MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 7, 2006

TO: David S. Watt, Ph.D.
   Associate Provost for Academic Affairs
   Chair, Health Care Colleges Council
   Deans, Department Chairs, Members of the University Senate

FROM: Carolyn A. Williams, PhD
       Dean, College of Nursing

       Juliann G. Sebastian, PhD
       Assistant Dean for Advanced Practice Nursing

SUBJECT: Pilot new track within the Master’s of Science in Nursing degree program:
         Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL)
         New Courses – NUR 753 and NUR 754
         Course Changes – NUR 900 and NUR 604

Faculty members in the College of Nursing have approved and submit for your approval
a request to pilot a new Clinical Nurse Leader track in the Masters of Science in
Nursing degree program in cooperation with the University of Kentucky Hospital.
This new track is consistent with a national initiative to introduce advanced
generalist nursing education at the masters degree level. The College of Nursing
is one of 90 groups of academic and clinical partners pilot testing this approach to
educating nurses at the graduate level to provide clinical leadership at the point of
care. The pilot project is a national initiative of the American Association of
Colleges of Nursing. This track will focus on clinical care provision with highly
complex patient populations at the point of care in a clinical unit, as well as
quality improvement and care coordination. The emphasis is not on nursing
management or administration. The partnership with the University of Kentucky
Hospital will provide a clinical environment in which students can learn the new
role and potentially be hired as Clinical Nurse Leaders upon graduation. The pilot
project will undergo both formative and summative evaluation. Potential students
will be told this is a pilot and will have the option of applying for an alternate
track within the MSN program based on eligibility and space availability. They
also will be provided the opportunity to enroll in one of the post-MSN Clinical

An Equal Opportunity University
Scholar options following graduation if they decide to pursue advanced practice clinical specialization.

Effective Date:

Fall 2006

Rationale:

Because clinical care delivery at the point of care has become so complex, both in patient acuity and in the processes of care delivery, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) in partnership with clinical organizations has concluded that addition of nurses prepared as generalists at the graduate level hold the potential to improve health outcomes. The AACN organized a national pilot program to develop, implement and evaluate graduate level clinical nurse leader tracks within masters of science in nursing degree programs in June, 2004. Both the U.S. Veterans Health Administration and the American Organization of Nurse Executives participate in the AACN Clinical Nurse Leader Implementation Task Force at the national level and have supported the need for this type of education and contributed to designing the national implementation plans. Ninety partnerships between schools of nursing and clinical agencies across the country are participating in designing and testing CNL tracks. The UK College of Nursing has participated in the national discussions and faculty members are now ready to pilot test a CNL track at UK.

This national initiative addresses the clinical complexity related to increasingly shorter lengths of stay for hospitalized individuals, rapid patient turnover and assuring patient safety. Those who are uninsured or underinsured often need help securing appropriate health services and care coordination to effectively navigate the care needed. Health promotion and disease management services demand high level understanding of behavioral, physiologic, and organizational sciences. While nurses prepared as specialists at the graduate level are highly effective working with specific patient populations, graduate level generalist knowledge is needed at the point of care for the multiple types of patients in hospital units, ambulatory clinics and long term care to name a few, and to provide clinical leadership for nurses working in these environments.

The Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) is a generalist masters-prepared nurse who provides expert clinical care to unit-based clients. The CNL is responsible not only for direct patient care but for improving clinical or client/family outcomes and enhancing unit-level nursing practice. The CNL is a formal leader in implementing, facilitating, and assuring quality patient care on a nursing unit. Clinical nurse leaders will provide direct patient care and clinical leadership for quality improvement, and collaborate with others to develop interdisciplinary initiatives to assure patient safety.

The curriculum for this track is 36 credits in length, thereby constituting a program change from the current MSN program that requires a minimum of 40 credits. The MSN program currently offers specialty tracks that prepare students as clinical nurse
specialists or nurse practitioners. Faculty concluded that **generalist** level graduate preparation could be provided within a 36 credit curriculum, consistent with the approach recommended by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing CNL Implementation Task Force.

Both formative and summative evaluations will be conducted as part of the pilot test and changes will be proposed as necessary through the normal University processes. Potential students have been and will continue to be informed that this is a pilot program. Students who decide they prefer to opt out of the generalist CNL track may apply to take the additional specialist courses which will prepare them for board certification as either clinical nurse specialists or nurse practitioners.

