

Form OS

OFF-SITE PROGRAM PROPOSAL FORM

Sponsoring Institution(s): University of Missouri - St. Louis (Cooperative with UMKC and UMC)_

Program Title: Masters of Science in Nursing

Degree/Certificate: MSN

Options: Nurse Educator

Delivery Site(s): Missouri Baptist Medical Center, St. Louis

CIP Classification: 511601

Implementation Date: Upon Approval

Cooperative Partners: Degree program is cooperative with UM-KC and UM-C, but only UM-SL will deliver face to face, ITV, or hybrid courses to this site.

Expected Date of First Graduation: Three years after start

AUTHORIZATION

Chris Weisbrook 573-882-6396
Person to Contact for More Information Telephone

2. NEED FOR PROGRAM

This proposal requests approval to establish an outreach site for the Nurse Educator emphasis area in the Masters of Science in Nursing degree program at Missouri Baptist Medical Center in St. Louis. The University of Missouri-St. Louis (UMSL) College of Nursing is working with nursing leadership at Missouri Baptist to increase the number of clinical faculty to help provide clinical instruction at Missouri Baptist Medical Center (MBMC). This clinical facility plans to host a BSN outreach program taught jointly by Goldfarb School of Nursing faculty and clinical faculty from MBMC. The medical center aims to serve as a teaching nursing hospital for schools in the area and wishes to support the education of more nurse clinicians to serve as clinical faculty for students at their facility.

Current clinical staff members who hold BSN degrees will be invited to apply for the UMSL College of Nursing MSN program. Those who are accepted will be sponsored by the MBMC, which will cover the cost of tuition and fees for these students in exchange for a predetermined employment commitment at the hospital following graduation. This will expand the numbers of nurse clinicians educationally prepared to serve as clinical faculty for the new BSN outreach program to be offered by Goldfarb School of Nursing and the many schools of nursing that place students in clinical rotations at the Missouri Baptist Medical Center, including the UMSL College of Nursing. A unique aspect of the plan is that graduates will continue to practice as nurse clinicians and will have responsibility for clinical instruction for nursing students. This will provide students access to clinical faculty who are both practicing and teaching in an integrated fashion that will provide superb clinical learning opportunities.

Adding this outreach site will meet the UMSL College of Nursing's Caring for Missouri commitment to expand the MSN Nurse Educator emphasis area by ten students. This public-private partnership will provide for novel clinical learning experiences for these students and a strong linkage between clinical education and the clinical environment. This represents a new public-private partnership aimed at expanding the pipeline of nurses with graduate degrees for the future.

The future projected national shortages of nurses are critical to the public's health and are estimated to be between 260,000 (Buerhaus, Auerbach, & Staiger, 2009) and 1,000,000 (Dohm & Schniper, 2007) over the next fifteen years. In Missouri, the shortage of nurses is estimated to reach 20% by 2015 (U.S. D.H.H.S., Division of Nursing, 2004). The Missouri Hospital Association reported that a 7.8% vacancy rate for registered nurses in 2008, compared with 7.6% in 2008 and 7.2% in 2007 (MHA Workforce Survey Tables, 2009, retrieved 4/18/10 from <http://web.mhanet.com>, and MHA Annual Workforce Survey, 2008). This was less than the 9.5% vacancy rate reported in 2005, but is increasing slightly and even in the face of the financial pressures put on hospitals from the economic downturn.

While enrollments continue to grow in nursing programs around the country, data from the annual survey conducted by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2010) shows that a total of 54,991 qualified applicants were not accepted into pre-licensure baccalaureate programs in 2009-10 and 8,491 were not accepted into master's degree programs. Schools reported that the main reasons that not all applicants are admitted are lack of faculty,

followed closely behind by insufficient clinical placement opportunities (Fang, Tracy, & Bednash, 2010).

