

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO: AAC 13-13

COMMITTEE DATE: December 4, 2012

BOARD DATE: December 11, 2012

**APPLICATION OF GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY TO AWARD THE MASTER OF
SCIENCE IN NURSING**

MOVED: The Board hereby approves the Certificates of Organization of
Georgetown University to offer the **Master of Science in Nursing**.

Authority: Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 69, Section 30 et seq.

Contact: Dr. Shelley Tinkham, Assistant Commissioner for Academic, P-16 and
Veterans Policy

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Georgetown University Master of Science in Nursing

INTENT

Georgetown University (GU) an independent institution, located in Washington, DC requests authority to offer the Master of Science in Nursing. Georgetown University holds regional accreditation by Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and its graduate nursing programs are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME). MSCHE, CCNE, and ACME are recognized accrediting agencies by the US Department of Education.

The majority of this proposed program will be delivered on line through a learning management system. In addition, students are required to complete precepted clinical placements where they reside and attend extended weekend simulation and assessment-based visit(s) at the Georgetown University campus in Washington, DC. Online programs and courses that require the following activities, conducted within Massachusetts, as part of the curriculum: internships, externships, clinicals, mentorships, shadowing experience, student teaching experiences, etc. are subject to Massachusetts Board of Higher Education approval. The proposed program will require students to complete clinical placements in Massachusetts; therefore, it is subject to approval.

Graduates of the proposed program will be prepared for positions as nurse educators and advanced practice nurses (clinical nurse specialists, nurse practitioners and nurse midwives) in a variety of settings, including but not limited to, community-based clinics, retail clinics, private practices, inpatient care, birthing centers, and women's clinics. Graduates can work in such roles as clinical experts, patient educators, researchers, and leaders in critical care settings.

The need for advanced practice nursing is large and growing. A shortage of general and family practice physicians in the United States, particularly in rural and underserved areas, has created a greater need for, and reliance on, other healthcare providers, including nurse practitioners, nurse midwives, and other advanced practice nurses. Although demand for graduate nursing education is high, many qualified applicants have been turned away from programs because of a lack of capacity at the nation's nursing schools.

The need for advanced practice nurses and the need to educate and prepare such nurses is also evident in Massachusetts. There is high need for critically skilled advanced practices nurses due to an aging population and the expansion of healthcare. The proposed program will be able to help address this situation in Massachusetts, New England, and across the nation.

The Graduate School Executive Committee, the principal decision-making body of the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences, and Georgetown University's Board of Directors, approved the online program on October 29, 2010.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Founded in 1789, Georgetown is a research-intensive independent institution and is one of the nation's oldest Catholic and Jesuit University known for its commitment to social justice. Drawing upon this legacy and its location in Washington, D.C., Georgetown University provides students with a values-based learning experience focused on educating the whole person through international exposure to different faiths, cultures and beliefs, offering students an opportunity to learn, experience, and understand the world around them. The central mission of Georgetown University is "to provide excellent undergraduate, graduate and professional education in the Jesuit tradition for the glory of God and the well-being of humankind."

The School of Nursing and Health Sciences (NHS) was first established in 1903 to educate and expand the nursing workforce for Georgetown University Hospital, which opened in 1898. Its mission is to provide student-centered, excellent undergraduate and graduate professional education to prepare morally reflective health care leaders and scholars who strive to "improve the health and well-being of all people with sensitivity to cultural differences and issues of justice." NHS has recently expanded its existing campus-based graduate nursing program by offering it through distance education. By way of this plan, the University intends to extend its mission and philosophy nationally by extending its reach beyond its campus through distance learning. Georgetown University's online Master in Nursing is currently authorized to operate or is not subject to approval in 45 states plus the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and is currently enrolling students in the program who reside in these areas.

The University has now requested the authority to offer its first degree in Massachusetts: the Master of Science in Nursing

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Admission

Candidates for the proposed program are required to meet the minimum standards set by Georgetown University for graduate school admission: a minimum undergraduate grade point average of 3.0 (on a scale in which A=4.0) or higher; possess a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN); and satisfactorily completed (with a C or better) a statistics course. In addition, three letters of recommendation are required, which discuss the candidates' abilities and skills related to the program and career they are pursuing, as well as academic performance and achievement. The candidates are asked to compose a goal statement and submit a short video in which they describe their career aspirations. The GRE is not required.

