# Subject Matter Expert Review TAACCCT Grant

#### **Findings & Report**

**Program**: Associate of Applied Science in Nursing (A.A.S.) in Registered Nursing, Great Basin College, Elko Nevada

Program Courses: NUR 135 Nursing Fundamentals, NUR 154: Introduction to Pharmacology, NURS 155: Clinical Decision-Making in Drug Therapy, NURS 158: Nursing Care of Adults in Health and Illness, NURS 159: Nursing Care of Individuals with Mental Health Illness, NURS 252: Nursing Care of the Childbearing Family, NURS 253: Nursing Care of Children and Adolescents, NURS 257: Nursing of Adults with Acute and Chronic Illness, NURS 258: Patients with Complex Health Problems, NURS 273: Professional Development and Transition to Practice, and NURS 280: Evidence Based Practice for Quality Improvement Seminar

**Faculty Developer(s)/Instructional Designer(s)**: Faculty and Staff of Great Basin College's Nursing Faculty

Campus Locations: Elko, Nevada; Winnemucca Nevada; and Pahrump, Nevada

#### Subject Matter Expert: Jessica Grimm DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, CNE

Dr. Jessica Grimm received her DNP as an Acute Care Nurse practitioner from the University of Utah, her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Brigham Young University-Idaho, her Associates of Applied Science in Nursing from Mesa Community College, and her Associates of Science from Eastern Arizona College. Dr. Grimm has subject matter expertise in curriculum development, academic nursing and leadership, clinical nursing, and advanced practice nursing. She is nationally certified as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner through the American Nurses Credentialing Center and as a Certified Nurse Educator through the National League for Nursing. Dr. Grimm has clinical experience in home health, hospice, intensive care, the emergency department, and hospitalist medicine. In the academic nursing setting, she has held leadership and administrative positions with director and coordinator positions at the baccalaureate and the doctoral level. She has served as a faculty member at the level of Assistant Professor at the pre-licensure level, as well as in RN-BSN, MSN, and DNP Programs. She has several years of advisory experience as a nursing consultant for curriculum mapping and publishing services. Her areas of expertise are in pre-licensure nursing, advanced practice nursing, curriculum mapping, hospitalist and intensive care advanced nursing practice, and transitioning new graduate nurses into nursing practice. Dr. Grimm currently works for Touro University

Nevada located in Henderson, Nevada, as an Assistant Professor in the School of Nursing and with Lovelace Hospitalist Group as an Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. She has served on the university's research committee and is the recipient of the mentored student research grant award. Additionally, she is a member of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners and the National League for Nursing.

### Date of Review: September 2018

**Data Sources for this Report**: ACEN Substantive Change Report 2014, Clinical Site Evaluations, Course Evaluations, Statistical Analysis Documents for Course Evaluations, AAS Curriculum Maps, Course Syllabi, Student Handbook, Summary of Technologies in Use

### **SYNOPSIS OF FINDINGS:**

Great Basin College (GBC) has developed a robust Associates of Applied Science (AAS) in nursing program that spreads across three campuses. Uniform curricula are utilized across all campuses. Students attending from satellite campuses and students attending the main campus appear to be receiving an equal educational experience. This AAS program illustrates a design that aligns with national practice and regulatory standards. Program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) are well defined and incorporate components of clinical application, evidence based practice principles, contemporary practice principles, National Patient Safety Goals (NPSG), American Nurses Association (ANA) standards, and Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) competencies. Course descriptions and student learning outcomes (SLOs) are comprehensive, appropriate for the degree level, and relevant to the profession. This program design demonstrates relevance to the nursing profession as well as to the healthcare community that each school location serves. Overall, course resources, materials, assessment strategies, and teaching methods are diverse in nature and appear to meet the needs of diverse learners. Additionally, they are clearly aligned with the SLO's associated with each course.

Course progression is well defined in the student handbook and individual course syllabi. Pre-requisites are also clearly defined in both of these documents.

Based on the documentation reviewed, it is this reviewer's assessment that the standards described in this document have been met or exceeded. Recommendations for possible areas for improvement have been listed throughout this document under each standard.

# 1. PROGRAM AND COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The overall design and purpose of the program and each course is made clear to the student. Core Course Performance Objectives (CCPOs) build upon knowledge and skills through the sequence of the program and align to the Program Graduate Competencies (PGCs).

Specific Review Standard	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
1.1 The program graduate competencies are clearly stated.	Х		
1.2 The goals and purpose of each course are clearly stated.	Х		
1.3 Prerequisites and/or any required competencies are clearly stated.	х		
1.4 Learning objectives for each course describe outcomes that are measurable.	Х		
1.5 Learning objectives are appropriately designed for the level of each of the courses.	х		
1.6 Instruction, activities, and assignments in courses are scaffolded from course to course, and throughout the program.	Х		

# COMMENTS:

PSLOs are clearly defined and available to the students. Course SLOs are aligned across the program with PSLO's. Course sequencing is clear. Pre-requisites to each course are clearly listed in course syllabi. Course complexity and difficulty increases throughout the program using measurable benchmarks. SLOs are clearly designed for the appropriate level of the course with consideration to course sequencing. A visual representation is provided that demonstrates progression of Course SLOs in achieving PSLOs through completion of the program curriculum.

Clinical and didactic courses are developed using SLOs that align with appropriate accreditation and regulatory standards for the AAS in nursing level. Each course contains a curriculum map which appropriately aligns with accreditation and regulatory standards. Curriculum maps include components of clinical application, evidence based practice principles, contemporary practice principles, NPSGs, ANA standards, and QSEN competencies.

**Recommendations:** 

• Consider labeling the level of the SLO in the course syllabus. For example, a semester one SLO would be labeled "level 1". This may make the leveling of SLOs more transparent.

• Although individual course SLOs are clearly mapped to PSLOs in the visual representation provided, this mapping should ideally be available to students as well. One easy way to do this would be to provide this information in course syllabi.

# 2. RELEVANCY

Program Graduate Competencies (PGCs) and Core Course Performance Objectives (CCPOs) are relevant to students, industry, and employers.

Specific Review Standard	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
2.1 PGCs represent industry's expectation of the overarching knowledge, skills, and abilities an associate-degree level student should have.	Х		
2.2 PGCs and core course competencies CCPOs are relevant to industry and employers.		Х	
2.3 Instruction, activities, and assignments in individual courses are relevant and engaging to students.	Х		

### **COMMENTS:**

Course descriptions and SLO's clearly state the role of the student as an associate-prepared nurse. Course syllabi are provided and utilize language that aligns with ACEN's national standards for accreditation.

Curriculum maps include components of clinical application, evidence-based practice principles, contemporary practice principles, NPSG, ANA standards, and QSEN competencies. Clinical courses are aligned with SLOs that include principles of evidence-based practice, contemporary practice, NPSG, and QSEN competencies. The program is designed to prepare their graduates for licensure examination. Program desired outcome item 2 reads, "85% of graduates will score at or above the national average on NCLEX<sup>®</sup>." This program outcome is addressed in the provision of Assessment Technology Institute (ATI) testing that is mapped throughout the program. Additionally, the curriculum is mapped to align with the NCLEX-RN test blue print across the program.

Program curricula are delivered consistently among all GBC AAS nursing students at three different campus locations. Skills lab, simulation experiences, and clinical courses are offered virtually through synchronized distance education with live instruction to students residing in rural off-site locations. This approach ensures consistency of program delivery and is considered highly innovative and effective. Students complete clinical rotations near the location of their campus which

may provide resources to meet educational needs and address disparities in rural areas of Nevada, further demonstrating the relevance of this approach. Instruction, activities and assignments are designed to prepare students for practice in the nursing industry.

Recommendation:

• Consider incorporating Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice (Interprofessional Education Collaborative) standards into the curriculum.

## **3. RESOURCES AND MATERIALS**

Instructional materials being delivered achieve stated course objectives and learning outcomes.

Specific Review Standard	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
3.1 The instructional materials contribute to the achievement of the stated course learning objectives.	Х		
3.2 The purpose of instructional materials is clearly explained.	Х		
3.3 The instructional materials present a variety of perspectives and approaches on the course content.	X		
3.4 The instructional materials are appropriately designed for the level of the course.		Х	

### **COMMENTS:**

Instructional materials selected are clearly designed to meet specific SLOs at appropriate levels of learning for the program. Instructional and teaching/learning methodologies are described in each individual course map and course syllabi. The syllabi describe instructional methods which include lecture, discussion, demonstration, small group work, videos, assigned readings, written assignments, computer assisted learning programs, nursing lab activities and clinical instruction. Syllabi also describe theoretical and clinical evaluation methods that are appropriate to the course level and work toward course SLOs.