The American Association of Colleges of Nursing also conducted an annual *Special Survey on Vacant Faculty Positions* in 2009-10 and reported a 6.6% nurse faculty vacancy rate in schools of nursing (Fang & Tracy, 2009, retrieved 4/19/10 from <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/IDS/pdf/vacancy09.pdf>). In over 90% of the vacant positions, a doctoral degree was preferred or required, while for 39% a master's degree was acceptable. Fifty-six percent of the 554 responding schools indicated they had vacancies and another 21.1% indicated they needed additional faculty but did not have vacancies. The vacancy rate in the Midwest among schools reporting vacancies was 9.8%, compared with 9.7% nationwide.

Data from a self-report survey conducted in 2003 by the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services – Bureau of Health Informatics (Kempker, personal correspondence, 2/6/07) indicate that 6.8% of Missouri nurses reported holding Master's degrees and 0.3% reported holding doctoral degrees for a total of 7.1% holding either graduate degree. By comparison, data from the Bureau of Health Professions Division of Nursing National Sample Survey, 2008 (U.S. D.H.H.S., 2010) show that 13.2% of nurses in the United States hold master's or doctoral degrees.

The average age of master's prepared nurse faculty at the rank of assistant professor was 50.6 in 2009 (Fang, Tracy, & Bednash, 2010), compared with 49.8 in 2005 (Fang, Wilsey-Wisniewski, & Bednash, 2006). Given that this rank indicates junior faculty status, it suggests that master's prepared faculty who are new to teaching are approximately 50 years of age, leaving them with shorter career trajectories than those entering teaching much earlier in their careers, particularly if they then choose to pursue doctoral degrees. The average age of doctorally prepared nurse faculty members at that same rank in 2009 was 52.1 years (Fang, et al., 2010). Educating nurses earlier in their careers for faculty roles is vital for ensuring the future pipeline of direct care staff nurses.

Missourians experience a high prevalence of serious health problems, and higher mortality than expected in certain key areas. The state is ranked 38th in the U.S. in overall health by the United Health Foundation (2009, retrieved 4/15/10 from <http://www.americashealthrankings.org/yearcompare/2008/2009/MO.aspx>). Key health problems include cardiovascular and cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes (Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, 2007). In St. Louis city, mortality rates from cancer, cardiovascular disease, and stroke exceed national averages, and the prevalence of sexually transmitted diseases exceeds national averages (MO DHHS, 2007). With its underserved rural areas and urban cores, nursing and other health professions students must learn how to care for complex populations, often with multiple co-morbidities and co-existing health and socioeconomic problems. With the rich diversity in the St. Louis metropolitan region, graduates must be sensitive to a wide range of cultural mores and understand the need for linguistic competencies with numerous populations. These health and cultural needs require a well educated nurse workforce with sufficient numbers of highly skilled and scientifically knowledgeable nurse educators.

Innovative strategies are needed to increase the numbers of nurses prepared to serve as faculty members. While the doctorate is the terminal degree in nursing, masters prepared nurse clinicians play a vital role in providing clinical nursing education. These individuals may then move into doctoral nursing programs that prepare them as nurse scientists or advanced nurse clinicians.

A. Student Demand

Nursing administrators at Missouri Baptist Medical Center have agreed to help recruit at least fifteen students for each of two cohorts, with the first cohort beginning in Fall, 2010 and the second in Fall, 2013. To date, 13 individuals from Missouri Baptist have indicated interest in being in the first cohort if this proposal is approved. The hospital plans to pay the tuition and fees for the students and will provide them with paid time to attend onsite classes.

i. Estimated enrollment each year for the first five years for full-time and part-time students

Form SE STUDENT ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS

Projections Based on Market and Student Demand at all Sites

YEAR	1	2	3	4	5
FULL-TIME	0	0	0	0	0
PART-TIME	15	15	15	15	15
TOTAL	15	15	15	15	15

Enrollment at the End of Year 5 for the Program to be Financially and Academically Viable

	YEAR 5
FULL-TIME	0
PART-TIME	15
TOTAL	15

ii. Will enrollment be capped in the future?

Enrollment will be evaluated in the future and may be capped at 30 students, depending on demand and capacity at UMSL. A total of fifteen students is the number needed to be financially viable at this site.

