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An Intensive Course: Benefits for Non-Traditional Students in a Practice-Based Discipline

Lisa Nicholas

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, lisa.nicholas@unlv.edu

Necole Leland

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, necole.leland@unlv.edu

Jennifer Pfannes

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, jennifer.pfannes@unlv.edu

Jovi Dumangan

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, jovi.dumangan@unlv.edu

Hope Hinchman

University of Nevada, Las Vegas, elizabeth.hinchman@unlv.edu

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Authors

Lisa Nicholas, Necole Leland, Jennifer Pfannes, Jovi Dumangan, Hope Hinchman, Gretchen Little, and Angela E. Silvestri-Elmore

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Lisa Nicholas, MSN, RN; Necole Leland, DNP, PNP, CPN; Jennifer Pfannes, DNP, RN, CPN; Jovi Dumangan, MSN, RN, CNE-cl; Hope Hinchman, MSN, RN; Gretchen Little, APRN, MSN; Angela Silvestri-Elmore; PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, CNE

Teaching Practice & Need it Addresses

Intensive courses: compressed, condensed, or accelerated courses deliver content within a shortened period of time. An intensive course is not meant to be a copy and paste of a traditional full-semester course.

Students will:

- Meet more frequently for a shorter period of time for class activities, discussions, and group work.
- Have increased number of out-of-class, self-study commitment hours for pre intensive course preparation.

Intensive courses provide a different modality to the higher educational environment. Non-traditional students, such as second-degree-seeking, desire to return to school while keeping pace with their daily responsibilities and therefore require non-traditional methods of instruction. This type of course delivery allows for easier access and integration into daily life than traditional course delivery.

Intensive courses:

- Maximize adult learning opportunities to achieve course outcomes in a condensed time frame
- Use measurements that assess multiple outcomes and objectives

Since there is an increase in enrollment of non-traditional students, universities are challenged to consider learning opportunities that meet the needs of non-traditional students.



How Others Can Adopt This Practice

Higher education institutions can implement intensive coursework if there is a need/desire to increase enrollment or meet non-traditional students' needs. The development and offering of intensive courses requires careful planning and implementation. Practice-based disciplines can use intensive courses to engage the students in content, material, and hands-on application. The intensive course can be a full immersion in the content since this is most likely the only course the student will take in a short amount of time.

Intensives, or condensed courses, must be well-thought out and meaningful.

Do's:

- Create a daily schedule
 - Ensures objectives and outcome are being met
 - Provides a clear delineation of how outcomes will be measured
- Utilize a course coordinator
 - An individual faculty member that works with other faculty and staff (clinical placements coordinator, simulation staff, clinical faculty)
 - Plans the activities that work to meet outcomes in the intensive course timeframe

Don'ts:

- Use the same course delivery methods and outcome measurements as used in a traditional course
- Copy and paste a traditional full-semester course to run in a condensed time frame

Evidence it Benefits Students

Intensive coursework is an area in the literature with many possibilities that may benefit student from undergraduate, second-degree-seeking to graduate students. Intensive coursework allows:

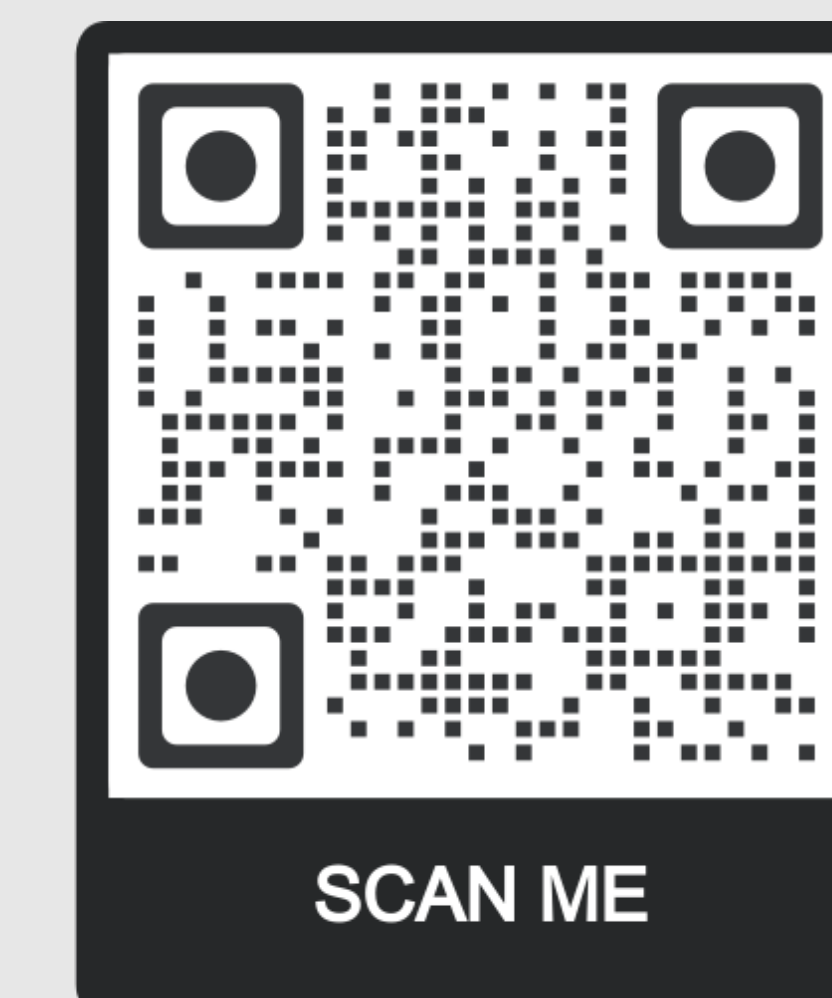
1. - Increased enrollment for programs
 2. - Increase student retention
 3. - Non-traditional students to attend class in a more desirable delivery method
1. - Students can focus on one course at a time
 2. - Increased interaction with teaching faculty

References

- Carmen & Bartsch (2017) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0098628317727912>
- Reinke (2018) <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2017.12.015>
- Trout (2018) <https://doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2017.1415196>
- Walsh et al. (2019) <https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2019.1579702>

Resources & Where to Find Them

- Resources can be found in the literature (see references) that provide guidance on how to implement teaching/learning activities to translate a traditional full-semester course into a condensed course.
- Additionally, the School of Nursing (SoN) faculty and staff can provide guidance to anyone interested in implementing a condensed course.
- Below is a QR code linked to an example template of an intensive/condensed course schedule:



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