

**2012-2013 Annual Assessment Report**  
**School of Nursing**  
**College of Health and Human Services**  
**California State University, Sacramento**

Submitted by: Dr.Carolynn Goetze, Chairperson

1. As a result of last year's assessment effort, have you implemented **any changes for your assessment including learning outcomes, assessment plan, assessment tools (methods, rubrics, curriculum map, or key assignment, etc.), and/or the university baccalaureate learning goals?**
  - a. If so, what are those changes? How did you implement those changes?
  - b. How do you know if these changes have achieved the desired results?
  - c. If no, why not?

The 2011-12 assessment efforts focused on overall program assessment via the Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) exit survey and focus group. The exit survey is a national benchmarking assessment that helps the department measure student performance on professional and accreditation standards as well as making determinations regarding university and departmental support. The School of Nursing has participated in this benchmarking survey for over a decade and is able to monitor trends over time. Survey results in 2011-12 remained satisfactory, with significant gains between 30-80% across several categories of learning and satisfaction. The most significant improvement between 2009 and 2011 was in the area of facilities, which was expected due to the program move to Folsom Hall in 2011.

The focus group is conducted within the department at the same time as the exit survey; the focus group is facilitated by a non-member of the BSN faculty. The focus group feedback for 2011-12 found high satisfaction with the program and the quality of the faculty and the facilities. Areas for improvement included communication between faculty and students and among department co-faculty. Students also supported faculty investigation of ways to decrease redundancies and create time efficiencies for students.

Additional assessment efforts in 2011-12 included annual, individual course evaluations and preparation of a self-study for the site visit by the California Board of Registered Nursing.

The School of Nursing was already in the midst of updating and revising the program evaluation plan (PEP) before the 2011-12 assessment findings were known. The PEP was modified significantly to better define assessment goals, timelines, and assigned responsibilities. In part due to the consistency in annual assessment results, faculty determined that the benchmarking survey and focus group could be conducted on a bi-annual basis going forward (with a plan to alternate assessment years with the MSN program). The faculty also determined that department-derived surveys may be implemented annually to

better assess program outcomes. Lastly, the department determined that assessment of alumni was lacking and should be completed in the coming year.

2. As a result of last year's assessment effort, have you implemented **any other changes at the department, the college or the university, including advising, co-curriculum, budgeting and planning?**
  - a. If so, what are those changes? How did you implement those changes?
  - b. How do you know if these changes have achieved the desired results?
  - c. If no, why not?

The results of the 2011-12 benchmark and focus group assessments were considered as the faculty sought to revise the undergraduate curriculum. The department was mandated by the Chancellor's Office and by regulatory changes to bring the BSN to a goal of 120 total units. Subsequently, the faculty spent 2012-13 revising existing program outcomes and course objectives for all but one of the required pre-licensure BSN major courses.

One of the courses eliminated as a pre-requisite for the BSN is Pharmacology. The focus group data have shown that students desire pharmacology to be situated within the practice context. Therefore, the clinical and laboratory nursing courses will be enhancing the pharmacology components throughout the curriculum to provide this improved opportunity for contextual learning. The revisions will be in effect in fall 2013.

Another theme identified from the 2011-12 focus group and repeated in previous years' focus groups was the student perception that the nursing research class (NURS 150) should be three rather than two units due to course rigor. As well, students questioned the separation between the physical assessment (NURS 16) and skills laboratory (NURS 15) courses in the first semester. Beginning in fall 2013, the physical assessment and skills laboratory courses will be combined with the therapeutic communication course (NURS 18) to make one broad course combining all five units. The nursing research course has been increased to three units and has obtained the writing intensive designation with the elimination of the previous writing intensive course, NURS 169 (3 units).

It is hoped that these changes will enhance student learning with a more integrated approach to the content areas. Additionally, by decreasing the overall unit and work load, the department aims to provide students with opportunities for more focused and deeper learning.

3. What **PROGRAM** (not course) learning outcome(s) have you assessed this academic year?

The program learning outcomes assessed for the 2012-13 academic year were associated with competence in the discipline.

