UNDERGRADUATE NURSING STUDENT ENGAGEMENT IN BLENDED LEARNING: A QUALITY IMPROVEMENT CAPSTONE PROJECT

AUTHOR: Miriam Mitchell, MPH, MSN, RN. School of Nursing, Massey University, Wellington, New Zealand. M.Mitchell@massey.ac.nz

PROBLEM STATEMENT

● Massey University School of Nursing has a teaching and research focus on primary health care and improving health equity, but MU Nursing students had gaps in their knowledge of core Primary Health Care concepts in the end-of-semester exam

● Students showed limited engagement with course material using the Learning Management System Moodle. In 2018 nursing students stated they had no reason to use Moodle and no grades were assigned for activity on Moodle

BACKGROUND LITERATURE

● Student engagement refers to amount of time and effort students put into their studies (National Survey of Student Engagement, 2018)

● Student engagement positively influences student success (Kahu & Nelson, 2016)

● Online discussion boards increased engagement (Osborne et al., 2018)

● Lack of faculty interaction and feedback are barriers for student use of discussion boards (Alhosban & Ismaile, 2018)

● Concern pedagogy substituted for “edu-tainment” (Sinclair et al., 2017)

● Behavioral engagement declined over length of course and students primarily motivated by grades (Luo & Kalman, 2018; Osborne et al., 2018)

● Recommendation to invest in staff training for blended learning (Alhosban & Ismaile, 2018)

PURPOSE

To improve the level of engagement demonstrated by second year nursing students enrolled in a blended learning course on Primary Health Care (PHC) and health promotion at Massey University School of Nursing

At least 95% nursing students will achieve a passing grade of 50% in both the end-of-semester exam and short answer question one (Q1) section. Results were below benchmark target of 95% pass rate in other short answer exam questions.

STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

Pilot cycle of change in February 2019 on one campus only, with subsequent Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) cycle involving all three campuses implemented July 2019

● Moodle content edited to reduce overloading

● Moodle forums contributed to 12.5% grade

● Weekly forums were on key PHC concepts and themes

● Pre-semester team-meeting with other teaching staff for training

● Modified Moodle teaching presence and provided exemplars

● Weekly interaction with other teaching staff for feedback

● Problems solved technical issues with Moodle helpdesk staff

STUDENT EXAM OUTCOMES

Achieved goal of 95% students passing exam, along with multiple choice and short answer question one (Q1) section. Results were below benchmark target of 95% pass rate in other short answer exam questions.

WAS CHANGE SUCCESSFUL?

Moodle Reports of Student Activity

Run chart showing % of student views and posts on Moodle each month

2018 Semester Two: 135 students

2019 Semester Two: 129 students

“The online learning environment enhanced my learning. I got to read my other fellow class-mates perspective on the topics we discussed. This allowed me to broaden and understand in more depth the topic we discussed.” (nursing student enrolled in PHC course)

CONCLUSION

● Graded activities in Moodle classroom increased engagement

● Student Moodle activity during classroom weeks doubled or tripled from 2018

● Students achieved higher exam results on topics that had weekly forums

● Varied quality of forum posts as all students received full marks for participation

● Nurse educators may wish to vary student activities in Moodle and introduce marking rubrics

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author gratefully acknowledges the project supervision and feedback by Dr Laura Yoder (EMU) and Dr Lucy Nguma (MU).