MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
Between
THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA
And
SHELTON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

This agreement is made between The University of Alabama (UA) and Shelton State Community College (Shelton State) for the purpose of providing registered nurses with an avenue for continued quality education, with the specific opportunity to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. Access to this educational experience will be conducted primarily on the Shelton State campus, with minimal travel to The University of Alabama campus. This collaboration to provide BSN Degree access to the citizens of West Alabama is entitled “The University of Alabama/Shelton State Community College Educational Opportunities for Registered Nurses (EORN) Partnership.”

It is a mutually held principle that quality education is the responsibility of both of these educational institutions. It is also mutually agreed that continued quality education for the registered nurse is a critical issue, especially in the rural health care setting. It is understood that cooperation and harmony are essential if the above functions are to be carried out properly. It is therefore understood that The University of Alabama (UA) and Shelton State Community College (Shelton State) shall each appreciate the problems of the other and shall work together in developing any part of this program not covered in this agreement.

The University of Alabama agrees to:

1. Assure the acceptance into its Educational Opportunities for Registered Nurses (EORN) Track Shelton State Associate in Science - Nursing Degree (ADN) graduates and other ADN graduates throughout Alabama in accordance with the student policies and procedures outlined in this agreement.

2. Provide program information to the Shelton State staff and periodically send representatives to the Shelton State campus to assist prospective students in matriculation at UA.

3. Provide supplemental library and other support materials as needed for distance education, such as, videotapes, CD-ROM, etc.

4. Employ Shelton State faculty as advisors, tutors, and mentors, as needed with the approval of the Shelton State President.

5. Courses in the EORN track will be offered through the UA College of Continuing Studies and the Capstone College of Nursing (CNN) via distance learning methods (telecourses, interactive telecommunications, World Wide Web, etc.)

Shelton State Community College agrees to:

1. Collaborate with area health care facilities to identify needed continued quality education for registered nurses and adequate clinical facilities in which to obtain these educational experiences.
2. Provide for all students enrolled in the EORN track access to all educational facilities and materials which Shelton State currently possesses to include all material held within the learning resource center and nursing department, computer laboratories, and access to the internet if needed.

3. Manage and distribute any materials provided by UA to students as needed.

4. Periodically send representatives to the UA campus to confer with UA representatives on specific college and school requirements for transfer students.

5. Provide nursing faculty willing to accept employment as advisors, tutors, and mentors, as needed.

It is mutually agreed, in regard to students:

1. Shelton State students are expected to complete all prerequisite courses necessary to enroll in upper level courses at UA and must complete all major and degree requirements as specified in the UA Undergraduate Catalog in force upon their matriculation with Shelton State.

2. To be admitted to UA, students must have earned a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 on all prerequisite courses (4.0 scale).

3. Normally, students may transfer a maximum of 64 semester hours of their Shelton State course work to the UA degree plan. All Shelton State credit for course work that is identified by the Alabama Articulation Program as college parallel may be considered for transfer to UA, provided the course work does not duplicate other credits and conforms to students’ UA degree plan.

It is mutually agreed:

1. The University of Alabama and Shelton State will cooperate in publicizing this agreement and facilitating transfer of academic credits from Shelton State to UA.

2. This agreement will be reviewed bi-annually by the chief academic officers of UA and Shelton State and may be terminated by either institution with not less than one year’s notice.

Memorandum of Agreement approved this ____ day of ________________, 2001.

Andrew A. Sorensen, President
The University of Alabama

Rick Rogers, President
Shelton State Community College
UA Forms Nursing Partnerships with Shelton, Wallace

The University of Alabama has formalized partnerships with both Shelton State and Wallace community colleges in recent weeks to provide more convenient ways for registered nurses to earn advanced degrees in nursing.

Dr. Jeanette VanderMeer, assistant professor in the UA Capstone College of Nursing and coordinator of the Educational Opportunities for Registered Nurses curriculum track, said the arrangements’ strengths include flexibility and improved communication.

"Everyone can’t attend classes during typical times - Monday through Friday, between eight and five," VanderMeer said. The severe national nursing shortage can make it particularly challenging for nurses to arrange times away from their employment to attend class. "They need them out there working," VanderMeer said.

Through the use of the Internet, e-mail and the UA College of Continuing Studies’ video-based program, QUEST, nurses can complete the nursing courses in one year, without facing the restrictions of being in class on a specific time and day. Instead, nursing students have the flexibility of choosing the best time for them to go on-line and attend class or watch a videotape of a class.

Required clinical activities are designed on an individual basis and efforts are made to arrange times and locations convenient to students.

"This partnership with the Capstone College of Nursing will enable our students to continue to build their nursing careers," said Gladys Hill, director of nursing at Shelton State Community College.

