Why Concept-Based Learning?

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Objectives

- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a concept-based curriculum

- Describe strategies to engage the entire nursing faculty in a concept-based curriculum
What’s Wrong with our Old Curriculum?
Some Considerations . . .

- No longer volume, but value—
- The influence of other disciplines
- New knowledge about pedagogy
Content vs. Concept
Content Saturation
Concept-based Curriculum

- Student-centered learning.
- We are facilitators rather than teachers.
- Allows students to focus on the *need-to-know* or essential information.
- No repetition of information for specific populations.
- Students learn about concepts that are relevant in practice today and in the future.
Content-Based Curriculum

• “How will I ever cover all of this material?”
• “I must cover this material. It is so important!”
• Holding on to our “sacred cows.”
• Teacher centered instruction.
• Must cover it for students to learn it.
• Traditional classroom lecture.
Concept-Based Teaching is about Teaching to *Ideas*
Learning how to create an environmental gestalt...

• Brings together the best of what we know about how people learn.
  • ---Erickson, 2002
According to H. Lynn Erickson

• The job of the teacher is, as it has always been, to make learning so compelling that people find it more satisfying to learn than to attend to any one of a score of competing possibilities.”

• Foreword, Concept Based Curriculum and Instruction
Meeting the Needs of Today’s Nursing Student...
The Most Predictive Indicators of Learning Outcomes:

• Two environmental factors
  ▫ Interaction among students
  ▫ Interaction between students and faculty
    ▫ (Astin, 1991)
Changes in Testing
How Do People Learn? - Bransford, et al., 2000

- The role of prior knowledge in learning
- Plasticity and issues of early experience
- Learning as an active process
- Learning for understanding
- Adaptive expertise
- Learning is a time-consuming behavior

- Students come to the classroom with preconceptions about how the world works

- Students need a deep knowledge base and conceptual frameworks

- Students respond to a ‘metacognitive’ approach to learning
Pedagogy on the “Hot Seat”
Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education: Chickering and Gamson (1991)

- Encourage contacts between students and faculty
- Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students
- Encourage active learning
- Give prompt feedback
Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education: Chickering and Gamson (1991) (con’t)

- Emphasize time on task
- Communicate high expectations
- Respect diverse talents and ways of learning
Curriculum “Metamorphosis”
Baccalaureate Generalist Nurse:

• Three roles:
  ▫ Provider of care
  ▫ Designer/manager/coordinator of care
  ▫ Member of a profession

• Nine Essentials
  ▫ 109 outcomes
Education is to serve Practice. . .
Shifting the Paradigm
If you want to build a ship, don’t drum up the men to gather wood, divide the work and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea.

– Antoine de Saint-Exupéry
# Strengths and Weaknesses of Faculty Teaching Performance

- **Wolf, et al., 2004**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<td>- Being a strategic and knowledgeable teacher</td>
<td>- Providing poor delivery of content</td>
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<td>- Creating a positive learning environment</td>
<td>- Acting disorganized</td>
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<td>- Demonstrating professionalism</td>
<td>- Being inaccessible</td>
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STRATEGIES for engaging nursing faculty in concept-based learning
Faculty are almost entirely INTERNALLY motivated. . . Wergin
Faculty are not unlike our students:

- Educate
- Create a compelling case
- Build against the backdrop of transformational thinking
- Employ **structural empowerment** and **transformational leadership**
RESEARCH, RESEARCH, RESEARCH!

- Healthy People 2020
- IOM
- QSEN
- BSN Essentials
- NLN Competencies
- NCLEX Test Plan
- Most Common Office/ED Visits
- Most Common Causes of Death
The goal of coaching. . .

• . . . [I]s to help people acquire new ideas that validate the experience of change and more accurately reflect the **revealing reality**, ensuring they have a place in it”
  ▫ Porter O’Grady & Malloch, 2007
Challenges

- Our existing mental models
- Management and leadership for the times
- Outside forces
- Our own interest
Evaluation:
Initial Results
The University of Kansas:

- 104 BSN students enrolled annually (1x/year)
- Average entering GPA = 3.75
- First year attrition rate: 1.8%-5.9%
- On time graduation rate: 97.1%
- Began the concept-based curriculum in Fall 2011
- First graduating class: 2013
- 2013 pass rate as of Sept 30: 89%
Faculty Satisfaction
Performance

- How would you describe this class of students? (end of third semester assessment)
  - Persevering
  - Adaptable and flexible
  - Able to ‘roll with the punches’
  - Inquisitive
  - A lot of ability
  - Calm
Student Satisfaction

- Difficult onboarding for the initial class
- No empirical/survey data yet (EBI)
- Anecdotal: very positive
  - “I really think the concept approach makes sense”
  - “I’m very pleased with the amount of support you and the faculty have shown me.”
  - “the faculty was willing to incorporate our suggestions and make changes”
  - “I feel this is a strong nursing program”
Changes in Testing: (Assessment)

- **Teacher-made tests:**
  - Assessment more variant than just multiple choice exams (projects, team/group work, individualized assignments, more use of rubrics, etc)
  - More grade differentiation
  - Fewer course/program failures
- **Standardized tests:**
  - Switch to ATI two years ago; dearth of data
  - Less emphasis on standardized testing in program
Other data/findings

- PRN mentor program responsible for 85% of class’s success
- **Changing the environmental gestalt gave us the biggest gains—for both faculty and students**
Student Satisfaction
Examples

- Ebooks
- Team based learning
- Active learning classroom environments
- Superb technological support
- Innovative clinical model—Clinical Playbook
- Affiliate faculty
- Integration of Self and Practice (ISP) by Student Services
- Changed mental model from nurse educator to Nurse Faculty Leader
- STRONG faculty!
Engaging nurses in practice re: Concept Based Teaching
“That’s not the way I was taught....”
Do we really need: *pedsobmedsurgcriticalmental health??*
Most Strategic Practices--

- Use language effectively
- Full exposure to what concept based learning is
- Helping staff understand the overall curriculum model
- Help update regulatory agencies (i.e. SBN)
- Each faculty becomes fluent and a champion
- Faculty “share what they see”
Glimmers of Wisdom . . . .

• Faculty are almost entirely internally motivated.

• Transformational is better than transactional.

• *Facilitating Learning* is a time-consuming behavior.
“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today.”

Mother Teresa