STRATEGIC PLAN FOR RESEARCH

2015 - 2018

UTEP NURSING

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO
MESSAGE from the Dean

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

It is with great pride that I share with you this copy of the UTEP's School of Nursing 2015-2018 strategic plan for research. Our university's mission of increasing access to an excellent academic experience motivated this plan. Specifically, it is through our pursuit of research excellence that we will further advance the quality of our already prestigious academic programs in nursing, through which we serve over a thousand students per year.

At UTEP’s School of Nursing we understand nursing as a professional service discipline grounded in the arts, sciences, and humanities that involves the application of knowledge obtained through scientific inquiry. This strategic plan emerges from this research-centered philosophy with the primary goal of enhancing the educational experience of our students. We will procure this goal by accelerating the translation of cutting-edge knowledge into our classrooms and into our region's clinical practice.

The vision of the School of Nursing is to become a leader in nursing education, practice, and research in the global healthcare environment. Correspondingly, this plan will guide the School of Nursing as we lay the foundation of an ambitious research program that responds to the most pressing needs of the local, regional, and global public health communities. Ultimately, through the attainment of the strategies set forth by this plan we will prepare and diversify the next generation of nursing investigators desperately needed by our nation.

As always, I thank you for supporting us and helping the School of Nursing remain a national leader in delivering excellence in higher education and diversifying the cadre of nursing scientists. I look forward to your comments and questions.

Sincerely,

Elias Provencio-Vasquez
Dean, School of Nursing
UTEP
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR RESEARCH
2015 – 2018
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THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

The greatest resource of the School of Nursing (SON) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is our students. The SON’s enrollment is rapidly approaching 1,000 students from across our multiple undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral academic programs. Such programs are central to UTEP’s great success in serving as a regional catalyst for economic development, social mobility, and enhanced quality of life. Our thriving undergraduate program serves a student pool that averages an admission GPA of at least 3.65 and highlights the commitment and capacity of our students. The SON proudly leads the nation in offering a first-class nursing education to a 21st-century student population that mirrors the demographic distribution of the El Paso region (78% Hispanic). Such success has placed UTEP in the national spotlight as a model 21st-century research university. With the growing Hispanic population across the state of Texas and throughout the United States, UTEP’s SON is ideally positioned to respond to the national need to diversify the cadre of nursing scientists.

The SON’s guiding principles are excellence, innovation, and diversity. Notably, our faculty combines substantial experience across the educational, research, practice, and service domains. The SON’s full-time faculty includes 12 members with PhDs, 5 members with DNP’s, and 19 members with master’s degrees, of whom 36% are Hispanic and 8% are males. The SON’s part-time faculty includes 13 members with doctoral degrees and 20 with master’s degrees, of whom 40% are Hispanic and 13% are males. Our faculty adhere to and promote a paradigm of caring that provides holistic human responses throughout the age continuum. This paradigm includes education, practice, and research that encompass provision of care, coordination of care, and professionalism. While the faculty subscribe to a variety of theoretical frameworks, which reflect adaptation, self-care, transcultural, and humanistic aspects, we all believe that the essence of nursing is caring.

Through its faculty, the SON maintains a strong clinical and service presence across the region’s healthcare facilities and non-profit healthcare organizations. The strong working relationship between the SON and the regional healthcare facilities supports the implementation of a comprehensive training program for our students who complete their clinical rotations at the best clinical facilities throughout the city. Most of our graduates join the regional healthcare workforce and maintain relationships with the SON. The SON also enjoys readily available community partnerships, including those with the Hospital Corporation of America, University Medical Center, and Tenet Corporation. The SON’s extensive collaborative network, which extends across the entire border region and reaches a highly diverse and vulnerable population, is a valuable resource and an untapped opportunity for the development of nursing research of national and global relevance in the areas of chronic disease management, health disparities, and geriatric treatment.

The SON views nursing as a professional service discipline grounded in the arts, sciences, and humanities that involves the application of knowledge obtained through scientific inquiry. In response to its research-centered philosophy, the SON has developed this strategic plan for research, which has the following aims: (a) to boost the SON’s research productivity through programs that seek to respond to national priorities and to accelerate
The greatest resource of the School of Nursing (SON) at the University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) is our students. The SON’s enrollment is rapidly approaching 1,000 students from across our multiple undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral academic programs. Such programs are central to UTEP’s great success in serving as a regional catalyst for economic development, social mobility, and enhanced quality of life. Our thriving undergraduate program serves a student pool that averages an admission GPA of at least 3.65 and highlights the commitment and capacity of our students. The SON proudly leads the nation in offering a first-class nursing education to a 21st-century student population that mirrors the demographic distribution of the El Paso region (78% Hispanic). Such success has placed UTEP in the national spotlight as a model 21st-century research university. With the growing Hispanic population across the state of Texas and throughout the United States, UTEP’s SON is ideally positioned to respond to the national need to diversify the cadre of nursing scientists.

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THE ROLE OF RESEARCH IN THE SON

The vision of the SON is to become a leader in nursing education, practice, and research in the global healthcare environment. The crystallization of this vision will occur only through continuous interaction between our educational, clinical, and research activities and capacities, as presented in the conceptual model shown in Figure 1. The model recognizes that at the heart of the SON's mission is the preparation of professional nurses led by nursing faculty who interact across all academic levels and programs (undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral).

The next layer represents a continuum of inquiry that continuously informs and enhances our academic programs with cutting-edge knowledge and evidence-based practice. These interacting factors infuse our educational programs with the expertise that comes from professional nursing as well as from the effective translation of cutting-edge research.

In the center band, practice refers to the clinical practice, educational practice, and leadership practice settings where challenges are identified and knowledge is applied. The challenges identified in practice prompt and inform the inquiry-driven research activity. The knowledge obtained through research is then tested, evaluated, and translated into new evidence-based practice that enhances our educational programs and clinical practice. In this sense, research is essential to the preparation of our students in the implementation of evidence-based practice. For instance, at the BSN level, students are educated about the need to base their future RN practice on knowledge gained from published primary and translational research. Students at the MSN level engage in clinical practice or agency-based projects that are founded on nursing science to effect meaningful change in their practice environments. DNP students engage in translational research, which has a direct impact on their clinical practice as advanced practice nurses. The center band presents the role of SON faculty as both translators and users of clinical and educational research. Through their evidence-based approach to nursing education and their adoption of educational best practices, they serve as role models for appreciation and implementation of scholarly inquiry.

The outer band delineates leadership and education as the operational elements of our guiding principles of excellence, innovation, and diversity and depicts the integration of the entire conceptual model into a cohesive strategy. Specifically, the model calls for effective leadership across every level of the SON and commitment to the procurement of educational excellence by embracing diversity and investing in innovation. This pursuit of educational excellence will generate the supporting structure for research, translation, and practice. In this regard, education and leadership become the synergistic and continually reinforcing agents that define our school of nursing.

All components of the model are necessary for the attainment of excellence in education and, ultimately, in clinical practice. The model emphasizes the essential role of research to the development of not only future nurse scientists but also nurses in general. Research drives the generation of new nursing knowledge that, via translational processes, informs, supports, and updates the path toward the development of nursing leaders, which is so necessary in the health field. The model also provides recognition that students and faculty from all academic programs significantly contribute to the development, implementation, and translation of research.
THE COMMUNITY WE SERVE

The rapid population growth and domestic migration of Hispanics across the United States is expected to prompt a new set of challenges for the national healthcare system. In response, the National Institute of Nursing Research calls for the diversification of nurses and nursing investigators to increase our capacity to address these healthcare challenges. Located in a dynamic and diverse area of the US/Mexico border region, the SON is uniquely positioned to lead the diversification of the national cadre of nurses and nursing scientists. The diversity of our community also places the SON in an ideal position to investigate the impact of socio-cultural contexts on multi-ethnic patient-provider relationships across multiple care delivery settings as well as the complex interactions between the social, physical, and natural environments as they have an impact on health disparities in minority and disadvantaged populations. By unraveling the socio-cultural factors that affect the effective delivery of care across settings in a highly diverse region, the SON can make a significant and timely research contribution of national relevance. Overall, the unique demographic characteristics of the region favor UTEP SON's prospects of becoming the first national nursing school to fully serve a 21st-century demographic.
INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT

The realization of excellence in research across disciplines is central to the fulfillment of the University's mission. In response, UTEP's strategic plan (2008–2015) provides a set of strategies to increase the research infrastructure, incentivize research productivity, and support and invest in interdisciplinary research initiatives. The Office of Research and Sponsored Projects (ORSP) successfully executed these strategies by deploying a comprehensive set of research support mechanisms that have energized the research environment across the University. Nursing investigators now have access to a series of institutional programs, such as the "Jump Start" program, designed to assist junior faculty to create and deploy a competitive research program. Other valuable resources include a continuing series of grant-writing workshops, a grant development office to help with proposal development and submission, and a biostatistics consulting laboratory to assist with study design and data analysis as well as an array of pilot-study funding mechanisms. The Interdisciplinary Research (IDR) program and the Border Biomedical Research Center’s pilot research program are two pilot-study funding mechanisms particularly relevant to nursing research. Both programs are designed to foster the formation of interdisciplinary research teams across campus, and both prioritize health-related research. The IDR, in addition to providing financial support for pilot research, offers a series of workshops and training interactions to strengthen the IDR collaborative experience and research program development.

