THE UNIVERSITY OF WEST FLORIDA AND OKALOOSA-WALTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE
BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (BSN) COOPERATIVE PROGRAM

LETTER OF INTENT

The University of West Florida (UWF) and Okaloosa-Walton Community College (OWCC) intend to establish a cooperative degree program entitled Bachelor of Science in Nursing, with initial offerings in the fall of 2003. This AS to BS program will allow students who have successfully completed an associate degree in nursing and who possess a valid Florida Registered Nursing License to continue their studies in a baccalaureate program offered in Okaloosa County through the University of West Florida and Okaloosa-Walton Community College. Students completing the curriculum will be awarded the Bachelor of Science in Nursing by the University of West Florida.

ADMINISTRATION AND OPERATIONS

Program oversight, including program policies/procedures, student issues, personnel items, budget, and other related issues, will be managed through a Joint Program Coordinating Committee (BSN Coordinating Committee.) Committee recommendations will be forwarded to the appropriate institution as needed. Committee membership will include members from UWF and OWCC appointed by the two Presidents.

Both institutions will meet all applicable standards of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, Commission on Colleges. The cooperative program will comply with the standards of applicable professional accrediting agencies (NCLEX-RN, FACN, etc.).

CURRICULUM

The BSN Degree will be awarded by the University of West Florida; Okaloosa-Walton Community College will provide instruction in selected junior and senior level courses. BSN courses taught through OWCC will be transferred to UWF to meet the student’s program requirements.

The program content will conform to Florida statutory requirements for the BSN, to the appropriate Florida common course prerequisites and to the state’s AS to BS articulation agreement for the BSN. Overall program content, including specific course requirements
will be established by UWF in consultation with OWCC as appropriate. The program will, however, contain a “track” or “option” specifically designed to meet not only the above requirements, but also the skill/content needs of Okaloosa and Walton County health care providers. All courses will be reviewed by the appropriate institutional committees and submitted to Florida’s State Course Numbering System.

Instructional responsibilities will be shared by the two institutions according to the following considerations:

- All courses required for completion of the full “Okaloosa Track BSN” will be available, on site, in Okaloosa County. The delivery format (e.g., distance learning, traditional class, combined class, etc.) will be determined by the Coordinating Committee and will conform to applicable accreditation standards.

- UWF will provide instruction in a majority of the theory/didactic courses.

- OWCC will provide instruction in a majority of the clinical instruction within the “Okaloosa Track”.

- The proportion of the program credits taught by UWF and the proportion taught by OWCC will conform to the standards of the Commission on Colleges (COC) of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS).

- The courses to be offered each term, the delivery format (distance learning, traditional classroom, or other mode) for the courses, as well as the institution responsible for the instruction will be determined by the BSN Coordinating Committee.

- The times and locations of the courses will be designed to accommodate part-time and working students.

**Students**

Students must be admitted to both institutions and will be subject to the usual UWF and OWCC admission standards/procedures, as well as to specific “Okaloosa Track BSN” program admission standards, which will be mutually agreed upon by the two institutions. Students may pursue the program as either full-time or part-time students. Continuation in the program will be subject to specific program standards mutually agreed upon by the two institutions and published in appropriate program materials of both institutions. General student rights and responsibilities will be delineated in a similar manner.
Normally, students in the “Okaloosa Track” will attend all classes in Okaloosa County; however, students may enroll in classes at the UWF Pensacola Campus or participate in non-Okaloosa Track clinicals on an exception basis.

The institutions will mutually agree upon enrollment capacity and application/admission periods for the “Okaloosa Track”, as indicated by student and employer demand, facility and clinical space, accreditation requirements and other related factors.

Students will have full access to the support services of both institutions; however, availability to specific institutional services may be limited by location.

Students will have full access to the library/LRC services of both institutions.

**Faculty/Personnel**

All faculty members, clinical preceptors, and other instructional personnel will meet the educational, experiential and licensure qualifications required by applicable accrediting agencies; additional qualifications may be mutually agreed upon by the institutions. All faculty members will be recruited, hired, supervised and evaluated according to procedures mutually agreed upon by the institutions; such procedures will conform to appropriate accrediting standards.

In general, all OWCC courses will be taught by OWCC full-time or associate faculty members possessing the appropriate qualifications, and all UWF courses will be taught by UWF full-time or adjunct faculty members possessing the appropriate qualifications. By special arrangement and mutual agreement of the institutions, UWF faculty may teach OWCC courses and OWCC faculty may teach UWF courses to the extent permissible under accreditation guidelines.

The workload, benefits, and compensation of the employing institution will apply to the individual. Unless otherwise agreed, the home institution will be responsible for employee compensation and benefits.

UWF and OWCC will provide on-site faculty, administrative and career service staff sufficient to support the program.

**Equipment and Facilities**

Classrooms, labs, program administration space and faculty offices for the OWCC component of the program will be provided by OWCC. Classrooms, labs and temporary faculty work space for UWF faculty members teaching on-site in the Okaloosa Track will be provided by OWCC or by UWF at the OWCC-UWF Joint Fort Walton Beach Campus, per mutual agreement.
Clinical sites, contracts and instruction for the "Okaloosa Track" will be managed through OWCC, in consultation with UWF.

Unless otherwise agreed to, equipment purchased by UWF for use in the program will remain the property of UWF, and equipment purchased by OWCC for use in the program will remain the property of OWCC, with maintenance and replacement the responsibility of the home institution.

**BUDGET AND FUNDING**

An annual budget and a three-year projected budget shall be developed by the Coordinating Committee and submitted to the appropriate UWF and OWCC staff for review and approval no later than June 1st of the preceding fiscal year.

