



NURSING STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT – Sample Fall 2009

PART A

1. Identify three course outcomes you will assess this academic year:
 - a. Describe the effects of developmental change on the client.
 - b. List the components of the nursing process as a systematic problem-solving method.
 - c. Identify values and attitudes, legal and ethical principles pertinent to nursing practice.

2. Why are these course outcomes being reviewed?

These three outcomes derive from the major concepts that provide the organizational framework for the nursing program curriculum (GHC Nursing Program Philosophy: Nursing Student Handbook 2009-2010 p. 9). They are presented in the first course of the nursing program (NURS 151) to set the stage for understanding the foundations of the practice of nursing. I am interested in determining to extent to which beginning nursing students are able to grasp these fundamental concepts.

3. To which program outcomes, if any, do these course outcomes link?

Course Outcome	Program Outcome
a. Describe the effects of developmental change on the client.	Demonstrates caring by treating all people with dignity and respect.
b. List the components of the nursing process as a systematic problem-solving method.	Provide nursing care through orderly collection of information from multiple sources to establish a nursing database from which a plan of care may be developed.
c. Identify values and attitudes, legal, and ethical principles pertinent to nursing practice.	Adhere to standards of professional practice within ethical, legal and regulatory frameworks.

4. What is the basis for the claims made in #3?

- a. The client is defined by the nursing faculty as an individual, family, group or community. Many concepts build toward the program outcomes regarding caring. Knowing the client as a holistic being with a diversity of physiological, psychological, sociological, cultural, developmental, and spiritual dimensions is essential to caring. Module 1 of NURS 151 introduces the student to this multidimensional perspective and includes a study of

Maslow's hierarchy of needs, culture and growth and developmental as they relate to client nurse relationships. (GHC Nursing Program Philosophy: Nursing Student Handbook 2009-2010 p. 6)

- b. The nursing faculty believes that nursing process provides a systematic problem solving structure that guides nurses within each of their roles which includes provider of care, manager of care, and member of the discipline of nursing. (GHC Nursing Program Philosophy: Nursing Student Handbook 2009-2010, p. 6). The student is introduced to the components of nursing process in NURS 151 and begins to apply it in the clinical portion of the course. Each course in the nursing program sets a higher standard to its use, culminating with the final course, Transition to Professional Practice in which the students are expected to use nursing process proficiently to plan and deliver nursing care.
 - c. The nursing faculty believes that all levels of nursing are responsible and accountable to the health care consumer for safe nursing practice and that nurses grow and develop in their roles with education and experience to attain and maintain competency in all nursing functions. (GHC Nursing Program Philosophy: Nursing Student Handbook, p. 6-7). Students are introduced to the legal and ethical standards of the profession in NURS 151 Module 3.
5. What methods will be used to assess each of these outcomes?
I analyzed the results of multiple choice questions specific to these concepts taken from the three exams that were built using the test bank provided by the author of the required course textbook.
6. What criteria will be used to determine successful achievement for each outcome?
Benchmark is 95% correct responses on selected questions.

PART B

7. Was this assessment an accurate indicator of student learning? Why or why not?
This assessment was only partially accurate in assessing the students' learning because it does not include a clinical component. Because nursing is an applied science, theory alone does not indicate learning. Application of learning while delivering patient care must also be included.
- I teach the theory component and I use the test banks that accompany the nursing textbooks. The questions are designed by experts in the field of nursing. They have the expertise to write NCLEX-type questions that are valid and reliable indicators of student outcomes achievement. Because I am not an expert in test construction nor do I have the resources to evaluate the validity and reliability of my own questions, I trust the experts to do that for me. The questions I select reflect the learning outcomes for the unit of study.
8. Based on the data you gathered, analyze students' level of achievement of the course outcomes according to established criteria.

Primary: minimum overall score, rating, response if at acceptable level
Outcome 1: *Describe the effects of developmental change on the client.*
NURS 151 Module 1 exam: Questions 26, 27, 28, 29, 30

Benchmark: 95% correct responses to selected questions.

