

Stephen F. Austin State University School of Nursing

New Simulation Center is Dramatic Upgrade
and Valuable Nursing Student Recruitment Tool.



United States

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFASU) Richard and Lucille DeWitt School of Nursing is a Laerdal Center of Educational Excellence. With a history of high licensure, graduation and persistence rates in Texas, it is accredited by the National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC) and students often have jobs waiting for them upon graduation. In January 2010, SFASU opened a new 41,000 square foot building, featuring a 9,000 square foot simulation center, administrative offices, conference room and four 100-student-capacity classrooms.



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"Previously, we operated our simulation-based training programs out of a 600-square foot windowless room," said Amy Owen, MSN, RN, Director of Simulation. "We had a couple of simulators but the beds wouldn't fit through the doors so to move a manikin, we carried it or used a wheelchair. We adapted, we built it into the scenario. Last week, in the new center, we held a disaster drill with 47 students, an O/B scenario and a medical surgery blood clot simulation. We can hold two or three different scenarios every week – we're in simulator heaven!"

The new state-of-the-art simulation center features:

- Assessment lab (10 examination tables, four VitalSim manikins)
- 10-bed medical surgical ICU with individual rooms (one SimMan, three SimMan 3Gs, six VitalSims)
- O/B and nursery (capacity four women and four babies, with SimNewB, SimBaby, VitalSim Nursing Kid, two VitalSim Nursing Babies, care dolls)
- ER skills lab with 6 Virtual IV's; 4 Adult and 2 Infant Systems
- 14-station control room utilizing the Laerdal Advanced Video System
- Storeroom with washer/dryer

Sim Center used for competency check-offs, community trainings and student recruitment

For 250 SFASU students, the new center plays a critical role in School of Nursing certification programs and required check-offs for numerous hospital competencies. Community members,

trauma nurses and the Red Cross use it for training, community outreach, ACLS sessions, blood drives and more. High school students interested in health industry careers tour the facilities, see manikins in use and even work as aides.

"The new Simulation Center is a huge recruitment tool for the School of Nursing," said Owen. "Enrollments are up from 63 to 80 in one semester. Applicants are of a higher level, are more highly qualified and will be able to work with the public sooner."

Student evaluations cite benefits such as confidence building, better communication with peers and patients, and skill set practice. "It allowed us to feel more relaxed because there was no way we could seriously injure or kill the patient," said one; another called it "especially helpful for those who are more visual learners." Scenarios were termed "fun, educational, intense, a great way to teach us to prioritize under pressure" or, as one put it: "I would like to have more time in Sim. I feel like it really prepares me as a future nurse for real life situations."

Planning ahead for higher quality control and efficiency

The SFASU School of Nursing applied to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) for a grant to hire three BSN nurses and a project manager to run and schedule simulations, and provide debriefing, versus training the entire staff of the facility. "We are required to use masters or PhD nurses to work in clinical settings with nursing students, but this creates a bottleneck that contributes to the huge nursing shortage. By extending our faculty, we'll achieve an even higher level of quality control on simulation," explained Owen. The plan would free Owen to focus on faculty-identified goals and objectives for scenarios, offer more consistency and allow more focus on applying skills in real-life settings. Preliminary approval is anticipated in summer 2010.

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Stephen F. Austin State University School of Nursing

The baccalaureate program at the Richard and Lucille DeWitt School of Nursing at Stephen F. Austin State University is accredited by the National League for Nursing and the Texas Board of Nursing. Students are admitted each fall and spring and complete prerequisite courses in the first two years, followed by nursing courses and clinical experience. State-of-the-art simulation equipment enables students to train for real-life scenarios while building confidence and teamwork: nearly 80% of faculty are practicing nurses, further enhancing student learning. For more information, visit www.fp.sfasu.edu/nursing/about.htm

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