

Thursday, June 3, 2010

New Clinical Nurse Leader program comes to OU's SON

The Oakland University Board of Trustees approved a new program this April in the Master of Science in Nursing degree track. The Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) program will prepare nurses to serve as innovative leaders within a variety of health systems.

CNLs will be trained to evaluate patient outcomes, assess risk and change care when necessary. Furthermore, they will strive to improve the health of diverse populations by monitoring patient safety, providing care coordination, and determining and supervising care for patients with the latest innovations in care delivery. By applying assessment, critical thinking, clinical research, problem-solving skills and quality initiatives to their nursing practices, CNLs will be prepared to assume dynamic leadership roles in a range of health settings.

Eligible candidates for the program must have completed a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from an accredited four-year university. Students will acquire an MSN degree after completion of classroom, clinical and online work totaling 44 credit hours. Before practicing their new role in a healthcare setting, however, matriculated CNLs must pass the CNL Certification Examination offered by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

While its official start date is yet to be determined, the program could launch as early as the winter semester of 2011. Application information will be available online and through the School of Nursing Admissions Office once the program's start date is announced.

Along with providing new opportunities for nursing students to develop their practice, the degree track aims to distinguish Oakland as a top destination for nurse education in the state. Currently, two other Michigan universities – Saginaw Valley State University and the University of Detroit-Mercy – offer CNL programs. However, OU's program will provide enhanced flexibility since most of the coursework will be completed online.

While the CNL role continues to develop within the medical field, local healthcare centers such as the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers, Crittenton Hospital Medical Center and St. John Hospital have requested to participate in the CNL initiative. Additionally, a proposed partnership between OU and the Mid-Atlantic Veterans Affairs Hospitals is intended to provide CNL education to qualified registered nurses within the VA Health Care Network.

The OU School of Nursing projects the need for nursing leaders to grow in coming years due to the nation's aging population and an increasing demand for heightened quality of care and safety measures. The School of Nursing expects to increase its enrollment of CNL students in response to anticipated growth in demand after the program's first year.

For more information about the CNL program, contact Marisa Ferrari at (248) 370-4489. To learn more about OU's SON, [visit the website](#).

SUMMARY

OU's newly approved Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) program will prepare nurses to serve as innovative leaders within a variety of health systems.

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