

Simulation Breeds Success

Concordia College New York Nursing Program

By Rachel Villoria

Concordia College's Nursing Program had a vision of technology supplementing and supporting the level of learning in their labs. MediaPOINTE®'s HD Portal proved to be an excellent solution for promoting student independence and better preparing future nurses for their careers.

Striving for Independence

Established in 1881 as a private institution, Concordia College was founded on a strong academic reputation, upheld to this day. US News & World Report's Best Colleges recently ranked Concordia at #31 for best colleges in the North Region for 2015, a prestigious place, and a credit to the education students have come to expect of this university.

CONCORDIA COLLEGE

Concordia College's Division of Nursing, has established itself as a top program in the field – boasting small class sizes, renowned faculty, emphasis on care, and the use of cutting-edge technology. As much of the school's budget has gone to maintaining high-tech simulation equipment, the supplementary technology, used to foster multiple levels of learning in the Simulation Lab, quickly became dated and problematic.

The Patricia Nelson Nursing Learning Resource Center Simulation Lab (NLRC) is a crucial aspect of the Nursing Program's curriculum, in which students are presented the opportunity to exercise the skills they learn in lectures before putting them to the test in clinical application. Concordia's top-of-the-line lab had just one setback – the audio-visual system in place used to record and review.



Dr. Christine Corcoran, Director of The NLRC and Assistant Professor of Nursing at Concordia, explained, "We were using a hand-held camera placed on a table, which also required us to be in the room with the students during simulations." Using this camera not only caused problems in the quality of recording, sound, and ability to capture everything needed, but it stunted students' ability to act independently in the labs.

The presence of faculty and other students in the room during simulations creates a tendency towards nervousness in the students, which drives them to look to others in the room for reassurance of their actions – a luxury not available to nurses on the job. Realizing this was a problem that needed to be solved, Dr. Corcoran approached the IT Department at Concordia with a vision. The IT Department then sought the help of Adtech Systems, who brought Concordia several systems to choose from, including the MediaPOINTE® HD Portal.

Vision Becomes Reality

Corcoran explains how the HD Portal quickly outshone the competitors, “When Adtech came in and showed us MediaPOINTE® we saw that the price was right, there was a grant program involved, and that this was something anyone could use without having to rely upon IT’s tech savvy, we knew it was the right product for us.” MediaPOINTE®’s HD Portal brought a high-quality mounted camera with streaming and recording abilities to Concordia, but more than that, the HD Portal allowed for what Corcoran most needed out of the system – the ability for the faculty and students to observe simulation labs from outside of the room.

Using MediaPOINTE®’s Keycard Automation system, students can start and stop their recording and streaming events while their instructors and classmates watch from the other room. Corcoran states, “The two best aspects about MediaPOINTE® allowing us to be outside of the room are that, one: it allows students to make mistakes and rather than look to us for the answers, they must rely on their own instincts and their own knowledge; and, two: it allows for other students to observe without being so close to the simulation that all they can think about is their position in the room and what they would do. Being outside lets them see the whole picture with more objectivity.”





The benefits of Concordia's newly completed Simulation Lab have not gone unnoticed. Dr. Corcoran tells us that students have given extremely positive feedback to the lab upon completing the Oxygen Therapy skills module and are constantly asking for more time with the system. She also explains how the Lab helps to attract prospective students to the program by allowing them to see the practical application of their skills firsthand before proceeding to clinical trials.

The NLRC at Concordia has also managed to attract external notice, having become the most recent award recipient of a \$150,000 grant from the Hearst Foundation. The Hearst Foundation cited the state-of-the-art lab at the heart of the grant, and looks to Concordia to help "meet the health care needs of the state" in the future.

Dr. Corcoran explained how this money will go to expanding the processes in the Simulation Lab and how they plan to utilize more of the MediaPOINTE® HD Portal's features in multiple skills modules' practice and validation, as well as in simulation scenarios in the future. Corcoran says, "This will allow us to web stream content for each class, personalizing the educational experience, rather than showing them something from YouTube. When they see an instructor or a member of faculty doing something, it hits closer to home and inspires learning."

The independence Dr. Corcoran wanted most for her students begins with educating her fellow faculty members on how to utilize the HD Portal. She states, "I know that I can work with it and master it without fear of damaging the system. Once I've done that I can show other nurse educators, and they can pass on the knowledge I've given them. And that's what we've already begun to do here." Corcoran believes that this technology has reach even beyond her own department. Recently, the Division of Nursing underwent their CCNE 10 Year Accreditation, where she got the opportunity to show what the HD Portal has done for the lab. The glowing preliminary report the Division received highlighted this technology and the strength of their simulation lab.

Corcoran wants to pass on what Concordia's Simulation Lab has been able to accomplish, so that others might be able to follow in their footsteps and use technology in different ways to promote education. Corcoran says, "It's about lifelong learning. The technology has the potential to encourage independent research – it allows you to see things differently and continually look for ways that you can do better."