

## BOISE STATE APPROVED TO OFFER NEW NURSING MASTER'S DEGREES

Following approval earlier today by the State Board of Education, Boise State University will begin offering a master's level nursing program beginning in fall 2007. Students may earn either a master of nursing or master of science in nursing degree, with an emphasis in public health. Not only will the program benefit the careers of nurses already in the field, but it will also prepare more nurses for teaching positions at Idaho universities and will enhance Boise State's undergraduate nursing program.

Idaho's nursing shortage is expected to become critical by the year 2020 as the Baby Boom population ages and retires. Seventy percent of nurses now licensed are age 40 or older, meaning that 60 percent or more of the state's nursing work force could retire by 2026. With the average age of nursing faculty at 55, the need to prepare new nurse educators to ensure a sufficient work force in the future is critical.

In a show of collaboration and support, Boise State University signed a Memorandum of Agreement with Idaho State University in September to better coordinate the delivery of graduate nursing programs to Idaho students. The two universities have a shared emphasis in graduate programs in nursing in Southwest Idaho. Boise State currently has the largest nursing education program in Idaho and is the only program in the state to offer the public health emphasis.

Pam Springer, Boise State Department of Nursing chair, is eager to begin the program. "The program is extremely flexible, allowing students to work and complete their master's degrees part time," she said. "It is exciting that Boise State and Idaho State can collaborate on the delivery of nursing education courses." The program adds to Boise State's growing array of graduate programs and is one more indication of the university's commitment to serve the state and region as a metropolitan research university of distinction.

The agreement states that Boise State and ISU will develop and agree upon a single core master's in nursing curriculum, which will eliminate unnecessary duplication. Students will be jointly enrolled at both institutions, allowing them to take online classes from either school. Contact: Pam Springer, Department of Nursing, (208) 426-4143, [pspring@boisestate.edu](mailto:pspring@boisestate.edu)  
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*Where you see blue, we see the largest institution of higher education in Idaho. For the ninth time in the last 10 years, Boise State University has set an all-time state record with a fall enrollment of 18,876 students. Since 1996, Boise State's student population has increased 25 percent.*