

## **UCC Program Review Committee - Summary of Review**

### **Program – Nursing**

This program includes the following degrees, minors, and certificates:

- Associate of Science in Nursing (ADN)
- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
- Registered nurse to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-to-BSN)
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

### **Recommendation**

This program is found to be viable

**Date of last review** – AY 2012 (?)

**Date of this review** – AY 2020

This review has been sent to school director and the dean. The director's and dean's responses are attached.

The review has been sent to the Graduate Council who concur that the program is viable.

# Ohio University School of Nursing Seven-Year Review - Fall 2019

## Program Review

### Review Team

- Internal reviewers: C. Scott Smith, MM, Associate Professor of Horn and Theory, School of Music; Karen Riggs, PhD, Professor, School of Media Arts & Studies; and Ahmed Faik, PhD, Associate Professor, Environmental and Plant Biology.
- External Reviewers were not assigned due to the recent numerous accreditations that required external reviewers.

### Executive Summary

The review team visited the School of Nursing (SON) on the Athens campus, October 7, 2019, including the Ohio University (OHIO) regional campuses (Zanesville, Southern, Dublin and Chillicothe) through Zoom technology and through PowerPoint presentation (Eastern campus). Included in this visit the required tour of all facilities (classrooms, clinical labs, and simulation rooms), and separate meetings of administrators, administrative staff, undergraduate students, and instructional and clinical faculty. Graduate students, whose coursework is mostly online, were unavailable to meet. The final meetings included the provost, College of Health Sciences and Professions dean, and regional campus deans.

The school has 27 tenure track faculty members (formerly recognized as Group I faculty), 29 instructional faculty members (former recognized as Group II faculty), 5 clinical faculty, and 179 fixed term contract faculty (formerly known as Group III and Group IV faculty). The school offers the following degrees:

- Associate of Science in nursing (ADN)
- Bachelor of Science in nursing (BSN)
- Registered nurse to Bachelor of Science in nursing (RN-to-BSN)
- Master of Science in nursing (MSN)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degrees

Prior to the visit, the committee received a comprehensive self-study report prepared by the school along with data regarding enrollments and recruiting numbers. The Committee's report includes our perceptions of the School's strengths and areas of concern that arose from our discussions. We give recommendations to help guide the school as it moves forward.

## Commendations

The committee wishes to applaud the department faculty (both Group I and II) for their work in delivering a high-quality experience for their students and serving the mission of the university. The review committee finds that the program is strong in the following areas:

- Excellence and commitment of the faculty: the review committee found strong evidence that tenure-track faculty are active researchers. The volume of research and creative activity is appropriate for the size and composition of the faculty.
- Emphasis on teaching excellence: Both the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) and The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) curricula are a combination of liberal arts, sciences and nursing courses that provide the knowledge, skills and behaviors that are necessary to safely and effectively engage in the practice of registered nursing.
- Student satisfaction and engagement: Alumni report that their education prepared them properly to begin their careers. Current students expressed enthusiasm for the quality of the faculty (with the exception of the Chillicothe campus, where they reported a disparity of teaching quality among instructors).
- Employer satisfaction: Employers report overwhelming approval of the school's program. Graduates quickly obtain employment in their field.
- The nursing courses incorporate complex knowledge and experiences designed to prepare nurses to advocate for patients in managing a complex system of health care and to be culturally competent and responsive to the growing list of health concerns reported in our nation.
- Attraction of and efficient use of resources: The faculty engages aggressively and successfully in grant-seeking that has funded important purchases and initiatives. School resources appear to be used conservatively.
- Service to the region: The school has been successful in helping Appalachian students, many of whom are first-generation college students, to obtain an education that prepares them for an attractive career.
- SON administrators effectively meet the challenge of working in multiple locations. They meet regularly, both on the Athens campus and virtually, sharing information, concerns, and ideas. Each campus faces its own challenges with its student populations, and administrators work hard to support each other by identifying common ground.

## Areas of concern

The mission of the School will be more effective if the following areas are addressed:

- Program completion: In particular, BSN program completion is relatively low, especially on the Athens campus and alarmingly so on the Chillicothe campus.
- Vulnerability of the core instructional mission to budget reductions: Based on the anticipated enrollment in the Acute Gerontology/Acute Care Nurse Practitioner

(AGACNP) and the expected increase in enrollment in the DNP program, the SON is actively recruiting two additional tenure track and non-tenure track full-time equivalent APRN with College of Health Sciences and Professions specialty focus faculty members. An additional 2.5 Group I tenure track FTE replacement positions with APRN specialty focus are being required in order to meet accreditation requirements for educating APRN students in specialties.

