From the Director

Greetings,

We are thrilled to bring back the School of Nursing newsletter. These past few years we have been focused on keeping our students, faculty, staff, and community safe while also ensuring students are able to progress in our programs in a meaningful way. Getting our newsletter out now serves as a sign that we are no longer in crisis mode.

High quality education and safe nursing practice continue to be foundational to our programs. I am proud to say we kept our commitment to our students and our communities, even during these challenging times. Since 2020, we graduated 158 prelicensure students, 88 RN to BSN students, and 4 MSN students (with 10 MSN students currently in the pipeline). Our RN licensure pass rate remained in the high 90’s.

We have our faculty, practice partners, and University administration to thank for allowing us to keep moving forward during the pandemic. From the bottom of my heart, I thank each of you. You played a part of the puzzle which allowed our students to learn, experience, and engage in ways that helped them be the best nurses possible and prepared them to meet global health care challenges in the 21st century. In addition, I want to acknowledge our graduates who persevered throughout the pandemic and proudly made it across the finish line to graduation.

The silver lining around this giant thunder cloud has been the discovery of new and innovative ways of teaching, some of which may continue as we enter our “new normal.” A few of the learning opportunities that came as a result of the pandemic include:
From the Director Continued…

- Addition of virtual simulation into some clinical courses. ZOOM allowed us to continue offering classes during the campus closure.
- New partners stepped up to take students when alternate opportunities for direct patient care was needed.
- New behavioral health clinical sites that allow students to learn in varied psychiatric environments ranging from crisis to residential, and meeting consumers who living with mental illness who share their lived experiences.
- Student awareness about policies and advocacy for nursing education and nursing practice increased. During the pandemic, students witnessed first-hand how regulations impact their education and nursing practice.

We were also able to apply emergency relief funds to purchase new equipment in the Rural SimCenter. We now have three new high-fidelity mannequins, an infant, a child, and a delivering mother, as well as a new A-V system and new medication dispensing system.

You will also see our newest cohort of prelicensure students sporting the new Chico State School of Nursing black scrubs. This change occurred as part of Chico State’s new branding which includes new color themes. In addition, the new University seal will be represented in the design of new nursing pins.

I hope you enjoy reading about some of the other new and exciting things happening here at the School of Nursing. You will see some new faces on our team as well as learn about significant achievements our staff, faculty, and graduates have accomplished.

In health,

Dr. Karin Lightfoot, Director

We welcomed Coral to the SON in February 2022 as our new Administrative Support Assistant. A Chico State alum, Coral brings a familiarity of the campus and student experience to her role, where she helps support the department and its students. Her background is in English education, though she also spent most of her undergraduate time mentoring students with a foster care and/or unaccompanied homeless background.
Welcome New Tenure-Track Faculty

Lorenzo Begay is originally from Southern California by way of Illinois. He has a BSN and dual specialty MSN in Adult-Gerontology Clinical Nurse Specialist and Nurse Educator from Fresno State. He also holds a BA in Anthropology from UCLA---nursing was his calling after volunteering and working as an inpatient rehab aide for UCLA Health collaborating alongside RNs prior to patient mobility sessions.

Lorenzo has practiced as a registered nurse for 8 years with a specialty in critical care and most recently a visiting assistant professor at Illinois Wesleyan University and former Nurse Residency Program Educator for a large regional medical center in Central Illinois. He is a nationally certified critical care nurse & member of Sigma Theta Tau.

While an RN program educator for Carle Health, he helped streamline new grad readiness by incorporating standardized constructive feedback for nurse residents at predictable time intervals in their orientation. The project initiative was titled "Knowing where I stand" and included a visual self-guided syllabus for nurse residents to document their progression and increase their self-confidence.

He greatly enjoys stimulating 'big picture' thinking with students whether conversing about a case study or reinforcing learned theory to real world application--you'll likely see him utilizing drawings or creative ways to facilitate differing modes of learning acquisition.
Welcome New Tenure-Track Faculty

Feng Ping Lee earned a PhD from the University of Washington and MSN from the University of Pennsylvania with a specialty of Cardiopulmonary Clinical Nurse Specialist tract. Her primary research interests include geriatric and home health care, care for patients with dementia, instrument development and testing. Outside of work, she enjoys hiking, travel, and spending time with three poodles.

Full Professor Status

Congratulations to Dr. Miriam Walter, Dr. Fay Mitchell Brown, and Dr. Karin Lightfoot for being promoted this Fall semester to the rank of Full Professor in the School of Nursing!

This accomplishment represents their commitment to excellence in teaching, service, and professional growth and achievement. The School of Nursing is fortunate to have such dedicated faculty.

We are all thankful for all that they do for our students, the School of Nursing, Chico State, and the profession of nursing!
Earlier this year Director Karin Lightfoot was featured in Chico State Today. For the article, *Faculty Showcase Offers Chance to be ‘Inspired’*, Dr. Lightfoot was asked about her work in paving a new path into nursing education and breaking the limitations in place that hinder the learning of nursing students and other processes integral to the successful functioning of schools of nursing. Dr. Lightfoot co-authored an article published in the *Journal of Professional Nursing* in May 2021, leading to substantial changes in legislation. Below is an excerpt of the original article by Ashley Gebb.

