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**Docket Item: 6.7 - CONSENT ITEM:** Lane Community College: Bachelor of Science: Nursing (BSN)

**Summary:**

Lane Community College has submitted an application for a Bachelor of Science: Nursing degree. This submission is Phase Three of a Three Phase process. Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) staff completed a review of the proposed program. After analysis, HECC staff recommend approval of this degree by the Commission.

**Overview of Submission Process:**

Review and approval of the Bachelor of Science: Nursing is a three-phase submission process:

- Phase One: Statement of Need (Appendices A and B)
- Phase Two: Notice of Application (Appendices C, D and E)
- **Phase Three: Final Program Approval (Submission and Approval in Webforms)**

**Staff Recommendation:**

The HECC recommends the adoption of the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission approve the following degree: Bachelor of Science: Nursing at Lane Community College.



**Lane Community College seeks the Oregon Higher Education Coordinating Commission's approval to offer an instructional program leading to a Bachelor of Applied Science: Nursing in Nursing.**

**Program Summary**

Lane Community College is proposing a registered nurse (RN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree pathway. This program is essential for access to the BSN degree among community college students, as well as current associate degree nurses working within the community. While the associate degree nurse is prepared to practice in several settings, the bachelor's degree prepared nurse possesses the additional education and training needed for critical roles in community health, case management, nursing leadership, and prepares the graduate for advanced education and practice.

**1. *Describe the need for this program by providing clear evidence.***

LCC is proposing a registered nurse (RN) to Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree pathway. This program is essential for access to the BSN degree among community college students, as well as current associate degree nurses working within the community. While the associate degree nurse is prepared to practice in several settings, the bachelor's degree prepared nurse possesses the additional education and training needed for critical roles in community health, case management, nursing leadership, and prepares the graduate for advanced education and practice. Lane offers the largest associate degree nursing program in the State of Oregon with multiple pathways into nursing. Lane has both a standalone practical nursing program and a professional licensure option, whereby students, after completing the first year of the ADN program, can take the NCLEX PN licensing exam and work as an LPN while completing the RN program. Lane also offers an additional pathway, whereby LPNs earn credit for prior learning (CPL) and earn advanced placement into the RN program. Collectively, Lane seats up to 236 nursing students annually. In our program proposal, we will illustrate the various pathways we will offer for students to achieve a BSN degree.

Lane County has a shortage of nurses prepared at the bachelor degree level (BSN). There are currently 3,170 Registered Nurses (RNs) working in Lane County. According to the Oregon Longitudinal Data Collaborative, only 43% of practicing nurses in Lane County are prepared at the BSN level or higher (2023). This places Lane County below the state and national level of BSN prepared nurses, which is roughly 71%. Employment as a Registered Nurse in 2022 was much larger than most occupations in Lane County. The total number of job openings is projected to be much larger than most occupations in the region through 2032 (State of Oregon Employment Department, 2023).

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PeaceHealth is the largest employer of registered nurses in Lane County and in 91 positions open to the public, 91 positions state “BSN preferred,” or “enrollment in BSN program, strongly preferred.” Currently, only 61% of their nurses are prepared at the bachelor degree or higher (Sacred Heart Medical Center at RiverBend, 2023). LCC is host to the largest ADN program in the State of Oregon, seating up to 220 students annually, between the practical nurse (PN) and RN cohorts. Recent surveys indicate that 82% of Lane Nursing graduates stay and work in the area (Oregon Longitudinal Data Collaborative, 2023). In a 2022 survey of Lane RN graduates, 100% of respondents indicated that they would complete an RN-to-BSN program at LCC if it were offered (Oregon Longitudinal Data Collaborative, 2023). A BSN program at Lane will significantly increase the number of bachelor’s prepared nurses in the community. This will improve the community’s healthcare outcomes, improve employment and advanced degree options for practicing nurses, and create an additional affordable and accessible degree pathway for students. While an associate degree in nursing prepares students for employment as an RN, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) (2023) regards the BSN as the minimum degree necessary for entry-level nursing due to increasing healthcare complexities in an ever-changing environment.

On April 11, 2024, the HECC approved Lane Community College’s Statement of Need for a Bachelor of Science: Nursing degree. The Statement of Need (see attached) contains data and rationale that support the need for additional Bachelor of Nursing degree pathways in Oregon, and more specifically, in Lane County. There are and will continue to be more jobs than graduates for these fields throughout Oregon and within Lane County. With a program cap of 60 students, we anticipate that the employment growth and annual replacement openings in Lane County will be more than adequate to support our BSN grads.