Projected Enrollment

The institution projects enrolling ten Massachusetts students per year (5 full-time and 5 part-time) based on the fact that a total number of 500 new students will be recruited to enroll in the proposed program nationally each year and Massachusetts represents

about 2% of the US population. The institution estimates that up to 20 Massachusetts students will be enrolled in the program by year 2 of the program. The program takes between 18 and 30 months to complete, depending on enrollment status.

Current Tuition and Fee Charges

Tuition is calculated on a per-credit model, regardless of semester/term of enrollment. The per credit cost of the program is \$1,680. The total cost of the program varies based upon the number of credits within each specialty, ranging from \$58,800-\$82,320. Mandatory fees can be roughly \$2000 (depending upon if a student opts into the GU student health insurance plan). These calculations do not include indirect costs to the student, such as living or travel costs as those vary by student and are not applicable to all students.

Curriculum (Attachment A)

Students may choose from one of the four following concentrations:

- Family Nurse Practitioner (44 credits)
- Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner (49 credits),
- Nurse Educator (35 credits)
- Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist/Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (48 credits),

The proposed program requires 21 credits of core courses and varying number of total credits for each concentration from a minimum of 35 to a maximum of 49 credits. Required precepted clinical hours vary according to concentration ranging from 650-1000 hours, and teaching experience is required for the nurse educator concentration. Students are expected to complete the program in 18-30 months depending on whether they choose the full-time option (typically 9 credits per term) or part-time option (typically 6 credits per term).

Descriptions of each concentration follow:

Family Nurse Practitioner

Family Nurse Practitioners (FNPs) are clinical experts who implement a holistic approach, stressing both care and cure. Georgetown will provide the academic knowledge and clinical skills necessary for health promotion, disease prevention, assessment, and management of common acute and chronic illnesses.

Nurse Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner

Students in the Nurse Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner concentration learn women's health and midwifery practice through a strong didactic program that includes advanced courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, and health assessment, along with a four semester clinical sequence that allows students to experience a wide range of women's health settings.

Nurse Educator

The Nurse Educator concentration prepares future leaders to respond to the growing complexity of health care delivery at all levels by preparing educators who will develop and teach in programs geared towards higher education, vocational education, staff development, patient education, and educational research and policy.

Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (AG-ACNP)/Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (AG-CNS)

The Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner/Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist (AG-ACNP/CNS) concentration combines advanced knowledge from the physiological and psychosocial sciences throughout the life span continuum with emphasis on skill development for the role. It also prepares registered nurses to improve outcomes of acutely ill patients and to impact evidence based practice in health care organizations. The dual AG-ACNP/CNS role combines advanced knowledge from the physiological and psychosocial sciences emphasizing theories of nursing with clinical expertise, consultation, research, education, and leadership.

Delivery Methodology

The proposed program uses multiple modes of delivery to assure competency achievement of students: online learning, both synchronous and asynchronous course content, application of this content through clinical practicum placements and simulation. Each mode is described below.

Synchronous online sessions include required weekly real-time video meetings between students and instructors with approximately 10 students per instructor for the synchronous portion, reviewing materials, presenting to each other, working on group projects and engaging in "live" question and answer exchange. Synchronous sessions in the online graduate nursing program are small (approximately 10 students), and done via a web video camera through Adobe Connect software, which is integrated into the platform.

Asynchronous online content includes lectures—narrative, audio, and video. Guest lecturers add depth and dimension to program content and provide special expertise on current topics across various courses. The use of real and simulated case studies both in courses and in the Simulations lab enhances the curriculum offerings. All course lectures and synchronous video discussions are retained in archival form so that students can review previous coursework as needed and so that review and remediation

will be possible where necessary. Students have ready access to course materials from past courses.

