About the School

The University of Hawaii at Manoa Nancy Atmospera-Walch School of Nursing (NAWSON) is the premier nursing and dental hygiene school in the State of Hawaii. Located on the UH Manoa campus, the only doctoral/research university-intensive institution in Hawaii, we are dedicated to improving health through education, research, and service. The NAWSON provides instructional, clinical and research activities to enhance the health and care of diverse populations in the State of Hawaii and the Asia-Pacific region.

Nursing History

- 1932 – Nursing education began at the University of Hawaii at Manoa with a one-year public health nursing program for graduates of hospital schools of nursing.
- 1944 – A Bachelor of Science degree was offered in public health nursing and nursing education.
- 1951 – The School of Nursing, under the College of Applied Science, was established by the legislature of the Territory of Hawaii.
- 1952 – The Hawaii Board of Nursing approved the BS in Nursing program for beginning students.
- 1956
  - The school received initial accreditation by the National League for Nursing.
  - The first BS in Nursing degrees were awarded.
- 1959 – The School of Nursing became an independent College of Nursing.
- 1965 – The Associate in Science in Nursing and the Master of Science in Nursing were established.
- 1966 – The College of Health Sciences and Social Welfare – made up of medicine, nursing and dental hygiene, and social work – was established to provide a coordinated interdisciplinary approach to the solution of problems
common to the fields.

- 1992 – The last Associate of Science degree students at UH Manoa graduated.
- 1993 – The primary care nurse practitioner specialty options including the family nurse practitioner were established in the graduate program.
- 1998 – The PhD in Nursing was established.
- 2000 – The School received initial accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education*. The nursing programs at UH Manoa were the first and only in the state to received accreditation by two nursing educational accrediting agencies.
- 2002 – An accelerated “fast-track” nursing pathway was piloted for beginning nursing students with a prior Bachelor degree.
- 2003 – The Hawaii State Legislature established the Hawaii State Center for Nursing.
- 2004 – Simulated learning experiences began with undergraduate nursing students.
- 2005
  - The PhD in Nursing program was offered online after receiving approval by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.
  - The Hawaii State Center for Nursing began operation.
- 2006 – The UH Nursing Consortium agreed to establish a statewide undergraduate nursing curriculum.
- 2008
  - The first cohort of the Master’s Entry Program in Nursing (MEPN) – now known as the Graduate Entry Program in Nursing (GEPN) – was admitted.
  - The Veteran’s Affairs Nursing Academy was established.
- 2009 – IKE AO PONO celebrated its 100th Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island graduate.
- 2010 – The UH Statewide Nursing Consortium offered its first undergraduate nursing courses.
• 2011 – The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master’s degree program in nursing, and Doctor of Nursing Practice program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (http://www.ccneaccreditation.org). UH Manoa Nursing received full ten-year accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

• 2012
  • The UH Translational Health Science Simulation Center (an 8,000 sq. ft. renovation) opened.
  • The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program and the Executive RN to BS Program was established.

• 2014
  • The UH Deans of the Schools of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, Medicine, and Social Work (within which is the Office of Public Health Studies) executed a MOU to create the Health Sciences Deans’ Council. The Council provides the framework for continued engagement across teaching and research. In 2017, the UH Hilo Daniel K. Inouye College of Pharmacy and the UH Cancer Center joined the Deans’ Council.
  • The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program received full accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education*.
  • The University of Hawaii Translational Health Science Simulation Center received full accreditation in the areas of teaching/education by the Society for Simulation in Healthcare.
  • The Veterans to BS Program was established.
  • The UH Manoa Nursing Alumni Association established an endowed scholarship.
  • Hawaii Keiki: Healthy and Ready to Learn was created in partnership with the Hawaii Department of Education to improve student and school academic success by addressing health needs.

• 2015 – The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program
expanded and enrolled the first class of Family Nurse Practitioner and Adult-Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner students.

- 2016 – The School celebrated the 60th anniversary of the first Bachelor of Science graduates with the Sensational 60th Anniversary Gala event. The School and Alumni Association inducted six alumni into the UH Manoa Nursing Hall of Fame.

- 2018 – The School and Alumni Association launched the Outstanding Young Alumni award.

- 2019 – The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master’s degree program in nursing, and Doctor of Nursing Practice program at the University of Hawaii at Manoa is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (http://www.ccneaccreditation.org). The three degree programs received full ten-year accreditation through December 31, 2029.

Dental Hygiene History

- 1931 – Dental hygiene education at the University of Hawaii at Manoa began with a four to five year curricula as part of the Teacher’s College, where graduates received both a Bachelor’s in Education and a 5th Year Certificate.

- 1961 – The dental hygiene program joined the College of Nursing and offered a Certificate in Dental Hygiene upon completion of a two-year curriculum.

- 1976 to 1983 – The Department of Dental Hygiene offered baccalaureate education as a Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies-Dental Hygiene.

- 1983 – The Bachelor of Science in Dental Hygiene was established.
School History

- 2000 – The School of Nursing changed its name to reflect the contribution of both departments to health sciences education and is now known as the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene.