

## *The year of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of EEUSP*

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*This year of 2011, on October 31, the University of São Paulo School of Nursing (EEUSP) begins the celebrations for its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.*

*History records show that the movements for organizing higher education for health professions in the State of São Paulo, blended with the creation of the University of São Paulo in 1934, preceded the creation of the São Paulo School of Nursing in 31 October, 1942<sup>(1)</sup>.*

*On this pathway, the perspective of the Rockefeller Foundation, that nursing education was important for public health, was the main encouragement for the creation of EEUSP. Establishing a school of nursing following the Nightingale model was the Rockefeller Foundation's demand to provide the funding for the construction of the College of Medicine, the Hygiene Laboratory – which today is the College of Public Health – and the Clinics Hospital building<sup>(1)</sup>.*

*Nursing is, to some extent, a new profession. The work done by Florence Nightingale during the Crimean War, in 1854, marks the advent of professional nursing. With her determination, organization skills, sharp observation and the ability to change her views into useful information, Nightingale created opportunities that had an important impact on the organization of the health system in England. Nightingale helped break the prejudice against women joining the Army and changed society's view on nursing and about women having a useful occupation<sup>(2)</sup>.*

*The central interest of nursing as a discipline is the answer from individuals, families, and communities to health problems and to the life processes. The main challenge in nursing education, as in the education of all health care professionals, is crossdisciplinarity. In the health area, crossdisciplinarity requires collaboration between professionals not only where formal knowledge production takes place, but also in places where health practices occur. Perhaps the greatest challenge of crossdisciplinarity in nursing as a profession and discipline is to sustain the will to care for people, by promoting the best human answers to health problems and life processes. Collaboration requires careful listening and does not deny the need for solitary moments so that the crossdisciplinary contributions of each discipline can be organized and reorganized. Health and disease experiences require professionals whose interest is beyond that of assuring the efficacy of products and processes. That is the central challenge of teaching and learning how to be a nurse: the genuine interest to understand human experiences and, taking them as the foundation, to judge not only the efficacy but also adequacy, applicability, and the positive meaning of health interventions.*

*By dealing with the challenges of keeping education, research and extension interconnected in a setting in which working with knowledge is becoming, more and more, the tonic in health professions, it is imperative to maintain a continuous reflection about the development of human resources for the health area.*

*The World Health Organization recognizes that we currently live a serious global crisis regarding the health workforce<sup>(3-4)</sup>, characterized not only by the scarcity of professionals, but also by workers with insufficient skills and existing in an unbalanced geographical distribution<sup>(5)</sup>. The result is millions of people without access to health services and an increased risk of health interventions doing more bad than good. These statements are applied to the health workforce in Brazil, but it is important to focus on the case of Brazilian nursing.*

*The rapid increase in the number of seats in private undergraduate nursing courses<sup>(6)</sup>, often wrongly interpreted as a result of actions to reduce the chronic unbalance in the proportion between physicians and nurses<sup>(7)</sup>, and the precariousness of work in public health services<sup>(8)</sup> indicate the urgent need to associate the Brazilian sectors involved in the definition of the nursing policies with a view to produce a contextualized interpretation of what is happening with human resources in nursing. That interpretation is essential so we can consider, for Brazil, the recommendations of the World Health Organization and strengthen nursing services<sup>(9)</sup>.*

*Since its establishment in 1942, the EEUSP has responded to the social changes involving health education without losing sight of the strong foundation that its main duty is to prepare people to work with scientific, ethical, personal and social knowledge of human care.*

*Nursing has made important contributions to the health of individuals, families, groups, and communities. Without a sufficient number of competent, skillful nurses, capable of their continuous improvement, much of the investment in health will have been in vain.*

*On 31 October, 2012, the EEUSP will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with full strength to continue facing the challenges that emerge in the mission to prepare nurses committed to the outcomes of the Brazilian health system, global health and the contributions of nursing to health knowledge.*

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