

May 15, 2009

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Dear Dr. Queener,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Indiana University School of Nursing proposed Doctor of Nursing Practice Program. The proposal prepared by the School of Nursing was thorough and professional, addressing all of the major program components. Their excellent planning, attention to details, and supporting materials facilitated this review.

The comments in this report have been developed after careful review of the documents submitted via email on April 17, 2009.

A. Program Purpose, Goals and Objectives

The program purpose, goals and objectives are well articulated and communicated throughout the documents, most notably in the final proposal statement on page 18, “The Indiana University School of Nursing Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) is designed to be a post-masters 37 credit hour practice-focused professional doctorate. Graduates of the program are prepared to assume leadership positions in nursing and health care, both at system and direct patient care levels. Graduates will contribute to quality improvement and patient safety through systems thinking, reflective practice, informatics, translation science, and evidence-based clinical practice. Holders of the DNP degree may seek careers in primary health care, complex health care systems, nursing informatics, patient safety, and in clinical nursing education.”

The proposed program is consistent with the University mission and philosophy, which was clearly articulated. The mission and philosophy of the University contributes to the strength of an already strong nursing program. Implementation of the DNP degree is in keeping with the missions of the University, IUPUI and the School of Nursing.

Page 2 of the proposal, *Clientele to be Served*, states “Registered nurses who hold master’s degrees in nursing” and on page 5, letter c, states “the program is designed to meet the needs of advanced practice nurses who hold master’s degrees in nursing.” The latter statement could be construed to mean that the program only admits advanced practice nurses such as nurse practitioners. This tends to be a point of confusion for potential students unless clearly defined and articulated.

As a point of clarification, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)

broadly defines advanced nursing practice (2004) as: any form of nursing intervention that influences health care outcomes for individuals or populations, including the direct care of individual patients, management of care for individuals and populations, administration of nursing and health care organizations, and the development and implementation of health policy. (p. 2)" According to the same document the DNP graduate prepared for an Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) role must demonstrate practice expertise, specialized knowledge, and expanded responsibility and accountability in the care and management of individuals and families (e.g., nurse practitioner). By virtue of this direct care focus, APNs develop additional competencies in direct practice and in the guidance and coaching of individuals and families through developmental, health-illness, and situational transitions.

#### B. Need and Demand

The need and demand is clearly articulated and supported throughout the documents.

#### C. Program of Study

The program's educational objectives are clearly presented and consistent with the AACN *Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice*. The course sequence is comprehensive and logical. The curricular threads of complexity science and relationship-centered nursing leadership are exquisite. As described, the University technology services have the capacity, skill and resources to support this as a distance-education program.

The same course number, D751, (see page 3, 7 and 9) is assigned to two courses, namely, Knowledge Complexity (3 credits) and Relationship-Centered Leadership in Complex Systems (3 credits). Additionally, on page 3 and 7 the course is titled Knowledge Complexity. In the program of study example on page 9 it is titled Knowledge and Complex Systems.

The purpose and objectives of the clinical hours and project/product components of the DNP Practicum (D749) are vague and unclear. In terms of clinical hours, the document implies that students will only be required to complete enough hours to meet the AACN 1000 post baccalaureate practice hour requirement for the DNP degree. If this is the case, it implies that the practicum objective is only to complete the hour requirement. The purpose and objectives of the DNP clinical hour requirement needs to be defined. The necessity, purpose and objectives of the DNP project/product need to be defined and described.

Admission requirements include 1 year of post-Master's work experience. What is the rationale to support such a requirement? This may deter potential applicants to seek admission to other programs.

#### D. Administrative Structure

The administrative structure as described is sufficient and reasonable.

#### E. Resources

##### *Faculty/personnel*

A review of Appendix C indicates that the faculty is academically and experientially qualified to teach in the DNP Program. Many are nationally and internationally recognized for their contributions to the scholarship of teaching, research, service, and practice. Nursing faculty are productive scholars as reflected in their documented contributions to the scholarship of teaching and the application, integration, and discovery of knowledge.

Resources estimated to fully implement 60 students into a DNP program over a period of 3 years include: Two and one-half (2.5) FTE faculty and 1 FTE graduate advisor, and a .50 FTE administrative support person. This appears to be adequate.

##### *Learning resources*

As described on pages 15-17, the existing learning resources (e.g., library, technology infrastructure) and clinical facilities are adequate to initiate and maintain the program. Any additional resources will be covered with new-to-campus student fees.

#### F. Financials

Enrolling 5 full time students in a doctoral distance-education program may be a bit ambitious. Students enrolled in practice doctorates tend to work full time and thus full-time study is difficult. Otherwise, the program enrollments and completion are reasonable. The projected total direct program costs and out-of-pocket direct program costs seem reasonable.

#### G. Evaluation

The DNP Program Evaluation Plan is clear, comprehensive and realistic.

The IUPUI nursing faculty is to be commended for developing a comprehensive Doctor of Nursing Practice program. The University and faculty are well positioned to assume a national leadership role in the design and development of the nursing practice doctorate.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the program. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

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