- Chillicothe campus: It appears that a lack of stability in leadership could be connected to students' dissatisfaction with and dropout from the program.
- Recruitment of master's degree-prepared faculty to teach in the clinical setting: This challenge is inherent to the location and population of Southeast Ohio despite competitive hourly wages.
- Dissatisfaction of students with the electronic version of the textbook and availability of Nursing Instructors/Professors.
- Diversity of graduate student population: SON lacks a diverse body of qualified students.
- Advising quality: The Student Satisfaction survey indicates a trend of declining satisfaction with the advising services. On the regional campuses, this could, in part, reflect a lack of clarity about teacher, administrator and advising roles. Although the Ohio University Southern campus students felt content with the faculty advising, other campuses had mixed answers about how faculty mentoring works. Zanesville campus students noted a disparity in advising quality.
- The DNP program received its first accreditation by CCNE in June 2019. Improvements are needed to increase student enrollment, student/faculty support resources, external funding for DNP student project support, marketing to potential students, dissemination of DNP scholarly work, and support for professional development of non-tenure track faculty.

## **Recommendations**

- SON should identify reasons for program dropouts, especially in Athens and on the Chillicothe campus. Steps should be taken to improve retention and increase student success. SON should review its advising process. Although accreditation requirements dictate specific course requirements and sequences, students sometimes need to meet with faculty before registration. Some schools and departments on campus require students to fill out a faculty advising survey after meeting with their advisors before their registration restrictions are lifted. The committee was told that the student-to-faculty advisor ratio is 90:1.
- With six open tenure track and non-tenure track lines open, SON needs to identify and implement a strong and aggressive strategy to fill these positions. Although the market is competitive, the school should make a concerted effort to recruit faculty members from underrepresented communities, particularly vis a vis race and sexuality. The school is in a position to grow its undergraduate population considerably, but this option is not viable without additional faculty.
- SON should review the quality and style of teaching and teaching practices across the regional campuses. Most of the students cited specific concerns about inconsistent

teaching between sections of courses and expectations for their “mark-offs.” The OU Southern campus is a notable exception.

- The HSP dean’s office should increase support for SON’s IT needs, including both physical equipment and software. SON has been able to acquire equipment important to carrying out its mission but lacks ready access to report. Critically, faculty feel that their research is constrained by lack of access to sophisticated software and support from statistical data analysts (faculty suggested a shared core facility).
- The Associate Director position on the Chillicothe position should be filled with a permanent appointment. The campus has had some challenges and needs strong leadership. The current interim director (there have been two) was quickly cast in that role, removing her from some of her Athens teaching functions, which left students concerned about continuity of instruction. She apparently is doing a fine job in the role but apparently does not wish to accept the appointment permanently.
- Probationary faculty expressed a need for clarity about expected research and publications needed for tenure and promotion. It is difficult to place a specific number on required publications, given the breadth and exclusivity of journals, but a more concrete guide would be helpful. Overall, probationary faculty felt secure relative to the mentorship during their pre-tenure.
- Chillicothe students expressed the need for a second lab. They found it difficult to accomplish their required work and practice with one lab.
- Ohio University Zanesville students believed their facilities are out of date. This should be addressed.
- As the need for nurses increases (as has been the case for several decades), the Athens student population likely will outgrow the school’s currently modern facilities. The school and college should consider a long-term plan to address this.
- The school and college need to arrive at a long-term strategy for repairing and replacing equipment, given the budget constraints presented by the OHIO promise. Regional campus costs should be clarified.
- SON administration should clarify for faculty its professional development funding award process. It appears that group II faculty have limited access for funding compared to group I faculty.
- Consider reaching out to alumni of various degree programs to hold focus groups that could help explain some responses on the alumni satisfaction surveys. Most scores are high but responses are low.
- Faculty are in the need for more support global programs (i.e., Ecuador)
- SON administration should implement a viable peer-teaching evaluation system for faculty (even though students evaluation is good).
- SON should identify ways to contribute or develop interdisciplinary programs designed to offer a degree (as example, Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) program).

## Program Overview

The Nursing School is dedicated to excellence in nursing education and to providing multiple pathways and points of access to prepare students for careers in nursing. The School mission is to prepare nurses whose work reflects the highest standards of collaboration, ethics and innovation. Despite this specific and unique goal within the university, the school is analogous in many ways to a typical department at Ohio University. The faculty and staff have tenure-track and non-tenure track faculty classification.

