

The Impact of the ELNEC Online Curriculum on Undergraduate Nursing Students' Confidence in Providing Palliative Care

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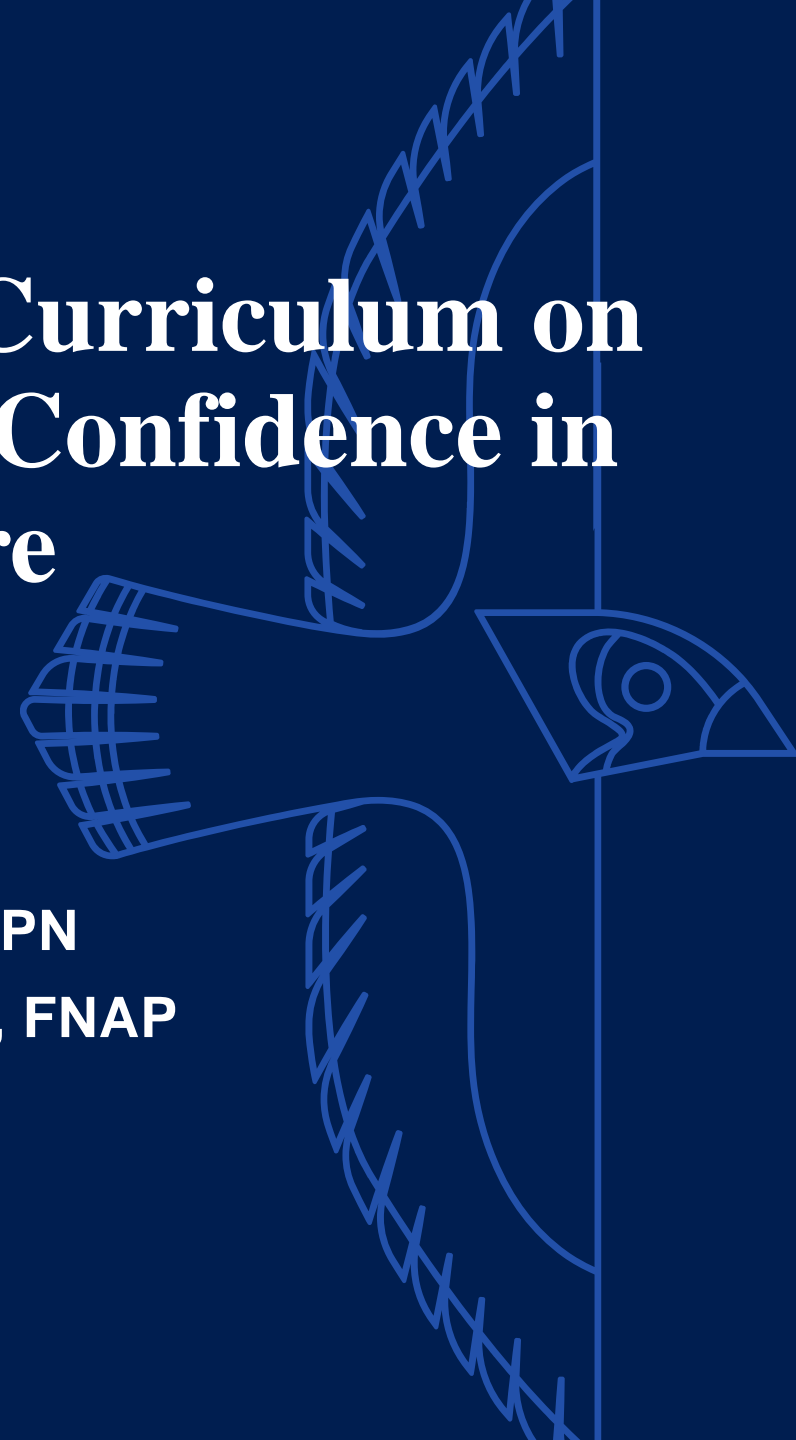
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Objectives



