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Evidence Based Nursing Research Project

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Introduction: A need for baccalaureate prepared nurses to find and use evidence in practice exists. Whereas using this evidence in practice may be a masters level expectation, current practice demands that baccalaureate prepared nurses acquire a basic understanding of how to use evidence in practice. Nursing students at the senior level have had exposure to critiquing research, however, they have difficulty translating evidence to practice.

Purpose: One of the AACN Baccalaureate Essentials core competencies is the development of critical thinking. With this in mind, a project with individual and group components was developed to facilitate the use of evidence. The purpose of this poster is to describe a method for teaching evidence based nursing in a Leadership and Management course.

Methods: To guide the project, students were expected to:

- Define a patient population and nursing unit for study.
- Select research based articles congruent with the selection.
- Individually critique research articles.
- As a group, compile research results into a nursing practice protocol.
- Work as a group to achieve a patient centered, evidence-based goal.

Current Status: It was found that students were inexperienced in selecting research based articles. Determining the quality of the research studies was also problematic. In addition, students verbalized a lack of value for the critiquing process. In some cases group dynamics were problematic. Taking the evidence based findings and developing of a protocol for practice was a high level activity for students; faculty support and input throughout the process was needed, making the project a time intensive effort.

Conclusions: Despite the difficulties encountered, students have completed the projects successfully. Evidence of critical thinking has been apparent in the student developed innovative projects. Increased exposure to evaluation of research evidence is needed early in the curriculum to prepare students for this complex learning experience.