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## Promises Endure: Historical Views of Nursing Faculty

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### Cover Page Footnote

Special thanks to the nursing faculty and administrators who shared their thoughts. My intent was to do justice to the cherished memories shared by the following interviewees: Dr. Holly Cassells, Dr. Jennifer Cook, Ms. Annette Etnyre, Dr. Hector Gonzalez, Dr. Mary Elaine Jones, Dr. Sara Kolb, Dr. Kathleen Light, Dr. Lois Soefje, Dr. James Sorensen, Dr. Caroline Spana, and Dr. Sarah Williams. An additional thank you to Dr. Mary Hoke and Dr. Julie Nadeau who provided guidance in the development of this project.

# Promises Endure: Historical Views of Nursing Faculty

Laura R. Muñoz

*University of the Incarnate Word*

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## Abstract

Lessons learned from the history of an organization are valuable. This is especially true for an organization with the legacy held by the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions at the University of the Incarnate Word. Memories recounted by nursing faculty were collected to enhance information provided in the two-volume chronicle written by Sister Patrice Slattery in 1995 titled *Promises to Keep* and in the history of the Nursing School, *The Story of One School of Nursing*, written by Sister Charles Marie Frank in 1976.

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Members of the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW) are familiar with the origin of the University which dates back to September 2, 1866 when Bishop Claude Dubois requested assistance to provide care for the desperate needs of the sick and numerous orphaned children in Galveston, Texas. He wrote, “Our Lord Jesus Christ, suffering in the persons of a multitude of the sick and infirm of every kind, seeks relief at your hands.”<sup>1</sup> This relates to the philosophy of the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing and Health Professions (IFMSNHP) which is rooted in social justice expressed in the caring and compassion provided to all individuals. Over 150 years later the desire to “reach out to those in need” remains a constant.

Since its opening in 1903 there have been many challenges faced by the School of Nursing (SoN) and numerous changes in both the profession of nursing and in nursing education. These changes have been mirrored in the IFMSNHP and warrant documentation.

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<sup>1</sup> “History: The Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word,” *Incarnate Word Foundation*, accessed on November 5, 2020, <https://incarnatewordstl.org/news/history-the-sisters-of-charity-of-the-incarnate-word/>.

## Faculty Interviews

To update and enrich the historical information about the SoN, 11 nursing faculty, many of whom had also served as deans, directors, program chairs, and administrators were interviewed over a three-year period.<sup>2</sup> The tenure of nursing faculty interviewed spanned the period from 1976 to the present, thereby providing an understanding of events and offering perceptions since the previous history by Sister Charles Marie Frank (1976) which documented occurrences between the school's inception in 1903 to 1976. Transcriptions of the interviews with these esteemed faculty reflected several recurring themes.

## Changes in School Structure/Organization

In a President's Note in the *Texas Nursing Magazine* published by the Texas Nurses Association, Dr. Kathleen Light, Dean of the UIW School of Nursing and Health Professions and later Provost of UIW, wrote, "while health care and nursing practice are very different, the important issues are the same."<sup>3</sup> The many changes that have occurred were the result of growth at many levels. One hundred and fifty years ago, San Antonio was the size that UIW is today. Despite the city's enormous expansion, continuity persists.

In the past thirty-five years there have been many changes which affected the SoN and the University. During this period two presidents, Dr. Louis Agnese and Dr. Thomas Evans, have brought their unique perspectives and talents. Another dramatic difference over the past years was mentioned by one of the interviewees who had been an undergraduate student and then returned as faculty. She described a notable change was the diminished physical presence of the

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<sup>2</sup> Special thanks to the nursing faculty and administrators who shared their thoughts. My intent was to do justice to the cherished memories shared by the following interviewees: Dr. Holly Cassells, Dr. Jennifer Cook, Ms. Annette Etnyre, Dr. Hector Gonzalez, Dr. Mary Elaine Jones, Dr. Sara Kolb, Dr. Kathleen Light, Dr. Lois Soefje, Dr. James Sorensen, Dr. Caroline Spana, and Dr. Sarah Williams. An additional thank you to Dr. Mary Hoke and Dr. Julie Nadeau who provided guidance in the development of this project.

