

Innovative education to address addictions learning needs of nursing students

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Background

- US: 20 million substance use disorders (SUDs) ¹
- Maryland: 2nd highest in US for opioid-related deaths ²
- Problem:
 - Evidence of deficient care SUDs ^{3,4,5,6}
 - Lack of addictions knowledge = poor health outcomes ^{7,8}
 - Few schools teach nurses to identify, prevent, and treat SUDs ^{9,10}

Current addictions education at UMSON

- Programs include some content on SU/SUDs and related behaviors
- Undergraduate electives:
 - Addictions, Society, and the Role of the Nurse
 - Motivational Interviewing

Addictions learning needs expressed by students taking electives:

- Lack of knowledge about
 - Treatment
 - Cultural competency
 - Communication
- Practicing nurses stigmatized patients as difficult, manipulative, unsafe, bad parents
- Want education/training and resources

Goal: Expand addictions curriculum

Methods

Nursing student learning needs survey

- Survey development: Tailored Design Method ¹¹
- Adapted from:
 - Alcohol and Alcohol Problems Perceptions Questionnaire ¹²
 - Drug and Drug Problems Perceptions Questionnaire ¹³
- Self-rated knowledge and open-ended questions
- Qualtrics XM™ software and IBM® SPSS 26
- Sent to 2000 students enrolled Fall 2019 University of Maryland SON
- Data collected October - December 2019
- 32% response rate

Results

Figure 1. Sample by degree type

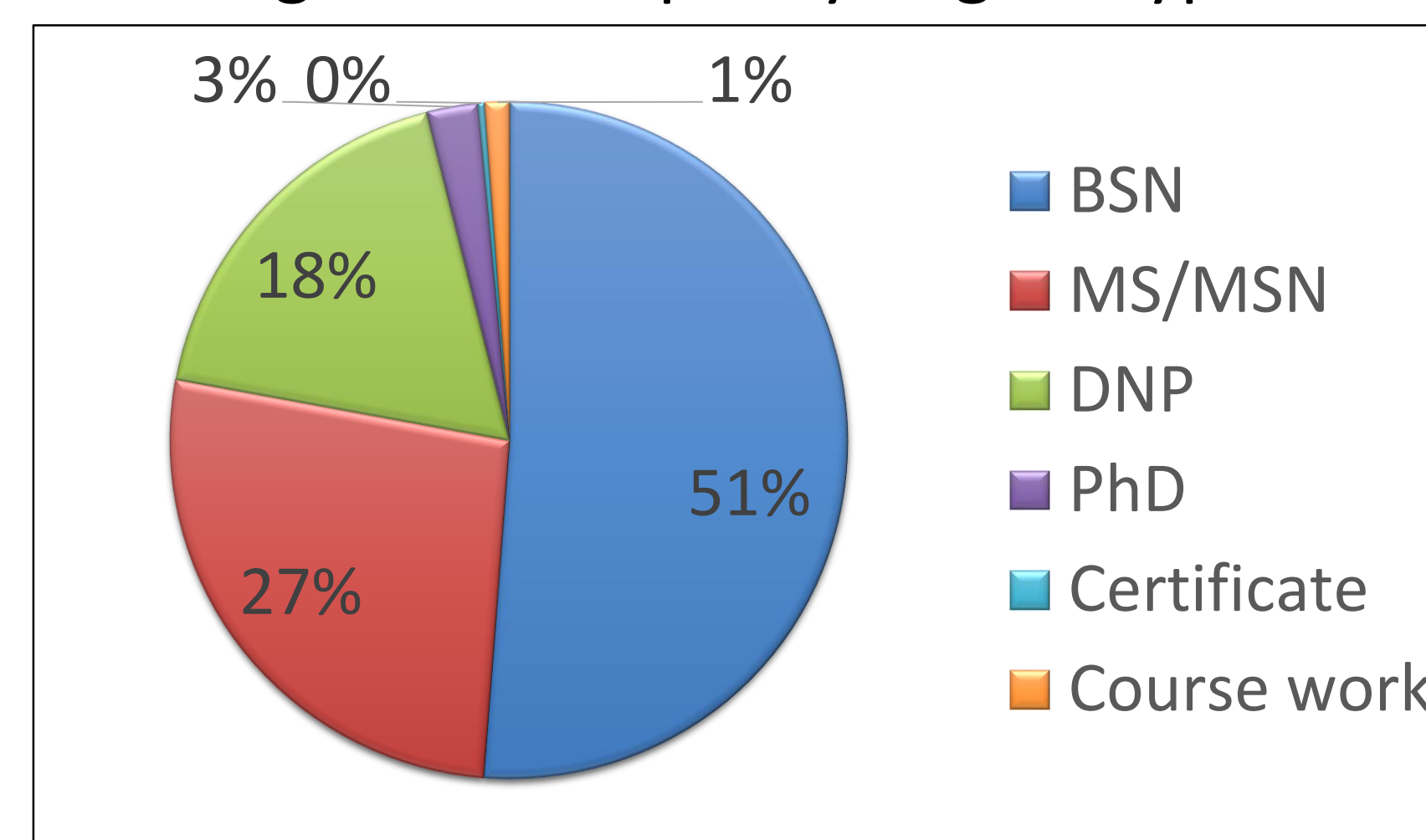
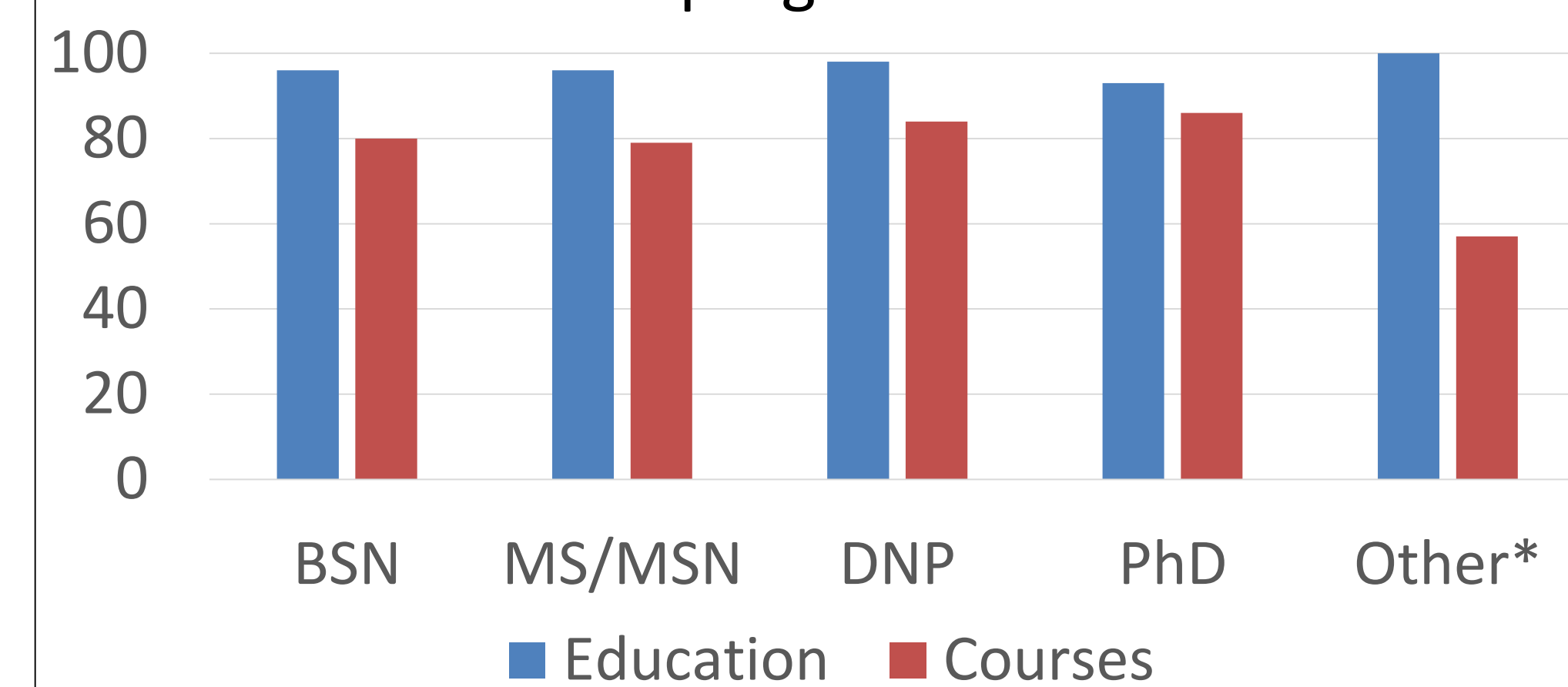


