**University of North Alabama**

**5 Year Online Departmental Review**

**College of Nursing & Allied Health**

**Online Nursing Department**

**Submitted by: Dr. Wanda Bradford, Chair**

**Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Five-Year Departmental Enrollment and Faculty Data**

**Statistical Overview**

Data listed below is the annual **averages** of the five-year data set provided by Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment for the Academic Years 2004 -2005 through 2008-2009. Although the Online Nursing Department was not established until the Fall of 2006, this review will included undergraduate online program data for five years, wherever feasible.

\*Note: GRADUATE data represents 3 years as the MSN program began in August, 2006-2007.

1. Average Number of Unduplicated Undergraduate and Graduate Majors:

1. Undergraduate: 261.60
2. Graduate: \*43
3. Average Number of Degrees Conferred
   1. Undergraduate: 68.80
   2. Graduate: \*14
4. Average Number of Undergraduate Majors/Degrees Conferred Ratio
   1. Undergraduate: 4.05
   2. Graduate: \*3.07
5. Student Credit Hours
   1. Undergraduate: 3,525.80
   2. Graduate: 460
   3. Total Student Credit Hours: 3,801.80
6. Average Class Size
   1. Undergraduate: 16.02
   2. Graduate :18.87
7. Number of Full-time Faculty : \*7

\* Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment data mistakenly reports 5 due to a coding error

1. Number of Part-time/Adjunct Faculty: 1
2. FTE Student/FTE Faculty Ratio (as per U.S. News definition): 33.01

8. Credit Hours/FTE Faculty: 9945

9. Department Expenditures (including Actual Personnel and Non-Personnel): $349.102.00

10. Cost Per Credit Hour: $91.73

**Assess the Department as it Relates to Students**

**Enrollment and Degree Productivity**

The Online Nursing Department has experienced significant and ongoing growth since it was established in January, 2001. The Online Nursing program was established to eliminate barriers of time and place that prevent Registered Nurses with Associate degrees from continuing their education. In August of 2000, there were only 12 RNs enrolled in the on-campus RN to BSN program. In January, 2001, we enrolled 44 students in the RN to BSN Online option and the enrollment growth has continued.

In 2007-2008, enrollment peaked at 320 students and was difficult to sustain in light of state appropriation education budget cuts and the lack of nursing faculty qualified to teach online. The enrollment increase in 2007-2008 is likely related to several factors. Because RN to BSN students are working adults with family andThe vast majority of online nursing students enroll on a part-time basis. Many students do not enroll in consecutive semesters, thus at any given time, there are a number of students who may lack only a few credits to graduate, but are not currently enrolled. The decline in our national economy in 2007 prompted fears of lay-offs in many locations. In hospital settings, nurses without the BSN are often be the first to be laid-off. Based on conversations from several returning students, they wanted to have their degree to avoid possible lay-off. We saw several previously enrolled students return to finish their degree requirements. Additionally, many hospitals across the nation began requiring all nurses in leadership/management positions to have the BSN at minimum and some institutions gave a time-line of 3 years for them to have the MSN. These two factors likely contributed to the spike in enrollment and in degrees conferred in 2007-2008 as illustrated in Chart 1.

**Chart 1. Undergraduate Enrollment & Degrees Conferred**

In August of 2006, after MANY years of effort, the Online MSN degree program was fully implemented with two degree tracks:“Nursing in Teaching-Learning Environments” and “Nursing Leadership in Organizational Environments.” As is the RN to BSN online option, the MSN degree program is completely online in an asynchronous format. Enrollment steadily increased and doubled in within 3 years.

Chart 2. Graduate Enrollment & Degrees Conferred

During the 2008-2009 academic year, a proposal for an **RN to MSN** online program was developed and approved. This program was implemented in August of 2009. Based on the number of RN to BSN program applications we have received, we expect to see an increase in online BSN degree conferment and a potential significant increase in online MSN degree conferment.

**Student services**

TheOnline Nursing Department actively provides various student services including the typical course/program advisement, mentoring students who may have difficulty, and providing references to prospective employers and graduate schools. Additionally, in 2007, using funds generated from the online fees collected, the Online Nursing Department began offering scholarships to both undergraduate and graduate nursing students. Two scholarships per semester are offered to undergraduate online nursing students. These scholarships are for $1,000 with one being merit based and the other need based. One merit/essay based scholarship for $1,500 is awarded to a graduate student in the spring and fall. In 2008-2009. The Online Department awarded 7 scholarships to RN to BSN students and 1 graduate scholarship for a total of $8,500.

In 2008, the Online Nursing Department partnered with the UNA Writing Center’s Dr. Robert Koch in establishing an online “Writing Center” that is embedded in three online undergraduates courses and two graduate courses. In addition to having writing tips and web links in the unit, students can post questions and tutors from the Writing Center will respond. Additionally, prior to turning in an assignment, students may submit their work to the Writing Center tutors who will critique it for writing style, format and grammar errors.

Based on the success of the Writing Center, the Online Nursing Department also partnered with the Collier Library’s Mrs. Leigh Thompson. Students can “Ask the Librarian” for assistance in locating online materials in the library’s online database or for tips in seeking information at other libraries or on the internet. Mrs. Thompson monitors the discussion board for questions from the students. Both of these partnerships have been very helpful to our online nursing students.

The Online Nursing Department also established a private Facebook group for nursing faculty and staff, nursing students and nursing alumni. This group has been very successful with over 600 members thus far. It is used to post news, keep in touch with alumni, note/celebrate achievements and to conduct alumni program satisfaction surveys.

In 2008, Mrs. Linda Austin, Mrs. Cathy Malone, and Dr. Lynn Aquadro (OD faculty) were instrumental in obtaining and organizing the first Nursing Honor Society charter at UNA – the Upsilon Omicron Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International. Many of our online nursing students/alumni have been inducted and several have held officer positions.

