

Bedside Notes: The Pulse of Harris College

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A Note from Dean Watts:

Among the things the global pandemic has reminded us of is the value of health and the high esteem to which society holds those who provide healthcare and human services. As I reflect on this, I have never been more proud to represent a college dedicated to transforming global health. Probably like many of you, the pandemic has also caused me to reflect on academia and, specifically, life at TCU. For the past year and a half the way that students learn, staff support, and faculty teach and research have been impacted by the demands of a COVID-19 response and new changes brought on by the shifting landscape at our university. Our learning and work life feels very different now than it did when we were coming back to campus in the fall of 2019. But even as the pandemic tries to surge back, both experience and data give me a sense of confidence that we will come back stronger, more resilient, and with greater potential as a nursing and health sciences college than before the pandemic. I know this is possible because of the talent, dedication, and professionalism of the faculty and staff in Harris College, and the dedication we have to our students. Go Frogs!



TCU Graduate Athletic Training Program

By: Drew Brooks

What does going on tour with Drake have in common with working in the NFL with the New England Patriots? Both are jobs that TCU students have earned after graduating from the Athletic Training program within the department of kinesiology in Harris College.

While most people may not realize it, athletic training is a healthcare profession. It encompasses the prevention, examination, diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation of emergent, acute or chronic injuries and medical conditions. Athletic trainers typically work with a more physically active population in a variety of settings including high school, college, professional, and practice advancement settings such as fire departments, industrial, and performing arts.

Dr. Stephanie Jervas, director for the athletic training program, explained how TCU has one of the oldest programs in Texas -- in fact, 2022 will mark the 50th anniversary of the program. What started out as a four-year Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training program will now be shifting to a two-year graduate program.

Now that it is moving from a four-year curriculum to a two-year curriculum, the Athletic Training program is modifying its curriculum to offer advanced-level instruction. This will include more hands-on labs for students and immersive clinical experiences in athletic training environments.

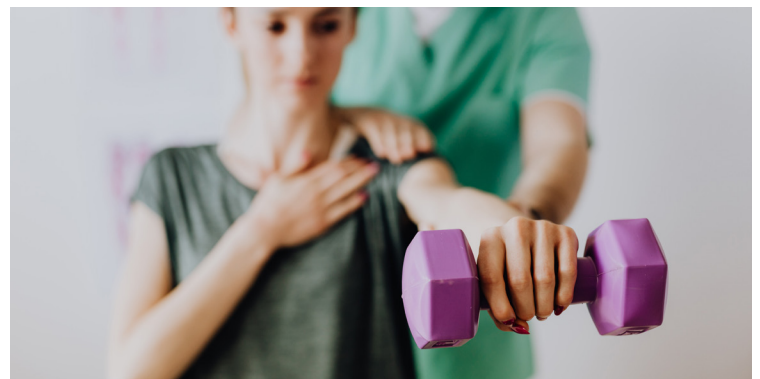
The Athletic Training program is unique in how

it prepares its students for their future careers. Dr. Jervas describes how Harris College supports the program through inter-professional education. While it's now a required component of Athletic Training programs, students and faculty in Harris College have been engaging in IPE for the past seven years. "We do educational events with nursing and nurse anesthesia, speech-language pathology, social work, and even the department of nutritional sciences within the College of Science and Engineering," she says. At these educational events, students come together and learn about the different roles and responsibilities of the various healthcare professions.

Harris College also offers students learning opportunities in "TeamSTEPPS." The STEPPS part of this stands for "strategies and tools to enhance performance and patient safety," Jervas explained. The students are taught "how to resolve conflict when they're working in teams and really what it means to have good teamwork," she says.

Dr. Jervas spoke about how "it's great to see these different professions, at the student level, sitting around a table and being able to apply different strategies to educate each other on what their educational program looks like and what their roles and responsibilities are in healthcare." This is something that she thinks "makes our students across our college stronger and something that sets them apart as they move out into their professional careers."

It's important to understand that a career of athletic training is challenging. Dr. Jervas says that those in athletic training circles have a saying: "no timeout, no halftime, no offseason." No matter where you go in athletic training, to do a good job and be successful requires dedication and effort. This is what makes an outstanding program like TCU's so crucial in preparing students for careers in athletic training.





