

**Report of the Program Review Committee:  
University of Washington School of Nursing**

**February 22-24, 2016**

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## **I. SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS**

Members of the Review Committee were contacted beginning in February, 2015 with the final committee formed as of April 20, 2015. On October 13, 2015 The Graduate School conducted a Review Committee Charge Meeting with members of the Review Committee, representatives from the School of Nursing and the Graduate School Council that reviewed both the program review process, the requirements of the program review, the special considerations to be addressed in the SON self-study and a list of specific questions to be addressed by the Review Committee. On October 15, 2015 the Review Committee received a final version of the Charge Letter that reflected input from the October 13 Charge Meeting. On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2016 the Review Committee as notified that the School of Nursing Graduate School Review 2016 Self-Study was posted on the SON review website along with supplemental information on SON enrollment and a draft site visit agenda. In addition to the Self-Study document, the Review Committee was provided website access to copies of the Graduate School Five-Year Review of the SON's Graduate Certificate Program in Advanced Practice Nursing, the SON's response to recommendations from that five-year review, and a copy of the most recent (2005) Program Review Report. The 2016 Self-Study narrative was divided into two parts, the first (Part A) was comprised of sections devoted to an overview of the organization, teaching and learning, scholarly impact, and future directions. The second part of the Self-Study narrative provided responses to each of the special considerations that were to be incorporated into the SON Self-Study. The narrative of the Self-Study was supplemented by an extensive list of appendices (18 in number) that provided such detailed information as the SON's strategy map, funding resources and trends, the curricular data and planning processes specific to the SON's degree programs, the SON's Diversity Strategic Plan and related demographics, the SON's evaluation of student learning, information pertaining to enrollment and graduation rates by degree and certificate programs, and examples of faculty scholarly activity and impact.

On February 18<sup>th</sup>, Professor Almgren met with the SON's leadership team to go over the final details of the site visit and also to invite input from the SON's leadership on any additional issues or questions that the SON would like the Review Committee to consider as a part of the review process. Professor Almgren also used this occasion to request some additional data on student body diversity, which was provided by the SON during the course of the site visit.

On February 21<sup>st</sup> Professors Almgren, Fuller, Badger, Martin-Holland and Turner met over dinner to discuss the site visit and in particular to go over the specific areas of focus and points of inquiry for each of the interviews that were to take place over the course of the site visit. As an aid to this discussion and based on prior input from Review Committee members, Professor Almgren had prepared source document that outlined the foci and suggested key questions for each of the interviews. While some questions pertained to targeted points of inquiry, most were

constructed to invite and facilitate an information gathering dialog between the Review Committee members and the interview participants within important focal areas. It was evident during this meeting that the members of the review committee shared a similar epistemological approach to the site review process, evidenced in the very generative interviews that occurred in the days that followed. As might be predicted, the foci and questions changed somewhat over the course of the site visit as the Review Committee learned more about the SON's organizational structure and processes, its collective sense of identity, mission and aspirations, its myriad strengths and achievements, and the particular challenges encountered by parts within the organization and the organization as a whole.

The site visit took place during the three full days of February 22, 23 and 24 in accordance with the attached schedule, with only a few minor changes in the length of some interview sessions. It is the opinion of the Review Committee that without exception the students, staff, faculty and community members interviewed over the course of the site visit were very forthcoming, engaged and invested in the process, and honest in their reflections and responses to the Review Committee's inquiries. The Review Committee also notes that as additional data and documents were requested from the SON leadership over the course of the site visit, the response in each instance was prompt and thorough.

## II. FINDINGS

This section of the report, as with the verbal summary provided to the SON's leadership at February 24<sup>th</sup> Exit Discussion, is divided into two narratives –the first devoted to observed strengths and the second devoted to the important challenges confronting the SON as it seeks to both sustain its mission and also retain its standing as one of the top ranked schools of nursing in the nation. Some of the challenges identified by the Review Committee, while they are made manifest in the SON, are challenges that involve and encompass the University of Washington as a whole.

### A. The Strengths of the University of Washington School of Nursing

#### 1. A Legacy of Excellence in Nursing Science, Leadership and Education

Despite having endured a tsunami of funding reductions over the past decade, which involved a \$7.3m loss in grants and contract funding since 2010 and an NIH funding trend that leaves many heretofore very successful faculty investigators with very daunting prospects for continued funding of their research, the SON has retained its place among the elite schools of nursing in the country. As with the 2005 Graduate School Review findings, the SON is among the most successful of all leading schools of nursing in NIH research funding, and as of the end of 2015 ranked third with \$20.8m in NIH funding over the most recent three year period. Most notably, the UW SON's Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program is ranked first in the nation in the more recent (2016) *U.S. News and World Report* Annual Ranking of Schools of Nursing. Other evidence of the SON's enduring leadership is in the scholarly contributions and the editorial representation of its faculty in leading scientific journals, the competitiveness of its PhD program application pool despite the limited financial support available, and the extent to which the SON faculty and its PhD graduates are by other leading universities. By the consensus of the external members of the Review Committee, each representing a leading school of nursing, the UW SON has several faculty that are considered giants in their respective fields of study. The SON has a remarkable and enduring history of success in three key dimensions that collectively define institutional excellence: in knowledge creation and development, in the training of the next generation of nurse scientists, and in its focus on high quality education in each of its professional degree programs.

#### 2. Leadership *Within* the School of Nursing

While many organizations speak of transparency as a value and an aspiration, its achievement is daunting and often elusive in complex, highly demanding organizations. Yet when the Review Committee convened to review the particular strengths of the SON, the leadership's ability to foster a culture of transparency in decision-making and information sharing at all levels was the

first organizational attribute that came to mind. Throughout all interviews with faculty, staff and students, the Review Committee heard repeated instances praise pertaining to access to the Dean, access to leadership, and praise for the bidirectional communication taking place on a range of issues affecting morale and a sense of being “seen and heard”. The Review Committee was particularly impressed with the vertically bidirectional communications on issues related to budgeting and organizational strategies for sustainability. A related strength that speaks to the quality of leadership at the SON is the organization’s shared governance ethic, which is made manifest in the representation of faculty and staff in the Shared Leadership Council, as well as the faculty’s oversight of curriculum, research and intramural funding, and the criteria and processes for appointment, tenure and promotion. Transparency and shared governance are clearly complimentary and interdependent, and the SON’s leadership manages to achieve both. Finally, it is evident to the Review Committee that the faculty, staff and students of the SON hold their leadership in very high regard.

### 3. Strategic Vision and Direction

As yet another reflection of the SON’s strength of leadership, the Review Committee is deeply impressed clarity of mission, vision, and clearly articulated values as they are represented in the SON’s four pillars which serve as guiding principles for decision-making, growth, direction, and sustainability in a dynamic environment. The four pillars are depicted in the SON’s 2015-2017 Strategy Map, and are identified as:

- Advancing Research, Education, and Service
- Achieving Organizational Excellence
- Securing our Financial Future
- Facilitating Sustainable Operations

These pillars were broadly communicated and well on their way to becoming embedded within and across the core decision-making groups across the SON community, as the lens through which competing ideas are considered, organizational structures and activities are aligned, and resources allocated. As a reflection of the third RES pillar, the Dean and executive team have put into the SON’s capital campaign funding for the development of the newly created Center for Global Health Nursing, which is envisioned as a venue through which PhD and DNP students will be involved with research, translation of research into practice, clinical practice opportunities, quality improvement work, and policy work that will advance nursing care and nursing science globally. As a reflection of the fourth pillar, the SON this past year developed an organizational plan for the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion in institutional structures, practices, and pedagogy. During that part of the site visit devoted to an interview with Diversity Committee, it was evident to the Review Committee that the SON’s representation of the Diversity Committee was broad and inclusive and that the members, while being quite

cognizant of the challenges inherent to the advancement of diversity, equity and inclusion in a complex organization. The Diversity Committee members also are confident they have the full and unqualified support of the SON's leadership.

#### 4. Excellence in Nursing Science Research

The SON's legacy of excellence in nursing science research is sustained by a top notch research faculty, a rigorous PhD program that attracts outstanding doctoral students, and a robust research infrastructure. The latter is represented in research laboratories that have the technology and expertise to support a wide range of health science investigations and an Office of Nursing Research that employs several consultants who offer students and faculty expert consultation on health and social science methodologies, statistics, and study design. The "modeling parties", organized by the Office of Nursing Research for faculty and doctoral students to gain critical feedback as they develop research proposals, enhance the competitiveness of the SON's funding proposals and help to develop the conceptualization and measurement skills of new investigators. This approach to the fostering of the scientific rigor and competitiveness of research proposals has also been emulated by other departments at the UW. With respect to the SON laboratory infrastructure, the Review Committee was particularly impressed with not only the range of wet and bio-behavioral lab capacities, but also the laboratory training available to students through the teaching and technical expertise of the laboratory scientists.

