



Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation

Division of Professional Regulation

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Vice-Chairperson: Linda D. Taylor, PhD, RN, CNE

Linda D. Taylor, PhD, RN, CNE is an Assistant Professor at Northern Illinois University School of Nursing. Dr. Taylor has a background in oncology nursing and nursing education in the Midwest and Florida. As the Founding dean of nursing at the College of Menominee Nation in Keshena Wi, she was responsible for the development, implementation and evaluation of a cultural affirmation model of nursing and providing nursing education to American Indian peoples. She has also had the opportunity to testify before the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. Following that appointment, she accepted a position in Miami, Florida, with a student demographic that was a Hispanic majority. Dr. Taylor's administrative academic focus has been on increasing access and increasing the number of underserved populations in the nursing profession.

Dr. Taylor earned a bachelor's and a bachelor's in nursing from Rockford College, a master's degree in nursing from Northern Illinois University and a Ph.D. in Nursing from University of Wisconsin Milwaukee. She was the youngest recipient of the Distinguished Alumni Award from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in 2016. She has served in two fellowships, the Robert Woods Johnson Nurse Executive Fellows and Leadership America.

Dr. Taylor's experience in nursing education has led to a research focus in nursing workforce and education. Her work continues as nursing education is moving towards an evidence base for nursing education.

Lynda Bartlett, MS/MBA, RN

Lynda Bartlett is currently a Case Manager Lead at the University of Chicago Medicine. She also serves on the Institutional Review Board (IRB), Nursing Research Committee and the Nurse Residency Advisory Board at the University of Chicago. She earned her Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing (BSN) from Saint Xavier University, Chicago, in 1986 and her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) with a focus in community health and nursing administration from Saint Xavier University in 1998. Also from Saint Xavier University, she earned her Master of Business degree (MS/MBA).

Lynda started her career as a staff nurse on a step-down cardiac telemetry unit and then moved to research. For seventeen years, she managed the Clinical Research Center (CRC) at the University of Chicago Medicine where she managed clinical staff who provided nursing care at the bedside to adult and pediatric patients participating in physician initiated studies. This research encompassed both inpatient and outpatient areas of endocrinology, pulmonary, surgery, psychiatry, sleep medicine, rheumatology and transplant.

Lynda is also adjunct nursing faculty at Saint Xavier University where she acts as a clinical instructor for the Nursing Care of Adult Practicum and Leadership Capstone. She participates in simulation and provides hands-on experiences to nursing students whose patients have complex disease processes. Lynda has served on the adjunct faculty council and the alumni board at Saint Xavier University. She also has experience in the outpatient setting where she has acted as a triage nurse in a variety of specialty areas that include endocrinology, general internal medicine, nephrology, rheumatology, dermatology and dermatology surgery. Finally, Lynda is actively involved with Sigma

Theta Tau International and is the current Region 5 Coordinator of North America that includes over 30 chapters from Illinois and Missouri.

Laura W. Bernaix, Ph.D., R.N.

Dr. Bernaix is Dean, and Professor, in the School of Nursing at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE). She has practiced in Maternal-Newborn nursing for 40 years, with the last 31 years devoted to teaching in that same focus area. Prior to becoming Dean, her positions at SIUE include faculty, Department Chair of Primary Care and Health Systems Nursing, Associate Dean for Academic Programs, and Interim Dean. Dr. Bernaix received her Ph.D. in Nursing from Saint Louis University, a Master's in Parent-Child Nursing from University of Evansville in Evansville, Indiana, and her B.S. degree in Nursing from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville.

Dr. Bernaix has received national, regional, and state grants for her research and teaching projects, and several awards for her work. Her program of research focuses on breastfeeding promotion, in which she has examined the nurse's role in support of the breastfeeding family in both the healthy term, and at risk, preterm infant populations. Dr. Bernaix's studies have included testing interventions designed to improve nurses' breastfeeding knowledge and support, as well as specific paternal support measures to promote positive breastfeeding outcomes in the NICU setting. Her authored research instruments are widely used by other researchers in similarly focused studies. Dr. Bernaix has presented her work at international and national conferences, and published in various professional journals.

