Graduate Education

Cynthia McCurren
Closing the Education-Practice Gap

Reflections From Our First DNP-APN Graduates

Introducing Our Next DNP Graduates

Exploring the Role of CNL
As I write this message, I am pausing to reflect on how rapidly events are occurring that could greatly influence nursing education. In June 2012, the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision to uphold the Affordable Care Act, stimulating controversy and elevating the public visibility of health care reform. The nursing profession is fortunate to have visionary leaders who have engaged in important work that gives us direction in this unsettled time. Reports from the Institute of Medicine and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation have supplied key messages and action plans related to nursing education. They call for nurses to achieve higher levels of education, so they can be prepared for significant advancements in science and technology and make meaningful contributions to health care reform.

Without a doubt, the role and importance of nurses in health care will grow in the coming decades. To meet this challenge, we need to ensure that our programs prepare nursing professionals with the advanced education they will need. A university college of nursing cannot achieve this alone. It requires partnerships with practice partners, professional organizations, the insurance industry and political leaders.

This edition of KCON Magazine provides insight into how we are addressing the challenges for enhanced graduate nursing education. We have showcased the first graduates of our DNP degree program. We have highlighted the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) role by featuring a KCON alumna who is contributing to creative care delivery models. And we introduce two new professionals who have joined our leadership team, demonstrating our commitment to practice engagement and health care reform.

The future holds an expansion of nurses’ roles in health care. Our work has just begun. We hope this edition of KCON Magazine will motivate you to contemplate the question, “What if YOU could help transform health care?” We invite you to seek ways to be part of our educational programs as a practice partner, a financial supporter or a dedicated educator. Together we can make a difference!
2  Closing the Education-Practice Gap
   Cynthia McCurren

4  Reflections From Our First DNP-APN Graduates

8  Introducing Our Next DNP Graduates

9  Exploring the Role of CNL

10 Alumni Update

13 Student/SNA Update

14 Faculty/Staff Update

19 KCON in the News
Closing the Education-Practice Gap

By Cynthia McCurren, PhD, RN, FNAP

In nursing education we have long worried about the “education-practice gap.” This traditionally referred to the ability of practice settings to adopt and reflect what was being taught in academic programs of nursing. In today’s health care environment, the practice community is turning the tables on academia. There is a perception that education does not keep pace with rapid changes in practice — that academia is failing to produce health professionals who are ready for complex care issues and collaborative teamwork.

There is truth on both sides of the issue. In October 2010, the Institute of Medicine, in collaboration with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, released a report titled “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health” [http://www.iom.edu/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx]. One of the key messages related to nursing education in this report has received considerable attention. It noted, “Nurses should achieve higher levels of education and training through an improved education system.” Embedded in this discussion were directives to address concerns about educational capacity and the urgent need to transform nursing curricula. In another 2010 report, “Educating Nurses: A Call for Radical Transformation” [http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/newsroom/press-releases/educating-nurses-call-radical-transformation],
the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching stated, “Nurses are ill-prepared for the profound changes in science, technology and the nature and settings of nursing practice.”

These and many other reports, journal articles and presentations have clearly shown us that practice and education — especially graduate nursing education — must work together to achieve our common goal of improved health outcomes through excellence in nursing practice and team-based care. These circumstances could be viewed as overwhelming, but at GVSU-KCON we see this as an opportunity!

In the last few years, our perspectives about nursing education have broadened and our collaborations have been extended. We have fostered communication between academia and practice, creating effective feedback loops that inform both curricular needs and clinical practice. We have created graduate degrees that embed the advanced competencies needed for a rapidly evolving health care system that is challenged to meet the triple aims of better care, better health and reduced cost.

Increasingly, the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) serves as the central point of contact between the patient and other care providers, including physicians and nurse specialists. A strong emphasis on evidence-based practice ensures that patients benefit from the latest innovations in care delivery and that quality improvement and systems thinking improve efficiencies. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree enhances the skills of advanced practice nurses in a context that includes information systems/technology; health care policy advocacy; interprofessional collaboration across the continuum; and clinical prevention, evidence-based practice and public health approaches for improving the nation’s health.

We are complementing these educational reforms with intentional collaborations within the practice community. The individuals depicted in the sidebar to this story are just three examples of the many ways KCON has formed connections that close the gap between graduate nursing education and practice. With their assistance — and the help of many others — we will continue to create the effective feedback loops that inform both curricular needs and clinical practice.

- A 12-member KCON Advisory Board was formed in 2010. It includes members of our regional community who influence health care as providers, consumers, politicians, philanthropists or health care executives. Joann Hoganson, MSN, RN, is one of our current board members. She is the director of community nursing for the Kent County Health Department (KCHD), and she supports the integration of public health perspectives related to health promotion, disease prevention and protection of the community in our education-practice partnership.

  Hoganson’s recommendation led to the “Kent County 2011 Community Health Needs Assessment and Health Profile,” becoming an integral resource to inform clinical education. KCON students participate in a number of initiatives within the KCHD as part of their clinical education. Overall, the Advisory Board ensures the exchange of communication. Strategic aims of the College of Nursing are considered in the reality–based context of health care delivery.

- Elizabeth Murphy, MSBA, BSN, RN, serves as the vice president and chief nursing officer for Saint Mary’s Health Care. Her visionary leadership has led to enhanced education-practice partnerships. The Clinical Nurse Leader concept is used throughout her facility as a care delivery model, and Saint Mary’s CNLs serve as preceptors for KCON CNL students. Also, her appreciation of the DNP degree has led her to increased placement sites for the mental health in primary care practicum that is a unique aspect of our DNP degree.

  Two of our faculty members have joint appointments with Saint Mary’s. One serves as a consultant for nursing research and evidence-based practice. The other works as an advanced practice nurse in neuroscience, which complements her program of research and allows her to mentor KCON DNP students within a clinical site. In addition, Murphy personally serves as a mentor/preceptor for a DNP student in the Nursing Administration and Health Care Systems track.

- Dianne Conrad, DNP, FNP-BC, practices in a rural primary care clinic, blending her practice with her faculty role at KCON. She continually brings the reality of practice issues forward, and facilitates learning experiences for students in the classroom and in her clinical practice. As an experienced advanced practice nurse, Conrad earned her DNP and now she clearly articulates her “lived experience” of bridging the education-practice gap. The educational components of the DNP degree have enhanced her practice and her contributions to health care. In turn, her unique insights are invaluable for faculty, students and our other practice partners.
Reflections From Our First DNP-APN Graduates

On April 28, 2012, KCON proudly celebrated commencement for the first class to graduate from the Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) track of its new Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program. These pioneering doctoral nursing students are Elaine Leigh, Emily Quiney and Rebecca Sypniewski. As this issue went to press, Jaclynn (Jaci) Lubbers was completing the implementation of her doctoral project. In this story, the four women share some thoughts and reflections about their DNP experience, what led them to take on the challenge of a new program, and where they go from here.

Rebecca Sypniewski, DNP, MSN ('03), RN, FNP-BC

Dissertation: “An Evidence-Based Approach for the Development of a Health and Wellness Program Within a Community Center for Older Adults”

Rebecca Sypniewski, a family nurse practitioner, has been employed at the GVSU Family Health Center for more than three years. “My decision to begin the DNP program initially started as a requirement for my current position,” she says, “but it really blossomed into a desire to look at our health care system through a different lens or perspective — the lens afforded by the DNP degree.”

As she continues her work at the Family Health Center, Sypniewski now has the credentials to serve as a faculty member for both undergraduate and graduate nursing programs. “While I am still practicing within the scope of an advanced practice nurse as I did prior to the DNP degree, my perspective is much different than before,” she explains. “I'm much more in tune with patients’ stories and how it affects their decisions regarding their health care. So when people ask me, ‘What can you do with a DNP?’ I respond that it is not what I can do, but how I do it. The knowledge I have gained from the DNP degree not only forces me to question how I provide care, our health care system and patients’ stories, but to put them all together more effectively as I provide patient-centered care.”

And what would Sypniewski tell someone about her KCON DNP experience? She says, “I would tell anyone that this was the most challenging task I have ever undertaken. I am extremely proud of my accomplishments and recognize my professional and personal growth. As an advanced practice nurse, I’m enacting the roles that are inherent in the DNP degree: leader, scholar, advocate, educator, innovator and clinician. But with added wisdom and knowledge from the DNP program, I am able to enact these same roles from a much different, broader perspective.”
About KCON’s MSN Degree

KCON’s Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree prepares professional nurses as advanced generalists who will serve as leaders within clinical microsystems (patient care units/setting). Graduates will have an exceptional blend of clinical, organizational, economic and leadership skills and will be fully prepared to:

- Provide patient care using current evidence-based practices.
- Integrate and coordinate care delivery processes.
- Apply advanced knowledge synthesized from nursing and related disciplines.
- Improve client outcomes in a cost-effective, fiscally responsible manner.
- Improve health care by assuming leadership roles in collaboration with others.
- Contribute to health care reform and the advancement of the profession.

