



Founders Week

Teacher of the Year



Louise S. Jenkins, PhD, RN, FAHA, ANEF

School of Nursing

Teaching takes many forms with Louise Jenkins, professor in the School of Nursing's Department of Partnerships, Professional Education, and Practice. She has close relationships with her students, yet teaches from a distance thanks to the innovative learning environment she creates online. The Institute for Educators and Teaching in Nursing and Health Professions Certificate Program she leads have strengthened nursing in Maryland yet also have attracted visiting educators from other countries such as Italy, China, South Korea, Denmark, Ireland, Egypt, and Japan.

Near or far, Jenkins' efforts are all positive for the School of Nursing (SON).

"Louise is an exemplar of service excellence in faculty development and collaborative education research," says Peg E. Daw, DNP, MSN, RN-BC, nurse

support program manager for the Maryland Higher Education Commission. "Her vision, leadership, and professionalism are assets to policymakers, health care leaders, nursing faculty, and educational programs."

Daw and Jenkins have worked together on multiple successive grants under the Nurse Support II Program, beginning with "Nursing Faculty for Maryland," which was awarded \$499,990 in fiscal year 2009, to "Increasing Capacity for Preparation and Professional Development of Nursing Faculty and Educators: A Statewide Approach," which was awarded \$1,457,052 in FY 2016.

Scholarship and funded projects are among the contributions Jenkins has made in her 20 years at the SON. She co-developed and leads the Teaching in Nursing and Health Professions Certificate Program, in which nearly 800 graduate and postgraduates have taken coursework to acquire essential skills for teaching. Hundreds more nursing faculty members across Maryland and the region have benefited from the institute's conferences, workshops, and other initiatives.

In 2004, the SON alumna was asked by former Dean Janet D. Allan, PhD, RN, FAAN, to co-found the Institute for Nurse Educators, which was created to address the urgent statewide nursing faculty shortage. Under Jenkins' leadership, the institute has become a broadly accessed, statewide center for developing capacity and excellence in nursing education. This work, contributing to a 63 percent increase in the number of new graduates of Maryland schools sitting for boards and becoming licensed in Maryland, has been recognized through the awarding of multiple grants, totaling nearly \$7 million, over the past 11 years.

As the institute's reputation has grown, its expertise is regularly shared locally, nationally, and internationally. "That work has been transformational in addressing the nursing faculty shortage, faculty development in Maryland, and spreading beyond," Jenkins says proudly.

She also co-conceptualized, planned, opened, and then for 12 years, served as co-director of the Clinical Education and Evaluation Standardized Patient Laboratory (CEEL). This partnership resource between the schools of Nursing and Medicine at UMB also is widely used by other schools on the campus and other educational institutions and professional organizations.

Many praise Jenkins for her collaborative work.

"I worked with her on the Informational Technology Stakeholders Group, which had representatives from each school to provide guidance about IT expenditures to support the education mission," recalls Peter J. Murray, PhD, UMB chief information officer and vice president. "Dr. Jenkins led a small work group that developed a proposal to expand resources for education using technology. She worked with leaders from Dentistry and Social Work to develop a successful proposal, and she now leads a group of faculty from each school on its implementation. She clearly demonstrates collaboration, creativity, and the ability to coordinate the work of a team toward a specific goal. Her first concern is always the student experience, and she is a champion for finding ways to make things run smoothly for students using technology in their education, particularly the use of the BlackBoard platform."

Former students also have glowing words about Jenkins.

"She knows how to motivate her students to strive for excellence," says Laura Petri, PhD, RN-BC, director of education and research at St. Agnes Hospital. "As a doctoral student, I participated in the measurement course offered by Dr. Jenkins. Her passion for teaching was evident and she ignited an interest for measurement for me and a number of my peers by encouraging student participation and application to personal experiences. Dr. Jenkins was also the chair of my dissertation committee. The process was a very positive experience and I believe Dr. Jenkins' support and guidance was a primary influence."

Teaching courses such as Instructional Strategies and Assessment of Learning, Jenkins has earned rave reviews, such as:

"Dr. Jenkins is an amazing professor. She listens to and respects her students."

"Not only is she a content expert, she was completely engaged in the class ... She contributed, mentored, and taught. She knew when to let the students mentor each other but never used this as an excuse to disengage from the class. In addition the content was very relevant!"

"Dr. Jenkins is a fabulous professor whose insight and experience helps the student see the big picture. I loved this class."

"Dr. Jenkins, I wanted to tell you how much I appreciated the time you spent sitting with me and going over my first measurement paper (really, an unheard of amount of time among faculty) and the prompt responses to my email questions."

"I entered into this course with much trepidation. ... You have been an excellent role model, encouraging, supporting and challenging us to think beyond the obvious. I am still uncertain where this journey will take me, but I know that I will be better prepared after completing this course."

"When I am fortunate and blessed to become an educator I hope that I can make a difference in a student's life the way you made a difference in mine."

The comments touch Jenkins, as she sees students as colleagues in the nursing profession, though in different roles and specialties. "This approach allows for expanding our learning experiences and our collective knowledge and expertise as applied to developing a teaching role," she says. "I try to keep in mind the importance of modeling the teaching role and expertise while supporting learning, being flexible, and always being respectful."

Jenkins is no stranger to awards. In 2014, she was inducted as a fellow, Academy of Nursing Education, National League for Nursing. This constitutes national recognition of her standing as a nurse educator who has made sustained and significant contributions to nursing education. She is also a fellow of the American Heart Association and a past chair of the Council on Cardiovascular Nursing.

Still, she sees being UMB's Teacher of the Year as something special. "There were so many emotions when Dr. Perman told me I had been selected," she says. "Of course, I was surprised and thrilled! I was also humbled by the honor of the award from colleagues and most appreciative."

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