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Georgia Southern University Receives \$1.6 Million Grant for Advanced Nursing Education

AUGUST 6, 2015



Georgia Southern University's [School of Nursing](#) recently received a \$1.6 million grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) for advanced nursing education. With the funds, Georgia Southern will establish an Advanced Practice Nurse-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioners (APN-PMHNP) track to uniquely serve the psychiatric and mental health needs of rural and underserved communities, making it the only university in the state to focus on telemedicine training.

"This project will create innovative partnerships between the graduate nursing program at Georgia Southern University and agency clinical partners," said Dr. Melissa Garno, associate professor and BSN program director. "We are very excited to be able to bring this educational opportunity to our state, with the goal of increasing and enriching the quality of psychiatric/mental health services in our communities."

The program, which will start in fall 2015, is for baccalaureate prepared nurses earning a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree, students in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing to Doctor of Nursing Practice (BSN-DNP) program, or those seeking a post-master's certificate program. The seven-course online track will partner with clinical environments that provide team-based care, include on campus simulation learning experiences, and short summer intensive sessions with national content experts.

Students in this program will learn to manage the current and evolving needs of individuals, groups, families and vulnerable populations with mental health needs in both didactic and a variety of community-based and acute care clinical settings, incorporating telehealth care delivery.

Telemedicine, the use of telecommunication and information technologies in order to provide clinical health care at a distance, helps eliminate distance barriers and can improve access to medical services that would often not be consistently available in distant rural communities.

"We're very pleased Georgia Southern University was selected for this prestigious grant, but the real winners are the people of Georgia," said Jean E. Bartels, Ph.D., RN, and interim president of Georgia Southern. "Georgia currently ranks 45th in the nation for access to mental health care, so graduates from this new track will be in great demand to help meet the severe need for psychiatric and mental health services, especially in rural areas."

Georgia Southern's School of Nursing is consistently ranked among the top nursing programs in the nation by U.S. News & World Report. Its graduate programs place it at the top of the list of Georgia nursing schools, boasting a passing rate of 99 percent on certification exams.

Georgia Southern University, a public Carnegie Doctoral/Research University founded in 1906, offers more than 125-degree programs serving more than 20,500 students. Through eight colleges, the University offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degree programs built on more than a century of academic achievement. Georgia Southern is recognized for its student-centered and hands-on approach to education. GeorgiaSouthern.edu.