

UNC Tomorrow

UNCW School of Nursing

The UNCW School of Nursing is a community of health care professionals dedicated to excellence in teaching, scholarship, practice and professional community service. Faculty commitment to a high quality academic environment ensures that graduates are educated to provide quality health care to diverse populations on local, regional, state, national and international levels. In partnership with communities, the faculty is dedicated to preparing graduates to address the health needs of populations in dynamic health care environments. Through strong collaborative relationships with the community, faculty and students provide health services and education to individuals and families across the life cycle.

1. What programs and curricula do you have that respond to specific needs?

All academic programs in the School of Nursing are responsive to local, state and national health care needs.

- Undergraduate nursing program is responsive to the national nursing shortage of baccalaureate-prepared nurses.
- Graduate program prepares family nurses practitioners for urban and rural settings to expand health care access. The students work with other health care professionals to solve medical problems in southeastern North Carolina. There is an additional Master of Science option which prepares nurse educators, especially for the community colleges who have a mandate to have all master's prepared faculty. The faculty nurse educator option is also designed to alleviate the nursing shortage by increasing the number of qualified faculty allowing the admission of students who are qualified, who cannot be accommodated at this time.
- Clinical Research Program contributes to the economic development of Wilmington, N.C. and its surrounding areas by graduating qualified individuals who can immediately begin contributing to Wilmington-area biopharmaceutical companies as professionals.

Four courses are highlighted at this time.

- **Community Health** provides a clinical practice experience in health departments in Onslow, Pender, New Hanover, and Brunswick Counties. They respond to patient, family, environmental, and community needs based upon assessments from the counties. Clinical practice areas include the following: Maternal Health, Child Health, Home Care Visits (mother, child, and adults), Good Shepherd Ministries Clinic, Communicable Disease, and School Health.
- **Health Policy** is an undergraduate course (Web-enhanced) for both pre-licensure nursing students and RN/BSN completion students (fully online). This course prepares our SON graduates for full and active participation in their community's policy work to ensure a healthy population and a quality of life that supports the

- population's physical and mental health while focusing upon risk reduction and disease prevention.
- **Pediatrics** includes a clinical component called **Camp Special Time**, which provides students a clinical practice immersion experience with children who are developmentally disabled or have chronic illnesses. The uniqueness of the program is that it also provides respite for **military families** at Camp Lejeune Marine Base.
 - **Gerontology/End of Life course** prepares students to use the highest standards of practice in caring for the elderly. Students use a standardized comprehensive geriatric assessment for adults over 65-years-old in their home setting and make recommendations for care. Assessment includes but is not limited to: immunizations, cancer screening, hearing and vision screening, glaucoma and dental exam, activities of daily living, physical activity, community resource utilization, mental health assessment, social and spiritual assessment. After assessment, each adult is given a notebook with the assessment and recommendations. Students and faculty follow up with physician referrals if needed and health promotion and disease prevention recommendations.

2. How are those programs and curricula delivered?

- The graduate program is delivered over the academic year with Web-enhanced format (Web CT/VISTA/Campus edition and Vista) and preceptored student clinical practice hours.
- The RN/BSN is totally online format with clinical practice hours at locations convenient for student access.
- The Master's FNP option uses online delivery and precepted clinical. The MSN/NE is online with periodic standard face to face delivery and precepted teaching residency.
- The Pre-licensure curriculum is delivered in traditional face-to-face format and online-enhanced. Undergraduate nursing students care for patients and provide health education under faculty supervision in homes, hospice, hospitals, schools, day care centers, health departments, clinics and other settings.
- The Clinical Research program is online and students have clinical practice internships in the biopharmaceutical industry.

3. What research and scholarship activities are employed to address specific needs?

Research and its dissemination in nursing education forums add to the evidence base for best practices in nursing education. Simulation Center development, simulation research, research dissemination are added to the evidence base for best practices in nursing education.

