



The Texas Concept-Based Curriculum

In *The Future of Nursing* (2011), the Institute of Medicine (IOM) recommended that “new approaches must be developed for evaluating curricula and presenting fundamental concepts that can be applied in many different situations rather than requiring students to memorize different lists of facts and information for each situation.” The concept-based curriculum approach helps nursing programs handle content saturation and provides a method for content management. Students focus on generalities of the concepts and apply what they have learned to specific priority exemplars. Deeper understanding of the concepts promotes development of clinical judgment, which is necessary for graduate nurses to function in the health care system (Giddens, 2013). Concepts can be applied in a variety of clinical settings, helping utilization of limited clinical sites and preparing graduates for a greater variety of positions. The Texas Concept-Based Curriculum (CBC) project, funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, expanded on the work of a Perkins Leadership grant to develop a standardized concept-based curriculum. A key component of the project is the Texas Concept Analysis Diagram, which is available for each of the 43 health care and professional nursing concepts, and provides structure for the analysis of the concept, application to key exemplars, and direction for nursing care. The concept analysis diagram helps to operationalize the CBC as a teaching strategy for classroom and clinical work.

In small groups, 80 faculty curriculum experts from 28 institutions developed detailed syllabi, lesson plans and up-to-date faculty resources with the help of the project manager, Bonnie Higgins, EdD, RN, CNE and consultants, such as Carol Thorne, EdD, Kristin O’neil, EdD and Jean Giddens, EdD. All of the materials are housed in a Blackboard course for use by interested programs. The Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) developed a template of its learning activity repository to allow for sharing and updating of learning activities by faculty. Various options are available for faculty orientation to the curriculum and teaching the flipped classroom, including webinars produced by the Academic Consulting Group from Elsevier.

The curriculum was implemented at six community colleges in the fall of 2013. By the fall of 2015, it will be offered at seven more programs. All programs committed to using the standardized curriculum content but there is flexibility in implementation. The collaboration has been phenomenal with everyone ascribing to the CASE model – copy and share everything. Initial results showed that students were progressing faster in clinical reasoning as noted by faculty, clinical staff and simulation coordinators. One of the faculty members put it quite well when asked about the concept-based curriculum: “The process is far more complex than it appears, but there is a beautiful symmetry to how all the concepts relate to each other.”

The *Academic Progression in Nursing* (APIN) grant, funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, worked on expanding the Texas concept-based curriculum to RN-to-BSN and key MSN courses, which are now available for adoption. These courses are available on the Blackboard course with the other materials to assist with seamless articulation and progression from the ADN to BSN and higher levels.

Participating Programs:

Initial Adopters:

Collin College
 El Centro College
 McLennan Community College
 Trinity Valley Community College
 Weatherford College
 Wharton County Junior College

Subsequent Adopters:

Del Mar College – Spring 2014
 San Antonio College – Fall 2014
 Southwest Texas Junior College – Fall 2014
 Tyler Junior College – Spring 2015
 Kilgore College – Fall 2015
 Northeast Texas Community College – Fall 2015
 Panola College – Fall 2015

For more information:

Texas CBC Concept-Based Curriculum
<https://ecourses.tvcc.edu>

Learning Activities Repository LAR-GO
<http://largo.texas-cbc.org>

Unique log in required – contact Bonnie Higgins, Helen Reid or Corrie Ruppel

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