

A Message from the Dean

PUBLISHED ON 06/10/2018 BY [SARAH SCHAUB](#)



Dean Joyce Griffin-Sobel

This issue of Focus on Nursing is largely centered on the research conducted by some faculty in the College of Nursing.

One of the goals in our Strategic Plan is to increase not only

the amount of research being conducted, but also to dramatically increase support for faculty to do that research. We are expanding the assistance we provide in the research office for grant writing, and we are initiating an external research mentorship program. In the latter example, researchers from across the country will be working directly with our faculty to develop collaborations, and to increase their abilities to receive large grant awards.

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As a profession, the need for clinically important research could not be greater, as our nation struggles with chronic disease, health disparities, and mental health issues.

For example, we have been encouraging patients to use mobile health apps on their phones for some time now, but as the evidence rolls in, the results are disappointing.

A recent guideline from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality stated that mobile health apps have little impact on patient management of their diabetes. Of the 11 apps studied, only a few showed clinically significant improvements in A1C, and none showed any effect on patients' blood pressure, weight, or quality of life. All of the cited studies had methodological issues that compromised the results.

Much more research is needed to determine what helps a person change behavior – in their diet, their activity or in risky lifestyle patterns. Nurse researchers have the clinical know-how, the patient access, and the scientific knowledge to conduct studies that can answer some of these questions and help countless people as a result.

Similar questions can be asked about why so many people aren't screened for colon cancer, a preventable cancer. Every year, thousands of people are diagnosed at a late stage of colon cancer, particularly in populations of color, and in many instances, an earlier diagnosis would have made the difference.

As we expand our research efforts within the College of Nursing, and collaborate across the University and country, I'm sure our faculty will continue to contribute to clinical solutions for problems affecting our citizens. I hope you will join us in supporting that effort.

Joyce Griffin-Sobel, PhD, RN, ANEF, FAAN, Dean, WSU

[NIH-funded research up significantly at College of Nursing](#)

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