Figure 2. Student interest in addictions education & courses (%) by degree program



Findings:

Nursing students report feeling knowledgeable about SU/SUDs in general (e.g., know enough about physical effects of drug use, $M=3.89$; advising about drugs, $M=3.73$); but when asked about specific competencies, were less confident (see red items in table).

This is consistent with responses from interviews of practicing nurses and learning needs expressed by students.

Overall, students want addictions education (Figure 2). BSN students were interested in a focused area of study (70%), including 71% of RN-BSNs.

Knowledge of addictions nursing competencies (5 = extremely, 4 = very, 3 = moderately, 2 = slightly, 1 = not at all)	M
Knowledgeable about screening for	
-Tobacco/nicotine use	3.5
-Alcohol use	3.5
-Illicit drug use and prescription drug misuse	3.3
Taking an alcohol and drug use history	3.5
Using alcohol and drug withdrawal assessment scales	3.1
Educating patients about medication treatments for SU/SUDs	3.0
Signs and symptoms of	
-Alcohol use disorder	3.5
-Opioid (e.g., heroin) overdose	3.5
- Problematic gambling behavior	2.6
Communicating about SU/SUDs	3.3
Readiness to change behavior in planning care	3.2
Community resources for patients with SU/SUDs	3.1

Outcomes

New substance use and addictions nursing education initiatives

RN-BSN Focus Area: Substance Use and Addictions

Plan of study (courses):

- Addiction, Society, and the Role of the Nurse
- Motivational Interviewing
- Public Health Nursing Essentials (with addictions-focused clinical)

Four graduate-level courses:

Coming in the fall

1) Addictions Nursing: Foundations

- Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) training with resource gathering for real-world application
- Treatments
- Recovery and advocacy

Coming soon

2) Motivational Interviewing

- Therapeutic relationship skills building

Under development

3) Addiction Nursing: Special Topics

4) Practicum

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