

BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION
REQUEST FOR COMMITTEE AND BOARD ACTION

COMMITTEE: Academic Affairs

NO.: AAC 13-37

COMMITTEE DATE: June 11, 2013

BOARD DATE: June 18, 2013

APPLICATION OF FISHER COLLEGE TO AWARD THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING

MOVED: The Board of Higher Education hereby approves the Articles of Amendment of **Fisher College** to award the **Bachelor 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

Fisher College Bachelor of Science in Nursing

INTENT AND MISSION

Fisher College, a private, New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accredited coeducational institution, located in Boston, MA, requests authorization to offer the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). The proposed BSN program seeks to provide additional educational opportunities for registered nurses with nursing diplomas and/or associate degrees. The mission and purpose of the proposed program is to provide an academically challenging professional nursing education that includes an opportunity for a seamless transition from the diploma or associate degree to the BSN, with a commitment to the enhancement of health and wellness in society.

The Fisher proposed program offers the last two years of a BSN degree, referred to in nursing education as a RN to BSN program. These programs are designed for students who have either a diploma or an associate degree in nursing and an active registered nurse (RN) license. Most nursing programs at four year institutions have both a Bachelor of Nursing program, a direct entry-level program for students pursuing a nursing degree and a RN to BSN program for licensed nurses with nursing diplomas and/or associate degrees; however, some institutions do have RN to BSN programs without offering an associate degree in nursing (ASD), for example, Framingham State University.

Fisher is proposing to launch this program in the beginning to graduates of Brockton Hospital School of Nursing (BHSON) and nurses at Brockton Hospital. In a recent survey of BHSON graduates, 68% to 93% of graduates indicated that they intend to pursue their BSN within 5 years of graduation. In the spring of 2011; 25 Brockton registered nurses indicated they would sign up for a RN to BSN program immediately if it were available at the hospital. While Fisher intends to begin the RN to BSN program with a student pool drawn from BHSON, it recognizes that the demand for the program may grow with the possibility of other registered nurses interesting in enrolling in the program.

Graduates with a nursing diploma or ASD are increasingly finding opportunities limited. A 2010 report from the Institute of Medicine indicated that to “meet the changing needs of patients, nurses must achieve higher levels of education and training. One step in realizing this goal is for a greater number of nurses to enter the workforce with a baccalaureate degree or progress to this degree early in their careers.” According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of December 2009, over 580,000 new RN positions are expected to be created through 2018. This represents a 22% employment growth which is greater than the average compared to all other professions. There are a large number of expected retirements, many in the nurse management role, which will enhance job opportunities. These job opportunities will exist for nurses with greater levels of education and skills.

The proposed program was developed using an external consultant and the Fisher College Curriculum Committee. The proposal was forwarded to the Faculty Forum (the faculty governance structure charged with review and approval of all Fisher College curricular matters) for a vote and was subsequently endorsed by the faculty, approved by college leadership, and authorized by the Fisher College Board of Trustees on October 3, 2011.

INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW

Fisher College was founded in 1903 and functioned as a secretarial school for young women (and men beginning in 1946) until its approval as a junior college in 1952. In 1957, Fisher Junior College was approved to grant the Associate in Science degree by the Board of Higher Education. In 1968, authority was granted to award the degree Associate in Arts. In 1970, the college was accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. The college began offering programs and certificates through continuing education at sites throughout eastern Massachusetts in 1975.

In 1988, Fisher Junior College was renamed Fisher College, a private, two year college. In 1999, the Board of Higher Education approved Fisher College to offer the Bachelor of Science in Management and in 2000, the Board approved the certificates in Administrative Assistant, Computer Technology, Early Childhood Education, Paralegal Studies, Medical Assistant, Retail Merchandising and, Travel and Hospitality Management. In 2008, the Board also approved the Bachelor of Science in Human Services and the Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Media Studies. The Board approved the Bachelor of Arts in Psychology in 2011 and the Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice in 2012.

