

Agenda  
College of Health and Human Services  
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

Date: October 28, 2013

Time: 10:30 AM

Location: AC 201D

- I. Old Business:
  - a. Minutes from previous meetings: Sept. 30, 2013
- II. New Business:

Type of Item	Description in Item and Contact Information
Action	Proposal to Create a New Academic Degree Type Associate of Science in Nursing Contact: Dr. Mary Bennett, <a href="mailto:mary.bennett@wku.edu">mary.bennett@wku.edu</a> , 745-3590

- III. Discussion:
- IV. Upcoming Meeting Dates: (note: items going to PEC may be delayed going to UCC and Senate)  
UCC- October 24, 2013 (**Proponents are required to attend**)  
Senate- November 21, 2013  
**Next CHHS Undergraduate Meeting- October 28, 2013 (Items due to [chhs.curriculum@wku.edu](mailto:chhs.curriculum@wku.edu) by October 16, 2013.**

**College of Health and Human Services  
School of Nursing  
Proposal to Create a New Academic Degree Type  
(Action Item)**

Contact Person: Dr. Mary Bennett, mary.bennett@wku.edu, 270-745-3590

**1. Identification Academic Degree Type:**

- 1.1 Academic degree type name: Associate of Science in Nursing
- 1.2 Standard degree type abbreviation: ASN
- 1.3 Catalog description of academic degree type: The Associate of Science in Nursing is an entry-level degree for nursing. It prepares the graduate to be a registered nurse who can practice in a variety of settings and who has the knowledge base to pursue the Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

**2. Rationale:**

- 2.1 Reason for developing the proposed academic degree type:

At WKU we currently have an Associate of Science degree with a major in Nursing. This proposal is not to create a new program, but to change the way we refer to our current program. The Associate of Science with a major in Nursing program has been referred to informally as the "Associate Degree program" and abbreviated ADN in documents dating back to the inception of the program. But Associate Degree is a generic term which could apply to many types of 2 year programs (dental hygiene and others). In addition, ADN is not a recognized degree type at the national or state level. Finally, the majority of Associate degree nursing programs in this state are not Associate of Science degree programs but are only Associate of Applied Science Programs (AAS). This has created confusion and transfer problems for our graduates, who have more general education and overall credit hours than students graduating from other "Associate Degree Nursing" programs but are lumped together with the AAS students when they try to enter BSN programs.

This problem was noted when the Associate of Science in Nursing Program merged with the School of Nursing in July 2011 but at that time was not addressed. This problem was highlighted when we turned in program documents to our accreditors for an update report on the merger, who questioned why we referred to our Associate of Science in Nursing program as an ADN and why our documents went back and forth between the correct title ASN, and the generic AD or ADN title. When we tried to correct this by switching to the abbreviation to ASN in all our internal documents, we were told by the registrar's office and those who work with the catalog that since we had not applied to have an ASN degree, we could not refer to the Associate of Science with a major in Nursing program as an ASN program. Thus, this change would more accurately depict the degree that is being awarded.

- 2.2 Document need for academic degree type for professional certification, program accreditation, licensure, career advancement, and/or higher education in the academic field:

The School of Nursing is seeking clarification and consistency of terminology among the programs. After speaking to the Office of the Registrar, it is necessary formally to create a new academic degree type in order to use Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) in any and all documents. The ASN abbreviation is the correct description of the program we have at WKU, and will be less likely to be confused with the lower level Associate of Applied Science (AAS). The School of Nursing requests that the Associate of Science in Nursing program be abbreviated ASN. ASN is consistent with the other programs in the School of Nursing, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) and the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN). Further, the Associate of Science in Nursing program's next accreditation visit is Spring 2015 making this clarification and consistency of terminology imperative. WKU has one of the few actual Associate of Science in Nursing programs in the State, but this fact is often lost as we keep referring to ourselves by the generic term "Associate Degree Program". This also affects our student's ability to transfer into BSN completion programs, because the AAS does not transfer as many hours as an ASN program.

- 2.3 List other universities in Kentucky and other states (including programs at benchmark institutions) offering this academic degree type:

In Kentucky, there are 28 schools that offer some type of associate degree in nursing. Of those 28, 15 are in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), which offer the technically focused AAS degree in nursing. Unlike WKU, other universities in Kentucky which still have a 2 year nursing program refer to their programs as Associate of Science Nursing (ASN) programs and offer the ASN degree. These Universities include Eastern Kentucky University, Lincoln Memorial University, Midway College, and University of Pikeville. The other Universities in Kentucky which offer a nursing degree have moved away from the 2 year nursing degree in favor of the BSN or higher degree nursing programs.

- 2.4 Evidence that this academic degree type is recognized by relevant professional organization(s), regional accreditor (s), and/or the Department of Education:

All of the schools listed in 2.3 are accredited by the same agency as our Associate of Science with a major in Nursing program, the Accreditation Commission for Nursing Education (ACEN). This indicates that the ASN is the preferred degree for accreditation. In addition, requests that we clean up our language by our accrediting agencies indicates that while our current degree type of Associate of Science with a major in nursing is a recognized type of nursing degree, the current catalog and other references to this program as the Associate Degree program or ADN program is not acceptable by

our accrediting agency. This is why we need to change the generic term ADN to the accepted reference of Associate of Science in Nursing or ASN program.

- 2.5 Relationship of the proposed degree type to other academic degree types now offered by the university:

Western Kentucky University confers four associate degrees: Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science, and Associate of Interdisciplinary Studies. The ASN would be unique to nursing aligning it with the other prelicensure nursing degree at the university, the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

- 2.6 Current WKU major(s) qualifying for this degree type: Nursing: Major code 273

- 2.7 Projected number of annual graduates in the proposed degree type:

Ninety students annually based on current graduation rates from our Associate of Science program. While this form is a proposal to create a new degree, we are not creating a new program. We are asking to change the way we refer to our current Associate of Science with a major in Nursing from the "Associate Degree Program in Nursing (ADN)" to the nationally recognized title for Associate of Science in Nursing, which is ASN. This would also allow the degree type of ASN to be on student transcripts to help ease transfer problems for students who later seek to obtain a BSN or MSN.

**3. Proposed term for implementation: Fall 2014**

**4. Dates of prior committee approvals:**

School of Nursing	<u>Aug 30, 2013</u>
CHHS Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	<u></u>
Consultation with CPE through Provost's Office	<u>October 15, 2013</u>
Undergraduate Curriculum Committee	<u></u>
University Senate	<u></u>
Board of Regents	<u></u>