The University of Florida College of Public Health and Health Professions was the first college of its kind located within a health center, and it quickly became a prototype for health professions education.

Today, the College of Public Health and Health Professions enrolls more than 1,700 students. U.S. News and World Report graduate school rankings place the college's graduate and professional programs among the nation's best. College researchers have generated more than $16 million in research grants in the past year, putting the college first in the nation in National Institutes of Health funding for colleges of health professions.

Just as the college developed the concept of a unique health college 50 years ago, the College of Public Health and Health Professions is the leader of a new education model, one that integrates public health and health professions disciplines. This novel approach pairs the community-based focus associated with public health with expertise in chronic conditions and individual patient care, opening up new opportunities for collaboration that will continue to impact health education and the nation's health in the years to come.
The country’s first college of health professions

It would be a health center, not just a medical center.

That was the promise made by then-University of Florida president J. Hillis Miller to Darrel Mase, Ph.D., and the concept that convinced Mase to leave New Jersey and develop a new college at UF.

The college Mase and his colleagues developed, the College of Health Related Services, became the first college of its kind and a prototype for colleges of health professions.

“He (Miller) referred to a health center, not to a medical center,” said Mase in a 1977 speech. “A health center’s a much better deal than a medical center because it encompasses prevention and health, well-being and keeping people healthy, as well as taking care of those who are sick and dying.”

Mase, who previously served as a professor of education and director of the speech clinic at New Jersey State Teachers College, arrived at UF in 1950 as coordinator of the Florida Center of Clinical Services, which offered vocational counseling, speech and hearing services, a reading laboratory, corrective exercise treatments and marriage and family counseling.

Mase was also a consultant for “Planning Florida’s Health Leadership,” a five-volume report, which among other recommendations for establishing a health center at UF, detailed the need for “integration and coordination of allied health programs of training, research, service and prevention with other programs in the health center.”

As plans for the UF Health Science Center took shape, Mase spent many hours researching the state’s need for health professionals. He discovered that no other academic programs for occupational therapy existed in the Southeast, and the nearest physical therapy program was located at Duke University.

UF’s concept of a college of health professions drew attention from the father of rehabilitation medicine, Howard Rusk, M.D. In a 1953 New York Times column Rusk praised the Florida Center of Clinical Services.

“Although other universities throughout the nation have some or all of these services, there is no other in which these various skills and disciplines are blended together to provide a total approach to human problems,” Rusk wrote.

But while the concept was gaining national attention, Mase still struggled to garner support within the university.

In his 1977 speech Mase recalled a conversation with an associate dean in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

“He said ‘Now Darrel, we’re not going to have programs like medical technology and physical therapy in this university.’ And I said, ‘What’s wrong with those programs?’ ‘Well,’ he said, ‘they’re just not up to our standards.’ And I tossed over to him curriculum for medical technology and one for physical therapy and I said, ‘What’s wrong with these?’ And he said ‘Oh my God, you can’t get anybody in those courses. Those are rougher than some of our own.’”

Sam Martin, M.D., a former provost for health affairs, said in a 1984 interview: “It was not easy because the university in many areas was against this. Darrel was the prophet without honor in his own home. The medical faculty would have been much happier for physical therapy to have been in orthopedics, like it is in many medical schools.”

Despite these hurdles, the College of Health Related Services opened its doors in 1958 and in 1965 John Gardner, the U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, testified before a congressional committee that the college should become a model for the nation. Within 15 years of the college’s founding, more than 70 similar colleges of health professions had been established in the United States.

At the time of his retirement as dean in 1971, Mase was still advocating for interdisciplinary collaboration across the health and medical professions.

“Too many of our efforts to change are thwarted by the hypothesis that change must be made by disturbing present institutions and various health occupations and professions as little as possible,” he said. “This premise permits little or no change. Perhaps we need to assume we have no health care system, determine what it should be and then determine how to get there.”
Legacy of leadership The college’s past deans

Darrel J. Mase, Ph.D.
Dean 1958-1971
“Whatever position allied health occupies on the national scene it owes to Darrel Mase’s courageous leadership. He literally charted the unknown. His presence and influence will continue to affect the University of Florida and the nation in the health field for many years to come.”
—Joseph Hamburg, M.D., president, Association of Schools of Allied Health Professions, 1971

Howard K. Suzuki, Ph.D.
Dean 1971-1979
“Dr. Suzuki came to the University of Florida as associate dean, well qualified to offer the college new ideas and direction in preparing students in the varied health professions which today are gaining in stature as important elements in comprehensive health care.”
—Edmund Ackell, M.D., UF vice president for health affairs, 1971

Richard R. Gutekunst, Ph.D.
Dean 1980-1995
“Richard Gutekunst has exhibited a spirit of dedication to the entire Health Science Center and the university. He also has provided policy leadership at the national level for the allied health professions — making him a resident expert on health manpower issues for Florida. Our state has benefited from his leadership in this arena, such as through his three-year tenure as president of the Florida Alliance of 100 Plus for Health Care Manpower.”
—David Challoner, M.D., UF vice president for health affairs, 1995

Robert G. Frank, Ph.D.
Dean 1995-2007
“Bob’s leadership was absolutely crucial to taking on the challenge of expanding our public health initiative. Doing something of that magnitude is daunting. It requires a college’s faculty to get outside their comfort zone to look toward the future of what the college could be. Bob was able to communicate that exciting vision and he had the stamina and perseverance to stick to it and achieve the goal.”
—Douglas Barrett, M.D., UF senior vice president for health affairs, 2007

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

1958
College of Health Related Services

1964
College of Health Related Professions

1996
College of Health Professions

2003
College of Public Health and Health Professions

From manual ledgers and ditto machines to computers and cell phones, as well as the deans of the College of Public Health and Health Professions, Linda Stallings has worked with them all.

Stallings, who retired as the associate director for medical/health administration in February 2008, started as the dean’s secretary and watched her job change with each new dean.

“Changing deans is like changing positions,” Stallings said. “With each transition I was given more responsibility and learned what was going on in different areas of the college. It was the hard knocks route.”

Richard Gutekunst, Ph.D., guided the college through tough financial times after taking the reins of the college from Howard Suzuki, Ph.D., in 1980. Stallings in turn guided Gutekunst through technological changes during the 15 years they worked together.

“Thank heavens he was a quick learner as computers can be very frustrating,” she said.

Since Stallings began working for founding Dean Darrel Mase in 1972, she has been the “right-hand woman” for every PHHP dean, said Robert Frank, Ph.D., dean of the college from 1995 to 2007.

“For at least the last 27 years, she has been involved in every single important decision at the college,” he said. “Her ability to be calm, combined with her encyclopedic knowledge of the college and the university, make her indispensable to this place.”
In 1966, readers of The Center, the monthly newsletter of the University of Florida Health Science Center, got an inside look at the college’s educational programs.
Alice Jantzen started the Department of Occupational Therapy with five faculty members and three students — a heroic feat, considering only 25 occupational therapists practiced in Florida at that time, and there were no academic programs within 800 miles of the university.

Although resources were sparse, UF forged ahead and established its program to help meet the need for formally educated therapists who could work with World War II veterans with injuries, many of whom would go on to college and enter the workforce.

As with any fledgling program, the founding faculty members had to rise above a laundry list of obstacles and growing pains. As the department chair, Jantzen was asked to construct a four-year bachelor’s degree curriculum and clinical service program in six weeks — a challenge even by today’s standards. Lack of adequate classroom space and funding to accommodate growing class size — which increased by about seven students each year — were also some of the logistical hurdles facing faculty members.

Over the next 25 years the program became a model for similar programs seeking to help patients with disabilities relearn how to perform activities and participate in their communities.

Today, the Department of Occupational Therapy offers two master’s degrees and participates in the Ph.D. in rehabilitation science program. More than 200 new occupational therapists have graduated from the entry-level master’s in occupational therapy program, and the department has become nationally known for its research in aging and assistive technology.
A toddler bobbles forward. Her tiny fingers clutch a metal rail as she exercises her legs, step by step, with the assistance of metal braces and under the watchful eye of the physical therapist.

This scenario dominated the health professions landscape in the early 1950s when more than 20,000 people were diagnosed with polio each year. Physical therapists became sought after to provide rehabilitation to patients with polio and to thousands of veterans with disabilities. But at the time, there was only one option for Floridians who wanted to become trained therapists: travel more than 500 miles to Duke University, which housed the only physical therapy program in the Southeast.

Recognizing the need for both occupational and physical therapy education in Florida, Darrel Mase helped found the Department of Physical Therapy in the newly established College of Health Related Services in 1958.

Within the next decade, the department saw rapid growth in enrollment along with its share of challenges. As class size ballooned, professors got creative — literally. In 1965, Assistant Professor Fred Rutan made miniature models of physical therapy clinics to scale featuring “real” working equipment. Classes that were too large to tour the actual clinic studied the equipment in the models.