Fisher currently enrolls just over one thousand full-time undergraduate students and almost eight hundred part-time students. They offer Associate in Science as well as Associate in Arts degrees and five bachelor's degrees.

Fisher College now seeks authority to grant a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

ACADEMIC AND RELATED MATTERS

Curriculum (Attachment A)

The Bachelor of Science Nursing Program is geared to the working RN. It is a part-time program that can be completed in eighteen to twenty-four months of continuous study. The proposed program consists of 122 credits of which 72 credits are prerequisites and may be transferred. Fifty credits must be taken after matriculation into the BSN program. Students who lack the prerequisites will need to take additional courses.

The proposed program's curriculum was developed in adherence with the standards outlined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (CCNE) in the *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice*. Students enrolled in the proposed program who work at Brockton Hospital will be able to complete the required practicum at Brockton Hospital. Students who choose to complete their practicum at a location other than Brockton Hospital will work with the BSN Program Director to secure placements. Fisher has secured letters of intent from two clinical sites and is seeking additional sites.

Upon completion of the proposed Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, students will be able to:

- Integrate and apply critical thinking related to the health needs of individuals, families, systems, and communities

- Utilize nursing theory, process and evidence based research in making healthcare decisions for individuals, families, systems, and communities
- Demonstrate effective communication strategies and collaboration with colleagues to enhance health care delivery systems in professional situations
- Evaluate, promote, maintain and restore health and wellness for diverse populations in a variety of healthcare and community settings
- Practice nursing with an increased professional awareness of ethical, legal, and moral considerations
- Synthesize the knowledge and skills learned from studying the physical and social sciences, humanities, and nursing theory into nursing practice
- Demonstrate abilities as a self-directed, life-long adult learner

Departmental assessment efforts are part of the College's regular cycle of program review. All academic programs are reviewed every three years utilizing a three-part instrument that includes assessment of college-wide learning outcomes, specific program learning outcomes and a general evaluation of the program's mission, enrollment, and resources.

In addition, each program is reviewed annually by an advisory board within the field of expertise. Input and suggestions are made actionable through modifications in curricula or specific elements of assignments.

Admission Requirements

In order to be considered for admissions into the proposed program, a student must submit the following information:

- A completed application form
- Official transcripts for all high schools and colleges
- Grade Point Average Requirement: 2.5 or higher
- Official test scores from students who completed their General Education Development Program (GED) in lieu of high school
- Successful completion of the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX), or current Massachusetts registered nursing licensure.
- 72 credits of prerequisites with an earned grade of C or higher, including:
 - 36 nursing credits from Diploma or Associate degree program in Nursing
 - Anatomy and Physiology I (4 credits)
 - Anatomy and Physiology II (4 credits)
 - Microbiology (4 credits)
 - Pharmacology (3 credits)
 - General Psychology (3 credits)
 - Human Development (3 credits)
 - English I (3 credits)
 - English II (3 credits)
 - Humanities (6 credits)
 - College Mathematics (3 credits)
- Current American Heart Association Health Care Provider identification
- Proof of health insurance
- Complete health and immunization records

- Satisfactory CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information) and SORI (Sexual Offender Record)

Tuition and Fees

The anticipated student cost including tuition and fees is \$21,312 for the entire proposed program.

Projected Enrollment

The initial enrollment projections are based on enrolling students from the BHSON diploma program and nurses at Brockton Hospital.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

	# of Students 2014	# of Students 2015	# of Students 2016	# of Students 2017
New Full Time				
Continuing Full Time				
New Part Time	25	30	30	30
Continuing Part Time		18	20	20
Totals	25	48	50	50

RESOURCES AND BUDGET (Attachment B)

Administration and Faculty

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Nursing will be housed administratively in the Division of Liberal Arts and Sciences and be led by a program director who is a full time member of the faculty licensed as a registered nurse and holding a doctoral degree. The college has hired an additional full-time faculty member with a doctorate in nursing who will begin in Fall 2013. Fisher plans to supplement the teaching load as needed with adjuncts. There are four full-time faculty and five part-time faculty teaching in the program. The college plans to make additional faculty hires, as needed, subject to growth of the program.