In terms of the research infrastructure, the University offers state-of-the-art research facilities with substantial capacity to support nursing research. Specifically, the Border Biomedical Research Center (BBRC) offers a comprehensive set of biomedical analytical capacities housed in the following cores: (a) Cytometry, Screening, and Imaging, (b) Biomolecule Analysis, and (c) Genomic Analysis. An additional infrastructure relevant to nursing research is available through a series of research centers focused on addiction, border policy, and the environment. In recent years, the University also has greatly expanded its research capacity via a series of strategic research hires that has brought to UTEP a strong cadre of scientists in behavioral and environmental health and team science fields, which offers strong collaborating opportunities to SON investigators.

Within the SON, the supportive research environment mirrors that of the University. The SON administration is committed to strategically supporting the development of a center of excellence in nursing research within the SON. As a first step, the Dean formed the Strategic Planning task force that developed this Strategic Plan for Nursing Research. Moving forward, the SON administration will lead a series of institutional adjustments to facilitate the effective implementation of the strategies outlined in this plan.

As outlined in UTEP's strategic plan, the role of the SON is central to the University's attainment of research excellence. For instance, the relocation of the SON and College of Health Sciences expanded the space available for health-related research on campus and is expected to boost interdisciplinary collaboration. The University’s strategic plan also prioritizes health-related research fields and recognizes the significant capacity of the SON to attain excellence in this research field. In this regard, the strategies outlined in this Strategic Plan for Nursing Research are both timely and necessary. The SON Strategic Plan for Research responds to the University’s mission and aligns with its ongoing strategies. Most importantly, the SON's plan for research builds on the substantial set of institutional accomplishments that resulted in a significant research infrastructure and support. Consequently, the time is right for the SON to take advantage of the overwhelming institutional support and advance its own research programs.
STRATEGIC GOALS

GOAL 1
Boost Productivity

The first goal of this plan is to increase the number and quality of externally funded research studies procured by SON faculty as well as the number of peer-reviewed publications in top-tier scientific journals. As emphasized in the SON model, boosting our research productivity is essential to the pursuit of excellence, which directly responds to UTEP’s mission. An increased productivity in nursing research will help the SON contribute to both national and regional research needs. The consistent procurement of external research funding that supports research programs of national relevance will ultimately lead to the development and sustainability of a Center of Excellence in Research, which will enhance our educational programs by continuously renovating their content and by expanding the opportunities for nursing student involvement. Ultimately, the development of research of national relevance will also enhance institutional pride and strengthen the regional presence of UTEP and the SON. Hence, we will procure external funding by established national agencies such as NIH and NINR and will increase our production of top-tier scientific journal publications.

GOAL 2
Build Capacity

The second goal of this plan is to expand our research capacity. Specifically, we aim to build the necessary infrastructure to attract, train, and support world-class nursing investigators. It is expected that a suitable research infrastructure will engage SON faculty in the development of innovative research programs that address global and national healthcare priorities. At the same time, the SON research infrastructure should foster the translation of research into evidence-based interventions and cutting-edge educational programs that respond to the needs of the regional community that we serve. Hence, we aim to create an integrative research system that brings together faculty and nurses from across the entire SON and facilitates and supports their contribution to nursing science.

GOAL 3
Attain Excellence

The guiding principle of excellence can be operationalized as the SON’s intention to become a national leader in nursing education. Specifically, we aim to prepare world-class nurses, nurse practitioners, nursing leaders, and nurse investigators. In this sense, the outstanding and highly regarded educational programs of the SON would be greatly complemented by a Center of Excellence (COE) in Nursing Research. Hence, the third goal is to lay the foundation for the development of internationally competitive research programs that propose solutions to the most pressing global healthcare problems while leveraging the strengths of our region and responding to the needs of our community. The SON is uniquely positioned to prepare professional nurses and nurse scientists who mirror the ethnic diversity of people across the United States and will tackle the most pressing healthcare challenges of this generation. Hence, the attainment of a COE in Nursing Research would directly respond to the national priority of diversifying the nation’s cadre of nursing investigators. The COE in Nursing Research also will serve as a great resource for the scientific community, nursing faculty, students, and community partners whose shared interest is finding solutions to health issues experienced by diverse populations that may be generalized to individuals in the rest of the United States.
**GOAL 1: BOOST PRODUCTIVITY**

**Objective:** SON faculty who serve as Principal Investigators will attain USD$2 million in direct cost of external research funding by December 31, 2018.