Fifty years later, students and faculty enjoy modern academic and research space in the college’s HPNP Complex. The department has one of the top physical therapy research programs in the nation with faculty conducting research in such areas as cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, functional motor control, muscle disuse and musculoskeletal disorders.

--

MILESTONES

- 1958 – First physical therapy program in Florida opens
- 1976 and 1977 – Department wins Minority Recruitment and Retention Award from American Physical Therapy Association
- 1985 – First advanced master’s in physical therapy program in Florida established
- 2005 – Doctor of Physical Therapy introduced

Founded: 1958
Founding Chair: Barbara White, M.A.
Former Chairs: Fred Rutan, M.S., William Gould, Ph.D., Martha Clendenin, Ph.D., Carl Kukulka, Ph.D.
Current Chair: Krista Vandeborne, Ph.D.
They were scientific fact-finders who performed life-saving analyses with modern diagnostic tools. When physicians needed urgent answers, they turned to medical technologists, the professionals behind the pipettes and test tubes immersed in laboratories. By the 1970s, the Department of Medical Technology encouraged a greater depth of scientific knowledge as new technology increasingly reduced the need for tests to be done “by hand.” The curriculum emphasized principles of laboratory medicine to prepare medical technologists to act in supervisory roles. UF’s medical technology graduates have gone on to serve as administrators, supervisors and clinical advisers responsible for teaching and mentoring young health professionals.

The Clinical and Community Dietetics program began as a nondegree internship program in 1968. Six years later, it gained “developmental accreditation” status from the American Dietetics Association. Students boasted a 93 percent first-time pass rate on national examinations, placing the program in the top 10 percent of dietetics programs nationwide.

The Medical Technology and Clinical and Community Dietetics programs closed in 1992, however dietetics training is still offered through the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences.

In 1972, 22 trainees began intensive training as UF’s first physician assistant students. The program, a joint effort between Santa Fe Community College and the College of Medicine, was the first of its kind in Florida. After 10 years at the College of Medicine, the Physician Assistant program transferred to the College of Health Related Professions in 1982. There it became a division under the Department of Health Services Administration before moving back to the College of Medicine in 1993.
A catastrophic injury, such as amputation or brain injury, can result in individuals and families facing significant challenges, including coping with the injury, re-learning a job and figuring out how to pay the medical bills. Graduate students in rehabilitation counseling are trained to have the answers. They coordinate services such as medical and psychological treatment, counseling, and job placement for people with disabilities, providing guidance and hope for those in need.

Before the 1954 Rehabilitation Act, there were few acceptable curriculum programs for rehabilitation counselors in the United States. College graduates entered the field from other specialties such as education or social service. After federal funds were authorized in 1955 to start university rehabilitation counseling programs, UF became the first university in the Southeast and among the first in the nation to provide graduate rehabilitation counseling education. The UF program soon became recognized nationwide as a leader in training rehabilitation counselors and reached top 10 status in the 1990s.

The Department of Rehabilitation Counseling admitted its first students in its temporary home in the College of Education and it joined the College of Health Related Services in 1959.

New initiatives in recent years have expanded the department’s research efforts. Faculty members now educate doctoral students in the college’s rehabilitation science program, and the addition of public health programs in social and behavioral sciences has added a new community health focus to departmental research. To reflect the breadth of the department, it was renamed the Department of Behavioral Science and Community Health in 2006.
Psychedelic rock, pop and Motown hits reigned the charts in 1968, but while teenagers enjoyed the music, University of Florida audiologists tested how blasting music at dances affected the teens’ hearing. The team led by Kenneth Pollock, Everett Scroggie and William Cutler found that the decibel levels reached during concerts and dances often matched the roar of jet engines, potentially giving teens the hearing of an elderly person by age 25.

Clinical research studies were the norm in the Department of Communicative Disorders, which housed a speech and hearing clinic. The department also provided graduate courses and offered clinical experience for students in the colleges of Health Related Professions, Medicine and Nursing and in the existing speech and hearing program at the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

Through these interdisciplinary partnerships, UF faculty members helped bring revolutionary advances to their patients, including new hearing aid technology and cochlear implants. When the first cochlear implant surgery was performed at Shands in 1985, UF audiologists and speech pathologists helped fine-tune speech processors in the device and taught patients how to overcome abnormal speech patterns. The department added a swallowing disorders program in 1984 to treat patients with swallowing problems caused by stroke, cancer, surgery or traumatic brain injury.

