

# UNLV | SCHOOL OF NURSING



## DNP Now

### From the Director

As the semester draws to an end, we find ourselves simultaneously dealing with both academic and pandemic issues. Regardless of which DNP track you are in, I am certain that your virtual studies have been impacted by the viral situation confronting our nation. That being said, I believe that we have been able to successfully navigate a scholarly course and maintain academic rigor.



Although likely very stressful for all, it occurs to me that this is a prime example of why healthcare needs nurse leaders just like those who are being educated right here at the UNLV School of Nursing DNP program – specifically, each of you! I am certain that many of you have already stepped into those roles during this chaotic time. I am hopeful that the education you have attained thus far in the program has already been able to assist you in your decision making as you lead other staff, manage overloaded facilities, or as you provide direct care to those patients who are struggling with the potentially deadly effects of the coronavirus.

Although you are often referred to as the “future leaders” in healthcare, I would posit that at this time, you are demonstrating how you are already the current nurse leaders in healthcare as well. Stay in close touch with your faculty so that they can actively work with you to facilitate your success, thank you each and all for your efforts, and, above all, please take every effort possible to remain safe.

**Paul Thomas Clements, PhD, RN, DF-IAFN, CGS**

## Student Services

### Wrapping up Spring 2020

Who knew spring would be such a wild ride for us all! As you all know, we have had to postpone all graduation activities which is just as hard for us as it is for the students. This is usually the very best part of the semester! We will be planning to do a Nursing Recognition/Commencement sometime this summer for you all and will forward out the details as they become available.



In the meantime, most of you have defended (YAY!!) and are in the process of making edits or waiting for final format approval from the Graduate College. Please do not forget to do the culminating experience form in the Grad Rebel Gateway ASAP! You are not finished until you have all your forms complete, project formatting approved, have uploaded it into ProQuest, and insured that all your hours are complete in E\*Value.

If you are moving into summer, please be sure you are registered and ready!

To say that I'm incredibly proud of all of you and what you do is an understatement. If you are doing anything in support of the COVID19 issues, please be sure to let us know ASAP! We want to toot your horns for you!

Elizabeth Gardner  
SON Student Services Director

## *Growing Our Own*



## **The Big Picture: UNLV Nursing Alumna Ready for First Job**

Laura Larson (grad '19) is an alum from our BSN-DNP program and is soon to be working in a women's health clinic where she will be seeing obstetric patients and gynecology patients. With her nursing background in labor and delivery, she believes this will be good match for her. Laura also volunteers at The Neighborhood Christian Clinic where patients who cannot afford insurance are seen. This is a predominantly Hispanic population, where, in addition to women's health, she may see cases that family Nurse practitioners usually see,

including diabetes, hypertension, and small injuries.

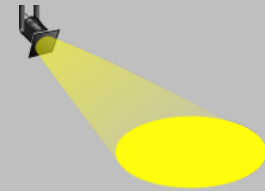
When asked specifically about her educational experience at the School of Nursing DNP program, Laura shared:

“Ever since nursing school I knew I wanted to become a nurse practitioner and to get my doctoral degree. Being much more interested in practice than research, the DNP degree was a natural choice for me. Within two years of graduating with my bachelor’s, I started the BSN to DNP advanced practice program at UNLV. I was thrilled to be accepted and felt well taken care of since day one.

Doing my BSN to DNP was admittedly very challenging, but a confidence building opportunity that I do not regret. While learning clinical skills in my FNP courses, I was learning the bigger picture in my DNP courses. Challenges I had not felt confident facing, such as business management, health care administration, and conflict management were well covered in the DNP courses within the context of what I would be doing in health care as a provider. Even though I did not have additional clinical training in my DNP course work, I gained a greater vision of how my care impacts populations, why we do what we do clinically, and how I can make a difference by bringing evidence to the bedside. The ability to read research articles, identify discrepancies between practice and evidence, and put evidence into action with careful planning and diligence would be my favorite take away from my experience in the BSN-DNP program at UNLV.

Now as I look forward to starting my first job I feel confident in what I have learned and eager to pair my excellent education with experience. I am proud to be a graduate of UNLV!”

## ***Student Spotlight***



## **A Lifelong Learner: Nursing Student Guides Others**

An undergraduate and graduate UNLV alumna, Alena Grewal realized the quality of UNLV nursing programs and wanted to be part of it. In her role as a Nurse Educator and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) as a Family Nurse Practitioner Board Certified, she has been teaching the clinical portion of the Nursing Care of the Adult Medical-Surgical Patient course. Alena joined UNLV School of Nursing in Summer 2017, and since then, she has been guiding nursing students on the Dedicated Educational Unit (DEU) at Summerlin Hospital Medical Center. As the Clinical Faculty Coordinator (CFC) for the DEU, as well as her continued exposure to direct patient care in

advanced practice, she has had the opportunity to influence and cultivate nursing student knowledge, skills, and abilities. In 2019, she was selected by the UNLV as "Outstanding Teaching by Part-Time Instructor."

Alena enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program at UNLV in the Fall of 2019 and has now defended her DNP Project Proposal titled: *Comparison of 12-hour Biweekly Shifts Versus 6-hour Weekly Shifts on Learning Outcomes and Fatigue in Nursing Students on Dedicated Educational Unit*. Additionally, Alena submitted an abstract for the Western Institute of Nursing's (WIN) Annual Communicating Nursing Research Conference, and was accepted for the WIN Research and Information Exchange poster session. Although the WIN Conference has been cancelled, she is looking for the first opportunity to present the poster in the future. Furthermore, in 2020, Alena received the Vital Affair Entrepreneurial Excellence Award because of her passion for teaching and using innovating ideas to develop and operationalize a modified clinical DEU model to improve learning experiences for her students in clinical settings.

Alena wanted to share why she decided to pursue a doctoral degree "I believe we as nurses are life-long learners, and completing the DNP program will serve as a vehicle toward the achievement of my educational, professional, and personal goals as a Nurse Educator and APRN. My utmost desire is to assume a leadership role in providing a high-quality, evidence-based education to the future generation of nursing students and also prepare me to lead others in the efforts to improve the delivery of valuable healthcare services to individuals and communities in need, here in Nevada."

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