

**Annual Key Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements  
School of Nursing  
Undergraduate Bachelors Program in Nursing**

**Key Assessment Findings**

Evaluation of the 2010/2011 senior undergraduate class.

The School of Nursing has two main outcome measures that are used in the undergraduate program. The first is the HESI© National End of Program examination and the second is the NCLEX nursing licensure examination. The HESI examination is taken in the last semester of the senior year of the nursing undergraduate program. The results are predictive of performance on the NCLEX examination and are referenced to that examination. The criterion reference the prediction of performance on the NCLEX examination. During the academic year 2010/2011 the students were advised to take the HESI test results very seriously, but in contrast to the 2009/2010 academic year, there was no mandatory score requirement.

Table 1: HESI Results for 2011 graduating class

HESI Composite Score Category	Number writing	Number in category	% passing in category	2010 comparison (N=80)	% Change
>=950 (Outstanding)	66	3	5%	14%	- 9%
900-949 (Excellent)	66	3	5%	8%	-3%
850-899 (Average)	66	4	6%	15%	-9%
800-849 (Below average)	66	6	9%	13%	-4%
750-799 (Additional preparation needed)	66	9	14%	19%	-4%
700-749 (Serious preparation needed)	66	14	21%	16%	+5%
650-699 (Grave danger of failing licensure exam)	66	11	17%	6%	+11%
<= 649 (Poor performance expected)	66	16	24%	10%	+14%

The NCLEX nursing licensure examination is the second outcome measure for the undergraduate program. Graduating students must write the NCLEX examination before they are allowed to practice nursing. Students are encouraged to take this examination in the summer after they graduate so that their knowledge is current. Results are reported quarterly to each program by the State Board of Nursing. As shown in Table 2 most of the graduating students of May 2011 have written the examination by the end of the third quarter of 2011. Results of their performance are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 NCLEX Results for 2011 Graduating Class.

<i>Title of Certification Examination</i>	<i>Number eligible to write</i>	<i>Number who took exam (to September 30/09)</i>	<i>Number who passed (to September 30/09)</i>	<i>% passing 2010 cohort</i>	<i>% passing 2009 cohort</i>
<i>NCLEX Licensure Exam</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>68</i>	<i>52</i>	<i>76.75% (N=68)</i>	<i>81.94%(N=72)</i>

### **Curricular Improvements**

Performance on the HESI examinations has declined and is still well below the target goal of 850 for all students. The School of Nursing continues to improve integration of the HESI subject examinations into the undergraduate curriculum as well as allocating more of the course grade to the HESI subject examination in appropriate courses. The baccalaureate faculty have increased the weight of the HESI subject specific examinations in all courses that have appropriate HESI tests, and have added NCLEX-type questions to examinations in those that do not use a HESI subject examination. Additionally the requirement to earn at least a score of 850 on the HESI exit examination has been reinstated. The 2012 graduating class will have to earn the threshold score in order to graduate. If they do not achieve this score after 2 tries, they are required to take an NCLEX review class either during spring break or in the summer before they are approved to graduate.

Additional measures taken to improve pass rates are as follows:

- More stringent entry requirements for prospective nursing students. As of January, 2012 no transfer students will be accepted into the School of Nursing. Additionally, the accelerated nursing program will require a 4 year degree as a condition of acceptance rather than 60 college credits. The defined pre-requisites and required GPA of 3.0 will remain in place. Entering 4-year students will be required to have at least 1150 composite SAT scores, and the overall high-school GPA will also be increased.

- Further integration of the HESI subject examinations in each of the relevant nursing classes, and assignment of a percentage of the class grade (no less than 20%) to the HESI nationally normed examination. This action decreases grade inflation significantly since student performance is measured against a national cohort rather than a local standard.
- Integration of the material presented in pathophysiology/pharmacology with that presented in nursing applications to assist students to better transfer knowledge learned in the didactic course to actual clinical situations. Intensive use of the simulation laboratory to assure that students were able to demonstrate understanding of nursing skills pertinent to the disease process they were learning.
- Incorporation of material on computerized testing strategies and response analysis in the Professional Roles course to better prepare students for the NCLEX and HESI testing environment.
- Incorporation of a required basic medication calculation module into the introductory nursing course to reinforce acquisition of medication calculation skills.
- Introduction of the basic science sequence of courses (Chemistry and Microbiology) in both fall and spring semesters of the first year to decrease class size and increase individual student attention.
- Senior courses in maternal/child nursing and pediatric nursing are now offered in the fall and spring so that the size of the didactic classes and the aggregate clinical groups are decreased. This enables better coordination across the clinical groups and more individual student attention.