



## Decker School of Nursing

### Letter of Intent

#### A. Program Identity and Abstract

**1. Proposed Title: Doctor of Nursing Practice**

**2. Proposed Award: Doctor of Nursing Practice**

**3. Proposed beginning date: Fall 2010**

**4. Program Description** The Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) program is designed to meet the target date of 2015 educational requirements (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, (AACN) that will prepare advanced practice nurses to respond more efficiently to changes in health care delivery and emerging health care needs. The DNP Program will have two entry points: 1) post-baccalaureate and 2) post-masters. The program will offer two advanced practice roles, Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Nurse Specialist. The DNP will provide additional knowledge and competency in translating research in practice, evaluating evidence, applying research in decision-making, and implementing feasible clinical innovations to change practice. Substantial emphasis is placed on a population perspective, how to obtain assessment data on populations or cohorts, how to use data to make programmatic decisions, and program evaluation. Students who enroll in the program with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing will complete 80 credits in three years of full-time study, or four years part-time, including a minimum of 1,000 clinical practicum hours. These graduates will be eligible to take the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) Examination for national certification as Nurse Practitioners as Family, Geriatric or Family Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Certification Examination in Adult, Gerontologic and Family Nurse Practitioner. Clinical Nurse Specialist graduates will be eligible to sit for ANCC national certification in Adult, Gerontological, Public/Community Health and the core CNS examination. Nationally certified masters-prepared Nurse Practitioners and Clinical Nurse Specialists will enter the post-masters DNP program, which will require completion of 38 credit hours over two years full-time or three years part-time. Most post-masters students will need 500 clinical practicum hours to meet the AACN required 1000 post-baccalaureate hours.

#### B. Institutional Mission and Planning

**1. Relationship to Mission** Binghamton University's strategic plan, the Middle States accreditation review, and SUNY Mission Review II all espouse "judicious growth in graduate enrollment and rigorous quality and selectivity standards". The development of a

Doctorate in Nursing Practice Program at Binghamton University is consistent with the strategic plan for the University. In the University's *The Roadmap to the Future* which describes ways of implementing the University's Strategic Plan, it states that the University needs to respond rapidly to educational needs resulting from the work world. The document supports educational programs for individuals who could "benefit from new courses, certificates and other thoughtfully designed educational experiences". The Strategic Plan of the Decker School of Nursing stresses the role of the School in addressing the health care needs of the region with a special emphasis on the needs in rural areas. That plan suggests the Doctorate in Nursing Practice Program is an area for growth for the Decker School. In addition, American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) decision in October 2004 to adopt the goal that preparation for specialization in nursing should occur at the doctoral level by 2015 would mean that our master's program as it currently exists would not be providing the educational preparation required of Nurse practitioners and Clinical Specialists.

**Binghamton University is confident that the caliber of a doctorate in nursing practice (DNP) to be developed at the University will be on a par with the excellence already achieved in its other programs.** Binghamton University has a long-standing reputation for academic excellence. Binghamton University is consistently ranked by *U.S. News & World Report* in the top 40 public doctoral universities in the U.S.A. For the 4<sup>th</sup> year, *Fiske Guide to Colleges* (2008) has called Binghamton University "the premier public university in the northeast". Binghamton University routinely ranks highly on other such lists. For example, *Kiplinger's Personal Finance* (February 2007) ranked Binghamton University as #1 Best Value in the Nation for out-of-state students, 5<sup>th</sup> in the nation for all students, and for in-state students, higher than any other institution in New York. Binghamton University is ranked among the top 100 U.S. institutions enrolling international students, or more specifically 75<sup>th</sup> out of nearly 1,800 schools participating in *Open Doors 2007* (Institute of International Education (IIE)'s annual census of international students in the US). Within New York State, Binghamton University ranked 9<sup>th</sup> out of nearly 130 schools, and among the distinguished company of Columbia University, New York University and Cornell University.

The Decker School of Nursing (DSON) provides excellence in education, scholarship and practice. The School is committed to providing outstanding educational programs from the baccalaureate to the PhD level. Graduates have assumed leadership roles in practice, education and administration throughout region, state and the nation. The master's and doctoral programs reflect a commitment to improving the health of rural communities through education of nurses to provide the highest quality care for rural individuals, families and communities. Our doctoral program initiated in 1999 is unique as the first and only PhD program in the United States to offer a focus in rural nursing. Our PhD graduates have been highly successful in providing leadership in the health care industry serving in positions such as the Chief Operating Officer for major hospitals; Director of Nursing for large health care system; chief grants facilitator for a health care network; nursing faculty in large universities and post-doctoral fellows at major universities.