With the addition of the college’s interdisciplinary rehabilitation science Ph.D. program in the 1990s, the Department of Communicative Disorders began educating its first doctoral students, leading to a significant new emphasis on research.
Health programs at the University of Florida were often heralded as “firsts” in their fields. As the first program of its kind in the nation to offer doctoral training in clinical psychology, the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology was no exception.

The department traces its roots to the 1950s when, as a clinical service of the college, the clinical psychology program shared some teaching responsibilities with the psychology department in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Under this structure, faculty members emphasized research, but clinical training opportunities were scarce.

With the college’s establishment of the Department of Clinical Psychology in 1962, however, students were able to use psychology techniques while treating patients at the Health Science Center. At that time, most clinical psychology programs in the United States sent students to other locations for their clinical education. The UF program made it possible for students to be in direct contact with patients beginning in their first year and to learn about the settings in which they would later work.

When it came to marrying clinical and research techniques, the department led by example. In the 1960s and 1970s faculty members were on the leading edge of research in neuropsychology, pediatric psychology, vision and cognition, and community mental health. The department hosted a national conference on scientist-practitioner education in the 1990s that set standards for education and training that still define the field.

The Department of Clinical and Health Psychology continues its tradition of groundbreaking work, earning a spot as one of the top departments of its kind for research funding from the National Institutes of Health.

MILESTONES
- 1953 – Doctoral program receives its first accreditation
- 1963 – Internship program is first of its kind in Florida to receive accreditation
- 1976 – Clinical psychology Ph.D. transferred from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to the College of Health Related Professions
- 1988 – Department hosts first national conference in pediatric psychology research
University of Florida administrators realized the need for training in health administration when they searched for a new University Hospital and Clinics administrator but found few qualified candidates.

In the early 1960s, discussions led by UF President J. Wayne Reitz encouraged the creation of a program with an innovative, original curriculum developed across disciplines. As a result, a 12-member panel, including officials from Johns Hopkins and Dartmouth, developed the framework for a graduate program in health administration, which was established in 1964.

University Hospitals and Clinics administrators L.R. Jordan and Stuart Wesbury played important roles in the program’s formation and development. In a joint effort with the College of Business Administration, the College of Health Related Professions developed coursework focused on contemporary hospital management. An administrative residency gave students a practical look inside hospitals and health institutions.

By the late 1960s, the advent of Medicare and Medicaid — along with the complicated reimbursement practices of those and other health insurance programs — increased the demand for hospital administrators with quantitative and financial-management skills and made the need for such skills a permanent part of the health care landscape.

Today, faculty members in the Department of Health Services Research, Management and Policy educate the nation’s leading health professionals who earn master’s or doctoral degrees in their specialties. Graduates go on to lend their expertise to such areas as health care policy, consulting, institutional management and health systems research.
In the 1970s, health professionals with associate degrees, such as radiology and respiratory therapy technicians, were looking for a path to career advancement. They found it in the college’s Bachelor of Health Science degree program. The first of its kind in Florida, the bachelor’s program offered health technicians the opportunity to strengthen their science backgrounds and acquire skills in health administration. For many, the program served as a stepping stone to graduate school and advanced professional careers.

From the 1970s through the 1990s, the Bachelor of Health Science was also the umbrella degree for the occupational and physical therapy curricula. When the national physical therapy accrediting body recommended physical therapy education move to the graduate level, the bachelor’s in health science program was transformed in fall 2000 to reach an entirely new audience — pre-professional students interested in diverse health careers.

“We felt it was important to develop an undergraduate major that would not only offer pre-professional students a foundation in the medical aspects of health and disease and disability, but also the interpersonal, professional and economic aspects of health care,” said Stephanie Hanson, Ph.D., who led the interdisciplinary faculty team who re-designed the bachelor’s program.

Students take courses in a range of topics including the U.S. health care system, public health, pathophysiology, disability management, therapeutic communication and critical thinking.

Today, the program enrolls over 400 juniors and seniors. More than three-quarters of Bachelor of Health Science students who apply to graduate or professional school are accepted into programs such as medicine, occupational and physical therapy, physician assistant, health administration and public health.
In response to a rapidly changing health care delivery system and a growing population of older adults and people with disabilities, the college created the rehabilitation science doctoral program in 1998.

The first one of its kind in the Southeast, the rehabilitation science Ph.D. program prepares students for academic careers and provides opportunities to develop skills in teaching, research and service leadership. The program quickly gained international acclaim and now attracts students from all over the world.

