



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2024 - 2029

COLLEGE OF  
HEALTH SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF NURSING



## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN



The University of Delaware School of Nursing offers one of the top rated traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing programs. Our CCNE accredited undergraduate program boasts a 96% NCLEX pass rate and a 96% employment rate after graduation. Our long-standing relationships with area clinical and community partners in and around Delaware provide our students with the hands-on experience required to be a successful nurse. Students at the School of Nursing also have the opportunity to broaden their perspectives through a dynamic study abroad program. Whether participating in short-term experiences or spending a semester in Limerick, Ireland, students gain invaluable insight into global healthcare delivery. While immersing themselves in a new culture, they can also fulfill clinical requirements, enhancing their education through an international lens. In addition, our curriculum integrates a nationally accredited, state-of-the-art simulation lab and, first-of-its-kind, healthcare theater program for a truly immersive educational experience. We also developed a Scholar Pipeline program, partnering with several healthcare facilities in Delaware, that affords our students the opportunity to connect with that facility, receive a generous stipend while completing their education and then graduate with guaranteed employment. Additionally, all School of Nursing BSN graduates are given the opportunity for direct admittance into our Master of Science in Nursing program.

Graduate programs in the School of Nursing offer online instruction tailored to meet the needs of working nurses and maintain a 100% board pass rate. In addition, our dedicated graduate clinical coordinator facilitates clinical placement anywhere in the country, making our program ideal for nurses nationwide. We offer up to six clinical tracks per degree and each of our programs is supported by experienced and accomplished master's, doctorate and PhD prepared nurses. Our faculty are also recognized experts in their areas of interdisciplinary research and contribute to the advancement of healthcare in our country and worldwide.

Our mission at the School of Nursing is to advance healthcare and wellness through education, scholarship, practice, and service by promoting excellence, creativity, inclusivity, and engagement. We are committed to providing the highest quality education and experience for all our students. Preparing our students to strengthen the healthcare workforce and meet the healthcare needs in Delaware and nationwide is always our top priority.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Speakman, EdD, RN, FNAP, ANEF, FAAN



## ABOUT US

The UDSON is the largest educational institution of pre-licensure nursing and baccalaureate nursing in Delaware. The undergraduate, Master of Science in Nursing, and post-graduate APRN certificate programs were re-accredited by the Commission of Collegiate Education in Nursing (CCNE) in 2015. Full accreditation of the Doctor of Nursing Practice program was awarded by CCNE in 2020. The UDSON earned the National League for Nursing (NLN) Center of Excellence in Nursing designation in the “Creating Environments that Enhance Student Learning and Professional Development” category in 2022.

The first Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree was awarded in 1966. The nursing academic unit has undergone significant changes over time. Nursing, starting as a single department, grew to a college, and then returned to the School of Nursing designation in 1997 to reflect more accurately its unique, professional focus within the university and the concurrent establishment of a College of Health Sciences. In 2021-2022, in response to diminishing enrollment in the post licensure (RN-BSN) track, when those programs were more widely available and less costly at other schools, the decision was made, and approved by faculty, to retire that track. The last students completed their studies in 2023. The Accelerated BSN track was placed on hiatus as redeployment of MSN tracks was beginning. Prospective students were reporting a preference for an advanced degree rather than a second bachelor’s degree. An entry-level Master of Science in Nursing is being developed to fit this need and support the nursing workforce in Delaware and beyond. The current undergraduate student enrollment is 656.

The Master of Science (MSN) degree program was established in the fall of 1968 and was awarded initial accreditation by the National League for Nursing (NLNAC) in 1973 with Clinical Nurse

Specialist (CNS) and Nursing Administration tracks. The Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program was established in 1992 and just two years later an accelerated second-degree program for students with a bachelor's degree in another major was initiated. In 2011, the PhD in Nursing Science Program was launched; a student's fit with the research expertise of nursing and interdisciplinary faculty defines the program of study.

In response to market demand and student preference, in 2021 the UDSON returned to offering the MSN program and a post-graduate APRN certificate track for candidates seeking Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) certification in the same population areas of focus as in the DNP program. Twelve students in the DNP program changed to an MSN plan of study.

In 2024, two new initiatives were developed to increase graduate enrollment and support the growth of the Nurse Practitioner and Nurse Educator workforce in Delaware: pre-approval of BSN Seniors for graduate study, and the MSN Nurse Educator track. With few requirements, all UDSON BSN graduates can secure admission into the School of Nursing's Master of Science in Nursing program as early as their last year in the BSN program, with the stipulation that they earn a 3.00 GPA upon completion of their existing program and possess a valid Registered Nurse license. Additionally, the application fee will be waived, and admission will be guaranteed. The MSN program is entirely online and boasts both a 100% clinical placement and 100% board pass rate. Seniors in the BSN program will have the opportunity to take 2 graduate-level courses before graduation.

