

Assessment of Distance Programs in Nursing

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This project focused on using the Flashlight Program to evaluate educational uses of the WWW in nursing. We used a specific form, Evaluation of Educational Uses of the Web in Nursing (EEUWIN) to assess the web enhanced courses in several nursing courses. The tool evaluates student perceptions of specific learning outcomes, preparation for real world work, what is expected of a professional, proficiency with technology use, socialization to the profession, satisfaction, educational practices and use of technology. Results are reviewed by the curriculum committee with recommendations for change as needed. The Flashlight project may be accessed at <http://www.tltgroup.org/programs/flashlight.html>.

Proposal for the Assessment of Distance Education (DE) Programs in Nursing

Purpose: This proposal requests funding to support the development and implementation of an assessment plan for the DE programs of the Department of Nursing (DON). Providing access to quality education experiences and service to the State via DE is an identified goal of UH Manoa Strategic Plan and the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene Goals (see attachment 1)

DE in Nursing: The DON has a long history of offering DE programs. We began in the 1980s flying faculty weekly to neighbor islands to offer the RN to BS programs to the graduates of the associate of science nursing programs on Maui, Kauai and the Big Island. Currently, we use video conferencing and web-based methods to offer DE programs. We broadcast courses of the MS in Nursing, Primary Care option to HITS receive sites on the neighbor island community colleges and UHH. The Clinical Systems Management (CSM) option of the MS in Nursing uses the PEACESAT and the Hawaii Health Net System to broadcast courses to the Pacific Islands and to state hospitals on the neighbor islands. A polycom video unit is used in the PhD program. We have a request of initiate the RN to BS program in Fall 2002 using HITS and web-based methods to neighbor island students which is under review by the Master Scheduling Group. In addition, many nursing courses use Web-based methods ranging from totally online courses to the posting of course materials with no reduction in face to face class time.

Assessment: Students in these DE programs participate in our usual program assessments, i.e. course evaluations, student progression survey, end of program survey, alumni and employer surveys which are based on our program objectives (see attachment 2). What is not being assessed is the unique aspects of DE program such as the impact of technology on learning outcomes, what teaching and learning practices contribute to positive outcomes, what supports need to be in place for students and faculty and how Web technology and its learning tools contribute to teaching and learning.

We are requesting funding to support participation in the Flashlight (FL) Program of the TLT group, the teaching learning technology affiliate of the American Associate of Higher Education (www.tltgroup.org/programs/flashlight.html). The TLT Group's mission is to motivate and enable institutions and individuals to improve teaching and learning with technology while

helping them cope with continual change. The Flashlight Program helps institution study and improve educational uses of technology by assisting in the development and implementation of studies related to technology and its impact.

Flashlight provides active assistance in designing studies tailored to the needs of the institution. They have a bank of validated survey items related to students and faculty and their views of technology-based teaching and learning. They work with institutions to develop studies to assess faculty and student development for DE, student and faculty support systems, availability and reliability of technology infrastructure, learning resources, fiscal resources and the policies and procedures that support DE activities. The goal is to improve student learning.

The **specific outcomes** of the DON's participation with the Flashlight Program would be to

1. develop and implement an assessment plan for the video-conferencing + Web-based strategies used in the above mentioned programs
2. develop and implement an assessment plan to assess totally online courses/programs. The DON has a future goal of totally online programs in two areas, the CSM option and the RN to BS option. The FL program has developed and validated a tool, *Evaluation of Educational Uses of the Web in Nursing* which will assist in meeting this outcome.

As more UHM programs engage in distance education, the DON's participation in the project may be very valuable to other units in addressing evaluation/assessment of DE programs. This is a common area of needed improvement for many programs

The **time frame** for implementation of the proposal begins in May 2001 with the attendance at the 2001 Flashlight Focus Training Institute, *Evaluating Web-based Courses in Nursing Programs: shining a Flashlight on the Benefits and Challenges of Teaching and Learning on the World Wide Web*. This is a workshop in which participants will learn how to conduct an assessment by working on an evaluation plan (see attachment 3) . From June to November 2001 the focus would be development of the assessment plan and tools with consultation from the FL Program. It is expected that there will be piloting of some of the tools based on the assessment plan in December 2001.

Organizational Structure to Support the DE Assessment Plan. The programs in the DON have been nationally accredited since 1933. The National League of Nursing Accrediting Commission require that the program have an identified plan for systematic evaluation and assessment of educational outcomes and demonstrate that results of the assessments are used as feedback to improve student learning. The DON has an existing plan and system for feedback. The Evaluation Committee designs the program evaluation plan, the Office of Student Services and the DON implements the plan with the survey results reviewed for action by the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees in consultation with the Undergraduate and Graduate Forums (all faculty are members of these Forums). These three committees are standing committees of the DON. Thus, the assessment plan for DE programs can be readily integrated into the already existing DON process for evaluation and assessment.

