



OFFICE OF MEDIA and PUBLICATIONS  
BOARD OF REGENTS OF  
THE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA  
270 Washington Street, S.W. • Atlanta, Georgia 30334  
Phone: (404) 656-2250  
FAX: (404) 651-9301

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR RELEASE:**

March 8, 2006

**CONTACT:** Arlethia Perry-Johnson

**PHONE:** (404) 656-2318

### **USG Expands Production of Nurses and Nurse Educators**

**ATLANTA** -- (March 8) – The Board of Regents today approved requests by three different University System of Georgia institutions to offer their existing nursing degrees online and at a variety of other colleges and universities around the state. These new external degrees will contribute greatly to alleviating the present shortage of nurses and nurse educators in the state, by producing as many as 375 new graduates in this critical field.

“Taking advantage of distance-learning technologies, the University System is providing a direct and immediate response to a pressing statewide and national need,” said Daniel S. Papp, senior vice chancellor for academics and fiscal affairs. “Through the collaboration and enterprise of our campuses, we are stepping up our production of entry-level nurses and nurse educators, both of which are in increasingly short supply.”

Papp noted that this two-pronged approach is necessary to effectively combat the nursing shortfall. Many senior nursing faculty are eligible for retirement, and faculty vacancies are forcing some nursing programs to turn away qualified students. The Georgia Hospital Association has reported a 13 percent vacancy rate for registered nurses statewide, but less than 8 percent of the nurses prepared in Georgia are pursuing advanced-practice degrees, he said.

The three new academic programs have projected enrollments of 100-110 students for the first year (81 graduate students and 20-30 undergraduate students), 113 graduate students for the second year, and 142-152 students for the third year (122 graduate students and 20-30 undergraduate students).

Details of the three proposals approved by the regents today are as follows:

- The **Medical College of Georgia** will offer its existing Doctor of Nursing Practice degree as an external degree via the Internet and at nine colleges and universities across the state. During the 2006-2007 academic year, the degree will be offered at **Emory University**, **Gordon College** in Barnesville, **Columbus State University**, **Albany State University**, **Valdosta State University** and the **Medical College of Georgia** School of Nursing at Athens. For the 2007-2008 academic year, **Clayton State University**, in Morrow, and **Georgia State University** will be added. In 2008-2009, the program also will be offered at **Georgia Southern University**, in Statesboro. The degree is a practice-focused program that prepares nurses for advanced nursing practice, providing clinical and management expertise. Graduate students in this program may focus on developing expertise in healthcare, leadership or teaching. MCG expects about 40 additional nursing students around the state to enroll in the program during the 2006-2007 academic year, and at least 25 more each year thereafter.

– MORE –

## **USG Increasing Production of Nurses, Nurse Educators**

**March 8, 2006**

### **Add One**

- **Georgia State University** will offer its existing Doctor of Philosophy degree with a Major in Nursing as an external degree via the Internet. The program, which promotes research on health and wellness issues within the context of nursing practice , will use distance-learning technologies such as video conferencing and collaborative software to deliver more than 50 percent of the instruction. However, students will be required to attend some traditional on-campus classes. GSU expects about 10 additional nursing students to enroll in the program during its first year and 20 during each of the two following years.
- **Darton College**, in Albany, will offer its existing Associate of Science in Nursing degree as an external degree via the Internet, video conferencing and collaborative software. Students will be required to participate in on-campus exams and clinical assignments. A \$2.48 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor will cover all expenses associated with the on-line program during its first three admissions cycles. The grant will fund the admission of 20-30 students to the program every other year, while also funding the admission of 100 new students per year into Darton's traditional on-campus nursing program.

The three degrees approved at today's board meeting all are effective immediately. The respective institutions will determine the start-up dates for each of the programs.

###