

UW Oshkosh and UW-Eau Claire to explore doctoral program for nurses

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<http://www.uwosh.edu/today/914/uw-oshkosh-and-uw-eau-claire-to-explore-doctoral-program-for-nurses/>

The nursing programs at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and UW-Eau Claire will begin planning a collaborative doctorate of nursing practice program, a program that will help advanced practice nurses in Wisconsin meet new educational requirements.

Beginning in 2015, advanced practice nurses will be required to have a practice doctorate as entry level; currently a master's is required.

Neither UW Oshkosh nor UW-Eau Claire has UW System approval to award doctoral degrees so the universities needed an entitlement from the Board of Regents to plan the DNP program. The entitlement — granted by the Board of Regents this spring — allows the campuses to begin planning a doctoral degree. The board will later have to approve the program.

It is expected to take 18 months for the program to be planned.

“The ability to offer a practice doctorate degree for nurses seeking advanced practice degrees is very important for UW Oshkosh,” said Roxana Huebscher, graduate program director for the College of Nursing at UW Oshkosh. “It allows us to meet the needs of nurses already in the field, as well as those students who are pursuing advanced practice.”

It has been exciting to work with nursing colleagues at Oshkosh and the UW System to create the opportunity to develop, and in the future offer, the DNP, said Elaine Wendt, dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at UW-Eau Claire.

“The DNP will prepare nurses to practice in the complex health care environment that now exists and to influence needed change in our health care system,” Wendt said, noting this will be the first doctoral degree offered by UW-Eau Claire. “The need for advanced practice nursing in our region is vast and UW-Eau Claire is poised to help meet that need through this new program.”

The program will be collaborative in nature but students will select a home campus from which the degree is awarded. Students in the program also can select some online coursework from UW-Milwaukee and UW-Madison.

The nursing programs plan to offer a bridge curriculum for nurses with master's degrees in nursing practice, which would take approximately three semesters of full-time work to complete.