The curriculum is designed by the school to meet the goals of nursing programs at the national level. The courses cover topics including communication skills, professionalism and customs, and they have a strong focus on leadership and management fundamentals. Not surprisingly, many of these topics might have broad appeal to students outside the Nursing program as well. The success of the program can be seen in the expansion of the online RN-to-BSN program. OHIO now offers the program in 23 states and parts of Canada in response to requests by individual nurses and healthcare system partners. To continue the excellence path, the school made several revisions of the program including revision of the traditional BSN curriculum, the School Nurse Certificate Program, development of a new Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) track and development of a DNP program, improving Nursing laboratory, classroom and simulation suite renovations at all four sites, expansion of faculty numbers and roles, revision of the ADN curriculum, expansion of the traditional BSN Program to the Eastern Campus and implementation of an Honors track for BSN students.

Given the wide applicability of courses to students both in and out of the nursing program, the Nursing program can be seen, in part, as a potential recruitment tool for prospective students and an efficient strategy to retain enrolled students (Our rural location and lack of primary care physicians has resulted in a multitude of job opportunities for nurse practitioners)

The school utilizes professional development funds and school research incentive (RI) funds to provide support to pre-tenure and tenured faculty related to scholarship and research activity. In addition, a full professor has a significant portion of workload as an Associate Director for Research and Scholarship in order to mentor and facilitate pre-tenure and tenured faculty in research, publication and meaningful peer-reviewed presentation activity. The SON P&T and Annual Review processes recognize and reward faculty scholarship and research.

## Faculty

Nursing faculty members are relatively diverse in background, academic preparation and specialization. Faculty are exclusively from the United States in part due to strict board of nursing rules requiring a nursing faculty member to have two years of clinical practice in the US before a nursing license can be obtained in Ohio. All nursing faculty teaching in nursing education programs in the State of Ohio must have an unencumbered Ohio nursing license. This has hampered the school's ability to attract international nursing faculty candidates.

Within the SON 56% of full-time faculty are in a non-tenure track position, 11.5% hold a BSN as their highest credential, 52.4% hold an MSN, and 34.4% a doctorate. In addition, 95% are women and 98.3% are white. These statistics align with the National League for Nursing 2017 Faculty Census Survey.

**a. Is the current number and distribution of faculty sufficient to carry out the broad overall mission of the Department (Teaching; Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity; Service)?**

- The faculty-to-student ratios for classroom, lab, and clinical are adequate to support student outcomes. The Ohio Board of Nursing requires a 1:10 maximum faculty-to-student ratio for supervised clinical experiences; however the average ratio for the traditional BSN program is 1:8. The overall average for faculty-to-student ratio in the classroom for the online RN-to-BSN traditional BSN, and ADN programs is approximately 1:30. Thus, faculty are sufficient in number to accomplish the mission, goals and expected outcomes of the programs. The full-time equivalency (FTE) is based on the number of students in the program and the faculty expertise and credentials required for specific program tracks. Adjunct faculty are utilized as teaching assistants (TAs) in the classroom and clinical areas to supplement fulltime faculty instruction. This allows the SON to keep student-to instructor ratios low in the classroom and meet OBN requirements for student-to-instructor clinical ratios.
- In addition, six faculty lines are open. Filling them (with a focus on increasing SON faculty diversity) would give undergraduate students greater access to mentorship.

**b. Is the level of the Department's RSCA appropriate for the program given the size of the faculty and the resources available to the Department? Is the Department's level of external funding at an appropriate level?**

- Faculty workload in the SON is determined on an individual basis, dependent on rank and expectations. Tenure track faculty may negotiate a range of 40-60% of total workload being ascribed to teaching with 10-20% assigned to service and the remaining percentage allotted to research or scholarship. Teaching loads may be reduced based on expected service and scholarship demands. Non-tenure track teaching faculty are generally expected to devote 80% of their total workload to teaching with 20% assigned to service.

Full-time non-tenure track Instructional Faculty (clinical emphasis) are expected to teach 40 hours per week in the clinical/laboratory setting and have no service expectations. Faculty serving as DNP Project Team Leads typically have no more than three or four students assigned as advisees. Faculty may be assigned a nine- or 11-month contract upon hire.

