Implementing Collaborative Testing with Exam Wrappers to Improve Metacognition Kathleen Mullen, DNP, MA, RN, CNE

Strategies to increase metacognition in nursing students and other healthcare professionals have been a recent focus in the literature. Metacognition is an understanding of how to think and learn (Chen, Björkman, Zou, & Engström, 2019). Metacognitive skills of self-direction of learning and self-regulation of learning are correlated with critical thinking and problem-solving abilities, significant to academic success and clinical decision-making (Medina, Castleberry & Persky, 2017). Students in an accelerated master’s direct entry prelicensure program demonstrated gaps in the metacognitive skills of efficiently self-assessing learning needs and selecting effective learning strategies. Collaborative testing and exam wrappers were implemented to improve self-assessment, self-direction, and self-regulation of learning metacognitive skills. Collaborative testing is an assessment and learning strategy utilizing peer interaction to analyze an item and the rationale for each potential answer, modeling self-assessment of knowledge (Hanna, Roberts, & Hurley, 2018). An exam wrapper is a post-assessment reflection tool prompting self-regulation of learning strategies (Butzlaff, Gayle & Kelley, 2018). The maternity nursing course implemented collaborative testing and exam wrappers with three formative assessments during the course. Mixed methods evaluation with student surveys, student interviews, and summative assessments, provided insight into the effect of collaborative testing and exam wrappers on metacognition and learning behaviors in the course. Students reported satisfaction with collaborative testing. Evaluation of reflection on learning strategies was inconclusive. Results indicated additional focus on the concept and processes of metacognition prior to engaging in course content may further student motivation to utilize self-assessment and self-regulation of learning.

References