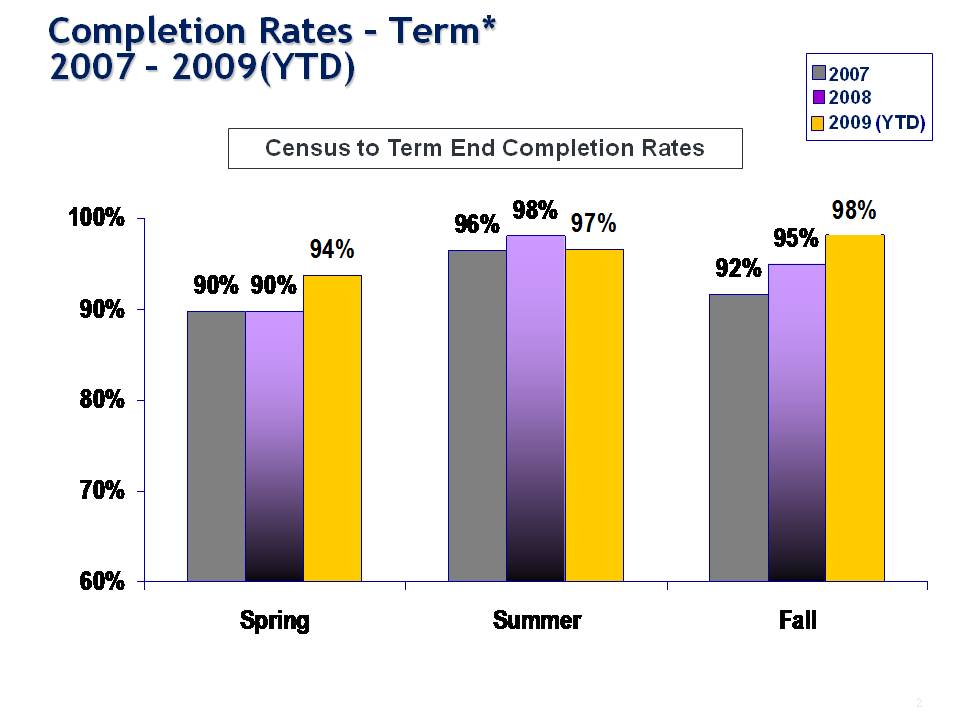
**Outcome information**

As the RN to BSN online option is a flexible program, most students take academic prerequisite courses concurrently with nursing courses; thus, the length of time from entry to graduation is variable and often extended. In 2008, the Online Department examined the length of time from entry to graduation for RN to BSN graduates. Of 424 graduates between 2001 and 2008, 87 graduated in 3 semesters. The average length of time from entry to graduation was 6 semesters, including time required to complete academic courses. The overall length of time of enrollment from entry to graduation ranged from 3 semesters to 20 semesters.

Based on the Five-year Department Evaluation Data study by UNA’s Institutional Research, Planning and Assessment Department, only 8% of RN to BSN students are enrolled in nursing courses on a full-time basis as evidenced in Chart 3. Although the majority of RN to BSN students do enroll on a part-time basis, an average of 69 RN to BSN students graduate annually.

**Chart 3. Five Year RN to BSN Enrollment Status**

The Online Nursing program has a good record of student course completion rates. As noted in Chart 4, the course completion rate for 2007, 2008 and 2009 ranged from 90% to 98% with an overall average of 94%. The increased course completion rates from 2007 through 2009 reflects the concentrated effort by faculty and staff to prevent/solve any course/technology related problems, to assist students with limited technology skills, and to work with students who have time/scheduling restraints whenever possible, in order to retain students in their courses. These data include both the RN to BSN and the MSN courses.

**Chart 4. Course Completion Rates**

All graduates of the RN to BSN option are surveyed annually. The Online Program Effectiveness & Curriculum Committee (OPECCC) is responsible for the administration of the Program Evaluation Plan (PEP) and performs an analysis and interpretation of data relative to program effectiveness. Data included in this narrative response represents the Spring 2010 Program Effectiveness survey, unless otherwise noted. Data analysis supports successful achievement of student outcomes in the following areas:

* Employment.
  + 73% of survey respondents report full-time employment and 15% report part-time employment. Of 6 respondents reporting unemployment, 3 reported being laid-off, 2 reported inability to find a job and 1 was not seeking employment. The majority of graduates (65%) report working in hospital settings. When respondents described their current nursing role, 49% reported Staff Nurse, 29% reported Charge Nurse or Nurse Manager, 11% reported Nurse Administrator, 6% reported Nurse Practitioner, and 4% reported Nurse Educator.
* Foundation for graduate study.
  + When asked to rate their satisfaction with the degree of preparation for graduate study, 85% (*n*54*)* reported “Extremely Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied”, and 1 respondent reported “Somewhat Satisfied”. 7 (13%) respondents had “No Opinion”.
* Personal and professional growth.
  + 47% (n59) of respondents report regularly reading of professional journals
  + 53% (*n*59) report membership in professional nursing organizations, and 32% report current enrollment in graduate studies.
  + 14% (*n*59) report having attained the MSN degree.
  + respondents described their career plans for the next 3 years with 46% (*n*59) expecting to be in graduate school on a full or part-time basis.
* Research and its application to practice
  + 93% (n59) report significant or adequate achievement in their ability to evaluate research for applicability to nursing. 5% reported inadequate achievement and 2% had no opinion.
* Interpersonal and technological skills necessary to assume leadership roles within the BSN scope of practice.
  + All courses are delivered completely online; thus technology skills are learned and/or improved
  + Communication is accomplished asynchronously via written communication with emphasis on appropriate netiquette and professional protocols.
* Program satisfaction
  + Graduates report a high degree of satisfaction with the online option. Of 55 respondents, 98% report “Extremely Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied”, and 1 respondent (2%) reported “Somewhat Satisfied”.

The analysis of course evaluation, annual graduate surveys and impromptu surveys, provide evidence that the Online Department’s undergraduate and graduate programs is effective in achieving the mission, goals and expected student outcomes for the CONAH.

**Assess the department as it relates to faculty**

**Teaching productivity** **and activities designed to enhance teaching and the curriculum**

The RN to BSN online option began the 2004-2005 academic year with 4 full-time faculty and 1 office staff, with 1 faculty from the traditional BSN program who taught course sections of 3 – 6 hours as overloads. One faculty also served as the Coordinator of the RN to BSN option. Almost all online faculty taught overloads every semester, including summers, as enrollment continued to grow.

The creation of the Online Nursing Department (OD) occurred in August, 2006 at the same time the new MSN online degree program was launched. The Coordinator of the RN to BSN option was also named Department Chair of the OD. By the 2008-2009 academic year, there were 7 full-time faculty, 1 adjunct faculty, 2 faculty from the Traditional Nursing Department (TD) who taught 3 to 6 hrs as overloads (as needed) and 2 office staff.

The quick growth of our online nursing programs has been significant as evidenced by the increased credit hour production in Chart 5. OD faculty have all volunteered to teach overloads as needed in order to sustain program growth. However, by the 2007-2008 academic year, it became evident that we needed additional online faculty to continue to grow our programs. Unfortunately, the impact of the national recession and correlating decrease in state appropriations resulted in an employment freeze at UNA in 2008.

**Chart 5. Credit Hour Production**

All OD faculty, including adjunct and TD faculty who teach sections of OD courses, are proficient in the use of eCollege for online course development and online pedagogy. The eCollege platform has been used since the online nursing program began in January, 2001. By consistently using the same online platform to deliver our online nursing courses, faculty have achieved proficiency and can focus on teaching and interacting with students. All faculty who teach online have had “one-on-one” training by eCollege staff or through our faculty mentoring program. OD faculty attend an online education conference each year in Denver, CO that is sponsored by eCollege and/or similar conferences sponsored by other organizations. OD faculty also mentor TD faculty in the use of eCollege, Articulate and concepts of online pedagogy. Our faculty mentoring program has been extremely successful in preparing faculty to teach online and to entice faculty to postpone retirement by teaching online. .

Student satisfaction with OD faculty and online nursing courses is consistently high. Data in the next four charts represent a sampling of question summaries from all online course evaluations from the Fall 2009 semester. Course evaluation data is consistent over the five year period of this review.

**Chart 6. Navigation through the online course was easily accomplished.**

**Chart 7. The instructor effectively made use of the online environment for learning.**

**Chart 8. Overall, how satisfied are you with our online course delivery system (eCollege).**

**Chart 9. The instructor provided learning enhancement activities in addition to text/lectures.**

OD faculty are committed to providing the best possible enhancement activities in their online courses. Nursing faculty are “early adopters” of technology, having implemented the first “completely online” program at UNA and are still paving the way with technology use and innovative programs. In addition to the eCollege online platform, the OD purchased licenses for Articulate software which allows faculty to develop interactive audiovisual content that can be integrated into their online courses. All faculty who teach online have had “one-on-one” training by eCollege staff or through our faculty mentoring program. Online faculty also mentor TD faculty in the use of eCollege, Articulate and online pedagogy. Our faculty mentoring program has been extremely successful in preparing faculty to teach online and to entice faculty to postpone retirement by teaching online.

OD faculty share their technology skills and teaching techniques through professional presentations and publications:

* Dr. Wanda Bradford, Dr. Sue Bobek and Dr. Teresa Leonard presented “Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks: Tips for Online Nursing Education” at the Creative Teaching for Nursing Educators 30th Annual Workshop” in Memphis, TN. (2005)
* Dr. Wanda Bradford, Mrs. Cathy Malone and Dr. Teresa Leonard each presented at the University of North Alabama *Best Practices in Distant Learning Conference* in 20008.
* Dr. Leonard and Dr. Bradford co-authored an article *“RN to BSN? Yes You Can”* published in *Imprint* in 2009.

**Research productivity**

Faculty in the online nursing department focus on teaching and on professional practice, however, they actively conduct research and make other intellectual/professional contributions. Table 1 highlights select faculty activities involving research projects, grants, presentations and publications during the five year period under review. Of seven faculty in the Online Department, two have not participated in or conducted research activities or grants. Both of those faculty members are approaching retirement, with one already in the DROP program and the other planning on retirement within the year.