- External funding: Notably, the Appalachian Ohio Opioid Workforce Expansion project award was made to Dr. Deborah Henderson, School of Nursing director, for \$1.35 million. The grant was awarded through the United States Department of Health and Human Services' Health Resources and Services Administration. Faculty have also garnered internal university funding through 1804 grants.

**c. Is the level of service, outside of teaching, appropriate for the program given its size and the role that it plays in the University and broader communities it interacts with? Is the Department able to fulfill its service mission?**

- Currently, SON has 63 FTEs across all programs. The number of full-time faculty has increased by 75% (since its creation). The number of adjunct faculty has increased by 63.9%. New positions within the school include clinical assistant to full professors of instruction faculty at the graduate level as well as simulation specialists. Full-time non-tenure track (lecturer with clinical emphasis) faculty positions were created in the undergraduate programs to provide course continuity as the clinical emphasis faculty instruct in the lab and clinical environments. A simulation specialist position has also been initiated to provide simulation experiences for students and works with faculty to create and provide high quality simulation experiences. The simulation specialist maintains a membership in the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL). INACSL standards are used as a resource for simulation integrity. An Associate Director of Research and Scholarship and a Coordinator of Assessment and Evaluation were hired for SON to continue advancement of the academic unit.
- The committee was not able to determine whether SON performs adequate university service. This is most likely due to a lack of interdisciplinary programs where faculty can contribute. Currently, the school offers one service course that is popular with majors and non-majors.

**d. Does the Department have an appropriate level of financial resources, staff, physical facilities, library resources, and technology to fulfill its mission?**

- The physical resources on the Athens and Dublin campuses are modern and practical. Among the regional campuses, Zanesville and Southern appear to have adequate learning spaces. Chillicothe needs a second lab. Eastern is just opening its program. If the Athens program grows, more space will be needed for faculty offices. Library resources appear to be adequate for all students. To increase scholarly productivity, research faculty need access to additional seat licenses for sophisticated software and greater access to



statistical data analysis personnel or a shared core facility.

- SON provides funding for faculty to present research and conferences. Additional funds could provide greater professional development support for non-tenure track faculty and staff.
- Administrators are rightly concerned about the potential impact of the OHIO Promise on the school's need to maintain its high-end facilities. Although the school has been successful in attracting funding to purchase expensive simulators required for its program, such technology will need to be updated and replaced regularly to maintain the program's ability to remain competitive and deliver a quality nursing education for its undergraduates.

## **Undergraduate Program**

The goal of the undergraduate nursing programs is to prepare registered nurses to provide direct care to patients across the life span.

### **a. Is the Department fulfilling its service role, adequately preparing non-majors for future coursework and/or satisfying the needs for general education?**

The school offers one service course that is popular with majors and non-majors. Majors can fulfill some of their general education requirements in the school.

### **b. Is the program attracting majors likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of majors appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

- Retention is weaker than desired. (See Table 5 in the self-report.) We were told that most students who leave do so due to poor grades, which can result from the mix of burdens on their lives. While this is logical, especially with the population of the regional campuses being non-traditional, it is concerning, especially on the Athens and Chillicothe campuses, the latter of which has had a very low completion rate.
- According to the self-study report, the number of undergraduate majors is adequate for the current size of the faculty. The new master's program, Psychiatric Health Nurse Practitioner, and SON's other master's programs should grow to accommodate national trends. The new doctoral program is off to a good start and should grow.
- During the period of this seven-year review, the first-year student retention rate is 61-77%.

### **c. Does the undergraduate curriculum provide majors with an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers or graduate work following graduation?**

- According to the self-study report, the Associate or Bachelor's degree in Nursing (ADN or BSN) programs are well designed to train adequately students.
- The Ohio University School of Nursing serves local, national, and international students who are in pursuit of an ADN or BSN. In 2012 the Associate Degree in Nursing

enrollment was 313. Since 2013, the ADN program has experienced a deliberate decrease in enrollment due to establishment of traditional BSN programs on each of the regional campuses and national trends toward preferential hiring of BSN prepared nurses. Enrollment in the BSN has increased and enrollment in RN-to-BSN has decreased.

- Overall, students feel well prepared to enter their careers. The school should look carefully at a potentially worrisome statistic: In 2016, the most recent year reported, Two-thirds of BSN alumni reported in 2016 that they were satisfied with the experience. Dissatisfaction was strongest in the Chillicothe program.

