Redesign of a Nursing Research Course to Foster Application in Evidence Based Practice
Kathy Jo Ellison, DSN
Auburn University School of Nursing
Arlene Morris

Problem: Students in a junior level Nursing Research for Evidence Based Practice course often do not see the importance of this course’s content in the development of their professional nursing skills. Nurses at local medical centers are also having difficulty finding time to search for best evidence in light of current nursing shortages.

Evidence: A literature review on current curriculum strategies for teaching evidence-based practice content and review of other course syllabi was conducted.

Strategy: The course instructors at 2 sister schools developed a project in the course based on the ACE STAR Model that seeks to connect the students’ developing knowledge about evidence-based practice with real life nursing problems. At one location, the students were connected with “real-life” nursing questions from a local hospital and in the other they were asked to address common concerns of the elderly. Both groups developed their questions, reviewed the literature and made recommendations for practice based on the evidence. They presented them to the relevant nursing groups in poster format.

Practice Change: The course content fostered application of knowledge that has potential for continuance across the curriculum and impact throughout the students’ practice careers.

Evaluation: A short-term outcome was the identification of methods to address curriculum gaps in students’ understanding and implementation of evidence-based practice content.

Results: Application of the ACESTAR Model assists students in seeking information to guide practice and thus facilitates the integration of the Model into the formation of nursing practices to seek the highest level of evidence as rationale for nursing interventions.

Recommendations: Other schools of nursing can implement similar approaches to the teaching and application of Evidence Based Practice which have potential to impact both students and practicing nurses.

Lessons Learned: Overview of the ACESTAR Model of evidence based practice at the beginning of the second semester of the junior level increases awareness of the model and its application during co-requisite and subsequent clinical courses and practice. The course must be structured to present theoretical content early in the semester to allow for application of content and development of content for various groups. Student group assignments fostered development of teamwork, active learning, reciprocity, and respect of diverse talents and ways of learning.

Bibliography
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