Clinical (or practicum) contact hours are required, and the clinical experience of distance learning students will be the same as it is for current on-campus students. Clinical experiences are arranged to ensure that students acquire the necessary skills at each phase of learning. NHS currently has approximately 400 active clinical sites in 28 states including the District of Columbia and has shown evidence of their ability to recruit sites and preceptors and to maintain these relationships using faculty clinical advisors. Their plan is to replicate this model in MA. It will follow its current model for reviewing and approving clinical sites and preceptors for distance learning students, including evaluating sites and preceptors (the practitioners at the clinical sites who supervise the students' clinical work) and establishing affiliation agreements with the clinical sites. All preceptors will continue to receive (through electronic media) a packet of information relating to the specific program, semester course overview, preceptor guidelines and evaluation tools, as well as an online orientation to the program and to the platform. The University has presented evidence of reaching out to potential clinical sites in Massachusetts,

In order to evaluate student's clinical progress NHS faculty will travel to each on-line students' practicum setting at least once a semester, monitor an electronic log system to ensure depth and breadth of clinical experiences, and utilize remote technology for additional conferencing

Simulation is a cornerstone of graduate nursing programs at NHS. Online students will be required to travel to campus to complete between one to three (depending upon the program specialty) 3-4-day weekend intensive simulation sessions that are required over the duration of the program. Students may receive financial aid to cover travel-related costs for these required campus visits.

Licensure and Professional Accreditation

The proposed program is designed to meet the national criteria established by the AACN's Masters Essentials, CCNE Accreditations Standards, National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) competencies, and National Task Force (NTF) criteria.

RESOURCES AND BUDGET

Faculty and Staff

The proposed program will be housed within the School of Nursing which is an academic unit of the larger NHS that has a reporting structure leading directly to the upper administration of Georgetown University. Faculty are hired based on need and the institution endeavors to maintain a 10:1 student/faculty ratio for synchronous learning sessions. Faculty qualifications are the same for both the online and on-campus modalities; many faculty teach in both modalities.

As of early Fall 2012, there is a total of 35 full-time faculty dedicated to the proposed program, and 82 part-time faculty. Greater than 2/3 of all full-time faculty members teaching in the nursing distance learning program hold earned doctorates, and many also hold nurse practitioner or clinical nurse specialist certifications in the role concentrations offered by the NHS. The faculty's academic and professional qualifications exceed the minimum standards required by the Independent Institutions of Higher Education Standards, 610 CMR 2.07.

In response to the visiting committee's concerns about faculty workload, the institution articulated that it plans to hire an additional 20 full-time faculty from September 2012 to April 2013. Some hires have already been made. Most of these faculty will support the Family Nurse Practitioner concentration.

Facilities and Library and Information Technologies

Online learning platform

The NHS has signed a 12-year contract with 2U Inc. (formerly 2tor Inc.), a proprietary online company to develop, support, and maintain the online curriculum, allowing the faculty complete control and time to focus on the academic component of the curriculum. These services include infrastructure, instructional design tools and assistance, training, and direct technological help for students and faculty.

Library Resources

The University library's collection numbers over 1,700,000 volumes and 12,000 serials, more than 1,500,000 microforms and large, growing collections of electronic journals, full-text scholarly resources, audiovisual materials, government documents, manuscripts, and photographs. CD-ROM databases and worldwide computer networks offer state-of-the-art research resources.

Students in the distance learning MS in Nursing Program will receive an extensive array of databases; course and general research guides; plentiful eBooks and electronic journals; course reserves; and direct reference support. Reference chat runs from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (EST) and the institution plans to add access in light of the distance education program.

Physical Resources

The on campus intensives will utilize NHS's resources that are used to support the on campus Master of Science in Nursing.

Fiscal (Attachment B)

Since the online graduate nursing programs will be offered nationwide, it is not possible to extrapolate expenses specifically for Massachusetts students; however, the program budget is included in Attachment B. The budget reflects NHS's relative independence as a budgetary unit, largely able to allocate its resources according to its own priorities, but also responsible for generating income.

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

The School of Nursing & Health Studies Department of Nursing terminal program objectives guide all Master's programs within the Department. They are as follows:

- Integrate advanced nursing knowledge, ethical principles and clinical excellence in advanced practice nursing within an area of specialization to promote human flourishing.
- Develop the role of the advanced practice nurse with commitment to excellence and quality outcomes.
- Utilize research skills and a scholarly approach to assist in the development and validation of nursing science.
- Integrate theoretical and scientific concepts that influence leadership in advanced practice roles consistent with education, practice and research.
- Participate in the process of health policy development for continued improvement of health care systems.
- Engage in lifelong learning, and the professional development of self and others.

