

AAC Response to the Program Review Report of the BSN Portion of Professional Program in Nursing

I. Introduction

The UW-Green Bay Professional Program in Nursing is a 120 credit program with four options for Registered Nursing students to achieve the BSN: on campus, at Northwoods campuses, and online options for Wisconsin –based students (BSN@Home) and out of state students (BSN-LINC). The program design is based on professional standards and guidelines including the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice and the American Nursing Association, among others. There is a statewide articulation agreement that enables RNs entering the program to have satisfied a minimum of 60 credits toward the BSN degree. A new curriculum was implemented in the fall of 2014 and outcomes created, all in alignment with the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education standards. The program last underwent a review in 2008, when it was advised by the AAC to expand enrollment in online courses and increase scholarly and grant output. There are six full-time tenure track faculty, a large cohort of Lecturers and ad hoc instructors, and staff of advisors and recruiters.

II. Assessment of Student Learning

Since the last review, the student learning outcomes were revised to align more closely with the Essentials (noted above). In 2012-2013, as part of an in-depth assessment of one outcome, the program studied the outcome, “Promote professionalism and model the values of altruism, autonomy, caring, human dignity, integrity, and social justice in nursing practice.” Feedback was obtained from practicum supervisors, indicating that with a few exceptions, students were professional while in the community practicum sites.

The program uses a variety of ways to evaluate outcomes, including Course Evaluations, Student feedback on D2L Discussions, faculty review of courses, interviews with non-continuing students, in-depth assessment of one outcome, and data from graduates. In addition, program outcome achievement (for the 9 outcomes) is evaluated on a regular basis via graduate, alumni, and employer surveys (3 year aggregate results were shown in review document). The program achieved a 72% response rate for employers, and the scores they gave for all but one outcome exceeded 4 on a 5 point scale.

III. Program Accomplishments

- After a rigorous self-study and review, the program received the maximum 10-year re-accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. This is the strongest possible feedback by a national body and should be commended.
- The BSN Curriculum underwent a rigorous evaluation and new curriculum was designed to align with national standards and pressing new challenges in the health care industry.
- Nearly doubled the enrollment in its programs from 218 in 2008 to 401 in 2014

- UWGB-NWTC 1+2+1 program has been established, and this can serve as a model for new agreements with area associates degree programs going forward. This is a key accomplishment that bodes well for future enrollment in the program.
- Scholarly output by faculty appears to be strong, with 35 peer reviewed publications, 28 chapters, and 56 presentations.
- Seven faculty have been awarded grants (internal and external) of over \$450,000 (over past 10 years), including the Wisconsin Technology Enhanced Collaboration of Nursing Education from 2006-2011.
- Enrollment of 9-12% students of minority racial/ethnic groups
- Establishment of clear and well-developed long term program goals

IV. Program Strengths and Areas in Need of Attention

Strengths

For a relatively small university, UW-Green Bay's Professional Program in Nursing has undergone a lot of development and expansion, having developed collaborative programs and innovative in program development. The program has a carefully constructed curriculum based on professional standards and guidelines, with 9 expected student learning outcomes. The program utilizes a variety of assessment methods, follows up with students who are non-continuing, and has studied completion rates. On the UWGB graduating senior survey, on almost all questions, the satisfaction of Nursing graduates exceeds the average score of all UWGB students, indicating a high degree of satisfaction. Ninety-four percent of graduating Nursing seniors would recommend UWGB to another student. That is a remarkable approval rating.

It seems clear that the faculty are committed to offering a quality program as they attempt to learn what's working and how to improve through a strong assessment process. Nursing faculty review two courses a year and recommends changes based on current students, faculty and advisory committee members. Nursing seeks the input of community and regional stakeholders in making curricular decisions. The program demonstrates an eagerness to be student-focused, having taken a number of actions to improve the student experience, such as an online orientation course and the newsletter "Ready, Set, Go Green Bay" newsletter for incoming students. This is especially important as almost all students are transfers.

While the small number of faculty have done a great deal of work to undergo accreditation, they have also worked hard to improve the program and develop new offerings. All the while, they have continued to bring in grants and be productive with scholarly work.

The program has built a strong program of ad hoc faculty and lecturers, along with a solid support staff in the needed skill areas.

Areas in need of attention

The program has undergone rapid development in line with the University strategic goals for growth and innovation. Due to the development of multiple new offerings, faculty report that new elective

courses must be developed for the BSN-LINC to offer students more choices for elective courses. A related issue is the need to increase enrollment in these new offerings through expanded marketing efforts. Some growth of enrollment can be achieved through additional partnerships with associate degree nursing programs at all levels, both regionally and nationally. The program reports stronger competition from other institutions, requiring strong attention to aggressive marketing of the programs.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

Since the last review, the Professional BSN Program in Nursing clearly has strengthened its programs, added a variety of new options, and increased enrollment and scholarly output. It appears to be strongly student-centered, with positive feedback by employers, alumni, and new graduates. The diligent curricular revisions have positioned the program to grow its quality offerings.

Recommendations by the AAC include:

- Continue to grow enrollment, largely through partnerships with statewide and national Associates degree programs across the US. This is especially important for the BSN-LINC online program.
- Continue to manage resources wisely – it is a small faculty with a heavy workload. This review has only addressed the BSN portion of the Nursing program, and we are aware that there are several new graduate initiatives being established by the Nursing faculty – drawing away the time and attention of key faculty. The program has expanded rapidly, added programs, and could be at risk of spreading people too thin. In fact, the AAC feels that a case might be made for an additional full time tenure track position to add some stability amidst the change. At the same time, existing faculty must spend their time wisely. The program should consider a period of time where fewer innovations are made and clear focus is made on implementing the new programs with high quality and on building enrollments. Maintaining quality amidst numerous changes and new initiatives may be a challenge, but the program has laid a strong foundation to maintain quality.