Using QSEN’s KSAs in a Graduate Course Aimed at Improving Quality, Safety, and Outcomes in Healthcare Systems

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ABSTRACT
In line with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing’s Master’s Essentials, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSAs) described in the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) project provide a solid framework on which to build graduate nursing education around the Institute of Medicine (IOM) competencies for healthcare professionals. In a graduate course at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill School of Nursing, students’ degree tracks range from BSN-MSN, RN-MSN, BSN-MSN and MSN-DNP. To address these diverse learning needs, innovative teaching strategies targeting the cognitive, affective, and behavioral domains of adult learning were integrated with the competencies of Patient-Centered Care, Teamwork and Collaboration, Evidence-based Practice, Quality Improvement (QI), Safety, and Informatics to develop the QSEN graduate KSAs.

Even Weeks:
- Traditional Classroom
- Met Face-to-Face
- Discussion Facilitated by Experts
- Focused on Macro and Microsystem Outcomes

Odd Weeks:
- Online Discussion
- 14 Teams of 4
- Explored Theories and QI Methods and Improvement Science
- Unfolding Case Study

Online Case Study Discussion Forum (Team)
Primarily addressed Cognitive Domain
Centered on an unfolding case study
Faculty partnered with a local healthcare organization to present students with information on restructuring an oncology clinic
Implemented KSAs to analyze a new aspect of the case study, focusing on a particular competency
Discussed details of the case study with the “real-life” oncology clinic nursing leadership team

QSEN competency-related paper (Individual)
Primarily addressed Affective Domain
Explicated a clinically based problem of interest.
Offered evidence-based solutions using KSAs within at least one relevant QSEN competency.

QI case study (Team)
Primarily addressed Behavioral Domain
Students were presented with data commonly collected in healthcare organizations to meet relevant Joint Commission (TJC) Core Measure set.
Performed root-cause analyses and formulated solutions
Presented posters showing data analysis and evidence-based recommendations to School of Nursing during a mock QI nursing conference.

EVALUATION
• Feedback regarding each of these strategies was overwhelmingly positive.
• Evaluation was primarily attained through faculty observation and student feedback.
• Many students planned to take the recommendations from their QI case study back to their own institutions for potential implementation.
• Course evaluation scores were improved in comparison to 2 previous years of the course that did not include all 3 teaching strategies.

SUMMARY
The QSEN Graduate KSAs can be used as a framework for courses in graduate nursing education focused on improving quality, safety and outcomes in healthcare systems and can be addressed through the cognitive, affective and behavioral domains of adult learning using innovative teaching strategies.

REFERENCES
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