Specific objectives are tailored and refined by specialties to apply to each concentration.

EXTERNAL REVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

The proposed program was reviewed by a committee comprised of faculty members: Jean E. DeMartinis, PhD, Associate Professor, UMASS Amherst, School of Nursing; Patricia A. Tabloski, PhD, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, Boston College, William F. Connell School of Nursing; and Mark. A. Schlesinger, Ph.D., retired Interim Chief Executive Officer, UMass Online.

The committee reviewed Georgetown University's written proposal submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education to offer the proposed degree and directly communicated with University administration, faculty, staff, and students during a site visit held on Georgetown University campus on February 6-7, 2012. Additional documents were also provided to the committee by the University at this time.

The committee reviewed the institution's ability to offer and support the proposed program in the context of its faculty, equipment, financial organization, leadership and other factors as mandated by standards currently utilized by the *Independent Institutions of Higher Education Standards, 610 CMR 2.07*. For this review, the appropriate criteria found within the 610 CMR 2.07 standards include: mission; planning and evaluation; organization and governance; academic programs and instruction; faculty; student services; financial resources; public disclosure; physical resources; library and other informational resources; and additional criteria for out-of-state institutions operating in Massachusetts.

At the time of the site visit the institution was revising the role concentrations due to recent changes in the nursing field in regards to educational standards, licensure and accreditation. Two adult care concentrations were revised to include a focus on gerontology. The visiting committee recommended that the institution ensure all role concentration descriptions are current and consistent throughout all promotional

materials and that they conform to current nursing education and accreditation standards. This included updating syllabi, concentration objectives, etc. In response, the institution's faculty updated curriculum, syllabi, course objectives, program objectives, concentrations titles, etc.

The visiting committee observed that there already exists intense competition for clinical placements in Massachusetts due to the large number of nursing graduate programs, especially in the Boston area. Consequently, the visiting committee advised that the institution proceed judiciously with admission of MA students to the proposed program to ensure that clinical placements are available across the spectrum of care. The institution was advised to begin assessing the interest level of Massachusetts clinical sites. In response to the visiting committee, the institution further articulated its clinical placement policy and secured letters of interest from the following Massachusetts clinical sites, in the event the program is approved:

- Lowell General Hospital
- South Boston Community Health
- East Boston Neighborhood Health Center
- Massachusetts General
- Minute Clinic Massachusetts
- Mercy Medical Center/Sisters of Providence
- Harvard Vanguard

The visiting committee also expressed concern about faculty resources as enrollment in the online version of the program grows, and asked the institution to submit a hiring plan, which has already been discussed in the faculty section of this report. The visiting committee also noted that student readiness for distance learning is a critical issue, especially for learners in underserved areas who may not have access to the technological resources necessary for the program, such as processing power and bandwidth, and the comprehension of the fact that online education's flexibility does not equate with less rigor. As such the visiting committee recommended that the institution make available for review the material for orienting students to distance learning and other ways students are alerted to the demands for distance learning. These materials were provided and the visiting committee found them to be satisfactory.

After reviewing the institution's response, the visiting committee members concurred that the institution responded substantively to their questions and concerns, and noted that the institution met or exceeded the minimal standards required for approval. The visiting committee strongly recommends the proposed program for approval.

PUBLIC HEARING

The required public hearing will be held on December 4, 2012 at the Department of Higher Education, located at One Ashburton Place in Boston, Massachusetts.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

After a thorough evaluation of all documentation submitted, staff is satisfied that the proposal of Georgetown University to award the **Master of Science in Nursing** meets the requirements set forth in 610 CMR 2.07 in the Degree Granting Regulations for Independent Institutions of Higher Education. Recommendation is for approval.

