

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST TO REDUCE ADMISSIONS TO THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING  
PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to reduce admissions to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program.

**Executive Summary:** The University of Iowa requests approval to decrease the annual admission to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program from 150 students admitted in Fall and Spring cohorts of 75 students to an annual Fall admission of 80 students beginning in Fall 2008. By so doing, the University proposes to redeploy its faculty resources to its master's and doctoral programs whose graduates can be available to teach nursing students and to supervise clinical placements. This request was reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan strategy (4.1.1) to "pursue opportunities to realize greater efficiency in operations, consistent with best practices in the delivery of education and other services."

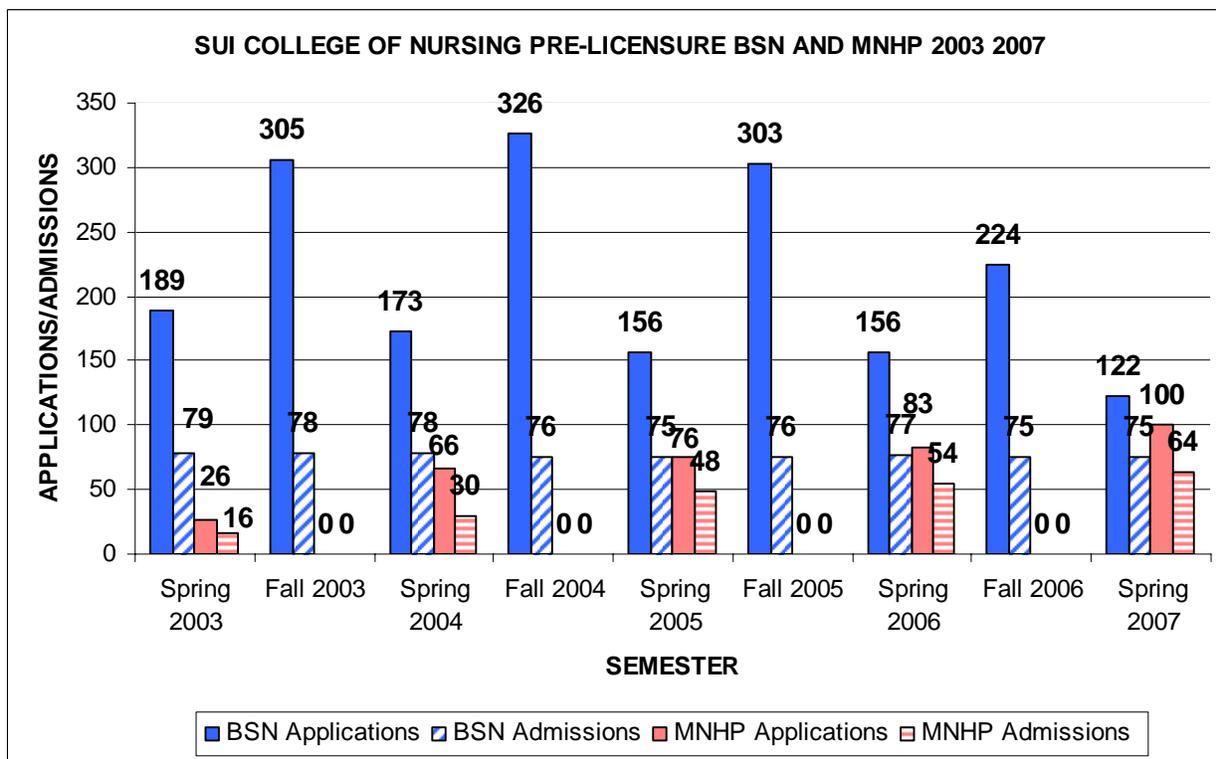
**Background:**

- ◇ **Background.** Nursing education faces significant challenges in meeting the demand for nurses prepared at graduate levels to assume leadership roles in clinical practice and to fill vacancies in nursing academic positions. In 2005, Iowa nursing education programs reported 106 faculty vacancies. While many other programs in Iowa prepare nurses for practice, the College of Nursing at the University of Iowa is the only program that prepares graduates at the doctoral level for roles as faculty members, executives, and researchers.
- ◇ **Proposed changes.** The University proposes to maintain the current total number of graduates at the current level using a different configuration:
  - ☑ Decrease the number of beginning baccalaureate (BSN) students admitted from 150 to 80 and increase the number of registered nurse students admitted to a baccalaureate program (RN-BSN) from 151 to 200.
  - ☑ Transition the Master in Nursing and Healthcare Practice Program (MNHP) to a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program (Entry into Practice MSN – Clinical Nurse Leader) and expand the enrollment by one-third to 80 students per year.
  - ☑ Expand existing programs for advanced practice nurses, such as the pediatrics and geriatric nurse practitioners, from 48 to 160.
  - ☑ Implement the new Doctor in Nursing Practice Program (DNP) approved by the Board of Regents in June 2007 with an enrollment of 50.

