

# HISTORY

The Yale School of Nursing has been a leader in professional nursing education since its founding in 1923, helmed by Annie Goodrich, who was not only the school's first dean but also the first female dean at Yale. The Yale approach to nursing education was transformational for the profession. What had always been an apprenticeship model became a true academic-educational model that commanded respect for its graduates as people trained in established principles of care as well as the underlying knowledge of human anatomy and physiology.

Yale once again led by admitting only college graduates after 1934. A college degree had not previously been a prerequisite for pursuing a nursing education. Fifteen years later, an advanced program in mental health nursing was added to the basic program. In 1952, the school became coeducational when the first male student was admitted.

In 1952, the Yale Corporation decided that the university could contribute to nursing most effectively through a graduate program for nurses who had both basic professional preparation and a baccalaureate degree. The baccalaureate nursing degree program was discontinued in 1956, and the curriculum of the advanced program was expanded to prepare nurses in psychiatric-mental health, maternal-newborn health, and community health nursing.

The educational program has continued to lead and evolve, reflecting the changing role of the nursing profession.

- Nurse-midwifery was an option in the Maternal-Newborn Health Program until 1972, when it became the total clinical component of the program. A Master of Science in Nursing degree was awarded to those who had successfully completed a minimum of one year's study, coupled with a summer field experience.
- A certificate in nurse-midwifery was also awarded by Yale University until 1972, when national certification by the American College of Nurse-Midwives was instituted.
- In 1959–1960, a revised curriculum of two years of study leading to the master's degree was inaugurated. The curriculum was further expanded in 1969 to include pediatric nursing and again in 1974 to include medical-surgical nursing.
- In September 1992, a specialty was added in nursing systems and policy, then renamed nursing management and policy; that specialty was discontinued in 2003.
- From 2006 to 2015, the curriculum included a specialty in nursing management, policy, and leadership to prepare leaders in the management of delivery systems that promote patient safety and quality of care.
- In April 1997, the Yale Corporation approved the post-master's certificate for advanced practice nurses seeking additional specialty preparation. The first certificates were awarded at the May 1997 commencement exercises.
- In April 1970, the corporation approved the development of a three-year curriculum for college graduates from other fields, a program of study now known as the Graduate Entry Pre-Specialty in Nursing (GEPN). The first class of twelve enrolled in the fall of 1974.

- In November 1992, the corporation approved the development of a Doctor of Nursing Science program. The first class was admitted and enrolled in September 1994; and the first graduates were awarded the D.N.Sc. in June 1998.
- In 2006, the corporation approved the program's conversion from the Doctor of Nursing Science to a Doctor of Philosophy, awarded by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. The first Ph.D. class was admitted and enrolled in September 2006. In April 2011, the corporation approved the development of a Doctor in Nursing Practice program. The first class of D.N.P. students was admitted and enrolled in September 2012.
- In spring 2020, the Board of Permanent Officers approved three new programs: a Clinical D.N.P. program, a Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Acute Care specialty in the M.S.N. program, and a Post-Master's Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Acute Care Certificate option.
- As approved by the Board of Permanent Officers, the school launched the Online PMHNP program in the summer of 2023 with its first cohort of students. As a three-year part-time program, students will be enrolled each term.

## COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020, the the school, along with the rest of the world, shut its doors as the globe faced the COVID-19 pandemic. In a matter of days, faculty, staff, and students pivoted to online teaching, learning, and working. Didactic learning as well as simulation experiences took place remotely, and clinical experiences were cancelled until fall 2020. The Class of 2020 was celebrated in a virtual ceremony, a first for the university, and many traditions were cancelled due to the pandemic.

Faculty and staff took the lessons learned from the spring term, and some in-person learning was able to resume in the fall 2020 term. Students were able to engage in clinical education again. Testing, quarantining, and personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements became the norm, and simulation experiences were created and executed while maintaining physical distancing in smaller groups. Many faculty and students worked at the bedside caring for COVID-19 patients, while maintaining their teaching and learning requirements.

As a community, YSN responded in multiple ways to support the an overwhelmed health care system. More than three hundred students, faculty, and staff volunteered to be part of surge-capacity support for local health systems. YSN developed a text-message-based survey to track local health care workers exposed to and/or diagnosed with COVID-19, including individuals' estimated return-to-work dates. This tool helped local health systems plan for workforce needs as the cases in and around New Haven also continued to climb.

In parallel, the school worked with state and national partners, including credentialing agencies, to ensure that educational guidelines would permit nursing students, including advanced practice nurses, to continue their educational progression, utilize clinical simulation hours appropriately, sit for their boards, and join the health workforce at a time when their presence was urgently needed.

## ANTI-RACISM AT YSN

On June 18, 2020, the school released an initial antiracism plan in which Dean Ann Kurth acknowledged racism within YSN and apologized for the times YSN did not effectively address racism within the school.

The plan outlined several initial actions the school would undertake to restructure the academic learning and working environment so it was antiracist. In the months that followed, the school held structural competency training for an initial cohort, with more training planned; added diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging metrics to faculty and staff annual evaluations; began requiring preceptors to sign off on an antiracism statement; and undertook a major curriculum review that included antiracism and anti-oppression components.

A new position of associate dean for equity was created in November 2020. The Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion reports to the associate dean for equity. In September 2021, Angela Richard-Eaglin, D.N.P., M.S.N., FNP-BC, CNE, FAANP, CDE, joined YSN as the associate dean for equity.

In early 2021 the school asked Benjamin Reese, Psy.D., clinical psychologist and national diversity expert, to conduct a survey of diversity, equity, and systemic and structural race issues at the school. The primary purpose was to understand those issues from the perspective of faculty, staff, and students and to recommend steps YSN needs to take. The scope of work included individual interviews and discussions with administrators, three faculty focus groups, three student focus groups, and two staff focus groups. Dr. Reese delivered a report in March 2021 summarizing his findings, and providing eleven recommendations for a path forward.

This community self-reflection was a recommended step in the planning process outlined by Secretary and Vice President for University Life Kimberly Goff-Crews, with all schools and units at Yale required to have five-year plans to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion (DEI), and belonging. The school conducted a planning process that engaged all constituencies within the YSN community and implemented the plan in November 2021. The associate dean for equity and the director of the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion report quarterly on the plan's progress.