Pre-licensure Students’ Perception of a Program to Ease Transition to the Master of Science in Nursing Clinical Nurse Leader Option

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Increasing Diversity in the Clinical Nurse Leader Option

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Presentation Objectives
• Describe challenges to academic success for first semester, second-degree, prelicensure Master of Science in Nursing students from diverse backgrounds.

• Articulate components of SMARTStart designed to ease student transition into master’s nursing education.

• Discuss student feedback and recommendations for enhancing their transition experience.

Background and Introduction
• First semester students experience anxiety and stress, conflicting work and family obligations and academic challenges including test-taking, graduate level writing, and difficulty with application and synthesis of information.

• A HRSA Nursing Workforce Development grant, “Increasing Diversity in the CNL Option” provides academic, financial, and support services to students from backgrounds underrepresented in nursing workforce.

• SMARTStart aims to assist students to better adapt to and increase the likelihood of success in nursing school.
Incorporating Student Feedback: SMARTStart Enhancements
All sessions were required and offered in a campus classroom

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<th>Spring 2019</th>
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| Content          | Student Success Center selected three components reflecting areas of challenge for students  
|                  | • Test-Taking  
|                  | • Graduate Level Writing  
|                  | • "Synthesis" using content from 5-credit Pathopharmacology course, historically deemed "most" challenging course | Four components chosen by student support services and program faculty, reflecting student feedback from spring 19 term  
|                  | • Overview of each 1st semester course (Pathopharmacology; Health Assessment; Fundamentals; Intro to the CNL Role)  
|                  | • Suggestions on how to approach studying for each course                     | Four components chosen by student support services and program faculty, reflecting student feedback from spring and fall 2019 terms  
|                  |                                                                              | • Taught study skill method: Preview-Review-Synthesis using the 1st semester courses as content material.  
|                  |                                                                              | • Reviewed syllabi and strategies to approach each individual course.  
|                  |                                                                              | • Offered additional component “Study with your Brain in Mind” (SSC professional staff)                   |
| Format           | Two 1-hour sessions; one 1.5-hour session and lunch (4.5 hours total)         | Two 1-hour sessions; one 1.5-hour sessions; one 30 min. session and lunch (with current students) (5 hours total) | Four 1-hour sessions; one 1.5-hour sessions and lunch (with current students) (6.5 hours total) |
| Presenters       | Two CNL program faculty and one faculty member with experience teaching graduate level writing | Four CNL program faculty  
|                  |                                                                                | CNL professional advisor  
|                  |                                                                                | Four CNL program faculty  
|                  |                                                                                | CNL professional advisor  
|
Student Reports of Useful Topics and Suggestions for Improvement

**Useful Topics**
- Getting to know faculty and their expectations
- Class structure and what semester will look like
- Books, resources, and supplemental materials
- Tips and tricks for learning and need to synthesize
- Nature and importance of the CNL role in profession
- Value of health assessment skills
- Importance of clinical judgement

**Suggestions for Improvement**
- Encourage students to prepare in advance by reviewing Blackboard and the Student Handbook
- Assure all students are informed of program
- Maintain focus, shorten program length, and provide breaks
- Consider spreading SMARTStart and orientation over two weeks
- Make sure information presented is consistent across courses
- Include lab and clinical expectations
- Provide time to get to know peers
Conclusions

• All students reported that SMARTStart helped reduce their anxiety and prepare them to begin nursing school.
• Students shared their perceptions of SMARTStart, made suggestions for improvement, and thereby contributed to program enhancement.
• Student feedback is valuable and important in program planning and evaluation.