3. DUPLICATION OF PROGRAMS AND COLLABORATION

No other public university offers a Nurse Educator emphasis area in the MSN program in the eastern half of Missouri. The three University of Missouri schools of nursing are approved to

offer a cooperative MSN program. In St. Louis, several private universities and colleges offer a Nurse Educator emphasis area at the MSN level. These are Maryville University Department of Nursing, Goldfarb School of Nursing, and Webster University Department of Nursing. None of these programs provides an advanced clinical concentration such as the UMSL program does. The Missouri Baptist Medical Center nurse administrators indicate this is why they selected the UMSL College of Nursing to partner with in this initiative. The curriculum in this program will provide students with advanced nursing clinical content that is aligned with the major clinical areas at MBMC; i.e., adult health, women's health, and pediatrics.

4. FORM PS: PROGRAM STRUCTURE

The MSN curriculum is divided into core courses and specialty courses. The four core courses are completed by all MSN students, and specialty courses are tailored to the specialty emphasis areas selected by each student. Nurse educator students declare a clinical population toward which they will focus their studies. Adult health, pediatrics, or women's health may be the populations of focus. The Nurse Educator emphasis area requires a total of 41 semester credit hours, including core and specialty courses, and 256 clinical hours related to the clinical population focus and teaching role.

MSN Degree Requirements

Completion of the DNP program requires the following courses (credit hours are in parentheses):

MSN Core Courses

6106, Policy, Organization, and Financing of Health Care (3)

6111, Theoretical Foundations of Research and Practice (3)

6120, Population-based Foundations of Health (3)

6130, Research for Evidence-Based Practice (3)

Advanced Nursing Practice Educator Functional Role – Specialty Courses

6309, Role of the Nurse Educator (3)

6320, Learning and Curriculum Development in Nursing (3)

6321, Instructional Strategies in Nursing Education (3)

6322, Evaluation Strategies in Nursing (3)

6518, Pathophysiology for Advanced Nursing Practice (3)

6739, Adult Primary Care 1: Diagnosis & Management (4) OR

6743, Child Health 1: Diagnosis & Management (4) OR

6746, Women's Health 1: Diagnosis and Management (4)

6950, Advanced Nursing Practice (4)

6952, Synthesis Practicum (3)

EDUC 6410, The Adult Learner (3)

Evaluation of Learning

The MSN program's Nurse Educator outreach activities will be evaluated using the mechanisms outlined in the College of Nursing's Evaluation Plan. The usual academic program evaluation strategies in the College of Nursing Evaluation Plan include course evaluations, exit surveys of graduates, alumni surveys at one, three, and five years following graduation, and surveys and focus groups with employers.

The College also has a standing Dean’s Student Advisory Council that meets monthly during the academic year to advise the dean and associate deans on student concerns and recommendations. At least two representatives from each program serve on this council.

MSN Nurse Educator Plan of Study

Only a part time plan of study will be offered at the MBMC site since that is what has been agreed to with the hospital partner.

Part Time Plan of Study (semester credit hours in parentheses)

YEAR	FALL	SPRING	SUMMER
I	N6106 , Policy, Organization and Financing of Health Care (3)	N6130 , Research for Evidence Based Practice (3)	N6120 , Population-based Foundations of Health (3)
	N6111 , Theoretical Foundations of Research and Practice (3)	N6309 , Role of the Nurse Educator (3)	Educ 6410 , The Adult Learner (3)
	Credit Hours 6	Credit Hours 6	Credit Hours 6
II	N6321 , Instructional Strategies in Nursing Education (3)	N6322 , Evaluation Strategies in Nursing (3)	N6739, N6743 or N6746 Diagnosis & Management 1(4)*
	N6320¹ Learning and Curriculum Development in Nursing (3)	N6518 , Pathophysiology for ANP (3)	
	Credit Hours 6	Credit Hours 6	Credit Hours 4
III	N6950 , Advanced Nursing Practice (Clinical) (4)	N6952 , Synthesis Practicum (Clinical) (3)	
	Credit Hours 4	Credit Hours 3	Total Credit Hours 41

* Each course number is designated for a diagnosis and management course for a specific population; i.e., adults, children, or women. Students select one of these course to match their individual population foci.

