



The Teaching Excellence Award

Educator Mentor : Academic-Scholarship

Michelle Nichols, Ph.D., RN, first came to MUSC in 2012 as a student in the College of Nursing's Ph.D. program. Immediately upon graduating, she assumed a tenure track assistant professor role within the college as an educator-researcher. During her first year, she taught across all three academic programs – undergraduate, Doctor of Nursing Practice, and Doctor of Philosophy. She has become one of the most valued educators within the Ph.D. program. She consistently receives stellar course evaluations and continually contributes toward improving Ph.D. curricular offerings.

For example, Nichols identified the need for a dedicated mixed methodological design course within the Ph.D. program. With a background in qualitative and quantitative research, she is an expert in mixed-methods research and took the lead developing the course, which will be offered to students beginning in 2022. She is dedicated to ensuring students have the skills and knowledge necessary to make them strong nurse scientists in the future.

Nichols works with learners on all levels, whether a beginning graduate or undergraduate student, an adolescent in the community, or an experienced clinical scientist. She desires to enable to her mentees to achieve their short and long-term goals. She learns about their personal and career aspirations and works collaboratively with them to craft a plan for developing skills and attaining goals. She recognizes that everyone learns and grows at different rates and routinely incorporates innovative methods and technology.

She is passionate about improving equity and sustainability in healthcare across the globe. Nichols works closely with teams of clinical investigators in Ghana and Nigeria. She has participated in training and mentoring them, both through in-person training workshops and on an ongoing basis via videoconferencing. In addition, she is the director of the Community Engaged Scholars Program within the South Carolina Clinical and Translational Research Institute. This program provides underrepresented community members with the skills and knowledge needed to empower them and the communities they represent.

Nichols' genuine concern for each student and mentee is evident in every aspect of her work. Thus, the Medical University of South Carolina Foundation is pleased to present the Teaching Excellence Award as an Educator-Mentor in the Academic/Scholarship category to Michelle Nichols, Ph.D., RN, with on August 17, 2021.