The purpose of instructional methodologies is clearly stated in individual course mapping documents. Each course mapping document clearly defines SLOs, describes course competencies, activities and evaluation methods that will be utilized. Needs of diverse learners are addressed through diverse approaches to learning evaluation and assessment strategies including quizzes, ATI

(standardized exams), clinical evaluations, faculty observation, clinical care packets, papers, skills checklists, graded simulation experiences, online modules, online and in person (or virtual) discussions, and journaling. Instructional methods notably accommodate various learning styles.

Clinical and laboratory instruction is aligned with SLOs in each course map. To accommodate learning needs of students in various locations, multiple practice learning environments are noted across all three campuses. The Pahrump Nursing Practice and Simulation lab is equipped with a SimMan 3G and an ALS manikin. Simulation is an integral part of instruction noted in clinical courses. These resources are highly valued in this context. The site visit from the Nevada State Board of Nursing notes availability of adequate resources for students and appropriate alignment of SLOs to practice activities. Ongoing faculty evaluation of student learning is completed through faculty's end of course reports and student's end of semester surveys.

A strength of this programs' instructional approach is observed in the use of a Distance Education Committee that addresses the use of technology in teaching processes and instructional methods. Additionally, faculty are trained in distance pedagogy and instruction which may further add to the quality of instruction students receive at a distance.

The program utilizes a virtual instruction platform through synchronized distance education with live instruction to students residing in rural off-site locations. All three campus locations have access to live tutoring services either virtually or in person.

**Recommendations:** 

- Provide leveling information in the course syllabi to allow greater transparency of course level to the student.
- Provide direction in the course syllabus as to how the SLOs for the course will ultimately lead to achieving PSLOs.

### 4. ASSESSMENT AND MEASUREMENT

Assessment strategies use established ways to measure effective learning, evaluate student progress by reference to stated learning objectives, and are designed to be integral to the learning process.

Specific Review Standard	Exceeds Standard	Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard
4.1 The course evaluation criteria/course grading policy is stated clearly on each syllabus.		Х	
4.2 Course-level assessments (those that can be delivered) measure the stated learning objectives and are consistent with course activities and resources.	X		

4.3 Specific and descriptive criteria are provided for the evaluation of students' work and participation and are tied to the course grading policy.		х	
4.4 The assessment instruments (that can be delivered) are sequenced, varied, and appropriate to the content being assessed.	Х		

### **COMMENTS:**

Course grading scales are outlined in a standardized format in each course syllabus and in the student handbook. Grade allocation in the course syllabi is described in percentages in some courses and as points in other courses which may be difficult for the student.

Assessment instruments utilized across the curriculum include quizzes, ATI (standardized exams), clinical evaluations, clinical care packets, papers, skills checklists, pass/fail simulation experiences, online modules, online and in person (or virtual) discussions, and journaling. Rubrics provide appropriate descriptive criteria for evaluation of student course work. Each course assignment is aligned with SLOs which are appropriately aligned to national accreditation and regulatory standards. This approach provides a diverse learning opportunity that addresses the needs of various learning styles.

ATI testing is noted as a standardized exam that has been integrated across the program curriculum. The use of this test aligns with the programs' desired outcome of satisfactory pass rates for NCLEX-RN exam after graduation. Appropriate sections of the test are delivered at leveled intervals that build on previous knowledge and are consistently delivered in courses that align with the test content. Additionally, the program offers remediation for this testing if an unsatisfactory score is achieved.

Rubrics are clearly described throughout course mapping documents and are tied to course SLOs. The rubrics supplied for review are sufficiently descriptive in nature to guide reliable evaluation of student work and provide transparency of grading criteria that aligns with the course grading policies. Course participation is discussed as a necessary dynamic in each course mapping document. Additionally, attendance at mandatory clinical/simulation experiences is clearly tied to grades within the course syllabi and student handbook. It is unclear if general course participation is tied to student grades.

Recommendations:

- Modification to course syllabi may help more clearly tie student participation into grading criteria.
- Consider adding actual point value descriptors along-side percentages for individual graded assignments in course syllabi. There is some variation in this approach across course syllabi which may present some confusion for students.