Student Services

Part 1: Exploring the OSS – The Office

Part 2: Exploring the OSS – The People

Student/SNA Update

Alumni Update

Faculty/Staff Update
From The Dean

The United States once led the world in the percentage of young adults with college degrees, but in recent years, 15 other nations have surpassed us in that measure. In response, policy makers are setting goals for retention and graduation rates, driving universities to address barriers to academic success. These barriers can be found at both the university and individual student level. While focusing on degree completion, we must consider the quality and outcomes of the experiences that lead to achievement and determine what we can do to help each individual student.

Grand Valley State University has taken this challenge seriously and created advising initiatives that are coordinated across all the academic units. These initiatives foster a collaborative relationship between student and advisor so the student feels a sense of connection, support and guidance. Advising encourages students to think critically, seek out resources and develop action plans. It provides students with the information and encouragement they need to take personal responsibility for exploring options and making decisions.

This edition of KCON Magazine shows how the Kirkhof College of Nursing integrates the university’s advising goals into meeting the needs of students declaring nursing majors at the undergraduate and graduate levels; KCON’s Office of Students Services, under the guidance of Kristin Norton, director, and a team of five academic advisors and office support personnel, is leading strategic initiatives tailored for the unique needs of nursing students navigating their educational journey. Each of the individuals in the Office of Student Services is highlighted, allowing you to learn about their important contributions.

I am excited to bring greetings to our collective community as we launch the 2013-2014 academic year, and to share how we make a difference in the recruitment, retention and success of KCON students through the excellent service provided by our Office of Student Services, faculty and staff. We continue to invite you as alumni, community and practice partners, and friends of the college to enhance your involvement in our efforts. I am abundantly grateful for your support in advancing nursing education!
The OSS Model

KCON’s OSS is one part of GVSU’s larger system of decentralized academic advising centers. With support and oversight from the office of Nancy Giardina, vice provost for student success, the advising centers at GVSU’s colleges share a common purpose focused on student retention and success. Yet they also operate relatively independently so they can meet the needs of their different student populations.

For KCON, this has meant a transition from the faculty serving as students’ primary advisors to a staff of five professional advisors and a coordinator handling the college’s BSN, MSN and DNP programs. When Cynthia McCurren arrived at KCON in late 2007 to serve as its new dean, she brought with her a model for best practices in student services from her previous academic roles. This led to the OSS developing a comprehensive approach that deals with all student concerns. And taking the bulk of formal advising off the shoulders of the faculty has allowed them to concentrate more specifically on the role of mentoring. “By shifting the metaphor from advising to mentoring,” McCurren explains, “faculty can better help students with their career development, employment options and plans for future education.”

Much More Than Choosing Classes

According to Kristin Norton, OSS director, advising centers are often stereotyped as just places where students go for help with registration and class selection. “Of course, that’s part of what we do,” she says. “But our responsibilities are much broader because we are focused on overall student success.”

In addition to course selection and registration, the OSS is heavily involved with recruitment, admission and retention efforts. “KCON is a ‘secondary admit’ program, so our office coordinates undergraduate admission,” Norton explains. “We also handle freshmen, transfer and ‘secondary admit’ program, so our office coordinates undergraduate orientation activities. And although GVSU has a fabulous admissions office, Linda Buck and Wanda Moerland spend a lot of time on the road recruiting for the graduate programs, the RN to BSN program and the Second Degree program.

“Our Traditional undergraduate program continues to generate more interest among potential students than we can accommodate, so recruitment is not an issue with that program,” Norton continues. “In fact, the number of freshmen declaring nursing as a major has continued to increase during the last three years. Nursing is a highly sought career and our programs are known for preparing highly qualified graduates.”

SSC Pilot Program

When it comes to retention, KCON has joined GVSU’s mathematics department and the Student Academic Success Center in a pilot program called the Student Success Collaborative (SSC). The Education Advisory Board (EAB) (www.eab.com) is the national sponsoring organization. Borrowing from innovative ideas in the use of data, the SSC combines technology, research and predictive analytics to help institutions identify and then intervene to positively influence outcomes for at-risk students and those questioning their choice of major.

In creating the SSC program, the EAB recognized that universities have collected a huge amount of untapped academic data. Using predictive analytics, hidden patterns related to academic success and failure can be uncovered and turned into actionable intelligence for advisors and faculty. GVSU’s SSC pilot program began with training this summer, and the platform is actively being utilized this fall. It is anticipated the entire university will “go live” following the pilot.