Specifically, there are two BSN program outcomes related to competence in the discipline: 1) *Summative Outcome I - Synthesizes theories and concepts from the sciences, the arts, and*

*nursing and integrates these into nursing practice and 2) Summative Outcome II - Utilizes the nursing process to facilitate optimal health, integrating knowledge and skills with individuals and groups across the lifespan and in a variety of settings.*

One program learning outcome in the MSN is best associated with competence in the discipline: *Competency 7 - Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and disposition in a specialized nursing area needed to provide excellent nursing care to individuals, groups, and communities.*

4. What method(s)/measure(s) have you used to collect the data?

The department utilized survey methodology to measure BSN alumni (0-5 years post-program completion) assessment of program outcomes. This department-made survey was administered in late summer 2012. Additional measures of BSN program outcomes included 1) individual course evaluations, 2) student performance in the capstone course in the major, 3) student performance on a nationally-normed, comprehensive nursing examination (NCLEX-RN predictor exam), and 4) results from the NCLEX-RN licensure examination for pre-licensure BSN students.

The MSN data collection methods included exit, alumni, and employer surveys of MSN graduates completed between May and July 2012 along with focus group interviews of graduating students. Student performance on the comprehensive exam was also reviewed.

5. What are the criteria and/or standards of performance for the program learning outcome?

Standards of performance required for Summative Outcome I (SO I) and Summative Outcome II (SO II) in the BSN program:

- (a) 80% of alumni report sufficient focus on SO I and SO II and overall appropriate preparation for practice
- (b) Individual course evaluation items for the capstone clinical nursing course (NURS 145 in the pre-licensure BSN; NURS 178 in the post-licensure BSN) combine for an average score of  $\geq 3.5$  (out of 4) for “effectiveness in helping (you) to learn and to achieve the course objectives”
- (c) Successful achievement of all course objectives and a letter grade of C or higher in the capstone course (NURS 145; NURS 178) for 100% of students
- (d) Pre-licensure BSN group performance on the nationally-normed RN-Comprehensive Predictor ATI examination shows the group above the individual mean – program (above the national average for like groups)
- (e) Minimum first-time NCLEX-RN pass rate of 85% and above average overall pass rates for like institutions (BSN/other CSU campuses combined)

Standards of performance required for achievement of Competency 7 in the MSN program:

- (a) Exit survey and focus group findings show satisfaction in preparation for advanced role

- (b) Alumni survey demonstrates satisfaction in preparation for advanced role
- (c) Employer survey indicating satisfaction with graduates' professional practice (>7/10 scale)
- (d) MSN comprehensive exam first attempt success rate of 90%

6. What data have you collected? What are the results and findings, including the percentage of students who meet each standard?
- a. In what areas are students doing well and achieving the expectations?
  - b. In what areas do students need improvement?

The result of the BSN assessments:

- (a) The BSN alumni survey obtained responses from over 380 alumni who graduated in the past five years, between spring 2007 and spring 2012. Respondents reported overwhelmingly that the program had sufficient focus on the learning outcomes in question, SO I (94%) and SO II (97%). Nearly all respondents (99%) reported sufficient preparation for the NCLEX-RN exam and the vast majority (>97%) reported sufficient preparation for entry-level practice.
- (b) The individual course evaluations for NURS 145 and NURS 178 were not obtained. This was due to clerical error and will be rectified in the next assessment cycle.
- (c) Successful completion of the NURS 145 capstone course for 2012-13 was above 98%; however, this is identified as unsatisfactory and short of the 100% goal. For the NURS 178 capstone course, 100% of students were successful in achieving the learning outcomes.
- (d) The results from the RN-Comprehensive Predictor ATI met the standard ( $\geq 85\%$ ), with the percent of the group above the individual mean – program above 90% throughout the academic year. In fact, the pre-licensure BSN students as a group ranked between the 96<sup>th</sup>-98<sup>th</sup> percentiles for performance on this benchmark exam.
- (e) As shown in the table below, pre-licensure BSN student first-time success on the NCLEX-RN licensure examination has remained above 97% for the past three academic years, with 100% pass rate for 7 of 11 quarters, including the past three quarters. The Sacramento State first-time pass rate average for 2011-12 (98.6%) was above the state average for all BSN graduates (88.7%) and above the average for the CSUs for the most recent year calculated (90% for 2009-10).

