

4 March 2000

To: Jeff Brown

From: Susan Scheuring
Allen Gray

Subj: Completing the Online RN ACCESS Program at UNCW, and Exploring
Collaborative Approaches to Online RN Education in the UNC System

The RN ACCESS Program at UNCW, a nursing BS completion program for registered nurses (RNs), has all required nursing courses online except a physical assessment sequence, that is not a candidate for being online, and an undergraduate research course. Putting the undergraduate nursing research course online is a high priority because it would enable the RN ACCESS program to become the first online BS program for RN students in North Carolina.

There is a different level of productivity and advancement, including educational mobility, for RNs who hold a BS degree, whether the RNs obtained a prelicensure BS degree, or completed a nursing BS degree successive to AD nursing preparation.

Most RNs who could be candidates for an online nursing BS program are employed in nursing, have families to care for, and find it difficult to attend conventional higher education offerings. Many RNs live in places distant from existing higher education opportunities. Online courses make higher education available to persons any time, any place, so long as the person has a computer with access to the internet. The combination of online nursing courses, and accessible coursework in community colleges, can enable RNs anywhere in North Carolina to complete the baccalaureate degree in nursing. Currently, there are approximately 3000 in the region served by UNCW who have associate degrees in nursing from two-year community college programs, or nursing diplomas from three-year hospital-based education programs.

The UNCW School of Nursing is actively developing a proposal for an RN to MSN track in its Family Nurse Practitioner Master's Degree Program. Having the undergraduate research course online would be pivotal, not only for completing the online status of the undergraduate RN ACCESS program, but also for the RN to MSN track of the graduate program.

Establishing an online RN to BS program would provide impetus for exploring collaborative efforts among RN to BS programs across the UNC system. Potential outcomes from such collaborative efforts could include working toward uniformity of learner outcomes, and of professional competencies.

Proposal outcomes:

1. online research course completes online RN ACCESS Program
2. planning framework for RN to BS faculty collaboration in the UNC System using computer mediated communication

Budget

The estimated budget is for faculty salary, and for non-faculty compensation during the month of June 2000.

Faculty

Shelton Hisley, RN, PhD; course faculty for NSG 415	\$2500
Susan Scheuring, RN, PhD; consultant	\$2500
P. Allen Gray, Jr., RN, PhD; consultant	\$2500

Clerical Position (student or temporary)	\$1000
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Graduate Assistant	\$1500
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Software	\$1000
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Budget Rationale

Dr. Hisley has primary responsibility as course coordinator for the section of NSG 415, Research in Nursing, taught for RN students. Dr. Scheuring received funding from UNCW in 1998 to develop the online course NSG 410, Community Health Nursing, and has taught that course for two years. Dr. Gray received funding from UNCW in 1998, 1999, and 2000 to develop the online courses NSG/NSGL 389, Family Nursing; NSG/NSGL 489, Chronic Illness Nursing; and NSG 490, Clinical Capstone Experience. He has taught the courses, other than NSG 490, for four years. Dr. Gray holds the MS degree in biomedical engineering (medical informatics concentration) from Duke University.

Faculty time to develop research course (Phase 1)

- develop course using a team; mentor new faculty member (Hisley) in online techniques; use content expertise (Hisley, Scheuring, Gray) to minimize development time

plan phase 2

- use technical expertise to plan collaborative computer mediated communication among UNC System nursing faculty (perhaps using WebBoard, or similar software) (Gray, Scheuring)

Clerical support (temp or student)

- identify RN to BS programs in UNC System (phase 2)
- initiate contacts for collaborative work with other UNC units
- literature searches

Graduate Assistant

- prepare material for online course
- initiate program development
- explore software applications for research instruction

Software

- program development and/or project management software