Dr. Bernaix was a Co-PI for the NIH National Children's Study from 2009-2013. She is a Fellow in the AACN Leadership for Academic Nursing Program and served on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing from 2009 - 2016. She served on the Research Advisory Panel of the national Association of Women's Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nursing from 2007-2017. Dr. Bernaix serves as a reviewer for two maternal-newborn nursing journals. She is active in several organizations including the Illinois Association of Colleges of Nursing (IACN), American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), and the Missouri March of Dimes Nurse of the Year Executive Committee and Co-Chair. She is a member of AACN's University Government Relations Collaborative. She also serves on the Board of Trustees for Anderson Hospital in Maryville, IL.

Susan Edamala, RN, MSN, CCDS, CCRN (Alum)

Susan Edamala is a Clinical Nurse consultant for Clinical Documentation Improvement (CDI) at the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System (UIHHSS). She was trained in the Indian Army and has worked as a Nurse in India, the Middle East and the United States. She received her BSN from Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, India and her Masters in Nursing in Clinical Leadership and Management from North Park University, Chicago, IL. She is a member of Indian Nurses Association of Illinois, National Association of Indian Nurses of North America, Association of Clinical Documentation Specialist and Sigma Theta Tau International.

Susan was instrumental in starting a new CDI department at the University of Illinois Hospital and Health Sciences System in Chicago. She has also worked as a visiting professor at Chamberlain College of Nursing and Adjunct Faculty at North Park University, Chicago, Illinois. Susan was recently recognized by the Cook County Treasurers Office for her distinguished service to the Indian community.

Susan is a born leader and a role model for her peers. She was the secretary of her college in 1990 during her BSN course at Armed Forces Medical College, Pune, India. She was the certification champion for CCRN during her work in the ICU. She was the Sevika Sangham secretary of her Church, convener for the World Day of Prayer in March 2017. She is an active member of the women's forum of the Ecumenical Council of Kerala Churches in Chicago. Susan is an active member of the Pravin Action council, a community organization that fought for Justice for Parvin's wrongful death.

Susan is proud to be a nurse and upholds the values of nursing. She practices autonomy in her everyday practice and advocates following the ANA Code of Ethics with her students and peers. She believes that the “Profession of Nursing” is a blessing to humanity. She does all in her power to uphold her profession by being a good example to the community. She motivates friends and family members to take up nursing as their profession and is currently striving hard to make the unsuccessful candidates of NCLEX® by giving them one-on-one coaching. She sees the value of the nursing profession in the society and help to educate the public regarding the importance of the nursing profession in her day to day encounters.

Carmen C. Hovanec MSN, RN

Carmen Hovanec is an Assistant Instructor at Chamberlain College of Nursing, Chicago Campus. Ms. Hovanec is a 1981 graduate of Saint Mary of Nazareth School of Nursing. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from De Paul University in 1988 and her Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) from Lewis University in 2003, where her graduate work focused on decreasing the gap between theory and practice.

A professional nurse for over three decades, she has experience as a staff nurse, mentor, preceptor, educator, administrator and consultant. She supports and mentors nursing students in the Chicago area.

Carmen is active in many community and professional organizations including the Illinois Center for Nursing Advisory Board, Council of Catholic Nurses of the Archdiocese of Chicago (CCNAC), Association for Nursing Professional Development (ANPD), Chicago Area Nursing Staff Development Organization (CANSDO), American Nurses Association (ANA), ANA-Illinois, De Paul University Department of Nursing Alumni Association, National Association of Hispanic Nurses (NAHN), NAHN-Illinois Chapter, National League of Nursing (NLN), Norwegian American Hospital Board of Trustees, March of Dimes Latino Advisory Council, and Zeta Sigma and Phi Pi Chapters of Sigma Theta Tau International.

Ms. Hovanec is one of the founders CANSDO. She was elected as the First President and a scholarship has been endowed in her name – the Carmen Hovanec Scholarship.

Krista Jones, DNP, MSN, PHNA-BC, RN

Dr. Krista Jones is Director of the UIC College of Nursing’s Urbana Regional Campus and a Clinical Associate Professor in the Department of Health Systems Sciences. Dr. Jones is a board certified Advanced Public Health Nurse. At UIC she has completed a Doctorate in Nursing Practice degree (2011), a Master’s degree in Advanced Community Health Nursing (2007), a Post-Master’s degree in Nursing Administration and Leadership (2009) and a Teaching Certificate in Nursing Education (2008). For the last 12 years, Dr. Jones has instructed undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students enrolled in Population Focused Nursing, EBP, Professionalism, and Leadership and Management courses.

