



UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

Office of the Vice-Provost, Planning and Budget

#13

27 King's College Circle, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5S 1A1 Tel: (416) 978-7116 Fax: (416) 978-1029 E-Mail: d.mccammond@utoronto.ca

MEMORANDUM

December 12, 2001

To: Planning and Budget Committee

From: Derek McCammond

Item Identification

Proposal for a Master of Nursing Program in Acute Care Nursing to be delivered in e-learning format

Sponsor

Derek McCammond, Vice-Provost, Planning and Budget

Jurisdictional Information

Excerpt from the terms of reference for the Planning and Budget Committee:

ii) "Programs" within a particular degree (for example, specialist, major and minor programs offered by the Faculty of Arts and Science) are primarily handled through the curriculum approval process of the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs. The administration brings the resource aspects of these programs to the Committee for consideration only if they involve allocation of Central University resources, significant shifts in divisional resources and/or significant implications for other divisions, institutions, or the public. Where program changes reviewed by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs do not require submission to the Planning and Budget Committee, the administration documents the basis on which this decision is made and reports periodically to the Committee.

Highlights

The University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing proposes to be the first in Canada to offer the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP) (adult and child) field of study to distance learners by converting the current program from the traditional on-campus, classroom delivery method to an e-learning delivery format entirely replacing the existing on-campus program. The ACNP faculty is committed to this initiative, has experience in e-format and is well positioned to be successful in this next phase of development. The proposed start date is September 2002.

An Executive Summary of the proposal is attached.

Resource Implications

This program is part of the general expansion of enrolment in undergraduate and graduate nursing programs which will receive full average funding from the Provincial Government. A portion of the expansion funding received from the Government together with a portion of the additional tuition fee revenue will flow to the Enrolment Growth Fund and allocated to the Faculty of Nursing to resource the expansion.

Action Sought

For information only.

Proposal to Convert the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Field of Study in the Master of Nursing Program to an e-Learning Format

University of Toronto
Faculty of Nursing

Executive Summary*

Initiative:

The University of Toronto Faculty of Nursing proposes to be the first in Canada to offer the Acute Care Nurse Practitioner (ACNP) (adult and child) field of study to distance learners by converting the current program from the traditional on-campus, classroom delivery method to an e-learning delivery format¹ entirely replacing the existing on-campus program. The ACNP faculty is committed to this initiative, has experience in e-format and is well positioned to be successful in this next phase of development. The proposed start date is September 2002.

Rationale:

Improved quality: The e-tools will support the development and maintenance of a community of scholars enriching the learning experience by increased contact between teacher/learner and learner/learner. The larger number and variety of learners from varying health care settings and geographic locations will enrich the academic experience. The acquisition of technology skills necessary for participation in e-learning will prepare alumni for the university and health-care environments of the 21st century.

Improved access to meet demand: The reduced requirement for attendance on campus to three residency periods, will increase equality of access across the country overcoming the structural and geographic barriers that keep nurses from accessing advanced training and keep patients from benefiting from advanced nursing care. The e-learning format of program delivery will help meet the significant demand for the MN-ACNP program by both nurses and employers across Canada. It will play a major role in addressing critical gaps and shortages in the current health care system by creating a larger pool of acute care nurse practitioners, who are able to meet the growing demand from hospitals for specialized care. It will respond to the increasing requests to make the MN-ACNP program more accessible through e-learning options.

Working Prototype: Being the first complete graduate program to be delivered in an e-format at UofT, it will be a working prototype for other courses and programs across campus.

Academic standards and requirements:

Direction has been taken from numerous UofT reports as well as the guidelines provided by SGS and OCGS (see Appendices A and B). A Steering Committee, with diverse representation from across campus, and a Faculty of Nursing Project Committee are overseeing the measured

¹ Many terms are used in the literature to denote the delivery of educational programs where students and teachers do not meet face-to-face on a regular basis. The term that appears to be the least confusing as to its intent is e-learning and in our proposal is meant to embody the concept of supporting learning with the use of technologies so that it can be done at a distance.

deliberate change with consultation of outside project coordinators to support pedagogical, technical and training aspects (see Appendices E, F & G). All University of Toronto graduate program requirements and standards and teaching learning outcomes will continue to be met. The same faculty will teach in the e-format as are presently involved in the current program. Any additional faculty will meet the required standards of SGS. Learner evaluation measures and standards will remain the same except where ongoing evaluation determines better methods to be used for the new e-delivery. Ongoing course and program evaluation will monitor the quality of the program and opportunities for continuous quality improvement. Three required residency periods will support the formation and maintenance of a community of scholars and facilitate professional socialization. They will provide opportunity for supplementing e-learning and learner testing. FTE enrolment numbers will be maintained with a gradual increase over time.

Resource Implications:

In addition to resources currently required for the on-campus program, additional requirements include: faculty release time, project coordination and training, instructional design consultation, curriculum content expertise, support for technical aspects of program development, web builders, and technical support for faculty and learners for getting set up and using hardware and software. Negotiations are under way with the Resource Centre for Academic Technology for web hosting. Library supports are well established, however additional resources will be required to support the increased requests for preparation of materials/information. The expected resource implications are being evaluated and a business plan developed with the Office of the Vice Provost Planning and Budget.

Learner costs for accommodations during residency periods and for equipment/software will be kept to a minimum and will be the responsibility of the learner. Any additional costs incurred will be off set by ability of the learner to remain in their home communities for the majority of the program rather than undertaking relocation costs.

*Note: Appendices referred to in this executive summary are attached to the back of the proposal.