BEST PRACTICES IN IMPLEMENTING STUDENT TESTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Abstract:
The purpose of this poster is to present the development of testing guidelines and policies in a multi-campus Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (AASN) program. Specifically, we address the use of E2, Custom HESI and Specialty exams with four campus programs in all clinical and theory courses. This process also includes the use of HESI admission and readmission exams. Key factors in successful implementation of testing include faculty buy-in, agreement and willingness to consistently implement established policies, and the creation of a positive testing culture with students. Faculty buy-in calls for instructors to perceive themselves as stakeholders with active roles in promoting HESI testing, frank discussion specific to students meeting exam outcome criteria, remediation policies, and remediation. Additionally, faculty must also achieve consensus in regard to exam cut-scores, HESI Case Studies, Evolve Adaptive Quizzing, and faculty-created tests. In terms of established policy program faculty meet face-to-face to review and revise testing policies a minimum of three times a year. Courses contain standardized statements on syllabi with information about student responsibilities (e.g., cost, dead-lines for purchase, creation of an Evolve account, arriving early, required earbuds for audio test items, etc.). Syllabi also state that HESI exams are included as part of a weighted test average which must be 70% or higher. Additional testing policies developed by faculty include requiring a photo ID and securing cell phones/electronics/personal items. Faculty submit syllabi containing objectives on the Evolve website for Custom HESI review by an assigned content expert from Elsevier. Questions are then reviewed and approved by instructors who have direct telephone and email access to their Elsevier client service specialist. Finally, faculty review HESI data used to measure student achievement, faculty established guidelines for teacher-constructed unit tests specific to item writing guidelines, exam analysis and composition. In situations involving remediation, all students take a custom HESI exam based on the content from the previ-ous successful semester to measure retention of knowledge. Finally, all students take the HESI E2 in the final semester. A cut-score of 850 is required for graduation. Students scoring below 850 must complete an approved NCLEX course before their transcripts are released to the state board of nursing, (e.g. NLN Board of Governors, 2012). Creation of a positive testing culture with students requires faculty to convey a positive attitude about the value of HESI products as part of preparation for passing NCLEX licensure. Prior to program acceptance, students have initial nursing. (e.g. NLN Board of Governors, 2012). Creation of a positive testing culture with students requires faculty to convey a positive attitude about the value of HESI products as part of preparation for passing NCLEX licensure. Prior to program acceptance, students have initial

Background:
• Arkansas State University delivers the Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (AASN) program to 4 campuses over a radius of 140 miles via Compressed Video Network.
• Standardization of testing policies among a multi-campus system is essential to ensure consistency, academic integrity and uphold academic and behavioral standards for students related to testing.
• HESI exams have been used in the Arkansas State University AASN program since 2003

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Elsevier Products Used:

Sample Syllabus Statements:

Test Average:
• All exam grades will be averaged as individually weighted for a total of seventy-five percent (75%) of the course grade. If an overall weighted average of 75% is not achieved on exams, then the exam average will be posted as the final grade for the course. Written and other assignments will be not included in this calculation. Please note: An overall weighted average or weighted exam average of lower than 75% (ex. 74.99%) is considered failing. A letter grade of “D” will be assigned. If a 75% average is achieved on exams, then other assignments, twenty-five (25) percent of the overall course grade, will then be averaged with the exam average. If the written assignments (ex. NCLEX questions, online quizzes) portion lowers or raises your overall grade, then that score will be posted as your final grade for the course.

HESI Final Examinations:
• The final exam for this course is a standardized achievement/ assessment test developed by Elsevier HESI testing. The exam was created from the objectives of this course and reviewed by the faculty. Faculty responsible for teaching the course approved the exam prior to completion.
• The final exam for this course will require an “Achievement Exam Permit.” Instructions for obtaining this final exam permit will be available on Blackboard with payment sent via e-commerce and payment is due by February 5, 2016 @ 5 p.m. as per your contract.
• Students are allowed 2 hours to take the HESI Achievement Exam.
• Earphones/earbuds will be required to complete the auditory questions for the exam. Students are responsible for providing their own earphones/ear buds.
• Students may bring ear plugs if desired.

Adaptive Quizzing:
• To enhance learning and preparation for lecture, students are required to take short on-line quizzes prior to specific content areas to be covered in class (9% of final course grade). When taking these quizzes you MUST go to the evolve website. This is the specific information needed to enroll: Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing COURSE ID: # NRS 2213 Nursing II Med Surg all campuses. Due dates are posted for each quiz.

Conclusions:
Nursing faculty need to agree upon and establish policies and procedures for online/computerized testing and faculty-created examinations to ensure consistency especially in multi-campus programs. Lack of consistency with policies regarding testing cut off scores, reviewing and interpreting exam statistics and rules for student behavior could result in student complaints of unfair treatment and/or litigation.