External Evaluation Report

The External Evaluation Report is an important component of a new academic program proposal. The external evaluator's task is to examine the program proposal and related materials, visit the campus to discuss the proposal with faculty and review related instructional resources and facilities, respond to the questions in this Report form, and submit to the institution a signed report that speaks to the quality of, and need for, the proposed program. The report should aim for completeness, accuracy and objectivity.

The institution is expected to review each External Evaluation Report it receives, prepare a single institutional response to all reports, and, as appropriate, make changes to its program proposal and plan. Each separate External Evaluation Report and the Institutional Response become part of the full program proposal that the institution submits to SUNY for approval. If an external evaluation of the proposed program is required by the New York State Education Department (SED), SUNY includes the External Evaluation Reports and Institutional Response in the full proposal that it submits to SED for registration.

Institution:

Evaluator Name (Please print.): Eileen Engelke

Evaluator Title and Institution: Assistant Professor; Lienhard School of Nursing; Pace University

Evaluator Signature: [Signature]

Proposed Program Title: NURSING BS

Degree: BS in Nursing

Date of evaluation: 10/13/21-10/14/21

I. Program

1. Assess the program's purpose, structure, and requirements as well as formal mechanisms for program administration and evaluation. Address the program's academic rigor and intellectual coherence.
   a. Program's purpose, structure and requirements are clearly stated. Rigor and intellectual coherence are in alignment with other RNBS completion programs and accrediting agencies.
   b. Core course requirements of 39 credits are above the average for an RNBS completion program.

2. Comment on the special focus of this program, if any, as it relates to the discipline.
   a. Special focus of this program is a completion of a bachelor's degree in nursing. Potential students are transfers from local institutions, who have completed a diploma or associated degree program in nursing and are eligible for licensure as a registered nurse.
   b. This program meets the requirements of AACN (American Association of Colleges of Nursing) Baccalaureate Essentials (2021).
   c. This program also integrates an interdisciplinary collaboration with the UAlbany's School of Public Health. Four courses are integrated into the curriculum, so graduates have foundational knowledge, skills, and attitudes of Public Health.

3. Comment on the plans and expectations for self-assessment and continuous improvement.
a. Student learning outcomes (SLOs) are listed for each course.
b. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) will follow the university and individual program guidelines of assessment. This looks at SLO/PLO on a 2–3-year cycle. The Director of Assessment office of the University will assure this cycle is followed accordingly.

4. Discuss the relationship of this program to other programs of the institution and collaboration with other institutions, and assess available support from related programs.
   a. This program will be the only program in nursing for this institution. There is a history of nursing at this institution in the 1970s and there are active plans for a graduate program in nursing in the near future.
   b. This program will be imbedded in the School of Public Health (SPH), with faculty from this school teaching several courses. The SPH is an established and flourishing program at UAlbany with over 35 years in existence.
   c. Nursing faculty will be hired to teach the nursing courses, as per need. There is currently a FT director (Linda Millenbach) and plans for a second FT/TT line in the near future.
   d. Adjuncts with expertise in Nursing will teach the other nursing courses until this line is filled, and/or during the time of student/program growth.
   e. This is a transfer undergraduate program with similar application processes, advisors and progression criteria as other transfer students coming into UAlbany.
   f. Each RNBS student will be assigned an academic advisor, who is specifically knowledgeable about the RNBS program and transfer credit evaluations.
   g. The UAlbany library has adequate resources for this student population and is willing to meet with the students at the start of the program and throughout, to assist students with resource accessibility.
   h. The RNBS program will also be collaborative with the SPH for required access to public health clinical experiences. There is a current SPH collaboration with the NYS Dept. of Health.
   i. There is significant support from the administration of the university, the dean and faculty from the SPH, and the supporting departments, for the success of this program.

