REQUEST FOR NEW PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA: BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this program.

Description of proposed program. The proposed program in nursing will prepare pre-licensure Bachelor of Science (BSN) graduates to work in a variety of health care settings. This program is designed to be a traditional stand-alone baccalaureate degree option. The BSN program will be hybrid delivery. The majority of courses, including all courses with a clinical or laboratory component, will be face-to-face on the UNI campus. A limited number of courses may be offered online or in a blended format.

There will be many opportunities for experiential learning in the BSN program. Students will have 405 hours of hands-on patient care in clinical settings (acute care, long-term care, hospice care, obstetrics, pediatrics, mental health, K-12 schools, health departments). Students will also have 130 hours in a nursing lab to develop competencies to deliver care, administer medications, hang IVs, etc. During the last semester students will have a 135 hour internship/preceptorship in an acute care or intensive care unit setting. In addition, students will have the opportunity to participate in a research or continuous improvement project.

Academic objectives. The BSN program outcomes will include the following:

1. Synthesize knowledge from liberal, natural and social sciences education with professional nursing
2. Apply leadership concepts, skills and decision making in the provision of high-quality nursing care, healthcare team coordination, and the oversight and accountability for care delivery in a variety of settings.
3. Integrate evidence, clinical judgment, interprofessional perspectives, and patient preferences in planning, implementing and evaluating outcomes of care.
4. Demonstrate competency in using patient care technologies and information systems that support safe nursing practice.
5. Explore the impact of sociocultural, economic, legal, and political factors influencing patient care quality, workplace safety, and the scope of nursing and other health professionals’ practice.
6. Incorporate effective communication skills to contribute the nursing perspective to interprofessional teams to optimize patient outcomes.
7. Collaborate with members of the interprofessional team to develop an assessment and intervention plan that takes into account determinants of health and available resources that contribute clinical prevention and population health.
8. Apply leadership tactics within complex systems of health care.
9. Assume accountability for personal and professional behaviors that demonstrate the nursing standards of moral, ethical and legal conduct.
10. Implement holistic, evidenced-based, high-quality and safe patient-centered care across the health illness continuum, across the lifespan, and in all healthcare settings.

Need for program. The need for nurses in Iowa (and nationally) is critical and is having a domino effect within healthcare systems. Many major medical centers and rural hospitals are forced to
close entire floors due to the shortage of nurses. Many patients who require hospitalization spend several hours in the emergency room waiting for a bed. Many life-saving screening procedures, such as colonoscopies, have an eight to nine month waiting list which can adversely impact patients' lives. Also, this nurse shortage results in higher patient caseloads and significant burnout in nurses, which in turn may cause fatal or near-miss errors when caring for patients.

The nation's 4.3 million registered nurses work in every aspect of health care and are crucial in delivering care, evolving health care systems locally and nationally, closing health disparities, and improving the nation's health. The nursing profession depends on the academic community to build an adequate supply of nurses.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, nursing shortages occurred on and off due to factors such as economic downturns, waves of retiring nurses, and increased healthcare demand. As the pandemic hit in March 2020, nurses, who represent the largest group of healthcare professionals in the country, already were under strain due to factors such as:

- Retirements outpacing new entrants to the field;
- Increased demand for health care from aging and chronic disease populations;
- Inadequate workforce support

Beckers Hospital Review (2020) reported that “current trends show the global nursing workforce will hit 36 million by 2030, leaving a shortage of 5.7 million nurses. To prevent this shortage, countries will need to increase the number of nurse graduates by 8 percent annually.” To increase the nursing workforce it is imperative to boost investments in nursing education.

- As of September 1, 2022, there were over 800 nursing vacancies in the MercyOne health system (Iowa). (Data source: Bob Ritz MercyOne)
- In May, 2022, UnityPoint Health was listed by Iowa Workforce Development as the organization with the most openings for registered nurses. (Data source: Denise Cundy, KCCI Interview)
- On September 21, 2022, Iowa Works reported there were 4,538 online job advertisements for registered nurses.
- Due to the nursing workforce shortage, 35% of nursing positions posted in Iowa take over 3 months to fill.
- It is projected that in 2030, nursing will be the #1 job needed in Iowa. (Data source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and Iowa Workforce Development)
- According to data released by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing on April 5, 2022, student enrollment in entry-level baccalaureate nursing programs increased by 3.3% in 2021, despite concerns that the pandemic might discourage career seekers from entering the profession.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Employment Projections 2019-2029, RegisteredNursing (RN) is listed among the top occupations in terms of job growth through 2029. The RN workforce is expected to grow from 3 million in 2019 to 3.3 million in 2029, an increase of 221,900 or 7%. The Bureau also projects 175,900 openings for RNs each year through 2029 when nurse retirements and workforce exits are factored into the number of nurses needed in the U.S.
- According to AACN’s report on 2019-2020 Enrollment and Graduations in Baccalaureate andGraduate Programs in Nursing, U.S. nursing schools turned away 80,407 qualified applicants from baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs.
- According to information released by Iowa Center for Nursing Workforce (2021), there are 50,629 active licensed registered nurses, with 41% aged 50 and older. Twenty-Two percent of Iowa RNs are eligible to retire right now. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022) predicts employment of registered nurses is projected to grow 9 percent from 2020 to
2030. This number does not include RN’s who are currently leaving the profession in the post-pandemic period.

Relationship to existing programs at the institution. A BSN program would enhance existing programs in biology, pre-health professions, athletic training, public health, gerontology and provide support for university general education courses.

Relationship to existing programs at other colleges and universities. The following schools have either a BSN or a BA in Nursing (data and information from the Iowa Board of Nursing website).
- Allen College, Waterloo, IA
- Briar Cliff University, Sioux City, IA
- Clarke University, Dubuque, IA
- Coe College, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Graceland University, Independence, MO
- Grand View University, Des Moines, IA
- Iowa Wesleyan University, Mount Pleasant, IA
- Luther College, Decorah, IA
- Mercy College of Health Sciences, Des Moines, IA
- Morningside College, Sioux City, IA
- Mount Mercy University, Cedar Rapids, IA
- Northwestern College, Orange City, IA
- St. Ambrose University, Davenport, IA
- St. Lukes College, Sioux City, IA
- University of Dubuque, Dubuque, IA
- University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA

On the aggregate, and for 2021-2022 academic year (the last year for which data was available for all schools), the average annual tuition and mandatory fees for private nursing programs in the state (identified above) was $33,957. The University of Iowa’s base tuition for resident students for the nursing program was $11,329 for the same year. There are additional and nursing specific fees that are implemented by nearly all programs that increase the overall cost of the nursing program at nearly all programs.

The University of Iowa has a similar cost but is a nationally ranked program that is highly selective. The initial consultation with University of Iowa College of Nursing focused on the overall need for nursing graduates in the state and a productive discussion on potential collaborations. For example, UNI would like to explore the possibility of subsidizing graduate students who are interested in pursuing a University of Iowa graduate nursing degree as a way to build additional capacity in nursing faculty.

UNI representatives also consulted with the Iowa Association of Colleges of Nursing (IACN) and its leadership about standing up a nursing program. Additionally, there have been several meetings with Allen College leadership to walk through possible partnership opportunities to create pathways to produce additional nurses for the state. With Allen UNI will continue to discuss different models to scale and improve its current 2+2 and 3+1 program to produce additional nurses for the state of Iowa. Initial conversations centered on co-marketing nursing in the Cedar Valley and sharing faculty expertise in nursing specialties. Conversations continue with Allen to identify additional resources that could be shared and scaling the 2+2 and 3+1 programs.

Resources to establish a high-quality program. UNI is planning on investing approximately $2M in one-time costs to modify or develop the needed physical infrastructure to provide this program the modern facilities needed for nursing students. Current actions include interviewing architects
to provide guidance about what structural elements to be built out based on contemporary approaches to nursing education. UNI has developed a detailed budget to pay for infrastructure modifications of space while building out a sustainability plan for keeping the nursing program solvent once fully stocked with students. The changes to current space allocation include using existing classroom spaces but building out a clinical simulation lab with equipment, a clinical skills and assessment lab, a movement lab and making minor modifications to existing office space for nursing faculty. Additionally, to sustain the program we estimate that an additional $1-2M will need to be generated from tuition, fees and endowed gifts to make the program solvent and vibrant. Depending on future student demand, additional tuition revenue would allow UNI to consider program growth. Program costs will include staffing costs for a Chief Academic Nurse Administrator, three faculty and two staff. Once fully enrolled with students, the tuition and fees would generate enough revenue to support these on-going costs along with adjunct costs and materials for courses.

Program staffing needs include:
Nurse Administrator – The nurse with responsibility and authority for the administrative and instructional activities of a nursing education unit and nursing programs within the governing organization.
Nursing Program Coordinator – A person assigned a range of administrative/coordinating responsibilities to assist the nurse administrator in the fulfillment of the goals of the nursing education unit and achieving a nursing program’s end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.
Nursing Clinical Coordinator – A person assigned to coordinate and oversee clinical placements.
Faculty, Nursing – Nurses who teach and evaluate nursing students, are academically qualified, and have experience in the content areas in which they teach.
Laboratory Personnel – Person without teaching or evaluation responsibilities who works in a skills/simulation laboratory with specified expertise that supports and/or facilitates student learning experiences.
Physical Resources – Nursing equipment, classrooms, laboratories, simulators, offices, and other common spaces used by the students enrolled in a nursing program and the staff and faculty of the nursing education unit.

Student demand. Currently, and based on the latest data from the American Association of College of Nursing, there are over 8,000 qualified applicants for nursing programs in the Midwest that were denied entry. Although there are many seats available within nursing programs in private institutions, most (if not all) do not match the public institution price of UNI, which is under $10K per year for resident undergraduates. We suspect that in addition to those students who are turned down by current nursing programs, there are students that are not applying because they cannot afford the tuition at a private Iowa nursing school. For the size of this program, these pools of students should be more than sufficient to fill our cohorts with qualified and excellent nursing candidates able to be trained, pass their NCLEX, and begin working in Healthcare settings within the state.

Workforce need/demand. Workforce data and conversations with Iowa healthcare leaders played a key role in determining the need for a BSN program.
• MercyOne, Bob Ritz (CEO); Mary Cownie (Chief of Staff); Kelly Richards (Chief Nursing Officer, Northeast Iowa); Kim Chamberlin (Chief Nursing Officer, North Iowa); Jackie Luecht (Chief Human Resource Officer).
• Cedar Valley Medical Associates, Gil Irey (CEO); Laurie Wallis (HR Director and Nurse)
• UnityPoint Health, Pam Delagardele (CEO)
• Hy-Vee, Dan Fick (Chief Medical Officer)
● Several internal conversations with faculty leadership at UNI as well as facilities and CFO Michael Hager

UNI leadership met with local healthcare providers to consult about possible challenges and opportunities of initiating a nursing program in the Cedar Valley. All expressed a dire need for additional nurses while outlining some of the challenges that included recruiting qualified faculty and securing clinical sites. In conversations with Cedar Valley healthcare providers, they have promised clinical placement sites as well as providing the opportunity for their clinicians to consider adjunct instructional roles for their employees.

Funding and Cost. The program will be supported by reallocation of existing resources in the Office of the Provost and Office of Business Operations. One-time expenses associated with facilities modernization, labs and equipment will be supported jointly by academic affairs and facilities management and phased through FY25. Once launched, ongoing operations will be funded through Academic Affairs. The program is projected to be revenue positive once a full initial cohort is in place. UNI is also pursuing external funding to support equipment and scholarships to students.

Projected student enrollment.

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Accreditation. Application for programmatic accreditation (initially for program candidacy) with the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) will take place during AY 2022-2023. UNI will also need approval from the Higher Learning Commission to offer this new degree type.

Evaluation plan. This program will undergo extensive evaluation as part of the CCNE accreditation process, approval by the Iowa Board of Nursing, and as part of UNI’s standard program evaluation processes that are required for all academic programs.

Date of implementation. Fall 2024.
Letters of Support

September 22, 2022

As the chief nursing officer for MercyOne Northeast Iowa, I write to offer the strongest support for the efforts of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) to organize and stand up a Baccalaureate of Science program in Nursing (BSN). Over the past six months, we have been in communication with UNI and in our conversations, we have provided support and guidance on developing such a program as well as have feedback on candidates for their newly concluded Chief Academic Nurse position. In addition, MercyOne continues to provide guidance in areas of health care workforce needs in our community. The planned nursing program, and the nurses it will train, will help fill a critical need for nursing care here in the Cedar Valley and rural areas across the state.

In return, we have committed to helping UNI by giving their nursing students the opportunity to apply to train and work at our clinical sites. We are also committing to communicate opportunities for our clinical colleagues to serve as clinical adjunct instructors within the nursing program. This collaboration will provide the educational experiences needed to address the increasing workforce needs and help support our mutual interests of serving our local communities.