5. FORM FP: FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS (deleted)

6. FORM PG: PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS AND PERFORMANCE GOALS

Institution Name: **University of Missouri-St. Louis**

Program Name: **Masters of Science in Nursing**

Date: **August (Fall Semester) 2010**

A. Student Preparation

Students admitted to the MSN program in the Nurse Educator emphasis area are expected to have a commitment to careers in clinical nursing education, whether in clinical student education, serving as a clinical preceptor, or engaging in staff development.

MSN Admission Requirements

The deadline for MSN applications for admission is April 1. Admission may be considered at a later date depending on space.

- B.S.N. from a nationally accredited nursing program
- Minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 scale)
- Current professional licensure with eligibility for Missouri license
- Successful completion of an undergraduate general statistics course
- Successful completion of an undergraduate health assessment course or equivalent

B. Faculty Characteristics

The faculty of the College of Nursing consists of tenure-track faculty distinguished for their teaching and research and nontenure track clinical faculty who are dedicated to the profession and to the preparation of the next generation of nurses. A list of the current faculty who may be involved in this program and their credentials follows:

Tenure-track Faculty

Juliann G. Sebastian, Dean and Professor; Ph.D., University of Kentucky

Margaret Barton-Burke, Mary Ann Lee Endowed Associate Professor of Oncology Nursing,
Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Rhode Island

Roberta K. Lee, Hubert C. Moog Endowed Professor of Nursing; Dr. PH, M.S.N., University of
Texas-Houston

Jean Bachman, Associate Professor; D.S.N., M.S.N., University of Alabama-Birmingham

Anne Fish, Associate Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Michigan-Ann Arbor

Kathleen Borcharding, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., Saint Louis University

Wilma Calvert, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Missouri-St. Louis

Dawn Garzon, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., P.N.P., University of Missouri-St. Louis

Shelly Hanko, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., F.N.P., St. Louis University

Kuei-Hsiang Hsueh, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Arizona

Deborah Kiel, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., Saint Louis University

Richard Yakimo, Assistant Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., St. Louis University

Non-Tenure Track Faculty

Dotty Akerson, Teaching Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., Saint Louis University

Kimberly Allen, Associate Teaching Professor; Ph.D., University of Missouri-St. Louis

Nancy Magnuson, Clinical Professor; D.S.N., M.S.N., F.N.P., University of Alabama,
Birmingham

Judith Maserang, Teaching Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., Saint Louis University

Sue Kendig, Associate Teaching Professor; J.D., M.S.N., W.H.N.P., University of Missouri-
Columbia

Sandy Lindquist, Associate Teaching Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., Saint Louis University
Vanessa Loyd, Assistant Teaching Professor; Ph.D. (c), M.S.N., University of Missouri-St. Louis
Jean Nelson, Teaching Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Missouri-St. Louis
Kim Young-Shields, Assistant Teaching Professor; Ed.D. (c), M.S.N., A.N.P., University of Missouri-St. Louis
Darlene Sredl, Associate Teaching Professor; Ph.D., M.S.N., University of Missouri-St. Louis

C. Enrollment Projections

Please see Form SE above

D. Student and Program Outcomes

Number of graduates per annum at three and five years after implementation: By the end of five years, at least twelve graduates are anticipated from among the off-campus cohort.

Special skills specific to the program: As noted on the College of Nursing web pages (<http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/nursing/current-students/handbooks/msn/Curriculum.html#OUTCOME>), “building on baccalaureate nursing education, and on completion of the MSN Program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate integration of advanced knowledge and skills within the context of an advanced professional.
- Provide leadership with interprofessional colleagues engaging strategic partners to improve health care outcomes and patient safety.
- Integrate informatics in the design, implementation and evaluation of population-specific interventions.
- Evaluate research findings to implement and disseminate evidence based professional nursing practice.
- Provide ethically grounded, culturally competent health promotion with diverse populations.