5. What is the evidence of need and demand for the program locally, in the State, and in the field at large? What is the extent of occupational demand for graduates? What is the evidence that demand will continue?
   a. The documents presented support the need for more bachelors prepared nurses both locally and nationally. This program will assist local nurses to complete their bachelor’s degree with a primary face to face (F2F) arena, as opposed to a fully online program.
   b. Many associate degree nurses want the option for F2F classes and “brick and mortar” programs. This will be the only program in the Capital region that can fit the needs for these students who prefer F2F classes over online.
   c. This program is also different in that it combines the expertise of both nursing and public health educators to assist in fostering the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for nurses interested specifically in public, population, and community health. Most RNBS programs do not have a public health focus, fulfilling both the interest areas of many nurses, but also the need for more nurses to ultimately choose public health as a specialty area for their nursing career.
II. Faculty

6. Evaluate the faculty, individually and collectively, with regard to training, experience, research and publication, professional service, and recognition in the field.
   a. At present, there is only one faculty member (current director) qualified to solely teach the nursing core courses in the program. It is the intent to hire another FT Nursing faculty person, and adjuncts as the program needs change.
   b. All FT/TT nursing faculty will have a doctoral degree and experience in clinical and/or public health nursing. Adjuncts are required to have a NYS RN license and a minimum of a master’s degree in nursing.

7. Assess the faculty in terms of number and qualifications and plans for future staffing. Evaluate faculty responsibilities for the proposed program, taking into account their other institutional and programmatic commitments. Evaluate faculty activity in generating funds for research, training, facilities, equipment, etc. Discuss any critical gaps and plans for addressing them.
   a. As noted in the proposal plan, qualifications, experience, and responsibilities for nursing faculty, are all in accordance with the University of Albany and national academic standards. Two FT/Tenure Track roles are proposed as the program grows. The remaining faculty will be adjunct. This is sufficient.
   b. At the present time, there are no concerns for critical gaps, yet it is highly suggested that the proposed plans for a master’s program, with sufficient faculty come to fruition.

8. Evaluate credentials and involvement of adjunct faculty and support personnel.
   a. At present, there are no adjunct nursing faculty in the program. Depending on student enrollment and course offerings, adjunct nursing faculty may be needed as early as the second semester. Administration is supportive to begin a search for qualified nursing faculty.
   b. Nurse faculty adjuncts will need to be searched within the NYS Capital region, as the program plans to have a 50/50 F2F/online component. It is suggested that the search committee seek adjunct nursing faculty with a minimum of a master’s degree in nursing (preferred doctoral degree), from the local hospitals, health institutions, community colleges and public health facilities. Faculty should be affluent in the Learning Management System in use at the time or required to take university courses to assure competence in online synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning principles.

III. Students

9. Comment on the student population the program seeks to serve, and assess plans and projections for student recruitment and enrollment.
   a. Recruitment for students will begin at Hudson Valley CC, additional local associate degree RN programs, and local health care institutions.
   b. Potential RNBS students will be current students at local community colleges that offer the associates degree in nursing, and/or current nurses who hold a license as an RN yet have not completed their bachelor’s degree in nursing.
   c. As all Registered nurses in NYS will need a bachelor’s degree in nursing within 10 years of their licensure, there is a significant population pool of students who can potentially meet the requirements for admission.
   d. It was suggested that a Dual admission contract exist between HVCC and UAlbany, so new and potential nursing students can be oriented to the UAlbany RNBS completion program, at the start of their associates degree program.
   e. A high percentage of associate degree nursing students are non-traditional students who come from marginalized communities. They are uniquely qualified to change the health trajectory of
other marginalized populations. Because of this, it is imperative to support them to continue their education and pursue their bachelor’s degree.

f. Once enrolled in the RNBS program, many of these students will be working FT as a nurse, and may have other personal responsibilities, that may jeopardize their success in the program.

g. Having an academic advisor and faculty mentor, as well as maintaining the F2F component of the program, can assist these students in their success.