Rehabilitation science Ph.D. students enter the program with a baccalaureate or master’s degree in a rehabilitation discipline and have professional or clinical experience in a rehabilitation-related field. Most graduates go on to post-doctoral or faculty positions at major research universities.

Students work closely with their faculty mentors in designing their research focus within the broad categories of movement science, disability science or communication and swallowing science. In addition, students take courses in grant writing, epidemiology, biostatistics and research design.

The program currently enrolls more than 50 students, with 28 participating faculty members from the college’s departments of Communicative Disorders, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy and the division of Rehabilitation Counseling, and from the Veterans Health System and other UF colleges. Students conduct research in areas such as biomechanics, neuroplasticity, traumatic brain injury, older driver assessment, assistive technology and locomotor training.
In a 1983 interview, Dean Emeritus Richard Gutekunst discussed the college’s goals, among them, the need for a degree program in public health.

“I believe there is a role for our college in public health education and graduate education, and hope to see the day when there is funding for a graduate program in public health,” Gutekunst said. “There obviously is a need for this type of program in Florida and the potential for offering a quality program at this university is unlimited.”

Twenty years later, the college is now training master’s in public health students to be effective leaders, practitioners and researchers in the prevention of disease and overall promotion of health in their communities.

The Master of Public Health program at the University of Florida began as a collaborative program among the colleges of Public Health and Health Professions, Health and Human Performance, and Medicine. At that time, three concentrations were offered: community health education, public health management and policy, and epidemiology. When the program transferred to the College of Public Health and Health Professions in 2004, the college broadened the community health education concentration to include social and behavioral sciences and added concentrations in biostatistics, environmental health and later, public health practice.

Public health students choose one of the six concentrations to focus their studies. All graduate candidates participate in an internship where they integrate course concepts with real-world application. Master of Public Health graduates go on to help shape public health policy, understand the determinants of public health problems and lead communities in public health initiatives.
MILESTONES

- 2004 – First epidemiology and biostatistics faculty are added to the college
- 2006 – Epidemiology and biostatistics program becomes an independent department
- 2007 – Doctoral programs in epidemiology and biostatistics approved
- 2008 – First six Ph.D. students enter the programs

It is the college’s youngest department, but the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics has been a pivotal component in developing public health education and research at the University of Florida.

Established in 2006, the department enhanced the master’s in public health curriculum for graduate students by offering concentrations in epidemiology and biostatistics. Students in epidemiology focus on the study of the distribution and determinants of health and disease in populations and communities. It is the scientific foundation of public health research that seeks to reduce risk factors and improve health.

Students in the biostatistics concentration use the application of statistics to design and analyze results of clinical trials and identify health trends within communities. As part of their training, doctoral students in biostatistics provide consultation to UF researchers, including an array of data collection and management services.

Faculty members conduct research on infectious diseases, cancer, aging, and social and environmental factors that influence health. The department currently houses the college’s environmental health program, which is expected to become an independent department within the next two years.

In 2007, the Florida Board of Governors approved UF’s new doctoral programs in epidemiology and biostatistics. The new programs joined the college’s existing Ph.D. in health services research to meet the Council on Education for Public Health’s requirement for schools of public health to offer three doctoral programs in public health disciplines. The addition of these programs allowed the college to move forward in the public health accreditation process in 2008.
A research revolution

Today the College of Public Health and Health Professions ranks first in the nation for National Institutes of Health research funding among colleges of health professions, but during the college’s infancy, some disciplines were going to need a research revolution to establish solid programs.

In 1964, Alice Jantzen, Ph.D., the founding occupational therapy chair, fought to call attention to neglected research efforts in her field. Speaking to the audience at the 44th Annual American Occupational Therapy Association conference, Jantzen said occupational therapy professionals were reluctant to “drop patient treatment and take up what may seem the dry business of research.”

She was a proponent of conducting research to provide answers when clinicians had questions.

“Research to date may provide answers to some of these questions but hardly enough of them,” Jantzen said. “Through research, treatment programs will stand on firmer ground and the design for our educational programs will be in much clearer outline.”

While Jantzen called for more research support in her field, Paul Satz, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology, was busy establishing his department’s first neuropsychology research lab. Six psychology research centers and numerous labs would follow with department researchers studying areas such as memory, child behavioral problems, fear and anxiety, weight loss, and pain.

