



July 29, 2004

Contact: Lisa A. Fellers  
Director of Communications  
Office: (817) 531-4498  
Cell: (817) 874-8683  
lfellers@txwes.edu

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Texas Wesleyan offers first accredited interactive video program in the nation  
for nurse anesthetists**

FORT WORTH, July 29 – The Council on Accreditation (COA) has approved Texas Wesleyan University’s Graduate Program of Nurse Anesthesia (GPNA), the largest in the nation, to offer its entire degree program as a distance learning option. Classes will be offered through interactive video and online coursework. The COA is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. John Martin, director of the GPNA at Texas Wesleyan, attributes their approval to the University’s excellent reputation, quality of education and graduate success rate.

“We are the only program in the country to be approved for such a program,” says Martin. “We hope this will help fill one of our country’s needs. We have a national CRNA shortage, and this is one step toward alleviating it.”

According to a recent news release from the American Association of Nurse Anesthetists (AANA), the CRNA shortage can be attributed to several factors. Among them are the increase of healthcare procedures requiring anesthesia and the decrease in graduating

-more-

July 29 – Interactive Video Program for Nurse Anesthesia, page 2.

CRNAs from nurse anesthesia programs. Today, roughly 90 schools in the country offer nurse anesthesia programs, and Texas Wesleyan houses the nation's largest, admitting approximately 120 new students each year.

Since its first class graduated in 1984, Wesleyan has had a 98 percent pass rate on the National Certification Examination for first-time test takers, and the national pass rate is only 89 percent. All Wesleyan graduates to date have successfully passed the examination and received their certification. In the graduating class of 2003, 64 percent of Wesleyan graduates scored 600 on the examination, the highest score possible.

The state of Texas has five accredited schools with nurse anesthesia programs, but several other states, such as New Mexico or Colorado, have none. The distance learning option at Texas Wesleyan brings the classroom to students who would otherwise be forced to relocate. This fall, five students will begin their nurse anesthesia training through Wesleyan's program at a clinical site in Edgewood, Kentucky.

“With proper development and oversight, this option will provide quality education to registered nurses who could not otherwise attend a nurse anesthesia program,” says Martin.

In addition to the electronic coursework, Wesleyan will continue to offer on-site courses and a combination of the two. Founded in 1982 as the degree granting institution for the Harris Hospital School of Anesthesia, Wesleyan's Graduate Program of Nurse Anesthesia emphasizes academics and rigorous technical education, while encouraging creativity and understanding within students. With 50 training facilities in 12 states, competition for enrollment at Wesleyan is intense – on average enrolling only one of every three qualified applicants.

###