

Dr. Munoz is tenured Associate Professor of Nursing. Laura came to UIW in 2004 as an adjunct clinical instructor, became a visiting professor and then finally a full-time assistant professor. Laura is a neonatal nurse practitioner and in 2011 she was appointed the founding director of the doctor of nursing practice program-- at that time only the second DNP program in Texas.

Laura is known for her ready smile and positive attitude, her creativity, and her grace under pressure. She is resolute in the face of a challenge—she will find a way to overcome any barrier and she will do it with style and good humor. In addition to her leadership in nursing, Laura is a master at leading cross-disciplinary teams.

She has led federally funded research and service teams that include faculty from pharmacy, education, fashion design, business and the liberal arts.

One of her faculty colleagues notes that Laura's growth over the past years provides a model for the evolution of a faculty-as-teacher—the ability to merge the quest for and sharing of knowledge from direct influence on the individual student to influencing the quality of education for the many.

Multiple letters of nomination talked about Laura's creative teaching style—using synchronous and asynchronous technology and blogs to stay in touch with distance students. Traveling across Texas to check in with students doing clinical in rural areas. A common thread in all the nominations is Laura's personal touch and encouragement that motivates students to reach her exacting standards.

A UIW alum wrote: “during my enrollment in the DNP program I was faced with multiple unfortunate circumstances that drove me to nearly surrender. I made arrangements to drop out of the program, but before I signed and submitted the required documents Dr. Munoz phoned me and encouraged me to stay enrolled. She became my Capstone Chair and worked tirelessly to make my graduation possible. Her interest in my success made it easy for me to communicate with her. She helped me believe in myself and gave me a sense of certainty that I would get through the program. With Dr. Munoz it was difficult to give up on myself because I knew I had a teacher who believed in me.”