### Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing – Office of Nursing Research

The mission of the Office of Nursing Research (ONR) at the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing is to support faculty and students in the generation, dissemination, and application of research related to nursing care across the lifespan. To advance this mission, the Dean has invested in a robust infrastructure within the ONR. Key personnel include the Associate Dean for Research (Dr. Drenna Waldrop), the Assistant Dean for Research (Nathan Mutic, MS, MAT, MEd), and the Director of the Biostatistics and Data Management Core (Dr. Melinda Higgins). The ONR team also comprises three full-time methodology/statistics experts, a data manager, a biobehavioral lab director (Dr. Whitney Wharton), a lab manager, a lab assistant, a grant editor, a full-time program manager, a full-time project manager, and a senior administrative assistant.

The ONR also includes the Research Administration Department (RAD), which is led by Director Selena McBride. The RAD team includes a Pre-Award Team Lead, Post-Award Team Lead (Emily Stone), three Pre-Award Administrators, and three Post-Award Administrators. Together, these professionals support research development and productivity.

The ONR provides structured support for the grant proposal process. When a faculty member or student notifies ONR of an intent to submit a proposal, an internal workflow is initiated. The Associate Dean and Program Manager are alerted, and follow-up is conducted by the Pre-Award Specialist, Grant Editor, and Statistical Team. This includes assistance with budgeting, early methodological guidance, and coordination of a mock peer review. Post-award support includes preparation of monthly reports and regular review meetings.

In addition to grants administration, ONR offers publication support and editorial resources. Monthly research roundtables and colloquia encourage interdisciplinary collaboration. The statistical team also hosts workshops each semester. All ONR offices are centrally located on the plaza level of the School of Nursing, enabling streamlined coordination.

Research conducted by School of Nursing faculty and students explores a broad range of health-related topics. Key areas include symptom management in acute and chronic illness (e.g., cancer, heart failure), and the study of interacting symptoms such as cognitive changes, sleep disturbances, pain, and stress. Faculty-led projects also examine health outcomes and self-management strategies in conditions such as diabetes, maternal health, and PTSD. Research related to caregiving, aging, and the influence of physiological factors on health outcomes is ongoing.

The School’s faculty are active recipients of extramural research funding, with awards totaling nearly $20 million in fiscal year 2025, including approximately $18 million from the NIH. NIH-funded initiatives include the Emory Roybal Center for Caregiving Mastery, a T32 research training grant, and twenty R01 awards. Each major grant includes participation from ONR faculty as Co-Investigators or Project PIs to foster coordination and maximize impact.

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