
Major Assessment Findings and Curricular Improvements
School of Nursing
Undergraduate Program(s)
AY2008-09 through AY2012-13

Assessment Measures

The School of Nursing uses the following measures to assess departmental learning outcomes:

1. The HESI© National End of Program examination, taken in the last semester of the senior year of the nursing undergraduate program.
2. The NCLEX nursing licensure examination..
3. Perceptions of General Educational Outcomes by Nursing Majors as reported by the National Survey of Student Engagement

Assessment Findings

The NCLEX (National Council of State Boards of Nursing Examination), the national licensure examination required for professional nursing practice, is the dominant educational outcome measure for the School of Nursing. The District of Columbia Board of Nursing requires the School of Nursing to have a pass rate for first-time test takers of at least 75%. The results in the 2013/2014 examination cohort were below this required percentage.

The School of Nursing requires the HESI senior exit examination in the spring semester of senior year. The HESI is a nationally normed exit examination predictive of performance on the NCLEX examination. Due to a variety of administrative and educational changes that have been made in the School of Nursing over the last 5 years, HESI examination scores have increased from a mean of 696 in 2008 to a mean of 897 in 2014.

NSEE results reflect the increasing emphasis in the School of Nursing on successful performance on nationally normed objective tests which are administered in every nursing undergraduate course. This emphasis on high-stakes test performance is essential if the nursing student is to be successful on the nursing licensure examination. The emphasis on preparation for standardized testing requires nursing faculty to emphasize instructional approaches that students may find less engaging than group discussion and project-based educational activities.

Milestone data is reported in Tables 1 – 2 and the NSEE results follow.

Milestone Data

Table 1 HESI Exit Examination Aggregate Scores for Senior Nursing Class 2008 – 2014

Year	# of Students	Mean HESI Score	Median HESI Score	National Percentile Rank
2008	66	696	680	17.38
2009	61	728	719	19.75
2010	80	811	798	45.06
2011	66	731	714	20.06
2012	50	748	750	22.47
2013	55	792	797	34.23
2014	57	897	891	60.42

Source: Elsevier Evolve HESI Results On Line Results Link:

<https://hesifacultyaccess.elsevier.com/Faculty/SummaryAnalysis.aspx>

Table 2 NCLEX Annual Pass Rates for All First-Time Test Takers from CUA School of Nursing

Year*	# Tested	# Passed	CUA Pass Rate	National Pass Rate
2008/09	67	47	70%	86%
2009/10	61	40	66%	88%
2010/11	85	69	81%	87%
2011/12	61	47	77%	88%
2012/13	63	51	81%	83%
2013/14	76	52	68%	82%

Source: Mountain Measurement Annual NCLEX –RN Report for the period covering April to March.
On line report link:

https://reports.mountainmeasurement.com/nclex/reports/details?ordsub_id=9707&report_id=534

Perceptions of General Education Outcomes by Majors (Attachment X):

Each spring, the School of Nursing uses the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) to benchmark the general education outcomes of its senior students against senior students enrolled in: Catholic University, Carnegie Peers, and the entire NSSE participant group.

**2013 National Survey of Student Engagement Mean Comparisons:
Selected Catholic University General Education Goals
School of Nursing: Seniors**

School of Nursing compared with:

General Education Goals: Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of scientific and quantitative reasoning.

	School of Nursing	Catholic University		Carnegie Peers		NSSE 2013				
	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>
<i>To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>										
Thinking critically and analytically	3.3	3.2		.11	3.3		.02	3.3		-.02
Analyzing numerical and statistical information	2.4	2.5		-.10	2.9	*	-.51	2.8		-.47
<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done the following? 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often</i>										
Reached conclusions based on your own analysis of numerical information	2.1	2.5		-.37	2.7	*	-.61	2.6	*	-.57
Used numerical information to examine a real-world problem or issue	2.1	2.4		-.22	2.4		-.28	2.4		-.28
Evaluated what others have concluded from numerical information	2.1	2.4		-.31	2.4	*	-.39	2.4		-.35

School of Nursing compared with:

General Education Goals: Graduates will demonstrate an ability to find information effectively using appropriate resources and technologies, critically assess the validity and relevance of that information, and utilize it in ethical and legal ways.

	School of Nursing	Catholic University		Carnegie Peers		NSSE 2013				
	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>	<i>Mean^a</i>	<i>Sig^b</i>	<i>Effect Size^c</i>
<i>In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often</i>										
Combined ideas from different courses when completing assignments	2.6	2.9		-.37	3.0		-.49	3.0		-.47
Connected your learning to societal problems or issues	2.6	2.8		-.22	2.8		-.20	2.9		-.28
Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	2.3	2.7		-.40	2.6		-.28	2.7		-.40
Connected ideas from your courses to your prior experiences and knowledge	2.9	3.3		-.50	3.2		-.39	3.3		-.45

**2013 National Survey of Student Engagement Mean Comparisons:
Selected Catholic University General Education Goals
School of Nursing: Seniors**

School of Nursing compared with:

General Education Goals: Graduates will demonstrate knowledge of and respect for different cultures and religions.

	School of Nursing	Catholic University		Carnegie Peers			NSSE 2013			
	Mean ^a	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c	Mean ^a	Sig ^b	Effect Size ^c
<i>In your experience at your institution during the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often</i>										
Included diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	2.3	2.7		-.40	2.6		-.28	2.7		-.40
Had discussions with people of a race or ethnicity other than your own	2.6	3.0		-.35	3.1		-.52	3.1		-.50
Had discussions with people with religious beliefs other than your own	2.5	2.7		-.23	3.0	*	-.56	3.0	*	-.57
<i>During the current school year, about how often have you done each of the following? 1=never, 2=sometimes, 3=often, 4=very often</i>										
Tried to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective	2.6	3.0		-.42	2.9		-.34	3.0		-.41
<i>To what extent does your institution emphasize each of the following? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>										
Encouraging contact among students from different social, racial/ethnic, religious backgrounds	2.7	2.2		.53	2.5		.18	2.6		.13
<i>To what extent has your experience at this institution contributed to your knowledge, skills, and personal development in the following areas? 1=very little, 2=some, 3=quite a bit, 4=very much</i>										
Understanding people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds	2.6	2.7		-.05	2.7		-.10	2.8		-.17

Curricular Improvements

In this section, provide narrative describing the curricular improvements introduced, and if possible provide comments on the effects of these improvements if known. For example, the improvements may include changing the structure of particular courses, requiring prerequisite courses or skills, providing special advisement, introducing earlier experiences with parts of what become key projects or papers. In some instances, there will be extensive changes of requirements or course offerings (i.e. in Nursing or TRS). A brief overview of these major changes should be noted here.

A root cause analysis was undertaken by nursing faculty together with several curriculum consultants in order to address the declining NCLEX performance observed over the last 5 years. Three major causes were identified: 1) the significant enrollment pressure and resulting large classes over the period 2) the continued shortage of qualified nursing faculty that has been discussed as a national problem approaching crisis levels with the impending retirements of significant numbers of nursing faculty and 3) the shortage of excellent clinical placements due to the increasing numbers of nursing students and programs that require clinical training. After lengthy discussion and review of the analytic results the following steps have been taken to address the problem:

1. Effective with the fall 2014 entering class students will enter a two year pre-nursing undergraduate curriculum which is administered by the School of Arts and Sciences. This program will consist of the first year experience core courses, science core courses, and required English, TRS, and social science courses selected by the student in cooperation with their advisor. At the end of the two year period (60 credit hours) student performance will be reviewed by the School of Nursing against defined progression criteria which includes an overall GPA of 2.5, a science GPA of 2.75, and a minimum score of 75% on the HESI entrance examination. Successful students will be admitted to the upper division nursing concentration.
2. Undergraduate nursing instructional policies that emphasize standardized objective testing and use of nationally normed subject examinations as a significant percentage of the class grade whenever such examinations are available. Instructional policies that preclude extra credit or additional credit assignments are also required to assure rigor in every class assignment.
3. Organization of nursing clinical courses to ensure that clinical instructors are continuously mentored by full-time School of Nursing faculty. Additional clinical support is provided to both students and clinical instructors by full time CUA nursing faculty clinical course coordination and clinical supervision.
4. A required review course for the NCLEX examination to be taken in the student's senior year.
5. Students must achieve a score of 850 on the HESI exit examination given to Senior students in their last semester as a condition of passing the N 480 senior course. If they are not able to achieve this score they will receive an incomplete in the N480 class until such time as they either achieve the required threshold score or the incomplete grade

expires.

6. Students who enter with English as a second language will be required to take an English placement examination regardless of previous English language course work. Depending on the placement examination results, additional English language courses may be required prior to entry into nursing study.
7. The School of Nursing has also institute a peer-review of teaching program to assure that nursing faculty are assisted in their development as classroom teaching and mentors. Each didactic course in the School of Nursing undergraduate program is reviewed by a full-time senior faculty member with at least 2 years of teaching experience at CUA. Course materials including syllabi, examinations, cases, and other classroom materials are also reviewed. The report is discussed with the faculty member and shared with SON administration.
8. Courses are evaluated annually by the undergraduate faculty curriculum committee to assure instructional continuity across the baccalaureate program and to remedy any curricular gaps or repetitions.
9. Additional of a two registered nurses to the School of Nursing undergraduate program staff with responsibilities for clinical placements and student counseling and recruitment. These professional administrative staff provide support for School of Nursing faculty as they expand their efforts to assure good clinical placements for CUA nursing students. The additional testing and performance requirements in the SON have increased demand for student support and counseling that have been met with this additional staff.