Faculty are actively participating in:

- UNCW Obesity Prevention Initiative/Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention proposal for Weight-Wise Program at Northwest, NC (Brunswick County);

- Writing a white paper and developing a presentation on The State of Health and Well-Being Across the Lifespan of the Region's Population;
- Writing an AHEC Grant for the development of the Bolton Health and Wellness Center as a clinical site for our SON students (undergraduates and graduates) from a variety of courses at all levels of study minimally including: Adult Health I & II, Community Nursing, Mental Health Nursing, Gerontology, and Health Policy;
- Working with an interdisciplinary team on an Interpersonal Violence of Latinos and Hispanics research grant;
- Implementing an international and cultural immersion grant;
- Developing a grant to integrate technology (informatics, simulation, telehealth) into the undergraduate and graduate curricula.
- Collaborating with the Watson School of Education to provide hands-on experience with medical devices and terminology commonly used by the medically fragile child in the local public school system as well as facilitating communication between educators and school nurses.
- Organizing teams, participating in walks and fundraising for the following community non-profits: Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, American Cancer Society Relay for Life, American Heart Association.
- Co-sponsors with New Hanover Community Action, Inc. in the annual "From our Heart to Yours" Valentine's Day event to screen African-American women for hypertension and educate about heart disease. Women are treated to lunch, screened by UNCW SON faculty and students for diabetes and hypertension, then addressed by a cardiologist on risk factors for heart disease.

4. How are research and scholarship activities applied to address specific needs?

Research and scholarship activities are used primarily to determine new knowledge and strengthen the quality of undergraduate and graduate teaching. The activities allow both students and faculty to reason and think critically and test clinical decision-making. Moreover, these activities strengthen clinical practice and solve community health and social problems. Some of the activities include the following:

- Undergraduate clinical reasoning during human patient simulation
- Graduate clinical reasoning with standardized patients
- Undergraduate use of bedside technology
- Graduate instruction in the use of simulation for nursing education
- Identifying health issues currently of highest concern in the region
- Identifying possible solutions to address these health concerns
- Designing studies to test and evaluate the solutions proposed for health concerns
- Working with a home health agency using telemonitoring to facilitate patient care and maintenance in the home

5. What types of public service programs and activities currently exist, and what needs are they intended to address?

Camp Special Time – provides respite for military parents of children with chronic illnesses and developmental disabilities. This is a public service program that promotes public health, maximizes student competence in the nursing role, supports client-centered care, and is an opportunity for students to demonstrate accountability and responsibility.

Camp BONES (Brigade of Nurse Exploring Seahawks) – addresses nursing workforce diversity and the nursing shortage. Camp BONES energizes middle school students to consider a career in a health-related field, specifically nursing. Students spend a residential week on campus in classes with faculty followed by a week of shadowing in a local hospital with registered nurses. Matriculating nursing students interact with these students to provide role model simulation and provide mentorship in applying knowledge gained in the learning experiences.

Health Maintenance and Education for Older Adults -- Pre-licensure students provide focused physical assessments and planned educational programs around verbalized needs of residents in independent living. The students' service to the community consists of providing health care and education, emotional support and advocacy.

Faculty members volunteer to provide health care at a clinic for people who are uninsured or underinsured and largely Latino and Hispanic.

6. How are those public service and scholarship activities organized and applied within the sectors or communities they are intended to benefit?

Most activities are organized within the academic curriculum. All clinical courses have a practice component in a health care agency. Agencies have preceptors or liaisons who work with faculty to create powerful learning experiences for students. Summer camps and weekend academies are planned for middle grade students. Collaborative partners for the School of Nursing include New Hanover Health Network, Coastal AHEC, Health Care Providers and local school districts.

2) How your unit identifies the current and future needs of the region or state, how those needs are reflected and prioritized in your unit's planning process, how you define and communicate with external stakeholders, and how you assess, measure, and communicate the impact of your unit on the region and the state (in response to the eight questions in the second section).

