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NURSING PROGRAMS

Making the Connection; Utilizing the LASSI and Faculty Mentoring as a Foundation for a Student Success Plan

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Promoting Student Success in Nursing
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Identifying and Improving Study Strategies for Struggling Students in Nursing Programs
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LASSI IN ACTION IS A USER DRIVEN NEWSLETTER THAT ALLOWS PROFESSIONALS TO SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH LASSI ASSESSMENT. WE WELCOME YOUR FEEDBACK ON LASSI, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO SHARING YOUR SUCCESS STORIES.

Making the Connection; Utilizing the LASSI and Faculty Mentoring as a Foundation for a Student Success Plan

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All students entering a nursing program at Norfolk State University complete a pre-entry immersion program called the Nursing Success Institute (NSI). During NSI all students are scheduled to take the LASSI. The LASSI assessment results are used along with other students' findings to identify relative strengths and weaknesses in the educational program. The results of the LASSI are then reviewed with the student on the second day of NSI. The different learning inventory components; anxiety, attitude, concentration, information processing, motivation, self-testing, selecting main ideas, study aids, time management, and test strategies are explained and described with students.

Additionally, faculty discuss with students strategies to incorporate findings into their study plan. This is done in the beginning of the program to better equip the student with the awareness and tools needed to be successful in the nursing program.

During the last year of the program, there are students who have started from different cohorts as a result of delayed progression related to course failure. As all students in each cohort take LASSI in NSI these students' LASSI results are available for comparison. T-tests were run on the scores of the delayed progression students' LASSI results and the on-time progression students' results. Four (4) areas had statistically significant results. It was found that the students with delayed progression had statistically significant lower scores for concentration ($p=.0008$), information processing

($p=.022$), self testing ($p=.043$), and testing strategies ($p=.0001$). It was also found when comparing the delayed progression group to the on time progression as a whole, the mean overall scores were statistically significantly lower ($p=.0003$). These results served to initiate actions by the department and faculty to ensure that student success would be individually addressed with multiple strategies utilized. All students are assigned faculty mentors during the last year of the nursing program. Each faculty member has three to four (3-4) student mentees. The students' results for the LASSI are shared with their assigned faculty mentors. The faculty members have been educated on the LASSI tool and the interpretation of the LASSI score. Faculty development

occurs on a biweekly basis with a scholarly journal based discussion. The faculty development focuses on identifying strategies to correlate with individual learning style of the students. This development provides the faculty member a framework to foster a success plan for their mentees.

The faculty mentors have meetings with their student mentees 3-5 times per semester. During the meetings the faculty mentors discuss on an individual basis each student's strengths and areas in need of improved focus for studying. The mentees discuss what has worked for the student and what has not worked. The faculty mentors also ensure that students are aware of resources that are available such as: success seminars, tutoring, and

open laboratory hours.

Success seminars that focus on different areas of weakness are scheduled each semester. The seminars are led by faculty volunteers and are designed to cover areas that address current student needs. Faculty also offer weekly tutoring that is content specific and offers lower student to faculty ratios than regular classes. Additionally, for students that prefer hands on experiences, there are additional open laboratory hours that students may attend.

As these students prepare to graduate and take the NCLEX-RN boards, a review will be completed to identify any correlations between LASSI components, interventions initiated, and success as a first time test-taker on the NCLEX-RN.

Promoting Student Success in Nursing

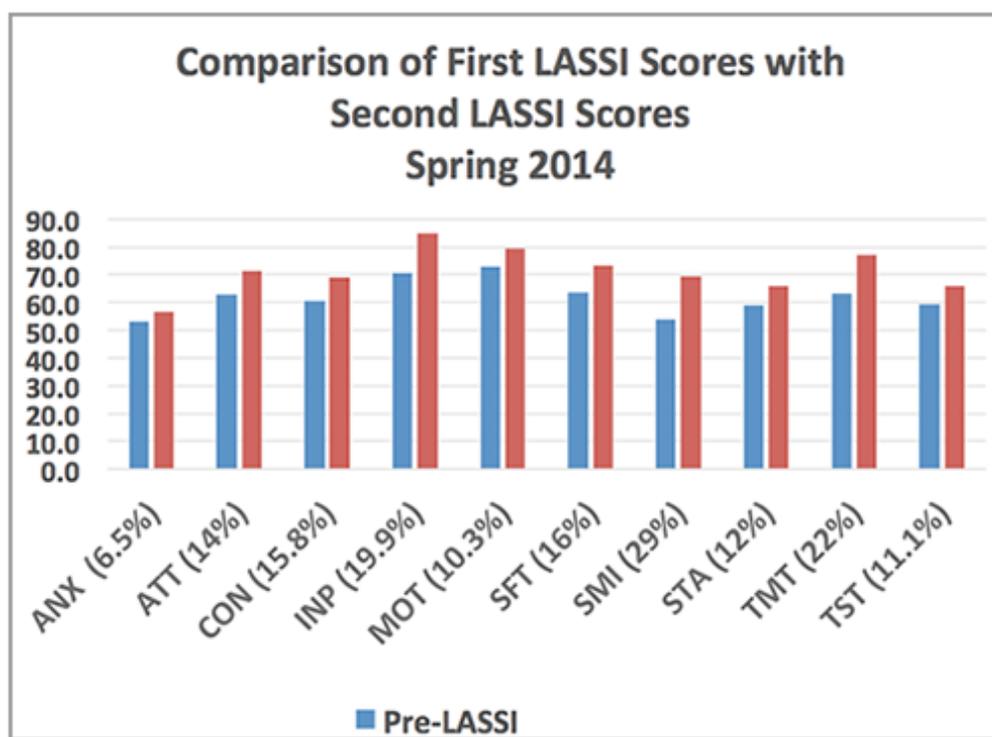
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Polk State College