One example of how KCON is using the SSC platform relates to early retention efforts. Norton explains. “We have students coming in each summer who say they want nursing, and they sign up for basic classes that first year. We pay close attention to the data that indicate how they’re doing in those classes. This data can now be used to predict the likelihood of their success in our program based on the grades they’ve earned and success markers in certain classes like foundation-level chemistry and biology. Once students have taken at least a semester’s worth of classes, you can query the database in several ways to find out how they’re doing in relation to known success factors.

“One of the things I like about this pilot program,” Norton says, “is how it helps with parallel planning. Perhaps a student isn’t doing very well in nursing courses but is doing well in psychology or writing. We know already that the data generated in this platform will help our students make intelligent decisions and move forward with their education and their lives.”

“We have exceptional talent among the professional advisors in KCON’s OSS,” McCurren concludes. “They are truly committed to helping our students be successful and realize the potential that is within each of them. This means attention to more than just academics as they support students through emotional upheavals, adjustment issues or feelings of doubt. I could not be prouder of the service they provide!”
Part 2: Exploring OSS - The People

KCON’s Office of Student Services (OSS) is fortunate to have a stellar team of professionals who are passionate about serving the students, prospective students and alumni who walk through KCON’s doors. They are highly experienced advocates, guides, information sources — and sometimes safe shoulders to cry on when the journey through college gets to be overwhelming.

So we introduce the people of KCON’s OSS, beginning with the office coordinator.

Denise Gross
Office Coordinator

Denise Gross joined the OSS staff in March 2012. She has more than 25 years of office administration experience, with 15 in a hospital setting in pre-op, recovery, medical records, and inpatient and outpatient surgery. With a focus on customer service and her exceptional organizational skills, Gross serves as Liaison between KCON’s students and advisors. She also supports the OSS’ five advisors and various committees, helps manage student applications and supervises student workers.

Linda Buck
MSN ’10, RN
Academic Advisor

Linda Buck is the OSS academic advisor for all students who have been granted direct admission status to KCON. She also serves as the graduate program recruiter, the first contact for all graduate students and as advisor to all of the MSN students. She holds an MSN with a concentration in nursing education and is nearing completion of a DNP at KCON with a concentration in Nursing Administration and Health Care Systems.

Buck notes that the nursing students she works with all appreciate the fact that she has been a nurse for 38 years. “This experience gives me the opportunity to enter into meaningful discussions regarding professional and educational goals with a high degree of professional credibility,” she explains. “In addition, my experience in a variety of clinical and nonclinical health care settings has given me insight into the benefits of graduate nursing education in the health care arena.”

Buck tells a story that perfectly describes her work at KCON. “I remember a few years ago, a student dropped in to the KCON advising satellite office on the Allendale campus. She was a biomedical science major, but was not sure which health related career path might best suit her interests and talents. We chatted for more than an hour about what the nursing profession could offer her in terms of populations served, practice settings and scope of nursing practice. We also reviewed her transcript and realized that she had already taken many of the required courses for the nursing program.

“This student subsequently changed her major to nursing.” Buck concludes. “She became one of the outstanding students in her nursing cohort, taking an active leadership role by assuming the presidency of the SNA. She has kept in touch, and we have begun conversations about her interest in attaining graduate school.”

Angela Caruso
MED ’85
Academic Advisor

Angela Caruso is the OSS academic advisor who works with pre-nursing students interested in pursuing a BSN, and she serves as one of the advisors for student nurses in the traditional program. She is also the advisor to KCON’s Student Nurses Association (SNA). She holds an MED with an emphasis in college student affairs leadership and a BS in advertising and public relations, both from GVSU.

Caruso has worked in student affairs since 2006, when she was a graduate assistant in housing and residence life at GVSU. “I moved to the University of North Carolina at Greensboro,” she says, “where I was a residence hall director, taught two student success courses, and was an academic advisor for their College of Arts and Sciences in the summertime. This hybrid position allowed me to work very closely with college students, and it gave me an understanding of today’s students better than any other position could. This experience has been really valuable when working with KCON’s students.”

Caruso has helped more than one student at a time of crisis. “Advisors can be that one person the student knows to go to with anything,” she says. “For example, one of my pre-nursing students was struggling in biology and having horrible problems with her roommate. Her mother called my office, worried about her daughter because she hadn’t heard from her.

“I was finally able to reach the student,” she continues. “We talked on the phone for a long time and also met the next day. We discussed her roommate issues, her stress level and how to cope in healthy ways, and how to be more successful in her biology class. And since I have so many contacts, I was able to refer her to several other GVSU resources. It’s just one of the things I do in my role as the students’ advocate.”

Cassonya Carter
MED, BA
Senior Academic Advisor

Cassonya Carter works in the OSS with students in the Traditional and Second Degree programs, helping them with admissions and eligibility requirements and guiding them through the application process. She also assists with minority recruitment and retention; serves as one of the professional academic advisors for freshmen and transfer orientation; and identifies and provides students with referrals to academic departments, student support programs and other university resources.

“CC,” as she is known to everyone, holds an MED in secondary, adult and higher education and a BA in public relations/vertising. She is currently taking classes at GVSU for a Winter 2014 certification in intercultural competence.

“One of my main objectives,” CC says, “is to foster student growth by designing alternative routes to help students reach their goals. I also utilize various success models with them in relation to study habits, time management and college survival skills.”

With 25 years of experience advising and empowering K-12 and postsecondary education students, CC is an enthusiastic, creative, passionate student advocate. “I fervently believe,” she explains, “that students of all ages and economic, social and ethnic backgrounds can learn and thrive in a learning environment that is stimulating, comforting and appropriate to their unique talents and abilities. I am constantly working closely with colleagues from GVSU and with various institutions and community partners to encourage their involvement and strong community alliances.”

Over the years, CC has developed her own unique blend of motivational and guided instruction approaches to her academic advising, with a focus on the student success model of educator Marva Collins. There’s an old saying that guides CC’s work every day: “Students don’t care how much you know, they want to know how much you care.”
STUDENT/SNA UPDATE

New Organization Assists Graduate Students

Jennifer Ohman, a KCON DNP candidate, has established a KCON Graduate Student Organization that interfaces with GVSU’s Graduate Student Association (GSA). The university GSA fosters academic, intellectual, professional and social development among graduate students.

KCON’s officers for the new organization are:
• Jennifer Ohman, DNP program, president
• Erin Micdale, MSH program, vice president
• Rachel Cardosa, DNP program, secretary
• Nicole Zeller, DNP program, financial officer
• Tami Pettenger, DNP program, graduate liaison
• Geraldine Teny, MD, MSN, RN, faculty advisor
• Linda Buck, MSN, RN, Jack-of-all-trades help
• Claudia Turkson-Ocran, DNP program, first student member

STUDENT BRIEFS

Monica Lyons, BS, FNP (DNP program), has joined the Spectrum Health Medical Group, pulmonology service.

Samartha Lockhart, KCON FHC student worker, attended the national collegiate championship competition for cadet track and field in May in Pueblo, Colo. She placed third in hammer, first in discus and first in shot-put. She also was chosen as national field athlete of the year.

Sylvia Simoes, MSN (’91), RN, MAH, (DNP program), former chair of the KCON advisory board, received a Life Member Award from LeadingAge Michigan at its annual conference in May.

AWARD RECIPIENTS 2012-2013

December 2012 Award Recipients
Banto-Parkes Award for Nursing Excellence
Kathryn MalFeen, BSN
Bennie Wassink Future of Nursing Award
Barbara Ropers, DNP, MSN, BSN, RN, NE-BC
Center of Distinction - Human Response in Health and Illness
Kali Dansev, DNP, MSN, RN, RN
Center of Distinction - Transforming Health Care
Dennis Bertch, DNP, MSN, BSN, RN
Center of Distinction - Vulnerable Populations
Mary Duffy, DNP, MSN, RN, RN
Clinical Preceptor Award for Excellence in Nursing Leadership (Graduate)
Elizabeth Murphy, BSN, NEA-BC, ABNA, RN
Clinical Preceptor Award for Excellence in Nursing Leadership (Undergraduate)
Liz Cawston, RN
Graduate Student Award for Nursing Excellence
Dennis Bertch, DNP, MSN, BSN, RN
Mary Hune Nursing Scholar Award
Linda Granger, BSN
Phyllis E. Gendler Gerontological Nursing Scholar Award
Alana Pfluger, BSN
April 2013 Award Recipients
Banto-Parkes Award for Nursing Excellence
Emily Burns, BSN
Bennie Wassink Future of Nursing Award
Karyn Spivey, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, MSH, CNP
Mary Ziemkow, BSN, RN, RN
Center of Distinction - Aging
Marielle Grahovac, DNP, MSN, RN, CN-RN
Center of Distinction - Human Response in Health and Illness
Eric Chibag, DNP, MSN, RN, CNP
Center of Distinction - Vulnerable Populations
Kimberly Lanning, DNP, MSN, FNP-BC, APRN
Clinical Preceptor Award for Excellence in Nursing Leadership (Graduate)
Tara Webb, MSN, NP
Clinical Preceptor Award for Excellence in Nursing Leadership (Undergraduate)
Megan Reavis, BSN
Graduate Student Award for Nursing Excellence
Marielle Grahovac, DNP, MSN, RN, CN-RN
Mary Hune Nursing Scholar Award
Tara Johnson, BSN
August 2013 Award Recipients
Banto-Parkes Award for Nursing Excellence
Beaverton Skiles, BSN
Lara Sokol, BSN
Clinical Preceptor Award for Nursing Excellence (Undergraduate)
Dennis Bertch, DNP, MSN, BSN, RN
Dorene E. Freeman Award for Outstanding Effort in Global Care
Jessica Randolph, BSN
Mary Hune Nursing Scholar Award
Pendeleo Fryling, BSN
Phyllis E. Gendler Gerontological Nursing Scholar Award
Michelle Koshchay, BSN

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Hello, KCON alumni,

We have once again arrived at fall. KCON has new and exciting things happening and so does our Alumni Association chapter. We have had new members join our group and there is a spark of excitement around events we are planning for Art Prize weekend, a 30th anniversary celebration for the class of 1983, GVSU’s Homecoming 5K and our annual fall open house.

So opportunities abound this year for KCON alumni. Now is the time to reconnect with your KCON roots. We would love to have you join forces with us to be a part of something bigger, for as much or as little time as your schedule allows.

By the way, distance is no reason to refrain from joining us because social media allow us to connect in many ways.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tracy Hosford,

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Congratulations to the class of 1983, GVSU’s Homecoming 5K and our annual fall open house.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Tracy Hosford,
**FACULTY/STAFF UPDATE**

Mupepi Receives Fulbright Award

Sylvia Mupepi, PhD, RN, has been selected to receive a Fulbright Award to continue her scholarship in Ghana related to women’s health. She has also been granted a sabbatical for the Fall and Winter terms of the 2013-2014 academic year. Mupepi will teach and conduct research on cervical cancer while in Ghana. “It’s the number one cancer killer of women in Ghana,” she says. “No study has been done to determine health promotion and preventive practices to reduce this mortality.”

The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, is the country’s flagship international education exchange program, designed to provide opportunities for faculty members to teach and conduct research abroad.

*“The Fulbright program began more than 60 years ago, and they are world-renowned and highly competitive,” notes KCON Dean Cynthia McCuren. “Selection for a Fulbright award is a considerable achievement and a high honor. We are very proud that Dr. Mupepi has received this recognition, and we look forward to seeing the results that emerge from her experiences in Ghana.”*

**FACULTY/STAFF BRIEFS**

Joy Washburn, EdD, RN, VNIFPNC, was invited to be a guest lecturer at Educating Professional Intermediate (EPI) in Arnh, Kingdom of the Netherlands, for a week in June.

The following faculty have been featured recently in the Grand Rapids Press:

- Karen Buttrt, PhD, RN, FNIFB, and Barbara Hooper, DNP, MSN, RN, NEBC, faculty counselors
- Cynthia Baader-Bott, PhD, RN, FSGA
- Rebecca Davis, PhD, RN
- Susan Jensen, PhD, RN, CCN, and Patricia Scholz, PhD, RN, research committee
- Larry Bookelie, MA, has been selected chairman of the Michigan Medical Group Management Association (MMGMA) membership services committee. He is also serving on the organization’s membership committee, program committee and administration of the year committee.
- Ruth Ann Brentnall, PhD, ACNP, CNPEN, AFNP-C, is serving as a consultant on an NIH National Cancer Institute grant "Managing Fatigue Using Virtual Reality for Post-Operative Lung Cancer Patients."
- Nancy Carfaro, MSN, RN, is serving as a faculty advisor for the KCON Student Nurses’ Association.
- Angela Cornem, MEd, BS, was selected in April as the recipient of the Advising Award–Primary Role, presented annually by the Michigan Academic Advising Association. She was also one of two recipients to receive the Advising Award at the spring GVSU Student Life ISO Recognition Ceremony.
- Evelyn Creggman, PhD, RN, and Ann Shauk, DNP, RN, FNIFB, recently wrote successful proposals for the funding of two Special Projects Graduate Assistantships through the GVSU Office of Graduate Studies.
- Dianne Conrad, DNP, RN, FRN-BC, received the Outstanding Faculty Mentor Award at the Graduate Student Celebrations on April 19.
- Barbara Hooper, DNP, MSN, RN, NEBC, attended the Krappasick Institute: Transforming Teaching & Learning, June 9-11 in Colorado Springs.
- Elaine Leigh, DNP (12), MSN (12), RN, FNP-BC, has been reappointed by Gov. Rick Snyder to the Michigan Board of Nursing. She has been voting an unpaid term on the board for the past year.
- Cynthia McCuren, PhD, RN, FRNP, has been elected to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing Board of Directors for 2013-2015.
- Kelley Montemayor, BBA, received the 2012 Distinguished Service Award at the May 2013 annual spring luncheon for the Widowed Persons Service. She serves on the organization’s board of directors.
- Kristin Norton, MA, has been selected as a member of the GVSU MAPWORKS Conference Team for 2013. MAPWORKS is a tool used to monitor first-year student retention patterns.
- Rebecca Szymkowiak, DNP, MSN (13), FNIFB, was selected as chair for public relations for the Michigan Council of Nurse Practitioners.
- Melodie Vanden Bosch, PhD, RN, received the Michigan State University College of Nursing 2012 Dissertation Award.

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Here are some of the presentations KCON faculty made during the past year:

**Bambini & Van Doren.** (2012, October). So, how do you do that? One college’s process for creating and implementing a conceptualized curriculum. University of Kansas School of Nursing, Kansas City, Mo.


**Conrad.** (2013, May). Nursing and the use of the EHR in the primary care patient-centered medical home. International Congress of Nursing, Melbourne, Australia.


**Damato & Scott.** (2013, April). The role of stakeholder engagement and interdisciplinary collaboration in an evidence-based practice program to promote and support breastfeeding. Poster presentation. Sigma Theta Tau International 2013 Spring Conference, Indianapolis, Ind.


**Hosper.** (2013, March). Using case studies and videotaped vignettes to facilitate the development of critical thinking in new graduate nurses. Schools. I always did well in school, so why did I fail the NCLEX-RN?

**Vanden Bosch.** Factors correlated with physical activity of middle-aged women with and without Type 2 diabetes.

**Vanden Bosch.** Physical activity factors compared by weight status in low-active girls.


The following poster presentations were made at the March 2013 Midwest Nursing Research Society’s 37th Annual Research Conference, Chicago, IL.

**Harrington.** Relationships of objectively measured physical activity and sleep with BMI and academic outcomes in 8-year-old children.

**Harrington, Schools, & Vanden Bosch.** Filling the classroom.

**Hurto.** Using case studies and videotaped vignettes to facilitate the development of critical thinking in new graduate nurses.

**Schoofs.** Relationships of objectively measured physical activity and sleep with BMI and academic outcomes in 8-year-old children.


The following faculty have been serving as members of review boards for scholarly journals, conferences and texts:

- Bambini, D. - Nursing Education Perspectives
- Barry, J. - Clinical Nursing Research
- Barry, J. - Journal of Nursing Administration
- Barry, J. - Nurse Educator
- Davis, R. - Gerontological Nursing Society of America, Conference Abstracts
- Davis, R. - Midwifery Nursing Research Society, Conference Abstracts & Posters
- Davis, R. - Research in Gerontological Nursing
- Crossland, L. - Journal of Advanced Nursing
- McCawley, C. - Geriatric Nursing
- Sheehan, A. - 2013 DNP Conference, Manuscript Submissions
- Sheehan, A. - Book review editor for Jones & Bartlett learning
- Vanden Bosch, M. - Heart and Lung
- Vanden Bosch, M. - Clinical Nursing Research
- Welcome, New Faculty

Grace Hoyer EdD(c), MSN, BSN, RN Assistant Professor

BSN ’89, Mercy College of Detroit

MSN ’01, Grand Valley State University

PhD(c), Eastern Michigan University

Dissertation: “Transcultural self-efficacy of nursing education leaders and faculty related to non-binary sexual identities”

Experience: 13 years of undergraduate teaching experience and professional nursing experience in community cancer prevention and screening, women’s health and orthopedics. Research focuses on the transcultural self-efficacy of nursing education leaders and faculty.

Susan Strouse PhD, MSN, BSN, RN, Assistant Professor

BSN ’89, Michigan State University

MSN ’10, Saginaw Valley State University

PhD 12, Duquesne University

Dissertation: “Nurse educators’ perceptions about the culture of nursing and their role in bringing students into that culture: A focused ethnography”

Experience: 23 years of undergraduate teaching experience, with an emphasis on professional issues, nursing ethics, cultural competence and medical-surgical nursing. 12 years of experience teaching RN to BSN students. Qualitative research focuses on nursing education, the professional culture of nursing and interprofessional education.
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 100 students, and 11 graduated from our DNP program in 2012-2013. 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.