#### 5. A Culture of Interprofessional Education, Collaboration, Leadership and Research

A remarkable attribute of the SON is the extent to which the SON has continuously promoted and been an integral partner in efforts to expand opportunities for interprofessional practice education, cross-disciplinary collaborative research, and SON faculty have typically taken a leadership role in these kinds of endeavors. The SON is noted for its leadership of the groundbreaking the Health Sciences Interdisciplinary Clinical Education initiative that for many years sustained courses in interdisciplinary practice that included students and faculty from all six of the UW Health Science schools, and the SON is currently working with other Health Science schools to strengthen the commitment to and sustained support of interdisciplinary practice education through a new organizational model that would support interdisciplinary clinical practice activities in classroom/simulation labs, and the community. The SON, perhaps more than any other health science school, has very deliberately build interprofessional practice into its core curriculum competencies. As part of its infrastructure investments, the SON is partnering with other health science schools in the potential development of an interdisciplinary component that will be part of the expansion of its clinical simulation labs.

## 6. Continuous Quality Improvement in its Educational Mission

The Review Committee was very impressed with the SON's extensive and systematic assessment of student learning and satisfaction with instruction and advising support across all degree programs, and the SON's incorporation of the findings from the various assessment tools in its evaluation and continuous quality improvement of each degree program's curriculum, instruction, and student advising and support functions. During the course of the site visit, the Review Committee requested and was provided student feedback evaluative data for all degree programs for the past several years in addition to an overview of the SON's student level and program level evaluative structure and methodologies by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Aside from noting that the student feedback data was generally highly favorable across degree programs in almost all domains of inquiry, the Review Committee shares the collective judgment that students are being asked the right questions at the right points of their learning and matriculation process. The SON is also has a very sound strategy for achieving high response rates through participation incentives and direct personalized e-mailing from the Dean.

## 7. Outreach to Underserved Populations and Communities

Consistent in its commitment to the advancement of equity in research, education and service discussed under Point 3 (Strategic Vision and Direction), the SON has an impressive array of clinical training sites that encompass rural communities, veterans and active military, Native Americans in urban settings and tribal communities, local and state correctional facilities for men and for women, the tent cities of Seattle's urban landscape, health clinics targeting homeless youth, and in partnership with organizations serving a range of ethnic and racial groups that comprise the underserved. Aside from the direct health care provided to the underserved populations and communities, the SON is training nurses at all levels of practice in the ethics and the art and science of providing health care to the underserved -and by extension clinical practice that targets the reduction of health and health care disparities. This aspect of the SON's training and service is a direct manifestation of the SON's Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, which speaks to (under Strategy 6.5) "the [use of] clinical placements and service-learning opportunities to enhance experiences with equity, diversity, and inclusion among faculty, staff, and students." It seems to the Review Committee that the SON's outreach to underserved populations and communities is also complimentary (if not essential) to that aspect of the SON's Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion that addresses strategies for the recruitment of students from underserved groups and communities.

## 8. IT Infrastructure and Vision

The SON's IT infrastructure is represented organizationally by its Technology Innovations in Education and Research (or TIER) division, which has a structure that is well aligned with its

core functions in information systems operations and instructional media and technologies. In its interviews with the students, faculty and staff of the SON, the TIER division and its staff were consistently referred to as essential, responsive, and innovative. In its wide-ranging interview with the TIER division's leadership, the Review Committee was quite impressed with the range of challenges being grappled with in matters such as health and student information security, transforming administrative computing services, aligning learning technology with the pedagogical goals and addressing very different levels of technology use skills among both full and part-time instructors. The strategic priorities for the development of IT infrastructure are well articulated and a great deal of progress has been made over the past two years. What struck the Review Committee members in particular was the coherence of the TIER leadership's strategic vision with the over-all School Strategic Plan.

#### 9. The Staff of the SON

It is evident to the Review Committee that the students and faculty of the SON hold the staff in high regard, and that from an operational perspective the SON is a well-functioning organization—reflecting the competence and the commitment of staff at all levels. More than doing their jobs well, the staff the Review Committee encountered both casually and in the context of formal interviews reflected an “all in” perspective with respect to their employment at the SON—that is, a narrative of their work and perceived contributions to the organization that communicated a strong personal investment in the vision and the mission of the school. While this level of personal investment might in part be attributed to the SON leadership's philosophy of transparency and shared governance, clearly the SON has also been very successful with respect to the recruitment and retention of dedicated staff.