2. ***Does the community college utilize systemic methods for meaningful and ongoing involvement of the appropriate constituencies?***

In consultation with our advisory committee, various Lane stakeholders (faculty and students and others), and local employers, the RN to BSN program has been designed to address the specific needs of employers in our service area as well as to prepare graduates to contribute in a meaningful way to the local and national healthcare system and its consumers. Our advisory committee participants include nursing students, faculty, other Bachelor of Nursing programs (Bushnell and Linfield Universities), nurse leaders and practitioners from the community, and nurse executives and nursing practice educators in the community. The table below includes the names and experiences of the Nursing Advisory Committee who participated in providing support and feedback on BSN program development.

To meet the requirements of a bachelor degree in Oregon, students must complete a minimum of 60 upper division credits. We are fortunate at Lane that we already offer a BAS in Business Management. We have collaborated with the BAS Business Management Faculty to come up with a number of upper division business management courses that we will be able to offer to our students to help them not only meet the upper division requirements but to enhance their ability to serve in leadership roles within the

healthcare system by increasing their understanding of business models, human relations in a business setting, change management, and concepts of production and efficiency.

Designing an RN-to-BSN curriculum on a community college campus is unique in that the curriculum must align with national BSN standards, meet the learning needs of the students, and meet the industry and health care needs of the community. Our BSN faculty team has spent a number of hours researching BSN programs around the country, BSN educational standards through the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and has collaborated with industry partners in the community to develop a robust and rigorous curriculum that affords students the flexibility to work full time while attending classes. As such, our faculty team has developed a flexible curriculum with online courses and optional practical experiences.

Lane continues to seek feedback and advice from statewide partners as well as institutions and individuals who have experience implementing BSN programs outside of Oregon. We have collaborated with regional partner institutions for alignment of the BSN with their master's programs, and we are actively pursuing future opportunities for program alignment or articulation with OHSU MSN programs, Grand Canyon University MSN programs, and GCU ADN to MSN Pathways.

3. ***Is the community college program aligned with appropriate education, workforce development, and economic development programs?***

Lane prides itself on its longstanding community partnerships with a variety of stakeholders, including K-12, local and regional industry, and with other organizations. In consultation with our advisory committee, various Lane stakeholders, and local employers, the RN to BSN program has been designed to address the specific needs of employers in our service area as well as to prepare graduates to contribute in a meaningful way to the local and national healthcare system and its consumers. Although graduates of an associate degree nursing program are qualified for many entry-level nursing jobs in Lane County, many job ads specify a requirement of at least a bachelor's degree, and when not specified as a requirement, the BSN is often preferred. Additionally, the BSN opens doors to more nursing positions and ultimately more career options and earning potential. The outcomes and occupational skills we have identified, through research and direct contact with Lane County employers, are embedded in our program design. These outcomes reflect and are responsive to healthcare labor market demand, and they closely align with key needs in both today's labor market and the emerging opportunities that voices in our workplace community have indicated.

A BSN is a prerequisite to most advanced practice nursing programs. To become a nurse practitioner, a nurse anesthetist or most other types of advanced practice nurse, a master's degree is ultimately required. The degree is designed for maximum flexibility, so that graduates of both our associate degree nursing program and ADN nurses in the community may enter the BSN with the least amount of friction possible.

Transfer credit has been considered thoroughly and courses have been aligned with other institutions to the greatest extent possible. Several regional partner institutions have indicated interest in pursuing alignment of the BSN with their master's programs, and we are actively pursuing future opportunities for program alignment or articulation with OHSU MSN programs, Grand Canyon University MSN programs, and GCU ADN to MSN Pathways.

4. ***Does the community college program lead to student achievement of academic and technical knowledge, skills, and related proficiencies?***

While an associate degree in nursing prepares students for employment as an RN, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2023) regards the BSN as the minimum degree necessary for entry-level nursing due to increasing healthcare complexities in an ever-changing environment. Nurses must be prepared to move between inpatient and outpatient settings and manage a comprehensive plan of care. As healthcare shifts from hospital-centered care to primary, preventative care in the community, so too must the minimal educational requirements of the nurse. In fact, according to the AACN, preparation of the entry-level professional nurse requires a greater orientation to global perspectives, community-based primary health care, and an emphasis on health promotion, maintenance, and cost-effective coordinated care. Our team developed the curriculum from a backward design process, beginning with the AACN framework. The PLOs for the BSN represent the professional practice expectations of the BSN graduate, demonstrating the increased rigor and higher order cognitive processes that are represented in this new degree. The PLOs were developed to simultaneously meet the needs of the local healthcare industry and integrate Lane's degree leveling definitions and assessment frameworks.

The BSN program learning outcomes (PLOs) are aligned with Lane's values, and we are developing this program's curriculum with the college's values in mind. The alignment between the PLOs, Lane's Vision, Mission, and Values, and our Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) ensures a highly functional and sustainable foundation to support student success across all levels of the organization and beyond-to our community stakeholders, corporate and non-profit partners, and other educational institutions. Individualized, immersive, practical education and co-operative education opportunities in the community will serve to help the emerging professional nurse identify health disparities in Lane County and work side by side with public and community health professionals on issues facing residents in Lane County: self-care, access to equitable healthcare, and self-health management. Our program will award credit for prior learning (CPL) for an active unencumbered RN license and a portfolio review, which may include professional RN certifications, scholarly writings, or publications. Our intention is to award no more than 30 CPL credits. We will allow working nurses to earn practical education credit at their place of employment, which creates career advancement opportunities and supports our local healthcare agencies. Thus, our program allows students to grow as leaders in the local healthcare system and beyond, and to develop relevant professional knowledge, skills, and capacities that employers in Lane County seek.

Lane Community College recently implemented assessment software to collect course-level learning outcomes data that provides program and institutional-level data through curricular mapping and rubric alignment. Rubric levels at Lane parallel the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) rubric levels for institutional effectiveness: Initial, Emerging, Developed, and Highly Developed (with the addition of “Not Evident”). Faculty will assess student competency and achievement of outcomes through written interactive discussion forums, case studies, academic papers and projects, and a final culminating evidence-based practice project.

Our BSN faculty team has spent a number of hours researching BSN programs around the country, BSN educational standards through the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and has collaborated with industry partners in the community to develop a robust and rigorous curriculum that affords students the flexibility to work full time while attending classes. As such, our faculty team has developed a flexible curriculum with online courses and optional practical experiences.

5. ***Does the community college identify and have the resources to develop, implement, and sustain the program?***

Lane has the resources and support to develop, implement and sustain the BSN program. Additionally, student services and support that are available to our ADN students, will also be available to our BSN students. Ensuring students have the support and resources while earning their BSN will contribute to sustainability of the program.

To deliver upper-division coursework in Year 1, Lane Community College will draw upon its current full-time nursing faculty (Approximately 23 FTE). The BSN faculty team will be pulled from their current ADN teaching responsibilities, which will create a vacancy of approximately one full time faculty position, which is currently being filled. Faculty who are developing the upper-division courses will be provided time and resources to complete development of these new courses on a schedule that aligns with the program roll-out. All courses will be developed by Winter 2025.

The required general education components will be served by the appropriate academic departments. The Business Department will draw upon its highly qualified faculty to support upper-division electives for the BSN students. Both the Business Department and general education departments currently have the capacity to meet the anticipated BSN enrollment without requiring faculty overloads or impacting lower division course offerings.

To support student learning, retention, and recruitment, the BSN program courses will be entirely online with a small clinical component and an elective cooperative education option. Lane’s BSN students will have access to a variety of services available at the college, including library services, academic advising, tutoring, financial aid, counseling and career support, student help desk and computer labs, academic

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technology center, childcare center, health clinic, student groups, veterans center, Mental Health Wellness Center, and other services on campus and online.

The college will draw upon its General Fund to support program development and roll-out. Tuition and fees collected for courses in the program will also be used to support the program in its first years and beyond.

### Resource Needs:

Advanced technical, technology, and teaching resources: A learning management system such as Blackboard or Canvas could enhance the teaching and learning experience. The college currently uses Moodle. Though With the BSN program being an online program, core program faculty will also need to be provided with laptops.

Library Databases: With courses in evidence-based practice, nursing research, and with most requiring formal papers and projects, student access to a wider range of nursing and allied health databases will be necessary. We have already collaborated with our Librarian and have upgraded our subscription to CINAHL to CINAHL Plus Full-text. This database includes 700 journal titles. It also includes evidence-based care sheets. We will ask to expand our simultaneous user from 12 students to unlimited. This will cost about \$6000/year. Our library also added Dynamic Health and the Nursing Research Guide. We will request access to the Cochrane Databases for student research of systematic reviews, which is about \$2800/year.

### **Assurances**

Lane Community College has met or will meet the four institutional assurances required for program application.

1. *Access.* The college and program will affirmatively provide access, accommodations, flexibility, and additional/supplemental services for special populations and protected classes of students.
2. *Continuous Improvement.* The college has assessment, evaluation, feedback, and continuous improvement processes or systems in place. For the proposed program, there will be opportunities for input from and concerning the instructor(s), students, employers, and other partners/collaborators. Program need and labor market information will be periodically re-evaluated and changes will be requested as needed.
3. *Adverse impact and detrimental duplication.* The college will follow all current laws, rules, and procedures and has made good faith efforts to avoid or resolve adverse *intersegmental* and *intrasegmental* impact and detrimental duplication problems with other relevant programs or institutions.
4. *Program records maintenance and congruence.* The college acknowledges that the records concerning the program title, curriculum, CIP code, credit hours, etc. maintained by the Office are the official

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records and it is the college's responsibility to keep their records aligned with those of the Office. The college will not make changes to the program without informing and/or receiving approval from the Office.