

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY EDWARDSVILLE

School of Nursing, Alumni Hall, Room 2333, PO Box 1066
Edwardsville, IL 62026-1066

August 1, 2006

Dear

As of the writing of this letter to you, there are only twenty days until the beginning of the new academic year! In the fall term you will "officially" begin your professional nursing specialty courses. You will be caring for real patients in real clinical situations. All those pathological conditions you studied in pathophysiology, all those drugs you had to learn, and of course all the skills and procedures you studied in your fundamentals and physical assessment courses will now be applied in the clinical setting. This will be a very exciting time for you. It will also be intense. Each of you is assigned to a faculty mentor. There will be those moments during your clinical courses and practica that you will feel overwhelmed. This is a perfect time to pay your mentor a visit and discuss what you're enjoying about your rotations and what you are finding stressful. At one time your mentor was a student as well and will definitely be able to relate to your experience and help you deal with it. This will also be a good time to start to explore with your mentor what your senior research/project will be. It will be much more advantageous for you to start thinking about your project in your junior year rather than wait until your senior year.

Dedication to the Profession

It is important to mark significant milestones in your academic career. Graduation for example is one of these milestones. Starting your clinical rotations and specialty courses in your Junior year is a notable event. The School of Nursing faculty believe it is important to celebrate this event, marking it as a milestone through the Dedication to the Profession ceremony. When I was a student nurse, it was called the "capping" ceremony as the nursing students received their nursing caps at this event. Today nurses no longer wear caps. However, the ceremony is no less symbolic and beautiful. The Dedication to the Profession is an opportunity for you to come together with your family and friends so they may witness your entry into professional practice. The ceremony which takes place on Sunday, September 17th in the Meridian Ballroom of Morris University Center in the early afternoon is comprised of one of your classmates and a faculty of your choice testifying as to why they have chosen to be a nurse. Students are then invited to process across the stage to receive your student nurse pin. The ceremony is concluded with the recitation of the Nightingale pledge, your commitment to the nursing profession. After a formal picture a refreshment social will follow for you and your family. I wanted to apprise you of this ceremony before school starts. This will give you the opportunity to advise your family and friends of this event so that they can be present to celebrate this milestone with you. Please set this date aside. Attire will be your student nurse uniform with your lab coats and clean, white shoes. More details about this event will be discussed with you when you return to school. I look forward to seeing all of you at the Dedication to the Profession ceremony on September 17th!

Student Governance

This year Mr. Held will be initiating a new structure to insure that you all have voice in the School of Nursing. Each class (Sophomore, Junior, Senior etc) will be organized into a governance structure with class officers. The President of the class will automatically be a member of the Dean's Advisory Council. There will be regular class meetings. It is hoped that this will provide you with even more voice in matters that relate to you. Nursing is a profession dedicated to serving others. I hope that each class will take on a project that is aimed at helping others less fortunate or able. Nursing homes, schools, special programs such as head start, and foundations focused on special health care needs such as the lupus foundation, or asthma foundation etc all need help to make the lives of the people they serve better. You already have a wealth of information and talents to share with individuals who have needs. Each class will be challenged to choose an organization to assist. If you have an interest in becoming an officer for your class, please advise Mr. Held of that fact.

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School of Nursing Changes

Over the summer two network computers and a printer were put in the Student Lounge on the School of Nursing floor. You are free to use these for printing off your NURSING papers or reading and responding to your email. In addition, the photocopier machine is also free for your use. I ask that you use it for your OWN classes and not to photocopy things for your friends in the history or art department or whatever other program outside of nursing they may be in. Our student enrollment has increased remarkably while the budget to run the school has not increased at the same rate. So, we are trying to cut back where we can this year. One area where we can save considerable money so that it can be used to teach the classes, is in supplies. The School of Nursing is the only unit on campus that provides free photocopy for the students. However, in the Fall term we will have 700+ students in the school of nursing. If each student photocopied just ten pages a week that would be 7,000 sheets of paper a week. In actuality, the paper usage by the students is much greater than that. Beginning this fall I have instituted a cost saving measure whereby 10 boxes of paper (that is 10 reams in each box, or 5,000 sheets of paper per box) will be purchased for the photocopier machine in the Fall and the same amount again in the Spring term. However, when the paper allotment for each term is used up, no more will be purchased. Students who wish to use the free photocopier machine will need to buy their own reams of paper (approximately \$5.60 or less at Office Max for 500 sheets of paper) to use in the machine. The SON extends free photocopy to its students as a favor. All SIUE students in other majors pay for photocopying. We will continue to supply the ink cartridges for the photocopier machine and for the printer for the computers in the lounge. Given the fact that there will not be unlimited supplies of paper this year for photocopying I suggest that each of you exercise some restraint in the use of the machine. I would appreciate it greatly.

Enjoy the last few weeks of your summer hiatus. When you return for the fall term, one of our first School of Nursing events will be the Nursing Heritage Walk for Scholarships on Saturday, September 16th. Mark your calendars and join us for a fun morning followed by a lunch. We all look forward to your beginning your nursing specialty courses and practica with us. You will be receiving a superior nursing education. After all, we must live up to our reputation as being the "Nursing Gem of Southern Illinois!"

Sincerely,



Marcia C. Maurer, PhD, RN
Dean & Professor, Nursing
Robert Wood Johnson Executive Nurse Fellow