Metrics for evaluating progress and goal attainment:
- Amount of external funding received per year
- Number of publications in peer-reviewed journals per year
- Number of external funding proposals submitted per year
- Number of presentations at local, regional, national, and international conferences per year

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<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Operational Components</th>
<th>Explanation/Justification</th>
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<td>Institutionalize and prioritize research across the School of Nursing (SON)</td>
<td>Create a position for and hire a Director of Research.</td>
<td>The complexity of this research plan and the importance of the goals described in this document necessitate that a focused leadership position be created. The individual who occupies this role will be an experienced researcher in the health sciences, with proven capability to manage and coordinate all research efforts undertaken in the SON, without overly focusing on his or her own research agenda. This person will mentor, develop, and guide other faculty in their scholarly/research aspirations while interfacing with the Office of Sponsored Projects and overseeing the Research Program of the SON.</td>
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| Formalize a Research Steering Committee | A special task force was created on an ad hoc basis in Spring 2014 at the request of the Dean to lead the development of this document. The members include SON research faculty, tenured and tenure-track faculty, and clinical faculty. The committee will seek formal recognition as part of the SON Faculty Organization in 2015. The founding members of the committee envision the committee's role to include the following:  
  - Oversee the implementation of this plan  
  - Advise and support the Director of Research  
  - Execute the accountability strategies defined by this plan  
  - Serve as role models for other SON investigators  
  - Coordinate the research interest groups  
  - Advise on research funding/grant opportunities  
  - Serve as an internal review board for research proposals  
  - Assist with identification of funding opportunities and partnerships | |
| Utilize the conceptual model to define and communicate the role of research within the SON | Upon approval, the Strategic Plan for Research as well as the conceptual model, which emphasizes the role of research within the SON, will be presented to the faculty via a faculty organization meeting, which will be recorded and made available to all current and future faculty, current and future students, and the public via the SON website.  
  The plan is designed to be inclusive and expansive and defines meaningful roles for all faculty, including tenured, tenure-track, and clinical track, across all research interests. The overarching themes of the SON conceptual model, education and leadership, define the two key responsibilities that every faculty member should embrace. We are here to lead the SON toward excellence in education across all of our education programs. Such excellence will be attained only by integrating research into our academic life, as depicted in the model. | |
| Establish clear accountability and reward mechanisms | Assign responsibility to Director of Research and Steering Committee over research productivity accountability | All tenured and tenure-track faculty will be accountable for research productivity, as described later in this document.

The Director for Research and the SON Research Steering Committee will formalize a culture of scientific inquiry in the SON by overseeing the implementation of all accountability measures that emerge from the implementation of this plan.

The Director for Research will coordinate with the Assistant Deans for the undergraduate and graduate programs to develop workload assignments that respond to the faculty members' creditable research activities.

Recognizing that the primary mission of the SON is to educate nurses at the baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels, the Director for Research and the Assistant Deans for the undergraduate and graduate programs will work closely to fairly adjust faculty workloads and allow faculty to distribute teaching and research/scholarly activity, depending on interest, in an equal and creditable way.

Although research productivity is expected of tenured and tenure-track faculty, all faculty in the SON will be afforded the opportunity to participate in research/scholarly activities. Those clinical faculty who wish to participate in research/scholarly activity within the bounds of this document can negotiate, based on merit, release time for creditable activities with the appropriate Assistant Dean.

| Clarify the roles and expectations for SON faculty (clinical, TT, T) | There are distinct differences between the tenured/tenure-track faculty role and the clinical faculty role that need to be reflected in their corresponding workload assignments.

The Handbook of Operating Procedures for UTEP and the UT system delineates the normal faculty workload for tenured/tenure-track faculty as 18 teaching load credits (TLCs) per academic year (Fall and Spring semesters). The normal faculty workload for clinical track faculty is 30 TLCs per academic year. The difference in teaching loads is attributable to research and scholarly activity.

In addition to teaching 9 TLCs per semester, all tenured/tenure-track faculty are expected to conduct research, seek external funding, present their research at local, regional, and national conferences, and publish in scholarly journals. As a result, the workload (TLCs) is 40% less than that of the clinical track faculty. In response, accountability mechanisms that effectively evaluate and ensure the adherence and expected productivity from these workloads will be created and implemented.

Clinical track faculty are expected to teach 15 TLCs per semester. Clinical track faculty are expected to maintain nursing expertise related to their primary area of teaching. There is no expectation from clinical track faculty to engage in research. Still, these faculty members might engage in scholarly activity to maintain expertise in nursing practice consistent with their primary teaching area. Such scholarly activity may include participating in continuing and formal academic education, seeking and/or maintaining national specialty certification, presenting at nursing conferences, and/or publishing in nursing journals and/or magazines. Support and accountability mechanism will be defined to facilitate and evaluate these activities from clinical track faculty.

Workload redistribution will be negotiated with the Dean and the appropriate Assistant Deans on a semester-by-semester basis.

Additional responsibilities, such as program director responsibilities and special projects assignments, should be considered during workload evaluation.

Ultimately, all faculty members remain accountable for the various responsibilities listed in their workload letters.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Establish clear accountability and reward mechanisms</th>
<th>Establish transparent policy regarding workload assignments that account for credible research productivity</th>
<th>Working with the Assistant Deans for the undergraduate and graduate programs, the Dean, the Director for Research, and the Research Committee will develop formal policies for workload credit and grant writing/grant submission processes. These policies will provide structure and will define all creditable work related to research processes that can be documented and accounted for the purposes of this plan.</th>
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<td>Tenured/tenure-track faculty will be evaluated annually on their assigned teaching responsibilities and their research productivity.</td>
<td>Tenured/tenure track faculty will be evaluated on their assigned responsibilities, according to their workload letters, through the normal faculty evaluation processes, as defined in the by-laws of the SON Faculty Organization. The Assistant/Associate Dean for Nursing Research will contribute to the administrative evaluation of their progress, based on the progress of each faculty member in regard to the long-term research plans described earlier. Annual goals and metrics in their research plans must be met or renegotiated with the appropriate administrative personnel.</td>
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<td>Implications for failure to achieve research goals and productivity.</td>
<td>Those tenured/tenure-track faculty who do not meet their stated research plan and scholarly goals, and/or consistently fail to contribute to the research productivity of the SON, will have their workload assignment adjusted accordingly, up to the 15 TLC load per semester expected of clinical faculty.</td>
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<td>Recognize and reward creditable scholarship and research achievement</td>
<td>Each semester, a research and scholarship report will be developed and distributed by the Research Steering Committee. This report will serve to highlight the activities of various research interest groups, the submission and attainment of research grants, and the scholarly activities of SON faculty. This report will be issued to the entire SON faculty via the email listserv as well as presented to the SON Faculty Organization.</td>
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<td>An annual SON recognition dinner will be scheduled, during which faculty who have significantly participated in research and scholarly activities during the year will be recognized and honored by the SON Dean, Assistant/Associate Deans, Provost, and President.</td>
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<td>Financial awards attained by faculty as well as meaningful research-related achievements (e.g., publications in top-tier journals) will be considered in the annual faculty evaluation process as well as in determinations for faculty promotion.</td>
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<td>Deploy a comprehensive research support program for SON faculty engaged in research</td>
<td>Assist current faculty in the design and implementation of a long-term, sustainable research plan</td>
<td>All tenured and tenure-track faculty will be required to submit a long-term (five-year) plan for the development of their research programs.</td>
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<td>The Assistant or Associate Dean for Research and the SON Research Steering Committee will develop the guidelines for the long-term research plans.</td>
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<td>The Assistant or Associate Dean for Research and the SON Research Steering Committee will be available to all SON faculty to consult in the development of their research plans.</td>
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<td>Long-term research plans will serve as the basis for assessing research productivity and promotion evaluation.</td>
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<td>The Assistant/Associate Dean for Nursing Research and Research Steering Committee will rely on these plans to identify emerging research interest groups, facilitate faculty collaboration, and guide mentoring activities in support of the sustainability of the research trajectories of tenured/tenure track faculty.</td>
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<td>Deploy a comprehensive research support program for SON faculty engaged in research</td>
<td>Create and staff a Nursing Research Support office supervised by the Assistant/Associate Dean for Nursing Research</td>
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<td>This office will serve as a centralized SON grant support center to:</td>
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<td>✦ Assist with study design</td>
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<td>✦ Assist with grant development grant document formatting (in collaboration with ORSP)</td>
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<td>✦ Assist with proposal writing, specifically, the support components of the grant proposal (in collaboration with ORSP)</td>
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<td>✦ Assist with grant management, including budget management, student recruitment and training, and communications/reports (in collaboration with ORSP) with NIH, NINR, and other grant agencies.</td>
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<td>✦ Assist faculty researchers with literature reviews</td>
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<td>✦ Offer and coordinate research development and training workshops for faculty and students</td>
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<td>✦ Serve as liaison with other collaborators and consultants (e.g., biostatisticians, phlebotomist, specialized health technicians)</td>
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<td>✦ Track and document all research activities for internal and external publicity and media coverage</td>
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<td>✦ Filter and distribute RFAs specifically relevant to the SON</td>
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<th>Develop a plan to support an early career faculty training or mentorship program</th>
<th>Specific attention will be directed toward supporting future new tenure track faculty. A three-year program will be designed and implemented to help new faculty effectively transition into a productive academic life at the SON. The program will:</th>
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<tr>
<td>✦ Identify faculty research mentors (within or outside UTEP) to assist the new faculty member in the development of a long-term, sustainable research plan (within the first semester), which is responsive to the existing research interests of the SON</td>
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<td>✦ Support travel to visit mentors during this period</td>
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<td>✦ Define a workload for the first three years that responds to the long-term research plan and facilitates its implementation</td>
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<td>✦ Develop a series of training workshops designed specifically for new faculty</td>
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**GOAL 2: BUILD CAPACITY**

**Objective:** To increase the number of SON faculty with a research record and/or potential to establish a competitive research program and whose research interests align with those of the SON.

Metrics for evaluating progress and goal attainment:

a. Number of new tenure-track faculty hires
b. Completion of a feasibility study for a PhD program in Nursing
c. Submission of a proposal for a PhD program in Nursing
d. Amount of funds invested via external funding on analytical equipment and lab infrastructure

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<td>Procure a PhD program in nursing</td>
<td>Propose a joint PhD program with UT Tyler to the SON Dean</td>
<td>The addition of a PhD in nursing would enhance the SON's ability to attract senior nursing research faculty. A national shortage of nursing faculty has increased the difficulty of attracting talented researchers at nursing schools. A key factor is the availability of a Nursing PhD program that accommodates the teaching and research capacities of competitive nursing scientists. The addition of talented nursing scientists would increase the SON's capacity to secure external research funds as well as scholarly products (e.g., published peer reviewed articles in top-tier journals, presentations, presence on national and international boards and review panels). A Nursing PhD program also would increase the pool of doctoral students available to work with the nursing faculty in writing research proposals and producing other scholarly products. The SON currently has a DNP program that would allow for collaborative projects between the DNP and PhD students, shared course work, and enhanced research and other scholarly opportunities for SON faculty as they work with doctoral students.</td>
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<td>Launch discussions between the SON Dean and PhD Director at UT Tyler to explore possibilities and strategies to establish a joint PhD program between the two institutions</td>
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<td>Perform a needs assessment to establish potential student pool and provide support for new doctoral program proposal, which will be submitted to THECB for approval</td>
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<td>Write new doctoral program proposal and submit for approval to:</td>
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<td>♦ SON Graduate Studies Committee</td>
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<td>♦ UTEP Graduate Council (create action report)</td>
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<td>♦ Provost's Endorsement</td>
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<td>♦ President's Endorsement</td>
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<td>♦ UT System/THECB Approval</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obtain essential analytic infrastructure and equipment</td>
<td>Locate and review the needs assessment completed prior to the design of HSN building</td>
<td>If a document exists, it can be used as guide for the development of policies and protocols. This information also will be useful in that, as new research proposals are developed, duplication of existing resources is avoided.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locate current protocol for access and use of existing facilities</td>
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<td>This will assist in determining physical space allocation for research support.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Propose the development of a lab space use committee to oversee lab space assignments</td>
<td>Establishing a committee to oversee and advocate for lab space assignments will help create a fair system for distribution of these valuable areas and better coordination with the University's space allocation officers. This committee will develop and revise internal protocols for access of existing lab spaces to ensure equal opportunity for all researchers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Establish a nursing biomedical research laboratory</td>
<td>The necessary equipment to allow for essential biomarker in support of nursing research needs to be purchased.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Locate and designate available office/lab space for research purposes. Initiate a request that office be assigned to the Research Steering Committee.</td>
<td>The Research Steering Committee will oversee the assignment of this space to faculty based on creditable research productivity and needs. The Dean will make assignments of unused space. The lab/office assignments will be evaluated every semester.</td>
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GOAL 3: ATTAIN EXCELLENCE

**Objective:** To establish and support the development of interdisciplinary research lines of national significance that respond to NIH priorities and that have long-term potential.

