

School of Nursing

Strategic Plan 2008-2013

Background

The Penn State School of Nursing opened in 1964 with 22 students in the basic baccalaureate program. In 1967, the RN to BS completion program was added as the first program in the Commonwealth specifically designed for registered nurses to complete their baccalaureate degree. In 1973, the master's program in nursing was started and in 1998, the doctoral program began as an interdisciplinary doctoral education in nursing. From its inception, the focus of the School of Nursing has been on the development and implementation of excellent academic programs in concert with the land grant mission of Penn State University to provide an educated citizenry to address the needs of the population of Pennsylvania

The School of Nursing has grown to be a complex organization providing five academic programs (associate, baccalaureate, Registered Nurse to baccalaureate, master's and doctoral degrees) and operates at ten Penn State campuses throughout the Commonwealth. There has been significant growth in the enrollments in the academic programs in the School of Nursing over the last four years. Since the academic year 2003-04, there has been a 23% increase in associate degree program enrollments, a 22% increase in baccalaureate program enrollments and a 34% increase in graduate program enrollments. The increase of enrollments in the baccalaureate program has, in part, been due to the success of the online RN to BS initiative in collaboration with the World Campus, which began in 2003. We currently have 157 students formally enrolled in the program with many others taking courses; and we anticipate significant growth to continue in this program.

Building on that academic excellence, the focus of the School of Nursing for the last four years was to contribute to the development of new knowledge and the translation of that knowledge to the bedside for the improvement of health care outcomes through research and scholarship. In order to accomplish that goal, we have developed the School of Nursing infrastructure in support of research, made strategic hires to advance our research mission and developed collaborations that inform the research process. The result has been a five fold increase in the number of NIH funded research grants (1 in 2003 to 5 in 2008), a substantial increase in the number of grants submitted each year, including those submitted to foundations, and the development of a culture that encourages scholarship and supports young researchers.

The outreach mission has always been integral to the School of Nursing and will continue to play a critical role in its future development. It is anticipated that there will be significant growth in our Outreach Program through continuing education offerings. With the passage of Act 58, which requires 30 units of continuing education for licensure renewal for registered nurses in Pennsylvania, the School of Nursing is developing various means for nurses to acquire the CEUs through Penn State offerings. It will be through effective, entrepreneurial outreach efforts that the School of Nursing will support its outreach mission

Program and generate revenues that will seed innovation in all three missions of the School of Nursing; academics, research, and service.

A critical dimension for the future will be the public engagement between the School of Nursing, specifically the faculty, and its key constituents, including alumni, students, community leaders, legislators, professional organizations and donors. Building on the current visibility of the School of Nursing, faculty will continue to play leadership roles in professional organizations, in the community and in roles affecting policy.

Nursing, as a profession, is experiencing a transition. The changes in the health care delivery system, the aging of the population with a resultant need for care, the long term projections for a nursing shortage and the recognition of the integral role of nurses in improving the health of society provide the foundation for the strategic initiatives for the next five years. These factors affect the teaching, research and outreach missions of the School of Nursing and have informed our thinking about the future.

Mission of the School of Nursing

The mission of the School of Nursing is to improve the health for all people in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the nation and the world through the development of qualified nurse leaders at all levels of practice, the development of nursing science related to health and health care and the provision of nursing care to individuals, families and communities. This mission will be accomplished through the integrated programs of nursing education, research, scholarship and outreach.

Vision for the Next Five Years

To develop innovative academic programs designed to prepare nursing professionals to meet the health care needs of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; to inform the science of enhancing quality of life for vulnerable populations and translate innovations into clinical practice; and, to maintain an outreach enterprise that provides leadership in economic, social, educational, and cultural issues facing individuals, communities, and organizations with the result of being recognized as among the top 25 Schools of Nursing in the country.

Goals and Strategies

1. Develop innovative academic programs to meet the health care demands of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and attract new markets to Penn State nursing.

Nursing programs across the country have experienced considerable growth over the last several years. From 2006 to 2007, enrollments in generic baccalaureate nursing programs increased by 8.6% and RN to BS enrollments increased by 11.5%*. Yet, the desired approaches to learning continue to change in response to economic pressures, demographic variables and changes in nursing and health care. New and innovative approaches to education need to be developed to address the changing characteristics of the student population, and the evolving role of nurses in health care.

Strategic Action 1a: Transition the current pedagogy in the master's program to a web-based approach beginning with the geriatric clinical nurse specialist program.

Measures of Success:

1. All Geriatric CNS courses will be available in web-based format by September 2009.
2. All other master's courses will be transitioned to a web-based format by September 2010.