**Table 1. Faculty Highlights**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Faculty Member** | **Research Activities/Grants** | **Presentations/Publications** |
| Mrs. Linda Austin | Member of a research team headed by Dr. Patricia Stevens (PI), University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee College of  Nursing. The study was entitled “An In-Depth Longitudinal Study of HIV-Infected Women” (2000-2004) National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Nursing Research. As a member of this team, Mrs. Austin analyzed participant narratives related to drug and alcohol patterns of use, history, and recovery. | Poster Presentation of Dissertation Research Proposal: How do HIV-infected women who have a serious mental illness describe their health care experiences. Emerging Issues in Nursing Leadership, Scholarship, and Practice: Sigma Theta Tau. |
| Dr. Lynn Aquadro | Appalachian Regional Commission Grant – **Funded** ($156,900.00),  2005-2006  Dissertation: Factors that Affect Diagnosis & Treatment of Metabolic Syndrome (2005) | **National** Conference for Nurse Practitioners – Poster  presentation. 2007  **National** Speaker: Creative Teaching for Nurse Educators Spring 2007 |
| Dr. Wanda Bradford | “Utilizing Technology to Retain Nursing Faculty at the University of North Alabama.” The primary purpose of this project was to alleviate the shortage of nursing faculty at UNA by increasing the pool of available faculty who are prepared to teach online. A secondary purpose was to entice senior faculty to post-pone retirement to teach completely online; or to teach online as adjunct faculty during post-retirement. | Presented “Utilizing Technology to Retain Nursing Faculty”. Rush University, School of Nursing. Chicago, IL. 2005. |
| **Faculty Member** | **Research Activities/Grants** | **Presentations/Publications** |
| Dr. Wanda Bradford (continued) | Assisted in the development of a survey tool to examine attitudes, motivational factors and obstacles that may impact nursing graduates decision to further their education.  Developed and deployed online surveys to determine interest and need for a new proposed nursing program, the RN to MSN online program. Developed program proposal which was approved and implemented in 2009. | Leonard, T. and Bradford, W. “RN to BSN? Yes, You Can!” *Imprint.* National Student Nurses Association, Brooklyn, N.Y. January, 2009. Publication.  “Moving an On-Campus Classroom Online”. Distance Learning Best Practices Conference, University of North Alabama. (Presenter).  “Teaching Old Dawgs New Tricks”. Creative Teaching for Nursing Educators Workshop, University of Memphis, Memphis, TN. (Co-Presenter).  “Utilizing Technology to Retain Nursing Faculty”. National Conference on Professional Nursing Education and Development, Atlanta, GA. Professional Nursing Education Group. Co-sponsors: Rutgers University College of Nursing, Villanova University College of Nursing, University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. 2006. Poster presentation. |
| Dr. Teresa Leonard | Served on dissertation committee of Dr. Wendy Darby, at Capella University, Minneapolis, MN (2005)  Edited UNA College of Nursing Self-Study Document for Commission for Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation.  Primary author of Master Degree Proposal for the College of Nursing and Allied Health at UNA  (Approved December, 2005) | Leonard, T., & Bradford, W. (2009). RN to BSN? Yes you can! *Imprint,* 56(1), 36-40. Publication.    Leonard, T. (2006). Exploring diversity in nursing education: Research findings. *Journal of Cultural Diversity, 13*(2), 87-96. Publication.    Leonard, T. (2003). RN to BSN: Advice on returning to school. *AORN Journal, 77*, 598-608. Publication. |
| **Faculty Member** | **Research Activities/Grants** | **Presentations/Publications** |
| Dr. Teresa Leonard  (continued) | Presented MSN proposal to state Graduate Deans’ Council, Birmingham, AL (2004). | “Online Education” (Guest Lecturer)—Present at University of North Alabama Health Care Lectures Course, Florence, AL, November 4, 2009  “Contracting for Grades”—Presented at University of North Alabama Distant Learning Conference, Florence, AL, May 9, 2008  “Objectification of Women” (Guest Lecturer)—Presented at University of North Alabama Women’s Health Course, Florence, AL, April 3, 2008  Communication Skills for Nurses”—Continuing Education Program Presented at the University of North Alabama, Florence, AL, June 26, 2007  “Cultural Diversity”—Presented at North Mississippi Medical Center Medical-Surgical Conference, September 15, 2005  “Teaching an Old Dog New Tricks: Tips for Online Nursing Education” --Presented at Creative Teaching for Nursing Educators 30th Annual Workshop, Memphis, TN, March 14, 2005 |
|  |  |  |
| **Faculty Member** | **Research Activities/Grants** | **Presentations/Publications** |
| Mrs. Charlotte Cramer |  | Presented “Creating a Study Abroad Service Learning Course”, Panel Presentation at Sigma Theta Tau International Region 8 Conference, Birmingham, AL, October, 2008  Presented “Creating a Study Aboard Service Learning Course”, Gamma Chi chapter meeting of Delta Kappa Gamma, Florence, AL, February, 2009  Presented “Disaster Relief—earthquake on island of Nias, Indonesia”, Presidential Mentors Academy, UNA, July, 2005 |

**Service, including service to public schools**

Faculty of the Online Department actively serve on many University committees, departmental committees, and volunteer in community service. Examples of service given by OD faculty include membership or volunteer activity on the following:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **University Committees** | **CONAH & Online Nursing Committees** | **Community Service** |
| * Academic & Student Affairs * Academic Affairs Outstanding Scholarship/Research Award Committee * Academic Affairs Outstanding Teacher Award Committee * ADA Panel * Distance Learning Advisory Committee * Diversity Task Force * Enrollment Management Task Force * Faculty Affairs Committee * Faculty Development Leave Committee * Faculty Senate * Faculty Senate Constitution Review Committee   (continued) | * CONAH Faculty Committee * Portfolio Development Committee, ad hoc * CCNE Steering Committee * Online Faculty Committee * Online Admissions/ Readmissions Committee * Online Program Effectiveness and Curriculum Committee * Online Student Guidelines & Resources Committee * Online Retention, Recruitment, Promotion Committee | * Alabama Citizen’s for Constitutional Reform * Advisory Committee for Health Occupations Education * Health Fair – Community Health Clinic * Medical Mission Trips Overseas * American Heart Association, BLS Instructor * Volunteer, Alabama Department of Public Health (H1N1 Vaccination Program) |
| **University Committees** | **CONAH & Online Nursing Committees** | **Community Service** |
| * Faculty Senate Executive Committee * Faculty/Staff Stewardship Committee * Faculty Senate Ad Hoc State Political Relations Committee * Graduate Council * Grievance Committee * Honors Program Advisory Council * Human Resources Search Committee * International Programs/ Offerings Committee * Project OPEN Advisory Committee * SACS Undergraduate and Graduate Programs Committee * SACS: General Academic Operations Committee * SACS Steering Committee on Financial Resources * Speaker/Concert Series Committee (Distinguished Events Series Committee), * Strategic Planning Committee * Technology Advisory Committee * UNA Black Faculty and Staff Association, President * Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost Search Committee (ad hoc) * VPAA Excellence in Teaching Selection Committee |  | * Board of Directors, Northwest Alabama Community Health Association * National Alliance for the Mentally Ill * Women’s Center, Advisory Board * Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner for Rape Response of Florence * Community Network Group (HIV awareness, education, and support), Lauderdale County Health Department * Leukemia & Lymphoma Society Volunteer * Alabama Citizen’s for Constitutional Reform * Advisory Committee for Health Occupations Education * Health Fair – Community Health Clinic * Medical Mission Trips Overseas * American Heart Association, BLS Instructor * Various Church/Religious activities |

**Faculty development plans**

All Online Nursing department faculty members are required to submit faculty development plans to the department Chair in the spring semester. Faculty development plans must include outcomes. Outcomes are documented annually and new plans developed. Previous year goals and accomplishment of these goals are evaluated and future goals developed by the faculty. Faculty must document the relationships of personal goals to respective departmental, CONAH and University goals. The Chair reviews the plan with the faculty member and offers suggestion to those who are seeking tenure and promotion. The CONAH has recently developed a set of criteria/standards for tenure and promotion for each academic rank.