10. What are the prospects that recruitment efforts and admissions criteria will supply a sufficient pool of highly qualified applicants and enrollees?
   a. This program offers something that other local institutions do not. Most RNBS programs are fully online, yet there is a significant pool of nurses who prefer to learn in a F2F environment.
   b. Students engage more with faculty and peers in a F2F environment.
   c. As per the proposal, there are approximately of 250+ potential nurse graduates from several local community colleges that graduate per year who could transfer seamlessly into the UAlbany program.
   d. This program also offers the specialty of a public health expertise. As we are learning more about pandemics, epidemiology, determinants of health and the higher health risks of marginalized communities, it is imperative that nurses with the specialty of public health be at the forefront of healthcare decisions for our communities. This degree, with it’s specialty focus, can help bridge these gaps in our communities.

11. Comment on provisions for encouraging participation of persons from underrepresented groups. Is there adequate attention to the needs of part-time, minority, or disadvantaged students?
   a. As mentioned previously, the pool of potential students come primarily from associate degree programs, which more likely than traditional 4-year programs, to have students from a minority background.
   b. The program encourages students to complete the program on a part time basis, over 1.5 to 2 years depending on transfer credits.

12. Assess the system for monitoring students’ progress and performance and for advising students regarding academic and career matters.
   a. All courses have student learning outcomes and assignments reflective of similar RNBS programs.
   b. All students will have an assigned advisor. It is encouraged that FT nursing faculty (possibly assigned) provide mentorship throughout the program.
   c. The advisor will assist students to complete their liberal arts credits (and specific SUNY gen ed requirements).
   d. It is suggested that Advisor assist students when registering, as these students typically work FT, and may not be able to attend classes any other day than the proposed Wednesdays (for the core nursing program courses). These students may need to complete Liberal arts/gen ed courses in online courses only.
   e. There has been discussion that the courses proposed be altered to allow for less core courses, and the option for 1-3 elective courses.
   f. Elective courses could be chosen from several SPH undergrad specialties or from several core graduate courses, in either public health or nursing (once established). This would allow students to take graduate courses as an undergrad student, and potentially, transition directly into either a MPH or MSN (once established).

13. Discuss prospects for graduates’ post-completion success, whether employment, job advancement, future study, or other outcomes related to the program’s goals.
   a. New York State requires that all nurses acquire a BSN within 10 years of their licensure.
b. Close to 50% of nurses acquire their first nursing degree from an associated degree program.

c. Many healthcare institutions today, require a minimum of a bachelor’s degree.

d. The proposed program documents cite a significant amount of literature to support the potential for greater employability for nurses with a bachelor’s degree.

e. This program helps the local associate degree nursing graduate to transition seamlessly into a local affordable bachelors’ program.

IV. Resources

Resources cited in the documents and during the “in person” review support adequate resources for this student population.

14. Comment on the adequacy of physical resources and facilities, e.g., library, computer, and laboratory facilities; practa and internship sites or other experiential learning opportunities, such as co-ops or service learning; and support services for the program, including use of resources outside the institution.

a. Within the reviewed documents and the Zoom discussions with the administration, faculty and support teams (see reviewer itinerary 10/13-10/14), it is evident that there is adequate student support related to physical resources and facilities.

b. There was significant discussion with the administration and RNBS Director, on the aspects and clinical requirements for an RNBS completion program based on AACN and NYS DOE accreditation. It is my understanding that NYS DOE requires a program minimum of 135 direct patient clinical contact hours.

c. This program intends to complete these hours over two courses, HNSG 414: Leadership and management and HNSG 411: Population Health.

d. HNSG 414: Leadership and Management hours will be organized to be completed at the student’s current employment institution. It is unclear if a contract and/or health clearance will be required (by both the institution and UAlbany). This needs to be operationalized as to:

   i. # of hours required
   ii. How a mentor is acquired and approved
   iii. Provisions for students who are unable to “find” a mentor/leader in their institution

e. HNSG 411: Population Health hours will be organized through the current SPH clinical faculty liaisons. Students will be assigned an RN (BSN minimum) who is currently working in a public health or community health setting. Collaborations currently exist with the State DOH and UAlbany SPH. These strong collaborations will facilitate this clinical placement with the RNBS students.

