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Innovative approaches to generational instruction: Welcoming the NeXters via the Hybrid

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Student Demographics

Students currently entering higher education were born between 1980-2000 and are often referred to as NeXters, Millennials, or Generation Y.

An undergraduate nursing core curriculum course was developed and implemented using a constructivist pedagogy approach which characterizes generational distinctiveness to optimize learning and student satisfaction.

Age Distribution:

N=	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Min	Max
82	24.6	22	22	6.4	20	52

Generational Distinctiveness

- Techno-savvy
- Family oriented (tremendous parental involvement)
- Self reliant, optimistic, confident
- Team and goal oriented
- Realistic, tenacious, with a heroic spirit, and proficient at multi-tasking
- Practical and trusting of authority
- Demand employment that is satisfying and complementary to their lives
- Seek flexible work schedules

NeXter's Model of Instruction

Constructivist Pedagogy:
- Emphasis on achieving active participation in learning
- Learning constructed from previous knowledge and experience
- Hybrid Course Instruction: Traditional face-to-face teaching enhanced with the use of technology
- Utilizes the proven effectiveness of traditional classroom instruction
- Student socialization kept intact
- Instruction supplemented with the usage of instructional technologies

Hybrid Instruction

- Blend of traditional in-class sessions with online (web based) components
- Encourages active and interactive learning
- Student- centered instruction
- Provides multiple opportunities for the student to explore, discover and learn according to individualized needs
- Increased Interaction between:

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            Student

Outside                 Instructor
Resources   Student

            Content
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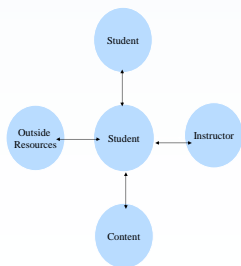
Essential Aspects of Hybrid Course Instruction

Self- Directed Learning
- Orientation and cohesive course structure
- Expectations addressed
- Firm schedule that does not fluctuate
- Online course learning units consist of: organized presentation of concepts including: assigned readings, content lectures (reflective of course objectives and learning goals), web resources and assignments
- Self-paced student progression
- Concise, organized, and easy to navigate

Problem Solving with Immediate Relevance
- Problem based learning and critical thinking exercises that attach meaning from real world experiences
- Individual and group projects reflective of current issues and trends in nursing
- Timely individualized instructor feedback using rubrics

Immediate Feedback
- Serves to organize the student, indicating what core content is important and how it would be applied
- Prompt assignment and evaluative feedback increases student motivation and interest in the course (providing proof of achievement and performance)
- Rubrics offer clear expectations for learning outcomes
- Frequent formative and summative evaluation (Confirms student understanding and recall of information)

Active Participation and Communication
- Course Online Discussion Forum
- Encourages student interaction
- Develops shared understanding from diverse sources
- Serves as a socialization tool
- Instructor as moderator and active facilitator

Outcomes

Course evaluation data (n=82)

% of students reporting:
Very Satisfied- Satisfied- neutral:
Correlation of course content 98%
Clarity of assignments 98%
Facilitate written communication 96%
Workload 98%
Online environment 92%
Theory to practice 96%
Professional role development 96%
Enhanced critical thinking 92%

Distribution of Grades

Grade: A+, A, A-, B+, B, C, W/D (scale 0-45)
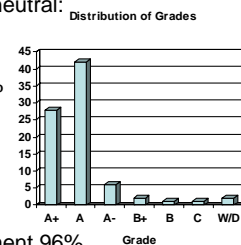
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