

About Heather M. Young, PhD, RN, GNP, FAAN

Associate Vice Chancellor for Nursing



The University of California Board of Regents has approved the appointment of Heather Young, PhD, RN, GNP, FAAN, as Associate Vice Chancellor for Nursing at UC Davis. Once the proposed school of nursing is approved by the Board of Regents, she will also be the Dean of the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis. Dr. Young is a nurse leader, educator and scientist and is a nationally-recognized expert in gerontological nursing and rural health care.

Before joining UC Davis in 2008, Dr. Young was the Grace Phelps Distinguished Professor, director of Rural Health Research Development, and director of the John A. Hartford Center of Geriatric Nursing Excellence at the Oregon Health and Science University School of Nursing. She is a fellow in the prestigious American Academy of Nursing.

Dr. Young is a UC Davis alumna, graduating in 1981 with a bachelor's degree in dietetics. She later earned an associate degree in nursing from Sacramento City College and a bachelor's of science in nursing degree from Southern Oregon State College. She then went on to the University of Washington, where she earned a master of nursing degree with a specialty in gerontology and a doctorate in nursing science.

Dr. Young's extensive research has focused on environments that promote healthy aging, with a particular focus on the interface between family and formal health-care systems for older adults. She has played an instrumental role in shaping long-term care policies in Washington state and beyond through her evaluation research. In addition, she has been a co-investigator on several longitudinal studies of family caregiving, one of which explored long-term care decision-making and caregiving among Japanese-American families. Her current research focuses on the medication management and safety in rural, assisted-living settings, technological approaches to promoting medication safety in rural hospitals and community-based strategies to promote health for rural older adults. She has published more than two dozen studies and secured millions of dollars in grant support.

Teaching has been an integral component of Dr. Young's career at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, contributing to clinical, theory, research, and gerontological courses. She also has regularly participated in community education, bringing the academic perspective to the general public and health-care providers in the field. At the Oregon Health and Science University, Dr. Young was a member of the regional doctoral faculty and has taught using distance technology, and advised students in distant locations in Washington, Alaska, Montana, and Utah.

Postgraduate student mentorship has also been a major part of Dr. Young's teaching activity. She mentored five doctoral students for pre-doctoral training and one post-doctoral fellow in the John A. Hartford Foundation's Geriatric Nursing Initiative to build academic geriatric nursing capacity. She has served as mentor/advisor for 18 doctorate students, six post-doctoral fellows and 20 masters' students. Dr.

Young developed and taught a doctoral course on policy in gerontology, with the core goal of exploring how research can inform and shape public policy.

At Oregon Health and Science University, Dr. Young was a leader in the graduate programs, having served in the past five years as a member of the Advanced Practice Nursing Leadership group, the Graduate Council, the doctoral faculty, and the Doctoral Admissions and Progressions Committee. These groups oversee their respective programs and develop policy for graduate programs. She directed the Gerontological Nurse Practitioner program and led the redesign of the program into a post-master's certificate in Advanced Practice Gerontological Nursing.

In addition to her extensive academic and research background, Dr. Young also has experience as a hospital nurse practicing in critical care and as a nurse practitioner in community-based long-term care. For more than a decade, Dr. Young held a joint appointment on faculty at the University of Washington School of Nursing and as the Chief Operations Officer for a retirement community company and was responsible for an academic-corporate partnership managing and designing programs in independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing.