Catherine Napoli Rice Ed.D., R.N.

Catherine Napoli Rice is a professor of nursing and chairperson of the department of nursing at Western Connecticut State University. She earned her Ed.D. from the University of Bridgeport, her M.S. from New York University, her B.S. from Hunter College CUNY and her A.S. in nursing from Rockland Community College. She has enjoyed a robust professional career in nursing that spans more than two decades. She began her nursing career in New York City at a major medical center in the critical care services department working on a surgical floor and burn step-down unit. She has held various leadership positions in the clinical setting and, as an academic, has developed her skills as an educator and researcher.

Program of Research and Scholarship

*Focus areas*

- Leadership in nursing education
- Mentoring of faculty
- Student support in nursing programs
- Simulation
- Disaster preparedness experiential learning

**Leadership and Mentoring**

The title of Dr. Napoli Rice’s dissertation was “An Investigation of Job Satisfaction and Need Satisfaction of Department of Chairpersons in the Connecticut State University System”. She received the ‘Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation’ from the University of Bridgeport School of Education and Human Resources, department of educational leadership. Several articles have been published from this work, and Dr. Rice has presented the findings at local and national educational conferences.

**Mentoring of Faculty**

Dr. Rice has a strong interest in mentoring faculty members. One research study she participated in with colleagues involved the examination of factors that facilitated and inhibited writing and publishing in junior faculty members. This study was presented at the 38th biennial international Sigma Theta Tau conference. As WCSU nursing department chair, Dr. Rice has enjoyed implementing some of the finding to encourage the creation of a community of scholars.

**Student Support in Nursing Programs**
The concept of mentoring permeates much of Dr. Rice’s scholarly work. She is now implementing a study entitled “Big Brother, Big Sister” which focuses on peer-to-peer student support within the nursing program and its effect on student success. Selected students will act as peer tutors and mentors to sophomore students. Data will be collected both qualitatively and quantitatively. Anticipated results will be available in spring 2013.

**Simulation**

Dr. Rice contributed a book chapter titled “Tune into Simulation through Physical Examination” in the award-winning book, Simulation Scenarios for Nurse Educators: Making it REAL with WCSU nursing professor Dr. Robin Goodrich. This is an outgrowth of her work in teaching sophomore students the elements of physical examinations using simulation technology.

**Disaster Preparedness Experiential Learning**

Dr. Rice was invited to be in the leadership group of 40 medical and nursing professionals in Connecticut that planned and delivered an emergency response plan. The team was charged with organizing and executing a real-time exercise in response to a mock disaster. The disaster chosen was a pandemic influenza outbreak that would quickly overwhelm area hospitals and would cause chaos in the community. Dr. Rice directed graduate students in developing more than 200 simulated sick patient scenarios. She also coordinated and led the nursing team in researching, developing and delivering care.