Proportion of students who will achieve licensing, certification, or registration: All students will be registered nurses before being admitted to this graduate program. Graduates who meet the two year post-graduation teaching requirement of the certifying organization will be eligible to apply for the board certification exam as nurse educators offered by the National League for Nursing.

Performance on national and/or local assessments: There is no national assessment. Student learning will be measured in each course.

7. QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR OFF-SITE PROGRAMS, ACCREDITATION, AND OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION

A. General Oversight: Describe the manner in which this program will be managed. How does the management of this program fit within the institution's academic administrative structure?

UMSL has a long tradition of overseeing off-campus offerings. The Division of Continuing Education provides administrative support for outreach and online programs. The Dean of Continuing Education reports to the Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. His staff have day-to-day responsibility over the off-campus locations and formulate a budget for each of the off-campus locations. Continuing Education arranges and pays for all of the agreements with the off-campus sites. For example, the Mineral Area College agreement costs UMSL \$25,000 annually. Continuing Education then constructs budgets for colleges engaged in off-campus teaching based on their total expenses. Additionally, Continuing Education employs a full time Instructional Design Specialist who serves as a resource to faculty teaching online. Since these are costs that support the entire campus's off-site programming, they do not require additional charges to this program.

The MSN Nurse Educator emphasis area will be managed similarly to all of UMSL's off-campus offerings. Top-level administrative and academic personnel provide oversight for the programs and regularly review their quality. Each semester, the deans and directors of the various colleges involved in the programs, working with Continuing Education, are to review the work of their academic staff and monitor their activity so that the highest standards can be maintained. Since all programs at UMSL that offer off-site courses have specified learning outcomes, off-campus students are expected to meet the same outcomes as those who take those courses on campus. In fact, we expect that most students will take some of their courses off-site close to their home and others on campus so it is crucial for off-site students to have the same preparation as those studying exclusively on campus. Students taking courses off-campus, like their on-campus peers, are to be surveyed at the end of the term to rate the quality of each course.

For the MSN Nurse Educator off-site program, the College of Nursing's Director for Continuing Education and Outreach, who is the faculty liaison with the Division of Continuing Education, will ensure that students in outreach sites receive information and access to academic services necessary for successful program implementation. The College of Nursing also employs a full time Software Support Specialist who works with faculty to identify and implement technological solutions to pedagogical needs and students' needs for flexibility. The Specialist serves as the College expert on the use of Wimba for interactive video classroom issues and has already worked with the information service staff at MBMC to check compatibility of the instructional television (ITV) systems across the two organizations. Additionally, the College of Nursing's Associate Dean for Advanced Nursing Education provides the leadership for the MSN program, assisted by the faculty Coordinator for the MSN program. She works closely with a Senior Student Services Advisor in the College of Nursing who assists MSN students with course registration and provides academic support services in person, or by phone or electronic mail. The graduate programs are supported by a full time administrative assistant. Working with existing College and University resources will facilitate course revisions and updates over time and ensuring consistency between face-to-face versions of the courses, ITV, and online versions.

B. Faculty Qualifications: How do the qualifications of faculty at this site compare with those of faculty for this program at the main campus? Please also note the comparable data regarding the proportion of course-section coverage by full-time faculty at each site.

Because of UMSL's long history of off-campus course offerings, there are policies in place that require the academic programs to approve all faculty involved in distance education. There are no full-time faculty members assigned exclusively to any site except the main campus, however.

The standards for faculty teaching off-campus remain the same as for on-campus teaching. For example, if an adjunct faculty member teaches an off-site graduate course, then the dean of the Graduate School must also approve that faculty member's credentials for that particular course, just as she does for on-campus courses. (Please see Form PG for specific program faculty.) Faculty teaching off-site are expected to teach the same courses with the same objectives as those that are offered on-campus. This is to assure that students will be able to take a course where and when it is offered and be prepared to take the next course in the sequence, even if they take it at a different site. Faculty teaching off-campus students in this program will use face-to-face teaching, instructional television, online, or WIMBA depending on the objectives and needs related to individual courses.

