

School of Nursing

Annual Report from the Dean

April 2021 – March 2022

Prepared by Johnnie Sue Wijewardane

1 Preface

In this annual report the details of some accomplishments of the Radford University School of Nursing during my tenure as Dean between April 2021 and March 2022. The activities and outcomes detailed in this report are above and beyond the normal expectations of a Dean. The accomplishments presented here represent the work of numerous colleagues in the School of Nursing and across Radford University with whom it is my pleasure to work. Like my distinguished Dean colleagues across Radford University, my primary role in these achievements was facilitator and sponsor.

Foremost, I must extend my thanks and appreciation to the School of Nursing Leadership Team as well as the entire faculty and staff, who continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience as well as unmatched innovation and creativity during one of the most trying times in modern history. I, of course, am referencing the COVID-19 pandemic that challenged every norm in nursing, higher education, healthcare, and personal life. Every nursing faculty and staff in the School of Nursing contributed to the Herculean task of delivering didactic and clinical content and experiences by employing every face to face, hybrid, and online pedagogical approach available; maximizing clinical simulation experiences; creating new approaches to clinical experiences; and continuing to engage, retain, and graduate most of our nursing students on time in the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Further, I offer my gratitude to Interim Associate Dean Dr. Katie Katz, RUC Academic Unit Head Dr. Tara Chitwood, RU Main Academic Unit Head, Dr. Wendy Downey, and Accreditation and Evaluation Consultant Dr. Darleen Hoffert, Interim President Carolyn R. Lepre, and Interim Provost J. Orion Rogers for support, guidance, and mentoring as I work with colleagues within the Waldron College and the School of Nursing and across the university. Additionally, the entire Academic Affairs Leadership Team and Dean's Council continually provide encouragement and wise counsel as I work toward forging the Dean's role and forming the School of Nursing leadership team to function effectively and efficiently.

During 2021, I worked closely with Provost Lepre, Dean Ken Cox, and Dr. George Santopietro to successfully petition SCHEV to separate the School of Nursing from Waldron College and become a stand-alone academic unit. With then-Provost Lepre and Interim Provost Rogers, I worked with faculty and Academic Affairs to place an SON Organizational Leadership Team. While our Associate Dean position is still considered interim, we plan to permanently seat that position by the end of Spring 2022.

2 Goals and Initiatives

2.1 To increase admissions and enrollment across the School of Nursing Academic programs

2.1.1 Initiative 1. Grow the Online RN to BSN and Master of Science in Nursing Administration programs through Academic Partnerships (AP) agreement

Dr. Katie Katz, Associate Professor and RN to BSN Coordinator worked with with the AP team and Radford’s AP Project Management team to successfully implement the Online RN to BSN program’s “Relaunch” in August 2021.

- Online RN to BSN program “Relaunch” consists of course delivery in 7-week sessions
- Offers 6 admission entry points during the program
- Online RN to BSN curriculum revised to incorporate REAL general education model
- Reduced required program curriculum credits from 33 to 30 to streamline course “carousel” delivery model and allow for program completion in one academic year

	Fall A	Fall B	Spring A	Spring B	Summer A	Summer B
Applicants	95	45	103	87	50 (deadline 4/25)	28 (deadline 6/13)
Total Enrolled	42	58	74	90		

Dr. Patty Vari, Associate Professor and Master of Science in Nursing Administration Coordinator began working directly with AP team and Radford’s AP Project Management team to plan and implement the Online Master of Science in Nursing Administration program’s “Relaunch.” Dr. Vari retired in December 2021 and Dr. Katz continued to implement the program for Spring 2022 launch.