**d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the undergraduate program?**

The faculty-to-student ratios for classroom, lab, and clinical are adequate to support student outcomes. The Ohio Board of Nursing requires a 1:10 maximum faculty-to-student ratio for supervised clinical experiences; however the average ratio for the traditional BSN program is 1:8. The overall average for faculty-to-student ratio in the classroom for the online RN-to-BSN traditional BSN, and ADN programs is approximately 1:30. Thus, faculty are sufficient in number to accomplish the mission, goals and expected outcomes of the programs.

**e. Are pedagogical practices appropriate? Is teaching adequately assessed?**

- Student course evaluations are collected regularly and reviewed internally. The Curriculum Committee regularly reviews outcomes.
- Most students feel well prepared when they leave OHIO. Course syllabi adhere to accreditation standards for nursing education. Courses include education about cultural differences, ethical practices, and other matters that paint a holistic picture of the patient. Special emphasis is put on geriatric care, commensurate with the aging of the population.

**f. Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers and/or pursue further academic work?**

Job placement rates have been near 100% annually and opportunities to interact with employers at career fairs are offered at every campus. Area hospitals actively seek SON graduates to join their staffs.

## **Graduate Program**

In 2018 the percentage of MSN student respondents answering that they were “extremely” or somewhat” satisfied overall with the program was 77%. The rate for the DNP program was 91% overall satisfaction.

**a. Is the program attracting students likely to succeed in the program? Is the number of students appropriate for the program? Is the program attracting a diverse group of students?**

- As of August 10, 2012, there were 217 students in the MSN. Today there are 261 students enrolled in the graduate programs. The benchmark for the master’s program

completion rate is 70%. The actual overall completion rate for students in the master's program is averaged for the past 3 years at 76.4%.

- SON lacks a diverse body of qualified students. SON needs to identify and implement an aggressive strategy to increase diversity of graduate student population.

**b. Does the graduate curriculum provide an adequate background to pursue discipline-related careers following graduation?**

The Master Plan of Evaluation (MPOE) is used to evaluate the achievement of program outcomes. The MPOE is comprehensive and includes benchmarks. It also includes the plan of data to be collected, such as first-time certification examination rates, retention rates, employment rates, student exit satisfaction, alumni satisfaction and employer satisfaction.

**c. Does the program provide adequate mentoring and advising to students to prepare them for discipline-related careers?**

- Satisfaction with student advising is assessed annually through the SON Student Satisfaction Survey. 66-80% of students are satisfied.
- Graduate nursing students are assigned to an Academic Advisor who assists MSN, DNP, and post-master's certificate students to help answer student questions and plan their courses of study in preparation for admission. Student advising services are provided in a formal and informal manner in order to meet the program outcomes and goals. All graduate students are encouraged to attend a Graduate College orientation.
- A variety of written and oral assignments are used to support achievement of student learning outcomes such as critical thinking exercises, case studies, evidence-based research papers, posters, and presentations.

**d. Are the resources and the number of and distribution of faculty sufficient to support the graduate program?**

The faculty-to-student ratios for classroom, lab, and clinical are adequate to support student outcomes. The Ohio Board of Nursing requires a 1:10 maximum faculty-to-student ratio for supervised clinical experiences; however the average ratio for the traditional BSN program is 1:8. The overall average for faculty-to-student ratio in the classroom for the online RN-to-BSN traditional BSN, and ADN programs is approximately 1:30. Thus, faculty are sufficient in number to accomplish the mission, goals and expected outcomes of the programs.

**e. Does the program offer appropriate financial support to graduate students?**

The SON does not employ graduate students for teaching or research assistantships.

**f. Is teaching adequately assessed?**

Students complete a combined course evaluation and faculty evaluation at the end of each course, which is collected by the College Dean's Office. Aggregated student course evaluation data is provided to each faculty in the subsequent semester. A benchmark of 4.0 on a 5-point scale has been established related to specific to teaching in the DNP courses since 2017.

**g. Are students able to move into to discipline-related careers?**

Actual first-time pass rates on national certification examination for nurse practitioners has been above 80% for all NP program tracks. This high first-time pass rate is a point of pride for the school. The percentage of students who reported employment within 12 months of program completion is 91%

**Overall Judgment**

Overall, the School of Nursing Studies serves its students and Ohio University very well. It is the review committee's recommendation that the program be rated as viable.



