Competency IV: Focus on Curriculum Design and Evaluation of Program Outcomes

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Definition of Curriculum

Curriculum is the formal and informal content and process by which learners gain knowledge and understanding, develop skills, and alter attitudes, appreciations, and values to meet student learning and program outcomes.

Essential Components of a Curriculum

• Mission/Philosophy (drives entire curriculum)
• Conceptual/Organizing Framework
• Program Learning Outcomes (aka New Graduate Competencies)
Essential Components of a Curriculum

• Plan of Study (courses)
• Curricular model (e.g., CBC, competency-based)
• Course syllabi and weekly lesson plans

Considerations for an Effective Nursing Curriculum

• Mission/philosophy must be in alignment with institutional mission/philosophy/values!
• Curriculum needs to consider community health/society trends and needs—examples???

Considerations for an Effective Nursing Curriculum

• Selecting appropriate clinical experiences:
  • Must be based on course learning outcomes.
  • Must provide the opportunity for students to meet the learning outcomes.
  • Must be collaborative with clinical agency and program faculty.
  • Must have open communication with clear expectations for all parties.
Considerations for an Effective Nursing Curriculum

- Learners’ needs (How to get feedback?)
- Stakeholders’ feedback and collaboration as needed (Who are stakeholders and how to get feedback/collaboration?)
- Partnerships
- Evaluation of existing curriculum

Considerations for an Effective Nursing Curriculum

- Evaluation of program outcomes (e.g., NCLEX/APRN exams, retention rate, etc.)
- Incorporation of current nursing standards, theory, and research
- Use of educational principles, theory, and research
**Future of Nursing Report (IOM, 2010)**

- Called for 80% of nurses to be BSN-prepared by 2020.
- Emphasized need for nurses to be collaborative partners to use evidence in practice to promote safe, quality care.

**Nurse of the Future (NOF) Competencies**

- 6 QSEN competencies PLUS:
  - Professionalism
  - Communication
  - Leadership
  - Systems-based practice

**BSN vs. MSN Programs**

- Generalist practice nursing role (use NCLEX and BSN Essentials) = BSN
- Advanced practice nursing (APRN) roles (use MSN/DNP Essentials, and APRN role standards and competencies) = Graduate degree (MSN/DNP)
Revising/Changing Curriculum

• Use change principles and theory, e.g.:
  • Lewin’s Change Theory
  • Perform a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)
  • Identify facilitators and champions.
  • Identify barriers and ways to overcome.

Revising/Changing Curriculum

• Involve all faculty.
• Have curriculum committee or task group develop working documents and then obtain faculty approval; then institutional and regulatory body/accreditation organisation approval.

Leading Curricular Change or Course Design: Best Practices?
Incorporating Technology

- What are best practices/evidence-based technologies and how to use them?

PAIR DISCUSSION

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Program Assessment Plan = CQI

- Subject or Problem
- Action for program as needed
- Expected outcome and frequency of assessment
- Results of data and analysis
- Assessment methods

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Program Assessment Plan

Student Learning Outcomes: e.g.,
- Measure course learning outcomes.
- Set ELAs (expected outcomes).
- Compare actual outcome achievement with actual achievement.
Program Assessment Plan Examples of Expected Outcomes

- 95% of students in Health Assessment course will perform a head-to-toe assessment at a proficiency level using a rubric.
- 85% of students in Mental Health Nursing will score a Level 2 on the ATI Mental Health Standardized Exam after 2 attempts.

Program Assessment Plan

- **Expected overall program outcomes** = Performance indicators that show the purposes of the program are achieved; should be realistic; e.g.:  
  - Student graduation rate (retention rate)

  Seventy percent (70%) of students in each cohort will graduate within 6 semesters after admission.
Program Assessment Plan

• Faculty Outcome Examples:
  • 100% of full-time faculty will engage in at least one scholarship activity.
  • 25% of full-time faculty will achieve the terminal degree.
  • 50% of full-time faculty will obtain the credential of CNE.

PRACTICE QUESTIONS
PRACTICE QUESTION #19
A curriculum committee is preparing to revise the current nursing curriculum. What is the committee’s best first step?
A. Ensure that the degree plan will allow graduates to meet student learning outcomes.
B. Review the mission/philosophy of the current curriculum.
C. Develop lesson plans for the first nursing course in the new curriculum.
D. Develop a substantive change report for the accrediting agency.

PRACTICE QUESTION #20
Which curricular approach requires student accountability and active student learning?
A. Backward design
B. Block course model
C. Concept-based curriculum
D. Integrated lifespan courses
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PRACTICE QUESTION #21
A nursing program director identifies the need for curriculum revision. What is the best approach for the director to facilitate this change?
A. Review the program data that support the need for curriculum revision with faculty.
B. Ask faculty to vote on whether they want a new or revised curriculum.
C. Ask for faculty volunteers to revise the curriculum.
D. Contact a neighboring nursing program to determine how their faculty revised the curriculum.
PRACTICE QUESTION #22
Which statement by the clinical nurse educator indicates understanding about clinical observational experiences for students?
A. "I sent several students to the PACU so I would have less students on my unit to supervise."
B. "I developed student learning outcomes for the PACU observational experience."
C. "I assigned nurse preceptors to students in PACU so they could do more skills."
D. "I asked the nurses in PACU to evaluate my student using our clinical evaluation tool."

PRACTICE QUESTION #23
A hospital staff nurse reports to the clinical nurse educator that a first semester nursing student did not give the assigned patient a complete bath. What is the nurse educator’s best action?
A. Counsel the student about the need to bathe patients.
B. Tell the student that he will receive an unsatisfactory grade for the day.
C. Inform the staff nurse that the nurse educator is responsible for supervising students.
D. Ask the student to explain why the patient did not receive a bath.
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PRACTICE QUESTION #24
Which outcome statement would be appropriate as part of evaluating a nursing program’s effectiveness?
A. Maintain a student retention rate of 75% for each cohort.
B. Perform a head-to-toe assessment of an adult.
C. Develop a plan of care for clients with mental health problems.
D. Pass the final pathophysiology exam with an 85%. **

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PRACTICE QUESTION #25
A nursing program's expected outcome was that 90% of graduates would be satisfied with the program. The actual outcome for the last two classes was around 70%. What is the faculty's most appropriate plan based on these data?
A. Continue to monitor the satisfaction rate for each cohort.
B. Ask the advisory board members if they are satisfied with the graduates.
C. Change the expected graduate satisfaction outcome to 70%.
D. Analyze the data to determine what program improvements are needed.

PRACTICE QUESTION #26
Which of the following evaluation methods would be appropriate to measure student achievement of this course learning outcome: Analyze the socio-political factors that impact the current health care system?
A. Multiple choice exam
B. Lab simulation
C. Scholarly paper
D. Clinical evaluation tool
**PRACTICE QUESTION #26**

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B. Lab simulation  
C. Scholarly paper **  
D. Clinical evaluation tool

**PRACTICE QUESTION #27**

Which statement by the novice nurse educator indicates a need for follow up by the mentor regarding the purpose of the program's assessment plan (also known as the systematic plan for evaluation [SPE])?

A. “The SPE involves all faculty to keep it current.”  
B. “The SPE documents the effectiveness of our nursing program.”  
C. “The SPE is our program's continuous quality improvement tool.”  
D. “The SPE is a tool we only update right before our accreditation visit.”