<sup>3</sup> Kathleen Light, "President's Note," *Texas Nursing Magazine* 81.3 (2007): 4-5.

nuns as faculty or administrators compared to the more recent predominantly lay faculty. Despite this difference, the influence of the Sisters of Charity Congregation remains strong. A comment made in an interview included:

There were many changes at Incarnate Word depending upon the administrative structure and who the major administrators were, but we always had - a continuous, strong leadership. The school of nursing was always considered one of the pillars of Incarnate Word.

While the university was officially a woman's university before 1970, as written by Sister Margaret Patrice Slattery, there were men in the nursing school and other select programs for many years before that time.<sup>4</sup> An interviewee stated:

I was the third male to graduate from the Incarnate Word in the nursing school. We had to be contrabanded in because it was a girls' school. I couldn't even be in the yearbook because it was a girls' school.

In 1903 the Santa Rosa Training School originally housed in Santa Rosa Hospital was established. In 1930 an affiliation with Incarnate Word College was started, with the nursing building subsequently constructed in 1971.<sup>5</sup> Although this was the first move for the school, it was not the only move to occur in the history of the school. In 2010 the faculty of the nursing school packed up their offices and scattered to other UIW buildings. Some faculty moved to the Convocation Center on campus while the majority moved to the Datapoint campus located on the northwest side of town. Dr. Light once referred to it as the "great diaspora," but similar to other challenges posed to faculty, this seven-month separation was met with resilience and a determination to maintain collegiality and quality education for students.

The original school structure located on the Hildebrand Avenue side of campus was a two-story facility with offices typically occupied by individual faculty. This allowed them the

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<sup>4</sup> For more on these changes, see M. P. Slattery, *Promises to Keep: A History of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word*, vol. 1 and 2 (San Antonio, Texas: UIW Press, 1995).

<sup>5</sup> C. M. F. Frank, *The Story of One School of Nursing* (San Antonio, Texas: Incarnate Word College, 1976).

opportunity to personalize their spaces, with walls often painted in a variety of colors and themes based on faculty interests. There were offices painted blue, peach, yellow, burnt orange, green, and one with a red strip around the perimeter. Each office had a closet with an accordion door where countless materials were stored. In the small faculty kitchen there was a calendar that was updated each month to reflect the important school/university events and meetings along with the birthdays of each faculty and an ever-present collection of snacks. With the passing of time, the structure reflected many years of use with holes in the ceiling of several rooms and sticky walls from the multiple times they had been repainted.



Sister Charles Marie Frank CCVI, RN, MSN ED  
1908-1998



Ila Faye Miller RN  
1919-2008

In 2011 the newly renovated building named after Sister Charles Marie Frank was opened, while the School of Nursing itself was renamed after Mrs. Ila Faye Miller, the scioness of a local family who had been a Registered Nurse. The building houses programs in nursing, athletic training, community education, kinesiology, nuclear medicine, rehabilitative science, and sports management/medicine. An interviewee stated:

Having the opportunity to know Sister Charlie stands out. I think being a part of the push to get the nursing building named after Sister Charles Marie Frank, keeping with her history with the nursing school, that was a highlight.

The new building is very attractive, filled with natural light and two large conference rooms. The offices are uniformly beige, and the closets were removed to extend the space for the

potential of two faculty per office. The kitchen was enlarged and modernized with several small tables added to make room for the expanding faculty. Of importance, was the addition of technology to several rooms which enabled faculty to utilize new teaching strategies and enhance distance communication. A third floor offering more classrooms, offices, and a simulation lab provided much needed space and up-to-date accommodations. Faculty in the new building were all members of the School of Nursing and Health Professions (SNHP) when previously there had been several faculty members from the Sociology, Psychology, History, or Business Administration. Although there were many positive changes brought on by the modernized structure, the expansion of the building altered the faculty's ability to easily interact. The larger configuration of the building requires a purposeful effort by faculty to socialize together.

Comments made included:

For me, the faculty lunch room was very formative. We all ate together, all the time. I don't do it anymore, myself. Even the dean, whoever they were, all ate at one big table, remember that? People would come and join and come and go. There was a lot of talk about academic issues, a little bit of gossip, but a little bit of student processing and stuff like that occurred. I think that was a really good thing.

Nursing faculty taught me that the group is important, that you keep talking to people, that there's wisdom in the group, that it can be messy and take longer, but you just keep talking to people. It requires a lot more work and intentionality to keep that collaborative sense.

An example of intentional plans to interact and recognize others is a newly formed "Joy Committee" spearheaded by Dean Holly Cassells that includes all SNHP faculty. Efforts to promote communication and maintain relationships with others are ongoing.