**Metrics for evaluating progress and goal attainment:**

a. Number of established Research Interest Groups (RIGs)
b. Research productivity of RIGs
   - Number of pilots conducted by members of RIG that respond to the group's research theme
   - Number of grants submitted/obtained by RIG members
   - Number of publications by RIG members
   - Number of investigators invited to the SON

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Operational Components</th>
<th>Explanation/Justification</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Launch the Research Interest Groups (RIG) program | Create a mechanism to guide the formation, development, and support of focused RIGs | Establishing RIGs will bring together nursing faculty members (both tenure track and clinical track) and other interdisciplinary researchers who share common topic/field interests and are committed to working together in developing a sustainable research program. The RIGs also can integrate healthcare and community partners to expand interdisciplinary collaboration suitable to the research focus. The Research Steering Committee will develop a protocol, guidelines, and templates for the formation and recognition of RIGs within the SON. RIGs will be required to develop a white paper that clearly states the following:
   - Significance of the research theme
   - Summary of the relevant body of literature
   - Identified research gaps
   - Potential stakeholders
   - Long-term research strategies
   - Feasibility assessment |
| Create a mechanism to guide the formation, development, and support of focused RIGs | Funds to support recognized RIGs in the forms described below will be allocated by the Research Steering Committee in response to formal written proposals, based on availability of funds and merit of the creditable research activities proposed by the RIGs. The support mechanisms will include the following:

   **Biostatistics:** A biostatistician consultant to assist in study design and data analysis will be available to established RIGs.

   **Research Assistants:** A part-time (19 hour-per-week) university student to assist RIGs in all aspects of research. The RIG needs to develop a scope of work and evaluation plans for each RA. The RIGs are encouraged to engage nursing students, as this is a perfect opportunity to introduce them to scientific careers in nursing and also grow our own SON’s researchers.

   **Pilot Funds:** The Dean, based on availability, might allocate funds to support pilot research. The availability of these funds will prioritize the requests of established RIGs. |
| Launch the Research Interest Groups (RIG) program | Create a mechanism to guide the formation, development, and support of focused RIGs | **Research Support Program:** The research support program described in Goal 1 of this plan will prioritize the support requested by established and productive RIGs and provide support to hire consultants for grant preparation of meritable size.

**External Consultants:** Support to bring national experts on a RIG’s topic to assist in the development and implementation of RIG-initiated research projects. |
| Leverage institutional pilot funding mechanisms to support RIGs | SON representation on all funding committees | The Associate/Assistant Dean of Research and the Research Steering Committee will require that SON faculty serve in all internal review boards for research proposals (e.g., University Research Institute [URI], Interdisciplinary Research [IDR], Border Biomedical Research Center [BBRC]). |
| | URI funding IDR funding Jump Start Program Research endowments that align with RIG focus and faculty focus | RIGs specifically will be encouraged and supported to seek funding from institutional mechanisms such as URI for new researchers, IDR grants, and the BBRC pilot funds.

**The University Research Institute (URI) for new researchers:** A competitive process available for new faculty. This grant provides a maximum of $5,000 for 12 months.

**Interdisciplinary Research (IDR) Enhancement Program Award:** A competitive grant funded by the Provost and ORSP to existing or starting interdisciplinary teams consisting of at least one faculty member from two different UTEP colleges or centers. Maximum funds are $20,000 for two years.

**Jump Start Program:** Competitive grant designed for tenure-track and tenured faculty to assist in initiating a research trajectory that will lead to successful extramural funding. This mechanism can be utilized to help junior faculty develop a long-term research plan, and alignment with an existing RIG or the development of a new RIG should be encouraged.

The Research Steering Committee will identify and support competitive SON faculty who are able to lead the research aligned with requirements and able to compete when professorship endowments become available. |
| Create an environment that encourages research | Integrate research in education and practice | Develop grants that support students’ participation in research.

Creditable research activities (e.g., grant funding attainment, peer-reviewed publications) resulting from the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning will be recognized and rewarded as legitimate scholarship products. |
| | RIG autonomy | The faculty members who form RIGs will choose the research themes. The RIGs will retain full autonomy over the development of their research program. However, it is important that topics remain relevant to nursing. |
| | Invest in long-term research capacity | Hire faculty whose research interests and capacities are a good fit with the research focus of the SON, defined primarily by its RIGs. In addition, consider the available facilities and potential collaborating colleagues when recruiting. Hires must have the capacity to be successful at UTEP and be provided with ongoing support for development.

For clinical track faculty with PhDs who wish to move to tenure track, there should be a clear and transparent method of doing so. Such appointments should respond to the same priorities as any other hire, as stated above in this section. |
| Create an environment that encourages research | Provide process for peer review of research and publications | Scholarly collaboration through writing groups should be encouraged as an effective way to increase publications and build a collegial environment. A successful two-semester pilot project from Fall 2013 to Spring 2014 with six faculty members resulted in four publications.