Kathy Buntin, coordinator of health sciences at Wallace Community College in Dothan, said the convenience and economic feasibility of the program could positively impact the severe nursing shortage. "Hopefully, this arrangement will encourage new recruits to enter nursing as they see that there are now better opportunities for advancement in the field," Buntin said.

Prior to beginning the upper division aspect of the curriculum, students complete UA core curriculum requirements, most of which can be completed at the community colleges. The RN student who has an associate degree will have already completed the majority of
these lower division courses.

UA has similar arrangements with the University of West Alabama, in Livingston; Bevill Community College, in Fayette and Jasper; and Alabama Southern Community College, in Monroeville.

One emphasis of the partnership is reaching nurses living in rural areas, said VanderMeer, who, herself, grew up in rural Greene County. Some nurses who earned associate degrees in their hometown community colleges may feel a bit intimidated by a large university, she said. The coordination with the community colleges can help ease the transition and enables potential students to get their questions answered in a familiar environment. "This arrangement bridges the gap between us and the community colleges," she said.

VanderMeer said she wants interested students who complete the program to participate in non-classroom activities as frequently and fully as they would like. "We want them to come to sporting events, Honors Day and commencement," she said.

Earning a bachelor's degree in nursing can provide additional opportunities for registered nurses, VanderMeer said. "It opens doors," she said. "They may have plans of obtaining leadership management positions." After earning a bachelor's degree, a nurse would then also have opportunity to seek a master's or doctorate degree.
UA to Form Nursing Partnerships with St. Vincent's, Jeff State

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. - The University of Alabama is forming separate partnerships with St. Vincent's Hospital and Jefferson State Community College to provide a more convenient way for registered nurses to earn advanced degrees in nursing.

Jefferson State Community College President Judy Merritt and St. Vincent's Hospital President Curtis James will join UA President Andrew Sorenson in signing formal agreements outlining the arrangements in an 11 a.m. ceremony today in the hospital's 2 East Board Room.

Dr. Jeanette VanderMeer, assistant professor in the UA Capstone College of Nursing and coordinator of the RN Mobility tracks, said the arrangements' strengths include increased flexibility and improved communication. These agreements are designed to give nurses more flexibility in earning advanced degrees.

"Everyone can't attend classes during typical times -- Monday through Friday, between eight and five," VanderMeer said. The severe national nursing shortage can make it particularly challenging for nurses to arrange times away from their employment to attend class. "They need them out there working," VanderMeer said.

Through the use of the Internet, e-mail and UA's video based program, QUEST, nurses can complete the nursing courses in one year, without facing the restrictions of being in class on a specific time and day. Instead, RN students have the flexibility of choosing the best time to go on-line and attend class or watch a videotape of class. Required clinical activities are designed on an individual basis and efforts are made to arrange times and locations convenient to students.

"We are excited to meet our associates' needs to better their careers through technology and partners such as The University of Alabama and Jefferson State," said James.

Prior to beginning the upper division aspect of the curriculum, students complete UA core curriculum requirements, the majority of which can be completed at Jefferson State.

The RN student with an associate degree will have already completed the majority of the lower division courses. The nursing courses not available at Jeff State are offered at UA via distance education, so students have the option of earning their entire degree without ever setting foot on the UA campus.

"The Jefferson State nursing faculty are very excited about the opportunity this agreement offers to registered nurses in the area," said Jefferson State Health Sciences Chairperson Janice Pyle. "The students will have the scheduling flexibility afforded by the technology of distance learning, but will also have the advantage of contact with faculty in a smaller academic environment. Many of the potential students are already familiar with our school and faculty and will feel very comfortable with the personal touch we will provide."

UA has similar arrangements with the University of West Alabama, in
Livingston; Bevill Community College, in Fayette and Jasper; Alabama Southern Community College, in Monroeville; Wallace Community College in Dothan and Shelton State Community College in Tuscaloosa. Coordination with the community colleges and St. Vincent's Hospital enables potential students and working nurses to get their questions answered in a familiar environment. "This arrangement bridges the gaps between us, the community colleges and the hospital," VanderMeer said.

VanderMeer said she wants students enrolled in the program to participate in non-classroom activities as frequently and fully as they would like. "We want them to come to sporting events, Honors Day and commencement." Earning a bachelor's degree in nursing can provide additional opportunities for registered nurses, VanderMeer said. "It opens doors," she said. "They may have plans of obtaining leadership management positions." After earning a bachelor's degree, a nurse would then also have an opportunity to seek a master's or doctoral degree.

For more information, contact the UA Office of Nursing Student Services at 205/348-6639 or 1-800/313-3591 or the nursing department at Jefferson State at 205/856-6022 or educational services at St. Vincent's at 205/939-7272.