- Nursing faculty shortage, nursing practice shortage, nursing workforce diversity shortage data, demographics of the region and health care needs are analyzed for application to our academic programs.
- Annual reports are generated for the NC Board of Nursing, National League for Nursing, American Association of Colleges of Nursing, American Nurses Association and sometimes the SREB Council on Collegiate Nursing Education.
- Ongoing state of the academic programs is shared three times a year with the UNCW Nurse Advocate Board.
- Strategic Plan is reviewed annually for goal achievement and evaluation of the plan.
- Communication is ongoing at various meetings and presentations at the administrative, faculty and student levels.

- Outcome measurement is through graduation rates, certification percentage, RN-NCLEX passing percentage, formal and informal surveys.
- Continuous communications, periodic meetings and workshops inform us of the needs of our practice partners and regional health care providers.
- Interface and collaboration with our community college colleagues helps define the capacity to keep pace with the increasing demand for advanced degrees and quality updates in educational offerings.

3) How your unit, especially in academic affairs, promotes collaboration, innovation, student learning of critical thinking and communication skills, and assessment of the learning experience in relation to essential skills.

Assessment of learning is integrated throughout all academic programs and special projects using standards from the NC Board of Nursing, National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Collegiate Commission on Nursing Education and SACS. These measurement concepts and standards are built into SON philosophy and conceptual framework that underpin all academic programs.

- Interdisciplinary collaboration is institutionalized in the SON. Nurses work in teams with physicians and other health care providers in all clinical agencies, and therefore design and implement research projects together to improve patient care. Faculty work with other disciplines across the campus on service learning and research projects.
- Undergraduate and graduate programs develop communication and critical thinking skills in theory courses (Clinical Reasoning--Scientific Inquiry) and clinical practice.
- The SON systematic program evaluation plan spells out the assessment measures that are used to identify the level of skills, lack of skills, and time frame for evaluation.
- Students take standardized exams that measure “critical thinking” and provide information to student and faculty regarding outcomes of the semester’s work.
- Communication skills are challenged by class presentations and written assignments and health teaching projects presented in traditional and community settings. Collaboration: Intersection of clinical instructors, and guest speakers (Dr. Roberts – epidemiology) promotes intra school collaboration.
- Technology is used in all courses thereby supporting innovation in the curriculum. Online or online-enhanced instructional methods and simulation are critical components of the curricula.

2. Are there barriers to your achieving greater success in these areas that you would like to see addressed?

Faculty shortage and lack of resources to support scholarship is a barrier. Due to the shortage of nurse educators and labor intensive workload in the pre-licensure program, little time is left to carve out major research programs. For example, all clinical nursing courses are three contact hours to each semester hour (3:1). Each clinical course is three or four semester credit hours. So faculty who are assigned two 4-credit clinical courses in addition to one theory course will carry 28 contact hours. After courses are prepared and updated, student

evaluations are developed and implemented and a modicum of scholarship is carved out. Community service is the last priority. A systematic plan to provide equitability of opportunity is essential to support engaged and productive researchers and to encourage scholarship, especially for junior faculty. Staff support and resources to employ graduate assistants are not sufficient to maximize faculty effort leading to outcome productivity.

3. How do you approach developing critical thinking skills and strong communication skills among students?

Learning styles are determined and used to create appropriate learning experiences for students. Students are assigned to clinical experiences that compel them to communicate with people whom they do not know and with whose lifestyles and values they might not agree. They are taught to develop new ways of thinking and looking at the world. One example is having video conferences with Japanese students. Recognition of the value of refining nonverbal communication skills and techniques is highlighted in the cultural immersion experiences when comfort with a language other than English is a challenge. Students acknowledge that critical observation, listening, touch, and other nonverbal cues facilitate communication when common language is a challenge.

Another example is working with inner city families in federally subsidized housing developments.

4. How do you assess what skills students need, what skills have you identified, and what programs/curricula do you have in place to foster development of those skills?

Critical thinking skills are assessed by analyzing case studies and medical records, written assignments, essay questions and standardized testing. Demonstrated competency using human simulation reinforces traditional measures that promote critical thinking and clinical decision-making. Students are required to complete oral presentations with evaluation by peers and faculty allowing for the demonstration of concepts in logically articulated application outcomes.