**Assess the department as it relates to facilities and resources**

**Library**

UNA’s Collier Library sufficiently meets the needs of the Online Nursing Department. Mrs. Leigh Thompson, Librarian, is very accommodating and helpful to our faculty and online students. The online databases can be a bit frustrating for new users, however the Library staff is very willing to work with students and faculty in order to create a smooth and uneventful online library experience.

**Laboratories**

N/A

**Equipment**

The technology equipment provided generally meets our needs. All OD faculty have desktop computers, laptops and all-in-one printer/scanner/fax combos. The more recently purchased HP Touch screen desktop computers do not have a graphic card capable of efficiently running video editing software and is not available from our state contracted vendor. This is a problem for online faculty who use video editing software to create video clips for their courses. Otherwise, equipment is sufficient.

**Space** Space is an issue. Our Online Department office space is small and does not have adequate storage space. Faculty have home offices but need additional on-campus space to conduct (face-to-face) student conferences, faculty conferences and committee meetings.

**Support personnel**

The Online Department has two support personnel, a Coordinator of Online Nursing Enrollment and Academic Secretary, and a work-study student. The Coordinator of Online Nursing Enrollment is responsible for guiding students through the admission and registration process and progression through the program. She assists with advisement, maintains students’ records, and orders and maintains supplies and equipment for online faculty. She also assists with recruiting and with disseminating information about the program including, but not limited to, mail-out brochures and electronic mail messages. The academic secretary assists with student records, advisement, correspondence, inquiries, and other duties as assigned by the Coordinator of Online Nursing Enrollment and/or the department chair.

The continued growth of our online RN to BSN and MSN enrollment, along with the addition of a new degree option, the RN to MSN Option, has increased an already taxing workload for support personnel. The recent approval for a Nursing Simulation & Technology staff position to be shared with the Traditional department may result in some reduction for the academic secretary who enters online nursing students into the eCollege system, however, as our enrollment and program growth continues, the effect may be minimal, at best.

**Notable achievements by the department**

The Online Nursing department was established in the Fall of 2006 simultaneously with our long-awaited launch of the first graduate degree program in the CONAH - the MSN online program. While the creation of the department was very much needed, the timing was chaotic as we reorganized the entire College of Nursing, reassigned duties and responsibilities, created new departmental committees, established new rules and regulations, etc, AND launched a new graduate program. To further complicate matters, we were required by the Alabama Commission on Higher Education to partner with Jacksonville State University (JSU) to avoid “duplication” of course offerings. This proved to be complicated and required considerable time, travel and continuous dialogue between the universities. However, we have developed a very good working relationship with JSU’s School of Nursing and despite the many obstacles encountered, successfully implemented the program. We also initially intended to utilize graduate courses from UNA’s COB and COE,, however, by the Fall of 2009, both the COB and the COE had canceled the designated courses, thus the Online Nursing Department was forced to develop comparable graduate courses. This development contributed even more to the amount of faculty overloads in the Online Nursing Department.

After receiving frequent inquires from potential students seeking an online RN to MSN option, we conducted an impromptu survey of RN to BSN alumni members of our private UNA nursing alumni Facebook group to determine interest in an RN to MSN online option. Results revealed overwhelming support for such an option. Seventy-nine percent of the 146 participants reported they would have enrolled in the program had it been available to them. Another 17.1% responded “maybe” to the question of interest in enrolling in the program and only 3.4% expressed no interest in the program. These data provided strong support for the CONAH proposal to establish an RN to MSN online option. The proposal ultimately received approval and implementation began in the fall 2009 semester

To summarize major departmental achievements from 2006-2009 (3 years):

* the Online Nursing Department was newly created
* departmental committees were organized and established
* a partnership with JSU was established
* the first graduate nursing degree program at UNA was implemented, offering two tracks (Education and Leadership)
* new undergraduate degree option was developed, approved and implemented

(RN to MSN option).

* two new graduate courses were developed and designed to address the same concepts as in the courses by the COB and COE, but applied to health care environment settings
* Course retention improved
* overall growth continued

The Online Nursing department now has three degree options: RN to BSN, RN to MSN, and MSN (Education or Leadership). All programs are completely online and help to remove the obstacles of time, place and travel so that working Registered Nurses can advance their education.

**Student Achievements**

The most recent survey of RN to BSN graduates (2010) revealed:

* 32% currently attend graduate school
* 14% had attained the MSN degree
* 46% plan to enroll in graduate school in the next three years
* 27% hold national certification in various professional areas

**Grants and other funds generated**

In light of the significant reorganizational changes and the implementation of new programs, no faculty have submitted grant proposals that would directly impact the department. Dr. Lynn Aquadro did receive funding of two grants to benefit the CONAH managed Community Health Clinic that is staffed by CONAH nurse practitioners. Two of the three NP’s are also online nursing faculty: Dr. Lynn Aquadro and Mrs. Charlotte Cramer.

The Online Department does generate funds through the eCollege course enrollment student fees. These funds are used to:

* ensure a stable, reliable online platform is accessible 24/7, 365 days per year.
* provide a Help Desk 24/7 via phone, email or Live Chat. F
* provide iSupport (instructional support) for faculty in regards to course development and multimedia
* ensure previous student course work, faculty records and course content is accessible and safely and securely archived for future reference
* supply all equipment and specific software needs of faculty
* provide $9,000 annually for scholarships to both undergraduate and graduate students
* supplement salaries of the academic secretary and the newly proposed simulation/technology staff position
* fund the faculty mentoring program regarding online course development
* supplement faculty development in regards to technology

**Other awards and distinctions.**

OD faculty are locally and nationally recognized for their teaching effectiveness.

