

October 22, 2008

Gerald Baldasty, Interim Vice Provost and Dean
James S. Antony, Associate Dean for Academic Programs
University of Washington Graduate School

Dear Interim Dean Baldasty and Associate Dean Antony:

On behalf of the UW Bothell Nursing Program, I would like to thank the members of our Academic Program Review Team and Graduate School Staff for their time and effort required in completing this review. We appreciated the opportunity to spend two days with them during our site visit (May 8-9) and receiving their subsequent summary report (July 25). We have shared their **Report on the University of Washington Bothell Nursing Program – 10 years Program Review** with appropriate constituencies for feedback. These included the UW Bothell Nursing faculty, staff, students and nursing advisory committee. It was also part of a focused discussion at our September 18, 2008 program retreat. The following response is based on these opportunities for discussion of the review committee report and recommendations. We will comment as needed on each section of the report and the absence of comment regarding any particular section should be interpreted as meaning that we are in agreement with the content as written.

Executive Summary (p.1)

We are very pleased with the Review Committee's conclusion that our ***“Faculty, staff and students are of the highest quality and constitute the greatest asset of the program.”*** When an academic unit has worked as hard as has the UW Bothell Nursing program, it is gratifying to have the quality of our efforts recognized in this way. As we respond to this review, we are simultaneously working on our UW Tri-Campus Nursing (Bothell, Seattle, and Tacoma) accreditation self-study in preparation for a spring 2009 CCNE site visit. As such, it was also helpful to see the Executive Summary specifically state that the review team assessed that ***“the content, delivery and quality of the academic programs are consistent with accreditation standards...”***

Review Process (p.2)

Although the effort spent in preparing the self-study and coordinating the review team site visit was work-intensive, we consider academic program review as a critical venue for assuring continuous quality improvement so essential to our continued success. Approaching the review process with this perspective encourages our cooperation and transparency as noted by our Review Team. In return, their genuine interest in learning about our academic programs was greatly appreciated and contributed to what we experienced as a very positive and collaborative review process.

Overview and Strengths of the UW Bothell Nursing Program (pp. 2-4)

Point of clarification (pg.2): *“Both the RNB and MN degrees are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), most recently in April 2000.”*

While it is accurate to say that the MN degree was re-accredited in 2000 as part of our Tri-Campus Nursing CCNE review, the MN degree at that time was only offered on the Seattle and Tacoma campuses. Although our MN program received full HECB approval at the same time as UW Tacoma (1996), we were not subsequently funded for full implementation until autumn 2002. As a result, it would be more accurate to state that the RNB degree was reviewed and accredited in 2000 and that information regarding the implementation of the MN program on the Bothell campus was submitted as a substantive change report to the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in August 2002.

Point of appreciation: (pg.2) *“The review team judged the cooperation between the ADN programs and the UW Bothell Nursing program as quite high and we view this as a significant strength of the program.”*

We appreciate this acknowledgement because we are extraordinarily proud of our outstanding relationships with community/technical college nursing programs in our region. We currently have 12 formal articulation agreements with Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs and are in the process of developing a 13th agreement this year with a new ADN program at South Seattle Community College. This represents 48% of all associate degree in nursing programs in Washington State. A further indication of this strong partnership was the recent \$286,999 award to UW Bothell Nursing as a Congressionally Directed Grant. The overall purpose of this initiative is to further strengthen these relationships through development of a consortium of partner schools to support and mentor nursing faculty for these programs. Grant funds will support the allocation of \$160,000 in scholarships to our MN students who are currently teaching at least part-time with one of our partner schools. In addition, it will support the planning, implementation and evaluation of a faculty-to-faculty invitational conference (March 2009) the purpose of which is to identify and promote strategies for supporting novice nursing faculty during this time of significant local and national shortages.

Primary Challenges and Risks (pp. 5-6)

Point of clarification (pg.5): *“Historically, no UWB Nursing Program Director has stayed longer than 5 years.”* The turnover among academic program directors at UW Bothell has been extraordinarily high since the first director (Decker) was appointed and served from 1990-1997. Until the most recent fifth year administrative reviews of the current UWB Nursing and Business directors (2006-07), hers had been the only such previous review. The recent reviews were positive and both directors will complete their 7th year of administrative service in 2008-09. Three of the 6 current academic program directors hold interim status roles and the director of UW Bothell Business has announced his intention to return to faculty at the end of this academic year. When that occurs, the UW Bothell Nursing Director will become the longest serving academic program director in the rather tumultuous 19 year history of this campus.