MercyOne is a connected system of health care facilities and services dedicated to helping our community live their best life. More than 18,000 colleagues strong, our care providers and colleagues make health and happiness of our community their highest priority, so you can get well—and stay well. With 230+ care locations, our clinics, medical centers and affiliates are never too far from home, allowing us to improve the lives of individuals and communities across the state of Iowa and beyond.

Thank you for considering our community’s important request. I would be happy to answer any additional questions about our support; otherwise, I look forward to working with UNI to develop this important program.

Sincerely,

Kelly Richards, DNP, RN
Senior VP Patient Care
Chief Nursing Officer, MercyOne Northeast Iowa
October 3, 2022

To whom it may concern:

As the Human Resources Manager at Cedar Valley Medical Specialists (and former Director of Nursing at Western Home Communities), I write to offer the strongest support for the efforts of the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) to organize and stand up a Baccalaureate of Science program in Nursing (BSN). Over the past six months, we have been in communication with UNI and in our conversations, we have provided support, guidance on developing such a program and have also provided feedback on candidates for their newly concluded Chief Academic Nurse position. Additionally, we continue to provide advice on areas of healthcare workforce needs in our community. The planned nursing program, and the nurses it will train, will help fill a critical need for nursing care here in the Cedar Valley and rural areas across the state. In return, we have committed to helping UNI by giving their nursing students the opportunity to apply for our clinical sites. We are also committing to communicate opportunities for our clinical staff to serve as clinical adjunct instructors within the nursing program. This collaboration will help support our mutual interests of serving our local communities by providing the educational experiences to address the increasing workforce needs of our shared community.

Cedar Valley Medical Specialists is 100 percent independent and 100 percent locally owned. Our staff of more than 400 includes specialized physicians as well as advanced practice and mid-level providers and support staff across dozens of healthcare specialties. We are headquartered in Waterloo, and all of our physicians, clinics, and labs are located in and around the Cedar Valley so that we may better serve our entire community.

Thank you for considering our community’s important request and I would be happy to answer any additional questions about our support, otherwise, I look forward to working with UNI to develop this important program.

Sincerely,

Laurie Wallis

Laurie Wallis, BSN, RN
Human Resources Manager
Cedar Valley Medical Specialist, PC
Subject: Re: UNI Nursing BSN consultation

Good morning Jose,

Thank you for your email and invitation to meet with you and Dr. Kertz. I commend you on securing Dr. Kertz to lead this program, she is knowledgeable, visionary and respected in the nursing community.

I support the development of a prelicensure program at UNI and would be honored to consult with you and Dr. Kertz in the development and implementation of the program. I will critically review the attached document and provide feedback.

The Iowa State RN-to-BN Program is waiting for the ACEN Board of Commissioner decision on the accreditation decision and anticipate receiving full approval this month. Are you planning accreditation with ACEN or CCNE? I serve as a peer reviewer for ACEN and would be happy to share my insight with UNI through the process. Please let me know what date/time works best for you to meet.

Congratulations on this bold and necessary step to improve the nursing workforce and the health of Iowa communities and beyond.

Respectfully,

Dawn M. Bowker, Ph.D., RN, ARNP-BC, CNE, SANE

Director of Nursing Education

Clinical Assistant Professor of Nursing

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October 21, 2022

José Herrera, PhD
Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Northern Iowa
Seerley 20
Cedar Falls, IA 50614-0707

Dear Provost Herrera:

I am writing to offer our support of the BSN program at the University of Northern Iowa. There continues to be a shortage of nurses in Iowa and nationally. This program will not adversely affect the enrollment at the College of Nursing at the University of Iowa. We do face a faculty shortage throughout the state and will work with UNI to develop strategies to offer pathways to graduate degrees at the University of Iowa in order to prepare additional faculty.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Julie Zerwic, PhD, RN, FAHA, FAAN
Kelting Dean and Professor
October 14, 2022

To the Board of Regents:

The Council of Provosts discussed the University of Northern Iowa proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing and reviewed associated documentation. There is sufficient evidence for the workforce needs in Iowa and UNI’s ability to provide a quality program. The plan indicates due diligence, significant engagement with community partners, potential accreditors and stakeholders at other institutions. The Council of Provosts appreciates the collaboration between the deans and departments involved at SUI and ISU. Based on the evidence and documentation, this program is likely to benefit the state of Iowa.

The Council of Provosts is supportive of the program and wishes the University of Northern Iowa the best in its implementation.

Jonathan Wickert
Sr. Vice President and Provost

Kevin Kregel
Exec. Vice President and Provost

José Herrera
Exec. Vice President and Provost