Over the years the DSON has been very successful in garnering Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship grants from the Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) to support our graduate program. Although our master's program has been consistently funded by HRSA since 1980, figures available

from 1987 to date show that we have received a total of \$202,464.03 in federal money to fund our graduate students. Many of our graduates have been successful in providing primary health care to disadvantaged populations, especially to those living rural areas. In addition several graduates have distinguished themselves by receiving national, state and regional recognition; some examples include, being selected as Nurse Practitioner of the Year; Employee of the Year for major health care institutions; Rural Health Care Worker of the Year; Rural Health Practitioner of the Year; Employee of year and working in third world countries delivering and teaching health care. The school is confident that with the DNP it will add yet another outstanding program that will prepare graduates at the highest level of practice and is the terminal practice degree.

**2. Existing Similar Campus Programs** The proposed program is unlike any other program outside of the Decker School at Binghamton University, and it will have only positive effects on those programs. The DNP will have a positive effect intersect with other programs at Binghamton University such as bioengineering, biomedical anthropology, and CCPA. For example, in the proposed curriculum, one elective, a course on computer-assisted diagnostics with intelligent systems, is included to be taught by faculty from Bioengineering. This course is focused on how the computer systems and what the results mean to the individual and our health care system at large. It focuses on development and implementation of new medical diagnostic algorithms using concepts derived from statistical learning theory. Emphasis is placed on the intelligent diagnosis derived from medical images, and proteomic, genomic, biochemical and physiological data sets. Students enrolled in the DNP program will be able to take electives from the Biomedical Anthropology program that will enhance their practice skills. Biomedical anthropology emphasizes biomedical, behavioral, epidemiological, and evolutionary approaches to understanding the transmission and dissemination of disease, the cellular and molecular mechanisms of pathogenesis, and the dynamic interaction of biological and sociocultural factors that shape health outcomes. Possible courses include Human Skeletal Biology, Human Growth and Development, Medical Anthropology, Epidemiology, Darwinian Medicine, and International Health.

The public administration program is housed in the College of Community and Public Affairs. The DSON currently offers a dual degree program in nursing and public administration (MS/MPA) in addition to the nurse administrator role. Students in the DNP program will interface with this program by selecting courses that support the development of their leadership skills to affect change through coursework that is currently part of the MS/MPA Program. Courses in Public Administration & Public Management; Public and Not-for Profit Finance; and Personnel Administrator in Public; Not-for-Profit Organizations and Organizational Behavior are currently offered for nursing students in the MS/MPA Program. The DNP graduate is prepared to influence health care outcomes for diverse populations in a variety of settings through coursework, clinical practicum and capstone project implementation. Students will have the ability to select interdisciplinary courses in all schools and departments of the University that support their program and capstone project.

**3. Clinical Placements** Currently the DSON has approximately 350 clinical sites and 375 preceptors who work with our students in the clinical area ranging from family practice, geriatrics, community health, mental illness to specialties such as pediatrics,

obstetrics/gynecology, cardiology, orthopedics, and endocrinology. These placements are sufficient in number and quality to add the DNP program to the Decker School.

### **C. Market: Need and Demand**

**1. Similar Programs within SUNY System** Currently, the only DNP program being offered in the SUNY system is at Stony Brook University (Long Island, NY); they are offering a post-master's entry level program. However, it is very unlikely that graduates of programs in the metropolitan area would relocate to the rural Upstate Region. The proposed program at Binghamton differs from Stony Brook's program in that there will be a strong emphasis on rural populations. The Decker School has a long standing commitment to preparing advanced practice nurses for rural areas. Rural content is infused throughout the existing programs in Family, Community health, Gerontological and Psychiatric Family Nursing. The proposed new program will have the same emphasis on rural issues, and recruitment of students from rural areas will be a priority. Our experience and the current literature demonstrate that this recruitment strategy leads to increased employment of graduates in rural areas.

