

From the Master of Nursing (MN) to the Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing (PhD), the University of Saskatchewan (USask) College of Nursing provides graduate students with opportunities to deepen their knowledge, expand their practice, and shape the future of healthcare. USask Nursing graduate programs support nurses who aspire to broaden their scope of practice, pursue new career pathways, lead change within their workplaces, or contribute meaningful research that advances health outcomes for individuals and communities.

With more than 235 graduate students studying across Saskatchewan and throughout Canada, the College of Nursing is home to a diverse and dynamic graduate student community. We are pleased to introduce you to four of these students.



Hayley Bobye-Magnusson

Hayley Bobye-Magnusson is a graduate student in the University of Saskatchewan Master of Nursing Thesis (MN) program, combining full-time professional practice with research that reflects her commitment to health equity and advocacy.

After graduating from Mount Royal University in 2020, Bobye-Magnusson built a diverse nursing career focused on children and youth. Her experience spans pediatric mental health, school nursing, summer camp nursing, and group therapy facilitation.

Outside of work, she remains deeply engaged in her community and personal interests, volunteering with Kids Cancer Care and spending time playing soccer, exploring the backcountry, rock climbing, travelling, and enjoying life with family and her cats.

Bobye-Magnusson was drawn to the USask College of Nursing because of the part-time, Learn Where You Live ideology, as well as the college's strong reputation.

She initially enrolled in the Master of Nursing Professional Practice program, but after completing the first course, realized she wanted to explore her interests in greater depth.

"I developed a strong interest in health equity, specifically within the school setting," said Bobye-Magnusson. "Transitioning to the thesis program allows me to conduct research that will support meaningful advocacy and system level change."

Now working full-time while completing her thesis, Bobye-Magnusson plans to research a topic that directly impacts the students she works with every day. She values the close connection between her research topic and her nursing practice, noting the process has strengthened both her research abilities and growth as a school nurse.

One of the greatest highlights of the program has been the growth in her academic writing.

"I have genuinely surprised myself with the improvement in my writing quality," said Bobye-Magnusson. "I am also proud of the breadth of research skills I have developed."

After completing her program, Bobye-Magnusson hopes to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing on a part-time basis, while continuing her work as a school nurse. Long term, she would like to transition into academia and pursue a teaching role at the university level.

Master of Nursing Thesis student Hayley Bobye-Magnusson. Submitted.



Jenna Cassan

Jenna Cassan, a student from northern Saskatchewan, is passionate about equitable healthcare access, shaped by her commitment to rural communities. Cassan has spent her nursing career in multiple specialties, including obstetrics, emergency, and primary care.

"Three years ago, I was given the opportunity to teach in a practical nursing diploma program, which furthered my passion for nursing education and motivated me to pursue graduate studies to strengthen my ability to support both learners and our community," said Cassan.

Cassan chose the Master of Nursing Professional Practice program because it closely aligned with her long-term goals in nursing education and offered the option to complete it remotely. "The program's emphasis on evidence-informed practice, leadership, and educational development provided a strong foundation for advancing my role as a nurse educator."

Her research interests center on equitable healthcare access and providing high-quality nursing education ensuring students and faculty feel supported, prepared, and

confident in their roles. She finds passion in equitable healthcare, faculty development, mentorship, and simulation-based education.

"Exploring practical and sustainable approaches to healthcare and educational support has been especially meaningful, given the limited resources often available in rural and remote areas," said Cassan.

One of the highlights of her time in the MN-PP program was when a professor encouraged her to pursue publishing her work from a course. "That experience strengthened my confidence as a nurse educator and affirmed the relevance and applicability of my academic work beyond the classroom."

Following the completion of her program, Cassan plans to continue working in nursing education, focusing on strengthening mentorship, simulation-based education, and access to educational resources. Cassan is committed to contributing innovative, evidence-based solutions that support healthcare systems, healthcare providers, educators, and ultimately enhance student learning and patient care.

Master of Nursing Professional Practice student Jenna Cassan. Submitted.



Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing student Jennifer Dunn. Submitted.

Jennifer Dunn

Jennifer Dunn (BSN'05) is a Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing student whose academic journey began with a desire to bridge the gap between academic preparation and clinical realities.

Before beginning her studies at USask, Dunn spent nearly 20 years at Alberta Children's Hospital, working in high-acuity surgical environments. Throughout her clinical career, Dunn has taken on roles beyond bedside care; one of the most formative being with Project Outreach. Through this work, she provided perioperative care in low-resource settings, while mentoring local nurses and physicians.

Her decision to pursue graduate education was not about leaving clinical practice behind, but about deepening her capacity to lead within it. Seeking to reconnect with the ethical and relational dimensions of nursing, she returned to school to complete a Master of Nursing, an experience that reignited her sense of purpose and ultimately led her to pursue her PhD.

Dunn began graduate studies with a clear purpose; to build educational and research practices that are trauma-informed, equity-oriented, and relationally grounded.

"My research now centres around how perioperative nurses construct professional identity in contexts of moral distress, institutional silencing, and spatial

marginalization," said Dunn. "This topic is a direct result of the questions and tensions I carried with me from my work in the operating room."

Her research allows her to remain engaged with the foundational elements of nursing, such as lived experiences, dynamics, and tensions that shape nursing practice.

"What I treasure most is the trust, the nuance, and the slowness this research makes space for," said Dunn. "My research does not aim to extract or fix, it aims to witness, dignify, and reveal."

For Dunn, the highlight of her experience with the college has not been a single accomplishment, but collection of moments rooted in mentorship, scholarship, publishing, and relational expansion, that continue to shape her development as both a nurse and researcher.

When she completes her PhD, Dunn will remain intentionally open to emerging opportunities. She is drawn to roles that bridge scholarship and practice, including faculty positions, research leadership, and curriculum development. She is particularly interested in mentoring nurses in high-stakes environments and co-creating initiatives that address moral distress and trauma-informed education.

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