

## **NURSING PROGRAMS AWARDED EIGHT-YEAR ACCREDITATION** (Rivier's News Report, September 6, 2011)\*

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All Rivier College's nursing programs were recently re-accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC), an arm of the National League for Nursing—an organization of nursing educators that works to advance nursing education initiatives. The accreditation applies to all curricula within the College's Division of Nursing, including the associate degree, bachelor's degree, graduate program, and Post-Master's Certificates.

"We're so pleased that our nursing preparation programs have received this accreditation," said Division of Nursing Chairperson Paula Williams. "It is a testament to the hard work by the accreditation committee, and our committed faculty who work tirelessly to prepare our students to be health care leaders in today's world."

"The NLNAC sets very high standards, so this speaks to the quality education we offer our students," added RN-BS/MS Nursing Program Director Susan Murphy, who chaired the accreditation committee. "The NLNAC has been associated with a high level of quality in nursing education for more than a century."

The NLNAC awarded an eight-year accreditation to Rivier College, the longest period of time for which the organization will accredit a program. The NLNAC accreditation expires in 2018.

"Accreditation is vital to our success as a nursing program," said AS and Professional Track Nursing Program Director Mary Ann Breen, who also served on the accreditation committee. "If students do not graduate from an accredited program, they cannot go on to further studies at other accredited institutions."

The committee started meeting in September 2008 to begin the accreditation process. In addition to Murphy and Breen, the committee included Associate Professor of Nursing Ivor Pattison; Instructor of Nursing Janine Reale; Assistant Professors of Nursing Judi O'Hara, Kathleen Patenaude, and Karen

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Frenn; and Professor of Nursing Denise Baxter. Administrative Assistant for the RN-BS/MS Nursing Programs Jennifer Andersen served as the administrative assistant for the project. As part of the process, faculty compiled a self-study report for the NLNAC, and NLNAC officials conducted a site visit and met with administration, faculty, and students, and visited clinical settings.

The NLNAC recommends that institutions have a Nursing Advisory Council to bring together faculty and local health care administrators to discuss curricula and program outcomes. One such gathering was held on Aug. 30 in the Dion Center Board Room. The meeting was attended by College and civic officials, including the Mayor of Nashua, Donnalee Lozeau, and representatives from various local health care agencies and other educational institutions having nursing programs, members of the public, as well as Rivier alumni, faculty, and staff.

“It enhances communication,” said Murphy. “You’re able to more fully bring together education and practice.” ■

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