Some program highlights:

- Class delivery formats designed to accommodate working professionals (hybrid online delivery)*
- Fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
- Open to full- or part-time students
- Degree requires approximately 41 credit hours and 480 clinical hours
- MSN admission cohort begins each fall semester; application and supplemental materials due by February 1

Why Should You Earn the MSN?

KCON’s MSN degree program prepares graduates to obtain certification for the Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) role. Support for this role is gaining momentum as an increasing number of practice sites report positive outcomes attributed to the CNL. For example, the Veterans Health Administration, the nation’s largest employer of RNs, has embraced the CNL role and is moving to introduce this clinician into all VA hospitals nationwide. And Trinity Health System, the fourth largest Catholic health system in the U.S., is connecting the CNL role to its strategic commitment. With a KCON MSN degree, you can join and contribute to this growing professional trend.

For more information, visit [www.gvsu.edu/kcon/](http://www.gvsu.edu/kcon/)

*For information about hybrid online course delivery, see [www.gvsu.edu/online/](http://www.gvsu.edu/online/)

Emily Quiney, DNP, MSN ('04), RN, FNP-BC

Dissertation: “Evaluating Health Care Services for the Medically Underserved Residents of a Western Michigan Lakeshore Community”

Emily Quiney, a nurse practitioner, currently works at Spectrum Health Butterworth in Grand Rapids as an OB triage specialist. “I chose to pursue the DNP to learn strategies for improving health care for vulnerable populations and everyone else who accesses the health care system,” she says. “I wanted to gain the knowledge necessary to improve the way we deliver health care.”

Quiney notes that she chose the GVSU program so she would have intensive, face-to-face interactions with her professors and peers. “By meeting for class in person, we had the opportunity to have very intensive discussions about health care and the role of the DNP,” she says. “It was a challenge to be part of the first KCON DNP cohort, but I was able to form many important relationships with professors and peers that will continue long into my career.”

What are Quiney’s plans for the future? “My DNP education has prepared me to address the changes necessary to improve our fragmented health care system, to use evidence-based practices as a guide, and to deal with the issues faced by vulnerable populations.” She continues, “I hope to better educate patients on how to take personal accountability for their health status as a way to increase patient autonomy and the effectiveness of the health care system. And I now can help lead policy initiatives and promote independent practice for nurse practitioners — one way to increase access to primary health care services while maintaining clinical skills and improving health care delivery. The DNP role fits very well with health care reform,” Quiney states, “and we have been trained to be leaders in transforming health care delivery and quality initiatives.”
Elaine Leigh, DNP, MSN (’02), RN, FNP-BC

Dissertation: “Hepatitis C Treatment: A Community-Based, Multidisciplinary Approach to Increase Access and Improve Health Perceptions”

Elaine Leigh manages a hepatitis C treatment clinic at Mercy Health in Muskegon and is a nurse practitioner with Spectrum Health Medical Group-Gastroenterology in Holland. This fall, she also is working with current DNP students as one of KCON’s affiliate clinical faculty members.

Why did she pursue a DNP degree at GVSU? “I needed a platform from which to change health care delivery for those with hepatitis C,” Leigh says. “The doctoral program gave me the tools to make real change and the credentials to partner with a community in need of improved hepatitis C services. I received my MSN from KCON, so I knew the environment and faculty and thought the new DNP program would be a professional, academic challenge.”

As her dissertation title indicates, Leigh spent her time in the DNP program focused on improving access and care for those with hepatitis C. After implementing an innovative practice in Muskegon, she is now managing care for those being evaluated and treated at a new dedicated hepatitis C clinic. “My project included an early evaluation of the clinic’s programming,” she notes. “The treatment programming focuses on education, self-management support and psychological/emotional support, and we’ve already seen trends toward improved health perceptions.”

Leigh points out that two significant initiatives will likely change the country’s health care delivery model for hepatitis C: the Affordable Care Act and changes in the hepatitis C screening guidelines, which suggest that everyone born between 1946 and 1964 be screened. “We don’t yet know precisely what these initiatives will mean for clinical practice,” she says, “but I wanted to have the knowledge and expertise needed to be part of this health care transformation.

“Students will enter the DNP program with a variety of experiences and levels of expertise,” she concludes. “Having been through the program myself, I think KCON does a nice job of individualizing the program plan to meet each student’s interests and needs.”

“I Needed A Platform From Which to Change Health Care Delivery...”

