

Quality Enhancement Plan: Interprofessional educational program to improve nursing students' self-efficacy in scholarly written communication

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INTRODUCTION

UWF Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), “Communication for Professional Success,” is a proactive initiative to improve student communication knowledge and skills. Active, high-impact learning experiences promote professional readiness and success. Online RN-to-BSN and English department faculty joined efforts to improve RN student scholarly writing by the QEP action.

RN students struggle with scholarly composition due to limited formal writing opportunities during prior studies. To enhance effective communication skills, Nursing and English faculty identified the following writing elements needed for professional communication:

- Professional communication
- APA Style, format, references
- Grammar, composition, organizing information
- Paraphrasing, quoting, and citing
- Academic integrity, plagiarism
- Library skills, choosing sources, literature review
- Integrating source material, and revision editing
- Career development (cover letters, resumes)
- Peer review

METHODS

Two (2) online co-requisite 1-hour writing courses were developed by the Nursing and English faculty. The Interprofessional education (IPE) effort was piloted in Spring & Summer 2016. By design, the writing courses supported success in the two (2) associated nursing courses. Seventy (70) students participated in this quasi-experimental study. The validated 20-item *Post-Secondary Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument* assessed students' pre- and post-intervention belief in their ability to meet writing objectives. Scores were compared for both individual student questions, and total means of all questions.

THE “WRITE” STUFF

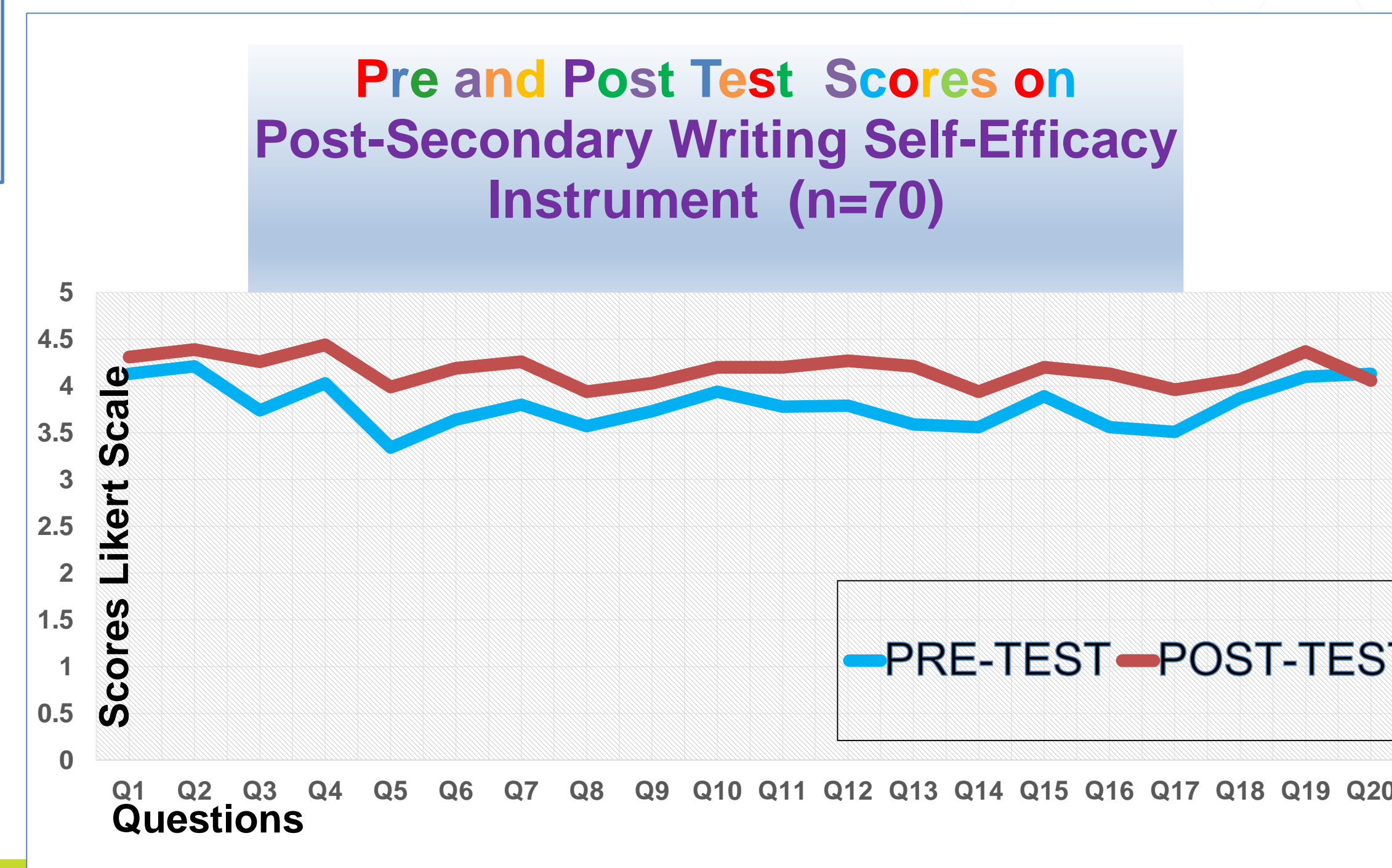


RESULTS

Pre- and post-intervention scores on *Post-Secondary Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument* were compared. Statistically significant improvements were found both individually, and on combined mean scores. Scores significantly improved on 15 of the 20 instrument items, and, overall pre-post mean scores ($p < 0.0001$), indicating higher confidence in students' writing ability. See Tables below.

Post-Secondary Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument	Mean N=70	Standard Deviation	P-value
Total Pre-Test Score	75.80	11.25	<0.0001*
Total Post-Test Score	83.41	12.44	

*Wilcoxon Signed Rank Test



DISCUSSION

Interprofessional educator (IPE) collaboration is key to the co-requisite courses. English composition faculty provide purely grammatical feedback on students' writing practice, with focus on word usage, paragraph organization and APA writing mechanics. Nursing faculty provide course topics and subject matter feedback. The faculty carefully schedule assignments to allow practice from one co-requisite course to the other.

Student informal qualitative comments reflect increased confidence in completing scholarly writing assignments. Faculty, in co-requisite nursing courses, report improved composition organization; and, decreased time on correcting grammar mechanics and APA format. Nurse Faculty say they can focus on content evaluation and feedback.

CONCLUSION

Foundational writing activities help RN-to-BSN students develop proficiency in critical thinking, writing, and learning.

The IPE collaboration is a benefit for both faculty and students. Linking assignments in the writing and nursing courses allows profession-specific academic content. Promoting self-efficacy and competence in scholarly writing creates nurses who can be professional communicators.