



ROSALIND FRANKLIN UNIVERSITY OF MEDICINE AND SCIENCE

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Life in Discovery

For Immediate Release:

New Online M.S. in Health Professions Education Program Offered by Rosalind Franklin University



Susan Tappert, PT, DPT

NORTH CHICAGO, IL – Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science announces a new graduate degree program for those who want to educate the next generation of health care practitioners.

“Colleges and universities have experienced an increased demand for healthcare educators to meet rising enrollment in academic healthcare programs,” Wendy Rheault, PT, PhD, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College of Health Professions. “We are responding to this critical need.”

Beginning the fall of 2010, the Health Professions Education program will offer both a Master of Science degree and a certificate. Designed for working health care professionals or students in the health care field seeking a second degree, the program will include courses on learning theory, classroom and student assessment, program evaluation and course development.

“We really need to educate our healthcare teachers,” said Susan K. Tappert PT, DPT, Chair and Assistant Professor, Department of Interprofessional Healthcare Studies.

Currently, outstanding clinicians are recruited to educate students in Rosalind Franklin University's College of Health Professions and other schools. Dr. Tappert, a physical therapist, recalls her own experience as a new college instructor.

"I remember my first day, wondering 'What am I supposed to be doing?'" she laughed. "I had no idea how to stand in front of a class or how to write objectives."

Fortunately, many health care providers have clinical experience during which they educate their patients. Others, like Dr. Tappert, have also helped train students during clinical rotations. And once on staff at Rosalind Franklin University, new teachers are offered mentorship.

"But not everyone is experienced in teaching in a classroom," Dr. Tappert said. "This is a way to give them the skills they need."

The new program, approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) last October, will bear the hallmark of the university: interprofessionalism. Since the opening of the College of Health Professions in 1970, students have learned the importance of cooperative care. All first-year students are required to take courses in which they are assigned to interprofessional healthcare teams.

In the Health Professions Education program, clinicians in specialties including medicine, dentistry, podiatry, occupational and physical therapy, psychology, pathology, pharmacy, and physician assistant, will learn together how to educate.

"We're teaching students interprofessionalism," Dr. Tappert said. "By putting students from multiple professions in the same class, they can contribute to the education of each other about different healthcare professions."

"We've seen our students bond," she said. "They're expressing opinions, rather than a teacher spouting information. They're teaching each other."

Rosalind Franklin University will present its program this March during a conference of the Jefferson InterProfessional Education Center in Philadelphia, Pa.

"The medical community as a whole is moving toward interprofessional interaction," Dr. Tappert said. "The old hierarchy – the pecking order with doctor at the top and then the nurse and others at the bottom – is going away. When professionals work together, patients have a better outcome."

Health organizations including the National Institutes of Health, Institute of Medicine and Centers for Disease Control have called for more collaboration in the treatment of patients. Rosalind Franklin University is graduating medical professionals in diverse fields who, because they have learned from, with and about each other, will not only be comfortable working together, but will help change the way medicine is practiced.

"In an ideal world, everyone who is working with a patient would meet either around the table or on the phone and talk about what they're planning to do," Tappert said.

The M.S. in Health Professions Education will be completed primarily online, with a flexible on-campus component prior to graduation. The university also offers online degrees in nutrition, health care

management and women's health. Online class discussions are an excellent platform for learning, Dr. Tappert said.

Following the completion of the program, students will be able to achieve the following goals:

- Integrate learning-style information and material presentation methods to facilitate student learning
- Design curricula based on assessment of student learning needs and professional accreditation requirements
- Evaluate information regarding student performance and program outcomes assessment
- Integrate educational leadership and evidence-based education principles to become a leader in the health profession education environment

Coursework in the M.S. in Health Professions Education program includes adult learning theories, curriculum design, presentation skills, assessment and evaluation mechanisms, research methods and change management.

The program is designed for self-motivated students who hope to land entry level teaching positions or who already hold teaching positions within health-related curricula. Students must successfully complete 39 hours of coursework, a teaching practicum, present a portfolio and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0.

The Health Professions Education Certificate program provides practitioners or students in the healthcare professions with an opportunity to develop or enhance teaching skills. Students will learn to adjust instruction to various learning styles, develop a course or module of study and assess student performance.

Prospective students must hold a minimum of a bachelor of science degree in a science or healthcare profession. It is highly recommended that students be certified, registered or licensed as healthcare professionals in the United States or Canada.

For more information, contact Dr. Tappert at susan.tappert@rosalindfranklin.edu or at (847) 578-3310.

About Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science is a national leader in interprofessional medical and healthcare education, comprising the Chicago Medical School, College of Health Professions, Dr. William M. Scholl College of Podiatric Medicine and School of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

There are more than 16,000 RFUMS degreed graduates in the United States and worldwide.