In 2016, the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program enrolled the first students into three available tracks: Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP), Primary Care Adult-Gerontology Nurse Practitioner (A-GNP), and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP). In response to consultation with regional healthcare agency leaders, two additional tracks were added in 2022: Adult-Gerontology, Acute, Nurse Practitioner (A-GACNP) and Primary Care Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (PCPNP).

The UDSON offers two doctoral programs. The PhD in Nursing Science program prepares researchers and academic faculty for positions in college, university, and clinical settings. UDSON's PhD in Nursing Science, the first and only PhD in Nursing program in the state, admitted the first student cohort in the fall of 2011. The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program is population health-focused and offers post-baccalaureate and post-graduate options in APRN roles.





## MISSION

Our mission is to advance healthcare and wellness through education, scholarship, practice, and service by promoting excellence, creativity, inclusivity, and engagement.

## VISION

Provide outstanding leadership in nursing education, scholarly inquiry, and healthcare innovation to improve regional, national, and global health and healthcare delivery.

## VALUES

### **Excellence**

Guided by our commitment to excellence, we exhibit integrity and caring and strive for outcomes and innovative solutions that make a positive impact on the health of individuals, families, and communities.

### **Inclusivity**

Guided by our commitment to social justice and equity, we strive to engage in research, learner-centered education, and nursing practice that supports diversity.

### **Engagement**

Guided by our commitment to engagement and collaboration, our work is interdisciplinary and supports local communities, and regional, national, and global partners.

# GOAL 1



- *Evaluate and revise curriculum to reflect the needs of communities, the non-traditional workplace, the changing healthcare delivery system, and the world through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Conducting educational program needs assessment of workplace and healthcare delivery partners.
2. Integrating American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials-Competencies into BSN, MSN, and DNP programs.
3. Increasing undergraduate and graduate students' academic skills and resiliency.
4. Enhancing BSN Honors program in the SON - rigor, continuity across program, scholarship outcomes.
5. Exploring Associate of Arts and Sciences (AAS) to BSN articulation agreement (2+2 program)
6. Planning and implementing new graduate programs while retaining rigor of admissions.
7. Developing southern Delaware satellite program for the BSN program, focusing on local commuters in that region.



# GOAL 2



- *Strengthen our communication strategies with internal and external stakeholders through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Strengthening our communication strategies with undergraduate and graduate students.
2. Strengthening current clinical site, faculty, and student relationships.
3. Contributing to community engagement discussions at the CHS and University level – through committees/task forces, e.g., Community Engagement Initiative, and college strategic planning activities

# GOAL 3



- *Attract, recruit, & retain diverse faculty (full time, adjunct, and affiliate), staff, leaders, and advisory board members through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Attracting and recruiting faculty, staff, and leaders from diverse backgrounds.
2. Retaining faculty, staff, and leaders from diverse backgrounds.



# GOAL 4



- *Recruit and retain students from diverse backgrounds.*

## STRATEGIES

1. Recruiting undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds.
2. Retaining undergraduate and graduate students from diverse backgrounds.

# GOAL 5



- *Expand interdisciplinary and global opportunities for nursing faculty and students through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Enhancing and expanding global service learning, semester abroad, & study abroad programs, using various delivery methods.
2. Strengthening UD SON graduate students' presence and use of UD Graduate College and CHS opportunities & services.
3. Building interprofessional and interdisciplinary co-curricular simulation and classroom learning and scholarship and research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students.



# GOAL 6



*Expand the culture of innovation, research, & scholarship within SON, programs, faculty, & students through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Revising SON curricula and new degree programs to develop a culture of innovation.
2. Building infrastructure to support innovation and entrepreneurship.
3. Growing volume and value of scholarship and research in the SON.

# GOAL 7



- *Ensure sufficient & appropriate resources to promote achievement of SON mission & aspirational goals through:*

## STRATEGIES

1. Creating and implementing a faculty recruitment and hiring plan that enhances faculty's ability to meet the SON mission and aspirations.
2. Hiring a Recruiter to increase outreach and presence in the professional world.
3. Evaluating physical capital needs to prioritize renovation opportunities, modernization, and/or develop of state of the art learning centers to support didactic, simulation, and experiential learning now and in the future.





UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE  
**HEALTH SCIENCES**

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