- Online Master of Science in Nursing Administration program “Relaunch” consists of course delivery in 7-week sessions
- Offers 6 admission entry points during the program
- Streamlined admission requirements
- Course “Carousel” delivery model to allow for program completion in one year

	Spring A	Spring B	Summer A	Summer B	Fall A
Applicants			2 (deadline 4/25)	3 (deadline 6/13)	1
Total Enrolled	6	5			

2.1.2 Initiative 2. Collaborate with clinical partners to increase and enhance clinical placements Undergraduate program coordinators, Drs. Sarah Gilbert, Deidra Pennington, and Jennifer Turner, clinical coordinator, Ms. Rebecca Underwood, and lead course faculty worked closely with Carilion Clinic’s Visiting Student Affairs and other clinical agencies to

ensure COVID-19 clinical requirements were met for students and faculty and expanded clinical placements in all areas but even more in geriatrics and community settings. New and renewal contracts established and maintained with clinical agencies for clinical placements for undergraduate and graduate programs

2.1.3 Initiative 3. Create and build alternative clinical experiences for students outside of hospital to augment clinical education

In addition to the need for increasing enrollment and overall pre-licensure graduates due to the looming nursing shortage across the state and region, the COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted nursing education through the limited the hospital experiences available for pre-licensure and graduate nursing students.

- Faculty continued to create and maintain innovative community and geriatric clinical experiences including simulation.
- Faculty worked collaboratively with Simulation Center staff to maximize the number of clinical simulations and direct clinical hours allowed by the Virginia Board of Nursing
- Continued geriatric clinical experiences through “Porch Projects” where students participated in recurrent visits across the semester with elderly family members or community members to explore age related health changes while visiting on the patients’ porches, patios, and anywhere outdoors where social distancing requirements could be adhered.

2.1.4 Initiative 4. Incorporate Course Sharing across the MSN and DNP programs to increase course delivery efficiency and reduce duplicative content delivery

- At the Dean’s request, Graduate Curriculum Committee members examined the MSN and DNP programs for course content duplication and overlap and began developing course revisions that would allow like and duplicative content to be delivered across the MSN and DNP programs in one course.
 - Duplicate content revised to be delivered at the doctoral level allowing no fewer than 9 credit hours of MSN content to count toward the DNP degree. This is an effort to encourage MSN students to continue studies at Radford toward the DNP degree.
 - Drs. Milena Staykova and Wendy Downey delivered the MSN/DNP research course this summer in a combined class and will evaluate the effectiveness of the chance, follow-up accordingly, and advise the Graduate Curriculum Committee and graduate faculty on implementation of other courses amenable to this process.
 - Other courses being combined include Advanced Pathophysiology, Advanced Health Assessment, and Advanced Pharmacology.
- The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Program courses, under Dr. Loraine Fleming’s direction, were clarified and reduced to no longer include the Family Nurse Practitioner specific content. This clarification is consistent with the PMHNP program requirements under the National Task Force recommendations and the PMHNP certification through the American Nurse Credentialing Center.

- 2.1.5 Initiative 5: Pilot Freshman Direct Admission program at RU Main Campus to mirror RUC's admission practice and improve freshmen admissions and retention through graduation.
- Offering direct admission into nursing program to approximately 250 highly competitive freshmen applicants at RU Main Campus for Fall 2022 as a pilot program.
 - Seeking to determine capacity and GPA/Standardized Testing requirements for these direct admits.
- 2.2 Goal 2. Re-organize the School of Nursing to improve efficiencies and promote unity across RU and RUC
- Collaborated with Provost Lepre, and Drs. George Santopietro and Kenneth Cox to propose reorganization of the School of Nursing as a separate academic unit from Waldron College of Health and Human Sciences. Completed in July 2021.
- 2.3 Goal 3. Enhance philanthropic giving to the School of Nursing
- 2.3.1 Initiative 1. Ongoing work with the Radford University Advancement representatives Wendy Lowry, and Tom Lillard, and Penny White to serve the School of Nursing and build foundation and scholarship funding sources.
- 2.3.2 Initiative 2. Worked with Tom Lillard and Dr. Ken Cox to divide Lettie Pate Whitehead Scholarship monies of \$720K plus additional \$30K designated for nursing between Waldron College and the SON.
- 2.3.3 Initiative 3. Met with Tom Lillard and other potential donors for School of Nursing and simulation center tours
- 2.3.4 Initiative 4. Worked with Tom Lillard, Penny White, and Wendy Lowry to designate the Dr. Iris Mullins Nursing Scholarship for the Build the Hive campaign for Spring 22 to reach endowment level.
- 2.3.5 Initiative 4. Collaborated with faculty, friends, and family of Ellen DeHaven, Assistant Professor of Nursing to establish the Ellen DeHaven Nursing Scholarship in her honor when she was sent home on Hospice Care.
- 2.4 Goal 4. Investments in programs and activities to improve student success
- 2.4.1 Initiative 1. Advising Center—Continue to work with Dr. Corey Cassidy and faculty representatives to develop efficient and effective ways and processes to advise Pre-Nursing and Nursing students across the spectrum to improve retention and overall student success
- Ms. Helen Reed served as Academic Leadership Fellow and worked with the Academic Success Center to craft a model to better serve incoming Freshmen and coordinate opportunities for interaction with faculty and upper division nursing students.
 - Ms. Ellen Greene, Ms. Ann Hutchens, and Dr. Sarah Gilbert have worked closely with Ms. Reed and the ASC on these models and processes.
 - Ms. Reed and Ms. Leanna Ratliff worked closely with Drs. Tara Chitwood and Deidra Pennington to improve advising, tracking, and admissions of students at RUC and deploy similar services at RUC and RU.

- 2.4.2 Initiative 2. RU Nursing Skills Lab Renovations and New Furniture—working with Facilities team to renovate RU Nursing Skills Lab including replacing storage room cabinets with open shelves, replacing vanity type sinks with surgical/medical grade sinks, and increasing seating capacity and improving workspace options with updated tables and chairs that can be easily stored and placed in multiple configurations.
- 2.4.3 Initiative 3. Cook and RHEC Simulation Center Searches
- 2.4.3.1 *Simulation Faculty Searches*
- Worked with Simulation Center Director, Dr. Christina Keller, to replace administrative assistant, technical assistant, and three faculty replacements. Continue to have ongoing searches.
- 2.4.3.2 *Simulation Center Maintenance*
- Worked with Simulation Center Director, Dr. Christina Keller, to replace mannequins and other equipment using Educational Trust Fund monies.
 - Collaborating with Dr. Keller to establish an ongoing replacement rotation for simulation equipment.
 - Collaborating with Dr. Keller and VP of ITS, Ed Oakes and ITS team to determine and plan server and AV equipment lifespan replacement.
- 2.4.4 Initiative 4. External Funding
- Continue to develop ideas for proposals for external funding.
 - Encourage and empower faculty to seek opportunities for grants from private and public funding sources.
- 2.5 Goal 5. Meetings and Activities related to School of Nursing Faculty and Staff
- Held bi-weekly meetings with the School of Nursing Leadership Team
 - Held monthly SON full faculty meetings
 - Deployed leadership development assessment and training for SON Leadership team with LIVMORE, LLC to foster unity and trust across the RU and RUC faculty
 - Fostered and facilitated increased collaboration and improved communication of School of Nursing by working with SON committee chairs from RU and RUC to combine instructional site meetings into SON committee meetings. This resulted in substantial communication and collaboration improvements across committees and instructional sites.
 - Obtained full accreditation of pre-licensure programs at RUC and RU from Virginia Board of Nursing Accreditation visit in June 2020.
 - Ongoing RUSON strategic planning for Spring 2022 on May 10, 2022
 - Continued increased faculty involvement in the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF) by supporting several faculty members' attendance at NONPF conferences.
 - Dr. Milena Staykova gave podium present at 2022 NONPF Conference on April 8, 2022, in Minneapolis, MN; *Cultivating Microlearning: Dimensions of Wellness in Graduate Programs*.

- Fostered faculty scholarship through submitting and developing co-presentations with Drs. Darleen Hoffert and Katie Katz for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners 2022 Conference.

2.6 Goal 6. School of Nursing Budget Management

- Oversight and management of approximately \$7M School of Nursing budget.
- Worked with Provost Lepre to restore necessary faculty and staff lines during the AY21-22 and for upcoming AY22-23.
- Worked with Ms. Carolyn McConnell and Mary Weeks on budget planning. Included SON Associate Dean, Academic Unit Heads, Simulation Director, and Program Coordinators, and Course Leads in reviewing and requesting budget items. Sent request to all faculty seeking input on needed equipment and upcoming expenditures for SON.

