HESI provides better remediation, student tracking, and integration

**Background:** Towson University is the second largest university in Maryland. Its Department of Nursing offers baccalaureate and master’s degrees in nursing.

**Issue:** Towson University decided to switch from its previous testing program to HESI in 2009 to gain more benefits for students and faculty.

**Approach:** Towson’s testing policy specifies how HESI tests are used in the nursing program to evaluate student competency and achievement of objectives. Faculty members encourage students to use the HESI Practice Tests and Case Studies to prepare for the Specialty Exams given at the course level.

The policy also includes how much each test counts toward the student’s grade. Students can take two versions of the Specialty Exam, with the higher score counting towards the grade, and students must score at least 900, which is highly predictive of success on NCLEX, on the HESI Exit Exam. Those who do not achieve this score must remediate in the categories identified in the Exit Exam Summary Report.

Students, who are required to complete remediation for all HESI exams, receive an online remediation plan. Towson’s policy recommends remediation time based on score, for example, 2 hours for a score of 800 to 899 and 5 hours for a score of 500 to 599 in the case of Specialty Exams. Exit Exams have higher recommended hours of remediation, ranging from 3 to 11. Faculty can check to see if students are working on remediation.

**Results:** Integrating HESI throughout the program and requiring remediation better prepares students for the NCLEX exam.

**Benefits:** Faculty at Towson University state that HESI offers better remediation, more detailed student tracking, and better integration compared to what they previously used. HESI also helps faculty identify students who are at risk for not doing well in the program so that they can receive the help they need.