Question	26	27	28	29	30	Total responses
% correct	59% (n = 21)	100% (n = 35)	88% (n = 31)	91% (n = 32)	79% (n = 28)	91% (n = 159/175)
% incorrect	41% (n = 14)	0% (n = 0)	12% (n = 4)	9% (n = 3)	21% (n = 7)	9% (n = 16/175)
95% Benchmark not met						

Discussion: This is a surprising result given the fact that all of these students have taken PSYC& 200 prior to beginning the nursing program. On the other hand, nursing is an applied science and students are not used to testing application of concepts. Their previous courses have required memorization of factual information rather than application. It is difficult to take these results and conclude that a change is in order. Because nursing is an applied science, students need to use the concepts in clinical practice to really understand how to apply them well. This concept will be tested again on the course final and those results will be compared with these to determine whether clinical application has improved their level of achievement. Perhaps the benchmark is unrealistic.

Outcome 2: *List the components of the nursing process as a systematic problem-solving method.*

NURS 151 Module 2 Exam: Questions 1 – 50

Benchmark: 95% of students will achieve a grade of 80% or better on the exam.

The benchmark was not met. Only 69% (24/35) of the students achieved 80% or higher on the exam.

Grades ranged from 72.3% to 100% with the following grade distribution:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-
94-100%	90- 93.9%	87- 89.9%	84-86.9%	80-83.9%	77-79.9%	74-76.9%	70-73.9%
n = 5	n = 3	n = 4	n = 8	n = 4	n = 4	n = 5	n = 2

The class average was 84.9% (B).

Discussion: This content lays the groundwork for use of the nursing process in clinical practice. Students are just beginning to use nursing process in the clinical component of this course. They will need all six quarters of the program to become proficient. Without the practice along with theory, it doesn't make a lot of sense to the neophyte nursing student. This concept will be tested again on the course final and those results will be compared with these to determine whether clinical application has improved their level of achievement. I would expect a higher result than this. This requires examination of how the concept is presented. Perhaps the benchmark is unrealistic.

Outcome 3: *Identify values and attitudes, legal, and ethical principles pertinent to nursing practice.*

NURS 151 Module 3 Exam: Questions 1 – 50

Benchmark: 95% of students will achieve a grade of 80% or better on the exam.

The benchmark was not met. Only 77% (27/35) of the students achieved 80% or higher on the exam.

Grades ranged from 69.8% to 100% with the following grade distribution:

A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D
94-100%	90- 93.9%	87- 89.9%	84- 86.9%	80- 83.9%	77- 79.9%	74- 76.9%	70- 73.9%	65- 69.9%
n = 6	n = 7	n = 3	n = 3	n = 8	n = 3	n = 4	n = 0	n = 1

The class average was 86.3% (B).

Discussion: While students did better on this exam than on the previous one, they are still not meeting the benchmark (perhaps the benchmark is unrealistic.) The improved grades may reflect students' improved skills in taking these types of tests, rather than an improvement in outcome achievement. One of the issues is that so much must be learned in so little time. Students have many pages of reading to do for each unit of study. In addition, they are also taking NURS 152, which is nursing pharmacology. Is that too much for beginners? What are the alternatives?

Secondary: more detailed minimum sub-scale or item score below which faculty need to improve review to ascertain cause and make improvement (???)

9. Based on this analysis changes are needed (curricular, pedagogical, etc)?

I will plan different teaching methods to facilitate students learning of these concepts. Review the outcomes for PSYC&200 to determine what specifically is included. Provide additional resources to augment what they are learning in that course. Also, include more discussion and practice on how to take these type tests.

10. What budget and training is needed to??

Nursing students would benefit from a tutor. The current class has two very robust study groups that meet regularly. This is helpful but because the students are just beginning their nursing education, they have difficulty putting the concepts in context. A tutor who knows the realities of nursing practice would be able to lend this type of assistance.