



Implementing the Dual Admission Program at the University of Maryland School of Nursing

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Responding to the Institute of Medicine (IOM) goal of 80% of the nurses at the bedside hold a bachelor's of science in nursing (BSN) degree by 2020 (IOM, 2010), the University of Maryland School of Nursing (UMSON) revised the Register Nurse to Bachelors of Science in Nursing (RN-to-BSN) curriculum and developed dual admission agreements with several Maryland Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) programs. The dual admission agreements lay out a pathway for students currently in their ADN program to enroll concurrently in UMSON RN-to-BSN courses. Regardless of whether nurses are selecting an ADN or a BSN degree, UMSON is committed to developing a competent and educated nursing work force. Supporting the IOM goal, the Maryland Action Coalition's (MDAC) vision statement asks the nurse educators, in Maryland, to develop "progressive educational programs that cultivate a highly skilled nursing workforce to participate in the implementation of long-term sustainable change within health systems and allows diverse populations access." Moreover, the MDAC's 2015-2017 strategic plan encourages schools of nursing to "close the gap in achieving 80% BSN educated nurses in practice settings by 2020". The MDAC offers nurse leaders an opportunity to disseminate best practices and programmatic initiatives thereby advancing nursing education and practice. While not universal, the steps outlined below offer similar universities the ability to adapt our processes to meet their own unique needs. The dual admission pathway is dependent upon four resources: legal, faculty, admissions, and registration. The Memorandum of Understand (MOU) is developed by legal counsel and adapted to each ADN plan of study, and unique program requirements. Formulating the MOU between the partner schools addresses the specifics regarding the dual admission process, prerequisite coursework and additional required coursework to complete the BSN. Signed copies of the MOU allow the faculty and administrators, at both schools, to develop specific documents to support student academic progression and advisement. A dedicated RN-to-BSN program director assists department chairs in identifying core faculty to teach and coordinate RN-to-BSN courses. Faculty members adapt course material and instructional aids to include assignments that current ADN students may address as compared to RNs working within a healthcare setting. The RN-to- BSN program director and admission staff develop recruitment and advisement materials to support academic progress from inquiry, to application submission, to program matriculation. Marketing materials are developed jointly to showcase the partnership, the application process, and the program plan of study to ensure a smooth progression from the ADN to the RN-to-BSN program. Together, the RN-to-BSN program director and the admission staff track and report student progress, for UMSON as well as for each partner college. Admissions staff develop tools to measure results to include students enrolled in RN-to-BSN courses as well as graduation rates. This poster describes the components of the UMSON RN-to-BSN Dual Admission Program.