

No segment of our society is immune to technology including the School of Nursing. High technology has arrived at the School of Nursing in the form of microcomputers. Microcomputers are now being used throughout the School to support the administrative, research, and instructional needs of students, staff, and faculty.

If one were to tour the School of Nursing building, one would very likely notice that some of the secretaries are now using microcomputers for word processing. Secretaries have been busy entering course overviews, student handouts, tests, and student evaluations into the computer for ease of storage, editing, and retrieval. Not only are microcomputers being used for word processing, but computers are also being used as instructional tools within the nursing curriculum.

The need for nursing education programs to assume more responsibility for teaching computer applications is apparent when one looks at what is happening in hospitals. Rare is the hospital today that does not have or does not plan to have a computer in the near future. Computer applications in nursing have just begun and are expected to expand rapidly in the next few years. With the growing utilization of computers by nurses in the workplace, the need for students to learn about computers has become readily apparent.

Through various sources of funding, including some Alumni Association money, the School was able to initiate the establishment of a computer cluster in the Learning Resources Center during Spring quarter 1984. As an increasing number of computerized instructional programs have become available in nursing education, selected ones have been purchased. This has made it possible to provide multiple and diverse computerized learning opportunities. Thus, computers represent the latest teaching strategy that is available for use by the nursing faculty and students.

Computers are being used for instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Undergraduate students are using the computers to supplement their classroom learning. The undergraduate students are using the computers to learn selected psychomotor skills, calculation of medication dosages, and communica-



## The School of Nursing Enters the Computer Age

By Kathleen Mikan  
Director of the Learning  
Resources Center

tion techniques. They are also using the computer to conduct dietary analysis of patients' diets and to plan special diets.

Graduate students, on the other hand, are using the computers primarily for data analysis. Many graduate students are using a microcomputer instead of the large campus computer in Rust to analyze their research data. Students have discovered that a microcomputer can save them money as well as time. With a microcomputer there is essentially no turn around time; the data results are immediate. Also students don't have to worry about the cost of a run; they can manipulate data as much as they want and not have to worry about additional costs.

The School has just completed its first year of computerized instruction.

During that time, the number of quarterly instructional hours that students have interacted with the computers has increased from nine, the first quarter, to nearly 800 hours Spring quarter 1985, just four quarters after the computers arrived. This reflects the rapidity with which computerized instruction is being accepted by faculty and students.

Faculty use of the computer as an instructional tool has just begun. Additional learning opportunities will be provided as additional money and resources become available.

As a result of their interaction with the computers, students are becoming more computer literate. Students are excited about the availability of computer programs that support nursing education as well as nursing practice.



**FRED HORNS AND GLENDA HARRIS INSTRUCT STUDENTS ON COMPUTER APPLICATIONS.**