Establish mechanisms for mock grant reviews in support of SON faculty before proposal submission. The writing groups may be the ideal panel of reviewers for smaller grants. External expertise will be sought for larger grants.

Establish forums to facilitate presentation rehearsal opportunities prior to attending meaningful conferences/meetings. The “Teacher Talks” may be the ideal venue for such conference rehearsals. |

| Emphasize programs of research | Encourage targeted responses to RFAs that best align with the themes of the RIGs.
Research Steering Committee and the Associate Dean for Research will seek RFAs that align best with the themes of the RIGs |

| Pursue NLN Center of Excellence designation | Appoint Center of Excellence champion | The Center of Excellence champion leads efforts to nominate committee members who represent faculty (tenure and clinical, long-term and new), plan meetings, and create a plan for collecting data that is needed for the Center of Excellence application. The data collection process takes approximately one year. |

| Committee reviews criteria for appropriate designation based on SON strengths | There are three Center of Excellence designations: (1) Creating Environments that Enhance Student Learning and Professional Development; (2) Creating Environments that Promote the Pedagogical Expertise of Faculty; and (3) Creating Environments that Advance the Science of Nursing Education
See NLN website for more detail: http://www.nln.org/excellence/coe/ |

| Committee members develop and implement plan | The committee members will be responsible for developing and implementing a plan that leads to submission of the application for Center of Excellence status. The steps toward the submission include creating an “Intent to Apply” document (by October 15 each year), deciding whether use a consultant; creating a timetable, gathering input from faculty regarding presentations and publications, service, awards, student involvement in presentations and publications; preparing specific sections of the document by each committee member; collating the document into a cohesive whole by the committee chair or an editor; and submitting the final application by May 15 of submission year. |
## Priorities

**Inputs**
- Inclusion of all SON faculty
- Student Engagement & Development
- Integration of all academic programs
- Lay a solid foundation for future
- Embrace both a long & short-term vision
- Develop sustainable research lines
- Leverage institutional resources
- Respond to regional needs

**Outputs**
- What we invest
  - Student support for research support program, RGIs, and pilot studies
  - Purchase essential biomedical equipment
  - In-kind support for dedicated staff and faculty to administer support program and pilot studies
  - Support for pilot studies.
  - Support for consultants and mentors (biostatistician)
- What we do
  - Hire director of research
  - Formalize research steering committee
  - Institutionalize the role of research
  - Establish clear accountability and reward mechanisms
  - Deploy a nursing research support program
  - Procure a Nursing PhD program
  - Equip a nursing biomedical lab
  - Launch a Research Interest Group Program
  - Create an environment that supports research

## Situation

Need for faculty engagement and capacity development.
Lack of accountability & incentive mechanisms
Insufficient infrastructure

## Assumptions
- Funding for staff and equipment will become available
- Strong institutional support
- The SON has space to develop research capacity
- Support for students continues
- PhD program is feasible
## Strategic Plan for Research

### Who we reach
- Provost
- ORSP and Dean
- SONFO
- Dean
- Associate Deans and Faculty
- Faculty
- UTEP and UT Tyler
- Faculty and Students
- Faculty and Students

### Outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short-term results</th>
<th>Medium-term results</th>
<th>Long-term results</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Faculty and student engagement</td>
<td>Established Research Interest Groups</td>
<td>Recruitment of talented faculty and students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective identification of relevant and sustainable research lines</td>
<td>Consistent stream of peer-reviewed publications</td>
<td>Competitiveness in NINR, NIMHD &amp; NIA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Development of research skills of faculty</td>
<td>Substantial preliminary data to support R01 proposals</td>
<td>RIG development into strong research programs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attainment of pilot support via institutional mechanisms</td>
<td>PhD Program in Nursing.</td>
<td>Attainment of grant support beyond NIH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pilot research to support sustainable research lines</td>
<td>Student-led research</td>
<td>P20, P30 grant proposal submissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer-reviewed journal publications</td>
<td>R21, R01, K, F grant attainment</td>
<td>Center of Research Excellence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small grant proposal submissions</td>
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</table>

### External Factors
- Availability of institutional research infrastructure
- Availability of external research opportunities
- Changes in regional research and clinical needs
- Increased academic competitiveness within the region
- Availability of funds generated through the NHCLI

### Evaluation
- # of granted proposals
- Funding dollars
- # of T/TT faculty
- Pilots awarded
- PhD program
- Conferences held
- # of grant submissions
- # of peer-reviewed publications
- # of established RIGs