ELAINE LEIGH
About KCON’s DNP Degree

KCON’s Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) degree is designed for nurses seeking a terminal degree in nursing practice who prefer an alternative to research-focused (i.e., PhD) doctoral programs. We offer two emphasis areas: (1) Advanced Practice Nursing (APN) in child/adolescent or adult/older adult, and (2) Nursing Administration and Health Care Systems. Graduates are thoroughly prepared for career advancement in:

• Clinical and health systems leadership
• Changing health care delivery
• Improving patient outcomes
• Clinical teaching in higher education

Some program highlights:

• Class delivery formats designed to accommodate working professionals (hybrid online delivery)*
• Fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)
• Open to full- or part-time students
• Students entering with BSN: degree requires approximately 90 credit hours and a minimum of 1,000 clinical hours
• Students entering with MSN: customized course plan will be created based upon DNP program emphasis and previous graduate coursework
• DNP admission cohort begins each fall semester; application and supplemental materials due by February 1

Why Should You Earn the DNP?

Join nearly 10,000 other students who are committed to making a difference in health care. They are responding to the rapid expansion of knowledge underlying practice, the increased complexity of patient care, national concerns about the quality of care and patient safety, and shortages of nursing leaders who can design and assess care. With a DNP, you can be a leader who transforms health care.

For more information, visit www.gvsu.edu/kcon/

*For information about hybrid online course delivery, see www.gvsu.edu/online/
Introducing Our Next DNP Graduates

On December 8, 2012, KCON will celebrate another first in Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program commencements. This time, recognition will go to the first class of KCON DNP students to graduate from the Nursing Administration and Health Care Systems track. All of these pioneering individuals came to KCON with master’s-level credentials in 2009.

Dennis Bertch, MSN (’93), RN
Current Professional Position: Associate vice president for academic services at Kalamazoo Valley Community College (KVCC)
Scholarly Subject: Identify QSEN (quality and safety education for nurses) core competencies needed for newly hired RNs and RNs in staff leadership roles

Kelli Damstra, MSN, RN
Current Professional Position: Affiliate faculty member at GVSU-KCON
Scholarly Subject: Improve breastfeeding knowledge, self-efficacy and intent through a prenatal education program

Karen Delrue, MSN (’01), BSN (’94), RN, CEN
Current Professional Position: Clinical nurse specialist, emergency services, at Spectrum Health
Scholarly Subject: Identify best practices in emergency department admission handovers to improve and standardize patient handoff processes

Mary Dougherty, MSN, RN, AOCNS
Current Professional Position: Clinical nurse specialist, oncology, at Spectrum Health
Scholarly Subject: Prevent central line-associated bloodstream infections on LTACH (long-term acute care hospital) units

Barbara Hooper, MSN (’92), RN, NE-BC
Current Professional Position: Affiliate faculty member at GVSU-KCON
Scholarly Subject: Improve the development of critical thinking skills in new graduate nurses by using case studies and videotaped vignettes

Carol Robinson, MS, RN
Current Professional Position: Evidence-based practice consultant at Elsevier CPM Resource Center
Scholarly Subject: Evaluate the impact of the ELNEC (End of Life Nursing Education Consortium) communication module on nurse death anxiety and communication apprehension scores
For Bridget Graham, MSN, BSN ('04), RN-BC, CNL, every day at work as a Clinical Nurse Leader (CNL) is a day in what she says is her perfect role — “keeper of the patient’s story.”

Graham is a CNL on a 32-bed, acuity adaptable, senior adult unit at Saint Mary’s Health Care in Grand Rapids. “My unit is fortunate to have two CNLs,” she explains. “I work full time and my partner, Dawn Borreson, works part time. We cover anywhere from 16 to 32 patients daily. I’m responsible for core indicators, nursing sensitive indicators, interdisciplinary rounds and patient satisfaction. I also do a lot of staff mentoring and education at the bedside.”

Graham knew from the beginning of her career that she wanted to pursue a graduate degree in nursing. “I enjoy learning and the challenge of looking at the evidence and asking questions about clinical practices,” she says. “I remember first hearing about the CNL role from my chief nursing officer and thinking that it was perfect for me. I was intrigued by the idea of being the consistent patient information link for the nurses and physicians. What really made me passionate about the role is that the CNL is at the bedside. We meet the patients, create relationships, and mentor the bedside nurses. And we do all this while pursuing process improvement opportunities to achieve better patient outcomes.”

In her role as a CNL, Graham has worked on many projects. One of her proudest accomplishments has been improved patient outcomes emerging from higher vaccine administration rates in her team’s patient population. Patients who are 65 and older are at a higher risk for a pneumococcal infection, and the unit’s staff has been able to consistently achieve vaccine administration rates between 90 and 100 percent.

Graham is also proud of the staff development and education she and Borreson have been able to offer their staff. “We’ve developed intermediate education to better prepare our nurses for the higher acuity patients that we see coming into the hospital,” she explains. “We also prepare a weekly case study to present to the staff, and we invite guest speakers as often as we can to generate a continual flow of new ideas.”

What does she see in the future? “I believe strongly in the CNL role. I think that as hospitals around the country see the outcomes that CNLs have achieved, interest in the role will grow exponentially. Hospitals must achieve exceptional patient outcomes because reimbursement will be directly tied to those outcomes. I believe the CNL can be instrumental in shaping the future of health care.”
FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello to all KCON alumni! I am truly excited to embrace my new role as your president and look forward to a bright future for our alumni group. In thinking about the presidency I was reminded of a letter I read a year or two ago in a nursing journal. It referenced a poem by Ilan Shamir titled “Advice From a Tree.”

• “Sink your roots deeply.” Be truly connected to the field of nursing. Draw nourishment from the connections you make in your career.

• “Go out on a limb.” Take risks. Agree to tackle new challenges.

• “Be flexible.” Bend with the challenges you face in nursing.

• “Let your limbs sway and dance in the breeze.” Enjoy yourself and spread your passion for nursing to others.

• And finally, “Embrace the changing seasons, for each yields its own abundance.” Be willing to let go of the old and embrace change.

Nursing is a career and profession to all of us, and a passion and life journey to most. Please join me in taking advice from a tree as we renew our KCON alumni board!

Tracy Hosford, BSN ('02), RN, PCCN

Find us on Facebook at “Alumni of the Kirkhof College of Nursing GVSU”

ALUMNI UPDATE

KCON Shines in NCLEX (Again!)

For yet another round, KCON’s graduates continued to shine when it comes to NCLEX-RN exam scores. For the quarter ending April 2012, KCON alumni taking the exam had a 93 percent pass rate, matching the national rate for that period. In the year from April 2011 through March 2012, the pass rate was 95 percent compared to a national rate of 87 percent. Congratulations, everyone!
Angie Bishop, BSN (’06), is working at Saint Mary’s Health Care in Grand Rapids in the older adult intermediate unit.

Phyllis Boone, MSN (’10), BSN (’02), is working at Porter Hills Village in Grand Rapids with elderly residents in the continuum from independent to assisted living and skilled nursing.

Lola Coke, PhD, MSN (’93), ACNS-BC, RN-BC, FAHA, PCNA, assistant professor and clinical nurse specialist at Rush University College of Nursing, is the 2012-2013 president of the Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association.

Robert Durkee, BSN (’89), is a field representative for the hospital accreditation program at The Joint Commission.

Sharon (Zinnah) Greer, BSN (’96), is a care manager in North Carolina, currently working on an MSN in Nurse Management/Organizational Leadership.

Abby Hegstrand, MSN, BSN (’07), is working as a clinical documentation specialist for Bronson Battle Creek and is an adjunct faculty member at Spring Arbor University.

Jenn LaVigne, BSN (’07), is working at Saint Mary’s Health Care in Grand Rapids on the inpatient oncology unit.

Jan Looman, MSN (’87), contributed to the February 26, 2012, Grand Rapids Press nursing column in an article titled “Helping a Person Who’s Having a Seizure.”

Kathryn Niemeyer, MSN (’02), MSC, APRN-BC, is finishing her PhD studies in complementary and alternative medicine with the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Arizona.

Dawn Overbeek, BSN (’91), formerly worked in labor and delivery at Holland Hospital’s Boven Birth Center. One of her four daughters began studying nursing this fall.

Ann Marie Polli, BSN (’07), recently received the Sigma Theta Tau Thelma Ingles Award, presented by Duke University School of Nursing’s chapter of the International Honor Society of Nursing.

Jessica (Easterday) Pulling, BSN (’05), is a nurse practitioner with Bronson Rambling Road Pediatrics in Portage, Mich.

Linda Scott, MSN (’95), PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, has been appointed associate dean for academic affairs at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Nursing.

Michelle Troseth, BSN (’83), MSN (’99), RN, FNAP, has been selected for induction as a Fellow in 2012 by the American Academy of Nursing.

Jennifer VanWyhe, BSN (’07), is working at Faith Hospice in Grand Rapids.

Kristine Weaver, MSN (’08), nurse practitioner, owns The People’s Clinic in Elkhart, Ind. (www.npforwellness.com)

Lori Reitman Wild, PhD, BSN (’80), RN, has been appointed professor and dean of the School of Health Sciences at Seattle Pacific University.

The following KCON alumni earned their DNP degree from Rush University in 2012:

- Amy Manderscheid, MSN (’08), BSN (’03)
- Marla Niedzwiecki, MSN (’97)
- Jeanne Roode, MSN (’95)
- Coleen Smith, MSN (’93)

Have news for the next issue of "Alumni Briefs"?

Send it to the GVSU Alumni Relations Office:
E-mail: www.gvsu.edu/alumni
Phone: 616-331-3590 or 800-558-0541

All KCON alumni are automatically members of the KCON Alumni Chapter. Please stay in touch and consider joining in on some of our activities.
AWARD RECIPIENTS 2011-2012

STUDENT/SNA UPDATE

SNA Contributes Again to National Agenda

Following up on a resolution successfully passed at the 2011 national convention, KCON’s SNA chapter had another resolution passed at the 2012 convention held in April in Pittsburgh. This year’s resolution promoted educating children about the importance of healthy eating habits. KCON presented the resolution after seeing the benefits of the local CATCH program, which targets children in underserved school districts and teaches them about nutrition lessons and physical activity. In Pittsburgh, GVSU also received a national award for outstanding newsletter.

We thank Michele Coffill, News and Information Services, who wrote the original extended version of this story for GVSU’s “Success Stories” online feature site.

KCON Attends “Pure Nursing” Conference

Sixteen GVSU SNA members attended the 61st annual Michigan Nursing Students Association (MNSA) conference this year. The theme was “Pure Nursing,” in keeping with the state’s highly successful “Pure Michigan” tourism and economic development campaign. GVSU’s SNA was honored by the MNSA with several awards. The scrapbook committee was recognized for excellence in the content and aesthetics of GVSU’s SNA scrapbooks. A tandem of community health project awards was received. And Katie New, SNA treasurer, received scholarships for her exemplary commitment to nursing.

An extended version of this story can be found in the February 2012 issue of “SNA Newsletter.”
New Administrators Join KCON

Dean Cynthia McCurren recently announced two additions to KCON’s administration team. “It is my pleasure to introduce two new colleagues,” she says. “Dr. Ann Sheehan is our Assistant Dean for Practice, and Dr. Evelyn Clingerman is the Executive Director of the Bonnie Wesorick Center for Health Care Transformation. We are delighted they are joining us this fall.”

Evelyn Clingerman, PhD, RN

Dr. Clingerman holds degrees from Old Dominion University (BSN, MSN) and Catholic University of America (PhD), and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Texas at Austin. She has more than 20 peer-reviewed manuscripts published and/or in review and has completed more than 40 regional, national and international presentations. She has manuscript reviewing experience with more than 10 professional journals; has been a research abstract reviewer for six professional organizations; and has served on numerous dissertation, qualifying exam, thesis and honors project committees.

Clingerman is noted for her expertise as a professional mentor. Her program of research focuses on diabetes and stress among Hispanic migrant farm workers. She has provided leadership in a number of university and professional initiatives, including the Bridging Disciplines Program at the University of Texas at Austin.

McCurren Elected NAP Fellow

Cynthia McCurren was elected to the National Academies of Practice (NAP) as a distinguished scholar and fellow in late March. The NAP is composed of 10 academies representing dentistry, medicine, nursing, optometry, osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, podiatric medicine, psychology, social work and veterinary medicine. Each academy can elect 150 active distinguished practitioners.

“It’s an incredible honor,” McCurren says. “No other organization has the breadth of knowledge and experience within its membership to discuss today’s health care delivery questions from an interdisciplinary perspective. I am motivated by the goals of NAP and excited to work with colleagues who share my passion to advance interdisciplinary work through practice and to advocate at the policy level.”

A version of this story was originally published in the April 23, 2012, issue of GVSU’s “Forum.”
Ann Sheehan, DNP, RN, PNP-BC

Dr. Sheehan has degrees from Nazareth College (BSN) and the University of Iowa (MSN, DNP). She has 20 years of experience in advanced practice as a pediatric specialist and has extensive knowledge related to efficiencies, quality, cost and regulatory requirements. Sheehan has served as a clinical preceptor in her role as an advanced practice nurse. For the past two years she has been a visiting professor at KCON, contributing to the education of DNP students. Noted as a leader in practice and as an advocate for quality health care and policy issues, she is active in local, state and national professional organizations, assuming leadership roles particularly in the area of health policy and patient advocacy. She has completed numerous publications and presentations in her career related to this specialization.

Recent Grants

Bair, D., Washburn, J. (May 2012-August 2012). Grand Valley State University, Pew Faculty Teaching & Learning Center. Presidential Teaching Initiative Grant; $15,000.


Scott, L. (2012). Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration. Advanced Education Nurse Traineeship; $32,446.


Faculty & Staff Transitions

Welcome, New Faculty & Staff

Kim Fenbert, DNP, PNP-BC, is on the clinical faculty with the Family Health Center (60% practice, 40% teaching).

Kirsten “Carrie” Hansen, BA, is academic coordinator of the graduate program.

Kelley Monterusso, BBA, is administrative assistant to the dean.

Kristin Norton, MA, is director of the Office of Student Services.

Patti Townsend, BA, is academic coordinator of the undergraduate program.

Farewell & Thank You

Linda (NICKi) Grinstead, PhD, RN, CPN, CNE, professor, has retired.

Susan Jensen, PhD, RN, CCM, associate professor, has started phased retirement.

Kay Reick, MS, RN, assistant professor, has started phased retirement.

Marilyn VanderWerf, MSN, RN, assistant professor, has retired.

Coreen Bedford, secretary for the undergraduate program

Lori Brown, BS, MEd, secretary for the graduate program

Sue Jarchow, MSN, RN, affiliate faculty

Linda Scott, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, professor and associate dean for graduate programs

Cathy Weisbeck, PhD, MSW, adjunct faculty
Here are some of the presentations KCON faculty made during the past year:


Winner: Health-Seeking Behaviors Research Section Dissertation Award.


Washburn. (2011, October). It’s a YouTube® world: C U online. Poster presentation. 41st Sigma Theta Tau International Biennial Convention, Dallas, Texas.

Washburn. (2011, October). The relevance of person-environment fit theory for transition to professional nursing practice. Poster presentation. 41st Sigma Theta Tau International Biennial Convention, Dallas, Texas.


Washburn & Hodges. (2011, October). One healthcare facility + two graduate nurse orientation programs = successful transition to practice. 41st Sigma Theta Tau International Biennial Convention, Dallas, Texas.

2012-2012 officers for Kappa Epsilon Chapter-at-Large (Sigma Theta Tau International) include:

- Amy Lodenstein, MSN, RN, vice president
- Luanne Shaw, MSN, RN, CEN, treasurer
- Elaine VanDoren, PhD, RN, secretary
- Mary Ellen Bollman, MSN, RN, and Karen Burritt, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, faculty counselors
- Cynthia Beel-Bates, PhD, RN, FGSA, Rebecca Davis, PhD, RN; Susan Jensen, PhD, RN, CCM; Susan Mlynarczyk, PhD, RN, PNP; and Patricia Schafer, PhD, RN, research committee

Larry Boekeloo, MPA, practice manager for the Family Health Center, has been appointed to the Michigan Medical Group Management Association’s program committee.

Paulette Chaponniere, PhD, BSN, MPH, has been invited to participate as a member of GVSU’s leadership team during 2012-2013 for the American Council on Education (ACE) Internationalization Lab.

Family Health Center (FHC). The staff collaborated on an article for the March 25, 2012, Grand Rapids Press Inside Information section, titled “Center Offers Immunizations, Advice to Travelers.”

Susan Jensen, PhD, CCM, has been elected as the 2012-2013 chair-elect of the Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC). She will become the organization’s chair in 2013-2014.

Sylvia Mupepi, PhD, RN, was naturalized as an American citizen on April 18 at the Gerald R. Ford Museum.

Linda Scott, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, FAAN, participated in the July 2012 National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) Fatigue/Sleep Methodologies Boot Camp.

The following KCON faculty served as volunteers at the 36th Annual Research Conference of the Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS), held in April in Dearborn, Mich.:

Abstract Reviewers
- Cynthia Beel-Bates
- Cynthia Coviak
- Rebecca Davis

Moderators
- Cynthia Beel-Bates
- Ruthann Brintnall
- Karen Burritt
- Karyn Butler
- Cynthia Coviak
- Susan Harrington
- Susan Mlynarczyk
- Linda Scott
- Melodee Vanden Bosch


The following faculty have been serving as members of review boards for scholarly journals:

- Bambini, D. - Nursing Education Perspectives
- Barry, J. - Clinical Nursing Research
- Barry, J. - Journal of Nursing Administration
- Grinstead, L. - Journal of Advanced Nursing
- Grinstead, L. - Western Journal of Nursing Research
- Harrington, S. - Journal of School Health
- Washburn, J. - Journal of Christian Nursing
KCON IN THE NEWS

Breaking News:
KCON Receives AENT Award

On September 26, Dean Cynthia McCurren learned that KCON has been awarded an Advanced Education Nursing Traineeship (AENT) grant worth $695,300 over two years, funded by the federal Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA). AENT grants are designed to increase the number of nurses fully prepared to practice as primary care providers. AENT traineeship recipients receive assistance with the costs of tuition, books, fees and reasonable living expenses during the period of their training.

“Highly educated, advanced practice nurses are playing an increasingly critical role in improving access to primary care,” McCurren says. “We are delighted and grateful to have been chosen for an AENT grant, as only 65 awards were made across the nation. This will allow KCON to support a greater number of students in our DNP degree program.”

KCON Signs Agreements

KCON recently signed collaboration agreements with Calvin College in Grand Rapids and Hope College in Holland. Under the agreements, BSN nursing students from the two colleges will have a streamlined placement process for admission to KCON’s advanced degree nursing programs: the DNP program or the MSN-CNL program.

“We’re excited to offer this opportunity to qualified and motivated nursing students from Calvin and Hope colleges,” Dean Cynthia McCurren says. “This innovative partnership with Hope and Calvin nursing faculty will promote intentional mentoring for students who want to pursue advanced nursing education. The ultimate goal is to increase the number of nurses in Michigan with advanced degrees.”

A version of this story was originally published in the April 9, 2012, issue of GVSU’s “Forum.”

DNP Program
Granted Accreditation

The Board of Commissioners of the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) acted at its meeting on April 26-28, 2012, to grant accreditation to KCON’s Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program for five years, extending to June 30, 2017.

“This is a wonderful accomplishment,” says Cynthia McCuren, KCON’s dean. “Our sincere appreciation goes to Dr. Linda Scott for her leadership, to the faculty who have implemented an impressive degree program, to the students who have enriched the program endeavors, to Linda Buck who has worked tirelessly on the recruitment and retention of DNP students, and to the many staff who have supported our graduate education efforts. We look forward to continuing to build a highly successful DNP program at GVSU!”
What if **YOU** Could Help Transform Health Care?

No matter what nursing degree you currently hold, Grand Valley State University offers programs that can help you take the next step in your career.

- RN to BSN degree completion
- BSN to MSN
- BSN to DNP
- MSN to DNP

Kirkhof College of Nursing... transforming tomorrow’s health care!
Kirkhof College of Nursing
Positions Available

Seeking faculty eager to promote distinction in teaching, research, service and practice.

Associate Dean for Graduate Programs: Seeking applicants for this position, which provides leadership in managing all areas of the graduate programs (MSN and DNP), including faculty and student affairs, program coordination, program evaluation, resource development and management, and public relations activities that facilitate the educational mission of the Kirkhof College of Nursing. Earned doctorate in nursing or related discipline required; master’s degree in nursing, and previous teaching experience at the undergraduate and graduate levels required. Academic administrative experience desirable. Eligible for RN licensure in Michigan.

Tenure track faculty positions available in the undergraduate and graduate (MSN and DNP) programs (www.gvsujobs.org). Earned doctorate required (in nursing preferred, or related discipline); master’s degree in nursing required. All qualified applicants welcome; critical need for psych/mental health, nursing administration and applicants with certification as GNP. KCON is housed in a state-of-the-art facility in Grand Rapids, with our Academic Nurse Managed Center located in close proximity.

KCON Centers of Distinction

The Aging Population: Best Practices
Human Response in Health and Illness
Reforming Health Care Delivery and Education
Vulnerable Populations: Best Practices

For more information, please contact the dean, Dr. Cynthia McCurren, (616) 331-5726. Apply online at www.gvsujobs.org for assistance call Human Resources at 616-331-2215. Review will begin immediately and continue until the positions are filled. For more information about Grand Valley, see our website at www.gvsu.edu. TDD Callers: Call Michigan Relay Center at 1-800-649-3777.
THE KIRKHOF COLLEGE OF NURSING CURRENTLY OFFERS THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

- Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)
  - Traditional Undergraduate Program
  - Second Degree Program
  - RN to BSN Program
- Master of Science in Nursing (MSN)
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)

“We are creating exceptional learning opportunities for our nursing students. We launched a revised curriculum in January 2012 for our BSN program to ensure that our students attain the nursing competencies needed for health care in the 21st century. A revised MSN program began in Fall 2010 to prepare Clinical Nurse Leaders, an emerging role critical for the transformation of care delivery. Our Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program began in Fall 2009. Enrollment is approaching 75 students, and our first class graduated this April. Our commitment is to continue to provide nursing education that prepares nurses with the knowledge, skills and insights needed to effectively contribute to health care reform and improved outcomes.”

Dean, Kirkhof College of Nursing
Dr. Cynthia McCurren

Web Site: www.gvsu.edu/kcon Phone: 616-331-3558 Fax: 616-331-2510 E-mail: Use “Contact Us” page on KCON’s Web site

The Kirkhof College of Nursing is fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and recognized for its outstanding teaching, scholarship, service and research.