SCHOOL NAME: University of Arkansas at Little Rock

INSTRUCTOR: Ann Schlumberger

Long-term experience with HESI improves NCLEX pass rates and performance

Background: *University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Department of Nursing offers an Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) and a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) completion program. The hybrid BSN program includes online delivery with scheduled faculty-student class meetings either online or face-to-face.*

Issue: *University of Arkansas at Little Rock's Department of Nursing first piloted the HESI Exit Exam in the school's ASN capstone course. Because of the information gained, the school wanted to implement other HESI tests.*

Approach: *The Department of Nursing implemented a mid-program Custom Exam to give students insight into their progress at the end of the first year and before starting the second year. Faculty members can then work with students to improve areas of weakness at the time, rather than detecting the problem later on the Exit Exam. Use of HESI continued to expand and now includes the HESI Specialty Exam for each course, which provides specialty-specific information.*

A Student Success Coordinator meets individually with students to review exam results, highlighting the areas they scored well in and those they did not, which helps improve student retention. Remediation is mandatory.

Faculty also use the data provided by HESI to evaluate student learning outcomes and the curriculum. For example, if a subscore is lower than 850 on both the Custom Exam and the Exit Exam, faculty evaluate the content of the curriculum.

Faculty meet twice a year to review HESI data for all courses, referring issues to the teaching teams or the Student Success Coordinator so that curriculum adjustments can be made as needed. Faculty also meet annually to discuss HESI data as it relates to the curriculum and how students are performing.

Results: *The University of Arkansas at Little Rock has now been using HESI in its ASN program for more than a decade. Faculty members can identify students who need help early, and the school has high NCLEX first pass and retake rates.*

Benefits: *HESI is an objective method that allows faculty to analyze student progress and the curriculum on an ongoing basis. HESI is also helpful for meeting requirements that nursing schools be accountable for student outcomes.*