

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
May 31, 2006

The May 31, 2006, special meeting of the Board of Higher Education (BHE) was held in the Board of Higher Education Conference Room in Boston, Massachusetts. The following members were present:

Aaron D. Spencer, Vice Chair
Jeanne-Marie Boylan
John Brockelman
Kathleen Kelley

Ann Reale
Richard Taylor
Carole Thomson

Absent: Stephen Tocco, Peter Alcock, Karl White

VICE CHAIR'S REMARKS

Vice Chair Aaron Spencer stated that the motion before the Board to approve the Doctor of Nursing Practice at the University of Massachusetts Amherst is of great importance to the Board of Higher Education and acknowledged the keen interest on the part of the Chancellor in supporting nursing education.

CHANCELLOR'S REMARKS

Chancellor Judith Gill stated her support of nursing education exists on both personal and professional levels. Chancellor Gill recognized Dean Eileen Breslin at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for her participation in the Advisory Committee of the Board's Public Higher Education Initiative in Nursing and Allied Health Education. The Board's Nursing Initiative was begun in 2005 by the Chancellor and is led by Deputy Chancellor David McCauley. The Initiative has strong support from the Legislature.

DISCUSSION

Deputy Chancellor David McCauley stated the Nursing Initiative was developed to address constraints on the public higher education system such as faculty shortages, the lack of clinical placement sites, and the lack of laboratory classroom space and tools. Mr. McCauley commented that there is no shortage of students, but other constraints contribute to the shortage of practicing nurses.

Deputy Chancellor McCauley stated the Legislature has supported the Board's efforts to address these constraints, providing \$500,000 each year for three years, for which the Board is grateful. However, this level of funding is but a small amount for the work that needs to be accomplished. He referred to two recent pieces of legislation, *An Act Providing Access to Affordable, Quality, Accountable Health Care* and *The Patient Safety Act* to establish nurse/patient staffing ratios, which will both increase the pressure on the health care delivery system.

Mr. McCauley commented that the constraints in the nursing pipeline affect both public and private institutions.

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE

Kate Harrington, University of Massachusetts Vice President of Academic Affairs, thanked the Board for meeting on such short notice to discuss the proposed program. The University of Massachusetts Amherst had applied for grant funding and was notified that funding would be

received contingent upon the Board's acceptance of the program by June 1, not June 15 as had originally been understood. This change in deadline necessitated the request for the special meeting. Vice President Harrington stated her appreciation to the staff and Board for their willingness to accommodate this request.

Dr. Eileen Breslin, Dean of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst School of Nursing, thanked the Board and staff for the effort to meet. Dean Breslin stated that the University would notify the funder pending the Board's approval.

Dean Breslin added the decision to offer the Doctor of Nursing Practice is part of a national movement which includes the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The Doctor of Nursing Practice is supported as the professional clinical nursing doctoral degree and will replace the existing master's degree. Dean Breslin added that 90 students have expressed an interest in the proposed program.

Dean Breslin stated that 190 programs nationwide are currently planning to convert their master's programs to the Doctor of Nursing Practice. The University of Kentucky is among a handful of institutions that has already made the change, and faculty from this program were helpful to the University of Massachusetts Amherst in designing its new program.

Dr. Ann Cary, Director of Graduate Distance Learning Programs at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, stated there are currently 15 Doctor of Nursing Practice programs nationwide. The University of Massachusetts Amherst wanted Massachusetts to be involved in the early stages of this national shift.

Dr. Carol Picard, Professor and Graduate Program Director at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, stated the graduates of the program will serve as faculty in nursing. Schools that offer both the Doctor of Nursing Practice and the Doctor of Philosophy have experienced increased enrollment in both programs.

Chancellor Gill asked whether a graduate will serve as a clinical supervisor. Dr. Picard stated the graduates will serve as clinical role models. The practitioner is expected to have a "systems level" understanding of health care practice and will graduate with more clinical hours than those with a master's degree.

Chancellor Gill asked whether the position of chief nurse is a possibility for graduates. Dr. Picard stated this is a possible path for graduates. Chancellor Gill stated this program will help provide leadership within hospitals as they adapt to incorporate this new level of training. Dr. Picard commented that graduates will also have primary care expertise and will help to prepare future clinical faculty over time.

Committee Chair John Brockelman asked how much money the grant will provide. Dean Breslin stated the grant is for \$1 million. Committee Chair Brockelman asked whether the funding is definite. Dr. Cary responded that the Board of Higher Education's approval will allow the funding to be released on July 1, 2006.

Committee Chair Brockelman asked whether the national standards are an elevated version of previous standards. Dean Breslin responded yes. Committee Chair Brockelman asked about the adaptation of existing curriculum and additional University funding for the program. Dean Breslin responded that there are several funding streams in addition to the grant which will allow

for coursework modification. Dr. Cary stated the University will not only repackage current curriculum but will also add new courses.

Board member Jeanne-Marie Boylan asked why the wording of the motion requires a report to the Chancellor in 2008 and one year after graduating the first class of students. Associate Vice Chancellor Aundrea Kelley responded that this will require the University to report on the initial class of graduating students as well as a formal report as the program begins.

Board member Richard Taylor asked why the University was choosing to continue to offer the Doctor of Philosophy in addition to the new Doctor of Nursing Practice. Board member Ann Reale commented that this is similar to offering both the Doctor of Education and the Doctor of Philosophy.

Board member Ann Reale asked about the connection with nursing practice and physicians. Dean Breslin stated that health care practitioners have been involved in the national dialogue and are planning future collaborations.

CALL TO ORDER AND MOTION

Vice Chair Spencer officially called the meeting to order at 10:32 and put forth the following motion, which was seconded and unanimously approved:

BHE 06-15 UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE.

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the expedited application of the University of Massachusetts Amherst to award the Doctor of Nursing Practice.

In September 2008 and one year after graduating the program's first class, the University shall submit to the Board a status report addressing its success in reaching program goals as stated in the application and in the areas of enrollment, curriculum, faculty, resources, and program effectiveness.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 15A, Section 9(b)
Contact: Aundrea Kelley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Policy

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:38 a.m.