#### 10. The Students of the SON

Throughout the site visit the Review Committee met with and observed nursing students who were passionate about their careers and passionate about their learning. There is an unmistakable vibe in the learning spaces of the SON, a kind of collective energy and embracement of “nurse as self” and nursing as a profession. The Review Team witnessed this in the clinical simulation labs, in conversations with students who spoke of learning to “think like a nurse”, and in the ways in which students across all degree programs spoke of their career experiences and aspirations. More objectively, the strength of the student body in the SON is evidenced in the robust applicant pools for both the clinical practice and academic degree programs, in high retention and graduation rates as well as recruitment of graduates to other Schools of Nursing and healthcare positions. Passionate students are in large part the product of selectivity in recruitment, but they are also a reflection of curricular rigor and inspired teaching and mentoring.



## **B. Challenges the UW School of Nursing Confronts**

As identified in the Self-Study and through the Site Visit process, the Review Committee finds that the SON is grappling with a number of formidable challenges to the full realization of its strategic vision and also the long term sustainability of its high standards of excellence in research, education, and public service. While there is no particular rank ordering of the identified challenges that the Review Committee highlights, we begin with a very significant sustainability challenge that was identified by the 2005 Review Committee –the sustainability of SON’s national leadership in faculty.

### **1. The Impending Retirement of Senior Faculty and Prospects for Replenishment**

While the 2005 Review Committee Report noted that 40% of the SON’s senior faculty would be expected to retire within the decade and some faculty did indeed retire, the SON and the UW academic community at large has benefited from the career longevity of several of the UW SON’s senior faculty who represent both leadership at the SON and also leadership in the national nursing academy. The SON is now at the precipice with the current and imminent retirement of many senior faculty, and the prospects for replenishment are very uncertain if not even quite guarded. The Review Committee finds that at the SON, as elsewhere at the UW, there is a gap between the normative career progression of junior faculty over several years and the declining availability of senior faculty to provide the mentoring support essential for career progression. Although this gap might be mitigated with the external recruitment of mid-career faculty and senior faculty from other institutions, this solution conflicts with both the budgetary resources of the SON and what the Review Committee understands as a university-wide strategy to recruit faculty solely at the junior level. Another significant impediment to faculty replenishment is the SON’s inability to compete for the top faculty candidates with the leading schools of nursing able to provide for 11 to 12 months appointment. There is a strong consensus among the external members of the Review Committee, each representing a leading school of nursing, that the SON’s 9 month appointment model places the SON at a significant competitive disadvantage in the recruitment of the next generation of leaders in nursing science and education. This jeopardizes the UW SON’s future as a top ranked school of nursing and its capacity to sustain the excellence in research in nursing science, education, and national leadership that has for decades defined the UW SON. This would be a terrible loss for the UW, the State of Washington and also for the nursing academy and profession.

### **2. Recruitment and Retention of Clinical Faculty**

The recruitment and retention of the clinical faculty that are the life’s blood of the professional degree programs at the SON will, for the foreseeable future, be challenged by the ability of the SON to pay competitive salaries relative to the clinical practice labor market. A second challenge has to do with the ability to structure part-time faculty appointments in ways that accommodate the demands of full-time clinical careers. The consolidation of part-time positions into full-time

appointments with multi-year contracts to the extent feasible is one approach to at least the second challenge identified, but that introduces another challenge -the need to create a career ladder for clinical faculty and other teaching faculty that not only recognizes achievement of excellence but also provides clinical and other non-tenure track teaching faculty with a discernable career trajectory. The Review Committee found the clinical and other teaching faculty to be highly energetic, impressive in their knowledge of pedagogy, and deeply committed to their teaching role –but also troubled and to some degree demoralized by the tenuous nature of their SON appointments, their lack of faculty voting rights, the murkiness of their professional futures at the SON. While it can be said that the clinical and other teaching faculty appear to feel generally appreciated and respected by their tenure track faculty colleagues (and certainly by their students), the Review Committee finds that the retention of current clinical and other teaching faculty and the success of future recruitment is uncertain in absence of more career predictability and governance inclusion. In this vein, there is also a large question around the feasibility of a tenure-track model for doctoral level clinical faculty based on contributions to clinical practice innovations and clinical practice pedagogy as opposed to nursing science research.

### 3. Needed Investments in Educational Mission Infrastructure

It has long been known, and certainly acknowledged in the SON Self-Study, that the current physical environment and teaching spaces (both in classroom and simulation spaces) are antiquated and inadequate both for contemporary teaching and learning needs/strategies and for anticipated future growth. The state legislature's \$4m allocation to the renovation and expansion of the SON's clinical simulation lab is certainly an exciting and welcome development, but more substantial investments in both physical space renovation/expansion and in the IT infrastructure for teaching, including distance teaching, are essential for current as well as future needs—such as, the classrooms that are designed for interactive as opposed to didactic pedagogy. The Review Committee recognizes that the public funding prospects for major renovations of the teaching spaces in the Health Sciences complex pose a formidable challenge for not only the SON but the other health science schools -and in addition that the SON is on the verge of entering the public phase of the UW's capital campaign with an SON funding target of \$40m over five years that will hopefully yield the resources to address these infrastructure needs. We highlight the urgency of making these investments as an essential requisite to the SON's capacity to sustain excellence in its teaching mission and in particular its ability to meet future nursing workforce demands.