C. Support Services: Describe how the institution will ensure that students at this site will be able to access services such as academic support, library, computing, and financial aid, as well as other administrative functions, at a level of quality comparable to that of on-campus programs.

The agreement with MBMC will allow UMSL students to access to the MBMC on-site support services located in the Clinical Nursing Institute at MBMC. We expect, however, that UMSL students will primarily use support services already offered online for on-campus students. Online services for registration, fee-payment, testing, advising/financial aid, book sales, and administrative support are services offered through the University's integrated systems. The student portal on My Gateway lists links to tools that students often need. On "My Academic Toolbox" are links for an enrollment certification letter, class schedule, DARS report, e-bill student account, e-mail forwarding address, creating a friendly e-mail address, accessing grades and GPA, online testing appointments, registration times, and both the online and telephone registration systems. Advising links are listed under "Academic Planning Tools" These include links to academic advising, academic calendars, choosing a major, the *Bulletin* (catalog), course schedules, final exam schedule, and policies.

In delivering courses at off-campus sites, emerging technologies complement more traditional efforts. Library holdings, for example, are computerized; students can conduct reference searches via telecommunications. Entire texts of an increasing number of periodicals are now available online. The library's password-protected page on My Gateway provides resources to both faculty and students. Faculty can place an item on reserve and request an instruction session for their class through this portal. Students can search for reserve items by a professor's name or by the name of the course. Faculty and students alike have access to online subject guides, the UMSL Library Catalog, statewide MERLIN and MOBIUS Catalogs, Database searching, Interlibrary Loan, and Library Instruction (Tutorials, How-Tos, etc.). They can also e-mail a reference question or sign up for a research consultation.

This broad range of online services demonstrates that even on-campus students are accustomed to seeking information online. Off-campus students should feel just as comfortable with these services, since they are the same for both groups.

Accreditation

The University of Missouri-St. Louis is accredited by the Commission on Higher Learning (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, which applies to all baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral level degrees. The last re-accreditation visit was in November 2008. Reaccreditation was extended for a full ten years until 2018. HLC has approved UMSL to offer accredited programs at all of the sites requested. Additionally, the BSN and MSN nursing programs are accredited professionally by the Commission for Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) through June 30, 2010. The college's BSN and MSN programs were last reviewed during the CCNE continuing accreditation visit in November, 2009. The final report from CCNE is expected at the end of April or early May.

Quality Assessment

All academic programs at UMSL undergo a required Five-Year Program Review. Reviews of the off-campus programs take place during the regularly scheduled review of that program. Data that faculty provide for the program review's self-study include how students' knowledge and skills are evaluated and what changes have been made as a result of the assessment results. A site visit (i.e., to the main campus) is required during the program review conducted by an external reviewer from another campus (normally another comparator urban public research university) and at least three faculty members from other departments on campus. The University of Missouri System conducts a periodic review of the program review process on each of the four campuses to assure the quality of the review process itself. UMSL underwent the System review in 2006. To promote continuous quality improvement, all programs update their responses to the Five-Year Reviews annually. The College of Nursing underwent its five-year review in 2007 and opted to use a new Comprehensive Program Review process developed by the UM System. This review brought together an interprofessional team of faculty reviewers from the four university system to analyze programs in the College of Nursing.

Academic personnel provide oversight for the off-campus programs. At the course level, course evaluations are required of every course, off- and on-campus. These data are used during annual faculty evaluations and for promotion and tenure reviews. Departmental and College Annual Reports require faculty to document how well students achieve the program's outcomes, both on-campus and off-site, and measures they have taken to improve students' learning.

Alumni and Employer Survey

As part of the College of Nursing accreditation, faculty regularly seek information from key constituents via surveys and focus groups. Most recently the College has begun using focus groups only to seek employer feedback as participation is substantially better using that method and it allows for obtaining more detailed data.

8. INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The University of Missouri-St. Louis is well equipped to support the proposed off-site program because of the long and successful experience the campus has in off-campus offerings. Because the undergraduate population consists of 80% transfer students, UMSL has close relationships with community colleges in this region. Professionals in communities served by those

community colleges look to UMSL for graduate programs, and the community colleges are pleased to host our courses.

