



U N I V E R S I T Y O F
SOUTH CAROLINA[™]
B E A U F O R T

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 16, 2006

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**The University of South Carolina Beaufort Earns Approval To Launch
Nursing Program at South Campus in Bluffton**

BEAUFORT, S.C. – The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) recently earned the approval of the Commission on Higher Education and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to implement a Bachelor of Science in Nursing program. With the approval of the new program, USCB will be one of 10 universities in South Carolina that offer baccalaureate-level nursing education.

"This new program is particularly exciting for our region," said University of South Carolina Beaufort chancellor Dr. Jane Upshaw. "This professional program will meet a critical need for nurses at our local hospitals, from Savannah to Beaufort, and will provide excellent job opportunities for our students."

USCB will implement a two-track nursing program, both of which will offer bachelor's degrees at the university's South Campus in Bluffton, S.C. The first phase of the program is a continuing-education track that will allow registered nurses with associate degrees to earn bachelor's degrees. In the first stage of implementation, nursing prerequisite courses will begin to be offered in January 2007.

"I'm so excited that we will be offering this new program," said University of South Carolina Beaufort's acting nursing program director Susan Williams, Ph.D., R.N. "We are focusing on ensuring that it is a high quality, value added curriculum. Our intent is to remain flexible and attentive to individual student needs."

A pre-nursing program, which will allow incoming students to pursue the first two years of a B.S. in Nursing, will be implemented the Fall of 2007. Junior and senior level courses will be offered pending approval by the South Carolina Board of Nursing and the build-out of the appropriate facilities, which will include a state-of-the-art simulation lab. Students can begin applying now for the Nursing program at USCB.

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For area nurses like Anthony Vito, R.N., a senior nurse in the neurosciences division at St. Joseph's/Candler Hospital in Savannah, the new program offers the opportunity to get a top-notch nursing education at an affordable price. Because residents of Chatham, Bryan and Effingham County are eligible for in-state tuition at USCB, the program offers a cost-effective option for nursing students based in coastal Georgia.

"My goal is to become a teacher or a clinical nurse leader," said Vito. "This program will afford me the opportunity to finish my educational goals so that I can fulfill my professional goals."

In April 2006, officials with the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) released projections that the nation's nursing shortage would grow to more than one million nurses by the year 2020. In South Carolina, there will be an estimated shortage of 12,000 nurses by 2020. In Georgia, the nursing shortfall is predicted to be as high as 37,000 during that same period.

"The seeds of this program start in the national shortage of nurses, which we as a community will feed even more strongly than the average U.S. community," said Dr. Upshaw. "We expect this new nursing program to benefit our community, students, quality of life and economic development right here in the Lowcountry. We hope that students in Savannah will also plan to take advantage of this new program."

In an effort to maximize benefits of the new program to area students, USCB plans to work in conjunction with the Technical College of the Lowcountry, which currently offers an associate degree program in nursing. TCL students will have the opportunity to expand their two-year degree at TCL into a baccalaureate-degree program at USCB.

"This new nursing program will really open doors for our students," said Dr. Upshaw. "We are thrilled to offer a quality program that will enable USCB students to pursue successful careers in nursing."

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BEAUFORT

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) is a senior institution of the University of South Carolina system serving the southeast coast of Georgia and South Carolina. The university's two campuses, located on the waterfront in historic Beaufort, S.C. and at the gateway to Hilton Head Island in Bluffton, S.C., serve a diverse student body of nearly 1,400. USCB offers students an

exceptional place to learn and live in an environment focused on growth, preservation and opportunity. For more information about The University of South Carolina Beaufort, please visit www.uscb.edu online or call the university's Office of Public Information at 843.521.3113.

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For additional information, please contact the USC Beaufort Office of Public Information, 843/521.3113. **XXX**