



A HOLISTIC MODEL FOR NURSING STUDENT RETENTION

Catherine M. Griswold Ed.D, MSN, RN, CLNC, CNE, & Laurel A. Moody MS, MSN, RN, CNE

School of Health Professions, Department of Nursing, Stevenson University, Stevenson, Maryland, USA



Introduction

Nursing programs are seeing attrition rates that range from approximately 50% to 70% (Sayles & Shelton, 2003; Wells, 2007). The high attrition rates of nursing students are a substantial concern for nursing education programs and the health care community due to the concerns that there is a deficit of new nurses entering practice where there is an increasing need for approximately 3% over the next decade (Sayles & Shelton, 2003; Shelton, 2012).

Reducing attrition rates of nursing students is a goal in higher education communities responding to the growing demand for more nurses in the healthcare system. Despite intense efforts at correcting the attrition rates, the problem persists with first and second year nursing students (Twale & De Luca, 2008; O'Donnell, 2009).

The state-wide and national priorities of increasing the number of nurses in the healthcare workforce persist. Annually, Stevenson's Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program attracts and enrolls high numbers of students interested in pursuing a career in nursing. Stevenson's program promotes the value of providing small class sizes and abundant opportunities to build one-to-one professional mentor relationships with nursing faculty.



Educational Leadership Action Plan

Using *The Umbrella Model of Nursing Student Retention; Summer Immersion Program (Griswold, 2014)* as the prototype, a summer residency program focused on enhancing the academic skills of nursing students and developing mentoring relationships with nursing faculty is a new, multi-faceted and innovative approach to improving nursing student retention at Stevenson University. The five-day residency program for students uses a holistic approach to retention. Each session incorporates short didactic lessons and expanded psychomotor activities designed for content mastery. Residency sessions include:

- (a) Academic strategies** - study skills, managing multiple courses, assignments and traversing textbooks, effective note-taking, test-taking techniques and tips, explaining the purpose and role of tutoring and supplemental instruction in student success, and APA essentials including academic integrity.
- (b) Nonacademic strategies** - time management skills, wellness activities and services, financial planning, enhanced communication and advocacy skills, and tips on balancing work, family, and school obligations.
- (c) Development of Individualized Educational Plan for Success** - benchmarks for achievements and plan for use of resources to enhance success during junior and senior years in program.



Action Plan – Time line

1. Planning Committee Formed – June 2015
 - Nursing Administration
 - Director of Nursing Advising
 - Nursing Faculty
 - Office of Institutional Research
2. Key Stakeholders Identified – July 2015
 - Academic Support
 - Residence Life
 - Wellness Center
 - Financial Aid
 - Grants Office
3. Criteria for Pilot Group Developed – August 2015
4. Developed Student Survey, Consent & Completion of IRB application – November 2015



Next Steps

- Complete IRB & Survey Senior Nursing Students
- Analyze Survey Results
- Once results are analyzed, Planning Committee will customize the prototype to meet the identified needs of Stevenson's nursing students.
- Develop formalized mentoring plan for peer mentors
- Develop formalized mentor protocol for faculty
- Conduct a SWOT analysis plan to evaluate the summer residency
- Work with the Office Institutional Research to ensure our work can be measured and reported.
- Apply for a planning grant from NSP II to support the development of this project.
- Goal is to launch this initiative summer of 2016.



References

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