Dr. Jones is the author of numerous publications. Her research interests include the development, implementation and evaluation of interventions to reduce risky behaviors among adolescents and young adults, public health nursing workforce issues and strategies to enhance the delivery of Nursing Education. Dr. Jones has presented her research at the Association of Community Health Nurse Educators, Midwest Nursing Research Society (MNRS), Sigma Theta Tau, and American Public Health Nursing Association (APHA) annual conferences.

Dr. Jones has held several leadership positions in local, regional and national nursing and public health organizations. She currently serves as Secretary of the national Association of Community Health Nurse Educators, President of the Champaign County Board of Health, Section Councilor of the Public Health Nursing Section of the APHA and recent chair of both the Adolescent Health and the Public Health nursing research sections of MNRS. She also serves as member of the Carle Foundation Hospital Nursing Research Advisory Board, the Urbana School Health Center Board of Advisors, and the Illinois Public Health Nurse/Academic Practice Partnership Workgroup.

Dr. Jones research has been recognized locally by Carle Foundation Hospital, statewide by the Illinois Public Health Association, and regionally by two different Research Sections of the Midwest Nursing Research Society -- Public Health and Adolescent Health. Additionally, she has received the Sigma Theta Tau Alpha Lambda Chapter Nursing Recognition Award, the Urbana Faculty Excellence Award and two Silver Circle Awards for teaching excellence at UIC. She is also a 2012 recipient of the Illinois Board of Higher Education Nursing Faculty Fellowship.

Marsha Prater, Ph.D., RN, NEA-BC, FACHE

Marsha Prater, PhD, RN, is the Senior Vice President of Patient Services and Chief Nursing Officer of Memorial Health System (MHS) in Springfield IL. She oversees the integration of the MHS mission, vision, values and strategic goals into the daily operations and patient care delivery across the organization which includes four acute care hospitals, a home services division, a regional behavioral health network, and 80+ primary care practices. Dr. Prater brings over 35 years of nursing and leadership experience to the Board. She has been with Memorial since 1990, initially serving as the administrator for Oncology Services until assuming her current role in 1992. Prior to coming to Memorial, Dr. Prater was an assistant professor of surgery and a staff nurse at SIU School of Medicine and a medical-surgical staff nurse at St John's Hospital.

Dr. Prater holds adjunct faculty positions at Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University, Southern Illinois University - Edwardsville (SIUE) School of Nursing and SIU School of Medicine. She also serves on the Advisory Committee of the Benedictine University Department of Nursing and Health.

Dr. Prater received her bachelor's degree from Illinois Wesleyan University. She obtained her master's and doctorate degrees from Southern Illinois University. She is a fellow in the American College of Healthcare Executives (FACHE) and holds ANCC certification as a nurse executive advanced-board certified (NEA-BC). She is also a member of several professional nursing and healthcare leadership organizations, including IONL, AONE, and Sigma Theta Tau International.

Theresa E. Towle, DNP, FNP-BC, CNRN

Dr. Theresa Towle is a Family Nurse Practitioner and an Assistant Professor at the University of St. Francis in Joliet, Illinois, where she also serves as the Director of the Family Nurse Practitioner program. She has held previous academic appointments with Loyola University Chicago and Rush University, Chicago, Illinois. Clinically, she practices on an as-needed basis with the Indian Health Service in Northern Arizona, providing care for the Native American tribes in and around the Grand Canyon and surrounding Mohave desert.

Dr. Towle's clinical experience is in family practice with additional expertise in advanced pain management, neurology and neurosurgery. However, she has had experience working with most of the medical specialties throughout her vast nursing career.

Professionally, Dr. Towle has served on the Board of Directors for the Illinois Society for Advanced Practice Nursing and has served as the Outreach Director for the International Parkinson & Movement Disorder Society. Currently, she serves on the speakers' bureau for the American Association of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) and the Collaborative On REMS Education (CO*RE) series dedicated to educating nurse practitioners on opioid prescribing and abuse. Most recently, she has published a podcast through AANP on safe opioid prescribing for primary care providers. She is currently a member of the AANP, ISAPN, American Nurses Association and Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society for Nursing.

Dr. Towle graduated with her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Indiana University, Master of Science in Nursing from St. Xavier University, and Doctorate of Nursing Practice from Rush University, in Chicago, where she was successful in establishing a multi-disciplinary presence within an

international physician organization. She has also received a certificate in Clinical Trials Management from the University of Chicago.