3 Other Activities Undertaken by the Dean

3.1 Service Activities

- I served on the following committees/groups in 2021-2022
 - Academic Affairs Leadership Team
 - Dean's Council
 - Radford University Leadership Council
 - Academic Program Review Committee (Co-reviewer with Dr. Rodrigo Hernandez, Davos College of Business)
 - Academic Program Review Enhancement Committee (Vice-chair)
 - RUC Operations Committee
 - Chaired School of Nursing Leadership Team
- Represented Radford University School of Nursing at American Association of Colleges of Nursing Annual Dean's Meeting.
- Represented Radford University School of Nursing at Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing meetings and currently serve on Bylaws Committee.
- Working with Carilion COO and nursing education department, IMPACT lab, Drs. Wendy Downey, Christi Callahan, and Loraine Fleming to develop Mental Health and Resiliency Development Continuing Education for Carilion Clinic and eventually market more broadly.
- Worked with ROTC Leaders and Nursing Faculty including Dr. Sarah Gilbert, Ms. Ann Hutchens, and Ms. Helen Reed to offer advanced placement for up to five ROTC freshmen cadets each year.
- Worked with ROTC Leaders and Nursing Faculty including Dr. Sarah Gilbert, Ms. Ann Hutchens, Ms. Becky Underwood, and Ms. Helen Reed to award clinical credit to ROTC cadets who complete the prestigious summer army hospital service and clinical program.

3.2 Scholarship Activities

Wijewardane, J. S. & Katz, K. R. (2022). Dementia and depression: Addressing Tough Issues with Patients and Caregivers. AANP Annual Conference 60-minute podium, June 23, 2022, Orlando, FL. (Accepted Conference, presentation pending).

Wijewardane, J. S. (2022). Preserving e-Professionalism and amplifying your NP Career. AANP Annual Conference 60-minute podium, June 23, 2022, Orlando, FL. (Accepted Conference, presentation pending).

Wijewardane, J. S. & Hoffert, C. D. (2022). Polypharmacy across the lifespan. AANP Annual Conference 60-minute podium, June 23, 2022, Orlando, FL. (Accepted Conference, presentation pending).

3.3 Professional Development & Service

I attended the following professional development meetings and conferences:

- AACN 2022 Annual Dean's Meeting and Pre-Conference, Washington, D.C., March 24-28, 2022
- AANP 2022 Health Policy Conference, Washington, D.C., March 4-8, 2022
- AANP Region 11 Leadership Meeting, February 12, 2022 (Virtual)
- VACN Spring Meeting, February 18, 2022 (Virtual)
- FAANP Winter Meeting, New Orleans, LA, January 28-31, 2021
- AACN 2021 Fall Meeting, Washington, D.C., October 28-November 1, 2021
- VACN Fall Meeting, (held at AACN Fall Meeting), Washington, D.C., October 29, 2021
- Crossroads DEI Workshop-Engaging Differences, Radford University, Virtual, May 2021
- AANP Annual Conference and Membership Meeting July 24, 2021 (Virtual)

Maintain memberships in the following selected professional organizations:

- Virginia Nurses Association
- American Nurses Association
- Virginia Council of Nurse Practitioners
- Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing
- American Association of Nurse Practitioners
- Fellows of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners
- American Organization of Nurse Leaders
- Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society
- Council on the Advancement of Nursing Science
- Southern Nursing Research Society
- National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties

I serve on multiple committees and leadership positions in state and national organizations:

- American Association of Nurse Practitioners, State Representative, 2020-Present
 - Co-chair Online Geriatrics Community, 2021-present

Geriatric Consultant and Spokesperson to Organizations at AANP's request and assignment

- Fellows of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, 2016-present
 - 2022 Winter Meeting Planning Committee
 - Mentorship Program Development Committee, 2020-present
 - Mentor to AANP member, Lacey Blessit, 2022-present
- Virginia Association of Colleges of Nursing
 - Bylaws Committee Member