University of Vermont RN-BS Degree Completion Program Offered At Sites Throughout Vermont

Program Overview

A statewide program offers Registered Nurses with an associate degree in nursing access to UVM’s Bachelor of Science in Nursing program and the opportunity to complete the degree close to home.

The program features:

- Nursing courses via interactive television to students around Vermont as well as on-campus in Burlington.
- General education courses can be taken through UVM (online or on campus) or through the Vermont State College System.
- An intensive on-campus physical assessment course in Burlington the first summer.
- Clinical experiences in students’ local area.

Advancing the Profession of Nursing

Today’s nurses practice in a complex and dynamic health care environment that includes caring for an aging population, advances in technology, an increase in specialized care, and pressures from managed care.

Recognizing the complex challenges facing nurses, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), the American Organization of Nurse Executives (AONE), the American Nurses Association (ANA), and other leading professional organizations recommend the baccalaureate degree for professional nursing practice.

Furthermore, the National Advisory Council on Nurse Education and Practice (NACNEP), policy advisors to Congress and the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, recommends that at least two-thirds of the nation’s workforce hold baccalaureate or higher degrees by the year 2010. Currently, only 37% of nurses practicing in Vermont hold the baccalaureate degree.

The Benefits for Patients, Health Care Facilities, and the Profession

- **Patient Safety:** According to a study published in the September 2003 Journal of the American Medical Association, a higher proportion of BS prepared nurses in the hospital setting is associated with decreases in post-surgical patient morbidity.
and mortality. A hospital's increase in the percentage of nurses with a BS degree from 20% to 60% would save four lives for every 1,000 patients undergoing common surgeries. A more recent study, published in the January 2007 issue of the Journal of Advanced Nursing, supports the findings that increasing the number of BS prepared nurses at the bedside results in better patient outcomes.

- **Flexibility in Staffing:** Nurses with BS degrees can move more easily within agencies to deal with complex health care issues in a variety of specialties and settings. They also have the skills to work independently and as supervisors and managers.

- **Job Satisfaction:** In a study published in the June 2005 issue of The Journal of Nursing Scholarship, Dr. Betty Rambur and co-investigators found that nurses prepared at the baccalaureate level were significantly more satisfied than associate degree prepared nurses in terms of opportunity for autonomy and growth, physical demands, job and organizational security, and they experienced less job stress.

- **Potential Cost Savings:** According to the AACN, nurses with a baccalaureate degree have knowledge in health promotion and disease prevention which can lead to more cost-effective, coordinated health care.

- **Professional Advancement:** Nurses are members of an interdisciplinary health care team in which the doctoral degree is entry level for MDs, physical therapists and pharmacists and the master's degree is entry level for occupational therapy.

### Contact Information:

The program is facilitated by local hospitals, in partnership with UVM. Individual nurses may also participate. Interested RNs should contact Continuing Education advisor, Polly Allen at pallen@uvm.edu or 802.656.2085 for further information. Hospitals, home health agencies or long-term care employers who are interested in joining this initiative as a participating employer should contact Maggie Jacobs at the University of Vermont: Maggie.Jacobs@uvm.edu or 802.656.2085.

For more information, visit learn.uvm.edu/nursing.

The program is sponsored by the University of Vermont’s Department of Nursing and The Continuing Education Office.