

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNIVERSITY: University of Arizona (UA)

PROGRAM FEE REQUEST

College/School: College of Nursing

Department: College of Nursing

Program: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) & Ph.D. Program

Is this for the graduate level, undergraduate level or all levels?

GRADUATE LEVEL UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL ALL LEVELS

Is this a new program fee or an increase to an existing program fee?

NEW PROGRAM FEE Amount requested: \$

EXISTING PROGRAM FEE

Current Fee: \$2,000 per semester Requested Fee: \$2,600 per semester

BACKGROUND:

An increase from a special program fee of \$2,000 per semester, to a program fee of \$2,600 per semester, for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Ph.D. programs is proposed for the College of Nursing. The program fees will be used to enhance and sustain the specialized educational environment existing within the College for clinical simulation (Steele Innovative Learning Center). In addition, program fees will be used to offset escalating costs for clinical supplies, expand computer lab technology resources, support new methods for teaching and learning, and enable the College to hire and retain high caliber faculty. Nursing, consistent with other clinical disciplines, incurs higher instructional costs. Doctor of Nursing Practice students require clinical preceptors for internship experiences and the cost for this oversight is increasing over time. As well, Doctor of Nursing Practice students must track their clinical exposures to ensure adequate breadth and depth of experience and the tracking software is costly and resource intensive to administer. Students enrolled in both the DNP and Ph.D. programs receive all of their didactic coursework via the D2L on line learning platform. The faculty development and support, technical support for students, hardware and software and other personnel costs of the online learning program account for significant expenses that have escalated over time.

DISCUSSION:

Access: The College of Nursing remains committed to providing access to Ph.D. and DNP education for students seeking doctoral preparation to embark on careers as nurse scientists and nursing faculty as well as professional advanced practice nurse leaders. 20% of the fees will be set aside for financial aid to students who demonstrate need. The College of Nursing, through philanthropic sources, provides scholarships to a large number of graduate students and development efforts continue to focus upon student support.

Quality of Education: Ranked among the top 6% of nursing programs in the country, the College of Nursing is considered a leader in nursing education.

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Market Pricing and Cost: With the proposed program fee, the cost of these programs will rank in the middle third of the 2008-09 tuition and fees of our peers and remain highly affordable for doctoral nursing education. Peer institutions such as the University of Washington and the University of Iowa have in place a significant program differential for DNP education.

Affordability: The Ph.D. and DNP programs will remain highly affordable for students seeking doctoral preparation and advanced practice training within the context of a terminal degree program. Many students in the Ph.D. program will qualify for the federal Nurse Faculty Loan Program which provides significant scholarship support in the form of loans which may be forgiven when a student embarks upon a career as a faculty member in a College of Nursing at the University or Community College level. The DNP program is gaining momentum in student preference and the increase in the program fee should have limited deleterious impact upon the ability of students to afford this educational option.

Earnings Potential of Graduates: The market demand for nursing faculty members and advanced practice nursing professionals remains very strong. The earnings potential for an entry level nursing faculty member is \$65,000 to \$75,000. An advanced practice nurse with a nurse practitioner certification and a Doctor of Nursing Practice degree may expect a starting salary of \$85,000 to \$100,000.

Benefits to the University: The differential tuition fees will enable the College to maintain and enhance its Ph.D. and Doctor of Nursing Practice programs and continue its 50 year tradition of offering a nationally distinguished education in healthcare to meet the needs of the citizens of Arizona

Student Consultation and Support: Students enrolled in the Ph.D. and DNP programs are primarily off campus with on campus presence limited to the two week research intensive summer experience (RISE). Students are aware of the extensive and costly technology support associated with the maintenance of the programs and are generally supportive of fee increases in order to sustain and enhance the quality of their educational experience. All students with expressed financial need resulting from this increased program fee will be directed to the College of Nursing Office of Student Affairs. Every effort will be made to assuage any undue financial burden emanating from this fee increase.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Arizona Board of Regents is requested to approve an increase from a special program fee of \$2,000 per semester, to a program fee of \$2,600 per semester for the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) and Ph.D. programs.