Assessment of DE Programs in Nursing

Attachment 1

Taken from *Manoa at 100*, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, Strategic Plan, 1998-2007, p. 7

(available at <http://www.hawaii.edu/svpevc/manoa100.html>)

5. Expanding Opportunities through Distance Education and Information Technologies.

With the advent of new technologies, opportunities for off-campus delivery of educational programs have emerged. Manoa will exploit actively these opportunities to enhance student access to its educational resources.

Therefore, the UH Manoa will:

- A. Implement a plan to make available to off campus locations selected Manoa programs through electronic media.
- B. Require all programs to review their offerings included among the regular day time offerings and to develop plans indicating in what manner and at what cost their courses or degree programs could be offered via accelerated evening and weekend courses, summer sessions, and distance education.
- C. Develop a single flexible system of student information and registration management to enable completion of degree programs through the regular day and by various combinations of asynchronous and variably timed courses.
- D. Improve the electronic articulation of System libraries with Hamilton Library so that resources are available wherever they are needed.

Assessment Fund

University of Hawaii at Manoa

Assessment of Distance (DE) Programs in Nursing

Progress Report

The Department of Nursing has a systematic program evaluation plan which includes course evaluations, and the student progression, end of program, alumni and employer surveys. The focus of most of these surveys is achievement of program outcomes. We currently use a number of distance education methods to offer courses. They include video conferencing or interactive TV (HITS) for the PhD program and the Primary Care option in the MS in Nursing program. In

addition, videoconferencing and web enhanced courses are used in the Clinical System Management option of the MS program and the RN to BS option for neighbor island students. Our current program assessment plan does not assess the unique aspects of DE program such as the impact of technology on learning outcomes, what teaching and learning practices contribute to positive outcomes, what supports need to be in place for students and faculty and how Web technology and its learning tools contribute to teaching and learning.

This project supported participation in the Flashlight (FL) Program and attendance at a meeting which focused on evaluating educational uses of the Web in nursing. The mission of the FL program of the Teaching, Learning and Technology group of the American Association of Higher Education is to motivate and enable institutions and individuals to improve teaching and learning with technology. They help institutions study and improve educational uses of technology by assisting in the development and implementation of studies related to technology and its impact.

Discussions have been held with the FL to discuss how they can help us evaluate our DE offerings. Our objectives have been refined to evaluate our web enhanced courses and video conferencing/HITS use in the CSM and RN to BS for neighbor island students offerings. We will be using a validated tool developed for nursing courses, Evaluation of Educational Uses of the Web in Nursing (EEUWIN) to assess the web enhanced courses in the above two offerings. The tool evaluates student perceptions of specific outcomes (access, convenience, connectedness, preparation for real world work and what is expected of a professional, proficiency with technology use, socialization to the profession and satisfaction), educational practices (active learning, prompt feedback, time on task, collaboration and interaction among peers, student-faculty interaction) and use of technology (technology infrastructure and use of technology promotes productive use of time). Additional items may be used from the Current Student Inventory and Flashlight Handbook which focus on the video conferencing/HITS methods. We believe this data will provide specific information related to the use of video conferencing/HITS and the Internet which will be used to improve teaching and learning.

The second objective is to complete a cost analysis comparing the use of HITS alone, video conferencing alone, HITS + web enhanced courses and video conferencing + web enhanced courses. In our enthusiasm to use different technologies, we are beginning to question the cost effectiveness of using too many systems and its impact on resources (fiscal and human). FL has a cost analysis handbook to meet this objective.

Our time line has been delayed for several reasons. The faculty strike and the intensive effort after the strike to complete courses impacted our time line.. In addition, the RN to BS offering for neighbor island students will begin in the Fall 2002. Since FL membership is purchased for one year, we will be initiating our participation in October 2001 in order to have access to FL for the Fall 2002.

The Chair of the Evaluation Committee, the Department Chair and the Director of the Office of Student Services have been working together to complete this project. Our revised time line is:

Activity	Dates
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Complete assessment survey including EEUWIN and other relevant items from the Current Student Inventory	December 2001
Complete Cost Analysis	March 2002
CSM students complete assessment survey	Spring 2002, Summer 2002 and Fall 2002
RN to BS students on neighbor islands complete assessment survey	December 2002

Results will be reviewed by the above 3 individuals with feedback shared with the faculty teaching the courses.