15. What is the institution's commitment to the program as demonstrated by the operating budget, faculty salaries, the number of faculty lines relative to student numbers and workload, and discussions about administrative support with faculty and administrators?

a. The institutional commitment to hire another FT faculty (tenure track) as well as additional adjunct faculty to meet the needs of the program are trustworthy.

b. Workload numbers are encouraged to be less than 30/class (preferably max 25) if there is 50% or more of an online component.

V. Summary Comments and Additional Observations

16. Summarize the major strengths and weaknesses of the program as proposed with particular attention to feasibility of implementation and appropriateness of objectives for the degree offered.

a. Strengths:

   i. Statewide and national need for nurses with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in nursing.
ii. Accessible, established, highly recognized and affordable public institution with high standards and academic respect.

iii. Interprofessional program incorporating the well-established School of Public Health.

iv. A nurse specialty component to include population, community, and public health.

v. Clinical placements in established collaborations with the NYS Dept. of Health and other local programs.

vi. Course progression towards an undergraduate minor in Public Health and/or progression towards an MPH or master’s in nursing (near future).

vii. Support and collaborations with SPH faculty

viii. Face to face/hybrid “cohort” component

ix. Seamless transition and active collaboration with Hudson Valley Community College nursing program, emphasizing the need for a local hybrid RNBS program.

b. Weaknesses:

i. Proposed core coursework is 39 credits which is higher than most RNBS completion programs. There has been discussion to combine courses and bring required credits to 36.

ii. Currently, there is not a department of nursing, nor any other nursing programs. Building a master program will strengthen the RNBS recruitment efforts.

iii. Although there is a need for an RNBS hybrid program, on campus requirements limit the potential student population pool to only local associate degree graduates and currently working nurses.

iv. Some operational/logistical issues with coordinating the hybrid classes. The current proposed plan has the nursing courses as hybrid and synchronous, yet the public health courses are not. This will pose logistical issues with the students. Suggested to either make both hybrid (every other Wednesday or meeting F2F on specific dates pre-assigned that the beginning of the semester) or change the nursing hybrid class to be asynchronous. The first option requires students on campus every other week (or 50% of the time). The second option requires students on campus every week.

17. If applicable, particularly for graduate programs, comment on the ways that this program will make a unique contribution to the field, and its likelihood of achieving State, regional and/or national prominence.

a. As mentioned previously, this program has a unique expertise to combine both public health nursing with experts in the disciple of public health.

18. Include any further observations important to the evaluation of this program proposal and provide any recommendations for the proposed program.

a. Recommend:

i. Combine two nursing courses (suggest EBP/research) and arrange 2 or 3 of the SPH courses to allow for choices in electives (including “double dipping grad courses.

ii. Develop a Dual admission contract between HVCC and UAlbany, so new and potential nursing students can be oriented to the UAlbany RNBS completion program, at the start of their associates degree program.

iii. Arrange Wednesday meeting dates to be more logistically feasible.

iv. Possibly offer nursing courses on site at local hospitals.

v. Several issues were not discussed but should be operationalized, such as:

1. Do new students need their license before they begin the program?
2. Can students begin the program before they have taken their boards?
3. What about the student who has not passed their boards? Are they dismissed or can they continue for a period of time?
4. What are the policies for probationary periods, academic failures, readmissions?
External Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement

I am providing an external review of the application submitted to the State University of New York by: University of Albany

__________________________
(Name of Institution or Applicant)

The application is for (circle A or B below)

A) New Degree Authority

B) Registration of a new academic program by an existing institution of higher education:

NURSING BS

__________________________
(Title of Proposed Program)

I affirm that I:

1. am not a present or former employee, student, member of the governing board, owner or shareholder of, or consultant to the institution that is seeking approval for the proposed program or the entity seeking approval for new degree authority, and that I did not consult on, or help to develop, the application;

2. am not a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of any of the individuals listed above;

3. am not seeking or being sought for employment or other relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application?

4. do not have now, nor have had in the past, a relationship with the institution/entity submitting the application that might compromise my objectivity.