Serving UMSL constituents is the major outcome. It is a natural extension of the land-grant mission to offer degrees off campus to meet students' educational needs. UMSL's major service area extends from suburban into rural areas without access to higher education beyond the associate's degree. As a result of the land-grant commitment, Residence Centers have been established at outlying community colleges, where community college faculty, PK-12 teachers, school administrators, counselors, social workers, and nurses can upgrade their professional skills and knowledge without driving long distances. Past and current enrollments in programs at UMSL's approved off-campus locations show that there continues to be a demand for public higher education opportunities in rural areas surrounding metropolitan St. Louis as well as the extreme reaches of suburban St. Louis County.

The College of Nursing also offers off campus education for registered nurses in the RN-BSN program at two area hospitals; i.e., DePaul Healthcare Center and St. John's Mercy Medical Center. This provides experience working with clinical agencies in delivering outreach courses that will facilitate smooth operation of the proposed program at MBMC. Nursing administrators have agreed that nurses from any of the nearby hospitals may participate in the MBMC cohort, on a space available basis after MBMC students have enrolled.

UMSL's Division of Continuing Education, whose dean sits with other deans on the Provost's Council, is charged with fulfilling the campus' land-grant mission. Their website (<http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/conted/credit/index.html>) describes the wide variety of course offerings and distance formats offered through CE, and their administrative role.

UMSL Students

The majority of students at UMSL are ethnically diverse working adults. They are mature and are instrumentally motivated to complete their education primarily to enhance their career opportunities. The trend of population growth in outlying areas of the St. Louis region, confirmed by 2000 census information, is reflected in the increasing enrollments at area community college campuses. The increase in travel time and two-wage earner families has contributed to many students – and potential students – becoming place-bound; this is particularly true for working mothers. Indeed, demographic and survey data revealed that 77 % of students taking courses at UMSL's Residence Centers were women, working full- or part-time (93%), nearly one-half married with one-third having children under the age of 13. Students in the MSN program off-site will likely reflect similar demographics.

Graduate School at UMSL

The mission of the Graduate School of the University of Missouri-St Louis is to promote culturally and intellectually diverse learning environments in which scholarship and creativity can flourish. The Graduate School distinguishes UMSL's graduate programs from those in traditional universities as follows: "our programs reflect our mission as a public metropolitan research university: our faculty members' and students' scholarship advances understanding of their disciplines in rapidly changing local, regional, and global contexts" (retrieved 4/19/10 from <http://www.umsl.edu/divisions/graduate/about/mission.html>).

The Graduate School is charged with oversight of all graduate programs and will assure the quality of the off-site programs. The Graduate Dean approves all admissions to graduate programs, oversees all program changes, and assures that students have fulfilled all requirements for graduation. UMSL's graduate faculty formulate all policies through a representative Graduate Council, and those policies are available on the Graduate School's Web site and in the online Student Handbook.

University of Missouri-St. Louis

With more than 16,000 students, UMSL is the largest university in the area and the third largest in Missouri. It offers 54 undergraduate degree programs, 37 master's degree programs, 15 doctoral degree programs, and the state's only professional degree in optometry.

UMSL began in 1963 as a consequence of the national movement to create public universities in metropolitan centers. UMSL's urban location determines its mission, which states,

“The University of Missouri-St. Louis provides excellent learning experiences and leadership opportunities for a diverse student body. Outstanding faculty and staff, innovative research, and creative partnerships foster synergies that advance the welfare of our stakeholders and benefit the global society” (retrieved 4/19/10 from <http://www.umsl.edu/services/academic/strategic-plan/vision-mission.html>).

To fulfill that mission, the university works in partnership with other key community institutions to help the region progress and provides opportunities for people of the area to receive high quality and accessible liberal arts, career, professional, and graduate education. By means of a careful melding of strengths in research, teaching, and community service, UMSL plays a leadership role in advancing scholarship; providing quality undergraduate, graduate, and professional instruction to the large and diverse numbers of students in the St. Louis area; and contributing to economic development throughout the region and state.

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