

ABSTRACT

The purposes of this poster presentation are to 1) describe the implementation of a master's of science in nursing (MSN) program by providing access to rigorous distance education to students living in rural Pennsylvania; 2) discuss building a critical mass of master's prepared advanced practice nurse experts in rural communities; and 3) share formative and summative evaluation information.

Through funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Health Resources and Services Administration, Bureau of Health Professions, Division of Nursing, the Jefferson School of Nursing (JSN) expanded its MSN program currently offered at the urban Philadelphia campus to the rural campus in Danville.

Using the methodologies of live web-casting and live video over the Internet, distance students are afforded the opportunity to participate in a live classroom setting rather than experience the static distance methodology of reading through lectures themselves. For example, during the clinical courses, the faculty teaches onsite in Philadelphia webcasting to students in their rural homes so that they can view and hear the lecture. These newer technologies make possible real-time faculty-student dialogue, student-to-student dialogue, and enhance socialization. Furthermore, the use of advanced technologies allows distance students to discuss with peers and faculty alike, in real time, the problems, successes, and questions which arise during class and clinical practica, thereby enhancing critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning skills.

This urban-rural partnership addresses increasing demands for educating greater numbers of master's prepared advanced practice nurses to work in north and central rural Pennsylvania thus promoting access to health care in rural underserved communities.

ABOUT THE GRANT

Pennsylvania is the third largest employer of non-physician providers and the majority of these individuals work in primary care.

There is a critical shortage of advanced practice nurses (APN) nationally and in the state of Pennsylvania. In 2005, the highest vacancy rate in Pennsylvania's health care workforce existed for APNs at 14.7%, this is increased from the 2003 vacancy rate of 11.6%.

Advanced practice nurses vacancy rate in north and central Pennsylvania were 15.1% and 17.6% respectively. In addition, the percent change in vacant positions was 76.2%.

Access to primary health care is limited in many rural areas. The project addresses increasing demands for educating great numbers of APN's including MSN and DNP nurses to work in north and central rural Pennsylvania. Rapid population growth in some rural communities may have an impact on available services, with varying expectations on local health and human service delivery systems.

Disparities in educational status, employment, and income may require the development of specialized approaches to nursing education and health improvement in rural Pennsylvania.

Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) and Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) curricula prepare APN nurses to provide healthcare by meeting objectives pursuant to the Health People 2010.

The project will recruit and retain diverse and disadvantaged students to the MSN and DNP programs and insure a supply of master's and doctoral prepared nurses to offset the advanced practice nurse shortage and primary care provider shortage in rural Pennsylvania.

IMPLEMENTING A GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM AT A DISTANCE THROUGH AN URBAN-RURAL PARTNERSHIP

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Faculty and Staff of the Jefferson School of Nursing Urban Campus pictured with a live video feed of Faculty and Students at the Rural Campus



Jefferson School of Nursing Students at the Urban Campus



Faculty and Staff at the Jefferson School of Nursing Rural Campus



Jefferson School of Nursing Rural Campus Graduate Students watching a live video feed from the Urban Campus.



A Graduate course Webcast from our Urban Campus.

EVALUATION

Summative evaluation revealed high student and faculty satisfaction on both campuses.

Formative evaluation comments include:

Was the web cast an effective alternative to the classroom experience?

Absolutely.

Definitely.

Very effective, no stress of driving.

Yes, for the most part I think the web classes are excellent. There are technical glitches that are inherent with this type of communication and overall, I don't feel these small issues negatively impacted the experience.

Was it easy to connect to the web cast course?

Yes, it was easy to connect to the web cast course.

Yes, the link provided was very easy.

I had more problems with my own internet company. I have since figured out that they do their internet maintenance during the day (go figure), and learned that when I'm having problems-Starbucks is the quickest answer.

Did you feel any connection with the remote group or did you forget that they were there?

Yes, I feel just as connected as I do when in the classroom.

I always felt connected to the group.

Our group is small, so it is easier to keep everyone involved.

I felt connected to them as though we were sitting in a conventional classroom. During breaks we took the time to converse with each other and ask questions and/or opinions.

Usually forgot they were there until a question was asked.

Felt connected

I felt that I had no connection whatsoever with the distance students. I can't help but wonder how they take the sim test that we do.

Were you able to understand the instructor?

Yes

Yes

All the instructors were very easy to understand. I don't think some of the guest lectures were use to teaching online students. Some were really good about staying near the mic.

Was the web cast an effective alternative to the classroom experience?

Yes I felt like I was sitting in the classroom. I got the same exact lecture that the students in class did.

Very much so.

Yes.

Were you able to follow along with the material presented by the instructor?

There was no problem following the material.

Yes, I was able to follow along with the material presented.

Yes.

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