Name of External Reviewer (please print):

Eileen Engelke EdD, RN, CNE

__________________________
Signature: [Signature]

10/17/21

7 of 7
Institutional Response to the Nursing BS Program Review

October 2021

The comments and suggestions received from the reviewer were informative and very helpful. Overall, the program review was a very productive and positive experience and exchange of information and ideas. We are pleased that the reviewer assessed most aspects of the proposed program in a very positive way. Below are the responses to the reviewer’s particular comments and suggestions for changes to the proposal.

Comment (Q1 – Program Structure):
“Core course requirements of 39 credits are above the average for an RNBS completion program.”

Response: We agree with this assessment, though we should note that the reviewed program actually had 42 core course credits, not 39, because three courses were four-credit courses (27 nursing course credits plus 15 public health course credits). The core course requirements are greater than average because our emphasis on population health necessitates including public health courses along with nursing courses as part of the requirements. We feel this extra element of the curriculum will be a strength that other RNBS completion programs cannot offer. However, in response to the reviewer’s assessment we reduced the number of nursing courses by one by merging the content of two courses (Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing), and changing one required public health course to a public health or other relevant elective to add greater flexibility into the curriculum. This reduces the number of nursing credits to 24 and the number of core course credits required to 39.

Comment (Q7 - Faculty)
“At the present time, there are no concerns for critical gaps, yet it is highly suggested that the proposed plans for a master’s program, with sufficient faculty come to fruition.”

Response: We are pleased that the reviewer felt that the proposed plan for number and qualifications of faculty is sufficient. We agree that the addition of a master’s program, with associated faculty, will provide for a larger faculty complement and will enlarge the overall pool of faculty available to teach and mentor BSN students. In fact, a proposal for an MS in Nursing degree has been developed and is about to enter the campus review process.

Comment (Q8 – Adjunct Faculty)
“It is suggested that the search committee seek adjunct nursing faculty with a minimum of a master’s degree in nursing (preferred doctoral degree), from the local hospitals, health institutions, community colleges and public health facilities. Faculty should be affluent in the Learning Management System in use at the time or required to take university courses to
assure competence in online synchronous and asynchronous teaching and learning principles.”

Response: We have incorporated these suggestions into the job description for adjunct faculty for this program, and we will use these suggestions for where to recruit appropriate adjunct faculty.

Comment (Q9 - Students)

“It was suggested that a Dual admission contract exist between HVCC and UAlbany, so new and potential nursing students can be oriented to the UAlbany RNBS completion program, at the start of their associates degree program.”

Response: A guaranteed admission arrangement with Hudson Valley Community College (HVCC) already exists, which provides a smooth and easy pathway for students to move into UAlbany programs after completing their HVCC degree. We will certainly work closely with HVCC in order to ensure their nursing students are aware of our BSN completion program from the start of their associate degree program. In addition, we would be very interested in exploring opportunities for dual admission with HVCC and will plan to do that once the BSN program is established.

Comment (Q9 - Students)

“A high percentage of associate degree nursing students are non-traditional students who come from marginalized communities. They are uniquely qualified to change the health trajectory of other marginalized populations. Because of this, it is imperative to support them to continue their education and pursue their bachelor’s degree.”

Response: UAlbany has a strong record of accomplishment with regard to recruiting and supporting such students, as evidenced by the high proportion of first-generation college students among the undergraduate population, and recent distinctions the university has received for success in this area. Students in this program will have access to the same university support systems that all undergraduates have. We will also work closely with the relevant university units to ensure that students are supported appropriately to facilitate their success.

Comment (Q12 – Student Progress/Advising)

“All students will have an assigned advisor. It is encouraged that FT nursing faculty (possibly assigned) provide mentorship throughout the program.”

Response: Consistent with the university’s four-year advisement model, students will receive their primary academic advising from a dedicated advisor with specialized knowledge of the nursing curriculum who is part of the university’s advisement center. However, we agree with the reviewer that nursing faculty also have an important mentoring role to play and will seek to establish a model where each student is also assigned to a faculty member for additional advisement and career mentoring. The university advisor and faculty will collaborate to ensure that a strong advising model is in place.

Comment (Q12 – Student Progress/Advising)

“It is suggested that Advisor assist students when registering, as these students typically work FT, and may not be able to attend classes any other day than the proposed Wednesdays (for the core nursing program courses). These students may need to complete Liberal arts/gen ed courses in online courses only.”
Response: The nursing advisor that is part of the university’s advisement center will fulfill this role. In fact, an advantage to this advising model is that the advisors in the advisement center are very familiar with students’ program requirements and with the range of liberal arts and general education courses offered to students. The advisors are also very aware of course modalities and will be able to assist students with identifying courses conducive to non-traditional student schedules.

Comment (Q12 – Student Progress/Advising)
“There has been discussion that the courses proposed be altered to allow for less core courses, and the option for 1-3 elective courses.”

Response: The curriculum has been modified so that the total number of core nursing courses has been reduced by one (by merging the content of two related courses) and one required public health course has been changed to be a public health or other relevant elective. This adds two elective courses to the program.

Comment (Q12 – Student Progress/Advising)
“Elective courses could be chosen from several SPH undergrad specialties or from several core graduate courses, in either public health or nursing (once established). This would allow students to take graduate courses as an undergrad student, and potentially, transition directly into either a MPH or MSN (once established).”

Response: The curriculum has been modified so that students can now choose one upper level public health elective, or a relevant elective from another discipline. Although students can’t apply a graduate course to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements (per UAlbany policy), once the BSN is established, we will seek to establish combined bachelors/masters programs that will allow dual counting of some credits with our MPH program and with a Masters in Nursing in the future.

Comment (Q14 – Resources and Facilities)
“There was significant discussion with the administration and RNBS Director, on the aspects and clinical requirements for an RNBS completion program based on AACN and NYS DOE accreditation. It is my understanding that NYS DOE requires a program minimum of 135 direct patient clinical contact hours.”

Response: After the external review, we sought information about this from our SUNY program reviewer, who clarified the requirements with the State Department of Education (SED). The response from the Office of Professions at SED is below. Thus, our proposed 90 hours of clinical placement meets the requirement and from our research, is consistent with other programs in the SUNY system.

The regulations are silent with respect to the number of clinical hours required in any nursing program and although national nursing standards also do not prescribe a required number of clinical hours, the national standards do recommend including clinical requirements in RN to BS programs. Generally, these are precepted experiences in the areas of community and leadership/management. The RN to BS programs in NY, usually have somewhere between 90-150 clinical hours.
Comment (Q14 – Resources and Facilities)
“HNSG 414: Leadership and Management hours will be organized to be completed at the student’s current employment institution. It is unclear if a contract and/or health clearance will be required (by both the institution and UAlbany). This needs to be operationalized as to: (i) # of hours required, (ii) How a mentor is acquired and approved, and (iii) Provisions for students who are unable to “find” a mentor/leader in their institution.”

Response: All university regulations will be followed in terms of setting up formal arrangements, such as contracts or MOUs, with these outside institutions. Details of the requirements for these placements, including the number of hours and the approval of a mentor, will be specified in program documents and any formal arrangements between institutions. The SPH has extensive experience setting up MOUs with other institutions for our MPH internship program. Students who cannot complete these clinical hours at their current place of employment will be assisted in finding a placement site by both the course instructor and the program director, who will also serve as the program’s clinical placement coordinator.

Comment (Q15 – Institutional Commitment)
“Workload numbers are encouraged to be less than 30/class (preferably max 25) if there is 50% or more of an online component.”

Response: We agree that fully or partially online courses provide the best experience for both students and faculty when enrollments are 30 or below. Course enrollment caps will be assessed regularly utilizing feedback from students and faculty, and we will seek to add sections when enrollment demands warrant this in order to keep courses to this size.

Comment (Q16 – Summary/Weaknesses)
“Proposed core coursework is 39 credits which is higher than most RNBS completion programs. There has been discussion to combine courses and bring required credits to 36.”