### 4. Student Recruitment and Student Body Diversity

The Review Committee acknowledges that all of the schools of health sciences are challenged to increase the diversity of the next generation of health care providers. The SON has been making significant efforts to not only recruit students from under-represented groups, including those from a under-represented SES communities, but also in their work to promote an environment

that embraces diversity in all its dimensions, fosters inclusion, and ensures academic success. These goals and specific strategies to achieve them are highlighted in the SON's newly drafted Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Review Committee is deeply impressed with the level of commitment evidenced in our interviews with the student recruitment staff and the broader faculty and leadership. However, outreach to under-represented communities requires funding for recruitment efforts –there is no substitute for having SON recruitment staff and SON students physically present in the communities and places where hopes and possibilities can be inspired and relationships formed. Currently that funding is woefully inadequate. A second resource need is adequate financial support for students in all degree programs, inasmuch as aspirations can only be linked to possibilities to the extent that education at the SON is made affordable to low income students. As stated in the SON's Self-Study: "Virtually all well-qualified diverse (under-represented) candidates will be courted by multiple major schools of nursing, each offering significant financial aid" (p. 9). The Review Committee notes that the SON's Strategy MAP highlights scholarship and student financial aid resources, as does the SON's Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Aside from the multiple funding streams for student financial aid/scholarships that the SON Self-Study identifies as current and potential resources, the Review Committee also heard a very strong interest from the SON's Advisory Board in partnering with the SON's leadership in strategies to enhance the fund raising potential of SON alumni and their connections with large dollar donors. There are also particular recruitment and student funding challenges that are specific to the PhD program that will be expanded upon in the section devoted to the PhD Program.

The Review Committee notes that both the Student and Academic Services and the faculty recognize that to the extent that the SON is successful in recruiting students from under-represented groups and communities, there will be need for additional academic support services to ensure that success in recruitment is matched by success in retention. It has been the experience of the members of the Review Committee that the public university must embrace becoming an extension of the K-12 public education system in order for students from under-resourced communities to make the transition to the academic demands of a first rate education.

## 5. Challenges Specific to the PhD Program

The UW's SON continues to be regarded nationally as a top ranked program for the training of the next generation of nurse scientists, and the applicant pool remains highly competitive. However, as pointed out in the SON's Self-Study, the inability of the SON to provide a full funding package to potential PhD program recruits places the SON at significant competitive disadvantage relative to its peer institutions –where full funding is the norm. The Review Committee concurs that unless the SON and the university can be more successful in its efforts to fully fund PhD students through such resources as government agencies, foundations, donors, teaching assistantships and research funding it will fall behind its peer institutions in the

recruitment of the future cohorts of PhD students that represent both potential for excellence and diversity. While the PhD Program has an appreciative number of men and aggregate Asian students enrolled; the Review Committee notes that in terms of under-represented minorities, the PhD program appears to be the least diverse –and it is hard to see how the PhD program can increase its under-represented student diversity without the capacity to offer full funding. A full funding package can be comprised of a potpourri of funding sources including pre-doctoral grants, teaching assistantships, research assistantships and targeted scholarships –both prospective PhD students and matriculating students primarily need the predictability of year-to-year funding more than they need their individually preferred options for funding.

In its conversations with PhD students, the Review Committee was struck by what seems to be a disconnect between the students' vision of their post-PhD career and their preparation for teaching. That is, while all of the PhD students interviewed envisioned a different balance between the roles of research scientist and educator, all embraced the expectation that their careers would involve a significant teaching role. In this vein, the Review Committee notes that while the Self-Study speaks of “general support that all PhD students should have mentored experiences in teaching, whether through paid TA positions and/or volunteer teaching experiences” (pp. 21-22), as yet there does not appear to be a systematic approach to teaching preparation –such as a required teaching seminar and a defined progression of teaching experiences. This concern was highlighted in the 2005 Program Review Report (pp. 8-9) and it was the basis of a specific recommendation that the “SON engage in a critical appraisal of the curricular supports available on behalf of those students, particularly PhD students, likely to have teaching responsibilities to assure they have the experience and tools needed to experience success in that role” (see Recommendation No. 5, p 11). While the Review Committee is cognizant of some challenging tensions between sustaining a high standard of excellence in scientific training and adequate preparation for success at teaching, we do not view these two domains of doctoral training to be incompatible, but rather complementary activities required of future nursing faculty members.

There is another PhD curricular challenge that relates to the conflict between the 3 year PhD curriculum and mandated time to completion for Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) pre-doctoral fellows, and the traditional 4.5 year time to completion trajectory that has long provided more opportunities for depth and breadth of scientific preparation and has been the lens through which faculty advise students. Both the RWJF and the non-RWJF PhD expressed a sense of tension and conflicting expectations between these two models of doctoral preparation co-existing within the same curriculum and within the same student cohorts –with some worrying that neither group of students was being well served by a one-size fits all curricular approach. In addition, the accelerated 3 year PhD curriculum appears to incompatible with doctoral program faculty that are funded for educational purposes only 9 months of the year –in effect meaning

that faculty mentors are either unavailable or uncompensated for 9 months of the 36 month doctoral program.

The Review Committee recognizes that the SON can address these challenges as the school implements its updating and revision of the PhD Program (as referred to on p. 18 of the Self-Study).

#### 6. Optimal Sizing of the DNP Program and the Future of the MN Program

It is the consensus of the Review Committee that the DNP 2.0 curriculum was soundly envisioned and has been implemented with degree program integrity and coherence. This judgement is validated by the *U.S. News and World Report* 2016 Annual Ranking of Schools of Nursing, which as highlighted previously ranked the UW DNP program as first in the entire nation. As DNP continues to attract capable student practitioners and builds upon its faculty, training site, and learning environment infrastructure the SON's leadership must grapple with the question of optimal sizing –that is how to strike the right balance between workforce needs and the sustainability of excellence in training. The former involves a deep understanding of trends in health care workforce demands and innovations in nursing practice, and the latter concerns the resources required in tuition subsidies, faculty, learning space infrastructure, clinical placements and also the ways in which hybrid teaching (online and classroom venues) can be optimized for pedagogical effectiveness and adaptability to the personal and professional career demands placed on DNP students. The Review Committee has no specific recommendations to offer on this question, other than to be vigilant about the diminishing returns to program growth that emerge as resources become stretched to the point of undermining programmatic excellence.

A related issue, is the uncertain future of the Master's in Nursing (MN) for Community Health Nursing (CHN), which has over the past 5 years seen a 37% decrease in fall term enrollment, due in large part to the shift of advanced nursing practice (APRN) credentialing to the DNP -which represents both a consensus at the national level and also a decision by the faculty in 2012 that the DNP be the only entry point for APRN preparation. Although the SON's MN continues to prepare CHN specialists and the SON considers the MN a key opportunity for CHN students to gain international experience, all three of the external members of the Review Committee (as experts in nursing practice trends) believe the MN's future to be fraught with ambiguity as the scope of DNP roles evolve and as health care organizations shape and negotiate their preferences for the credentialing of their nursing workforce and leadership. There are also issues related to the ability/desire of a segment of the current nursing workforce to commit to the three year DNP program if their career aspirations can be fulfilled by an MN. While there are many possible futures for the MN (including for CHN practice combination MN/MPH preparation), it is the consensus of the Review Committee that no one at this point can discern what that future will be. However, given MN enrollment trends and competing resource demands from the other degree programs, certainly a very hard look at the sustainability of the MN program at the Seattle campus must be a consideration.

### 7. Curricular Resources Challenges the BSN/ABSN Programs are De-Merged

As the SON rolls out the redesigned BSN 2.0 curriculum, the SON at the same time will be creating a stand-alone ABSN program. There are sound pedagogical reasons for this, as evidenced by among other things in the narratives of both BSN and ABSN students (heard by the Review Committee in their interviews with the BSN/ABSN students) that the learning contexts of the curricular overlaps between the two degree programs did not work well for either group of students. In particular, the ABSN students felt that instructors expected them to “think like a nurse” in absence of the immersion in nursing education that BSN students had already been exposed to. The BSN students, for their part, felt that some of the overlapping courses were being “remedialized” to accommodate the slower learning trajectories of the ABSN students. While the development of a stand-alone ABSN curriculum makes sense in pedagogical terms, the Review Committee has concerns about how the already stretched faculty, classroom, and clinical site resources will be transitioned to ensure the sustainability of two separate programs. We recognize the BSN Curriculum Committee has begun planning for separating the curricula, changes in sequencing of courses, and the challenges involved in juggling the roll outs of both the BSN 2.0 and the new ABSN curriculum (as yet un-envisioned).

### **III. RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **A. Degree Program Review Recommendations**

##### **1. That Both the ABSN and the BSN Programs be Reviewed in 5 Years**

As suggested under point seven in the section devoted to Challenges, the Review Committee shares a concern that the transition to both the BSN 2.0 and a stand-alone ABSN will significantly stretch the already strained faculty, learning space and clinical site resources of the SON, which may in turn undermine the learning outcomes of both degree programs. This is not a prediction, but rather a serious concern that invites a systematic appraisal of the success of this transition. In light of this concern, the Committee recommends that the SON submit a 5-year report to the Graduate School Dean and Graduate School Council that responds to the following points of information:

- How the curricular learning requirements, structure, and process of matriculation of the new stand-alone ABSN program are either consistent with and or different from the ABSN program from the version observed in the 2016 10-year review.
- What measures have been taken by the SON to both address the strain on the BSN/ABSN faculty, learning infrastructure, and clinical site resources observed in the 2016 10-year review, and then to ensure that these resource domains are sufficient to sustain both the BSN 2.0 program and the stand-alone ABSN program (such as it has been developed and implemented subsequent to the 2016 10-Year review).
- How the SON assessed the effectiveness of the above referenced measures in achieving their aims.
- How the transition to the BNS 2.0 and the stand-alone ABSN programs has affected student and faculty perceptions of the quality of each program, as well as the core student learning outcomes.
- How the SON would summarize both the gains and losses from this transition.

##### **2. That the MN and the MS Degree Programs be Reviewed in 10 Years**

The Review Committee had no findings that would suggest that Master of Science degree program should be reviewed within the next 10 years –indeed the SON’s MS program appears quite robust both in its curricular structure and learning outcomes. While the Review Committee identified some significant challenges with respect to discerning the evolutionary direction of the

MN degree, the workforce demand trends, and perhaps even its long term sustainability/viability, the Review Committee does not believe an earlier review mandate will be helpful until there is more regional and national consensus on the future of the MN degree and the framework through which an MN degree curriculum should be evaluated. At the point that the SON is able answer some of these large questions about the future of the MN degree and perhaps redesign its curriculum accordingly, an earlier than 10 year review then could be reconsidered.

### 3. That the DNP Degree Program be Reviewed in 10 Years

While the Review Committee has identified some challenges with respect to the optimal sizing of the DNP program and also acknowledges some SON revenue challenges as the DNP program shifts from a fee-based to tuition-based financing, we are impressed with the coherence and rigor of the DNP 2.0 curriculum and the success of its implementation.

### 4. That the PhD Program be Reviewed in 5 Years

Despite its legacy as a top tier PhD Program that has trained many of the best and brightest of the nation's nurse scientists and educators, as acknowledged under Point 5 in the Challenges section of this report that there are significant issues to be grappled with in the immediate future pertaining to the curricular structure, the adequacy of funding for PhD students in terms of competitive recruitment and student diversity goals, and the balance between preparation for research and educator roles. The SON's plans to undertake an updating and redesign of its PhD Program offers the opportunity to systematically address each of these challenges, and the Review Committee recommends that the SON provide a 5-report to the Graduate School Dean and Council that illuminates the ways in which the SON has sought to address them. The specific challenges and points of information that this 5-Year report should cover include:

- The strategies and related actions that have been implemented to develop a full-funding package for PhD students commiserate with the competitive funding packages of the SON's peer institutions.
- The strategies and related actions that the SON has undertaken to increase the recruitment and matriculation of students of PhD students from under-represented minorities and any evidence pertaining to the success of these strategies/actions.
- Those aspects of the PhD Program's curricular structure and student funding mechanisms that have been developed to provide all PhD students with a systematic approach to teaching preparation, individualized to the extent reasonably possible commiserate with students' aspirations and likely career paths.



- How the curricular structure of the revised PhD program either accommodates or reconciles the conflicts that were evident in the 2016 10-year review between the 3-year PhD curriculum mandated by the RWJF pre-doctoral fellowship program and the more comprehensive 4-5 year curricular and matriculation path that has been the normative tradition of the SON's PhD program.

## **B. General Recommendations**

### **1. Support the Graduate Faculty Proposal to Discontinue the post-MS DNP**

The Review Committee concurs with the graduate faculty that there is little justification for the continuation of this degree option.

### **2. For the DNP Program, Consider Replacing the Term “Capstone Project” with “DNP Project”**

The external members of the Review Committee note that there is a national consensus within the nursing academy that the term “DNP Project” be used to promote the search term consistency and dissemination of new nursing practice knowledge developed from the DNP culmination projects –as opposed to “Capstone Project” which is a broad and ambiguous term that is inclusive of even undergraduate liberal arts projects. From the Review Committee's understanding, the use of the term “Capstone” for a matriculation project is not a requirement imposed by the UW Graduate School.

