

To: University Senate

From: Senate Planning and Review Committee

Date: February 10, 2010

The Senate Planning and Review Committee received the proposal from the School of Nursing to initiate the Clinical Nurse Leader program as a new track for the Master's of Science in Nursing degree program. We read the proposal and requested additional information which has been provided. SPRC voted unanimously to recommend this proposal for approval to the University Senate.

The Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) will prepare the advanced nurse generalist to provide clinical leadership at the point of service in a variety of practice settings. The ultimate goal is to ensure that populations of patients receive safe, high quality care and benefit from the latest innovations in care delivery. Nurses prepared as CNLs, will have the skills to assess population risks, collect and evaluate patient outcome data, report findings, direct quality care and make decisions about patients' plans of care that improve safety and quality outcomes.

Several organizations support the need for this role, including the Institute of Medicine, the American Nurses Association, the Department of Veterans Affairs, the American Hospital Association, and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. One major role of the CNL prepared clinician is to reduce the fragmentation of health care that frustrates so many patients and families when they are clients of the health care system. It is also designed to reduce preventable adverse events, such as medical errors that result in injury. The CNL is being offered at the master's level because these individuals must possess a high level of clinical competence, leadership skills and systems knowledge in order to assess and evaluate quality care while also serving as a resource for the health care team. Such expertise cannot be achieved at the undergraduate level.

#### Evaluation

The proposed CNL track promotes the role and mission of Oakland University in several ways. It is student-centered; many of the courses are offered on-line. It provides opportunities for increased partnerships. The Department of Veterans Affairs has approached OU to offer this degree to a core group of its registered nurses. It will increase enrollment and stimulate growth. Because of the user-friendly format, it promotes OU's reputation as a national university.

There are 76 colleges and universities that offer this program nationally. However, only the University of Detroit-Mercy and Saginaw Valley State University offer this degree in Michigan. Both of those programs have some traditional classroom format. Oakland's CNL courses are all offered on-line, thus this program brings a unique format that does not compete directly with UDM or SVSU.

No additional faculty, classrooms, labs or equipment are requested for this program. It is anticipated that student enrollment will average approximately 15 students per year. Forty-four credit hours are required to graduate. Sixteen of those 44 credits are in the CNL track. The remaining 28 credits reflect foundation and clinical core courses required of all MSN students. There is a national certification exam in CNL and our students meet the criteria for students to take that exam.

The proposal included course overviews, a sample curriculum, recruitment plans and faculty CV. There were letters of support from Dean Thompson-Adams, Crittenton Hospital, and the Department of Veterans Affairs. These letters attest to the job opportunities for graduates of this program.

There were no weaknesses noted in the proposal. In fact, as one member of the committee noted, such a position is long overdue.