Library and Information Technology

Fisher College houses a physical collection of resources in Boston which are available to all students whether on-campus or off-site. The Library has external and collaborative network affiliations.

In addition, a health sciences library is available at the BHSON (as part of the Brockton Hospital proper) is accessible to all Fisher College students regardless of major. The health sciences

library, which houses approximately 800 texts and 10,000 journal volumes in print or electronic form, is a member of the Massachusetts Health Sciences Library Information Network (MAHSLIN) and several other networks, which will be particularly supportive of the RN to BSN students conducting research for course and clinical assignments. Library materials that support the current Nursing program can be found in the Online Library Catalog, *Horizon*. A Horizon search allows students to find items in both the Fisher Library Online Catalog as well as the Metro-Boston Library Network.

The Library offers students availability to several of the most commonly used online Nursing databases, such as EBSCOhost, MEDLINE, and ProQuest, and is currently budgeted to add CINAHL Plus to further support the RN to BSN students and current diploma students. Students may access the Library's website, online catalog, and databases from any on-campus computer. All buildings on the Boston campus are wired for Internet access. Also, all members of the Fisher College community can access databases available remotely through the Boston Public Library.

Physical Resources

Fisher College has a contractual arrangement with BHSON for space which includes classroom space and necessary nursing lab space. The contract provides for access to several human patient simulators representing adult, child, and infant age groups. Initially, the proposed RN to BSN program will be offered physically at the BHSON. The College is aware that anticipated growth of the RN to BSN Program may eclipse the BHSON's ability to provide for physical space necessary to deliver the program or may require scheduling of classes in a way that will have an adverse effect on RN to BSN enrollment. Fisher College has leased additional space at 379 Oak St. in Brockton. The college has signed an occupancy lease with the owner and will open the site to students in May in a space the college has had redesigned to include six classrooms including one science lab, one computer lab with provision for 20 computer terminals, six offices, a student lounge, and a faculty lounge/kitchen area. The entire space will support Wi-Fi for general use of students and faculty. Smart Board technology will be present. Should demand for the RN to BSN outgrow the space at BHSON, the program will be offered at the new Brockton site as well.

Financial Resources

The primary costs associated with this program are the full time program director and other instructional faculty. In the second year of the program, a second full time instructor will be hired. In addition, funds have been allocated to update library resources and complete any facilities changes that might be needed. The budget for the proposed program is provided in Attachment B.

Licensure and accreditation

Students entering this program will be required to have a valid active nursing license. Fisher will apply for accreditation via the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC). Fisher will apply for candidacy status with NLNAC after obtaining program approval from the BHE and NEASC. Once receiving candidacy status from NLNAC, Fisher will have two years to apply for full accreditation. Students who graduate during or after the cycle of time in which the institution is reviewed for accreditation will be recognized as graduates of an accredited program. Accreditation ensures quality of the program.

EXTERNAL REVIEW AND INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE

External Review

The proposed program was reviewed by the visiting committee of Nancy Phoenix Bittner, PhD, CNS, RN (Chair), Professor, School of Nursing, Science and Health Professions, Regis College; Marie B. McCarthy, MSN, RN, Vice President for Education, Lawrence Memorial/Regis College, Nursing and Radiography Programs & Hallmark Health System and Susan Mullaney, EdD, RN, CNE, Professor and Chair, Department of Nursing, Framingham State University.

The evaluation included the team's review of the written proposal submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education (MA-DHE) by Fisher College to offer the *Bachelor of Science in Nursing* degree, and the site visit conducted from October 14-16, 2012. During the site visit additional documents were provided by the college, and information was also obtained from direct communications with the college's President, Vice President for Academic Affairs; Dean, Division of Accelerated and Professional Studies and School of Health; Program Director BSN Program, and the Dean, Curriculum Development; select faculty, and students. The committee toured the main campus and the Brockton hospital site including Fisher-contracted instructional spaces and faculty offices.

