



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2, 2016

PSC practical nursing program gains ACEN accreditation

Pensacola State College's practical nursing program has much to be proud of these days. The program recently received a nationally coveted stamp of approval.

In late March, the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) granted initial accreditation to the practical nursing program following an in depth two-year evaluation. The evaluation also included an intense three-day site visit in October for the five-year accreditation.

"In nursing education, ACEN is one of only three accrediting bodies in the country that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education," said Dusti Sluder, PSC director of nursing and assistant to the interim dean of Warrington campus.

PSC's practical nursing program – along with the college's other degree programs – also is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

"ACEN accreditation fosters ongoing program self-assessment, planning and improvement that maintain and enhance professional and educational decisions. The nursing program has gone through a rigorous peer-review process and met standards and criteria that are founded to be the centrality of nursing standards for the public good," Sluder added.

The college's practical nursing program also is one of the oldest and most successful in the Southeast and nation. About 90 percent of the program graduates have found employment over the past three years, records show.

The program has garnered national attention as well - from April through September 2008, the program was ranked No. 1 out of the 1,036 programs in the nation, according to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing Inc.

PSC President Ed Meadows said the ACEN accreditation speaks volumes about the quality of the college's practical nursing program.

"The goal of the college, its faculty and staff is to prepare our graduates for careers in the healthcare industry by providing the most cutting edge technology and up-to-date education possible," Meadows said.

"We believe we are being successful and plan to continue to improve opportunities for our current and future students. On behalf of faculty and staff with the Department of Nursing, we are honored to hold such a prestigious recognition. Our faculty and staff are dedicated to student success and the quality of education," the president added.

The practical nursing program provides students with state-of-the-art learning resources such as the Mary Ekdahl Smart Center. Opening in summer 2006, the approximately 12,000 square-foot smart center includes an emergency room, a 10-bed lab, simulation labs, a fully-furnished birthing suite, pediatric suite, cardiopulmonary suite, debriefing rooms and custom recording systems that can broadcast live from archives to any audiovisual-equipped classroom.

The facility conducts a variety of "real world" clinical scenarios — ranging from a patient having cardiac arrest to experiencing postoperative pain, to help nursing students learn judgment and skills needed to care for patients. It also has 14 high-fidelity simulators: two Laerdal SimMan Classic, five Laerdal SimEssential, a Laerdal 3G, Laerdal SimNewB, Laerdal SimBaby, and Gaumard's wireless Noelle birthing simulator, Neonatal Hal, and two 5-year-old Hal. It also has Harvey, a cardiopulmonary patient simulator that can be used in small groups or a classroom setting.

"Practical nursing students spend a portion of their clinical experience in the simulation center. Students are able to learn in a safe environment which is an invaluable learning tool," Sluder explained.

The ACEN's initial accreditation was based on six standards: Mission and administration capacity, faculty and staff, students, program curriculum, resources and outcomes. The commission will perform another site visit in 2020 for continuing accreditation.

The ACEN is at 3343 Peachtree Road, NE, Suite 850, Atlanta GA 30326 For more details, call (404) 975- 5000, Fax: 404.975.5020. www.acenursing.org

For more information, call PSC Marketing Director Sheila Nichols at (850) 484-1428.