SCHOOL NAME: Purdue University Calumet

INSTRUCTOR: Janice Tazbir

HESI improves student confidence and NCLEX scores

Background: *The School of Nursing at Purdue University Calumet in Hammond, Indiana offers BSN, accelerated BSN for second-degree students, LPN to BSN, and RN to BSN undergraduate programs and clinical nurse specialist, family nurse practitioners, nurse executive, and post-graduate certificate graduate programs.*

Issue: *The faculty at the School of Nursing at Purdue University Calumet wanted to improve the school's NCLEX pass rates.*

Approach: *Purdue University Calumet implemented all HESI products in 2002. Faculty at the school used the data to benchmark strengths and weaknesses and to revise the school's curriculum. Faculty now use HESI data to fine-tune the curriculum. For example, if students performed below average on pharmacokinetics, the content would be revised. HESI Case Studies are started in the Foundational course and are also used in specialty courses.*

After completing their Foundational course, students take a Specialty Exam that faculty members have customized by submitting their syllabi for development of a custom exam. Students who do not earn the passing score of 850 must complete a HESI remediation program. Remediation is based on each student's specific knowledge deficits identified on his or her HESI Individual Scoring Report. Students also use HESI Case Studies and Practice Test for remediation. Faculty members work with students to further individualize remediation and use HESI's online reporting capabilities to monitor their progress.

After students complete their first medical-surgical course, which falls in the middle of the curriculum, they take a Specialty Exam again. They must score 850 or complete remediation if below 850.

Students first take the HESI Exit Exam during Week 11 of their senior semester. Those who fail to score 900 must complete a remediation program. Students then take another Exit Exam during Week 16. If they still fail to score 900, they must submit proof of further remediation before receiving a certificate of completion so they can take the NCLEX.

In addition to providing individual student feedback, faculty members also let students know that HESI predicts pass rates, so students who score well have more confidence in their readiness to take NCLEX.

Results: *After implementing HESI, pass rates increased from 77 percent to 81 percent to the high 90s and even 100 percent. Continued integration of HESI into the curriculum has fostered student confidence while helping to maintain high pass rates.*

Benefits: *HESI relies on a rigorous, formal process for item development and analysis. Nurse educators who have expertise in the field in which they are writing develop the questions, which an expert panel reviews. Each question is psychometrically evaluated for consistency and readability. The ability of HESI to predict NCLEX pass rates help faculty better prepare students for the test.*