**2. Similar Programs with in Non-SUNY Institutions** There are three DNP programs in private institutions in the state of New York. In Upstate New York there are two programs that prepare advanced practice nurses at the D.N.P. level. St. John Fisher College, Rochester, NY, is a newly developed program and offers both baccalaureate and post-masters entry programs. The University of Rochester, Rochester, NY is also a new program that launched its D.N.P. program in September 2008 and offers both baccalaureate and post-masters entry programs. Columbia University School of Nursing, NY was the first program in the United States to offer the D.N.P. starting in 2004; their program is a post-master's entry program. Pace University, Westchester, NY has also started a post-master's program. Again, it is improbable that graduates of programs in the New York City metropolitan area would relocate to the rural Upstate Region.

**3. Potential Need** Similar to other disciplines, doctoral programs in nursing can be categorized into two distinct types: research-focused and practice-focused. The DNP program is a practice focused program and therefore analogous to professional degrees offered in other disciplines including entry-level degrees [e.g. the Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) and the Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)], and those that offer advanced practice degrees (e.g., the Doctor of Psychology or PsyD, Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT), Audiology (AudD)).

The proposed DNP program fulfills a strong local, regional, and national need for doctorally prepared advanced practice nurses. The proposed program was designed to be in full compliance with professional standards for the practice doctorate as put forth by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). The program was developed in direct response to the October 2004 endorsement of the AACN position statement which recognizes the DNP as the appropriate credential for all advanced nursing practice roles by 2015. AACN developed this position after an intensive study of the health care system and the findings and recommendations of many national groups. Based upon the growing complexity of health care compounded by an escalating demand for services, burgeoning growth in scientific knowledge, and the increasing sophistication in technology, the nursing profession's current

practice of preparing advanced practice nurses in master's degree programs is no longer adequate.

**4. Student Demand** Student demand is expected to be high and steady. We have received numerous inquiries from students currently in our baccalaureate program who are interested in graduate education as a nurse practitioner and are interested in a program that will offer the terminal degree for advanced practice nursing, the DNP. Student's currently in our nurse practitioner master's program are asking when DSON will offer a post-master's program. We receive weekly emails and telephone calls from our alumni inquiring when DSON will offer a DNP. The need will be assessed more precisely through the use of a needs assessment questionnaire that will be distributed to current students, alumni, health care agencies and baccalaureate programs in the region.

**5. Employment Opportunities** It is anticipated that DSON graduates holding a DNP will have the same employment opportunities afforded our current MS graduates. The methodology for determining future job openings for DNP graduates is based on the nursing shortage data from the Bureau of Health Professions, and on data from AACN on graduations from MSN degree programs. Graduations from MSN programs were used since most advanced practice nurses are currently prepared in these programs. In a recent report, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) reports that by 2025, there could be as many as 200,000 too few physicians (20% of the needed supply). Physician will share the stage with non-physician providers and DNP Nurse Practitioners are among the designated providers will be responsible for providing primary care.

The DNP program is intended to meet the market demands for highly skilled professional nurses in local, state, regional, and national markets. It is especially important to offer the DNP program to ensure adequate numbers of advanced practice nurses for the future as the profession transitions to the DNP degree by 2015. Many different types of employment opportunities exist for graduates of DNP programs. Graduates of DNP programs are assuming positions with the following job titles: Vice President for Nursing and Clinical Services, Program Director, Vice President for Patient Care, Chief Executive Officer, Health Officer, Commissioner of Health, Quality Improvement Director, Clinical Information Technology Specialist, Direct Care Clinician, and Faculty Member. Nationally there are 84 existing practice doctoral programs in nursing; however, more than 50 additional nursing schools are considering starting DNP programs nationwide.

We have received verbal support from the nursing leaders of the community representing the major health systems of the region.

#### **D1 and 2 Projected Enrollment**

	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
<b>Full-Time</b>	25	25	35	35	50
<b>Part-Time</b>	25	25	35	35	50

### **D3 and 4**

The proposed program will result in an increase in graduate enrollment in the Decker School of Nursing by approximately 20 % in Year 1 and 40 % in Year 5. This increase is in keeping with the goals of both the University and the Decker School to increase graduate enrollment. The projected enrollment is based on both an analysis of need and interest in the program, as described above.

### **D5 Cost Requirements and Sources of Funding**

Costs will be minimal and initially will come from funds within Decker. The School will re-configure courses and staff assignments so that the MS to DNP program can be added with minimal new cost. Once the DNP program is approved, we will be submitting a Health Resources Services Agency, Division of Nursing (HERSA) grant to support the growth of program to provide for additional personnel and support services. There is an annual request in the Fall for proposals from this agency to support advanced practice nursing programs.

### **References**

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