

Nursing Students Receive Training in New State-of-the-Art Advanced Nursing Education Suite

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Utah State University formally opened its Emma Eccles Jones Advanced Nursing Education Suite this summer.

The newly remodeled space will allow the Department of Nursing in the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services to double its current size, both in space and in student capacity. Now, a total of 60 students may be admitted into the BSN program each year, 30 per semester. A total of 120 students will be enrolled in the BSN program at any given time.

An extensive remodeling began in May 2022, approximately 8,000 square feet of underutilized locker room space in the 1970s-era Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (HPER) building. The remodel not only made the new 5,000 square-foot nursing education suite possible, but a larger and more efficient swimming pool cage was added, the lobby space adjacent to the nursing suite and swimming pool area was updated, and two gender-neutral restrooms were installed. The USU Women's Gymnastics team also received a new locker room.

The nursing suite provides not only classroom space but is designed to function like the floor of a hospital. It boasts four simulation rooms, a skills practice lab, a nurses' station, a medication room, three briefing rooms and more.

"Adjacent to each simulation room is a control room with a one-way observation window. This allows faculty to observe student interactions with their 'patient' in real-time," says Carma Miller, head of the USU Department of Nursing. "Faculty in the control room can adjust the manikin's condition and speak through the manikin to create a lifelike patient situation for the students."

The suite's high-tech design provides students with invaluable practice in a risk-free environment. In each simulation room, a medical manikin that closely simulates human physiology and anatomy (including heartbeat and pulse) can breathe, respond to students' interventions

by changing vital signs, and even speak, moan or scream. Students give injections, adjust oxygen rates, place feeding tubes and start IVs. They interact with the manikins as if they are live patients, learning from mistakes and repeatedly practicing their clinical skills.

Students begin simulations by gathering in a briefing room, where they are briefed on the problems their patient is experiencing and are introduced to the patient scenario.

"Students play different roles in the simulation exercise, such as the nurse, an aide or a distressed family member," Miller said. "This gives them a better appreciation of the dynamics they'll experience in the hospital."

Recognizing the contributions of the donors, Carma Miller, head of the Department of Nursing, said: "We are deeply grateful to all our donors who supported the expansion of the BSN nursing program on our USU Logan campus. Prior to this new addition, the nursing program was only able to accept one in every three qualified applicants. We are delighted that for the first time in our program history, a second cohort of nursing students was admitted in January 2024."