Attachment 1: Curriculum Outline

Major Required (Core) Courses (Total # of courses required = 7)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NURS518	Health Care Ethics	2
NURS528	Advanced Health Assessment	3
NURS530	Research Methods & Biostatistics for Healthcare Providers	4
NURS540	Research Evidence and Best Practices in Health Care	3
NURS544	Advanced Concepts in Pharmacology	3
NURS546	Advanced Concepts in Physiology and Pathophysiology	3
NURS624	Foundations of Health Systems and Policy	3
	SubTotal # Core Credits Required	21
<i>Elective Course Choices (Total courses required = Depends on specialty)</i>		
	<i>For the Family Nurse Practitioner specialty concentration...</i>	
NURS538	Professional Aspects of Advanced Practice Nursing	3
NURS687	Primary Health Care of the Family I	4
NURS691	Primary Health Care of the Family II	5
NURS714	Primary Health Care of the Family III	5
NURS752	Primary Health Care of the Family IV	5
NURS701	Care of the Family in Crisis	1
	<i>Family Nurse Practitioner SubTotal # Elective Credits Required</i>	<i>23 credits</i>
	<i>Family Nurse Practitioner Program Total (core + specialty)</i>	<i>44 credits</i>
	<i>For the Nurse Educator specialty concentration...</i>	
NURS622	Foundations of Nursing Education and The Curriculum Design Process	3
NURS628	Instructional Design, Student Assessment, and Classroom Management	3
NURS660	Simulation, Laboratory, Clinical and Distance Education	3
NURS662	Professional Role Development	5
	<i>Nurse Educator SubTotal # Elective Credits Required</i>	<i>14 credits</i>
	<i>Nurse Educator Program Total (core + specialty)</i>	<i>35 credits</i>
	<i>For the Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner specialty concentration...</i>	
NURS501	Introduction to Reproductive Healthcare for Women	4

NURS502	Primary Care of Women	2
NURS675	Reproductive Health Care of Women II	4
NURS682	Labor, Birth and Newborn Care	5
NURS720	Integrated Reproductive Health Care of Women	6
NURS731	Seminars in Advanced Women's Health Care	3
NURS538	Professional Aspects of Advanced Practice Nursing	3
NURS701	Families in Crisis	1
	<i>Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner SubTotal # Elective Credits Required</i>	28 credits
	<i>Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Program Total (core + specialty)</i>	49 credits
	<i>For the Adult Gerontology-Acute Care Nurse Practitioner/Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist specialty concentration...</i>	
NURS670	Diagnostic Reasoning & Clinical Decision Making	3
NURS469	Anatomy for Health Care Professionals	1
NURS676	Adult Gerontology ACNP/CNS I	4
NURS692	Best Practices in Teaching and Learning	3
NURS678	Adult Gerontology ACNP/CNS II	4
NURS538	Professional Aspects of Advanced Practice Nursing	4
NURS696	Adult Gerontology ACNP/CNS III	4
NURS716	Adult Gerontology ACNP/CNS IV	5
	<i>Adult Gerontology-Acute Care Nurse Practitioner/Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist SubTotal # Elective Credits Required</i>	28 credits
	<i>Adult Gerontology-Acute Care Nurse Practitioner/Adult Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist Program Total (core + specialty)</i>	48 credits
Curriculum Summary		
Total number of courses required for the degree		11-15 courses; Courses and credits vary by concentration.
Total credit hours required for degree		35-49 credits; Courses and credits vary by concentration.
Prerequisite, Concentration, Dissertation or Other Requirements: The concentration requirements for each of the specialty concentrations of the MS in nursing program are outlined above.		

Attachment 2: Program Budget

Based on Massachusetts' population as a percentage of the United States' population (~2%) and an anticipated enrollment of 500 students nationwide, it is likely that approximately 10-20 Massachusetts residents per year will enroll in the online graduate nursing programs.

Since the online graduate nursing programs will be offered nationwide, it is not possible to extrapolate expenses specifically for Massachusetts students; however, the program budget is included below.

Online Graduate Nursing Estimated Revenue and Expenditure

	FY11	FY12	FY13	FY14
Gross Program Tuition Revenue	\$2,103	\$19,639	\$31,693	\$34,706
Total Revenue	\$2,103	\$19,639	\$31,693	\$34,706
Technology and Student Services	\$1,262	\$11,123	\$19,016	\$20,824
Faculty Costs	\$259	\$987	\$1,553	\$1,702
Preceptor Training Costs	\$10	\$88	\$150	\$165
Simulation	\$110	\$373	\$544	\$561
Other Faculty/Staff Costs	\$693	\$2,549	\$3,159	\$3,246
Other Direct Costs	\$272	\$667	\$817	\$872
Total Costs	\$2,606	\$15,787	\$25,239	\$27,370