

November 23, 2014

To: James Lentini,
Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs

From: Ron Tracy
Chair, Senate Planning Review Committee

RE: Masters of Science and Graduate Certificate in Forensic Nursing

On November 5, 2014 the Senate Planning Review Committee met to discuss and evaluate the Masters of Science and Graduate Certificate in Forensic Nursing. Kelly Berishaj and Margaret Glembocki from SON were invited in to answer questions about the proposals. The following is a summary of the description of the proposal and responses to questions from the committee.

The MSN in Forensic Nursing program consists of the core MSN courses plus the courses in Forensic Nursing courses which make up the graduate certificate program. The core courses are all online, while the forensic courses will have a theoretical and clinical component, so will be offered face-to-face, but in blended or hybrid formats. The certificate program consists solely of the forensic nursing courses. The program will follow a cohort model. The FN courses will be taken as three-credit courses for a total of 18 credits over four semesters (fall I, winter I, summer I, and fall II semesters).

The MSN and certificate programs are targeted to practicing nurses who have some experience in working in currently identified FN roles as well as nurses who are interested in entering into FN practice. Particularly with many advanced practice nursing programs going to doctoral level education, the MSN-FN would be an important option for nurses who are not interested in advanced nursing practice, but who are interested in specialty clinical practice, administration, leadership, and/or education. Initially, it is expected that demand will be higher for the certificate program, with demand for the MSN growing as the field matures. Although it is not expected that there will be a doctoral level program, if it should come about, the MSN would not be eliminated since it would serve a different clientele.

In response to a question about the lack of an obvious focus on legal issues compared to other FN programs, it was explained that coverage of legal issues is integrated throughout the FN courses. OU program faculty want to ensure that health care and concern for the patient remains at the core of the program, and that it is not perceived as too connected to the criminal or legal systems.

After a positive discussion the proposal was approved unanimously.