

Adding an Academic Advisor to an online program

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Background

Online program started in 2012, with approximately 5-10 students per year, until 2018. Currently operating in 6 states. Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Texas. We had part-time faculty and an administrative assistant trying to fulfil the role of the advisor. We needed consistency with advising and recruiting. In 2018, we did a major overhaul of the online program and mirrored our face-to-face program with books, lectures, and standardized testing. For the first time, in 2019 our Online Program had 100% state board pass rates.

Objectives

Adding an academic advisor will increase the applicant pool and increase the number of eligible students for the online program.

Adding an academic advisor will increase the number of highly qualified LPN's to our online program.

Adding an academic advisor will increase completion rates in the online program.

Methods

Through a grant from NSPII, we were able to hire an Academic Advisor to work directly with the online students. Giving the students a first line of contact for advising needs. With the addition of this position, the college also added all general education courses online as well. Our online program is 100% online. We advertised in the Maryland Nurse as well as a nationwide nursing magazine. The results of our grant are phenomenal.

Figures

Year	Applicants	Md Residents	Accepted into program
2018	111 2 admission cycles	34	22
2019 1 st year of grant	202 2 admission cycles	68	56
2020 2 nd year of grant	515 2 admission cycles	149	72
2021 Grant ends 6/30/2021	650+ applications 1 st admission cycle	160	128

Conclusions

Adding an academic advisor has nearly quadrupled our applicant pool over the past two years. Having that 1 person to advise and assist students with the application process has proven to be beneficial. Our applicants increased from 111 applicants in 2018 to over 500 applicants in 2020. So far for the first admission period of 2021 we have over 650 applicants. Our admissions have increased as well. Our online advising specialist has over 1,300 advisees

Our number of graduates started to increase with the change in curriculum and addition of an academic advisor;

2019 – total of 19 graduates with 100% state board pass rate

2020 – total of 32 graduates with 90% state board pass rate

2021 – predicted 52 graduates.

2022 – predicted 100 + graduates.

Projections

The number of qualified applicants for this years admission cycle was more than we could accommodate. We had to go to competitive admissions for the online program. There were 97 LPN's who met the minimum score for entry into the program. We could only accept 40 students this term. By the end of this academic year, 2021, we will have accepted a total of 128 students in the online program. With a projected 100 new RN's graduating from the online program per year. Currently we have 180 students in the online program. The online program consists of 3 or 4 semesters of actual nursing courses with 1 – bridge (transitions) course. Students must take the LPN-ADN entrance exam and score a minimum of 700 on the standardized exam. A score of 700 – 899 will allow entry into the 2nd semester of the program. A score of 900 or higher will allow entry into the 3rd semester or the final year of the program. We currently have 3 sections of each course for the online program.