



Executive Summary

Vital Thinking = Exemplary Care seeks to improve the clinical judgment skills of diploma and associate degree clinical students. Clinical judgment is a subconstruct of critical thinking which involves a range of complex reasoning tasks and actions that are necessary for providing safe, competent, and exemplary patient care.

Cabarrus College is taking a two-pronged approach toward accomplishing this initiative. The first approach involves faculty development. Our faculty must become experts on the Vital Thinking framework in order to best serve our students. During the first year of implementation, faculty will be educated on Tanner's Clinical Judgment model, the revised Lasater Clinical Judgment Rubric, and best practices in clinical coaching. Faculty will develop and practice a common vocabulary for providing feedback to students, specifically in simulation and clinical practice settings.

The second approach is through incorporation of planned activities into the Associate Degree Nursing, Medical Assistant, Occupational Therapy Assistant and Surgical Technology programs' curriculum. These activities will provide students with opportunities to enhance their clinical judgment skills in the classroom, skills lab, clinical, and simulation settings.

Faculty Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop and adopt standardized feedback using a common vocabulary to provide to students based on observations in the clinical setting.
2. Demonstrate competence in using the clinical judgment rubric to assess students.
3. Develop skill in clinical coaching directed to developing clinical judgment in students.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate application of knowledge in raising questions and identifying problems.
2. Develop skills to prioritize data for the purpose of acting.
3. Communicate and perform the right action for the right reason for individual patients.
4. Reflect on active learning experiences for continuous improvement.

To discover whether students are positively impacted by the Vital Thinking project, the College will utilize a revised version of the Lasater Clinical Judgment Rubric. In the first semester, students will participate in a college-wide simulation and complete a Pre-Vital Thinking Assessment Tool (Pre-VTAT). As the students' program coursework continues, they will participate in simulations and clinical coaching. Before graduation, students will again participate in a college-wide simulation, this time with a more complex scenario. Students will also complete the Post-Vital Thinking Assessment Tool (Post-VTAT). Cabarrus College anticipates a gain in the Post-VTAT scores, per cohort, in students across programs. Most importantly, the College hopes to create a cycle of learning that eventually will expand Vital Thinking into the clinical workplace.

Institution Name: Cabarrus College of Health Sciences

Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP): Vital Thinking = Exemplary Success

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