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November 12, 2019

John R. Cotton, PhD  
Associate Professor  
Mechanical Engineering Department/Biomedical Engineering Program  
Chair, UCC Program Review Committee  
255 Stocker Center  
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Athens, OH 45701

Dear Dr. Cotton,

I am writing to respond to the Seven-Year Review Report. First, thank you for your organization of the review and the opportunity to host the review team. It is my goal to facilitate the efforts of the faculty and staff in the School, across our locations. This comprehensive review process allowed us the opportunity to review our past seven years and to look forward to our future. We also wish to thank our review team: C. Scott Smith, Dr. Karen Riggs, and Dr. Ahmed Faik. The resulting recommendation of the review team is that the School is viable.

We appreciate the commendations in the report. We have reviewed the areas of concern as a nursing leadership group and will utilize the perspectives expressed in the report for our further analysis and planning. I would like to provide clarification on the program completion concern expressed throughout the report. Pre-nursing BSN students (freshmen students) engage in foundational coursework in the sciences during their first year spent in this pre-major code. The sciences are known to serve as a predictor for BSN student success. Nursing programs and science faculty would agree on this point. Students meet the criteria for the pre-nursing major but often have difficulty reaching the necessary level of competence in the foundational sciences that will be required for future success in the nursing curriculum. Without a solid performance in the freshman year sciences, a student will not be selected for the BSN major as we know their capacity for success is likely not the same as students who have demonstrated success in the sciences. Nursing education is by design sequential and requires significant strength in foundational sciences content knowledge so that the work of developing clinical reasoning and decision making can begin in the sophomore year selected BSN majors. Our undergraduate, pre-licensure nursing programs are judged on student outcomes. Success on the percentage rate of licensure on the first-time testing on the registered nurse licensing examination is an important benchmark. All undergraduate nursing students in Ohio must meet or exceed 95% of the national first-time pass rate average for each year in the United States. If we do not

reach this benchmark, approval of the nursing program is in jeopardy. For these reasons, admission criteria to the BSN major and success in the sequential curriculum are critical in undergraduate, pre-licensure nursing curricula. Nursing attrition across the U.S. averages 50% and thus far, we have demonstrated a better rate than this which allows us to meet the current state board of nursing and accreditation benchmarks. Other areas of concern identified by the review team are in various stages of analysis and process improvement within the school already although these areas may not have been identified for further discussion beyond the self-study.

Recommendations offered by the review team have been discussed by the nursing leadership group as well and will be shared with the entire faculty and staff. Some viewpoints expressed by students which resulted in recommendations are not factual. We will ask relevant School committees to examine this and any action required as part of our continuing continuous quality improvement activity will be initiated. One example from the report stated that Zanesville students expressed they believed their facilities are out of date. The fact is that Zanesville just opened two new state-of-the-art nursing laboratories in the past few months. They are among the best that our university has to offer at any of our nursing program locations. Another example was that Chillicothe students expressed the need for a second nursing lab. Chillicothe already has a second lab. What can be evaluated is the scheduling for the Chillicothe lab space, opportunities for improving the student experience during nursing laboratory learning, and plans for improving their current laboratory spaces.

I offer my remarks on two recommendations in order to ensure that the School is understood clearly by those who will review the team report.

*SON should identify reasons for program “dropouts”*: The faculty of the School have a standing faculty committee on Recruitment and Retention made up of faculty members from each location offering nursing programming and representing all levels of programs in the school. There is opportunity for student participation on this committee. This committee will be asked to review this recommendation. The extensive data collected in each program allow the faculty, school leaders and our colleges to track successful student completion and to also track student attrition across programs. Our School curriculum and evaluation committees review results and make recommendations. Faculty and staff do place considerable effort on retention and promotion of student success through additional faculty effort devoted to individual and group student remediation activities within courses and across each program, supplemental instruction activities, analysis and coaching related to benchmark external assessment testing, and student input through their input on committees and through their student evaluations.

*Open tenure track and non-tenure lines*: There is a nationwide nursing faculty shortage which is growing worse each year. Colleges and schools of nursing across the U.S. report open faculty lines and difficulty in attracting faculty with the needed credentials to meet the demand. Colleges of Nursing are in a stronger position to attract the qualified faculty candidates available due to the autonomy, status and capacity that comes with being a College of Nursing. It is my assessment that we are not able to grow our undergraduate population beyond our current targets even though this was suggested in the review team report for the following reasons. 1) Preferences are afforded to Colleges of Nursing by external clinical partners over a School. We are in direct competition with several Colleges of Nursing for clinical space. 2) Added student numbers also create the need for additional nursing classrooms which we do not control, additional laboratory spaces and additional faculty/staff resource needs that accompany an increase beyond the established targets we have in each location. In Athens, the

the beginning expectation was that we would serve 100 BSN students, so resources were allotted based on this. We have increased the number of students accepted to the BSN in Athens, but it requires more than having additional faculty.