The team found the program to be consistent with the college's mission and strategic plans for growth in baccalaureate program offerings noting that the current collaboration with the Brockton School of Nursing (BHSON) has been in place for 21 years.

The Committee recommended the College:

- develop a more specific plan for assessing student learning outcomes at degree completion as well as for assessing the programmatic outcomes;
- develop a policy to correct inconsistencies in the allocation of the number of credits for individual courses; and
- hire additional full-time terminally qualified faculty member with a doctoral degree.

The hire of a doctorally prepared faculty member is essential for meeting the minimal standards for both approval by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and for meeting professional accreditation standards. The committee also felt the proposed workload of the full-time director during the first year of implementation was too demanding without the hire of an additional full-time faculty member.

Institutional Response

The institution responded substantively to all the committee concerns and specific responses to the issues outlined above are as follows:

- An extensive assessment plan was presented.
- The policy on the allocation of credit for classes was clarified and distributed to faculty; courses in the proposed nursing program were reviewed and brought into line with the policy.

- Fisher College hired an additional qualified faculty member with a PhD in Nursing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The required public hearing was held in the Board of Higher Education office on February 20, 2013. No comments were offered in opposition to the proposed program.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION

After a thorough evaluation of all documentation submitted, staff is satisfied that the proposed **Bachelor of Science in Nursing** meets the criteria set forth in 610 CMR 2.08(3) in the Degree-Granting Regulations for Independent Institutions of Higher Education, accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Recommendation is for approval.

ATTACHMENT A: CURRICULUM OUTLINE

Undergraduate Program Curriculum Outline

Required (Core) Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 10)		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
NU 100	Academic Strategies	1
NU 300	Concepts of Professional Nursing Practice	3
HE 225	Leadership and Communication in Healthcare	3
NU320	Physical Assessment and Health Promotion Across the Lifespan	3
NU 335	Pathophysiology and Applied Pharmacology	4
NU 340	Nursing Research for Evidenced-Based Practice	3
HE 330	Nutrition for Health Care Professionals	3
NU 310	Nursing Informatics	3
NU 440	Community Health Nursing/ Practicum	6
NU 450	Innovations in Nursing Practice/ Advanced Practicum	6
	Program Credits	35
	Completed via prerequisite coursework (see below)	47
General Education Courses (Total # courses required = 13 courses – 40 credits total, the following 5 courses in BSN curriculum, others completed in prerequisite coursework)		
Indicate Distribution of General Education Requirements Below		# of Gen Ed Credits
Arts and Humanities, including Literature and Foreign Languages FL 110 Spanish for Healthcare Professionals		3
Mathematics and the Natural and Physical Sciences NU 321 Statistics for the Nursing Professional –		3
Social Sciences SO 121 Social Justice, Race, and Gender Issues in American Society SO 300 Introduction to Gerontology Social Science Elective		9
Completed during RN to BSN		15
Completed via prerequisite coursework (see below))		25
Sub Total General Education Credits		40
Curriculum Summary		
		50 credits in RN to BSN (35 program+15 Gen Ed)

	72 credits of prerequisite course work
Total credit hours required for degree	122
<p><i>Prerequisite, Concentration or Other Requirements:</i></p> <p>36 credits from Diploma/AD program Anatomy and Physiology I (4 credits) Anatomy and Physiology II (4 credits) Microbiology (4 credits) Pharmacology (3 credits) General Psychology (3 credits) Human Development (3 credits) English I (3 credits) English II (3 credits) Humanities Electives (6 credits) College Mathematics (3 credits)</p>	

ATTACHMENT B: BUDGET PROJECTION

NEW ACADEMIC PROGRAM BUDGET

RN to BSN Budget	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 3	
REVENUES					
Tuition Campus Based	156,240	309,742	329,987	345,127	
TOTAL REVENUES	156,240	309,742	329,987	345,127	
EXPENSES					
<i>Total Faculty Expenses</i>	140,620	257,214	265,814	273,289	Full/Part-time/Preceptors
Administrative Costs	5,000	12,000	12,000	12,500	\$250 per student
Student Services	5,000	12,000	12,500	12,500	\$250 per student
Academic resources/	15,000	18,000	18,000	18,000	CINAHL Plus with Full Text through EBSCO
Marketing	2,500	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Accreditation/Membership	7,000	4,000	4,000	4,000	
Facilities/Contingency	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	
Other Expenses	39,500	56,000	56,500	57,000	
GRAND TOTAL EXPENSES	180,120	313,214	322,314	330,289	
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	(23,880)	(3,472)	7,674	14,838	
Margin	-15.3%	-1.1%	2.3%	4.3%	

Faculty Form

Summary of Faculty Who Will Teach in Proposed Program							
Please list full-time faculty first, alphabetically by last name. Add additional rows as necessary.							
Name of faculty member (Name, Degree and Field, Title)	Check if Tenured	Courses Taught Put (C) to indicate core course. Put (OL) next to any course currently taught online.	Number of sections	Division of College of Employment	Full- or Part- time in Program	Full- or part- time in other department or program (Please specify)	Sites where individual will teach program courses
Dr. Valerie McCarthy, Ed.D., MS Community Health Nursing, BSN	<input type="checkbox"/>	300/400 level nursing courses	1	School of Health Professions	Full-time		Program Administrator Fisher College RN to BSN site
Dr. Margaret Pribulick PhD, Nursing, MS Community Nursing, RN	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	School of Health Profession s	Full-time			Brockton Fisher College RN to BSN site
Turi-Markovic, Tunde PhD Psychology	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Race, and Gender Issues in American Society (C) Introduction to Gerontology ©	1	School of Social Sciences and Human Services	Full-time	Fisher College - Psychology	On-line

Wallinga, Willem ABD Mathematics, MS Mathematics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Statistics for Nursing Professionals	1	School of Liberal Arts and Sciences	Full-time	Fisher College - Human Services	On-line
Weiner, Jennifer PhD Counseling Psychology	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Race, and Gender Issues in American Society (C) Introduction to Gerontology ©	1	School of Social Sciences and Human Services	Full-time	Fisher College – Math department	On-line
Christiana O. Akanegbu BSN, MSN		Health Assessment				Yes Full-Time SH/BHSN Diploma Program	Fisher College RN to BSN site
Croft-LaFrance, MaryEllen ASN, BSN, MSN Nursing SH/BHSN Nursing Instructor Fisher College Adjunct Instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Pathophysiology and Applied Pharmacology (C)	1			Yes Full-Time SH/BHSN Part-Time Fisher College at SH/BHSN Diploma Program	Fisher College RN to BSN site
Eisenstein, Maureen BSN, MSN Nursing SH/BHSN Nursing Instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	• Academic Strategies (C) • Nursing Informatics (C)	1			Yes Full-Time SH/BHSN Diploma Program	• Fisher College RN to BSN site
Jean Marie Gouveia BSN, MSN SH/BHSN Nursing Instructor		• Pathophysiology and Applied Pharmacology (C)				Yes Full-Time SH/BHSN	• Fisher College RN to BSN site

						Diploma Program	
Terry Khouri AD in Nursing MSN SH/BHSN Nursing Instructor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health Nursing Practicum (C) • Social Justice Course 	1			Yes Full-Time SH/BHSN Diploma Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisher College RN to BSN site
Taylor, Susan Diploma, BSN, MSN, ABD Nursing SH/BHSN Dean	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition of Healthcare Professionals • Statistics for the Nursing Professional 	1		Part-Time	Yes Full-Time Dean SH/BHSN Diploma Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fisher College RN to BSN site