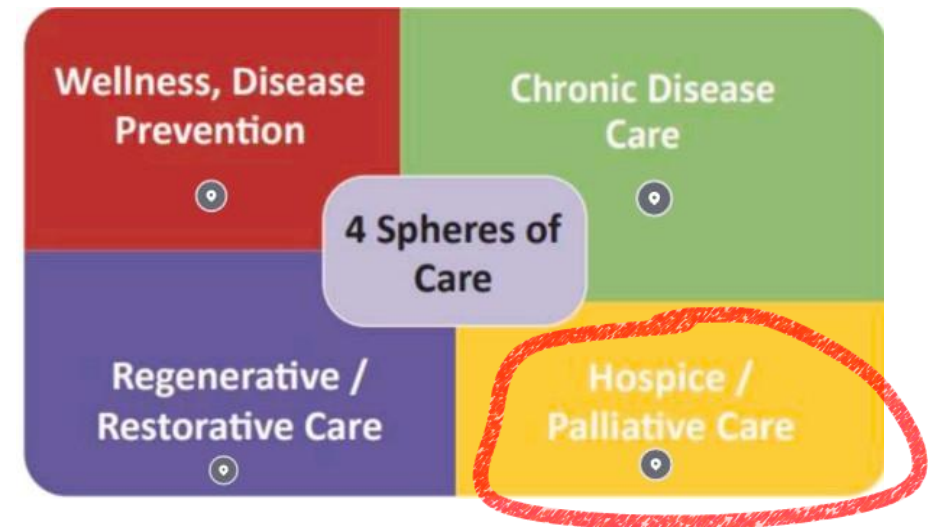
Describe how Creighton University's College of Nursing assessed pre-licensure nursing student learning outcomes using the Primary Palliative Nursing Care - Competence Assessment Tool (PPNC-CAT).



Share how we utilized ELNEC's online modules through interactive and experiential learning to support primary palliative care competency development.

Background

- The AACN includes care of patients and families during EOL in the Essentials.
- Several stakeholder organizations have called for palliative care (PC) competence as a standard.
- Benefits of palliative care include:
 - Improved quality of life
 - Symptom management
 - Patient and family support



Challenges

- Inconsistent quality and depth of EOL/palliative care content in nursing curricula.
- Faculty may lack specialized training in palliative care.
- Time constraints within already packed curricula.
- Difficulty in providing practical, hands-on experience.



ELNEC: Consistent, High-Quality Solution

- What is ELNEC? (End-of-Life Nursing Education Consortium)
- National project to improve palliative care education for nurses.
- Evidence-based, standardized curriculum.
- Addresses AACN CARES competencies



[ELNEC Website](https://www.elnec.org/)

ELNEC Undergraduate/New Graduate Curriculum

Six Key Modules plus Faculty Guide

- Introduction to Palliative Nursing
- Communication in Palliative Nursing
- Pain Management
- Symptom Management
- Loss, Grief, and Bereavement
- Final Hours of Life

Our ELNEC Journey

ELNEC Module Alignment within Concept-Based Curriculum

ELNEC-Undergraduate Module	Course (Didactic & Practicum)	Concept	Exemplar
1. Introduction to Palliative Nursing	Care Management Concepts III	Client-Centered Care Coordination	Palliative Care
2. Communication in Palliative Care	Care Management Concepts II	Communication	Interpersonal Group Dynamics
3. Pain Management in Palliative Care	Care Management Concepts I	Pain	Review of “Pain” as a concept
4. Symptom Management in Palliative Care	Care Management Concepts II	Stress & Coping	Chronic, Debilitating Disease
5. Loss, Grief, & Bereavement	Care Management Concepts I	Loss & Grief	Process of grief, types of loss, types of grief
6. Final Hours of Life	Care Management Concepts III	Spirituality	End of Life Care

[Sample Proposal](#)

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine nursing students' confidence with palliative and EOL care after completing the ELNEC Undergraduate/New Graduate Curriculum.

