSN program curriculum, with its public health focus, is uniquely designed to improve the quality and delivery of individual and population-focused health care for all Oregonians.

Need for the Program

The Bureau of Labor Statistics has projected 19 percent growth in the job market for RNs between 2012 and 2022, compared to only 11 percent growth for the job market as a whole. In particular, the market currently favors highly experienced, seasoned nurses, and the shortage in this sector of the nursing market is real. According to the 2015 Health Care Recruiting Trends Survey, this shortage is defined by nurses who lack the necessary experience and credentials to meet the demands of the profession in the 21st century. This shortage is due to a knowledge gap and too few BSN-trained nursing graduates.

Currently, students who complete an Associate's Degree in Nursing (ADN) can sit for the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) and become licensed RNs. Since the 1990's the nursing profession has placed more emphasis on: hospitals being excellent places to work; success in recruiting and retaining nurses; more educated nurses and those with specialty certifications; lower nurse burnout; and higher nurse satisfaction.² Increasingly, hospitals with "Magnet" designation show improved patient outcomes directly related to higher proportion of nurses with bachelor's degrees, specialty certification, and better work environments. In fact, "currently, more than three-quarters of employers express a strong preference for BSN-prepared nurses, and almost half of hospitals and other health care settings in the US are now requiring new hires to have a BSN."³

Investment in a baccalaureate-educated workforce and specialty certification has the potential to improve the quality of health care.⁴ Furthermore, increasing the education of this workforce can be considered cost-effective by a reduction in expensive patient complications and poor outcomes.⁵

The Institute of Medicine (IOM) published the Future of Nursing Report in 2010.⁶ One of the IOM recommendations stated that the nursing workforce should include 80% BSN-prepared

² McHugh, MD., Kelly, LA., Smith, HL., Wu, ES., Vanak, JM., & Aiken, LH. (2013). Lower mortality in magnet hospitals. *Journal of Nursing Administration*, 43(10), S4-10.

³ Yakusheva, O. & Weiss, M. (2017). Rankings matter: nurse graduates from higher-ranked institutions have higher productivity. *BMC Health Services Research*, 17(134), 1-8.

⁴ Kendall-Gallagher, D., Aiken, LH., Sloane, DM., & Cimiotti, JP. (2011). Nurse specialty certification, inpatient mortality, and failure to rescue. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 43(2), 188-94.

⁵ Aiken, L., Cimiotti, J.P., Sloane, D., Smith, H., Flynn, L., & Neff, D.F. (2011). The effects of nurse staffing and nurse education on patient deaths in hospitals with different nurse work environments. *Medical Care*, 49(12), 1047-1053

⁶ Institute of Medicine (2010). IOM Future of Nursing Report Executive Summary available at <https://www.nap.edu/read/12956/chapter/2#3>

nurses at the bedside to meet the increasingly complex patient needs in the evolving health care environment by 2020.

Central Oregon is a community where students have few postsecondary options from which they can choose. As stated above, less than 30% of Central Oregon nurses possess a BSN degree. St. Charles Healthcare System, the major healthcare provider in Central Oregon, will soon seek Magnet status and as such, approached OSU-Cascades and COCC to partner on a BSN degree to help the 700 nurses without a BSN in Central Oregon to advance their education. The RN to BSN program capitalizes on the Associate of Nursing preparation provided by COCC to remote communities and to recruit diverse students. Working in partnership with COCC, the RN to BSN program provides a pathway to a degree that will allow nurses to elevate their education while remaining employed in their communities. Furthermore, the fully online program would also be a viable route to a BSN for nurses throughout the state.

Program Financials

Projected Enrollments: The 42-credit program will be offered completely online using the OSU Ecampus platform and services, including course development support. The program will launch with the part-time option as a cohort model, enrolling up to 30 students starting in each term: fall, winter, and spring (no new students admitted in the summer). Allowing for an attrition rate of 4 students in each cohort after the first term, we anticipate 182 to 212 students (76 to 92 FTE) in the program in a given term by the third year of the program.

Instructional Faculty and Support Staff: The Executive Director and all faculty will be new hires. The Executive Director will be hired at the rank of Clinical Associate Professor or Clinical Professor and will reside on the OSU-Cascades campus. The accrediting agency, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), does not dictate how many faculty must be associated with the program nor do they require a particular type of graduate degree. Therefore, we will hire additional faculty to deliver the nursing courses following national searches at the instructor or clinical instructor level. We will seek to recruit online nursing instructors who represent the best nursing instructors in their area of expertise. These could be full- or part-time faculty depending on their area of expertise, needs of the program, and their desire to teach either full- or part-time. Whether full- or part-time, by year three of the program, we anticipate needing 4.5 FTE instructors to deliver the part-time curriculum. Instructional faculty (besides the Executive Director) will not be required to retain a physical presence on the OSU campuses.

Academic advising will be provided by an advisor on the OSU-Cascades campus at the rate of 0.33 FTE advisor for every 100 students. The library analysis recommended the purchase of two new databases. These supports will be provided by Ecampus.

The budget is summarized in the table below.

	Academic Year 2019-20	Academic Year 2020-21	Academic Year 2021-22	Academic Year 2022-23
Personnel				
Faculty, fixed-term	\$52,500	\$150,480	\$247,881	\$322,745
Support staff (advisor)	0	\$30,000	\$60,000	\$60,000
OPE	\$17,715	\$48,781	\$62,530	\$74,787

Personnel Subtotal	\$70,215	\$229,261	\$370,411	\$457,532
Other Resources				
Library databases	\$4,338	\$8,468	\$8,602	\$8,704
Services & Supplies: course development, accreditation, program membership, program development	\$68,801	\$57,004	\$39,031	\$7,976
Other Resources Subtotal	\$73,139	\$65,472	\$47,663	\$16,716
TOTAL COST OF PROGRAM	\$143,354	\$294,733	\$418,045	\$474,249
Resources				
Current budget, unit	\$63,211	\$19,141		
Tuition (OSU-Cascades share)		\$161,400	\$456,940	\$517,440
Ecampus Support: consultant, course development support for faculty, academic advising	\$80,143	\$114,192	\$133,004	\$69,240
TOTAL RESOURCES	\$143,354	\$294,733	\$589,944	\$586,680
Difference (budget positive year 3)	\$0	\$0	\$171,899	\$112,431

RECOMMENDATION

All appropriate university committees and the OSU Faculty Senate have positively reviewed the proposed program. The Provost recommends that the Board approve the establishment of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing, effective fall 2019, pending the support of the Statewide Provosts Council and the approval of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.