

Nursing Education Research Conference 2020
Nursing Faculty and Student Perspectives of Teaching Effectiveness in the Online Environment

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Purpose:

Online course delivery continues to expand, however, approaches to design and deliver vary and domains of effective teaching remain unclear. Concerns persist related to teaching effectiveness (TE), faculty role and the quality of online education (Harless, 2016; Smith, 2014; Wingo, Ivankova, & Moss, 2017). Student evaluations, though unreliable, are commonly used in evaluating TE (Clayson, 2018; Hornstein, 2017). The need is critical for a valid and reliable instrument for faculty evaluation of online TE. Faculty perception is essential to evaluating online TE and establishing online teaching best practice. The **purpose** of this study was to deepen our understanding of online TE and gather empirical evidence from perspectives of nurse faculty and students in order to support the development of an instrument to measure online TE.

Methods:

Qualitative descriptive study in which 32 participants (15 faculty and 17 students) were recruited through email invitation and completed Qualtrics demographic survey. Faculty participants were employed full time in a US public university and were middle-aged female Caucasians with the experiences of academic teaching (*Mdn*= 12; *IQR*= 9-15 years) and teaching online (*Mdn*= 6; *IQR*= 3-10 years). Student participants were undergraduate (junior or senior-level), or graduate level (masters & doctoral). The majority of student participants were Caucasian (88.2%) and single females less than 30 years old (82.4%; *Mdn*= 24 & *IQR*= 20.5-28.5). Seven Principles of Effective Teaching (Chickering & Gamson, 1987) served as the framework to guide the study interviews. The central research question was: How do nursing faculty and students in online course perceive teaching effectiveness? Semi-structured interviews were used in five focus groups to reach data saturation. Data were transcribed, categorized, and compared using thematic content analysis procedures.

Results:

Focus group interviews yielded seven themes from faculty and six themes from students. Themes will be discussed in detail in this presentation. Examples of themes common to both faculty and students perspectives include: (1) Factors which influence TE such as: teaching philosophy, teaching presence, student engagement, and relationships; (2) Faculty characteristics and teaching strategies are essential components of TE; (3) Significant differences between face-to-face and online learning; (4) Student characteristics impacting motivation, success, and faculty TE; and (5) Establishing clear expectations for TE. Faculty participants offered advice for online TE and identified needs specific to online teaching and learning related to technology, consistency, resources and administrative support.

Conclusion:

Although faculty and student characteristics and experience with online teaching and learning explicitly shaped perceptions of online TE, the essential components (e.g. teaching philosophy, teaching presence, and teaching/learning strategies) were identified as key to evaluating online TE. Study results have extended our understanding of online TE and its meaning, as perceived by nursing faculty and students. Consistent with the prior literature (Frazer, Sullivan, Weatherspoon, & Hussey, 2017; Smith & Crowe, 2017), our data, using a multidimensional approach, are anticipated to guide development of a comprehensive instrument to measure online TE. *Note: This study was funded by Sigma Theta Tau International, Delta Omega Chapter and by Sigma Theta Tau International/National League for Nursing.*

Title:

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Keywords:

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Abstract Summary:

This presentation describes original research findings related to experiences and perceptions of nursing faculty and students who have participated in online education. Themes from both faculty and student focus groups, identified barriers to effective online teaching and learning, advice for faculty teaching online, and research implications will be presented.

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Author Summary: Dr. Chen is a nursing researcher and faculty with years of the experiences in online teaching. Her research interest is to better understand factors associated with teaching effectiveness in relation to improvement of online teaching and learning outcomes aiming to build evidence-based practice in nursing education.

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