Response: The curriculum has been modified according to the reviewer’s suggestions and explained more fully in the response to Q1 on page 1 of this response.

Comment (Q16 – Summary/Weaknesses)
“Although there is a need for an RNBS hybrid program, on campus requirements limit the potential student population pool to only local associate degree graduates and currently working nurses.”

Response: We believe that there is sufficient local demand for a program with in-person elements to provide us with an adequate pool of potential students.

Comment (Q16 – Summary/Weaknesses)
“Currently, there is not a department of nursing, nor any other nursing programs. Building a master program will strengthen the RNBS recruitment efforts.”

Response: The reviewer is correct that the SPH does not have a Department of Nursing. The proposed program will be a schoolwide program, just like our BS in Public Health and Doctor of Public Health degrees. Nursing faculty will join one of our existing academic departments. There is a plan to develop an MS in Nursing program, and the proposal for that is in progress. In the future, when both programs are established and there is a core group of nursing faculty, we will assess
whether the programs and faculty would benefit from the establishment of a Department of Nursing as the School’s fifth academic department.

Comment (Q16 – Summary/Weaknesses)
“Some operational/logistical issues with coordinating the hybrid classes. The current proposed plan has the nursing courses as hybrid and synchronous, yet the public health courses are not. This will pose logistical issues with the students. Suggested to either make both hybrid (every other Wednesday or meeting F2F on specific dates pre-assigned that the beginning of the semester) or change the nursing hybrid class to be asynchronous. The first option requires students on campus every other week (or 50% of the time). The second option requires students on campus every week.

Response: We agree with these logistical issues the reviewer raised. We currently do not have the capacity to develop our public health courses into a hybrid format. However, we would certainly be open to doing so. To accomplish this, we built $7500 into the budget to support the translation of the three required public health courses into hybrid courses.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“Combine two nursing courses (suggest EBP/research) and arrange 2 or 3 of the SPH courses to allow for choices in electives (including “double dipping grad courses”).”

Response: As described previously, these two nursing courses have been combined and one public health course requirement has been changed to an elective. More public health courses have not been changed to electives because that would exacerbate the logistical course scheduling problem addressed in the previous comment. In addition, to truly have an emphasis on population health, certain public health courses are required because they are foundational.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“Develop a Dual admission contract between HVCC and UAlbany, so new and potential nursing students can be oriented to the UAlbany RNBS completion program, at the start of their associates degree program.”

Response: We will work closely with HVCC to ensure nursing students are aware of our program and our existing guaranteed admission program from the start of their program, as described previously. Once our program is well established we will explore the possibility of a dual admission arrangement.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“Arrange Wednesday meeting dates to be more logistically feasible.”

Response: This has been addressed in our response to the comment in Q16 on the previous page.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“Possibly offer nursing courses on site at local hospitals.”

Response: Once the program is well-established, we will explore this possibility with local hospitals to see if this is feasible and desired.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“Several issues were not discussed but should be operationalized, such as:
1. Do new students need their license before they begin the program?
2. Can students begin the program before they have taken their boards?
3. What about the student who has not passed their boards? Are they dismissed or can they continue for a period of time?
4. What are the policies for probationary periods, academic failures, re-admissions?”

Response: Students must obtain a license to practice as a Registered Professional Nurse by the completion of the first semester. All students must maintain an unencumbered New York State RN license and current registration for continued enrollment. Passing the NCLEX-RN examination is a requirement for licensure in NYS. Students who are discontinued for not obtaining a license will follow regular UAlbany requirements and procedures for readmission after being discontinued from a program. Similarly, all UAlbany policies and procedures regarding academic probation, academic failures, dismissal and readmission for undergraduate students will apply to this program.

Comment (Q18 – Recommendations)
“I did not see Program Learning Outcomes. Are these available?”

Response: The program learning outcomes were included in the proposal (section 2.3b) provided to the reviewer. They are based on the AACN 2021 Core Competencies for Professional Nursing.