Methods



Retrospective pre-/post-evaluation design



Midwestern Jesuit University
with three campuses



Six ELNEC modules threaded into
courses in a concept-based
curriculum for undergraduate
traditional and ABSN students



Primary Palliative Nursing Care
Competence Assessment Tool
(PPNC-CAT)

Sample for Study

Spring 2024

- 97 ABSN
- 112 traditional

Fall 2024

- 84 ABSN

PPNC-CAT

- 33-items (competency statements) across 9 domains
- 4-point Likert scale
 - "not confident"
 - "somewhat confident"
 - "confident"
 - "very confident"

Summary of PPNC-CAT

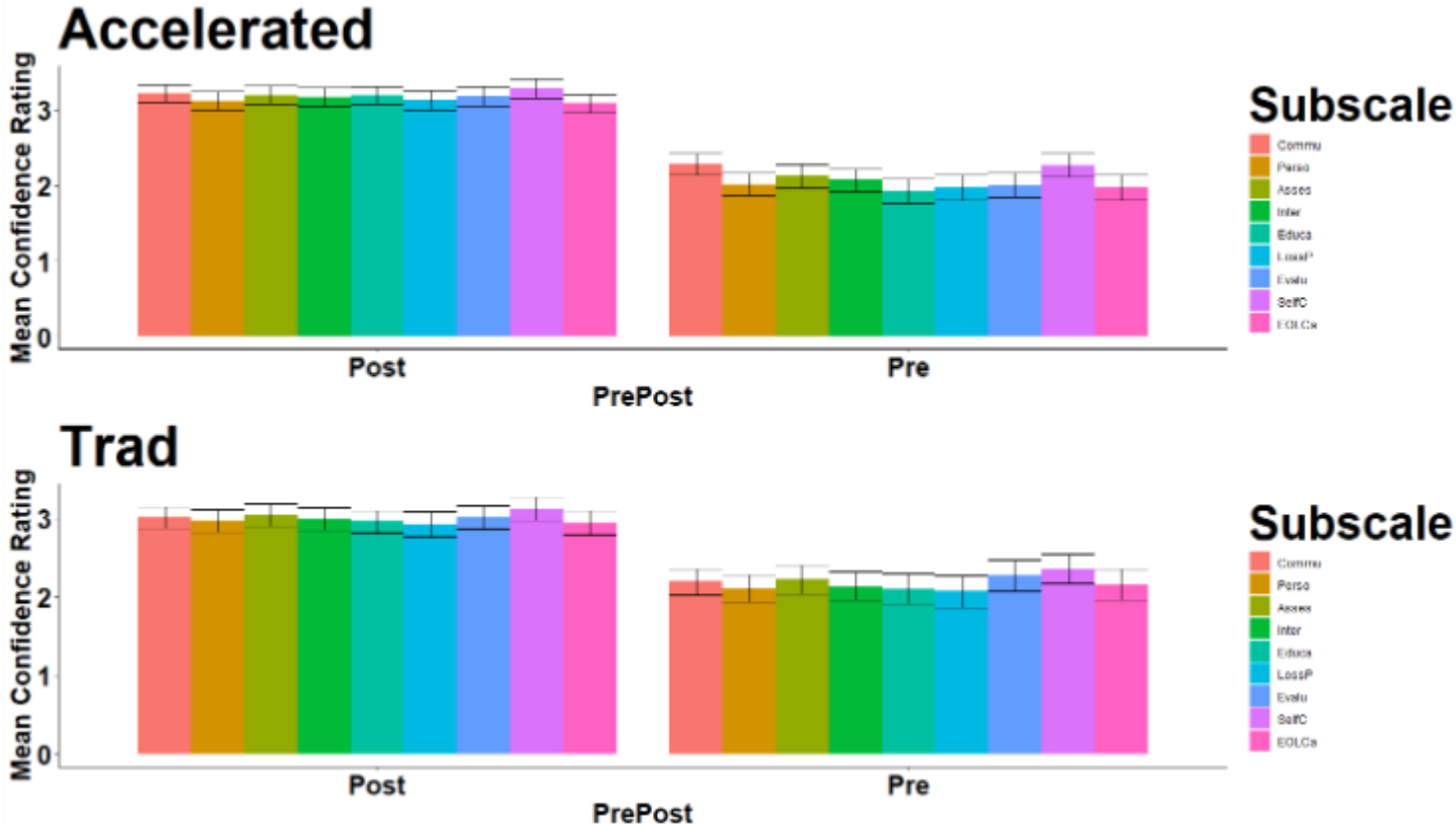
Domain	Competence Statements
Communication	3 statements about presence, therapeutic communication, and serious illness
Person- and Family-Centered Care	6 statements about culture, ethics, and shared decision-making
Assessment	6 statements about bio-psycho-social-spiritual needs and caregiver assessments
Prioritization & Intervention	6 statements about bio-psych-social-spiritual needs, caregiver needs, and advocacy
Education	3 statements about important elements of education about serious illness or injury
Evaluation	1 statement about reassessment
Care Nearing End of Life	2 statements about assessing patient and family preferences for care and adjusting care to changing needs as death becomes imminent
Loss, Grief, Bereavement	2 statements about care of the family and coping throughout the disease trajectory
Self-Care & Reflection	4 statements about self-care, reflective practice, and other aspects of lifelong learning