Alumni Spotlight: Britt Brown

By: Drew Brooks

As he entered his freshman year of high school standing at about 4-foot-11-inches and 80 pounds, Britt Brown realized his limitations as a football player. Or, rather, his dad realized this fact. Brown had a goal to be part of football, so when he realized that his size may be a deterrent for playing, he pivoted to what would become his future career: athletic training.

Through TCU and SMU, Brown learned about athletic training summer camps. There, he met head athletic trainer Ross Bailey of TCU and athletic trainer Cash Birdwell of SMU, which set him on the career path of athletic training.

Now, he finds himself in his 25th year with the Dallas Cowboys where he serves as the Associate Athletic Trainer and Director of Rehabilitation. There was no athletic training major when Brown attended TCU, so he followed the normal steps at the time and

graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education in 1987 with the intention to begin his work in a high school.

However, during his time in the Harris College, TCU had an agreement with the Dallas Cowboys for one student with an interest in athletic training to be a summer intern. Brown was chosen in 1986 as the third TCU student to work with the Cowboys. After impressing the organization with his knowledge and skills, he was invited to come back to the Cowboys in 1987 for the entire year.

He returned to TCU in 1988 to obtain a Master of Science in Physical Education with an emphasis in Exercise Physiology, which he earned in 1990. After his master's degree, he worked at SMU for their basketball and football programs for three years before he was hired by the Miami Dolphins in 1992. In 1996, he returned to the Cowboys where he's worked ever since.



During the regular season, Brown's days start early at 5:30 a.m. with player treatments before their meetings. He then has treatment

and rehab in the morning until practice. After practice, he performs post-practice treatments and rehab until afternoon team meetings. After the players' team meetings, Brown has more treatments until he finally calls it a day around 7:30 p.m.

While some days are shorter than others, Brown doesn't get a true off day until the Cowboys' season ends. Then, in the offseason he handles postseason surgeries from injuries that players acquired during the season. He continues rehab with players like quarterback Dak Prescott, who broke his ankle but never stopped rehab after his injury.

Brown loves the fact that he doesn't sit behind a desk all day long. "I pretty much spend four to five hours every day during the offseason with guys rehabbing," he says. He describes how "the satisfaction of them being able to go back and do their job and throw a touchdown pass and play is all the gratification" he needs.

Brown advises people interested in the field of athletic training to realize that "there's going to be some sacrificial things that you're going to have to do and put up with in order to be successful." It's "not just a drive-thru deal where you automatically get everything you want." For those who want to work in the NFL like he does, he says "the number one thing is working hard and understanding that you're there to take care of the player."

The field of athletic training is challenging, especially in the NFL, but Britt Brown's grit and determination have led him to have a successful career with the Dallas Cowboys, and continue to push him to be the best that he can be.



Faculty Spotlight: Dennis Cheek

By: Drew Brooks

Dr. Dennis Cheek is the Abell-Hanger Professor of Gerontological Nursing, an endowed faculty appointment within TCU Nursing. Dr. Cheek came to TCU in the fall of 2003, making the fall of 2021 the start of his 19th year with the university. He teaches five classes, two at the undergraduate level, two at the graduate level, and one at the doctoral level. Dr. Cheek teaches courses in two Harris College academic units -- TCU Nursing and the School of Nurse Anesthesia.

His favorite part of teaching with TCU is the teacher-scholar-practitioner model. "Actually being able to teach and mentor students has been the greatest part," he says. When his oldest daughter had a child born in downtown Harris Hospital, he walked into the room to be greeted by several nurses and a midwife who had all been his former students.

Seeing professionals who were once his students has been a reward for him as well as a reinforcement. He

knows his students will be caring for him and his family in the future, and he is confident that their education in TCU Nursing will equip them to serve well.

Dr. Cheek's scholarship centers on cardiovascular function. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. While heart disease impacts both men and women, the risk of cardiovascular accidents -- i.e., heart attacks -- is often underestimated in women, and women are less likely to be referred for diagnostic cardiovascular testing compared to men.