* Dr. Wanda Bradford received the *VPAAP Outstanding Teacher Award* in 2006 and was also named *Outstanding Teacher* in the College of Nursing and Allied Health.
* Mrs. Charlotte Cramer received the *VPAAP Outstanding Teacher Award* in 2007.
* In 2008, Mrs. Cathy Malone was selected from a nationwide pool of nominees for the *Excellence in Online Teaching* award presented by Pearson/eCollege at the CITE conference in Denver, CO.

**Response to previous program review recommendation**

N/A (This is our first departmental review).

**State the vision and plans for the future of the department**

Provide a vision statement of where the department would like to be in five years; assuming only costs to continue, with no additional state resources

In consideration of the financial limitations above, the department’s vision is:

To maintain our current programs and become established as the overall best online nursing education program in regards to costs, quality, faculty and student support.

Provide a vision statement of where the department would like to be in five years, if additional state resources are available.

To grow our enrollments, expand our offerings and become established as the overall best online nursing education program in regards to costs, degree offerings, certification offerings, quality, faculty and student support.

**Program Overview**

**Brief overview of program**

The Online Nursing Department (OD) was established in August, 2006, however the Online Nursing program began in January of 2001 with two faculty members and 44 students. By Fall of 2001, we added another faculty member and continued to add faculty and support personnel relative to enrollment growth and by Spring 202, at 104 students, we had more than doubled our enrollment within 12 months. By 2006, The exponential enrollment growth warranted a division of the College of Nursing and Allied Health into two departments: Online Nursing and Traditional Nursing.

**Mission statement for the program: Reference its relationship to college and institutional mission, as well as state priorities where appropriate**

At this juncture in time, the departments in the CONAH do not have separate mission statements. Despite prolonged discussions regarding this need, the “separation anxiety” experienced by some faculty members, prevent them from recognizing/understanding the need for departmental mission statements. We welcome advice on this issue.

**Goals and objectives of the program relative to teaching, research and public service, and assessment of program performance in relation to them**

**Student Learning Outcomes of the program**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Online Nursing**  **Department goals** | **Student Outcomes** | **Strategies to Achieve Outcomes** |
| 1. **Offer high quality online BSN and MSN nursing degree programs** 2. **Graduate nurses who are prepared to practice nursing in global healthcare environments** 3. **Promote a culturally diverse learning environment designed to eliminate barriers to learning** 4. **Develop and nurture a strong relationship with community health facilities and health professionals** 5. **Foster scholarly activities, research, teaching, services, and practice that advance the knowledge base of nursing** | **Graduates of the RN to BSN  baccalaureate program in nursing will:**   * **Function in professional nursing roles** * **Possess  a foundation for graduate study** * **Synthesize knowledge from a broad educational foundation upon which professional nursing practice is based** * **Communicate and collaborate with members of the health team and other interested groups in identifying and meeting the health needs of individuals, families and communities nationally and internationally** * **Demonstrate an understanding of the need for continuous personal and professional growth** * **Possess basic knowledge about research and its application to practice** * **Develop interpersonal  and technological skills necessary to assume leadership roles within the BSN scope of practice** | * **Recruit and retain qualified and diverse faculty and students** * **Maintain and expand good working relationships with clinical agencies** * **Begin writing across the curriculum early and link it with research and evidence based practice** * **Provide learning opportunities that require students use critical thinking and apply previous learning** * **Provide learning opportunities that require students to communicate and be active** * **Ensure that students perform in a professional and ethical manner** * **Instill an awareness of the need for development of lifelong learning skills** * **Create an environment that recognizes excellence and significant achievement** * **Provide opportunities for development of skills required to function in the technological world** * **Develop professional nursing skills, including leadership and management, through meaningful clinical learning opportunities with qualified clinical instructors** * **Provide opportunities to evaluate and use research in nursing practice and nursing education** |

**Governance structure of the program**

Please refer to Appendix I - Organizational Chart.

**Admissions requirements (including limited access requirements if applicable)**

Admission for RN to BSN Option

Initial admission is based on requirements for admission to the University; however, admission to the University does not assure admission to the program in nursing. Requirements for admission to nursing courses are as follows:

• Submit a formal application to the College of Nursing. Applications should be submitted by August 1 for fall admission, December 1 for spring admission, and May 1 for summer admission. Applications are available on the College of Nursing website.

• Registered nurses must submit official proof of a current license and be in good standing with the Board of Nursing. RNs may be admitted with advanced standing based on official transcripts of acceptable college work, evidence of graduation from a state-approved College of Nursing and official licensure verification. Admission to the College of Nursing and Allied Health is competitive, and meeting all admission requirements does not guarantee admission.

Admission for the RN to MSN Option

The RN-to-MSN alternative allows the substitution of nine semester hours of graduate nursing courses for nine hours of undergraduate nursing courses. Students who are enrolled in the RN-to-BSN option may opt to follow the RN-to-MSN alternative provided they meet the following requirements:

• A minimum 3.0 GPA after completing 12 credit hours of undergraduate

nursing courses at UNA.

• Advisor permission to register for graduate nursing courses.

Students who meet the requirements for the RN-to-MSN alternative will take:

* NU 501 Advanced Nursing Research (3 hrs) in lieu of

NU 303 Nursing Research (3 hrs)

* NU 503 Advanced Theory (3 hrs) and NU 601 Health Policy and Social Issues (3hrs) in lieu of NU 418 Concepts, Theory and Issues in Nursing (6 hrs).

Following successful completion of NU 501 and NU 503, students may apply for acceptance to the RN-to-MSN alternative and must meet all additional requirements as described in the Graduate Catalog.

