Dalhousie School of Nursing

Dalhousie is changing the delivery of its baccalaureate degree from a 4-year 8 semester BScN program to a 3 calendar year 8 semester program for direct entry students, which include those students with no previous university credits. A 6 semester program over 2-years for advanced standing students will also be offered. The SON is implementing the modified BScN curriculum in the fall of 2016.

Background

In 2012, the government of Nova Scotia initiated a review of undergraduate nursing education in the province. This review was a collaborative effort between the Nova Scotia departments of Health and Wellness, Labour and Advanced Education, and the three universities with undergraduate nursing programs – Dalhousie, CBU and St. FX. Concurrently, the School of Nursing was undergoing a curriculum review and revision. Program changes are in response to these collaborative reviews.

Program Changes

The modified BScN program will have:

- A shorter time frame from admission to graduation: options include 8 semesters over three calendar years or 6 semesters over two calendar years.

- An advanced standing option (6 semesters over two calendar years) for applicants who have completed 10 university level pre-requisite courses.

- Broader recognition of applicants' prior learning and more flexibility with transfer credits

- All students will be admitted in September of each year allowing for two graduation dates (May and October) and enhanced integration into the health care system.

- Smaller class sizes and more flexible course scheduling, as a result of the two cohort model

- Teaching and learning strategies that include more distance education, active learning and clinical simulation.

- Concentrated clinical practice learning opportunities and a final 13 week clinical consolidation experience.

- Increased access to specialized practice learning opportunities.

- Greater alignment with the undergraduate nursing programs at CBU and St. FX.

- A slight increase in the number of students admitted per year (from 210 to 217) at full implementation.

March 10, 2016