AY	Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2			Tot tests	Tot pass	% pass
	# tests	# pass	% pass	# tests	# pass	% pass	# tests	# pass	% pass	# tests	# pass	% pass			
2012-13	10	10	100%	4	4	100%	75	75	100%	tbd	tbd	-	89	89	100%
2011-12	20	20	100%	11	11	100%	51	50	98%	61	60	98.4%	143	141	98.6%
2010-11	41	38	92.7%	3	3	100%	47	46	97.9%	53	53	100%	144	140	97.2%

The results of the MSN assessments:

- (a) In the MSN program, the benchmarking surveys showed that student ratings of program effectiveness exceeded those of comparative institutions. The MSN focus group data suggest that the graduate nursing curriculum prepared the students for the

culminating experience and for the role of the MSN prepared nurse. Overall, graduates indicate a high level of satisfaction with the education they received. Graduate satisfaction on the benchmarking survey is equivalent or superior to comparative institutions on the majority of measures.

- (b) Alumni survey data showed a significant majority of alumni feel well prepared by the graduate nursing program to effectively function as a Masters prepared nurse. The students would overwhelmingly recommend the program to their professional peers. Interpretation of this data however is obscured by a preponderance of survey questions related to APRN practice which is not a focus of the Sacramento State Masters nursing program.
- (c) The employer survey demonstrated that regional nursing employers are highly satisfied with the performance of MSN employees (>7/10 on majority of measures).
- (d) The first time pass rate for the MSN Comprehensive Examination was 78% for spring 2013. Fall 2012 overall pass rate was 100%.

7. As a result of this year's assessment effort, do you anticipate or propose any changes for your program (e.g. structures, content, or learning outcomes)?
- a. If so, what changes do you anticipate? How do you plan to implement those changes?
  - b. How do you know if these changes will achieve the desired results?

The department is pleased with the assessment of competence in the discipline overall. As noted previously, the pre-licensure BSN curriculum implements significant changes in fall 2013 with updated program outcomes, revised course objectives, and a more integrated and streamlined curriculum. The School of Nursing will closely monitor student achievement of learning outcomes within this new framework. The failure to achieve 100% student success in the NURS 145 capstone clinical course is of concern and faculty have already begun to address the issue through improved standardization of clinical nursing performance evaluation rubrics across all clinical courses in the program. Faculty has also looked for ways to better support part-time faculty in early identification of students having difficulty in the clinical area. As well, simulation learning opportunities in the laboratory continue to grow and allow students to experience higher acuity patients in a safe environment. Early implementation of remediation plans may better prepare all students for success in the capstone course.

The post-licensure BSN program may make changes in the coming year due to the revision of the program learning outcomes to be approved in fall 2013. Curricular mapping of the updated outcomes could result in revisions to existing course objectives and assessments.

As a result of focus group findings, the MSN program has improved the format of the comprehensive examination orientation sessions to improve perceived consistency of information. The program does not anticipate making any other changes this year.

8. Which program learning outcome(s) do you plan to assess next year? How?

The School of Nursing plans to assess the Baccalaureate Learning Goal of (3) Intellectual and Practical Skills, specifically 3.4 Written communication (Third VALUE rubric) and 3.5 Oral communication (Fourth VALUE rubric) within both the baccalaureate and master's programs during 2013-14. Faculty began this process at the end of spring 2013 by identifying discipline-specific writing expectations for graduates (such as the ability to write a hospital policy and procedure). Next, faculty will identify specific oral communication expectations. Then, faculty will map the communication learning outcomes within the existing curricula and examine how these skills are introduced, developed, and mastered. Curricular mapping may reveal some areas for change to improve upon skill development and may allow faculty to make mid-year revisions in assignments. During the spring 2014 semester, faculty will identify key exemplars for committee review to assess students' communication development at various points in time. Students will be surveyed within courses and at exit regarding their achievement of the communication outcomes. Development and utilization of a standard written communication evaluation rubric will be considered for the BSN and MSN programs.