Admission to the MSN Program

Unconditional Admission

* Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing from a nationally accredited institution
* Unencumbered license to practice nursing in the United States
* Undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.0\* or greater
* 1 year full-time experience as a registered nurse (Required for Nursing in Teaching-Learning Environments track only).
* Three references from professional sources
* Completed College of Nursing admission application
* Written statement of professional goals and the role of graduate education in achieving those goals
* For international students, a minimum score of 550 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or a minimum score of 213 on the computer-based TOEFL.
* Official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended

Conditional admission may be considered on a case-by-case basis for the applicant who does not fully meet admission requirements. The conditionally admitted student must have three years of full-time experience as a registered nurse. Conditionally admitted students may be required to take either the [Graduate Records Examination](http://www.ets.org/portal/site/ets/menuitem.fab2360b1645a1de9b3a0779f1751509/?vgnextoid=b195e3b5f64f4010VgnVCM10000022f95190RCRD) (GRE) or the [Miller Analogies Test](http://psychcorp.pearsonassessments.com/haiweb/Cultures/en-US/site/Community/PostSecondary/Products/MAT/mathome.htm) (MAT). The applicant with a GRE score of 1000 or greater or MAT score of 410 or greater qualifies for unconditional admission to the MSN program regardless of undergraduate GPA.

Clinical Health Requirements  
All students are expected to have a physical examination, proof of hepatitis B and other immunizations, current tuberculosis screening, a current Basic Life Support card, a notarized felony affidavit, and current student liability insurance prior to beginning clinical courses. Students must also hold current licensure (unencumbered) in the state(s) in which clinical experiences will be completed. The appropriate forms with these items documented are to be submitted by a specified deadline date

**Degree requirements**

Both the RN to BSN option and the RN to MSN option are a 128-hour program leading to the Bachelor in Nursing degree. The General Studies requirements equal 64 hours and Nursing requirements equal 64 hrs, for a total of 128 hours..

**Curriculum** **Requirements for the RN to BSN Option and the RN to MSN Option**

**Course Credit**

A. General Education Component: . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . 41

Nursing majors must complete:

Area III: Chemistry 101-102\* or 111-112\*

Area IV: Education 299 and Psychology 201

Area V: Additional Requirements . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . …23

Biology 241-242 (8)

Biology 307 (4)

Elementary Statistics 147 (3)

Human Environmental Sciences 342 (3)

Remaining requirements to bring total to 23 semester hours

(from nursing and general electives) 64

B. Major Core Requirements:

Nursing 302R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .. 6

Nursing 305R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .. . 3

Nursing 411R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .. . . . 6

Nursing 416R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .. . . . 6

**Option I or II** . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….. . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ... . . 9

.

Upon successful completion of one semester of nursing

coursework, CLEP credit for 30 hrs of transfer nursing courses

will be awarded to the student 30

60

**Option I – RN-to-BSN**

NU 303R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ….3

NU 418R . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . …... . 6

**Option II – RN-to-MSN**

NU 501\*\* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . …... .3

NU 503\*\* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . …… . . 3

NU 601\*\* . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . …… . . 3

C. A minor is not required.

D. General Elective hours . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . ……4

**Total 128**

**Curriculum Requirements for the MSN degree.**

The MSN degree is a 42-hour program for both the Teaching/Learning track and the Leadership track

**Teaching-Learning Track**

NU 503 Advanced Nursing Theory (3)  
NU 603 Health Promotion Across the Life Span (3)   
NU 604 Human Diversity and Ethics (3)\*   
NU 501 Advanced Nursing Research (3)  
NU 601 Health Policy & Social Issues (3)  
NU 600 Psychology of Learning in Nursing (3)  
NU 602 Advanced Role Development (3)   
ED 655 Evaluation of Modern Learning (3)\*   
NU 610 Teaching the Health Care Consumer (6)   
ED 605 Curriculum Development (3))\*   
NU 611 Teaching the Health Care Provider (6)   
NU 699 Capstone Project (3)

**Leadership Track**

NU 503 Advanced Nursing Theory (3)  
NU 603 Health Promotion Across the Life Span (3)  
NU 604 Human Diversity and Ethics (3)\*  
NU 501 Advanced Nursing Research (3)  
NU 601 Health Policy & Social Issues (3)  
EMB 504 Statistical Concepts (3)\*  
NU 602 Advanced Role Development(3)  
NU 504 Business Concepts for Nurses (3)  
NU 612 The Nurse Manager (6)  
NU 505 Strategic Planning & Communication In Health Care Environments (3)  
NU 613 The Nurse Executive (6)  
NU 699 Capstone Project (3)

\*Taught via JSU’s online nursing program

**Associated institutes and centers**

**N/A**

**Involvement of external constituents in establishing goals, objectives, learning outcome and curriculum**

**N/A**

**Community college articulation where appropriate** The Online Nursing Department accepts and abides by the Alabama Articulation and General Studies Committee (AGSC) to transfer course work. The Online Department fully supports the AGSC. All OD faculty engage in recruiting trips to area community colleges and health agencies.

**Program productivity including number or majors and degrees conferred**

Please refer to pages 1 and 2 for previously included descriptions and data.

**Program Evaluation**

**Assessment**

Formative and summative evaluation methods, both formal and informal, determine the satisfaction of students, graduates, and employers with the program and its outcomes. Formative methods include solicited and unsolicited feedback related to course and clinical activities during the semester, during advisement sessions, and through student and alumni postings in the UNA Nursing group on Facebook. Summative methods include faculty/course evaluations, graduate and employer surveys, and impromptu surveys . Consistent data evaluation facilitates continual quality improvement. The Online Program Effectiveness and Curriculum Committee (OPECC) plays a key role in the evaluation.

The evaluation tool associated with eCollege is use to deploy electronic course evaluations at the end of each semester with the use of the evaluation tool associated with the eCollege platform. The department chair, CONAH dean and faculty review the individual results. Results can also be combined and summarized in different formats before further review and analysis by the OPECC.