When his mother-in-law's seemingly harmless scratchy throat turned into a double bypass surgery, Dr. Cheek decided to focus his future research program on answering questions that would enable us to better understand cardiovascular disease.

It is a common misconception that heart disease is a disease only affecting men, but, as Dr. Cheek has learned, the statistics reveal that more women are dying from it. While men on average experience a first heart attack at younger ages than women, the survival rate for women is worse. Dr. Cheek's research seeks to shed light onto this phenomenon.

When his mother-in-law visited his family and complained of a scratchy throat, Dr. Cheek thought little of it. Maybe it was simply the cold air she was breathing in while she walked around. Or maybe it was just a result of her age. However, after failing evaluative tests during a follow up, she had a procedure that revealed her right heart vessel was 99% closed and her left heart vessel was 80% closed.

Thankfully, she was able to receive double bypass surgery and lived for another 24 years. Despite lacking all the typical signs of a heart attack, Dr. Cheek's mother-in-law had been in serious danger. Had she not been evaluated for heart disease, "she would've had a huge heart attack and would have passed," he explained.

The anatomy of men and women is different. While men typically have trouble with the blood vessels on the surface of the heart, women typically have trouble with the smaller vessels that run into the heart. This makes it harder to determine the problem in women and may be a reason why heart disease is underappreciated in women compared to men.

As a teacher and scholar with TCU Nursing and Harris College, Dr. Cheek is investigating the

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presentation of cardiovascular disease as a function of gender and is specifically studying those with Type 1 diabetes. Diabetes is the number one contributor for heart disease, so he is currently leading a study of those who are using a monitor to keep blood sugar levels tightly regulated to measure their blood vessels compared to individuals without diabetes.

Along with his interesting research into heart disease, Dr. Cheek is also studying precision medicine, or pharmagenomics, and measuring the biomarker cortisol from human hair.

Harris College has been instrumental in facilitating Dr. Cheek's research. His research lab, located on

the second floor of the Bass building, is one of the few lab spaces in the college designed for bench (i.e., basic) science and translational research. His research collaborations include partnerships with faculty colleagues and students, and he has published papers in some of the most prestigious journals of his discipline and presented study results at regional, national, and international conferences.

Dr. Cheek loves TCU and has dedicated his career to educating the next generation of nurses and nurse scientists. He loves its teacher-scholar-practitioner model and ethos of TCU, which is that it always puts its students first.



One More Program for Harris College Students

By: Milton Mondlane

In this issue, Dr. Anthony DiLollo, the director of the Davies School of Communication Sciences & Disorders Leadership, and Teresa D. Gonzalez, assistant professor of professional practice, chronicle the path of the new graduate Deaf and Hard of Hearing Studies program.

Dr. DiLollo's academic journey began at the University of Western Australia where he received a Bachelor of Psychology, followed by a master's degree in Communication Disorders from the University of Mississippi, and ultimately a Doctorate of Philosophy in Speech Pathology from the University of Memphis. Dr. DiLollo continued to specialize in fluency disorders, counseling, and interpersonal communication which enhanced his career as a speech-language

pathologist and a counselor in clinical environments and the classroom.

Upon Dr. DiLollo's arrival at TCU in June of 2020, he joined ongoing efforts to develop the graduate Deaf and Hard of Hearing Studies program. Teresa D. Gonzalez, whose efforts were paramount to the beginning of this journey, informed us that the program began with the incentive to provide tangible real-life experiences to TCU students through an advanced master's program. The curriculum comprises sign language, aural rehabilitation, learner-centered teaching, and educational psychology classes. Moreover, TCU students serve as interns within the local regional day school programs for the deaf and hard of hearing prior to their student teaching field experiences. TCU students are often placed within the Birdville Regional Day School Program for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, which is located in North Richland Hills, Texas, and the Regional Deaf program situated within the Crowley Independent School District.

The development of this program highlights the Davies School faculty commitment to fostering inclusive learning environments. Teresa Gonzalez recounts that, along with faculty member Lynn Flahive and Dean Chris Watts, they took on the challenge of developing a degree plan and its curriculum. Moreover, she stated: "I had to collaborate with the professors from the College of Education to meet the Texas Education Agency requirements. ... After reviewing multiple regional day school programs for the deaf and hard of hearing online, it was apparent that graduating students need to be dually certified.

