

Project Abstract

Project Title: Samford University Nurse Anesthesia Program Traineeship
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Overview of Project: Samford University nurse anesthesia program has moved to an entry level Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program. Goals of the program are to prepare nurse anesthetists with excellent clinical skills, with an emphasis on cultural and spiritual competence, and a focus on care needs of rural and underserved health populations, including the young, old, and those with disabilities. The curriculum is a comprehensive program of study that addresses the full anesthesia scope of practice, based on professional standards and current state-of-the-art practice models. Multi-modal analgesia as well as service and cultural understanding are emphasized throughout the curriculum, service-learning component, and clinical experiences.

Primary outcomes of the Samford University Nurse Anesthesia Traineeship project are to: 1) Prepare students to practice at the highest level for all patient groups, but especially rural and medically underserved patients across the lifespan in Alabama and the southeast; 2) Increase student awareness of their impact on the opioid crisis; 3) Increase students' involvement in community service and culturally-appropriate health promotion and care including the opioid crisis; and 4) Maintain greater than 60% of graduates serving in rural, healthcare provider shortage (HPSA), and underserved (MUA) areas of Alabama and the southeast.

Project Processes: Traineeship funds provide Samford nurse anesthesia students with necessary resources to complete their education and meet career goals. Because nurse anesthesia students are not able to work during most of the program, this funding is critical to their success. The Samford program is housed within a private university; extra funding has allowed the program to stay competitive with other programs across the country. Full-time students in the second and third phases who receive funding must be in good standing with the program and university. The program has made strong efforts to increase student awareness of alternatives to opioid use during anesthesia. Including all current students, 84% of students are from culturally diverse, rural, and/or disadvantaged backgrounds. Thirty-five clinical sites include 80% sites in rural, MUA, and/or HPSA. Traineeship support allows students this rich clinical exposure.

The Samford University Nurse Anesthesia program is fully accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs (COA). All graduates are eligible to sit for the National Certification Examination from the National Board of Certification and Recertification for Nurse Anesthetists (NBCRNA). Based on the School of Nursing's Systematic Evaluation Plan and HRSA requirements, an inclusive evaluation plan will measure the effectiveness of the project.