**Why was this work important or interesting to you?**
It addressed how CACN (California Association of Colleges of Nursing) leadership collaborated with leaders from the Community College Schools of Nursing to bring issues to the attention of state legislators so we can collectively develop strategies to update nursing education legislation. I often speak with our students about the importance of contributing to nursing knowledge and the need to use their voices to advocate for health care and nursing practice. I try to walk the talk and lead by example. While we were certainly busy at our own Schools of Nursing, ensuring our students and faculty had the support and resources needed to continue our mission and goals, we felt it was also important to work with our state partners to address challenges we all faced.

**How did you persist toward getting published during the pandemic?**
By working with a team of authors that kept us all on task, even when we were working long days taking care of the needs of our own Schools of Nursing. In addition, each member of the team brought their own expertise that collectively made our article strong.

**What comes next for you—with this research or any other projects?**
In the future, I hope to engage in more research specific to effective teaching methods to improve nursing education, including the use of simulation and other alternate modes of instruction. Last year I presented at the American Public Health Association annual conference, where I shared my research about having nursing students provide care at a Camp Fire shelter and the impact it had on their education.
In the Fall of 2021, long-time RN-BSN Advisor and Program Coordinator Jan Ellis retired. Jan provided valuable support to the RN-BSN program for many years. Before her retirement, Jan made an additional contribution to the program by dividing up her position for future program administrators to maximize efficiency. Now the program has a new Program Advisor, Melissa Cheatham, and new Faculty RN Coordinator, Robbin Guynn.

Robbin has been onboard as a faculty with the School of Nursing for several years, and Melissa brings a special advising skill set from her time on campus as an advisor for the Department of Social Work. We are so excited to have them both in their positions and we wish Jan all the best in her retirement.
RN-BSN Program Advisor, Melissa Cheatham, represented the School of Nursing at the Adventist Health and Rideout Career Fair earlier this year. The RN-BSN Program accepts students from all over California, and it is our mission to support our community by prioritizing student admissions from our local service area. We also work closely with a number of regional hospitals to support their RNs in furthering their education. Keep us in mind for your next career fair!
Distinguished Alumni Award: Monica Soderstrom

Monica Soderstrom was given the College of Natural Sciences Distinguished Alumni Award for 2022! Monica has made such an impact both on our campus community and the county at large through her work in public health. We are proud to call her one of our own. We are thankful that we were able to celebrate with her.

Congratulations Monica and thank you for all that you do!

Distinguished Alumni Award winner, Monica Soderstrom, sitting at the Lambda Pi Fraternity bench on campus.

Director Karin Lightfoot and Distinguished Alumni Monica Soderstrom at the School of Nursing.

Nursing students and School of Nursing Staff and Faculty celebrated Monica Soderstrom for her award with some cake and good company.
The School of Nursing is so proud of its faculty and staff who have recently completed their degrees! This last year we had two faculty, Paul Weingartner and Richard Burton, complete their Doctorate degrees. Two of our wonderful staff, Melissa Cheatham and Candice Sawyer, also completed their Master’s degrees.

Faculty Paul Weingartner graduated from San José State University with a Doctorate in Nursing Practice. Congratulations Paul!

Faculty Rich Burton graduated from Regis University with a Doctorate in Nursing Practice. Congratulations Rich!
Staff Melissa Cheatham graduated from Liberty University with a Master’s degree in Higher Education. Congratulations Melissa!

Staff Candice Sawyer graduated from Chico State with a Master’s degree in the Biological Sciences. Congratulations Candice!
We love to hear from our graduates! We were so pleased to learn that graduate Jonathan Gurrola received an award for advancing his hospital’s service goals!

Each year, Sharp entities bestow C.O.R.E. Awards, honoring those who exemplify the spirit of The Sharp Experience. Like the center of a flame, the award represents the essence of The Sharp Experience in the winners and is represented in the actual blue flame award.

Jonathan was awarded this honor for his work drafting and facilitating a policy for LGBTQ+ patient care, the only one its kind in San Diego. The award also recognized Jonathan for serving as coordinator for the Human Rights Campaign Foundation’s National Healthcare Equality Index application process for seven hospitals, in addition to working with executives and senior hospital leaders to accomplish these goals.
Grad Nurses’ Experiences through COVID-19

Author: Miriam Walter, School of Nursing, California State University, Chico

The COVID-19 virus spread rapidly across the globe in 2020, becoming a pandemic before it was designated as such and before hospitals or schools could adequately prepare. Nursing programs were forced to suddenly move to online learning or even close. Nursing students struggled during this chaos, anxious to go to hospitals to help and to continue clinicals, but also sometimes suffering extreme anxiety with the uncertainty of their being able to graduate while dealing with family and other responsibilities. The focus for faculty immediately turned to planning and advocating for the students' continuation of clinicals in this constantly changing environment, which remained uncertain. Even before the current pandemic, anxiety among nursing students has been a concern.