### **Evolution of Nursing Programs**

Regardless of the state of the building or the faculty who occupied it, there has been consistent fidelity to students and to the Mission of the University by faculty and administrators. A repeated theme in the records reviewed and in perceptions expressed by the interviewees is

that there was a concerted effort to respond to the needs presented and provide quality education to students.

In 1903 the Santa Rosa Hospital School of Nursing began using a medical model with physicians as instructors and students engaging in service-learning activities, which had been the norm for over thirty years. By 1938, a Department of Nursing Education within the college was created, thus providing the registered hospital school the opportunity to specialize in teaching and attain a Bachelor of Science or Nursing Education.<sup>6</sup> From 1930 to 1950 a degree-completion program was offered with two tracks available.

Faculty of the SoN are pioneers in nursing education. This was true from the start of the nursing program when registered nurses (RNs) in the community with a diploma or an associate degree were encouraged to complete the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN). The RN-BSN was the first UIW nursing program. The generic four-year curriculum was established in 1944 by Sister Charles Marie Frank. There were many individuals who contributed to excellence in nursing education, in part, because of a willingness to evolve to meet the needs of the community. Delivery of the RN-BSN moved to the Adult Completion program, but supervision by the faculty of the SoN of nursing continued initially under Dr. Light, then Drs. Jean Deliganis, Williams, and Rauschhuber. An interviewee shared:

It was a simpler time in that, we had fewer regulations and less policies and we could make it up as we went along to the benefit of the student. It was not that we were trying to give away the degree, but we were trying to figure out how do we help nurses?

In the earlier days of the college (prior to becoming a university in 1996) the nursing program had a much smaller enrollment and a different faculty structure. Several nursing faculty members mentioned the use of a theoretical framework developed by Dr. Dorthea Orem, a

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<sup>6</sup> C. M. F. Frank, *The Story of One School of Nursing* (San Antonio, Texas: Incarnate Word College, 1976).

prominent nursing theorist. Adoption of the Orem theoretical framework occurred in 1974 with many faculty in strong support of its use, although its utilization as a guiding framework for the program eventually ended.<sup>7</sup> Remembering that period, an interviewee commented:

This was a very cohesive philosophy and approach that faculty were totally into it. You couldn't help but learn it. Apparently, nurses out in the community used it in their practice. You could take students out to an agency and they were talking about self-care and deficits and requisites. They were really using the lingo. Then as people retired and they hired more people, it got away, and then they moved to something which looked much more like a biomedical model. The young faculty we were hiring were very committed to that. They could understand what it was they were doing as opposed to Oremese, her language.

Some of the changes in healthcare, in the profession of nursing, and in nursing education resulted in the introduction of new nursing roles and degrees, the development of concept-based curricula, transformation in teaching methods, such as an increased use of blended and online platforms, and simulation as a change in pedagogy. A national change in healthcare was the introduction of the Affordable Care Act in 2010 resulting in an increased need for additional providers. The focus of healthcare has evolved to include patient safety and health promotion. These changes were mirrored in the IFMSNHP through evolution of curricula and modifications in programs and degrees offered. An interviewee commented:

The nursing program tried early on to accommodate and emphasize the concept of wellness and maintaining wellness and we saw that in the introduction of a core course, which was the Dimensions of Wellness... although it was never, you know, the exciting thing in healthcare.

Another shared:

There's been a lot of change in the way that systems are organized. I don't know how they impacted our program so much, except for that recent trend of reducing hospital stays and increased acuity. If you go further back, we've always had this huge emphasis on disparities. I don't think that has waned at all. We've held very firm to that. Since we live in a community with a lot of poverty, the school's always been very attuned to it. It's the mission and I think that's the strongest, so I think that has definitely influenced our philosophy and the approach we take in all of our courses.

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

In 1984 Dr. Sara Kolb joined the SoN as coordinator of the Master's in Nursing Science (MSN) program which had a population focus. In 1999 a grant-supported initiative to partner with a church in the community that had a senior program was launched with St. Phillip of Jesus. This effort was consistent with the University's interest in providing service-learning opportunities. The alliance also met the learning needs of students and helped the community with health screening and health education in a parish-based center. An interviewee recalled:

We were well known in South San Antonio at all the Senior Centers. We didn't go to all of them, but we went to almost all of them on the south side. We had something like 10,000 patient contacts in a year.

UIW was the first school in Texas to develop the Clinical Nurse Leader track in 2004. In 2006, the Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS) track with an emphasis on adult-gerontology was reestablished. In 2015, post-MSN certificate tracks preparing CNL's and CNS's were initiated, followed by the start of the RN-MSN track in 2019.

In fall 2011 the first students were admitted to the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program for students with an Advance Practice degree (MSN to DNP). The program extended the DNP degree in 2014 to a BSN to DNP track with a Family Nurse Practitioner concentration under the supervision of Dr. Diana Beckmann-Mendez. The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner concentration was added in 2016. An interviewee shared:

I think the other really big trend is the move to the DNP and deciding to venture out into doctoral education. I think that was a surprise for a lot of us. Like "Wow, we're gonna take this really big step." Then it turned out that was pretty much status quo, and we did it at the right time. We were just slightly ahead of the rest of the state, which was to our advantage. It's like if you didn't have a DNP program, you're not in the forefront. It's a good thing that we actually did that, but it was a pretty big risk at the time.

### **Change in Educational Approach**

Advances in technology supported the creation of the Center for Learning and Research which opened in 2011 with a state-of-the-art simulation lab on the newly added third floor of the nursing building. The name of the center was changed in 2015 to the Clinical Learning Center (CLC) where innovative learning opportunities for nursing students along with students from other health-related professions.

In Fall 2017 faculty embarked on implementation of a concept-based curriculum with an emphasis on community-based, population-focused, non-acute-care settings. Clinical experiences are focused on health promotion, disease prevention, and chronic-illness management.

The advent of new health professional schools in the University and an interest in improving outcomes for students, practitioners, patients, and populations, resulted in an initiative to implement interprofessional education through collaboration among various schools in UIW. Initial efforts began in 2012 with a grant led by Dr. Mary Elaine Jones. Ongoing work continues in a more formalized initiative implemented in 2020 with participation by several professional schools including Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, Optometry, and Medicine. An interviewee stated:

Interprofessionalism is an important change because it does require that nurses can articulate what their contribution can be. I think nursing has the capacity to put it together in a very practical way. You really need to practice side-by-side.

Student admissions increased in 2015 when enrollment of BSN students was raised from 40 to 60 students admitted twice a year. In 2020 a further change in the educational approach at the IFMSNHP was the expansion of the BSN program to include an Accelerated BSN track. This compressed, four-semester curriculum along with the increased admission rate enhanced the potential number of UIW BSN graduates.

### **Relationship with Our Military**

The SoN has had a longstanding very positive relationship with the military. A close association with the military was, in part, because Incarnate Word was the only school offering a Bachelor's degree in San Antonio for many years. Several of the men enrolled in the nursing program were initially a part of the military who were early supporters of nurses holding a BSN.

Two graduates of the nursing school who rose to notoriety in the military include Brigadier General Madelyn Parks who graduated from Incarnate Word College in 1961 and Brigadier General Lillian Dunlap who graduated in 1954. Dean Light described BG Dunlap as a devoted and tireless supporter of the nursing program at UIW—just as she had been to the Army Nurse Corps and to the whole profession of nursing. BG Dunlap expressed her continued interest in the nursing school by establishing the BG Lillian Dunlap Endowed Chair. Four of the five nurse leaders who filled the endowed chair position have been fortunate to know General Dunlap before her death in 2003. She kept in frequent contact with them, offering advice and encouragement. On a lighter note, General Dunlap loved the fact that there was a river boat named for her—the “General Lil,” yet another recognition of her strong leadership and impact on the San Antonio community. The inspirational nurse leaders who filled the BG Lillian Dunlap Endowed Chair include: Janice M. Swanson, RN and PhD (1984 – 1986), Brenda S. Jackson, RN and PhD (1987 – 1996), Barbara Aranda-Naranjo, RN and PhD (1997 – 1999), Mary Elaine Jones, RN and PhD (2003 – 2013), and Karen L. Weis, RN and PhD (2015 – present).

The contributions of the nursing faculty who held the Dunlap Chair position have been and continue to be immense and varied. Work accomplished under their tutelage and with their support, advanced the academic careers of many faculty members. An interviewee recollected:

Well, it was Mary Elaine, who really did the next real consortium-like work—really pulled a lot of faculty together...you could see that they did an awful lot of work coming out of the Dunlap Chair. That Dunlap Chair has had a pretty big influence on faculty,

getting their scholarship, getting promoted, making connections, doing a lot of work together.

## **Leadership**

Many of our faculty have risen to leadership positions at state and national levels. They have been active in specialty nurse's organizations, Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Honor Society, and Texas Nurses Association. Dr. Kathleen Light and Dr. James Sorensen served as President and Vice-President of the TNA, respectively. More recently, Drs. Jennifer Cook, Caroline Spana, Sarah Williams, and Danielle Gunter have been active participants on the TNA board.

## **Leaders Across Campus**

Our faculty have served as leaders in the establishment of university shared governance. During the tenure of Sister Patrice Slattery as President of the college, shared governance was introduced as an initiative. Several of the faculty interviewed were instrumental in its development. Comments included:

She had invited representatives of different programs to meet with her as an advisory group. I was invited, so I was very impressed that--because I thought that she recognized nursing as being very important- not me, but nursing was very important, or the views of nursing were very important to the university.

Nursing, more than other schools, from the very beginning, had a system of shared governance which was not well developed in the other schools. In 1981 we already had a very strong set of bylaws and a committee structure. Duplicating the, what at that time was called a faculty assembly—or faculty association, for the college. The Department of Nursing, we were never a school. The Department of Nursing already had a strong governance structure and also had a strong curriculum structure—curriculum development structure, which later on, became a model for the university, at large.

Since its inception in 1972 the shared governance body of the faculty has had several names. From 1972-1983 it was the Faculty Executive Committee, followed by the Faculty Association until 1997. In 1999 it was renamed to Faculty Senate which is the current name. Nursing faculty have been clearly visible as members of the university shared governance as

Chairs/ Presidents. Six nursing faculty have led this organization. They include: Dr Caroline Spana, first female Faculty Chair (1977-1979), Dr. James Sorensen (1995-1997), Dr. Gary Norgan (2005-2007), Dr. Ramona Parker (2013-2017), and Dr. Julie Nadeau (2019- 2021).

### **School Leadership**

The organizational structure of leadership and titles held by leaders has varied through the years. Consequently, it has been a challenge to accurately determine the distinguished individuals who served as Deans/Directors of the SoN, but it is clear that leadership through the years has been strong and committed in support of faculty and students. When describing leadership, interviewees stated:

We had Humanities, Arts, and Sciences. Then we had Professional Studies. There have been so many different iterations of schools. I remember different times when nursing was with science, when nursing was with business. We were in with a lot of different places as a department, never a school.

I was very fortunate to meet her and work with Sister Charles Marie Frank, and she was the dean of the nursing school at Catholic U. She was very dynamic, very sharp, knew what the trends were, knew what was to come, and did so accordingly. What I have learned from reputations of schools in particular is that the school has a reputation. The dean has a reputation, the school borrows it.

Another interviewee added:

I'm sure I served under 10 Directors of the nursing program, 10 or more, and despite their many different personal philosophies and personality characteristics, they were able to help maintain the stability of the nursing program in light of the many different administrative changes.

### **School of Nursing Deans/Directors of Nursing Programs, 1938-Present**

Sr. Mary Victory Lewis	Dr. John Lantz
Sr. Charles Marie Frank	Dr. Lois Soefje
Sr. Mary Brian Sherry	Dr. Ann Hillestad
Sr. Peter Gerard Lally	Dr. James Sorensen
Sr. Lucilla (Margaret Mary) Curry	Dr. Jane Cardea
Sr. Christina Bolle	Dr. Brenda Jackson
Sr. Kathleen Krekeler	Dr. Kathleen Light
Sr. Teresa Stanley	Dr. May Hoke
Dr. Holly Cassells (current dean)	

## **Involvement in Community**

President Agnese often said that he could recognize a difference in graduates of UIW, often citing care provided when he interacted with nurses in the community. There are several examples of occasions when faculty and/or students have met the needs of others. This contribution to the broader community has been a consistent effort integral to social justice imbedded in the UIW Mission. Involvement in such activities reflected flexibility, innovation, and moreover a response to community need. An interviewee described:

We had this flood; we couldn't send anybody to clinical. She got on the phone and started to call the Red Cross and calling key people in town about what to do. Then she hired buses and she told the faculty and all the students, "No, you're all going out to shelters." She had a plan. Everybody knew which shelter and we all had to get on these buses. I remember taking my clinical group out to a flooded area. We did that for a few days. We also did the same with Katrina, but the '98 flood was the first one that I really remember doing that.