In the spring of each year, graduate surveys are deployed to collect information regarding satisfaction with the BSN program, achievement of program outcomes, educational progress, and career status. The OD does not collect employer data because of the different nature of the RN-BSN graduate. These graduates are experienced nurses who are not under the type of close evaluation by a first-time employer that graduates of the traditional program experience. In addition, the geographical locations of RN to BSN graduates are more diverse making collection of aggregate employer data impractical. Rather than employer data, the online graduate survey collects data that reflects positive student outcomes such as percentage of graduates who report promotions, awards, certifications, advanced practice achievement, and enrollment in graduate programs. Data that may reflect negative outcomes could include such information as multiple employers within a short length of time, lack of promotions, etc.

In 2009, the OD initiated the use of Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, to administer BSN graduate surveys. As residence and email addresses of alumni typically change over time, a solution to enable us to maintain current contact information for alumni was sought. The establishment of the private UNA Nursing group on Facebook provided a new avenue to locate and communicate with alumni and resulted in higher alumni response rates than previously received. We now have over 600 students and alumni who have joined the group. The Facebook forum is also a good way to perform impromptu surveys. A recent impromptu survey of five questions resulted in rapid responses and greater participation than experienced through previous survey methods.

Analysis of grade distribution over time can be used to identify potential discrepancies in teaching/grading methods in course sections taught by different professors. Additionally, it can also identify discrepancies in grades for course sections taught by the same professor. However, as the grade distribution reports do not include individual course sections, there is little information to be gained, thus grade distribution has not been formally used by the OPECC in regards to program evaluation. The Chair has reviewed the reports and noted few discrepancies in grade distributions. However, if the grade distribution could be provided for all course sections, rather than overall course grades, it could be more useful.

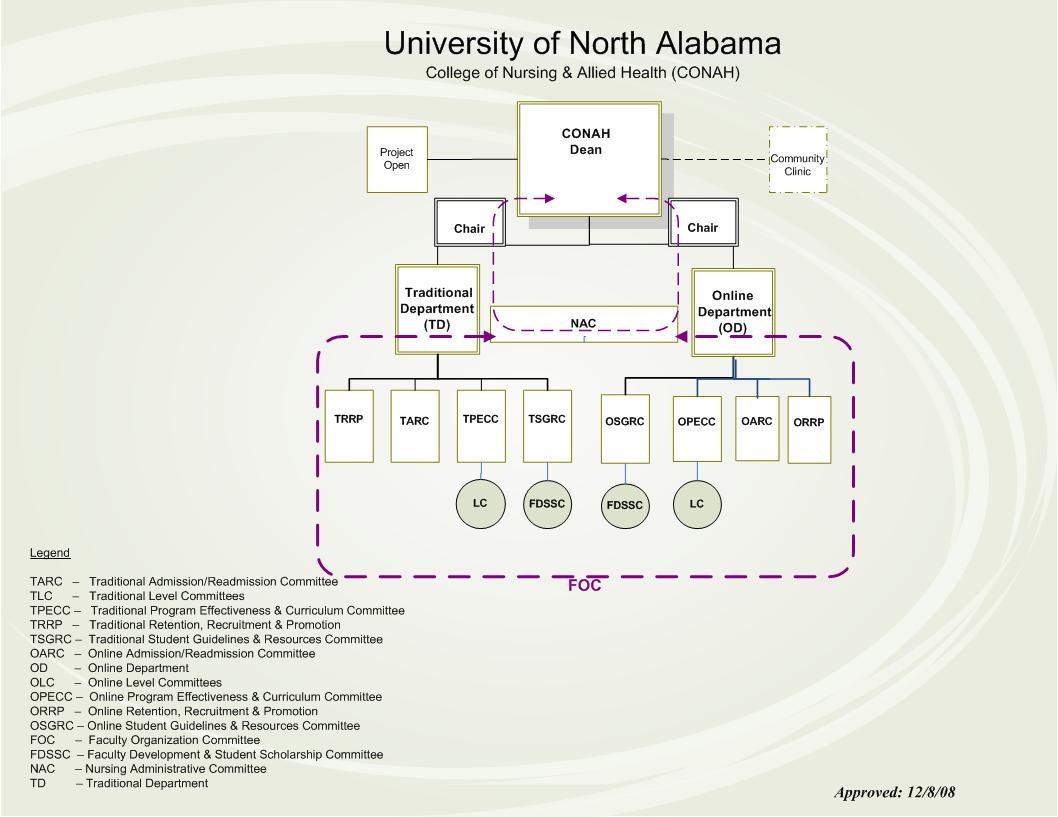
**Continuous Improvement Plan**

The Online Nursing Department will continue to deploy course evaluations for all courses at the end of each semester. Alumni surveys will be deployed annually and impromptu surveys will be sent periodically via SurveyMonkey to UNA’s Nursing Facebook group. All results will be analyzed by the department chair, the College dean and the OPECC.

eCollege has recently implemented a new tool, Enterprise Reporting, that enable us to extract more specific course, student and faculty data in regards to user activity, enrollment, grades, etc. Additionally, another new tool available in eCollege is the Learning Outcome Manger (LOM). This tool has been anticipated for more than a year and is finally out of beta and ready to be released. LOM is exciting as we will be able to link student outcomes to specific course content, assignments, exam questions, discussions, projects, etc. and extract data to demonstrate the degree of student proficiency in achieving specific outcomes. It is expected the new staff position, when filled, will be trained in the use of both of these tools.

**Program Recommendations**

1. **Maintain current level of enrollment at minimum**
2. **Maintain current efforts to increase course retention**
3. **Expand “face-to-face” recruitments at area community colleges and health care  
   agencies**
4. **Develop a method to follow up on student withdrawals to determine patterns/cause**
5. **Continue to use social networking to maintain contact with alumni**
6. **Effectively utilize Enterprise Reporting to analyze enrollment, retention and attrition trends and patterns, and LOM to analyze student and program outcomes.**
7. **Develop a plan to alleviate faculty overloads and to replace expected faculty and staff retirements within the next 3-5 years.**

**Appendix I. CONAH Organizational chart **