Point of clarification: (pg 5): *“The review committee learned that the UW Bothell campus is financed almost exclusively by student tuition.”*

We would like to clarify that the UW Bothell campus is financed predominantly (over 75%) through student tuition **and** state FTE funds. The two specific funding challenges for the Nursing program have been tuition exemption and summer quarter funding. These two policies have challenged the long-term success of the program because they contribute to **incomplete reporting of actual instructional effort** of this unit. The tuition exemption disparity has been resolved after a multiple year initiative to garner support for a specific UW Bothell Nursing Tuition Exemption policy. The exemption from the general UW TE policy was essential when the numbers of state-employed nurses seeking this venue became fiscally untenable for a small program such as ours. The second funding challenge, summer FTE, relates to the fact that the UW Bothell Nursing curriculum runs as a cohort model throughout the entire calendar year. In order to meet the unique needs of our students who are working nurses with multiple career and personal responsibilities, it is necessary to teach core curriculum throughout the calendar year. This student-driven cycle means our summer FTE is a significant percentage of our annual FTE, an important difference from many other academic units. The current arrangement of utilizing UW Extension for summer quarter funding does not permit us to annualize summer FTE to accurately reflect the program’s instructional effort. In 2004, the former UW Executive Director of Admissions and Records (Tim Washburn) was working with us on finding solutions to both issues. When our progress in resolving the tuition exemption was temporarily stalemated, he focused on a possible solution for our invisible summer FTE dilemma. He recommended and assisted the campus in requesting a waiver from OFM which was approved for nursing to include summer FTE in our annual report submitted to the legislature. The following year the UW central administration withdrew support for this mechanism and denied approval for the campus to submit a similar request for OFM consideration in 2005 or subsequent years.

Recommendation 1: (p.6) *“UWB Nursing Program sustainability is the biggest challenge and efforts should be made to assure long-term financial and programmatic sustainability.”*

We strongly agree with this assessment which we specifically highlighted in our self-study noting that *“the next 5 years will require strategic focus on assuring our financial and programmatic sustainability as the campus addresses enrollment challenges and our collective sustainability.”* The UWB Nursing program appreciates the review committee’s recognition of the work, effort and commitment of our faculty and staff. Subsequent events, program priorities and support shown by the UW Bothell central administration are beginning to help us further address this issue:

- With the promotions of Dr. Carol Leppa (2007) and Dr. Suzanne Sikma (2008), this is the first year since the Nursing program was launched on the Bothell campus (1992) that we have had any faculty at the rank of full professor other than the program director. This creates a stronger faculty base for shared leadership including mentoring of junior faculty.
- At our September 2008 retreat, the Nursing faculty and staff identified the need to include planning for sustainability and transitions as a core priority goal for this year. This priority will require a multi-level approach that addresses sustainability of individual faculty and staff, the academic programs we offer, and the sustainability of the campus, university and larger communities we serve. Our intended outcome for 2008-09 will be to use this multi-level framework to consider, create, and articulate a sustainability and succession plan for UW Bothell Nursing.

- The 2008-2009 Budget allocated new funds to support an additional 1.25 Staff FTE and back-filled faculty salary with permanent dollars. In spite of the hiring freeze, the Chancellor has approved exempting these much needed positions.
- In addition to merit raises, the nursing faculty has been awarded collective unit adjustments of \$38,898 to address the market discrepancies and support retention of this highly functioning faculty.
- The genuine effort being made by the UW Bothell administration to support the ongoing excellence and sustainability of the Nursing program is greatly appreciated.

Recommendation 2: *Any new UWB Nursing or UWB Campus (STEM) initiatives that further tax faculty effort should be met with appropriate resources (faculty, staff and support).*

We strongly agree that the relationship between continued growth and the sustainability of the program needs to be carefully managed to assure ongoing quality of our academic programs as well as enhance the retention of our highly esteemed faculty. Both the campus in general and the nursing program in particular must align visions and expectations with available resources. Any new UWB Nursing or UW Bothell campus initiatives that place additional demands on faculty and staff effort must be met with appropriate resources. Given that the Nursing program is again over-enrolled in both our RN-BSN (126%) and MN (141%) programs, we are acutely aware that additional initiatives to further support the campus at large must be accompanied with additional resources.

In addition, it is imperative that we proactively address the appropriate mix of tenure-line (assistant, associate and full professors) and adjunct (lecturers and senior lecturers) faculty as well as to better clarify the roles and responsibilities of each rank or level. This issue has also been identified by the faculty as a core priority item to be addressed in the current year.

The Nursing Program will continue to support the UW Bothell's new STEM initiative in ways that align both the nursing program and campus goals and that are consistent with matched resources. In this regard, the nursing program was asked shortly after our site visit to consider what role if any, the faculty could envision with respect to the new STEM initiative. This resulted in a focused faculty discussion in May 2008 which was summarized and forwarded in writing to Vice Chancellor Susan Jeffords. The Vice Chancellor agreed to meet with the nursing program on October 8, 2008 to discuss this feedback. During this meeting she thanked the faculty for their thoughtful discussion and summary which concluded with a clearly stated interest in collaborating with but not becoming a formal part of this new unit. She also clarified the evolving distinction between STEM as an overall umbrella which is likely to have curricular threads across the campus and the new unit which will be called "Science and Technology" (S & T). Dr. Suzanne Sikma (Nursing) is continuing to contribute to the planning of this new unit by serving on the S & T transition work group as well as the task force planning a new biology major for the campus.

Recommendation 3: *Summer quarter FTE and operations funding should be redirected in full to the UWB Nursing Program in order to match resources with teaching effort.*

We fully support this recommendation and agree that the campus leadership should explore a variety of options for creating a self-sustaining summer quarter at UW Bothell. We have begun preliminary

conversations with our new UWB central leadership team to explain the option of requesting a waiver from OFM to include our summer quarter FTE in our annualized reports to the state. While we are currently over-enrolled as a Nursing Program, there is increasing scrutiny of the overall UWB campus enrollment challenges. In our self-study, we suggested that consideration of temporary support to request including summer FTE be provided until the campus as a whole moves closer to full enrollment. If a full summer quarter FTE inclusion is not feasible, we suggest that consideration be given to expanding the number of 11 month versus 9 month appointments. Currently, the Nursing Program has the only 2 UW Bothell faculty 11-month appointments (Leppa and Sikma) and proposes an alternative solution to be to extend this option to other nursing faculty.

Recommendation 4: *UWB Nursing and UWB administration should begin a campus-wide planning effort that will result in committed support to on-site research careers for existing and new faculty.*

We also agree with this recommendation and strongly support initiatives that would provide additional research support for UW Bothell faculty. Advancing this recommendation will require collaborative efforts not only by UWB Nursing and UWB administration but also across the entire campus and larger university community. Nonetheless, preliminary discussions and proposed actions have been identified:

- Developing and enhancing the UW Bothell infrastructure to support faculty research and scholarship is clearly necessary and the nursing program will collaborate on any such efforts. At the same time, we will also continue to encourage and support new and ongoing tri-campus collaborations such as with the Center for Women's Health and Gender Research (CWHGR). Over the last two years, the CWHGR Summer Institutes have provided mentoring of 4 UW Bothell Nursing faculty (Cooke, Kovalesky, Mohammed, and Petry). Unfortunately this center is in its last year of funding and recently announced that they are no longer able to fund any new pilot/feasibility study proposals from their partner institutions which include UW Bothell and Tacoma.
- At the campus level, the Director of the Office of Research Support (Carolyn Brennan) has increased her effort from part-time to full time during 2008-09 and plans to convene an advisory board of seasoned researchers to assist in the development of a strategic plan for this office. She has begun a "Grant Administration Support Program" to provide additional training for academic program staff with budgetary oversight responsibilities. She also has plans to offer a research roundtable series this year, and the office has been approved to hire an additional research administration staff position once the current hiring freeze is lifted.
- At the program level, we have already begun to consider internal strategies to strengthen our support of nursing faculty research careers. The campus received approval from the Provost's Office to begin using research quarters through "stacking of courses" and we have been able to arrange for four (Abrums, Cooke, Kovalesky, and Petry) tenure-line faculty to benefit from this strategy during 2008-2009. We expect to develop a system for rotating opportunities for research quarters among the tenure-line faculty. In addition, we have set aside the RCR funds allocated to the Nursing Program from external grants to be used as faculty seed funds and although currently limited (\$14,000), it is an effort to provide additional research support.

Recommendation 5: *The Nursing programs at UW Seattle, Bothell and Tacoma serve diverse and unique needs. Continued coordination between the Program Directors and UW Seattle Nursing School Dean is essential.*

We agree that the nursing programs on all three campuses serve their own diverse and unique needs making ongoing coordination an essential element of our shared accreditation. Currently, we are developing our tri-campus self-study in preparation for an upcoming CCNE site visit in April 2009. While we expect this will result in a positive review, we also welcome the opportunity to explore future feasibility, merits and risks of independent accreditation in light of our increasingly divergent needs, plans and strategies. With significant transitions in UW Tri-Campus Nursing leadership at UW Tacoma and UW Seattle this year, we have an opportunity to consider venues for enhancing our already strong tri-campus collaboration as a shared commitment regardless of any future decisions regarding the merits of joint versus individual accreditation.

Concluding note:

In closing, we would like to once again extend our appreciation to our review team for their thoughtful efforts to review the strengths and challenges of the UW Bothell Nursing Program:

Sean D. Sullivan, UW Seattle School of Pharmacy (Chair)
Charles Emlet, UW Tacoma, Social Work Program
Nancy Place, UW Bothell, Education Program,
Ruth Bindler, Washington State University College of Nursing
Judeen Schulte, Alverno College School of Nursing
David Canfield-Budde, UW Graduate School Academic Programs

We acknowledge the due diligence with which they addressed their charge in conducting this review with genuine efforts ***“to ensure transparency, integrity and value in the review process by working collaboratively on behalf of the Graduate School Dean with all stakeholders, including the academic units under review.”*** (<http://www.grad.washington.edu/acad/mission.htm>).

Sincerely,

Mary A. Baroni, PhD, RN
Professor and Nursing Program Director
University of Washington Bothell

cc: Kenyon Chan, UW Bothell Chancellor
Susan Jeffords, UW Bothell Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs