Caring Across the World

Nursing School Planning a Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree

The School of Nursing has received permission to plan the post-masters doctor of nursing practice degree from UNC General Administration. The final paperwork has been submitted to GA for final approval at the January meeting. Upon approval, the WCU School of Nursing plans to start recruiting students for the DNP program by March 1, 2013, with a start date of August 2013. The 42-credit DNP is a consortium effort between WCU and UNC Charlotte.

WCU School of Nursing Moves Into Two New Locations

Exciting things are happening in the School of Nursing. In the fall of 2012, the School of Nursing began calling two new locations home. First, the traditional BSN program, historically split between the main WCU campus for the junior year and the A-B Tech Enka campus for the senior year, reunited in the new state-of-the-art College of Health and Human Sciences Building.

The new building houses both the junior and senior years of the BSN program as well as all other College of Health and Human Sciences programs such as physical therapy, communication sciences and disorders, nutrition and emergency medical care. Visit the College of Health and Human Sciences homepage for additional information and updates on the new building.

One current student commented: “The new College of Health and Human Sciences Building is a wonderful addition to Western Carolina’s campus. It truly is wonderful to walk out of your classroom and see the mountains that draw so many people to our school. There are study rooms and a computer lab available for students right there in the building. Multiple labs for clinical practice also are available to aid in the human and health science majors’ learning process. Before the CHHS building was completed, the human and health science majors were spread out all over campus. As a student, I have seen the new CHHS building help encourage a community between all the majors that it houses. I have definitely seen a community being built between the nursing cohorts. This is the first time in a long time the students from all semesters of the traditional program have been in the same building. It is so nice to have the opportunity to talk to nursing students who are further along in the program and to mentor the students who are just starting out. I also know that a few of our class members recently attended a lecture for PT students. They were able to help our professor..."
Western Carolina University is proud to announce its recent opening of a new high-fidelity anesthesia simulation center at its new Biltmore Park campus. The facility was designed by Dr. Mark A. Kossick, who was appointed as the graduate anesthesia simulation education coordinator. He previously served at another university as director of graduate simulation education, which has brought a wealth of experience to the development of this new center.

Through a $1.23 million HRSA education grant secured by Dr. Shawn Collins and the administrative support of WCU, the School of Nursing was able to purchase the most advanced human patient simulator available on the market today (CAE/METI HPS).

### Sampling of HPS Functions

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<th>HPS Cost</th>
<th>$236,000</th>
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<td>1) pupils react to opioids, light, brain injury</td>
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<td>2) the ulnar nerve responds to a peripheral nerve stimulator (tetanus, train-of-four)</td>
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<td>3) automatic recognition and response to administered drugs and drug dosages</td>
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<td>4) variable lung compliance and airways resistance</td>
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<td>5) automatic response to needle decompression of a tension pneumothorax, chest tube drainage and pericardiocentesis</td>
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<td>6) central and peripheral pulses that abate in response to hemodynamic changes</td>
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<td>7) the ability to respond to cardioversion, defibrillation, and external pacing as needed.</td>
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Other ancillary hardware in the operating room includes: operating room light; a $20,500 MP70 IntelliVue anesthesia monitor that can display end-tidal gas values, invasive and noninvasive blood pressures, ECG, pulse oximetry, pulmonary artery and central venous pressures; thermal dilution cardiac output waveforms, derived 12 leads; and a Zoll defibrillator. The adjacent control room permits faculty to deliver the simulation curriculum via MUSE CAE software and record simulated activity via Learning Space ($34,000) audiovisual recording system; which also will allow debriefing experiences for students.

The anesthesia clinical skills lab includes learning experiences with a GE ultrasound machine with color flow Doppler imaging capabilities ($24,250); advanced airway devices (e.g., GlideScope [11,200], fiberoptic bronchoscope, jet ventilation device); Life/form spinal injection simulator; Life/form central venous cannulation simulator; various adult (Airsim Bronchi [2,350], AMBU Airway Management Trainer [$1,480]) and neonatal airway models; as well as an OR stretcher for preoperative anesthesia assessments.

The WCU nurse anesthesia program’s high-fidelity simulation center will provide graduate anesthesia students with state-of-the-art experiences in advanced airway management techniques, regional anesthesia ultrasound imaging devices, and HPS simulation experiences for many years to come.
Repede Deathbed Communications Research Accepted for Publication

Dr. Elizabeth Repede PhD FNP-BC studies the relationship between consciousness and healing. The purpose of her last study, which was done jointly with Dr. Madelaine Lawrence of the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, was to determine the incidence of deathbed communications (DBCs) during the 30 days before death and their impact on the dying process.

Patients at end of life often experience transcendent experiences that involve communications with deceased relatives, spiritual beings and other phenomena that are outside of normal waking consciousness, such as being enveloped in light, unusual scents and brief moments of extraordinary clarity after being comatose. These are called deathbed communications (DBCs) and deathbed phenomena (DBP). While there is a substantial amount of lay literature on these topics, there is almost no formal research on these events and the impact that they have on patients and their loved ones.

For Repede’s research, 60 hospice chart audits from one hospice in South Carolina and 75 survey responses by hospice nurses across the U.S. were analyzed. Chart audits revealed five out 60 (8.33 percent) included descriptions of DBCs or evidence of DBP. The survey of 75 hospice nurses identified 363 incidences of DBCs with an average of 4.8 patient occurrences per nurse per 30 days. Only one nurse of the 75 survey respondents reported no DBC or DBP in the last 30 days of patient care. Eighty-nine percent of the hospice nurses reported patients who experienced a DBC had a peaceful and calm death with only 40.5 percent reporting a peaceful and calm death without the DBC.

This demonstrates that although these phenomena are reported almost universally by nurses, the documentation in the patient record is underreported, despite the fact that these occurrences have an overwhelmingly positive impact on the dying process. The other finding that emerged from the literature review in this study was that patients most often tell nurses, even over family members and other care providers, about these experiences, but nurses often feel unprepared educationally and emotionally to help patients deal with these experiences, which are not even described in textbooks. This research has been accepted for publication on the American Journal of Hospice and Palliative Medicine.

Gilliam’s Research Assesses Diabetes Management Information

Dr. Patricia Gilliam PhD Med ARNP-BC is now completing a research study that was done in collaboration with the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians and Integrated Learning Partners, an education and health services consulting organization.

This study was designed to assess the education and counseling provided by a group of primary care providers and a group of their patients with diabetes. Primary care providers (nurse practitioners, family practice physicians and physician assistants) were recruited from a group of providers currently participating in a national performance improvement and continuing medical education initiative sponsored by the Georgia and Oklahoma Academies of Family Physicians.

The study was designed to assess the type of diabetes management information provided along with the communication and counseling style of the primary care provider from the perspective of the providers and a group of their patients. This baseline information was used to design an educational program for the providers that provided the most current information needed for diabetes self-management as well as evidence-based teaching and counseling methods that are most effective for patients with chronic diseases. Dr. Gilliam developed and presented a webinar for the providers and assembled a collection of patient education materials that was disseminated to both the providers and their patients who participated in the study. A follow-up survey was conducted with both the providers and patients to determine if there was any effect following the educational intervention.

Dr. Gilliam has been invited to present the results of this research at the annual meeting of the Alliance for Continuing Education in the Health Professions in San Francisco in January 2013.
Collins’ Research Points to Emotional Intelligence
As Important in Selection Process

Dr. Shawn Collins DNP PhD CRNA has been studying the emotional intelligence of nursing students. Current nurse anesthesia program admissions requirements usually focus on high grade point averages, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, number of years of acute care experience, and a personal interview to assist in predicting those who will succeed in these intensive academic and clinical programs. Some believe these criteria may not be sufficient in predicting success and have suggested the use of such noncognitive criteria as emotional intelligence (EI) measurements may be helpful. The purpose of Dr. Collins’ cross-sectional correlational study was to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and personal and academic factors of nurse anesthesia students at three points in a program, matriculation, at one year of study, and in the last semester of study, and the relationship of these to clinical scores and national certification examination (NCE) scores.

An ex post facto cross-sectional study design was used to gather data at three critical times in nurse anesthesia (NA) programs to explore the relationships between emotional intelligence scores, preadmission demographics, clinical scores, and NCE scores. The online Mayer Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT) instrument provided 15 individual EI scores for each subject. Descriptive statistics, factor analysis, correlation, multiple regression, and Q-factor analysis were used to describe and examine the statistical relationship between variables.

This study found that there were unique profiles for each NA student by year with one EI profile consistent throughout. Several EI variables are predictive of NCE scores. Although this study did not establish that EI is the most important tool for determining which students should be admitted to NA programs, it did reinforce the suggestion that emotional intelligence can be an important additive tool in the selection process. The study represents new evidence to support both traditionally used cognitive data related to admissions; it also raised questions about the usefulness of EI as a strong non-cognitive measure. However, it did find that defining an EI type may be useful in understanding of success of students in different aspects of nurse anesthesia programs and on NCE scores.

The existence of possible profiles may be useful as a preliminary study of EI in NA students. This research begins a base of knowledge on EI in relation to nurse anesthesia students. Leaders and followers need both cognitive and emotional intelligence to be the most successful they can possibly be. Dr. Collins’ research has been accepted for publication in the AANA Journal.

Recent School of Nursing Happenings

- Sharon Metcalfe conducted an international partnership with the University of Lahti (Finland) and Edinburgh University (Scotland) for the past three years.
- Shawn Collins received a second doctorate in August (a PhD in leadership) and was awarded outstanding dissertation for the School of Education in 2011-12. He is in the second year of a three-year, $1.23 million HRSA grant. This year’s funding is $300,000 and supports simulation and program expansion for the nurse anesthesia program. Collins also received a Nurse Anesthesia Traineeship grant for $11,500. These monies go directly to all currently enrolled nurse anesthesia students.
- Mason McDowell received his DNAP degree from Texas Wesleyan. He also led an effort to collect coats for charity as the cold months are upon us. Students donated 26 coats to give to Asheville Buncombe Community Christian Ministry.
- Liz Repede passed the national certification as a board certified advanced holistic nurse practitioner.
- Nursing and Physical Therapy have a combined lab between showing some effort and an effort to work toward “inter-professional” learning/use of labs in the new building.
- Nursing is involved in another spring break outreach trip to Jamaica. At the moment we have 13 going, which will probably end up being the largest group to go.
- Dr. Linda Comer received an HRSA Nurse Traineeship Grant that will provide $11,000 each to second- and third-year FNP students for the next two years (for a total of approximately $700,000).
- Professor Colleen Hayes received an $8,000 AHEC grant for long-term care clinical site development.
- Dana Deyton, a student in the FNP program, was nominated and chosen as a Great 100 nurse scholarship recipient and attended the gala.
Two-time Nursing Alumna Promoted to Army Colonel

Col. Beth Lohse, of Special Forces and stationed at Fort Bragg, was promoted to full colonel on Aug. 20, 2012. Lohse, pictured with her family, is a double graduate of Western Carolina University School of Nursing. In 1985 she was an ROTC distinguished graduate and was commissioned in the Army Nurse Corps. She has had numerous assignments around the world including serving in Desert Storm. In 2005 she returned to WCU to pursue her master’s degree as a family nurse practitioner and graduated in 2008. She currently serves as a primary care provider with the Aid Station/Joint Medical Augmentation Unit, Joint Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg. While serving in the Army, Lohse has received many awards, including five Army commendation medals, three Army achievement medals, and humanitarian service medals during Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita. In addition, she is a French language skill identifier for the Army. Lohse is one of our own and makes us proud.

WCU School of Nursing Moves Into Two New Locations

work with the PT students on a particular topic they were learning in class. It was a great opportunity to get an idea of how our different disciplines work and can work together.”

The second move involved the remaining nursing programs. The accelerated BSN program, RN to BSN program, and all graduate nursing programs moved from the A-B Tech Enka campus to unite with the WCU programs at the new Biltmore Park location in the fall of 2012.

Go to biltmorepark.com to read more about the various shops, restaurants and other amenities available at this location. Visit WCU’s Programs in Asheville website, biltmorepark.wcu.edu, for more information and to view frequently asked questions about the move to Biltmore Park.

We are excited about the new changes that have occurred with the School of Nursing in 2012. To learn more, contact Dr. Jessica Shirley, director of student services, at jshirley@wcu.edu.
WCU Nursing Advisory Committee Meets in Biltmore

The Education Advisory Committee of WCU’s School of Nursing met in late September in the new Biltmore Park facility. The committee advises the School of Nursing regarding needs, trends and changes in health care delivery in the region. Our experts invest their time and experience to give their input into what is going on regarding the region’s health care and its needs.

Dedication of Health and Human Sciences Building

Chancellor David Belcher and the Western Carolina University Board of Trustees invite you to the dedication of the new Health and Human Sciences Building. The four-story, 160,000-square-foot building is home to more than 1,200 undergraduate students and some 300 graduate students. The rooms are designed specifically for health-related teaching and learning.

Thursday, February 28, 2013, at 10 a.m.
Remarks, 10:10 a.m. | Tours and refreshments, 10:30-11:30 a.m.
RSVP by Monday, February 18
healthandhumansciences@wcu.edu
Fund the Future of Nursing

For some of you, nursing school is fresh in your mind. For others, it is a distant memory but one that has provided a lifetime of rewards. Regardless of when we became nurses, it is our time to lead. Nursing school is a financial burden on those who want to spend a lifetime helping others. You can assure a promising future for nursing students at WCU with a charitable bequest or donation to the WCU School of Nursing Development Fund. If you choose to make a bequest, it will cost nothing during your lifetime, and it may reduce estate taxes and increase the size of the estate available for your heirs. Bequests are easy to arrange and can be made from a variety of assets, including cash, publicly traded securities, real estate and personal property. You can also name the school as a beneficiary of a tax-deferred retirement plan or life insurance policy. Finally, we would like to add a donor recognition section to future newsletters.

For more information, contact Meg White at 828.227.3343 or send a check (put “nursing” in the memo line) to WCU 201 HFR, Cullowhee, NC 28723. You can also log onto give.wcu.edu and choose “Make a Gift Now.” Under “Area of Giving” choose a subcategory of nurse anesthesia or School of Nursing.

Stay Connected

For future newsletters, we would like to add alumni updates in a “Class Notes” section. Please send your news to Jessica Shirley EdD, the School of Nursing student services director, at jshirley@wcu.edu. Visit us on Facebook at facebook.com/WCUNursing.