Critical thinking skills among nursing students in their clinical courses are developed through various means: analysis of assessment findings; complete computer documentation of assessment and nursing activities; written assignments; journals and descriptions of pathophysiology; incorporation of cultural, spiritual and ethical considerations in nursing care. Assessment of students skills is made through in-class and online examinations, laboratory evaluation, written assignments, online discussions and class participation. Collaboration among faculty in all assessment and clinical courses is achieved through monthly meetings, informal conferences and online communications.

Evaluator/rater consistency is achieved through frequent communication among faculty to validate outcome criteria. Systematic evaluation using standardized testing with national norms also affirms student achievement among peers at the same educational level.

5. What is the current enrollment growth potential, both on-campus and off (i.e., distance education, etc.)? What limitations do you face in your growth potential? Where do graduates go to work? What are barriers, disincentives that preclude our doing more?

Current enrollment growth potential varies for the type of program both on- and off-campus.

Bachelor of Science with a concentration in professional nursing -- pre-licensure

- Recommendation from the UNC Board of Governors was to double the number of graduates from 38 to 76 by 2010.
- UNC Wilmington had as its goal to increase the number of pre-licensure graduates to 100 by the year 2010.
- Goal has been met and the graduation rate has more than doubled during the 2005-2006 academic year.
- By the end of the 2007 calendar year, SON graduation is projected to increase by 147%. Additional increase in student enrollment is influenced by the number of faculty the SON is able to recruit and retain and the availability of clinical sites.

UNC Wilmington Pre-licensure Graduates

2002-2003 grads	2003-2004		2004 -2005		2005- 2006		2006- 2007 (projected)
	Grads	% ↑	Grads	%↑	Grads	%↑	
38	48	26.3%	52	36.8%	70	84.2%	67 (May), 30 (Dec.)
							97 147.3%

Bachelor of Science with a concentration in professional nursing -- registered nurses

- UNCW SON’s goal was to increase RN to BS graduates from 5 in 2003 to 30 in 2010.
- Limited progress has been made in the RN to BS graduates and the enrollment has just started to increase. While we have achieved up to a 75% increase, the projection is 275% increase in graduations for RNs in the BS program.
- In our current recruitment efforts to date, 17 students have enrolled, an additional seven students have been admitted and six students are in the enrollment process. Most students tend to matriculate part-time taking one to two courses which prolongs the graduation date. Many are employed full time.

- All nursing courses are online but not all prerequisite courses are available in the online format.
- A minimum of 20 students should enroll annually to the RN to BS program to achieve the goal of 30 graduates a year.

Clinical Research

- The online program has an enrollment of 40 students.
- Graduation has doubled in the two-year period.
- Clinical Research Program presently works with Wilmington area clinical research employers to arrange internships for students in which students gain industry experience before graduation. The program also communicates on a regular basis with industry leaders to discuss current issues and concerns in the biopharmaceutical industry and incorporates that information into the Clinical Research Curriculum

BS Clinical Research Graduates

Year	2006	2007
Graduates	5	10

The major barrier to increased enrollment is insufficient full-time faculty.

Master of Science in Nursing

- The UNC Board of Governors’ recommendation was to graduate 60 master’s students annually.
- UNCW SON’s goal is to graduate 10-20 MSNs annually until sufficient faculty are hired to teach the students at a ratio of 1:6.

UNC Wilmington MSN Graduates

2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
7	6 (14.3% ↓)	9 (28%↑)	9 (28%↑)	Projected (3) (57.1%↓)

Number of clinical sites needed for the expansion by year and a plan to secure the sites. By all accounts, it has been recognized that an increase in clinical sites is needed.

A rise in clinical contracts and memoranda of agreement has occurred. The use of human patient simulation has not decreased the need for additional clinical sites yet did improve the quality of the students' practice. Standardized patients are being used as well for selected experiences.

	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
BS Degree program	13	17	57			
MSN Degree programs	11	8	23			