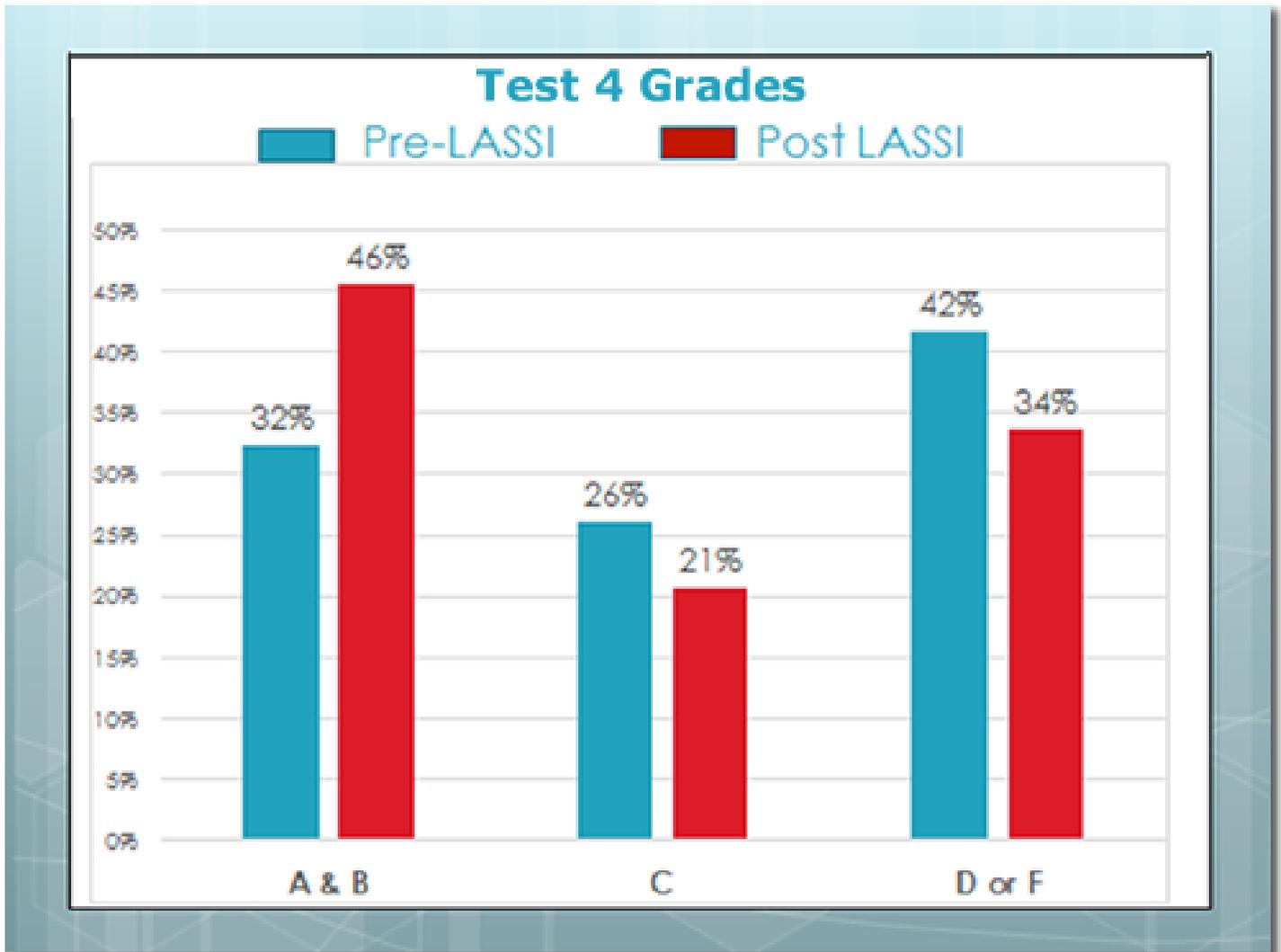
Nationally, 58% of students entering Associate Degree Programs in Nursing graduate. (Belsky & Carpenter, 2010) Polk State College has a 25.5% attrition rate in Adult Health 1 (AH1). The purpose of this study was to increase student success in A.H1 through the use of the LASSI and faculty support by coaching students to them improve their learning and study strategies.

