

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR A NEW DEPARTMENT AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA:
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING AND PUBLIC HEALTH**

Action Requested: Consider approval of the request by the University of Northern Iowa to create a Department of Nursing and Public Health in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this request.

Reason for proposed change. UNI proposes to establish a new Department of Nursing and Public Health. Nursing is a newly approved program at UNI. The public health program is an existing program with two faculty members currently housed in the Department of Health, Recreation & Community Services (HRCS) in the College of Education. The new department will join the new School of Health and Human Sciences in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Bringing nursing and public health together will allow for increased efficiencies with shared courses and streamlined advising and administrative services. It will also help students find new connections, networks, and better prepare them for a wider range of career options.

Effect on program configuration. Creation of a Department of Nursing and Public Health will not directly impact the curriculum of the individual programs; however, some sharing of curriculum and co-teaching is being developed which will reduce instruction costs. Faculty in the public health program will be reassigned from the current HRCS department in the College of Education to the new department in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. Planning has been ongoing throughout the past academic year and faculty have been fully involved in the planning and design of the changes.

Effect on students. These changes will have a minimal effect on current students. Nursing will not accept its first cohort until Fall 2024. Public health students will be able to continue, uninterrupted, in their programs. The alignments will help build new affinities among students. Currently health programs are housed in different colleges, and bringing public health students into a department with nursing students will help them find new connections, networks, and better prepare them for a wider range of career options. Changes to advising structures will also improve the student experience. New students to UNI will see improved access to information during campus visits and more holistic onboarding and advising during their first year.

Effect on accreditation. Public health is not an accredited program. Nursing is currently working through the accreditation process.

Effect on resources. Public health is an existing program with two faculty members and no additional resources are needed. New resource needs associated with nursing have been identified and were presented when that program was approved by the Board of Regents earlier this spring. Bringing these programs together into one department will facilitate some course sharing and other administrative cost savings.

Date of implementation. July 2023.