**Program Overview**

This innovative program addresses the critical nursing shortage by preparing the Nurse Scientist Educator (NSE) who will:

- advance knowledge in nursing education;
- advance nursing knowledge and practice in the care of people living with chronic illness; and
- be a leader in nursing research, education and practice.

The NSE who completes this program acquires substantive, meaningful knowledge in a range of areas:

- qualitative and quantitative research methods;
- the nature of, and criteria for, scientific inquiry;
- building, synthesizing and applying nursing knowledge;
- research designs and theoretical perspectives in chronic illness;
- interdisciplinary approaches to the issues of chronic illness;
- strategies for developing a program of research; and
- publication, grant development, curriculum design and evaluation.

This program is designed around selected foundational concepts and values. First, Boyer’s (1990) model of scholarship with its four domains of scholarship – Discovery, Integration, Application, & Teaching – was adopted. Second, respect for the human experience of chronic illness and the need for more and better nursing care for people with chronic illnesses created a commitment to research on the prevention of chronic illness and the care of people with chronic illness. Next, the growing need for qualified nurse faculty led to a commitment to prepare Nurse Scientist Educators (NSE). Finally, the belief that students require supportive structures to advance their knowledge and develop research and teaching competencies led to the development of a comprehensive curriculum that provides learning, training, and mentorship. Examples include cohort education, assigned mentors, and structured activities leading to publication and funding.

The program is designed to assist the student to develop the knowledge, skills, and habits of NSE through mentoring, didactic teaching and experience.

**Faculty and principal area of expertise**

- **Debbie Armstrong**, Lecturer; PhD(c), University of Massachusetts Worcester; Spinal cord injury, Pathophysiology
- **Marilyn Asselin**, Assistant Professor; PhD, BC, University of Rhode Island; Reflection in practice
- **James Fain**, Dean; PhD, BC-ADM, FAAN, University of Connecticut; Diabetes self care in diverse populations
- **Kerry Fater**, Associate Professor; PhD, CNE, University of Connecticut; Professional competence, professional development, curriculum development, education
- **Kathryn Gramling**, Associate Professor; PhD, University of Colorado; Relational ontology, theory, aesthetics
- **Ruth Griffin**, Assistant Professor; DNSc, Columbia University; Mental Health, Post-partum depression, chronic mental illness, children’s pain
- **Susan Hunter Revell**, Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Rhode Island; Spinal cord injury, technology in the classroom
- **Lori Keough**, Assistant Professor; PhD, APRN, University of Massachusetts Worcester; Diabetes, self care in adolescents
- **Jeanne Leffers**, Professor; PhD, Brown University; Environment, sustainability, global health, public health
- **Mary McCurry**, Assistant Professor; PhD, RNC, ANP, ACNP, Boston College; Decision making, family care givers, technology in the classroom
- **Gail Russell**, Professor and Graduate Program Director; EdD, NEA-BC, Columbia University; Leadership in health systems
- **Kristen Sethares**, Associate Professor and PhD Program Coordinator; PhD, CNE, Boston College; heart failure, self care
- **Sharon Sousa**, Associate Dean; EdD, Boston University; Severe mental illness, self care
- **Barbara Weatherford**, Assistant Professor; PhD, University of Massachusetts Worcester; Organizational culture and patient care safety, leadership

**Degree Options**

The PhD in Nursing is a research focused degree. There is substantive content and experiential learning in three areas: the conduct of research, the scholarship on chronic illness, and scholarship and leadership in nursing education.

**Program Requirements**

In addition to the usual UMD admission criteria, applicants to the PhD program must complete the following:

- Bachelor’s degree minimum GPA of 3.0 and Master’s degree minimum GPA of 3.3
- One of these two degrees is from an accredited nursing program
- Master’s level courses include nursing theory, nursing research and multivariate statistics or equivalents.
- Computer competency in word processing, spread sheets, PowerPoint, statistical software (SPSS), electronic searches, and internet resources.
Application to the PhD program:

- Three letters of recommendation from people who have supervised the applicant in the academic, professional, or community service setting. If possible, at least one recommendation should be from a doctoral-prepared nursing professor who is familiar with the applicant’s academic work and capacity. The recommendations should address the applicant’s professionalism, leadership, capacity to teach, ability to do graduate work, and potential to advance the discipline of nursing through scholarship.
- Personal statement of research interest and intent. Please submit, with your application, a typed two-part essay. In the first part (up to 250 words), give your reasons for wishing to pursue graduate study. In the second part (up to 1,000 words), indicate your research interests and goals for doctoral study. Use plain paper and put your name on each page.
- All applicants are encouraged to submit supporting credentials (curriculum vitae and published articles) with their applications.
- An example of scholarly writing (for example, a peer reviewed publication or a paper from graduate school).
- Current Massachusetts Registered Nurse license
- One year of professional nursing experience.
- Acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination.

Information about the test and about the locations of test centers is available from:

Educational Testing Service, Box 6000, Princeton NJ, 08541-6000
tel. 609 771-7670 voice/TDD/text: 609-734-9362 www.gre.org

Application Review and Offer of Admission

Application Deadline February 15
The Admissions Committee of the PhD in Nursing Program reviews all applications. Applicants that meet admission criteria may be invited for an admission interview with the committee.

Degree Requirements

The PhD program is a 52 credit post-MS curriculum that is designed to be completed in 48 months of full-time study including summer work. There is a one-year residency requirement. A Certification Examination demonstrates the student’s mastery of nursing science in promoting health, guiding the illness experience and shaping the health system for people with chronic illness and/or addressing innovations in nursing education. The Certification Examination consists of developing two articles that are submitted to peer-reviewed journals. The PhD dissertation is an original body of work in which the candidate demonstrates an in-depth understanding of a substantive area in promoting health, guiding the illness experience or shaping the health care system for people living with chronic illness or in nursing education. The dissertation demonstrates the candidate’s ability to effectively incorporate theoretical, conceptual, and methodological tools in addressing the influence of nursing practices and the delivery of nursing services to people living with chronic illnesses.

Program Highlights

A structured mentorship experience begins upon admission. Students are assigned to work with a specific faculty advisor on academic writing, writing for publication, grant writing, and completing qualifying examination requirements.

The Doctoral Seminar is held four times a semester on topics of nursing research based on student needs and interests.

The students’ experiential learning includes writing for publication, grant writing, opportunities for research and teaching assistantships, qualifying examination, dissertation proposal hearing, and defense of the completed dissertation.

There is exposure to on-line learning and other technology innovations to improve the teaching-learning experience.

Faculty Research

The faculty of the College of Nursing conduct research in two broad areas -- living with chronic illness and innovations in nursing education. Support for this work comes from a variety of sources -- the US Department of Health Education and Welfare, National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, and many professional groups, and community agencies. Recently, Dr. Kristen Sethares’ work on heart failure and patient self-care was recognized when she was an invited presenter at the Chancellor’s Colloquium.

Our faculty are recognized experts and are actively involved in service projects in southeastern Massachusetts and beyond. They serve as consultants for our practice partners and professional groups. Faculty are frequently invited speakers at professional meetings and give peer-reviewed poster and podium presentations throughout the US. Many faculty volunteer for local, regional, national and international health initiatives. For example, Dr. Jeanne Leffers has guided students in service to underserved communities in Central and South America for over 10 years. For the last two years, she led the student group to Haiti to work in the continuing relief efforts there.

Contact information

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