

A guided research experience: Application of the research process in BSN honors program

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Background

Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) undergraduate honors students are assigned to faculty conducting research projects at various stages of implementation. The student is paired with faculty based on research area of interest. A two-semester independent study (IS) curriculum was designed to facilitate student learning of the research process. Concepts learned in the undergraduate research course (UTHealth, N4512) were applied and incorporated. The purpose of this project was to create a general and structured curriculum for the BSN IS Honors Program.

Project Description

Semester 1: Concept knowledge and Analysis

The student will:

- Complete CITI training
- Attend weekly faculty research meetings
- Identify a concept of interest (N4512)
- Search the internet for public knowledge of concept
- Identify scholarly literature regarding concept
- Create evidence tables analyzing peer-reviewed literature (N4512)
- Present evidence tables and conclusions to faculty

Semester 2: Participate, Synthesize, and Disseminate

The student will:

- Review semester one evidence tables
- Participate in faculty research project
- Construct a poster with review findings
- Write a final paper synthesizing review findings
- Create a poster to dissemination findings
- Evaluate how faculty project addresses gaps in scientific literature

Results

At the completion of the two-semester IS course, the student has developed two products created from their interaction with the scholarly literature and involvement in the faculty research project. The **first product** is a final paper which could be submitted for publication. The **second product** is a professional poster to be presented at an internal or external conference.

The two course products further the student's exposure to the research dissemination process. They also allow the student to **advance their professional and academic career**.

Discussion

This structured curriculum for the BSN Honors Program allows the student to better understand the research process. A mentorship relationship between student and faculty in nursing research is sorely needed (Byrne & Keefe, 2002). This curriculum **encourages the mentor process** while the student learns the origins of evidence based practice through academic research. Students who choose to enter graduate education will have a base of knowledge upon which to build. The curriculum is an **effective method of cultivating future nursing researchers** and can be implemented across various programs of research.

References

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- Byrne, M. & Keefe, M. (2002). Building research competence in nursing through mentoring. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 34(4), p391-396.

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