Strategic Action 1b: Begin a second degree program at the Altoona campus.

Measure of Success:

1. By September of 2009, a second degree program at Altoona will enroll a group of 20 students.
2. Based on the success of the initial program at Altoona, a second site for this program will be started at Harrisburg in 2010.

Strategic Action 1c: Develop accelerated models of the RN to BS, RN to MS and RN to PhD curricula.

Measure of Success:

1. Determine the potential to develop two tracks for master's education, one professional master's track and one academic master's track leading to a PhD by September 2009.
2. All accelerated curricula (RN to BS, RN to MS and RN to PhD) will be developed for implementation by September 2010.

Strategic Action 1d: Develop a Doctor of Nursing (DNP) Practice program to be delivered via technology. (This will be a collaborative project with Outreach)

Measure of Success:

1. The model (curriculum and process) for the DNP program will be approved by faculty by December 2009.
2. The DNP program will be implemented in September 2012, if possible, through the World Campus.

*AACN 2007-2008 Enrollment and Graduation in Baccalaureate and Graduate Programs in Nursing.

2. Create student-centered environments that distinguish Penn State School of Nursing graduates in the health care market and prepare them for advanced education.

Penn State School of Nursing is the largest School of Nursing, as well as the largest preparer of pre-licensure students, in the Commonwealth. As such, we have a responsibility to be among the best Schools of Nursing in the Commonwealth preparing students for the complexities of contemporary health care. In order to accomplish this goal, we need to have access to state of the art teaching facilities, cutting edge curricula and innovative educational experiences that distinguish our graduates from graduates of other Schools of Nursing.

As a discipline, nursing continues to face challenges in creating a workforce that is racially and ethnically similar to the patients, families and communities we serve. Penn State School of Nursing plans to provide leadership in increasing the number of minority students in the graduate program. We also plan to continue to seek opportunities to increase the diversity of the faculty. This requires us to continue to build the pipeline through innovative programs that enhance the advancement of racially and ethnically diverse nurses into graduate education. Finally, we must be vigilant in making our School of Nursing a setting where individuals from diverse backgrounds feel supported, encouraged and valued for the richness they bring to the academic environment.

Strategic Action 2a: Add one international opportunities for faculty and graduate or undergraduate students each year to existing international partnerships.

Measures of Success:

1. By the end of academic year 2013, the School of Nursing will have added five additional opportunities for students to engage in international experiences.
2. Continue to participate in the World Universities Network with Penn State faculty delivering three symposia by 2013.

Strategic Action 2b: Become a leader in the wise and appropriate integration of technology into the nursing curriculum.

Measure of Success:

1. Become a Department of Health and Human Services funded Center for Excellence in Technology Integration.
2. Begin a fully on-line Doctoral of Nursing Practice Program (see Strategic Action 1d).
3. Fully implement the new Integrated Simulation Learning Environment (ISLE) in January 2009.
4. Integrate the use of the ISLE in all relevant courses using the support of the Simulation Coordinator (new position) by September 2009.

Strategic Action 2c: Continue our aggressive and proactive efforts to diversify the faculty and student body.

Measure of Success:

1. All faculty recruitments will reference Penn State's *Framework for Fostering Diversity*.

2. Recruitment of faculty and students will be done at the National Black Nurse's Association Conference every other year.
3. Fifty percent (50%) of all students enrolled in the MACaN program will be eligible for admission into the graduate program within one year of graduation from their baccalaureate program.
4. Twenty five percent (25%) of those involved in the MACaN program will come to Penn State's graduate program within three years of graduating from their baccalaureate program.
5. Building on the MACaN's program success, external funding will be obtained expanding the focus to multidisciplinary health service professional students (possibly CSD, nutrition, medicine and HPA).

3. Advance the research and scholarly productivity of the School of Nursing faculty and the work of the Hartford Center for Geriatric Nursing Excellence.

The School of Nursing has dramatically increased its research and scholarly productivity over the last five years and plans to continue the strong focus on improving quality of life in vulnerable populations. The increase in NIH funding is just one example of the School's focus on research and scholarship. In FY 2004, Penn State School of Nursing was ranked 93rd in NIH funding and 42nd in FY 2007, an increase of over 50 points in three years. This increase in scholarly productivity has been accomplished with a small research faculty, only eight in number.

In order to continue this progression in research and scholarship over this strategic planning period, resources will be needed to grow the number of tenured and tenure track faculty, to create innovative models of research collaboration, continue to build the infrastructure in support of the research enterprise and demonstrate Penn State's research expertise to external constituents.