- ◆ Impact on current students. Students currently enrolled in the BSN program will not be affected by the proposed change.
- ◆ Impact on future students. Pre-nursing students who were admitted to the University in Fall 2007 will be affected if they are not admitted to the BSN program in Fall 2008 because there will be fewer admission opportunities. They will not be able to re-apply in Spring 2009 because there will only be Fall admissions. Students who are not admitted on their first application will be encouraged to continue their studies at the University of Iowa in a discipline of their choice and to apply for the Entry into Practice MSN upon completion of their baccalaureate program. Other students may transfer to a two-year nursing program and return to the University of Iowa through the College of Nursing's RN-BSN degree completion program.
  - ☑ Students and their parents have been informed by the Academic Advising Center about possible changes and provided with information about alternative paths to a nursing degree.
- ◆ Program availability in the state. In 2006, Iowa had 49 nursing education programs (baccalaureate and associate degree programs) with 1,795 students graduating from pre-licensure RN programs (Iowa Department of Public Health, March 2006). The following colleges offer the BSN program:

<b>College</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Enrollment</b>
Allen College	Waterloo	355
Briar Cliff College	Sioux City	NA
Clark College	Dubuque	98
Coe College	Cedar Rapids	47
Graceland College	Lamoni	NA
Grand View College	Des Moines	272
Iowa Wesleyan University	Mount Pleasant	77
Luther College	Decorah	94
Mercy College (Program recently approved)	Des Moines	0
Morningside College	Sioux City	89
Mount Mercy College	Cedar Rapids	300
Northwestern College	Orange City	8
Saint Ambrose University	Davenport	234
The University of Dubuque	Dubuque	NA

- ◆ Five-year application/enrollment trend. The following graph summarizes the applications and admissions to the BSN and MNHP programs at the University of Iowa from 2003-2005. The College of Nursing intends to roll the MNHP Program into the MSN Entry into Practice Program. The trend toward the MSN and away from the BSN has already begun. The University believes that, with active marketing and advising, the trend will continue to grow.



- ◇ Nursing trends. Nursing, as a profession, continues a slow but steady progression toward master's level preparation for practice at the generalist professional level and doctoral preparation at the advanced specialized level. The University's data indicate that the nursing shortage, in general, and the faculty shortage, in particular, will be a factor for the next ten years as the current labor force continues to age and move to retirement.
- ◇ Effect on nursing needs in the state. The shortage of nursing faculty in the nation and the state is a more significant challenge than the nationwide shortage of nurses because faculty shortages directly affect the ability of educational institutions at all levels to produce the next generation of practicing nurses. All colleges of nursing in Iowa are affected by a shortage of nursing faculty prepared at the master's and doctoral levels. This shortage is projected to grow as nursing faculty age; the current average age is 54.
- ◇ American Association of College of Nursing. The American Association of Colleges of Nursing is actively considering a position paper regarding standards of preparation for teaching in baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs. The position paper calls for nursing courses to be taught by faculty with graduate level specialty educational preparation and for doctorally prepared faculty to assume overall responsibility for nursing courses. Clinical practicum faculty will be expected to hold, at a minimum, a master's degree in nursing. The University believes that demand for graduate prepared nurses to teach in all baccalaureate programs in the state will increase significantly. Schools that are unable to meet the new standards will face increased risk of losing their accreditation.

- ◇ University of Iowa expertise. The University's College of Nursing has historically produced nurses prepared at the master's and doctoral levels. In Fall 2007, the College admitted the largest number of students into the master's sub-track programs (80 rather than the usual 40 students); 67 students into the new Entry into Practice MSN sub-track; and 22 into the new Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. The ability of the College to address the increased demand for graduate education is dependent on its ability to reduce the more resource intensive BSN program.
  
- ◇ Existing resources. The reconfiguration of the College of Nursing enrollment to place more emphasis on graduate education will not lead to a reduction in either faculty or staff. Faculty will be shifted to graduate course assignments to address increased enrollment in graduate courses. Staff, such as student service personnel, will also shift to provide support services for the larger number of graduate students. The proposed changes are expected to be space neutral for the nursing programs.

Details about the proposed reduction of admissions are available in the Board Office.