

F A C U L T Y

by Todd Schwartz

new research

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— Nancy Lowe, CNM, PhD

# faculty

## Two new faculty bring extensive practice and research expertise to OHSU

It isn’t a rule that new School of Nursing research faculty be named Nancy and hail from Ohio State — but it doesn’t hurt, as evidenced by Nancy Lowe, CNM, PhD, and Nancy Perrin, PhD.

Perrin, who earned both her master’s and her doctorate in quantitative psychology at Ohio State University, joined the School’s Office of Research Development in January. She came to OHSU from Portland State University, where she directed the Systems Science PhD program and served for several years as associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

“I spent most of my time,” Perrin says, “working on assessment of educational outcomes, on faculty development and on incorporating technology into the curriculum. Eventually I found myself wanting to once again focus my research on health outcomes, so coming to ORD and the OHSU School of Nursing was an exciting opportunity.”

With her expertise in research methodology and statistics, Perrin acts as a co-investigator on data-intensive studies, working with OHSU faculty at both ends of the research process, helping at the outset with the study’s design and the grant writing, then consulting on the analysis after data has been gathered. She is currently involved with several projects that examine the relationships between alcohol consumption and health, between medical errors and patient safety, and the modeling of health care data in order to predict at what point and which groups of elderly persons will become frail in the near term.

In addition, Perrin holds a joint appointment with the Kaiser Permanente Center for Health Research.



Nancy Perrin, PhD.

Nancy Lowe joined the School in September as a professor in the division of nurse-midwifery. She comes to OHSU from the College of Nursing at Ohio State University, where she was most recently a professor and director of the women's health/nurse-midwifery graduate programs, as well as an adjunct associate professor in the College of Medicine. Lowe has practiced in the area of maternal/newborn nursing for more than three decades. She has been certified in midwifery since 1992. She is the editor of the respected *Journal of Obstetric, Gynecologic and Neonatal Nursing*.

"OHSU gave me an opportunity and a research setting I just couldn't refuse," she says. "My research has focused on care practices during labor and delivery, and the intrapartum experiences of women. I've always been interested in the psychophysiology of labor, how the woman and the care providers interact to enhance — or sometimes get in the way of — the normal process."

A surprising finding of a study on which Lowe was the principal investigator: The more confident a woman feels in her ability to handle labor explains 30 percent to 40 percent of the variation among

women in the amount of pain they feel.

In another project with pending funding, Lowe will serve as a co-investigator to study the effects of prolonged latent labor and the prevention of subsequent problems. In a second line of research, health care for

women in the military, Lowe and an Ohio State colleague have a newly funded NIH grant to conduct a clinical trial on a self-diagnosis and self-treatment kit for genitourinary infections in women when they are deployed in military settings.

"I'm coming to OHSU," Lowe adds, "because it's a school of nursing that has risen to the top tier. The environment for collaborative research that informs the care of women is wonderful, and I'm excited by the colleagues I'll have. I'm looking forward to a rare opportunity."



Nancy Lowe, CNM, PhD