

**BRIDGING THE EDUCATION-PRACTICE  
GAP: INTEGRATION OF CURRENT  
CLINICAL PRACTICE INTO EDUCATION  
ON TRANSITIONS TO PROFESSIONAL  
PRACTICE**

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# Faculty Disclosure

Faculty Name	Cheryle Levitt, PhD, RN
Conflicts of Interest	NONE
Employer	State University of New York at Delhi
Sponsorship	NONE

# Goals and Objectives

At the culmination of this presentation, the learner will:  
Integrate current clinical priorities into course development for professional practice in a baccalaureate program.

Session Objectives:

- Incorporate selected current priorities in clinical nursing as content for a core course in transitions to professional practice in a BSN program.
- Compare the results from clinicians vs. educators on priorities for course topics for a core course on transitions to professional practice.

# According to the Institutes of Medicine

Nursing curricula need to be reexamined and updated. They need to be ***adaptive*** enough to undergo continuous ***evaluation*** and ***improvement*** based on ***new evidence*** and a changing science base, changes and advances in technology, and changes in the ***needs of patients and the health care system.***

(IOM: The Future of Nursing, 2011, p. 191)

# Purpose of Study

This descriptive exploratory study addressed the ***gap between education to practice*** by engaging practitioners in diverse healthcare settings to contribute to the content in a core course for transitions to professional practice in an RN-BSN program. The input from the practitioners provided the reality-based content that students need ***to function effectively in multiple healthcare delivery settings.***

# Setting

- RN-BSN program, online
- Public university, in upstate New York
- Participants from mixture of urban, community, and rural healthcare facilities

# Method

- e-survey sent to preceptors, directors of nursing, staff RNs, program affiliates, BSN faculty
- (n= 515 sent; 206 received; 40% responded)

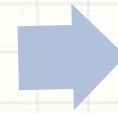


# Primary Research Question

What are the ***topics*** recommended by practitioners for students in a core course in a RN-BSN program on ***transitions to professional practice***, ranked in order of priority?

# Secondary Research Question and Independent Variables

Does perceived  
importance of nursing  
topics vary significantly  
according to seven  
demographic variables?



Age

+

Years employed

+

Current role

+

Years in Current  
Role

+

Highest  
Education

+

Geographic  
location

+

Employment  
Setting



# Dependent Variables

- Accountability, autonomy
- Characteristics of a profession
- Collaboration and coordination in caring
- Critical thinking, clinical reasoning
- Cultural caring and other multicultural issues in nursing
- Ethical principles and standards in healthcare
- Evidence based practice
- Healthcare informatics and technology
- National and global healthcare issues
- History of nursing
- Leadership and management principles
- Legal issues in nursing practice
- Nursing professional organizations
- Nursing science, theories, and models
- Professional communication
- Professional nursing concepts: philosophy, identity, standards, roles, behaviors
- Quality improvement

# Profile of the Sample

Age		
Category	Frequency	Percent
20-39	46	22.7
40-59	138	68
60+	19	9.4
Total	203	100
Missing	3	
	206	

Years Employed		
Category	Frequency	Percent
1-4 Years	15	7.3
5-12 Years	40	19.5
>12 Years	150	73.2
Total	205	100
Missing	1	
	206	

Current Role		
Category	Frequency	Percent
Charge Nurse	11	5.3
Clinical Preceptor	6	2.9
Faculty in a Nursing Program	19	9.2
Nurse Manager	51	24.8
Nursing Administration	41	19.9
Staff Nurse	51	24.8
Staff Nurse Educator	27	13.1
	206	100

Years in Current Role		
Category	Frequency	Percent
1-4 Years	71	37.4
5-12 Years	67	35.3
>12 Years	52	27.4
Total	190	100
Missing	16	
	206	

# Profile of the Sample

Highest Education		
Category	Frequency	Percent
Associate Degree	8	3.9
Baccalaureate	111	53.9
Diploma	5	2.4
Doctorate	6	2.9
Masters (non-NP)	61	29.6
Nurse Practitioner	15	7.3
	206	100

Geographic Location		
Category	Frequency	Percent
Metropolitan	55	26.7
Online Position	9	4.4
Rural	60	29.1
Suburban	82	39.8
	206	100

Setting		
Category	Frequency	Percent
College or university	17	8.3
Community agency (includes outpatient)	23	11.2
Community hospital	89	43.2
Long term care	13	6.3
Rehabilitation Center	2	1
School	1	0.5
Teaching hospital	61	29.6
	206	100

# Data Collection and Analysis

- The survey was peer reviewed and piloted prior to distribution.
- Participants were asked to choose their top ten topical areas and to rank them in order of priority.
- Data were analyzed via descriptive statistics and for differences, using a series of Kruskal Wallis tests.

# Results: Ranked Importance (n=206)

Topic	Median Rank	n
Critical thinking, clinical reasoning	8.00	155
Accountability, autonomy	7.00	132
Collaboration and coordination in caring	7.00	112
Characteristics of a profession	6.00	80
Ethical principles and standards in healthcare	6.00	115
Evidence based practice	6.00	147
Professional communication	6.00	121
Professional nursing concepts: philosophy, identity, standards, roles, behaviors	6.00	110
Quality improvement	6.00	101
Cultural caring and other multicultural issues in nursing	5.00	96
Healthcare informatics and technology	5.00	89
Leadership and management principles	5.00	108
Legal issues in nursing practice	5.00	112
Nursing science, theories, and models	5.00	83
Nursing professional organizations	4.00	48
National and global healthcare issues	3.00	63
History of nursing	3.00	55

# Results

- No significant differences in importance rankings according to:
  - highest degree earned by the participant
  - age
  - geographic location
  - clinical setting
  - between clinicians and faculty



# Results: Significant Findings

- *History of nursing* ( $\chi^2=7.846$ , 2 df,  $p=.020$ )
  - Significant difference according to ***years employed***

Years Employed	Median Rank	Interquartile Range
1-4 years (n=6)	1	0.25
5-12 years (n=16)	4	7.5
>12 years (n=33)	3	5

# Results: Significant Findings

- **Leadership and management principles** ( $\chi^2=14.061$ , 5 df,  $p=.029$ )
  - Significant difference according to **current position**

Current Position	Median Rank	Interquartile Range
Charge Nurse (n=2)	5.50	1
Clinical Preceptor (n=3)	4	3
Faculty in a Nursing Program (n=9)	6	4.5
Nurse Manager (n=29)	4	3
Nursing Administration (n=24)	6	5.75
Staff Nurse (n=26)	6	4.25
Staff Nurse Educator (n=15)	6	4

# Results: Significant Findings

- *Critical thinking, clinical reasoning* ( $\chi^2=8.790$ , 2 df,  $p=.012$ )
  - Significant difference according to ***years in current position***

Years in Current Position	Median Rank	Interquartile Range
1-4 years (n=50)	9	5
5-12 years (n=49)	7	6
>12 years (n=45)	9	3.5

# Results: Significant Findings

- ***Professional nursing concepts: philosophy, identity, standards, roles, behaviors*** ( $\chi^2=6.213$ , 2 df,  $p=.045$ ).
  - Significant difference according to ***years in current position***

Years in Current Position	Median Rank	Interquartile Range
1-4 years (n=42)	6	5.25
5-12 years (n=32)	7	4.75
>12 years (n=29)	4	5.5

# Limitations

- Uneven sample, less faculty than practitioners
- Limited to the New York state geographic area
- Did not consider practitioners' current status in their own educational programs

# Conclusions

Some of current content supported in findings



Course redesigned and launched within six months



Relevant topics guided course redesign



Easy application to other program courses



# Resources for Course Development

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing: Essentials of Baccalaureate Education
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN)
- American Nurses Association: Scope and Standards of Practice
- National League for Nursing: Competencies for Graduates of Baccalaureate Programs
- Institute of Medicine: The Future of Nursing Report
- Evidence from Scholarly Literature

# Implications for Course Development

<b>Previous Assignment</b>	<b>New Assignment</b>
Nursing history and culture paper	Professional identity development project
Nursing Theories PowerPoint presentation	Critical analysis and application of professional nursing roles and behaviors
Past, present, and future of nursing paper	Quality improvement project

# Implications and Recommendations for Research

- Practitioner's strong interest in participating in curriculum planning
- Develop collaborative partnerships for curriculum development and evaluation
- Validation of content for program assessment
- Future studies on validation of competencies

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# Thank you for coming!

Questions?