The review team report offered recommendations for the School related to recruitment of underrepresented faculty members. While we are interested in locating such candidates, we must first meet other criteria. The Ohio Board of Nursing requires that faculty members must have three years of practice experience as a registered nurse with a U.S. nursing license. This eliminates many international candidates. Knowing there is a lack of qualified nurses wishing to seek a faculty position and that we are competing with all other universities for qualified candidates further complicates us attracting applicants in general and waiting for applicants who may be from underrepresented groups.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Seven Year Review.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Henderson".

Deborah Henderson, PhD, RN, CNE  
Professor and School Director  
School of Nursing  
hendersond@ohio.edu

## Nursing Program Review Dean Response

Thank you for the report of your review of the School of Nursing. This process has confirmed much of what we have come to understand through our various external accreditation and state licensing board reviews. It also highlights many of the challenges we have focused on addressing as the School and its programs have grown.

As dean of the College of Health Sciences and Professions, I can provide comment on the aspects of the review that relate to the various Athens campus nursing programs: MSN/DNP, BSN, and RN-to-BSN. As the ADN and BSN programs are under the oversight of Regional Higher Education administration, I am not able to respond to observations and comments related to those positions.

For the sake of this response, I have listed the various recommendations that relate to the Athens campus nursing programs and faculty and provided responses to each in italics. Recommendations that specifically address regional campus programs have been left out of this response as I would need to defer to the various regional campus deans for responses concerning the programs on their campuses.

1. SON should identify reasons for program dropouts, especially in Athens and on the Chillicothe campus. Steps should be taken to improve retention and increase student success. SON should review its advising process. Although accreditation requirements dictate specific course requirements and sequences, students sometimes need to meet with faculty before registration. Some schools and departments on campus require students to fill out a faculty advising survey after meeting with their advisors before their registration restrictions are lifted. The committee was told that the student-to-faculty advisor ratio is 90:1.

***Response:** The majority of BSN program dropouts occur during the freshman year when students are enrolled in the Pre-BSN track with the hope of gaining admission to the BSN track at the start of their sophomore year. We have clarified the various factors that contribute to students leaving the program. The far most frequent factor is student failure to receive required grades in pre-requisite courses, especially those in Biology and Chemistry. The problem is that when a student fails to achieve the required grade in those courses, they must often wait until the following year to re-take the course—meaning they are forced into a five-year track for their degree. School of Nursing leadership has worked extensively with both departments to try to alter this pattern with some success. The School is also proposing a move from a two-course Chemistry requirement to a one-course requirement. Advising staff in the School of Nursing and the College of Health Sciences and Professions work extensively with Pre-BSN students to assist them in achieving success in the Pre-BSN phase and in transitioning to other program options if they fail to meet admission requirements.*

*Additionally, we are limited to only admitting approximately 140 students per year into the BSN program. This limitation is based on the availability of clinical rotation sites*



*throughout southeastern Ohio. In some years, we have more students who meet requirements for admission than we are able to admit. Unfortunately, that means other students are denied access to the major. Because of the above grade issues, we have found that we need to admit approximately 180 students into the Pre-BSN track to assure 140 students are eligible for admission into the BSN. In some years, more than 140 students may meet those requirements. In other years, we may have less than that. This means we occasionally encounter years when not all eligible students are able to be admitted to the BSN.*

2. With six open tenure track and non-tenure track lines open, SON needs to identify and implement a strong and aggressive strategy to fill these positions. Although the market is competitive, the school should make a concerted effort to recruit faculty members from underrepresented communities, particularly vis a vis race and sexuality. The school is in a position to grow its undergraduate population considerably, but this option is not viable without additional faculty.