The proposed curriculum includes two courses from the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, NUR 900 “Process of Nursing Leadership” and NUR 901 “Nursing Leadership Through Effective Use of Self”. Approval is requested for awarding graduate credit for these two courses for students in this track. Addition of the Clinical Nurse Leader track also will require adding two courses, NUR 753 and NUR 754, and modifying two existing courses, NUR 900 and NUR 604. The new courses and modifications to existing courses are described below.

**Curriculum**

The curriculum for the proposed Clinical Nurse Leader pilot track is attached.

**Proposed New Courses**

**NUR 753 – Nursing Therapeutics and Clinical Outcomes (5 credits; 3 didactic, 2 clinical)**

In this course, students will focus on common clinical problems encountered on the nursing unit and on promoting optimal clinical outcomes for patients/families. Students will use evidence to select and improve clinical guidelines for patient care delivery. Students will recognize roles of the various members of the interdisciplinary team and will be able to coordinate and monitor care based on role responsibilities. Students will learn methods of measuring clinical outcomes and apply these to the nursing unit. Students will learn methods of quality improvement including variance analysis, continuous quality improvement techniques, and how to use teamwork to promote quality outcomes.

**NUR 754 – Clinical Nurse Leader Practicum (4 credits clinical)**

In this course, students will have the opportunity to practice as a clinical nurse leader (CNL) with precepted supervision from either a person in the CNL role or advanced practice nurses who practice in specific subsets of the role (e.g. the APN who is responsible for unit level quality management)
**Proposed Course Changes**

NUR 900 – Process of Nursing Leadership (current credit hour distribution: 3 credits; 2 credits seminar, 1 credit clinical; proposed credit hours 2-3 variable credits)

Faculty propose changing this to a variable credit course, for 2-3 credits. Students in the Clinical Nurse Leader MSN track would be required to take 2 credits of seminar. Students in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program in which the course is currently required, would continue taking the course for 3 credits. This will allow CNL Masters students to learn the leadership content necessary for their curriculum while preserving the clinical credit needed for the DNP students. None of the seminar content will change, although students in the two groups will be asked to orient their assignments toward their individual programs of study.

NUR 604 – Leadership in Advanced Practice Nursing (current credit hour distribution: 3 credits; proposed credit hours 2-3 variable credits)

Faculty propose modifying the credit hour distribution for this course from 3 credits to 2-3 credits. Students in the other MSN specialty tracks are required to take the course for three credits. Students in the CNL track would be required to take the course for two credits, focusing on generalist nursing leadership content. These students would not complete course modules and in-class work related to advanced practice nursing issues, certification and regulation, since those areas of the course would not apply to them. Course faculty will arrange the modules and class schedule to make permit CNL students to complete two credit hours of the course. The specific course objectives which CNL students would be expected to complete are described in the major course change form that is attached.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.
**UNIVERSITY SENATE REVIEW AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY SHEET**

**Proposal Titles:**
1. Clinical Nurse Leader Track, Masters of Science in Nursing degree program
2. New courses, NUR 753 and NUR 754
3. Course changes, NUR 900 and NUR 604

**Name/email/phone for proposal contact:** Juliann G. Sebastian, PhD  
*Assistant Dean for Advanced Practice Nursing*  
3-3304; jgseba00@uky.edu

**Instruction:** To facilitate the processing of this proposal please identify the groups or individuals reviewing the proposal, identify a contact person for each entry, provide the consequences of the review (specifically, approval, rejection, no decision and vote outcome, if any) and please attach a copy of any report or memorandum developed with comments on this proposal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviewed by: (Chairs, Directors, Faculty Groups, Faculty Councils, Committees, etc)</th>
<th>Contact person Name (phone/email)</th>
<th>Consequences of Review:</th>
<th>Date of Proposal Review</th>
<th>Review Summary Attached? (yes or no)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Clinical Nurse Leader Steering Committee | Dr. Sharon Barton  
CNL Steering Committee Chair  
3-6650  
Sjbart1@uky.edu | Final planning completed  
Final curriculum distributed for email approval | Dec. 19, 2005  
Feb. 8, 2006 | Yes, minutes attached  
No objections submitted by email |
| Masters Program Committee (MPC) | Dr. Sharon Lock  
MPC Chair, 2005-06  
3-2366  
Selock0@uky.edu | Recommended approval | Feb. 10, 2006 | Yes |
| College of Nursing Graduate Faculty | Dr. Sharon Lock  
MPC Chair, 2005-06  
3-2366  
Selock0@uky.edu | Graduate faculty voted approval | Feb. 10, 2006 | Yes |