R. Paul Duncan, Ph.D., professor and chair of the Department of Health Services Research, Management and Policy, remembers the structural and cultural changes that began to take place in the early 1980s as the college was on the cusp of a dramatic expansion in research funding and programs.

“I really think that was a time when our college made a clear decision to create a culture where faculty were encouraged to conduct research, but except for encouragement, there was not a substantial structure in place to actually foster inquiry,” Duncan said.

Duncan credits UF’s acceptance into the American Association of Universities, the appointment of Dean Richard Gutekunst, who had a distinguished research career, and the goals and strategies of Dean Robert Frank in the mid-1990s as the catalysts that spurred the college’s research success.

“I would argue that Dean Gutekunst said research was a good idea,” Duncan said. “But Dean Frank insisted it was a good idea.”

In 1995, the college generated about $1.4 million in external grants, but Frank says he felt the faculty and staff could do better.

“We thought we could do twice the level of funded research over a five-year period,” Under the watchful eye of an undergradu- ate research assistant, older adults practice playing video games. College researchers Drs. Patricia Belchior, Michael Marsiske and William Mann are currently studying the effects of video games on seniors’ mental functioning.
he said. “We had the good fortune to be making these decisions as the National Institutes of Health decided to double the number of grants it gave out. That opportunity, along with the persistence and ability of our faculty, lit a fire of research funding successes. This was truly the beginning of a new epoch for the college.”

Today, under the guidance of Interim Dean Michael G. Perri, the college has secured $16 million in research support, placing it first in National Institutes of Health funding for colleges of health professions and 25th among colleges of public health. The college ranks second among UF’s 16 colleges in the average amount of research funding per faculty member and the college’s public health programs continue to open up new opportunities for research funding.

“I’m very proud of the growth of the college’s research programs,” Perri said. “It is an amazing accomplishment and a testament to the outstanding scholarship of the faculty.”

Krista Vandenborne, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Physical Therapy, helped nurture her department from one with little research funding to one of the most well-funded physical therapy departments in the country.

“I think when we started out, we were so focused as a profession on clinical care and education and had little resources or training to do quality research,” she said. “There was also some concern that focusing on research may detract from our educational mission. I don’t think it’s one versus the other. I think we’re a balanced department with a strong curriculum, and research has only enhanced that.”

Perhaps the best way to see how far the college has grown is to look to its future scientific leaders. Megan Witte, Ph.D., a graduate of the rehabilitation science doctoral program, believes her research experience with the Smart House project, under the direction of William Mann, Ph.D., chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy, has helped her become a better professional in and out of the classroom.

“Part of our job is to provide education to our clients,” Witte said. “How can we do that if we don’t keep up in the research world? It takes learning as much as you can.”
Designing women

The college’s women leaders navigated challenges, helped build top programs

There were no department founding fathers here — just a trio of women each at the helm of the College of Health Related Services’ first three departments. They designed the health services curricula and fought to establish research programs and gain adequate academic and professional space within the Health Science Center. Fifty years later, the strength and innovation of Alice Jantzen, Ph.D., chair of occupational therapy; Barbara White, M.A., chair of physical therapy; and Ruth Williams, Ph.D., chair of medical technology, continue to influence health professionals.

Physical and occupational therapy as well as the medical technology fields historically employed more women than men. Although the college’s women leaders enjoyed positions of influence, through the decades they learned to manage social challenges such as gaining equal recognition and finding a balance between dedicating time to their craft and their families.

Lela Llorens, Ph.D., former chair of the Department of Occupational Therapy, said she was grateful that the field offered leadership roles where other health disciplines fell short.

When Llorens joined the UF faculty in 1971, Jantzen mentored her and helped her adjust to the administrative nuances of being a professor at a large university.

“I knew she was going to retire at some point,” Llorens said. “I made her agree to stay five years longer because I wanted to learn from her. She was a strong, no-nonsense woman who took a mentor role with people who worked with her.”

Llorens said she worked to make her voice heard during interdepartmental committee meetings, especially when she was the only woman.

“There tended to be lower expectations for women, especially if you were the only one in the room,” Llorens said. “It was always amusing to me to think I was going to surprise somebody with my ideas.”

Eileen Fennell, Ph.D., a professor in the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology, was a wife and mother of two young children when she entered the college’s clinical psychology doctoral program in the early 1970s.

While the women’s movement made it more acceptable to pursue higher education, a grueling schedule didn’t make it easier to juggle life as a full-time student and Super Mom.

“I remember what it was like to feel like you were stuck between a rock and a hard place,” she said. “As the years went by it got better, and it got a little easier for new generations to manage those things.”

Fennell remembers waking up before sunrise on weekends to drive her children to their swim meets by 7 a.m. and cheering them on to victory in between studying for exams by the poolside.

Executive Associate Dean Stephanie Hanson, who was recruited as the college’s first female associate dean in 1996, attributes part of her success to the evolution of women’s roles.

“Previous generations paved the way for the broader acceptance of women in leadership positions in the United States,” Hanson said. “I am fortunate, especially as a single parent, to have benefited from the hard work of previous generations and the men and women today who support my work as a college leader.”

Claudette Finley, M.S., an associate professor emeritus in the Department of Physical Therapy, says she never felt the proverbial glass ceiling hanging over her head. Opportunities existed for those who worked hard and wanted to advance their careers.

“I’m really proud of our college and what it has accomplished,” Finley said. “Back then, I got to step into that department and see role models I could relate to. It showed me it was possible to do this.”
DEGREE PROGRAMS

Then:

• Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy
• Bachelor of Science in Physical Therapy
• Bachelor of Science in Medical Technology

Total Enrollment 15

Now:

• Doctor of Audiology
• Doctor of Physical Therapy
• Ph.D. in Biostatistics
• Ph.D. in Epidemiology
• Ph.D. in Health Services Research
• Ph.D. in Psychology
• Ph.D. in Rehabilitation Science
• Master of Health Administration
• Master of Health Science in Occupational Therapy
• Master of Health Science in Rehabilitation Counseling
• Master of Occupational Therapy
• Master of Public Health
• Bachelor of Health Science

Total Enrollment 1,702
In 1966 the college’s founding dean, Darrel Mase, Ph.D., told the audience at the American Public Health Association’s annual meeting that health, at that time the third-largest industry in the nation, would soon become the first.

“Society,” he added, “is demanding that good health care and comprehensive rehabilitation services for those with illness and disabilities shall be among the ‘rights and privileges’ of all citizens.”

More than 40 years later, Mase’s words ring true. The health services industry employs more workers than any other industry in the United States. Americans are still calling for access to quality health care, although Mase may not have been able to predict the current barriers to care, such as the rising number of people without health insurance.

The College of Public Health and Health Professions is working to meet tomorrow’s education, research and service challenges. Researchers in the college’s newly formed Florida Trauma Rehabilitation Center for Returning Military Personnel will address the special needs of a new generation of veterans and others who will benefit from the latest rehabilitation interventions, including a growing population of older adults. Partnerships with UF’s new Emerging Pathogens Institute boost the college’s environmental health research portfolio and have the potential to expand the college’s reach to global health issues. And the college’s most significant undertaking in recent years — the addition of public health — has ushered in new opportunities for collaboration.

“Our new collaborative model of public health and health professions disciplines will have a powerful impact on the health of communities and individuals through our interdisciplinary endeavors in teaching, research and service,” said Interim Dean Michael G. Perri.

Predicting what the next 50 years will bring is difficult given the technological advances on the horizon that could affect the future of research and clinical care, such as stem cell and gene therapies, early detection and other treatments that we can’t even imagine at this time. But just as it has for the last 50 years, the College of Public Health and Health Professions will continue to remain at the forefront of health education, anticipating and responding to the health needs of populations, communities and individuals.

“We must plan today in relation to the society we are to serve tomorrow,” Mase said in 1964. “Change is inevitable. Let us have sufficient education, foresight and pliability to meet this challenge.”

**Number of Faculty**

Then: 10  
Now: 132

**Research Awards**

Then: (1964) $105,794  
Now: $16,100,000

“Our new collaborative model of public health and health professions disciplines will have a powerful impact on the health of communities and individuals through our interdisciplinary endeavors in teaching, research and service.”

—Interim Dean Michael G. Perri
“I remember when...”

Alumni recall their days at PHHP

“My favorite memory is when I turned in the completed and final draft of my dissertation to the Graduate Research Office. After I left that office, with my PhD finally done sticker tightly gripped in both hands, I felt like I was walking on clouds. If I was able to do cartwheels all the way to my car, I would have! I will never forget that afternoon in the fall of 2001. Wow, what a day!”

—Julie Maslinski Prins, Ph.D.
Doctorate in rehabilitation science 2001; Master’s in rehabilitation counseling 1994; Bachelor’s in rehabilitative services 1993

“All of our physical therapy classes were held in the basement of the health center. This was an especially lonely area during our late night anatomy lab study groups. Halloween was one of our favorite ‘holidays,’ need I say more?! The PT students today certainly have a different facility, but I wouldn’t trade my time at the JHMHSC for anything!”