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This dual certification involved passing the Texas Examination of Educator Standards and the Texas Assessment of Sign Communication in two educational fields of study. Therefore, graduating students needed to be certified in Habilitation of the DHH and Early Childhood. What a journey!

The pioneers of this program have been successful in the developmental phase, and now they are seeking to grow enrollment. Some of the present challenges include spreading awareness of the program to enhance its recruitment efforts. Dr. DiLollo emphasized that the demand for hearing itinerant teachers is still unmet because very few students learn about the opportunity to help exceptional children and adolescents with deafness conditions.

Many TCU alumni of the undergraduate Habilitation of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing program achieved leadership roles and accolades upon graduation. For instance, former student Chandler Schoonover from the class of 2010 has been presented the “2018 Teacher of the Year” award by the Weatherford Independent School District and the “Outstanding Teacher of the Year” 2018 award by the Statewide Conference on Education of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, an award that was selected by the conference sponsor, the Texas Association of Parents and Educators of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing.

As the leadership of the program considers its future, their labors will be dedicated to increasing the number of students. As the program grows, their goal is to potentially add a faculty member to the program.

Dr. DiLollo and Teresa Gonzalez are motivated by the current master’s students on track for graduation, and the impact they will have on the underserved community of deaf students. It is important to mention that the benefits to the underserved communities of deaf students in the state of Texas cannot be overemphasized. Raelicia Morris, another TCU alumna working as a deaf education teacher at Smithfield Middle School, and other alumni demonstrate every day the spirit of service that drives our Horned Frog community.



The Tale of Evidence-Based Practice at TCU, as told by Dr. Dru Riddle

By: Milton Mondlane

Dr. Dru Riddle has been a full-time faculty member for 10 years, but he has been a member of the Frog community since 2003. He is a nurse anesthetist, a profession that he loves and continues to

practice. Dr. Riddle has also developed a passion for teaching and, in 2012, he began his academic career at TCU.

Dr. Riddle’s apprehension of fellow nurse anesthetists who did not embrace evidence-based practices motivated him to make a contribution to at least one of the 135 anesthetist programs in the United States. Ergo, he was moved to help TCU students to become more competent nurse anesthetists.

After Dr. Susan Mace Weeks moved to her role as TCU’s Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Director of the Health Innovation Institute at TCU, Dr. Riddle was assigned to lead TCU’s Center for Translational Research, a subcenter of HIIAT. Departments such as kinesiology have been leveraging this center to help students develop the didactic toolkits that will train them to be competent healthcare workers. Dr. Riddle emphasized that didactic research is paramount to students’ success upon graduation. At TCU, they have the opportunity to learn how to dissect data and identify high-quality research. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic is incentivizing students to get further acquainted with the research component of the medical world by learning to decipher the relevance of different data sets to their studies.

As a professor and the director of the Center for Transnational Research, and as the lead on evidence-based practice at TCU, Dr. Riddle and other members of the faculty ask students to continuously seek better data by setting up data identification methodologies and thoroughly following their respective

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plans. Then, the students proceed to present and articulate their findings. These skills are crucial in helping students identify trends, patterns, and foresee crises as they become practitioners of their trade.

As for the future of evidence-based practice, Harris College students can anticipate additional training in expedition and streamlining of data acquisition that is relevant to their studies, coupled with a greater understanding of how to write valuable and high-impact publications. Furthermore, Dr. Riddle indicated

that in many ways the future is already here. As the co-chair of Cochrane US, which propagates evidence-based healthcare decisions, Dr. Riddle is establishing collaborative pursuits with TCU's Center for Translational Research. Such collaboration is pushing TCU to the global stage as they build Cochrane's infrastructure with partners in the UK, Israel, Australia, and other companies.

TCU Harris college students must look forward to the future of this tale!



Frogs Stand Up for Others

By: Milton Mondlane

The recent news cycles have been flooded with accounts of social injustice. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, we all underwent critical moments ranging from racial violence and political discord to the pain of losing loved ones. Amidst these difficult times, it is prideful to know that fellow Frogs continue to fight on behalf of others and encourage movements for change. One of these Frogs is Dr. Nada Elias-Lambert. She is a social worker by trade and the current interim Chair of the Department of Social Work, where she is also an associate professor.

