



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

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Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Names New School of Nursing Dean

Evans to step down after almost 12 years as dean

Holly Wei, Ph.D., R.N., has been named the [Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center](#) (TTUHSC) School of Nursing dean, the university announced today (Nov. 6).

Wei is the associate dean for Research and Scholarship at East Tennessee State University College of Nursing and currently serves as the interim executive associate dean and chief nursing administrator.

“We are fortunate to have Dr. Wei joining our team,” TTUHSC President Lori Rice-Spearman, Ph.D., said. “She brings a wealth of experience and expertise, but also has a great respect for and commitment to the school, our great university and its values as a place of innovative learning and working that puts people first.”

Wei received her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at North Carolina Central University, Durham, and her Doctor of Philosophy in Nursing from the University of North Carolina School of Nursing at Chapel Hill.

Wei will succeed Michael Evans, Ph.D., R.N., FAAN, a Grover E. Murray Professor who has served as the TTUHSC School of Nursing dean for almost 12 years. He will step down as dean (Nov. 6) to serve as a professor in the School of Nursing and associate provost for special projects.

“I am honored to have had Dr. Evans leading our School of Nursing for more than a decade,” Rice-Spearman said. “His leadership was instrumental in developing innovative programs to address the perpetual nursing shortage. Our school is excellently positioned because of Dr. Evans’ expertise and dedication to nursing education.”

Some of Wei’s past professional experiences include serving as professor and assistant dean for the Ph.D. program at the University of Louisville School of Nursing, Kentucky; as both an assistant and associate professor at East Carolina University College of Nursing, Greenville, North Carolina; and as a registered nurse and nurse researcher at University of North Carolina Health - Chapel Hill.

“We are excited about the appointment of Dr. Wei to lead our School of Nursing,” TTUHSC Provost and Chief Academic Officer Darrin D'Agostino, D.O., said. “Her experience in all areas of nursing education will be instrumental in building off of the strong foundation and national reputation the school has developed.”

Wei’s research focuses on organizational caring culture, leadership development, health promotion across the lifespan and epigenetic biomarkers. With more than 70 professional publications, Wei’s multiple nursing practice models include the Convergent Care Theory, a guide to nursing research and practice.

Her textbook, “Visionary Leadership in Healthcare,” was awarded the 2022 American Journal of Nursing Book of the Year and received first place in Nursing Management and Leadership. Many universities have adopted the book for leadership courses.

Wei is a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and serves on the advisory and editorial boards of the Advances in Nursing Science, International Journal for Human Caring and International Journal of Nursing Sciences. She also serves on numerous national and international committees. Recently, she led a task force on addressing the Higher Education Demographic Cliff 2025 and spearheaded the preparation of two Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education accreditation visits.

The TTUHSC School of Nursing was designated as a National League for Nursing Center of Educational Excellence, the first school in Texas to be so named. Since the first class in 1981, the school has grown from offering traditional programs to master’s and post-master’s programs in diverse areas of nursing specialization and Doctor of Nursing Practice. Based in Lubbock, there are additional campuses in Amarillo, Abilene and Odessa, with a teaching site in Mansfield, as well as clinical training sites in Dallas, Houston, San Antonio and Austin.

“I am deeply honored and humbled to be the next TTUHSC School of Nursing dean,” Wei said. “Thank you for entrusting me with this privilege. I am inspired by the dedication and passion that the TTUHSC faculty, staff and students bring to this institution. The journey ahead is one that I embrace with great enthusiasm, knowing that together, we can achieve remarkable heights in education, research, service and health care practice.”

Laura Opton, DHSc, R.N., current TTUHSC associate dean in the School of Nursing, will serve as acting dean until Wei officially begins Jan. 22, 2024.