Welcome to the Annual Graduate Nursing Newsletter from UMass Lowell! We hope you like the new look. The past year has been a busy and exciting year for the Department of Nursing with new programs, new faculty, and increased enrollments. The first year of the post-MS DNP program has been smooth and students are enjoying the blended format courses and course content. It has been wonderful seeing some of our own alumni come back for the DNP program. The students in the DNP program bring so much experience and knowledge to the courses. Faculty from interdisciplinary DNP courses have been pleased with the expertise and contributions the DNP students bring to the courses. We look forward to more MS alumni returning to UMass Lowell for continued studies.

Our Gerontological Nursing Program will have a new look in Fall 2010. The program will be renamed the Adult/Gerontological Nursing program, with an increased focus on care for adults across the lifespan with a continued focus on gerontological nursing. This will allow graduates to sit for both the adult and gerontological nursing certification examinations. The change in the program is the result of the APRN National Consensus Model to be implemented by 2015 that calls for increased gerontological content in family and adult NP programs, and increased young and middle aged adult content in gerontological nursing programs. There is increased interest in the UMass Lowell program with applications arriving for fall 2010. There is consistent need for advanced practice nurses to care for the growing older adult population and the Department of Nursing is proud of the leadership role that many of our graduates have assumed in the care of older adults over the more than 3 decades of the gerontological nursing program.

The course Curriculum and Teaching in Nursing was offered fall 2009. Many faculty members from the Department of Nursing shared their expertise with students in the class. With so many graduates assuming teaching positions on graduation, this course was helpful to certificate, DNP, PhD, and alumni who were interested in a teaching position. The course will be offered again in spring 2011!

I hope you enjoy the spring 2010 Graduate Nursing Newsletter. You will find information about alumni, faculty, and programs. We have welcomed 2 new tenure track faculty in fall 2009, Dr. Angela Nannini and Dr. Juliette Shellman, who were interviewed for this newsletter. We always welcome information to include in the newsletter from our alumni. Information about conferences you attended that would be of interest to other readers would also be welcome.

Best wishes for a happy spring!

Susan Crocker Houde
Director of the MS, DNP, and Certificate Programs
CONGRATULATIONS to all UML MS Program Alumni who are making such a difference in so many peoples' lives! We are so very proud of our alumni!

ALUMNI NEWS

Linda Skandier-Sickorez FNP-BC is currently the coordinator of PAs and NPs for the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at Lahey Clinic North. She sees new patients, ER follow ups and surgical follow-ups in her clinic. She also continues to first assist in the operating room. As the coordinator of midlevel activity, she is responsible for allocating midlevel resources to the operating rooms and the clinic to ensure an efficient use of manpower (or in this case woman power). Her message to the NP's out there is that “we can exist in many healthcare areas. Do not think that surgical specialties are just for physician assistants. In our department we employ more NPs.”

Rosalyn Kenney is working in a very busy family practice in Salem NH since graduation in 2001. She is soon to complete a doctoral program in counseling studies from Capella, and taking side courses in natural pathology and “LOVING EVERY MINUTE OF IT.”

Tracy Durkin GNP (grad 5/2009) is currently working at Newton Wellesley Internists Group which is out of Newton Wellesley Hospital. There are 10 NPs and 10 MDs in the practice. She works at 2 rehab/nursing homes in Newton, does primary care in the office seeing patients and makes home visits to people who cannot travel to the office. She is enjoying it after having a long orientation which was much appreciated. She attended the Pri-Med Conference in November. It was interesting going to her first conference as a NP. She is planning on going to the GAPNA conference in Sept in New Mexico. She uses Epocrates Essentials on her iphone every day. She paid for 2 years and received a discount. She says “It is so worth it. It includes drugs, labs, diagnostics and much more.” She also volunteered with Habitat for Humanity in August before starting her job as a NP. She went down to Thibidoe, Louisiana for a week and helped build homes. “Boy is it hot in August in LA”.

There are a number of UMass Lowell NP alumni working within the Northeast Health System/ Beverly Hospital Corp., and they have recently organized a NP/PA peer group in the system where they meet once every other month to collaborate on current issues, share concerns and discuss the direction they would like the NP/PA role to impact in the organization. This colleague interaction and peer support has led to improved utilization of NP to NP referral and collaboration of patient care. Current issues include the patient choice of an NP as a primary care provider as BC/BS enacts this policy as of 3/1/2010 with reimbursement at 85%. “So we actively represent the voice of UMass Lowell alumni!”

Loretta Bergesen, FNP

Jennifer Robinson started a job as an NP for the Neurosurgery Department at Massachusetts General Hospital after graduation. She is specializing in patients with brain tumors and enjoying learning about a new field and having time to spend educating and improving the quality of lives for patients.

CONGRATULATIONS to all UML MS Program Alumni who are making such a difference in so many peoples' lives! We are so very proud of our alumni!
New Faculty to the Department of Nursing

Dr. Angela Nannini joined the Nursing faculty in September 2009. She received her BSN from George Washington University in 1971 and obtained a diploma in Spanish from the University of Madrid in Spain in 1973. In 1978 she completed a Master of Science in Nursing as a family nurse clinician at Vanderbilt University. She has been certified as a Family Nurse Practitioner since 1978. In 1998 she completed her PhD with a concentration in health policy from Brandeis University.

Dr. Nannini originally went into nursing because she liked science and working with people. She remained in nursing because she enjoyed working at the community level as a family nurse practitioner. She is interested in culturally diverse populations, particularly Latino families living in underserved areas. She has been involved with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in an administrative capacity since 1986.

Dr. Nannini was the first recipient of the Distinguished Nurse Practitioner of the Year Award from the Massachusetts Coalition of Nurse Practitioners in 1998. In 2007 she received the Innovative Teaching Award from the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing. She recently found out that she will be receiving the Excellence in Nursing Education Award from the Massachusetts Association of Registered Nurses (MARN) this spring. Between publications, published abstracts and invited presentations Dr. Nannini has over 100 items on her CV. She has been involved with 10 grants and is currently writing a grant that examines health issues of pregnant and post partum women seeking emergency care.

Dr. Nannini has over 33 years of teaching experience including UMass Boston and Northeastern University. She chose to come to UMass Lowell because she enjoys teaching at a public university where she feels there is more equity in access for students to higher education. Dr. Nannini’s specialty areas include family nurse practitioner and health policy. She is happy to be involved at the ground level of the DNP program here at UMass Lowell. She is currently teaching Social Cultural and Policy Issues in Health Care. She feels her greatest challenge at UMass Lowell will be balancing research and teaching.

When asked what her most rewarding job has been, she answered working with migrant farm workers in Colorado during the farming season in 1976. She worked in the schools by day and clinics by night. Because migrant farm workers have many health issues and little access to healthcare, she was able to make a difference in many lives. I asked Dr. Nannini what she felt her single greatest accomplishment in life has been. She answered “I never really look at the ends, it is the process of what I do that I focus on. I like the process of learning and strive every day to be a better educator”.

By Linda Foley
New Faculty to the Department of Nursing

For Dr. Juliette Shellman nursing is a second career. She obtained a BS in Education in 1978 and a MS in Education Administration in 1989 both from Central Connecticut State University. She taught eighth grade science and health from 1981-1992. She knew she did not want to become a school principal so she decided to go into nursing. She has an aunt who is a nurse and always admired the profession of nursing. In 1994 she obtained a Diploma in Nursing from St. Mary’s Hospital School of Nursing. The only job she could find upon graduation was in a sub-acute unit in a nursing home. She planned to stay for only a short period of time. Seven years later she was still there and had developed her passion in caring for older adults.

Initially, she thought she wanted to become a Gerontological Nurse Practitioner but after taking a community health course in a RN-MS bridge program at the University of Connecticut, she decided to pursue a MSN in community health. She completed her degree in 1998 and then went on to obtain her PhD in Nursing from the University of Connecticut. She completed that degree in 2003. In 2006 she completed a Post-Doctoral Geriatric Nursing Research Fellowship at New York University, John A. Hartford Foundation, Institute for Geriatric Nursing. Dr. Shellman’s specialty is community and public health with the focus on older adults and mental health in the community setting.

Between book chapters, journal articles, invited presentations and training manuals, Dr. Shellman has 63 items on her CV. She has participated in 17 research studies. Her research focus has been in the area of reminiscence with older adults.

Dr. Shellman has taught at both the University of Connecticut and Yale University. She is currently still living in Connecticut. She chose UMass Lowell because of the focus on older adults and geropsychiatric nursing as well as Carnegie designation as a community engaged university. She is teaching community health and nursing research in healthcare in the undergraduate program. She is also teaching health promotion in the RN-BS program. She feels her biggest challenge here at UMass Lowell will be navigating the traffic in the Lowell area.

When asked what she felt was her greatest accomplishment, she responded by saying it was both changing careers and completing all of her nursing education, from diploma to PhD, within a 10 year period. I asked Dr. Shellman if she had any words of wisdom for students pursuing or thinking about pursuing graduate education and she said “be sure that your area of research is something that you are very passionate about because there may be some difficult times during your career when you will need a reason to keep going. Having a passion for your subject will assist you to persevere through the most difficult times”.

By Linda Foley
Gerontological Nursing, 20(12), 187-192. This study explores whether participation in leisure social and religious activities are related to depression and satisfaction with life in older adults of Nepal.


In this article several policy initiatives are discussed that address the shortage of health professionals prepared to care for older adults. Initiatives by professional nursing organizations to improve the gerontological nursing workforce are also reviewed. explores challenges related to the preparation of a geriatric workforce as far as the lack of faculty, inconsistent curricula, and limited training opportunities.


This study is aimed at studying whether supplementation with fruits and vegetables that are high in antioxidants can compensate for dietary and/or genetic deficiencies that promote increased oxidative stress.


This cross-sectional descriptive study used survey findings and focus group interviews to investigate dehydration problems among community-dwelling older adults and identified strategies perceived to be helpful in preventing dehydration in this population.


This study suggests that important differences may exist between the way providers and South East Asian families perceive childhood asthma. Nurses are encouraged to ask the families in their care how they explain their children's asthma, thus facilitating more culturally competent care and increased ability to meet the family's needs. Implications for policy change relative to improving access to care to immigrant groups are also suggested.


The aim of the study was to describe the experiences and concerns of young adults (18-40 years) living with an ICD. Qualitative descriptive methodology was chosen incorporating interviews and written narrative responses to investigate twenty young adults’ experiences of living with an ICD. The data reveal that young adults with ICDs experience concerns regarding childbearing, childrearing, and are worried about their financial security. These findings provide insight for the development of age-appropriate interventions for young adults before and after ICD implantation.


This article presents an overview of resources for conducting systematic reviews of the literature and discusses the use of the systematic review as a tool for evidence-based policy. The literature is a valuable tool for gerontological nurses to influence policy decisions. Gerontological nurses who have a strong foundation in research methodology and the skills to synthesize scientific evidence for the purpose of promoting evidence-based policy have the potential to positively influence health care outcomes for older adults.


This article describes the health policy pathfinder, including design, execution, and evaluation steps, and provides a brief excerpt from a student pathfinder. Moving a specific nursing health policy agenda forward depends on skill in building coalitions with other interest or stakeholder groups, including consumers. Often, nursing students study health policy in a discipline-specific environment without experiential opportunities to argue their views with other stakeholders in policy arenas.


**Book Publications**

Phillips McEnany G - Book contract signed as co-editor with Nancy Redeker, PhD, RN with Springer Publishing for the first sleep-focused book in nursing: *Sleep Promotion and Sleep Disorders in Nursing Practice*. The book is slated for publication in 2011.

Melillo, K., & Houde, S. (In Press), the second edition of *Geropsychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* will be released by Jones and Bartlett Summer 2010. Several faculty have written chapters for the textbook, including Geoff Phillips McEnany “Normal and disordered sleep in late life” and “Psychopharmacology”, Betty Morgan “Substance abuse in later life”, and Ruth Remington chapters on dementia. Professor Emeritus May Futrell, Alumni Tracy Ramos and Kathy Fabiszewski have also contributed chapters to the textbook.

**Book Chapters**


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**PhD in Nursing News**

Two PhD students successfully defended their dissertations in December 2009.

**Lauri Welch**

Title: Out-of-Pocket Prescription Costs and Nurse Practitioner Prescribing: A National Survey
Defended on December 10, 2009

**Mary Kelly**

Title: Factors that Influence the Utilization of Primary Care By Families of Children with Special Health Care Needs
Defended on December 10, 2009

Christine Acebo, PhD presented at the Spring 2010 Nursing PhD Colloquia which was held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010. Dr. Christine Acebo is a Medical Science Liaison at Cephalon, Inc. The Title of the Colloquia was Cognitive Consequences of Sleep Disorders. Her presentation also highlighted the state of the science relative to sleep-related issues such as shift work and obstructive sleep apnea and the serious health effects of lack of sleep.

Christine Acebo, PhD
Beginning in the fall 2010 semester, there will be a new Post-Master’s certificate being offered to those with a Master’s degree titled: “Sleep & Sleep Disorders in Health and Disease”. The certificate is 12 credits and consists of four 3 credit courses. We have begun accepting applications through Graduate Admissions.

Dr. Geoff Phillips McEnany developed the Post-Master’s certificate program entitled “Sleep & Sleep Disorders in Health and Disease”. The certificate consists of four online courses, one of which is a scholarly project / capstone course. Individuals who have a Master of Science degree in nursing, social work, psychology or other health-related disciplines are eligible to apply. This is the first program of its kind in the country.

The certificate program aims to provide the student with fundamental information in the normative mechanisms of sleep, as well as biological and environmental influences in sleep and wakefulness across the lifespan. From this foundation, additional course work focuses on diagnosis and intervention of sleep dysregulation with a particular focus on the formal sleep disorders.

The certificate program was developed for two reasons. The first was in response to the NIH call to facilitate learning for health professionals in the areas of clinical and theoretical dimensions of sleep and chronobiology. The second was in response to the request for additional education in the area of sleep. In Dr. Phillips McEnany’s grant-related online course in sleep which ended in July 2009, there were 2500 nurses registered internationally.

The program will be marketed through the continuing education division of UMass Lowell. Dr. Phillips McEnany is actively recruiting interdisciplinary faculty members to teach in the program. His role will be to coordinate the program and work with students in their final capstone project.

Please contact Geoffrey Phillips McEnany@uml.edu for more information about the program.

Dr. Miki Patterson has been developing a “Post-Master’s Certificate in Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Nursing”. She will be offering a graduate face-to-face course in Orthopedic and Rehabilitation Nursing, Fall 2010 Thursday nights, 5:00-8:00 p.m. The full 4-course certificate has received academic approval and should be offered in a blended, online format in the near future.

This program will be the first of its kind in this country. Dr. Patterson decided to develop this certificate because there has been a big push on the national level to have more certified advanced practice orthopedic nurses. She states “there are so many NPs and NP students that want to have the skills in orthopedic musculoskeletal exam, reading x-rays and MRIs, casting and splinting and RN first assist in the operating room and there are very few places to get them”. She believes that unless an NP can get on-the-job training, it is hard to acquire this information.

Dr. Patterson was an orthopedic nurse practitioner for 20 years, as well as Past President of the National Association of Orthopedic Nurses. She has accumulated a large network of colleagues who are willing to precept students for clinical practicum experiences. She plans to recruit potential students through the National Orthopedic Nurses Association (NAON), the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), and the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP). She feels this certificate program will draw nurses from across the country and possibly internationally.

If you are interested in more information, please contact Miki_Patterson@uml.edu
For the second year in a row I was able to journey to Ghana Africa as the faculty advisor for the UMass Lowell Nursing Students without Borders club. This year I traveled with 10 senior nursing students and was again joined by UMass Lowell alumna, Maura Sullivan Norton. The focus of our 3 week trip was to address health care issues in the Volta region which is a rural region in the eastern part of Ghana. Our group was able to purchase or obtain donations of medical supplies that were shared at various orphanages, clinics, hospitals and villages. Due to our experience last year we were able to be much more productive this year and worked tirelessly each day. Sometimes we worked at more than one location each day. Our goal was to reach out to people who do not have access to nursing care. Although we spent a few days observing some of the nursing care in Margret Marquart Hospital and the Kpando Health Center, our focus was to organize our clinics to reach out to communities who were lacking in medical care. One of our communities was Torkor which is a poor fishing village with many uninsured residents who have no access to health care. We set up a make shift clinic in a small covered area and were inundated with residents who had heard about the free care that was available. We did not have much in terms of supplies, but we could do blood pressure screenings and also under my direction the students were able to dispense antihypertensive medications along with patient teaching, some antibiotics and some well child assessments. Donations of medications and vitamins were given by students who were able to visit some of the residents by going door to door.

Personally this trip was challenging and rewarding at the same time. As an NP I am used to having certain diagnostic tools at my disposal, but in Ghana I had none of that available and I had to rely on my basic assessment skills and deep rooted nursing experience. My options for treatment were limited by the availability of meds and certain medical treatments. The people of Ghana did not know my own fears and limitations as they brought me their children hoping for a cure. I was faced with a deaf child, 2 children with lower extremity paralysis of unknown etiology and a 3 year old child with obvious untreated hydrocephaly that seemed beyond treatment. I felt helpless and wondered why they think I, the white nurse from USA, could help them.
**Precepting**

Please consider precepting one of our MS level students. You may contact Arline_ElAshkar@uml.edu if you are interested and either she or a faculty member will contact you with the details. We are always interested in having UMass Lowell graduates serve as preceptors and with our growing numbers of students in practicum experiences, our need for additional preceptors is acute. Precepting hours can be counted toward recertification and a tuition voucher may be awarded for those of you interested in taking further courses!

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**PhD Program**

The PhD Program in Nursing at the University of Massachusetts Lowell is inviting student applicants for Fall, 2010. Full-time and part-time study options are possible, and several online and web-enhanced courses are available. Our program provides the student with a unique health promotion research focus in areas including: sleep, gerontology, health behavior, and diversity, to name a few. For more information, please follow this link to our website: [http://www.uml.edu/College/SHE/Nursing/doc_pro.html](http://www.uml.edu/College/SHE/Nursing/doc_pro.html), or if you have questions, contact Dr. Geoffry Phillips McEnany at (978) 934-4409.

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**Alumni Notes:** Let us know what you have been up to by writing your news and returning it to the address below. We will use the information in the next edition of the newsletter. Or if you know someone has moved, please notify us.

Present Name: ______________________________
Name at Graduation: __________________________
Year of Graduation: __________________________
BS ______ MS ______ DNP ______ PhD ______
Current Email: ______________________________
Suggestions for future activities:
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
__________________________________________
My Story:
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Return to Pauline Beaulieu, Staff Assistant, Department of Nursing, UMass Lowell, 3 Solomont Way, Suite 2, Lowell, MA 01854. or respond via email to pauline_beaulieu@uml.edu
We welcome applications to our graduate certificate programs. Applications for graduate certificate programs are available on the Graduate Admissions web site at www.uml.edu/grad. More information about the certificate programs is available at www.uml.edu/nursing.

Graduate Certificate in Adult Psychiatric/Mental Health/ Nursing

This 18-credit post-Masters certificate in adult psychiatric and mental health nursing provides MS-prepared nurse practitioners and clinical nurse specialists with the knowledge and skills necessary to care for adults with psychiatric and mental health issues. Those who complete the certificate are eligible to sit for the national certification examination for nurse practitioners and/or clinical nurse specialists in adult psychiatric and mental health nursing.

Graduate Certificate in Nursing Education

This 12 credit certificate responds to the growing need for professional nurses who have specialty education in teaching methods and curriculum. It is intended for nurses who hold a masters degree, a doctoral degree, or are matriculated in a doctoral program. The courses emphasize teaching/learning principles, curriculum and instruction, and research evaluation in higher education.

Graduate Certificate in Gerontological Nursing

This 13 certificate will focus on topics pertinent to the health care of well older adults and those with chronic health problems. Content will include gerontological nursing theory, health promotion and preventive care, psychiatric and mental health issues in the older adult, palliative and end-of-life care, as well as pharmacological issues.

Graduate Certificate in Geropsychiatric and Mental Health Nursing

This 12 credit certificate is for the post-baccalaureate nurse who wants to develop greater knowledge and skills in the assessment and nursing care of older adults who are experiencing common mental health and psychiatric problems of late life. Instruction will focus on pathology, psychopharmacology, and behavioral management strategies in nursing care of older adults.

Graduate Certificate in Palliative and End-of-Life Nursing Care

This 12 credit certificate is for the post-baccalaureate nurse who wants to develop advanced knowledge and skills in the evidence-based assessment and nursing care of individuals and families across the lifespan in need of palliative and end-of-life care.

Post-MS DNP Program

The Post-MS DNP Program is a 41 credit program with the purpose of educating nurse practitioners who not only provide quality primary care to patients, but who assume leadership roles in the health care system, and have the knowledge and skills necessary to propose solutions to improve patient care and health care outcomes. This program builds on the strong patient care knowledge and skills obtained at the MS level by adding knowledge and skills in evaluation research, health policy, organizational leadership and financing, evidence-based practice and health care informatics. The DNP is expected to have a positive impact on the sustainability of the health care system by having advanced education in areas necessary to improve health care delivery using an evidence-based approach. Both part-time and full-time study is possible.

Please contact Susan_Houde@uml.edu for further information.