A mixed-method, short survey was administered on-line to learn more about the graduates' emotional reactions, especially their anxiety levels. Twenty-five of 38 students responded to the survey. As expected, anxiety is high during such crises; providing support, grace and flexibility helps. Transparency, frequent updates, check-ins, and creating a sense of community is essential to help lessen anxiety, as experience and research have shown. Considering student feedback is imperative during this time to help faculty improve our effectiveness and support.

Duty to Treat During COVID-19

Author: Miriam Walter, School of Nursing, California State University, Chico

Hospitals worldwide were overwhelmed by the abrupt onslaught of COVID-19 in March 2020; contingency planning, preparations, and provisions were often inadequate. And nursing programs came to a sudden halt at a time when healthcare workers were needed most. Nurses, being at the front-lines of this battle, have a high risk of exposure to the virus due to the nature of their work. As a result, they are at an increased risk for long-term mental health issues as well as illness, isolation, and death. Ethical dilemmas surround the duty to treat vs. duty to self and family. Nursing students were caught amid this chaos, many initially anxious to go to hospitals to help, but also sometimes suffering extreme anxiety themselves due to the evolving dangerous situation, along with the uncertainty of their being able to graduate. By early March 2020, the California Nurses Association was already decrying the lack of personal protective equipment [PPE] and the mistreatment of nurses.

Nursing students were assigned to write a paper on ethical and legal issues related to COVID-19 and the nurses' duty to treat. Topics raised by students included the inadequate preparation of the U.S., the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, mental health concerns, communication issues, relevant laws, and the need for public policies to protect nurses as well as the public. This article explores the issues surrounding duty to treat and some solutions to assist nurses in making difficult decisions during such times. Minimizing nurses' risk during pandemics includes adequate personal protective equipment, staffing, and training.
Now Accepting Applications for a RCNP Manager!

Kathleen Kirby retired in September of 2021. She served the Rural California Nursing Preceptorship (RCNP) program for more than 20 years and is now living her best life in retirement. We are so thankful for the years she spent managing the RCNP program.

The RCNP program places nursing students, new graduates, and RNs seeking additional training in hospitals all over Northern California. Participants have the opportunity to build their skills and gain increased confidence. Preceptorships are in specialty units. RCNP is a highly sought after and respected program. We are looking for a nurse leader to continue making the RCNP a success. The RCNP manager position is part-time with a competitive salary. To learn more about the position or apply please visit the Position Opening.
Another Chance for a Pinning Ceremony

Past graduates took advantage of the opportunity to have an in-person pinning ceremony on stage in the Bell Memorial Union. Faculty Sarah Brown Blake gave remarks during the ceremony to honor the graduates.

COVID has affected us all in a variety of ways. Unfortunately, our Spring 2020, Fall 2020, and Spring 2021 graduates were unable to participate in an in-person pinning ceremony at the time of their graduations. These graduates did have a virtual celebration, but the lack of in-person ceremony was met with great student disappointment. We were able to offer a makeup ceremony for those students to attend this past spring. We had a small yet meaningful ceremony for the graduates along with their family, friends, faculty, staff, and other campus members.
Spring 2022 graduates on stage in the Bell Memorial Union reading their nursing pledge while faculty, staff, family and friends watched in the audience below and via Zoom.
We hope your learning experiences at Chico State helped you to pursue a rich and satisfying career in nursing. Are you willing to help current students in the School of Nursing do the same? Many learning experiences at Chico State are being threatened by the State of California budget crisis. As a result, the Chico State School of Nursing is working harder than ever to provide the best educational experience possible for nursing students while managing an ever-decreasing budget. Are you able to help us purchase needed equipment with a gift to the School of Nursing? Please consider making a donation through the California State University, Chico online giving website. To access the site, please paste this address into your web browser: www.csuchico.edu/givetoNS under Gift Designations put the amount and percentage next to “School of Nursing.”

Or, you can fill out the School of Nursing Gift Card below and mail it. Please indicate Nursing Skills Lab in the memo area of your check and mail the Gift Card and donation to:

If you mail check, please make payable to "University Foundation, #6562” and mail to:

California State University, Chico
Atttn: Karin Lightfoot
School of Nursing
Chico, CA 95929-0200

Thank you for your support.

---

**School of Nursing Gift Card**

Name
______________________________________________________________
Address
___________________________________________________________
City, State, zip _______________________________________________
Phone ___________________________ E-mail ___________________________

Please make check payable to “University Foundation, #6562”

Credit Card (please specify):  ☐ Visa  ☐ MasterCard  ☐ American Express  ☐ Discover

Card Number ___________________________________________________
Name on Card ___________________________________________________
Expiration Date __________ Amount Charged __________ Signature _____________________________

Thank you for your support of the CSU, Chico School of Nursing Programs