Innovation
*An innovation indicates: a new idea or method; doing something altogether different; something that may be new to the particular nursing program or may be new to nursing education in general; a response to the needs of the community, trends in society, and the explosion of knowledge

Partnerships with Clinical or Community Partners

1. **Program Name:** UT Arlington
2. **Type of Nursing Program:** BSN and RN-to-BSN
3. **New Partnerships:** UT Arlington Academic Partnerships
4. **Narrative Description:**

   **Two separate collaborative initiatives** between The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and partner hospitals to increase the number of BSN’s in Texas.

   **Academic Partnership RN-to-BSN Program**

   This is a collaborative program available to Diploma or Associate Degree RN’s employed by a partner hospital or hospital system. Courses are offered in an online, media rich, condensed 5-8 week modular format that allows the student to complete the nursing courses in as little as 13 months. Students take one nursing course at a time allowing them to focus on one subject at a time on their own study schedule during the week while continuing to work.

   This program has increased the number of RN-to-BSN students at UTA College of Nursing from 100/150 students per year to more than 4,000 per year.

   **Approximate cost of implementing and maintaining partnership:** Undetermined at this time
   **Grant monies used:** No

   **Expected benefits from partnership:**
   - Increases number of BSN prepared nurses within partner hospitals
   - Increased access and affordability of a BSN education to RN’s
   - Hospital partners identify potential RN employees to participate in the program
   - Tuition as well as general pre-requisite courses are discounted for RN’s in the partner hospitals
   - Scholarship benefits provided periodically to encourage enrollment
   - Increases faculty teaching options that result in increased enrollment
   - Increases salaries for faculty teaching as an “overload”

   **Challenges from partnership:** Increased enrollment challenges University infrastructure to manage eight start dates a year and exponential growth.

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**Academic Partnership BSN Program**

A collaborative, accelerated 15-month BSN program between UT Arlington College of Nursing and select hospital partners to increase the number of students enrolled in the nursing program and ultimately the total number of new RN's in the state of Texas. Students can be employees of partner hospitals who have the requirements to enter the BSN program or they can come from the pool of qualified applicants that did not get accepted to into the traditional UTACON on campus Junior 1 class or other schools of nursing in the state. Once the student completes pre-nursing course requirements, and they are enrolled as a student in the Junior year, they can complete the program in 15 months. All courses will have the didactic portion conducted online with media rich, interactive learning elements in condensed modular formats. Course modules will vary from 5-13 weeks in length based on semester credit hours and number of clinical hours required. Clinicals will be directly supervised by UT Arlington Clinical Faculty in the partner hospitals and be of the same number of hours as the traditional BSN program. The majority of clinical hours will be in the same hospital or hospital system. Since one facility will rarely have all of the necessary specialty clinical experiences, such as pediatrics, an affiliation will be developed by UTACON to obtain that specialty clinical experience. Clinicals will be coordinated in such a way as to not displace already existing relationships with that facility and other schools of nursing. Therefore clinicals may be held at night or during weekends.

**Approximate cost of implementing and maintaining partnership:** As needed, additional clinical faculty are hired to supervise the increased number of students requiring supervised clinical experiences.

**Grant monies used:** Funding from the Nursing Shortage Reduction Program is being used to expand enrollment

**Expected benefits from partnership:**
- Increases number of students in the initial licensure BSN program.
- Decreases the RN shortage with increased numbers of BSN graduates
- Increases readiness to transition into the workplace since the majority of the clinical experience occurred in the partner hospital.
- Increases the competence and confidence of new RNs in the workforce
- Decreases orientation time and hospital expenses for these new RN Graduates
- Increases the efficiency and effectiveness of faculty resources
- Utilizes Coaches who are faculty qualified, to help students navigate in the on-line didactic course model. This model therefore is a scalable model to be used with large numbers of students that a traditional classroom didactic model is not able to accommodate. University space constraints are not an issue as they are working on-line.
- Since this is not a preceptor model the health care facility does not need to cover the cost of the clinical faculty

**Challenges from partnership:** Need for flexibility of space and times for clinical rotations within partner hospitals.

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