Three-Year Check-In for New Programs – Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate Program

Report completed 17 June 2019

The creation and maintenance of graduate programs and certificates represents significant resource commitments by faculty and staff. Given these investments, in 2014 the Graduate Faculty Executive Committee (GFEC) established a “check in” process for newly approved programs and certificates prior to their first formal university review (which occurs in the fifth year.) Through this “check-in,” the GFEC hopes program faculty and staff will assess the implementation of their new program and determine what mechanisms may be needed for sustained student success.

Progress reports will be included on GFEC agendas, and program representatives may be asked to attend GFEC if additional information is requested. In the interest of brevity, please keep responses to 300 words or less.

Program Name
Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate

Term of First Enrollments
Fall 2016

Check-In Completed By
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Date Completed
17 June 2019

Academic Quality and Student Success

1. Provide an update on any changes to the program’s curriculum and learning outcomes. Include a description of the program’s typical course modalities (face-to-face, online, asynchronous discussion, team or individual assignments) and if courses have evolved based on faculty or student feedback.

The Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate Program is for working, master’s-prepared nurses who are currently teaching and would like to improve their skills, or for those who’d like to begin their teaching careers. Students not currently enrolled in a nursing doctoral program at UW–Madison enroll in the capstone certificate. Nursing PhD and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) students are also eligible to complete the graduate/professional certificate courses to earn the Nurse Educator Certificate. To date, certificate enrollments have been from current UW–Madison PhD and DNP students. Students who complete the certificate
are eligible to sit for the National League for Nursing (NLN) Certified Nurse Educator Examination.

There are three courses required in the certificate:

a. NURSING 785 Foundations of Curriculum Development and Evaluation in Nursing Education (3)

b. NURSING 786 Foundations of Teaching and Learning in Nursing (3)

c. NURSING 787 Nursing Education Practicum (3)

This 9-credit program of study includes graduate-level foundational and practicum work. The three required courses cover the foundation of teaching/learning and curriculum in nursing education, with an emphasis on evidence-based teaching. Courses are delivered in a blended learning format—coursework is completed primarily online, with regularly scheduled class sessions on campus. The program can be completed in one year, January–December, during a spring, summer and fall terms.

The certificate’s curriculum (i.e., the three courses) has remained unchanged since launch. The courses themselves have evolved based on faculty innovation, student feedback, and changes in nursing education. NURSING 787, the practicum, has perhaps seen the most innovation as the course has evolved to provide students with the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills in the nurse educator role in selected educational environments.

2. Briefly explain the program’s learning outcomes assessment plan and discuss how you are or how you plan to evaluate student learning. Summarize any data collected to date showing evidence of student learning.

The Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate program has six learning outcomes. Students who complete the three courses in the certificate are assessed against these outcomes. The school conducts course evaluations for each course in the certificate program, which gauge student learning relative to both the course- and program-level outcomes. The course-level aggregate data relative to learning outcomes achieved for AY 2018–19 was a 4 out of 5.

3. The GFEC is interested to learn how departments balance faculty and staff teaching loads and responsibilities between new and existing programs. Discuss how the department or program is achieving balance, and what challenges supporting multiple programs may have created for teaching, student services, advising or funding. Also of interest is information on what if any assets are shared between programs, or additional benefits that have been realized.
The School of Nursing is a school that essentially runs as a department. It offers graduate and undergraduate degrees (BS-Nursing, DNP, PhD) and three certificate programs. In recent years, there has been programmatic growth in the school, with the implementation of an Accelerated BSN program in May 2018 and in-process work to create two new named options in the DNP program. This growth has been supported by additional staff and faculty roles in the school, funded by revenue generated from the non-pooled Accelerated BSN program, as well as campus investments in the school.

4. Please describe how your program has ongoing and broad faculty commitment, including governance, to ensure its continued success. If applicable, reflections from faculty and staff can be included here or as an appendix. Also consider if implementation of this program is supporting the Department and/or School/College’s current strategic goals.

Nurse educators are critical players in assuring quality educational experiences that prepare the nursing workforce for a diverse, ever-changing health care environment. As interest in nursing careers continues to grow throughout the country, institutions (including UW–Madison) are struggling to fill faculty positions with enough educators to meet the demand. As such, programs like the Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate are very important to the future of nursing education and the profession.

With this background, the School of Nursing and its faculty are committed to offering and growing the Nurse Educator Certificate program. The mission of the school is to develop leaders for the profession and society—we make discoveries, enhance systems, and improve health through research, education and practice. Without nurse educators, the school cannot achieve its mission or strategic goals.

Operations and Administration

5. Illustrate how the program has either brought in NEW and ADDITIONAL students (required for non-pooled programs), and/or how overall enrollment in your related programs has remained steady. If unanticipated overlap with existing programs has resulted, discuss steps to mitigate the overlap.

The School of Nursing is aware that the capstone certificate has not generated new enrollments as desired. It recently appointed a member of the faculty, Dr. Wendy Crary, Certified Nurse Educator (CNE), to serve as the Nurse Educator Certificate Coordinator, replacing the former coordinator who retired. It is the expectation that Dr. Crary will work with the school’s admissions and recruitment team, along with the Division of Continuing Studies, to create new enrollments in the program.
6. **Funding Considerations**

   a. **For traditional/pooled programs** – How is the program successfully funding its students?

   b. **For non-pooled programs** – Provide a brief summary of projected vs. actual revenues and expenses. Does the program have sufficient enrollment for sustainability? Discuss the current market outlook compared to the original marketing study and plans to grow or change the program to become sustainable.

   As noted earlier, enrollments in the Capstone Certificate have not been as projected. The Nurse Educator Certificate courses regularly enroll 5–10 students, but these are typically nursing PhD and DNP students wishing to add the graduate/professional certificate to their degree programs. These enrollments make the course offerings worthwhile, especially as the school works to increase the nurse faculty workforce, but clearly the school needs to do more to enroll non-degree-seeking students in the Capstone Certificate. The school’s Office of Academic Affairs will partner with new certificate coordinator Dr. Wendy Crary to consider avenues and opportunities to recruit would-be nurse educators into the program. It is expected that this will include outreach to regional schools of nursing, recruiting enrollments from currently faculty who are not already certified nurse educators.

7. **If the program admits international students, describe how program processes address length of stay visa issues, online course restrictions, and needing ESL services.**

   The Nurse Educator Capstone Certificate Program does not admit/enroll international students.

8. **Are there any issues impacting the program’s long-term sustainability? If so, what support would you like to help you succeed?**

   As shared, the school is pleased with the number of current PhD and DNP students completing the graduate/professional Nurse Educator Certificate, but enrollments into the capstone certificate have lagged. The school and its faculty are committed to this program and will be taking steps in the coming year to identify opportunities to market the program and recruit additional students.