Upon taking the LASSI students were provided internet resources to review and were asked to submit an action plan describing how they would address their weak areas identified by the LASSI. Faculty referred to the student's action plan and the LASSI report to coach and support change with students.

Students were asked to take the LASSI before classes began and repeat the inventory after classes ended in AH1. Performance on the LASSI improved in all areas.



Student grades on all tests were compared with the average grades of three AH1 classes taught immediately prior to the initiation of LASSI. All test scores in the Spring 2014 class of AH1 reflected slightly lower numbers of C's, D's and F's and an increase in the number of A's and B's.



Grades on Test 4	Pre-LASSI and Collaborative Testing	Post LASSI and Collaborative Testing
A's and B's	32%	46%
C's	26%	21%
D's and F's	42%	34%

Comparison of Percentage of Students that Progressed to AH2 Before LASSI and in Spring 2014

	Retention Rate
Pre-LASSI	75.5% (Average of Spring 2012, Fall 2012 and Spring 2013)
Post-LASSI	85.6% Spring 2014

Students were given a survey at the end of the term about their perception of the value of the LASSI. There was an overwhelming response of written comments favoring the LASSI.

Survey Results

1. Did you take the LASSI this term?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	58	95%
2	No	3	5%
	Total	61	100%

2. Did you review your scores on the LASSI?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	58	95%
2	No	3	5%
	Total	61	100%

Below are samples of student comments from the AH1 class of Spring 2014 about the value of the LASSI:

"If you are not passing or you are on the borderline, you simply must come to grips with reality and realize that what has always worked in the past doesn't necessarily work in nursing school. She is a whole other animal."

"When the student improves the weaknesses identified by the LASSI, they have a much better chance of being successful in the nursing program."

"When I did not do well on the first test I had no idea what I needed to do to pass the tests. I felt like I was already studying all the time. I reviewed my LASSI report and realized I had trouble concentrating and was not coming to class prepared. I started reviewing the material before class and moved to the front of class. My grades went from D's to high B's."

Student Comments about changes made in their learning and study strategies as a result of the LASSI:

"I started studying in a quieter environment as well as turning off my phone to eliminate distractions."

"I review the reading assignment before class, after class I re-write my notes and add information to increase my understanding."

"Instead of cramming for the test the night before; now I plan specific time to study every day. This makes a huge difference."

"The LASSI report stated my attitude needed to change. I was shocked. I realized if I wanted to be a nurse I had to be more serious and cut out some of the extra activities that kept me from studying."

Initially the LASSI was used as a pilot study and the fees were paid by the college. As a result of the success of using LASSI, the fee for the inventory has been added to student fees for AH1 and will continue to be used in the future. Access to the LASSI data will be used by the faculty in future terms to continue to support the student to become a more active learner, in charge of their own education and success.

References:

Belsky, F.; Carpenter, G. Factors affecting attrition from associate degree nursing programs in North Carolina. North Carolina Health Professions Data System, Cecil G. Sheps Center for Health Services Research, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, USA. April 2010.

Identifying and Improving Study Strategies for Struggling Student in Nursing Programs

Debra Price RN, MSN, CPNP, Tarrant County College

We use the LASSI when we have returning students (readmitted to the program due to one failure) and for students that are struggling in course work. We review the LASSI scores together and I refer them to the 2014-2015 *Strategies for Test Success* book (WB Saunders) by Linda Silvestri and Angela Silvestri (3rd ed.). The pages in the text are correlated to what they score low in on the LASSI. For example, there are 4 chapters in the book that review Test Taking Strategies. There are additional pages that correlate to the LASSI Inventory results.

We have learned that if the concentration area is low (a risk area), the student may be a candidate for DSS (Disability Support Services). We encourage those students to take their scores to the DSS office for further evaluation. We also refer to our nursing counselor if test anxiety is an area of concern.

We have also learned that when TST is low, often the SMI, SFT, and STA are also low. We can then offer ideas on how to improve study habits, which results in an increase in the TST score. We often introduce concept mapping or the Cornell note taking system as a method for note taking and this helps students organize notes more efficiently. We review various study aids and discuss ways to self-test or self-quiz when reviewing material. For (SMI) Selecting Main Ideas, we will encourage students to read the text in order to continue building notes on subject matter, so that they have additional purpose when reading.

Students are generally not surprised when they see the LASSI results. We would like to do research with a pilot group coming into the program, testing them at the beginning and end of the semester, to determine if the *Strategies for Test Success* book (Silvestri) is as effective as we believe it to be.