Dr. Elias-Lambert's trajectory began before she pursued her doctoral degree in social work. She first met her passion when she worked as a social worker to prevent gender-based violence. The experiences she had were paramount to her continued pursuit of social work in academia and professional settings. Moreover,

and perhaps most importantly, as a social worker Dr. Elias-Lambert embraces the value of social justice. She realized that she wanted to help her community members transform from bystanders to upstanders. That was the genesis of the Bystander to Upstander: Transforming Culture program.

The Bystander to Upstander program aims to close the information gap that prevents faculty and staff members from protecting members of their community when incidents of gender-based violence and other social injustices such as racism, sexism, and heterosexism occur in their vicinity. In 2016, Dr. Elias-Lambert started the actionable awareness campaign that is Bystander to Upstander, B2U for short. It has since received a positive reception from faculty and staff on the TCU campus. TCU faculty have been remarkably engaged and facilitated the "train-the-trainer" model, where they return to their respective units and departments to share the information they received from the program. One of the hallmarks of culture change facilitated by B2U was when Dean Phil Hartman of the College of Science and Engineering adopted the program in his college.

More recently, Brad Stewart, associate director of TCU's Wellness Center, and Leah Carnahan, assistant director at TCU's Campus Advocacy, Resources & Education office, are leading the bystander intervention efforts for students. The students develop bystander intervention skillsets to address sexism, racism, and other forms of injustice. Staff members, faculty, and students are collaboratively striving to prevent a continuum of injustices, from racist jokes to outright violence. Consequently, as more Frogs stand up for others, the more the purple community abandons the idea that violence intervention is "not my business."

As with any other program that encourages a change

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in values and viscerally held opinions, there are difficulties. There are logistical struggles that limit Dr. Elias-Lambert's outreach, given that she is a professor and cannot accommodate a number of workshop requests to meet the growing demand. There are also more persistent obstacles, such as eliminating norms that facilitate violence. Nevertheless, the Bystander to Upstander program receives institutional support, especially from Dean Watts in Harris College and Associate Provost for Research, Dr. Floyd Wormley.

Dr. Elias-Lambert is currently working with partners at the Center on Violence Against Women and Children at the Rutgers School of Social Work to develop a B2U program implementation guide with the goal of implementing and evaluating the B2U program with a pilot group at Rutgers early next year. Dr. Elias-Lambert is confident that the program will grow and will soon unveil workshop facilitator and implementation guides as well as a faculty bystander attitude and behavior scale to utilize in outcome evaluations.



Special edition: A conversation with Dr. Suzy Lockwood

By: Milton Mondlane

Dr. Suzy Lockwood's introduction.

I came to TCU as a faculty member in 1997 having completed my Bachelor of Science in Nursing at TCU in 1983. I am the current Associate Dean for Nursing & Nurse Anesthesia and Director of the Center for Oncology Education & Research Director. In my capacity, I oversee all components of academic affairs for the TCU Nursing unit. I also teach courses at the undergraduate and doctoral levels.

TCU Nursing's adaptability to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nursing graduate-level courses have always been offered online since the first program began in the mid-2000s. This familiarity with teaching online prepared our professors to address the pedagogical difficulties imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, all exams in Nursing and Nurse Anesthesia have been computer-based

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and administered online for more than five years. Consequently, the majority of our faculty were well prepared to adjust to remote instruction, especially at the graduate level. For undergraduate students, the adjustment was more difficult, but they adjusted very quickly.

The most significant changes revolved around clinical/practicum instruction. Nursing students at all levels are required to complete a significant amount of hands-on clinical experience in various healthcare settings. When the pandemic began, students could no longer go to hospitals or even engage in simulated experiences in the Health Professionals Learning Center at TCU. However, with the guidance of nursing faculty and support of TCU Nursing leadership, students were given access to multiple computer-based technology and programs that permitted them to continue their learning during the spring semester of 2020. Our professors were also very resourceful. They came to our campus to complete simulations and record material for students. I am delighted with our faculty and students. They went above and beyond!