### **3. For the PhD Program Redesign, Incorporate a Systematic Approach to Preparation for Teaching**

The basis for this recommendation is explained under Point 5 in the Challenges section of the report. Such a systematic approach would include opportunities for students to take courses on curriculum development and evaluation, teaching pedagogy and related strategies to enhance and assess learning, increased opportunities and a scaffolded progression of teaching assistant appointments and independent instruction, and the addition of questions on teaching aspirations and preparation on the evaluative component of the PhD Program. The Review Committee also sees a stronger teaching preparation component in the PhD Program as a convergence of opportunities to enhance not only career training, but also the capacity to fund more of PhD students' graduate education and ultimately to build upon the SON's commitment to increasing the diversity of the next generations of nursing scientists and educators. In this vein, it seems readily apparent that to the extent that under-represented minority BSN students are directly exposed to under-represented minority PhD students, career aspirations are expanded and ignited.

4. Create Opportunities for Junior Faculty and Senior Faculty to Co-Teach in the PhD Program, as a Mechanism to Foster Faculty Development and Mentoring.

In its conversations with junior faculty, a salient theme was the desire to partner with senior faculty in the co-teaching of PhD courses both as a rewarding venue for junior faculty to disseminate their hard won specialized knowledge, and also a way to learn how to teach high level courses from their senior faculty colleagues and mentors. While it may be that some junior faculty will be hesitant to make their wishes to teach at the doctoral level known, the Review Committee believes that all would appreciate the creation of opportunities to do so.

5. Develop a Career Ladder Model for Clinical Faculty, Inclusive of Voting Rights and the Availability of Multi-Year Contracts.

This is an admittedly omnibus recommendation that incorporates the clinical faculty recruitment and retention concerns identified under Point 2 in section of the report pertaining to Challenges. It speaks to the needs of SON's indispensable clinical faculty to have a clear vision of their career progression at the SON, the stability and predictability of multi-year contracts, and the shared power and sense of inclusion inherent to voting rights within the domains specific to their curricular responsibilities, definitive expertise, and career interests. The Review Committee highlights the point that the enactment of this recommendation is not a radical innovation, but rather it would place the UW SON at par with other top ranked schools of nursing in its treatment of clinical faculty.

6. Restore the 11 Month Appointment Model as the Norm for SON Full-time Tenure Track Faculty Contract

As fully explained under Point 1 in the section on Challenges, with its inability to offer at least 11 month appointments, the SON is at significant competitive disadvantage relative to its peer institutions for the recruitment of the crème de la crème of junior faculty. This of course has everything to do with the UW SON's retention of its place as a top tier school. The Review Committee very deliberately refers to move to an 11 month appointment model as a restoration, because as highlighted in the 2005 Review Committee Report (pp. 4-5), the university's move of SON faculty from an 11-month appointment to a 9-month appointment model (now more than two decades ago) was made as a mechanism to fund a zero sum salary increase –with the expectation that the faculty could be funded during the summer with teaching and related activities. As explained in more detail in the 2005 Review Committee Report, this funding option quickly disappeared when the university placed summer courses under the new Educational Outreach division, which over time placed summer teaching into the hands of the lecturers and very junior faculty. More recently, declining NIH funding makes the summer salary prospects for faculty even more dismal. The findings from this Review Committee, also as with the 2005

Review Committee report, note that the 9 month faculty appointment model is incompatible with the 12 month operations of clinical training sites and also the summer advising and mentoring of doctoral students that is essential to their development and progression toward timely degree completion. Remarkably, the findings of the 2005 Review Committee pertaining to this recommendation could be adopted word for word to the findings of this current Review Committee –with only the caveat that the faculty recruitment needs for the SON are now more immediate and the competitive position of the UW SON’s recruitment efforts even more compromised relative to its peer institutions than was the case a decade ago. The latter is true because: 1) the 11 month contract is the norm among top ranked SON’s the UW must compete against in the recruitment of top notch junior faculty, 2) with the decline nationally in NIH funding of summer salaries the 11 month salary guarantee is even more of a recruitment incentive, and 3) the escalating costs of housing in Seattle relative to junior faculty salaries. In light of these realities, the Review Committee strongly urges the development of a career ladder model which includes competitive 11 or 12 month faculty contracts to ensure the SON’s faculty recruitment efforts are in line with competing SONs and universities.