Early in the fall semester of 2005 hurricane Katrina hit the Louisiana coast resulting in massive transferring of individuals to shelters at Kelly Air Force Base. The SoN collaborated with the Red Cross and the San Antonio Metropolitan Health District to provide care for hundreds of displaced adults and children. This experience provided an extraordinary service to the community and a wonderful learning opportunity for students. They were able to utilize knowledge previously gained, such as their familiarity with good hygiene practices which helped them recognize the need for hand sanitizer long before it was commonly used. An unexpected, but lasting outcome of this experience was a change in scrubs worn by students from maroon (school colors had been maroon and gray). In an effort to distinguish themselves in the clinical setting and to mirror the new UIW colors, the students' scrubs were changed to red and black.

There are many other avenues by which members of the nursing school have participated in community activities. With coordination by Dr. Yvonne Davila and Cynthia Richardson and

many other SoN faculty, students have been involved in clinical experiences and other activities in the community. Since 2010 students have participated in many health fairs and immunization events at Haven for Hope, a center for providing, coordinating and delivering care for people experiencing houselessness in Bexar County. Holiday events such as the annual Christmas party at Haven for Hope have provided gifts for over 500 children and adults in the center. A massive collection of canned green beans has also been donated to the Raul Jimenez Thanksgiving Dinner through the years. These activities have promoted student awareness of the many needs of others and provided an opportunity to recognize the importance of human dignity as a key principle of social justice.

Another example of visibility and involvement in the community is the Nursing Cardinal Wellness Center (NCWC) established in 2015 as a nurse-managed center that provides preventative healthcare to low-income families of the eastside of San Antonio and the surrounding area. The NCWC offers well-child checkups and women services under the direction of Dr. Holly DiLeo. The center also provides a positive learning environment for graduate and undergraduate students from throughout the university.

### **Maintenance of High Standards**

In March 2019, UIW SoN ranked number nine out of 119 accredited nursing schools in Texas. The effort to maintain high standards has been continuous. Interviewees corroborated this in a statement which included:

Nursing had always been a leader in that area of, what does it mean to have a curriculum, not a collection of courses? I learned that terminology, early on, in my career from Lois Soefje and Caroline Spana, and maybe Teresa Stanley, that a curriculum is very different than a collection of courses.

In reviewing the school minutes spanning many years it is obvious that faculty were consistently involved in evaluation and revision of curricula, modification of various programs,

and a consistent effort to maintain accreditation standards. Despite the hard work and commitment of the faculty and the students in the 1980s the student pass rates for the Texas Board of Nursing exams were very poor. To address the issue outside consultants were enlisted, and changes were made. An interviewee recalled comments by one consultant who said:

You've got this great faculty who know what they're about and great students. You're really leading the city in a lot of areas that you don't realize.

After diligent efforts by leadership and the faculty there were carefully planned changes implemented in the curricula and in the teaching structure (e.g., formation of level coordinators and course leads). As a result of strong leadership and faculty working together with industrious and determined students, the pass rates steadily improved. Since 2017 impressive pass rates by students have ranged from 97.8-100%.

### **Accreditation**

The nursing program has been continuously accredited since 1942 when the National Organization of Public Health Nursing awarded the first accreditation. The National League for Nursing (NLN) accreditation was granted in 1951 and continued until 2000 when the program received initial accreditation from the Commission on College Nursing Education (CCNE). The CCNE accreditation was extended to all the programs including the first accreditation of the DNP program in 2014. In 2016 all programs in the SoN received ten-year reaccreditation.

### **Faculty Certification**

In addition to advance degrees, several nursing faculty maintain certifications in their area of expertise and interest such as emergency care, pediatrics, neonates, obstetrics, public health, critical care, executive nursing, gerontology, and oncology. The nurse practitioners on faculty are also board certified in their practice areas of family or psychiatric mental health

nursing. This expansive level of knowledge provides students with excellent resources and strong mentorship.

In 2008 Drs. Jeanette McNeill, Julie Nadeau, and Sarah Williams acquired their certification as Nurse Educators (CNE) granted by the NLN. They developed workshops to encourage more faculty to attain their certification. CNEs include: Cynthia Richardson, Dr. Yvonne Davila, Dr. Cynthia Purcell, Dr. Lee Ann Waltz, Dr. Daniel Lovasz, Heather Litwhiler, and Delia Meyer.