Students are excited to get back. I too am excited to have them back. The only drawback to date is that our faculty are accustomed to being actively engaged and knowing every student's name -- the facemask makes that harder!

Cultivating academic excellence and evidence-based practices under E-learning conditions.

As I mentioned, for the last five years, our faculty has been doing testing online. So, they have been ahead of the game when it comes to academic honesty. Of course, the testing that takes place in all of the nursing programs tends to be high-stakes. With access to zoom, video monitoring, and lock-down browsers we have been able to continue the examination procedures/processes without significant issues. Our professors are master teachers and understand the value of test integrity and design that will provide all students with an opportunity and environment to demonstrate their grasp and understanding of the material. As we are preparing members of the future workforce, we also instill in our students a strong commitment to the code of ethics which we will be practicing under.



Navigating institutional changes amid uncertain times.

Providing 100% instruction online required a waiver from the governor and our accrediting body. One of the initial problems was an understanding of the short-term and long-term impact of the pandemic. When we reached the end of the spring semester of 2020, these waivers were about to expire, and COVID-19 was still rampant. Thankfully, the governor and our various accrediting bodies extended them. From a clinical instruction perspective, our students were also allowed to return to our clinical sites beginning in June 2020 and with TCU's support and understanding of the required instruction of health professionals we were fully on campus by the beginning of the 2020 fall semester.

One area that remained challenging was clinical teaching in the pediatric setting. This limitation was due to their vulnerability of course. Hence, the faculty relied on filming, case studies, and simulations. Their efforts merit our applause; student learning especially in this area was not reduced in any way. Nevertheless, when it comes to nursing, remote or online instruction do not do justice to the experiences our students will face when they join the labor force. This reality highlights the importance of our rapid return to in-person training. On the other side, our students gained many of the "soft" critical nursing skills. Nurses must be flexible in

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unpredictable conditions, and the COVID-19 pandemic helped our students develop the confidence to thrive in very overwhelming environments.

It is also reassuring to know that hospitals are adapting to students who graduated in December 2020 or May 2021. They are providing additional instruction and learning experiences during orientation for graduate nurses to ensure they are indeed prepared to provide safe, quality care.

Immediate and long-term challenges to TCU Nursing posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are bad and good things that came out of a pandemic. For example, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, students had experiences that reinforced their personal protective equipment usage. Alternatively, because people are using masks and washing hands, the flu season has not been as adverse as we know it can be.



More students were prepared for class and became more intentional about their studies. Moreover, and this is fundamental, now more faculty and students have an even better appreciation and understanding for population health and disaster preparedness and the vital role that nurses play in protecting our communities. This is truly a profession of respect and trust. All over the country and the world, our nurses have had experiences that we could never imagine before the pandemic.

On the other hand, the death toll is breathtaking. Likewise, we are seeing that many nurses in the workforce are leaving. A primary driver in this has been a direct result of the pandemic and the toll it has exacted on their mental health. These have been very exhausting times.

Telehealth nursing potential and COVID-19 as an impetus.

Our graduate curricula already included telehealth, and we are reshaping the undergraduate curricula to introduce it to our students. Telehealth is reshaping the health industry, and we want our students to get the experience before they graduate. In the undergraduate simulation courses, students have the opportunity to discover the value of virtual communication.

Thank you, Dr. Suzy Lockwood. Thank you to all our Frog nurses and nurses-to-be. Thank you to all nurses who work tirelessly to ensure the safe care of all persons!

About the Harris College

Harris College is vibrant and thriving with innovative students, faculty, programs and curricula -- all focused on healthcare professions that make a difference for others. Programs in Harris College date back to the early history of TCU and also Fort Worth. The Harris College of Nursing & Health Sciences represents the original healthcare-focused college of our university, and has educated health professionals who have gone on to impact the lives of people within communities and also distinguish themselves as leaders within their professions.

The academic units within Harris College -- Communication Sciences and Disorders, Kinesiology, Nurse Anesthesia, Nursing, and Social Work -- are home to more than 1,700 undergraduate and graduate students who are supported by committed and talented faculty and staff.



Harris College
of Nursing & Health Sciences