—Laurel Jeter
President, bachelor’s in physical therapy class of 1984

“I remember a dramatic event when I was an intern here at Shands 100 years ago and worked with a young man who was a classical musician and had suffered a spinal cord injury from a karate class accident. When he was actually able to bring food to his mouth for the first time after months of being fed by others, tears flowed down his face, and mine as well.”

—Kay Walker, Ph.D.
Bachelor’s in occupational therapy 1964; UF professor of occupational therapy 1971-2003; occupational therapy department chair 1984-2000

“One of my earliest memories is of the Cuban Missile Crisis during fall 1962. In the event of a nuclear attack, faculty and staff and their families could shelter at the Health Science Center, where my dad [Lowell Hammer, Ph.D., professor 1962-1992 and former acting dean] worked in the Communicative Disorders department. There were canisters of water and crackers that we were supposed to use for food. Later, in the early 1970s when I had an OPS job at the health center, these same canisters were still stored in the basement under the Pharmacy wing.”

—David Hammer
Master’s in business administration/master’s in health administration 1987

“During the unforgettable leadership course taken by all Health Science undergraduates, the wife of our professor, Dr. Robert Garrigues, had to undergo surgery. Sadly, Dr. G was woefully unprepared to take on cooking duties. Under the guidance of our teaching assistants, our class took the matter into our own hands, forming small groups and signing up to cover each night of the week. However, we knew full well that Dr. G would not openly accept our help. Donning disguises to protect our identities, we played a game of Ding-Dong-Ditch with complete, homemade dinners every night for weeks!”

—Carolyn (Kensel) Bird
Bachelor’s in health science 2006

“Dr. John B. Henry [medical technology instructor] was ahead of his time with technology. We had Coulter Counters — the gold standard of blood cell counters, AutoAnalyzers for chemical analysis, and he even tinkered around with computers way back then. He was a real renaissance man. We were exposed to the latest technology. When we graduated and went to work we had a reality check when we discovered that other labs were still using antique methods.”

—Sue Osier
Bachelor’s in medical technology 1964
In honor of its milestone anniversary, the college hosted a lecture series that brought some of the nation’s leading health services and rehabilitation experts to campus throughout the year. The lecture series is sponsored in part by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida. Lectures included:

“Overcoming Health Care Disparities: The Role of Patient-Centered Care”
Lisa A. Cooper, M.D., M.P.H., a professor of medicine, epidemiology, and health policy and management at Johns Hopkins University. Sponsored by the UF Area Health Education Centers program

“Medicare: A Building Block for Health Reform”
Karen Davis (pictured at left), Ph.D., president of The Commonwealth Fund

“Medical Devices: Regulation, Reimbursement and Research”
Deborah Freund, Ph.D., a distinguished professor of public administration in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University

“The Future of Disability in America” (Darrel J. Jette Leadership Award Lecture)
Alan Jette, Ph.D., a professor of health policy and management at the Boston University School of Public Health and director of the Boston University Health and Disability Research Institute

“The Future of Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance”
Michael Morrisey, Ph.D., a professor of health care organization and policy at the University of Alabama Birmingham

Kenneth Ottenbacher, Ph.D., O.T.R., Russell Shearn Moody distinguished chair and professor and director of the division of rehabilitation sciences at the University of Texas Medical Branch

“Do Medicare Beneficiaries Have Too Much Choice? An Examination of Stand-Alone Drug Plans”
Thomas Rice, Ph.D., a professor of health services and vice chancellor for academic personnel at UCLA

“Scientific Evidence and Improving the Quality of Health Care”
Donald Steinwachs, Ph.D., a professor of health policy and management and director of the Health Services Research and Development Center at Johns Hopkins University

“The Politics of Health Care Reform”
Gail Wilensky, Ph.D., economist and a senior fellow at Project HOPE

Thank you to our 50th anniversary sponsors

Interim Dean
Michael G. Perri, Ph.D.

Editor/Writer
Jill Pease

Writer
Melissa M. Thompson

Special thanks to:
April Frawley-Birdwell
Health Science Center News and Communications
Beth Powers
Health Science Center News and Communications
Linda Stallings
PHHP Dean’s Office
Nina Stoyan-Rosenzweig
George T. Harrell Archives

Design: JS Design Studio • Printing: StorterChilds Printing Company Inc.