### **Continuing Education**

As early as the 1970s an interest in continuing education for the community was expressed. Efforts have been coordinated by several faculty including Dr. Jennifer Cook, Linda Dalton, and Dr. Maureen Rauschhuber. For the past 45 years the Sister Charles Marie Frank Lecture has been held in the fall while the Sister Margaret Mary Lucilla Curry Lecture was added as an annual event in 2018. Both events attract many students, faculty, and community nurses. Several of the Sisters from the Congregation who knew and worked with Sr. Charles Marie and Sr. Margaret Mary Lucilla have attended the events.

### **Global Outreach**

Involvement beyond the school often took place in response to needs identified. This outreach has involved travel within Texas, to Laredo, and Fort Worth, recently outside the state to Montana, and internationally to the Philippines, Vietnam, Mexico, and China. An interviewee recalled:

Either they went there to explore, or they went there and actually taught. I think that's maybe a thread in the history, is that UIW, Incarnate Word College Nursing Program always responded to these requests to help educate nurses.

Interviewees frequently mentioned outreach which they described as often occurring with little advance notice and requiring faculty to be nimble and comfortable with the ambiguity of the situation. Their flexibility, creativity and resolve resulted in innovative, quality education, and a positive experience for the students. Interviewee statements included:

I think it was '70 or '71, the Republic of Continuing Education Vietnam sent about thirty students, officers from the Vietnam army, to get their degrees in nursing. How that contract came about or how it went, I have no idea. All I know is that all of the sudden we had thirty Vietnamese officers that were coming to Incarnate Word to get their Bachelor's degree.

Students wanted to go to Mexico. I honestly can't even believe that we packed a van full of students and took 'em all the way down there for – I don't know. I would say it was probably a week or ten days. I can't even image a faculty member driving a van with ten students in it nowadays, down there. It was crazy, but the Sisters had a retirement home and a residence, and we stayed there – in Cuernavaca. We visited social agencies, hospital, clinics, and orphanages that the Sisters were running. They were learning about healthcare in Mexico.

During Dr. Agnese's tenure as University president there was an emphasis on the integration of an international experience for students as an effort to prepare them for the world. Because that proved to be a difficult endeavor, an alternative of bringing international students to campus was instituted. There were several occasions when nursing faculty collaborated with students of other countries. One of the earliest experiences was with students from the Philippines who came to the United States for an education and worked as interns for the U.S. before returning to the Philippines. The president of the Philippine Nurse's Association, Sister Remy, who was a friend of Dr. Light asked, "Would you be the first U.S. school that would try to work with this model?"

Even though the study abroad for students remained an emphasis, fostering an interest and planning logistics was challenging. One way to meet the needs of others in the global arena and spark interest from the faculty was a recurring push by Dr. Agnese. An interviewee stated:

I guess it was our faculty meeting and we were in the old conference room and he came in. He looked at the faculty sitting around the room and said, “Somebody is going to go to Taiwan.” He had just come back and made some agreement that we would be sending a faculty member. All the faculty looked at themselves, like, “Are you crazy? No way. Not me. Not me.” Then he said, “Well, somebody is gonna go.” Then later Kathi-I don’t think she really twisted my arm, but she asked me if I would go. Maybe because she thought I was younger and more flexible. I did go and we had lots and lots of work with arrangements, but it was the most fabulous experience. He was totally right that it was really a great thing to do.

In 2008 Christus Muguerza located in Monterrey, Mexico sought to educate nurses working in leadership positions through attainment of their MSN degree. Through an effort initially led by Drs. James Sorensen and Monica Ramirez a cadre of faculty travelled to the campus at the Universidad de Monterrey for several semesters. Later, due to rising turmoil in Mexico faculty opted to continue the program via distance learning classes. The graduation of students was testament to flexibility, determination, and hard work on the part of both students and faculty. An interviewee stated:

I loved that fact that we could be crazy. Then, fast forward to the students from Mexico. Another opportunity where we were asked, “Can you help solve a problem of not enough master’s prepared nurses in Mexico?” We used all kinds of non-standard procedures, which you know very well, to get them through. That was something I have always loved and valued about both, the people that I worked with in nursing.

A more recent example of outreach education was the partnership initiated by President Evans with Carroll College in Helena, Montana for students interested in attaining their MSN. During a whirlwind of arrangements, faculty visited the campus in Montana, recruited students and brought about their enrollment at UIW. A few semesters later, in 2020, the students from Montana graduated with their MSN degree. Another example is the partnership between DNP program at the University of St. Thomas in Houston in which an affiliation has been established to provide education and optimize the resources of the UIW faculty.

### **Study Abroad Adventures**

Since 2005 Dr. Irene Gilliland has led many students, faculty, and guests across the globe in a study abroad experience. In 2014 faculty and students from the Feik School of Pharmacy collaborated in development of the trips that offered an opportunity for cultural immersion, and helped students learn about other professions. An added benefit was the development of faculty scholarship through the publication of articles related to their experiences. Destinations have traversed the globe in trips to China, India, Vietnam, Thailand, Ecuador, Africa, Australia, and the Galapagos Islands.

### **Faculty Retention and Changes in Faculty Composition**

In a Texas Nursing Association ceremony honoring BG Dunlap, Dr. Brenda Jackson, a former Dean and BG Lillian Dunlap Endowed Chair recalled that when she arrived in 1996 at UIW she was the only faculty member who had a doctorate in nursing. Two additional faculty, Dr. Gary Norgan and Dr. Katherine Gallia joined the faculty shortly afterwards. Since that time many changes in the composition of the nursing faculty have taken place. Through the years many faculty members attained their terminal degree with the support and encouragement of leadership.

In 2010 the Institute of Medicine deemed the gravest threat to the nursing profession to be a scarcity of qualified faculty to fulfill the demands of healthcare.<sup>8</sup> Much like the remainder of the U.S., the phenomenon of an aging workforce threatened to affect the nursing faculty of the IFMSNHP by creating a void of experienced academic leaders.

The extended retention of many faculty reflects satisfaction with the university and the school. It also provides stability and continuity that not all schools can claim. Even though the

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<sup>8</sup> “The Future of Nursing: Leading Change, Advancing Health,” *Institute of Medicine* (Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2011), accessed on November 6, 2020, <https://doi.org/10.17226/12956>.

SoN has enjoyed the benefit of many long-term nursing faculty, around 2013, seven of our long-time nursing faculty retired from the SoN, several of whom held terminal degrees. Their mean years of teaching was twenty-five, ranging from twelve to fifty years. Of course, not all faculty have such an extended stay at the school, but there is a pattern of retention among the faculty. We recognized the loss in the leadership they provided, but their departure also had implications on the school's academic and research agenda. Interviewees stated:

Well, I remember a sense of family among the faculty. I remember driving to work and passing by the park across the street thinking to myself, I am so happy to be coming to work here. It just feels so good because I love my job. I love the people I work with and I think, most of the faculty felt that way-very trusting and loving.

I think you always feel terrible pain when certain people leave or, and I've always felt it very acutely for many, many years. Such a hole when somebody leaves. Sometimes, you'll hear it from faculty like, what are we gonna do with this person gone?" or whatever. You and I have been there, we've gotten through it and we know that life does go on. I felt it that way years ago and it's like, no, you'll rise to the occasion. It'll be fine.

As in the past, the nursing faculty remained resourceful and welcoming to new faculty.

Over one-third of our nursing faculty have joined UIW within the last five years. These new nursing faculty have brought with them an array of advanced degrees and vast clinical expertise to support the expanded MSN and DNP programs. Because of the expansion of the DNP which now offers a Family Nurse Practitioner and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner tracks, additional nurse practitioners with terminal degrees were added to our faculty. There is a dramatic contrast in faculty in 2021 composition compared to twenty-five years ago. Currently 65% of the nursing faculty have a terminal degree with another five faculty currently enrolled in a doctoral program. Soon 78% of the nursing faculty will have their terminal degree. Diligence of the new and former faculty has resulted in continued scholarship and a surge in successfully funded external grants.

### **Promises Endure**

Comments made by interviewees reflect consistent themes which support ongoing endeavors to meet the needs of the others. Over the years faculty of the nursing school have actualized their efforts to “reach out to those in need.” Their enduring response has enacted principles of social justice through their consistent, expansive approach to education and caring of others. Nursing faculty are bright, hard-working, resilient, individuals who are deeply devoted to students and to the Mission of the University resulting in the longstanding success of thousands of nurses who have graduated from the nursing programs. Despite the passage of time and the many changes that have taken place, there are constants in the Ila Faye Miller School of Nursing at the University of the Incarnate Word. UIW nursing faculty and nursing graduates continue to make a difference around the world.