Strategic Action 3a: Develop strategic partnerships to advance the development of knowledge and the translation of science to the bedside in the area of improving quality of life in vulnerable populations.

Measure of Success:

1. School of Nursing faculty will develop collaborations within and outside the University to advance research on quality of life in vulnerable populations.
2. SON faculty will be identified as expert in the use of intervention as a methodology in the study of quality of life in vulnerable populations.
3. Penn State SON will be among the top 25 Schools of Nursing in NIH funding.
4. Hire one faculty member whose scholarly area relates to the methodological issues in research in vulnerable populations.

Strategic Action 3b: Recruit at least one faculty member per year (tenured or tenure track) whose research interest is complementary to the scientific focus on quality of life in vulnerable populations.

Measure of Success:

1. At least one new research faculty member will join the School of Nursing faculty each year for the next five years.
2. New faculty will be research productive (grant submission or manuscript production) within one year for junior faculty member and immediately upon hire for senior faculty.

Strategic Action 3c: Continue to advance the research enterprise of the School of Nursing.

Measures of Success:

1. Implement a faculty-led Research Institute focused on vulnerability in September of 2008.
2. Engage two visiting professors (09-10 and 11-12) to bring unique expertise to the advancement of faculty programs of research.
3. Obtain an NIH funded exploratory research center by 2013.

Strategic Action 3d: Prepare future leaders in nursing research in a cutting edge doctoral program.

Measure of Success:

1. Align the doctoral curriculum with the state of the art in nursing research, health systems and nursing education.
2. Recruit and admit three to four highly qualified doctoral students each year (full and part-time.)
3. Fifty percent of all doctoral students will submit an NRSA and 30% will be successful in funding.

4. Develop a model outreach enterprise that identifies Penn State as the preferred provider for continuing education in the Commonwealth.

The Outreach Program in the School of Nursing has helped us to meet the educational needs of nurses as well as important clinical needs of the citizens of Pennsylvania. The outreach enterprise is designed to be nimble and open to the changing face of health care delivery. As opportunities arise, Penn State School of Nursing will be responsive to the needs of the community by developing high quality, cost effective and innovative solutions.

Strategic Action 4a: Develop high-quality, low cost CE (continuing education) offerings.

Measures of Success:

1. Ten CE programs will be developed each year and posted on the web to be accessed through the Penn State School of Nursing portal.
2. There will be an increase of 10% per year for five years in clients accessing Penn State CE system.
3. New partners will be identified to collaborate on CE offerings.

Strategic Action 4b: There will be an entrepreneurial approach to innovation and opportunity in all outreach activities.

Measure of Success:

1. One new certificate program will be developed each year.
2. One new, cutting edge academic program will be initiated every other year.
3. Other programs and opportunities will be vetted for consideration by the SON administrative team.

Strategic Action 4c: The Outreach office will be self-sustaining by 2010, generating enough revenue to support a full-time coordinator and full-time staff assistant.

Measures of Success:

1. Budget analysis reflecting sufficient income to offset expense.

5. Strengthen external collaborations

External relationships with alumni, donors and our community colleagues are critical to the future of the School of Nursing. As the complexity of the School of Nursing grows, the opportunity to engage our external constituents becomes more difficult, yet more critical. Alumni provide a ready source of support for the School of Nursing and its students by bringing the passion for Penn State, nursing and the development of the next generation of nurses to our students. Community colleagues provide the ready source of clinical opportunities that are essential to nursing education.

Strategic Action 5a: Increase the regularity of communication with alumni and friends of the School of Nursing.

Measures of Success:

1. In the spring each year, the SON will produce a magazine that will include feature articles and information on philanthropy, as well as news about the SON.
2. Each year, there will be an increase in the alumni and friends attending events in the School of Nursing, including the holiday reception, homecoming parade party, the Jean Vallance Lecture, and colloquia by visiting professors.

Strategic Action 5b: Create opportunities for the Dean and other SON members to share the vision for the School of Nursing.

Measures of Success:

1. Each quarter, the Dean of the SON will meet with the development office to share the work of the School and identify potential opportunities for relationship building.
2. Two faculty members will hold national office in a professional nursing organization.

Strategic Action 5c: Engage the Nursing APG in meaningful and relevant activities that advance the mission of the School of Nursing.

Measures of Success:

1. By April of each year, the APG, in collaboration with the SON, will identify at least one event that the APG can work on to enhance the relationship between the School of Nursing and the alumni group.
2. The event will take place each year in the fall.