THE UIC COLLEGE OF NURSING ANNOUNCES THE ADDITION OF
RURAL HEALTH NURSING
Advanced practice interprofessional electives coming to the Rockford campus in fall 2017

Rural populations experience higher incidence of disease and disability, lower life expectancies, higher mortality, and higher rates of pain and suffering.

The UIC College of Nursing intends to help alleviate these disparities by educating advanced practices nurses to deliver care to the more than 20% of Illinois and Iowa residents living in Health Professional Shortage Areas.
UIC College of Nursing to launch rural nursing electives (RNURSING) at Rockford Regional Campus

It is estimated that 20 to 30 percent of Illinois and Iowa residents live in rural primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), where the supply of primary care physicians relative to the population is below federal standards. The Illinois Department of Public Health has designated 62 of the 102 counties in Illinois as HPSAs. Shortages of healthcare professionals willing to work in rural settings, as well as limited training of healthcare professionals to care for individuals from rural communities, have resulted in significant health disparities. Rural populations experience higher incidence of disease and disability, lower life expectancies, higher mortality, and higher rates of pain and suffering.

Advanced practice nurses (APNs) are critically needed as primary care providers to increase healthcare access in rural communities. Primary care APNs provide up to 90 percent of the services offered by physicians and often care for underserved, uninsured and vulnerable populations.

The UIC College of Nursing’s main campus in Chicago and its five regional campuses in Peoria, Quad Cities, Rockford, Springfield and Urbana provide the highest-quality education for APNs throughout Illinois and eastern Iowa. Now, the Rockford Regional Campus is developing rural nursing (RNURSING) electives for advanced practice nursing students.

Joining UIC’s rural medicine (RMED) and rural pharmacy (RPHARM) students in Rockford, RNURSING students will take part in electives facilitated by the National Center for Rural Health Professions. Launching in fall 2017, the interprofessional electives will focus on meeting the healthcare needs of rural communities through collaborative projects among the three professions.

Using in-person education, simulation and distance-learning technologies, the UIC College of Nursing offers 12 advanced practice specialty programs at the level of the doctor of nursing practice (DNP) degree. The DNP is the terminal degree for practice. Initially, DNP students only at the Rockford campus will be eligible for RNURSING electives, with an eye toward expanding the offering to students at the college’s four additional regional campuses in Illinois.