

Nursing Education Research Conference 2020

Faculty STEP to Improve Thinking

Sally J. Vliem, PhD

Bronson School of Nursing, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI, USA

Lisa Singleterry, PhD

Bronson School of Nursing, Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing, Kalamazoo, MI, USA

Purpose:

Greater emphasis will be given to teaching strategies that improve clinical reasoning once changes in the NCLEX-RN test plan take place in 2022 and faculty development with proven strategies needs to begin now (Dickison, Haerling, & Lasater, 2019). Evidence shows that faculty teaching strategies can promote higher level thinking and improve development of students' clinical judgement (Cassum, Gul, & Profetto-McGrath, 2015; Cook, Stroup, & Harrington, 2019; Oliver, et al. 2018). Given that Cassum, Gul, and Profetto-McGrath (2015) determined that faculty need to make time for students to think and not just focus on the content, a standardized testing education program (STEP) was developed to make that time. The aim of this quality improvement (QI) project was to raise clinical judgement scores on the Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) tests taken by senior nursing students using evidenced-based teaching strategies.

Methods:

Two faculty co-developed STEP to help students practice thinking through NCLEX-RN style test questions. All senior-level students were invited to participate. The 10-week thirty-minute program was offered fall and spring semesters. Session topics included general test-taking strategies, with the major focus on development of thinking. Teaching strategies included brief sessions, Socratic questions and faculty dyad conversation to model reasoning. All strategies were chosen to facilitate student recognition and analysis of cues in order to prioritize hypothesis and generate solutions.

Results:

Thirty-nine of 77 (51%) senior-level students participated in one or more STEP sessions. Three examinations were used to compare critical thinking means between participants and non-participants of STEP: 1) content mastery series (CMS) exam for Nursing Care of Children (pediatric) (taken prior to beginning STEP); 2) CMS for Medical Surgical Nursing (taken during STEP); and 3) Comprehensive Predictor (taken after STEP). On average, those who participated in STEP ($M=56.46$, $SD=7.45$) had significantly lower ($p=.003$) critical thinking scores on the pediatric examination than non-participants ($M=62.55$, $SD=9.78$). The medical surgical nursing examination revealed a non-significant difference ($p=.06$) in critical thinking between participants ($M=62.28$, $SD=9.51$) and non-participants ($M=66.43$, $SD=10.02$). Likewise, a stronger non-significant difference ($p=.310$) was found for the Comprehensive Predictor critical thinking scores between participants ($M=69.50$, $SD=7.92$) and non-participants ($M=71.40$, $SD=8.46$).

Conclusion:

The goal of faculty development is to support or enrich the work of nurse educators. Lang (2016) and Brown, Roedinger, and McDaniel (2014) emphasize the use of

teaching practices and strategies that trigger learning. With peer support, faculty can develop their skills to teach higher level thinking in students to prepare new graduates to provide safe, competent nursing care. This QI project demonstrates how faculty peer collaboration led to improved ATI clinical judgement scores for students who participated in STEP. Peer collaboration, practice, partnership of faculty and support of administration were needed to develop STEP and the use of evidence-based teaching strategies to provide at-risk students an opportunity to practice thinking in a novel environment.

Title:

Faculty STEP to Improve Thinking

Keywords:

Clinical judgement, Faculty development and Teaching strategies

Abstract Summary:

A goal of faculty development is to enrich the work of nurse educators. A standardized testing education program (STEP) was initiated by faculty to improve the clinical judgement of nursing students. This program can serve as a guide for faculty who want to encourage higher level thinking in their students.

References:

- Brown, P.C., Roediger, H.L., & McDaniel, M.A. (2014). Make it stick. The science of successful learning. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press.
- Cassum, S., Gul, R., & Profetto-McGrath, J. (2015). Facilitators and deterrents of critical thinking in classrooms: A multidisciplinary perspective in higher education in Karachi Pakistan. *International Journal of Nursing Education*, 7(2), 60-64.
<http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.library.wmich.edu/10.5958/0974-9357.2015.00075.6>
- Cook, L., Stroup, C., & Harrington, C. (2019). Operationalizing the concept of critical thinking for student learning outcome development. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 58(4), 214-220. doi: 10.3928/01484834-20190321-05
- Dickison, P., Haerling, K. & Lasater, K. (2019). Integrating the national council of state boards of nursing clinical judgment model into nursing educational frameworks. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 58(2), 72-78. doi: 10.3928/01484834-20190122-03
- Lang, J.M. (2016). *Small teaching*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.
- Oliver, B., Pomerleau, M., Potter, M., Phillips, A., Carpenter, S., Ciesielski, S....Grobecker, P. (2018). Optimizing NCLEX pass rate performance using an educational microsystems improvement approach. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 57(5), 265-274. doi: 10.3928.01484834-20180420-03

First Primary Presenting Author

Primary Presenting Author

Sally J. Vliem, PhD, PhD, RN, CPNP
Western Michigan University
Bronson School of Nursing

Master Faculty Specialist
Kalamazoo MI
USA

Author Summary: Dr. Vliem has been an educator for over 25 years. She has teaching responsibilities in both undergraduate and graduate programs and has worked with graduate students in the nurse educator track. Sally has a passion for nursing education and enjoys learning new strategies to engage students.

Second Secondary Presenting Author

Corresponding Secondary Presenting Author

Lisa Singleterry, PhD
Western Michigan University Bronson School of Nursing
Bronson School of Nursing
Assistant Professor
Kalamazoo MI
USA

Author Summary: Dr. Singleterry teaches in the graduate and undergraduate programs at Western Michigan University. She earned her PhD at Michigan State University and CNE fall 2012. Lisa transitioned from the bedside to the blackboard after she recognized a gap in students' clinical reasoning skills. Dr. Singleterry co-facilitates a community of practice focused on reflective teaching, summer workshops, and is partnering with Dr. Vliem to develop a clinical faculty workshop through their local STTI chapter.