***Response:*** *We are extremely aggressive in recruiting faculty. Our experience is consistent with that of nursing programs across the United States. Unfortunately, there are far more open positions across the nation than there are faculty to fill them. I have spoken with numerous other deans and they indicate that they struggle with the same numbers we do.*

*We have taken a number of aggressive steps to address this. Over the past decade, we have raised the average salary for a Nursing faculty member by nearly 40%. New faculty in Nursing are now offered starting salaries that are approximately \$18,000-20,000 above those of other new faculty in the College. We also now offer the opportunity for graduate Nursing faculty to work in Dublin instead of Athens and even have two faculty who are permitted to work from their homes as they teach in online programs. We have also engaged a company to recruit instructors for the RN-to-BSN as a way to expand our ability to promote our programs and our positions.*

3. The HSP dean's office should increase support for SON's IT needs, including both physical equipment and software. SON has been able to acquire equipment important to carrying out its mission but lacks ready access to report. Critically, faculty feel that their research is constrained by lack of access to sophisticated software and support from statistical data analysts (faculty suggested a shared core facility).

***Response:*** *CHSP recently spent several million dollars on new teaching and simulation equipment for the School of Nursing. This includes all teaching and simulation equipment for three clinical skills labs, one interprofessional simulation lab, and one student practice lab. As for research equipment and software, I have committed to allowing the School of Nursing to retain all of the F&A recovery (both School and College shares) to use for additional support for its research activities. Additionally, until recently, the School had access to nearly \$2 million of reserve funds that had built up which was available for uses such as this.*

4. Probationary faculty expressed a need for clarity about expected research and publications needed for tenure and promotion. It is difficult to place a specific number on required publications, given the breadth and exclusivity of journals, but a more concrete guide would be helpful. Overall, probationary faculty felt secure relative to the mentorship during their pre-tenure.

**Response:** *Both the School and the College Promotion and Tenure committees have been encouraged to address this concern in the policies they develop. The CHSP Promotion and Tenure committee is presently reviewing the College policy.*

5. As the need for nurses increases (as has been the case for several decades), the Athens student population likely will outgrow the school's currently modern facilities. The school and college should consider a long-term plan to address this.

**Response:** *Just three years ago, we spent over \$7 million building updated and expanded facilities for the School of Nursing. These include three clinical education labs, one interprofessional simulation lab, one student practice lab, and two large classrooms providing 150 seats for didactic instruction. These facilities are more than sufficient to meet the current and future needs of the program. In fact, the space now available to the School of Nursing is among the largest dedicated spaces among Nursing programs in the State of Ohio. The size of the BSN program is not limited by facilities. Rather, the limitations we face are in terms of the number of clinical rotation sites within a drivable distance of Athens and the number of faculty we can recruit to teach in the program. These factors will keep the program from outgrowing facilities.*

6. The school and college need to arrive at a long-term strategy for repairing and replacing equipment, given the budget constraints presented by the OHIO promise. Regional campus costs should be clarified.

**Response:** *The College of Health Sciences and Professions has maintained an equipment repair line in its annual budget. In light of restrictions being imposed on the College by the University to reduce our operating budget, we have removed this line from future budgets. If the University is willing to allow the College to keep a greater portion of the considerable revenue we generate, this equipment repair line would be restored.*

7. SON administration should clarify for faculty its professional development funding award process. It appears that group II faculty have limited access for funding compared to group I faculty.

**Response:** *I would defer to the director of the School of Nursing as professional development funding decisions occur at the School level.*

8. Consider reaching out to alumni of various degree programs to hold focus groups that could help explain some responses on the alumni satisfaction surveys. Most scores are high but responses are low.

**Response:** We regularly solicit information from School of Nursing alumni. This is done at events we hold at various locations, through individual meetings our corporate relationship managers hold in healthcare systems employing our graduates, and through the several dozen visits I make to Nursing alumni each year in my role as dean. As is common, we have found that response rates on alumni surveys are typically low and have found it is advantageous to engage in individual conversations.

9. Faculty are in the need for more support global programs (i.e., Ecuador)

**Response:** The College of Health Sciences and Professions invests over \$600,000 per year to support the Global Health program including supporting faculty who engage in it. Several Nursing faculty receive support through this program and participate in study abroad and other activities. Future support will depend on the degree to which University leadership will allow the College to continue to build global health programming support into its base budget and/or access and utilize its reserve funds to support global programming.

10. SON administration should implement a viable peer-teaching evaluation system for faculty (even though students evaluation is good).

**Response:** I will defer to the director of the School of Nursing on this as the recommendation is directed to a school-level step.

11. SON should identify ways to contribute or develop interdisciplinary programs designed to offer a degree (as example, Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) program).

**Response:** Opportunities here are somewhat limited by the requirements of the School's accrediting agencies and state licensing boards. SON does extensively contribute to interdisciplinary programs in the College of Health Sciences and Professions through links with our Department of Interdisciplinary Health Studies.