Students will pay OWCC course fees for classes offered by OWCC; students will pay UWF course fees for classes offered through UWF. Other institution-specific fees (e.g. parking, late fees, library fines, etc.) will apply to the student when he/she is registered in courses with that institution. Matriculation, tuition, lab and other fees, and FTE generated will accrue to the institution awarding the credits.

The institutions agree to seek designated state funding to support the program. However, because mechanisms for continued state funding of cooperative programs have not yet been determined, and because state funding does not flow to the community college on a per FTE basis as it does to the university, the institutions will mutually agree to a shared funding model sufficient to support the cooperative program. The model will address the proportionate costs each institution will be responsible for in the delivery of instruction for the "Okaloosa Track." Further, the model will contain sufficient checks and balances to ensure both institutions are able to conduct reasonable fiscal planning and projections, and will be subject to review annually.

**EVALUATION**

The program will be evaluated annually with respect to student success, enrollment patterns, student satisfaction, and other related issues. The program will comply with the appropriate accountability standards set forth by the state and applicable accrediting agencies.

**FINAL AGREEMENT**

Upon approval of the cooperative program by the Florida State Board of Education, UWF and OWCC will proceed with development of a comprehensive letter of agreement that commits the institutions to a cooperative AS to BS program in nursing to commence as
soon as Fall 2003. The provisions of the final agreement will be effective upon signature and will remain in effect from year-to-year unless cancelled or amended by mutual agreement of the President of Okaloosa-Walton Community College and the President of the University of West Florida.

James R. Richburg  
President, Okaloosa-Walton Community College

John C. Cavanaugh  
President, University of West Florida

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Date

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Date
May 28, 2003

Dr. James Rogers
Executive Director
Commission on Colleges
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033-4097

Dear Dr. Rogers:

At its April 15, 2003, meeting, the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved the offering by Okaloosa-Walton Community College (OWCC) of upper-division courses in Nursing as part of bachelor’s degree program in Nursing to be offered in partnership with the University of West Florida (UWF). This approval was based in part upon a Letter of Intent, signed by the presidents of UWF and OWCC on April 4, 2003, to establish a cooperative degree program entitled Bachelor of Science in Nursing. This ASN to BSN program is intended to allow students who have successfully completed an associate degree in nursing and who possess a valid Florida Registered Nurse license to continue their studies in a baccalaureate program offered in Okaloosa County, Florida, through UWF and OWCC. Students completing the program will be awarded the Bachelor of Science in Nursing by UWF. (See attached copy of the Letter of Intent for further details about the planning for this program.)

By means of this letter, I am notifying the Commission on Colleges of our intent to implement this RN/ASN to BSN program at the OWCC/UWF joint campus in Okaloosa County with a limited amount of instruction to occur on the main campus of OWCC in Niceville. Subsequent to preparation of the original Letter of Intent and approval by the SBOE for OWCC to offer upper-division courses in Nursing, the program planners have agreed that the earliest date for implementation of the program will be Summer Semester 2004 with the possibility of a limited number of prerequisites being offered in the Spring Semester 2004.

We are aware that OWCC will be required to submit a substantive change request with respect to its offering of upper division Nursing courses. Further, because this constitutes offering coursework at a more advanced degree level than previously approved by the Commission, we are aware that OWCC will be required to seek approval by the Commission before implementing such course offerings.

UWF seeks clarification from the Commission as to the nature of the substantive change request action required for UWF. UWF has offered the RN/ASN to BSN program in the Pensacola area for many years. UWF has also offered the upper division component of many of its bachelor’s degree programs at its branch campus in Okaloosa County for many years. The principal differences in the proposed 125 in cooperative Nursing program with OWCC from other offerings of the UWF RN/ASN to BSN program are as follows:
(1) UWF will accept as transfer credits upper division Nursing credits taught by OWCC as part of the Nursing major. UWF will teach not less than 51% of the upper-division Nursing credit hours. UWF will waive its requirement that the last 30 sh of course work be taken at UWF. All other existing state, institutional, and SACS related credit distribution and transfer credit requirements will be met including the SACS requirement that at least 25% of the total credits required for the degree be offered by the institution awarding the degree.

(2) The majority of the credits for the upper division component of the program will be taught in the Okaloosa County area either at the joint OWCC/UWF campus in Fort Walton Beach or on the main campus of OWCC in Niceville. UWF already has approval from the Commission to offer the upper division component of bachelor’s degree programs at the OWCC/UWF joint campus.

(3) A limited number of the Nursing courses may be offered through distance learning mechanisms. At this point in the planning of the program, it is expected that approximately 12 sh of the 36-39 sh of upper-division Nursing courses may be offered in this format. The OWCC/UWF joint campus facilities in Fort Walton Beach (FWB) include a two-way, interactive distance learning classroom linking the Pensacola and Fort Walton Beach campuses.

To provide further information about the nature of the program, I have attached copies of the action taken by the SBOE, the above-mentioned Letter of Intent, and a press release issued by OWCC. Please advise as to whether UWF will require approval by the Commission before implementing the proposed cooperative Nursing degree program with OWCC. We understand that such implementation will be contingent upon approval by the Commission of OWCC’s substantive change request to offer upper-division Nursing courses. Please know that UWF will assist OWCC in whatever way appropriate and necessary as it prepares its substantive change request related to the offering of the upper-division Nursing courses which will transfer into this program.

Sincerely,

John C. Cavanaugh  
President

Attachments:  Excerpt from Minutes of SBOE Meeting 
Letter of Intent 
Press Release

President James R. Richburg  
Dr. John Dwyer