Results

Sample Demographics

	Both programs	ABSN	TRAD
Age			
21-25	76.03%	62.4%	100%
26-40	22.95%	36%	N/A
Over 40	1.02%	1.6%	N/A
Mean Age (years)	24.7	26.4	21.8
Campus			
Grand Island	0.7%	0.7%	NA
Omaha	50.7%	14.4%	36.3%
Phoenix	48.6%	48.6%	NA
Gender			
Female	83.6%	81.2%	87.7%
Male	15.1%	16.7%	11.3%
Other/prefer not to say	1.4%	2.1%	0.9%
Ethnicity			
White	67.5%	56.5%	86.8%
Asian/Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14%	17.2%	8.5%
Black	5.1%	8.1%	N/A
Hispanic	4.8%	7.5%	0.9%
Other/prefer not to say	8.6%	10.8%	3.8%
Religion			
Catholic	34.2%	25.8%	49.1%
Christian	21.6%	23.7%	18.9%
Spiritual/Other/None	44.2%	50.5%	32.1%
Experience			
Any experience with death/EOL	86%	85.5%	84%
No experience with death/EOL	14%	14.5%	16%

Results



- Significant pre- vs. post-interactions between traditional and ABSN students ($p = 0.003$)
- Transition from "Somewhat Confident" to "Confident" across all domains and both programs

Results- Pre-course and Post-course

- Lowest domain mean pre-course was Education
 - (2.15)
- Highest domain mean pre-course was Communication
 - (2.40)
- Lowest domain mean post-course was Care Nearing EOL
 - (3.14)
- Highest domain mean post-course was Self-care and Reflection
 - (3.27)

Results- Differences in Domains

Greatest percent change
and largest difference in
confidence in the Education
domain

- (48.1%; 2.15-3.19)

Smallest percent change in
confidence in the
Communication domain

- (33.9%; 2.40-3.21)

Smallest difference in
confidence in the Care
Nearing EOL domain

- (2.17-3.14)

Discussion of Findings



ABSN students demonstrated higher confidence post-ELNEC



Greatest increase: Education



Lowest increase: Communication



Highest post-test: Self-Care & Reflection



Lowest post-test: Care Nearing End of Life

Previous Studies

7 previous studies of ELNEC Online Curriculum:

Most used faculty developed questionnaires of student comfort/satisfaction

(Ferrell et al., 2018; Davis et al., 2021; Li et al., 2019; Lin et al., 2018; Mazanec et al., 2019; Mazanec et al., 2020)

One study used a validated, objective tool of student knowledge

(Harwell & Lippe, 2021)



PPNC-CAT: First use with high reliability ($\alpha = .987$)

Implications

ELNEC is an effective tool, improving nursing students' PC confidence.

Supports integrating ELNEC into undergraduate nursing curricula.

Consider the impact of student age and experience with death.

Provide opportunities for students to gain experience with palliative care.

Focus on areas where students need more support (e.g., Care Nearing EOL).

Limitations



Retrospective design

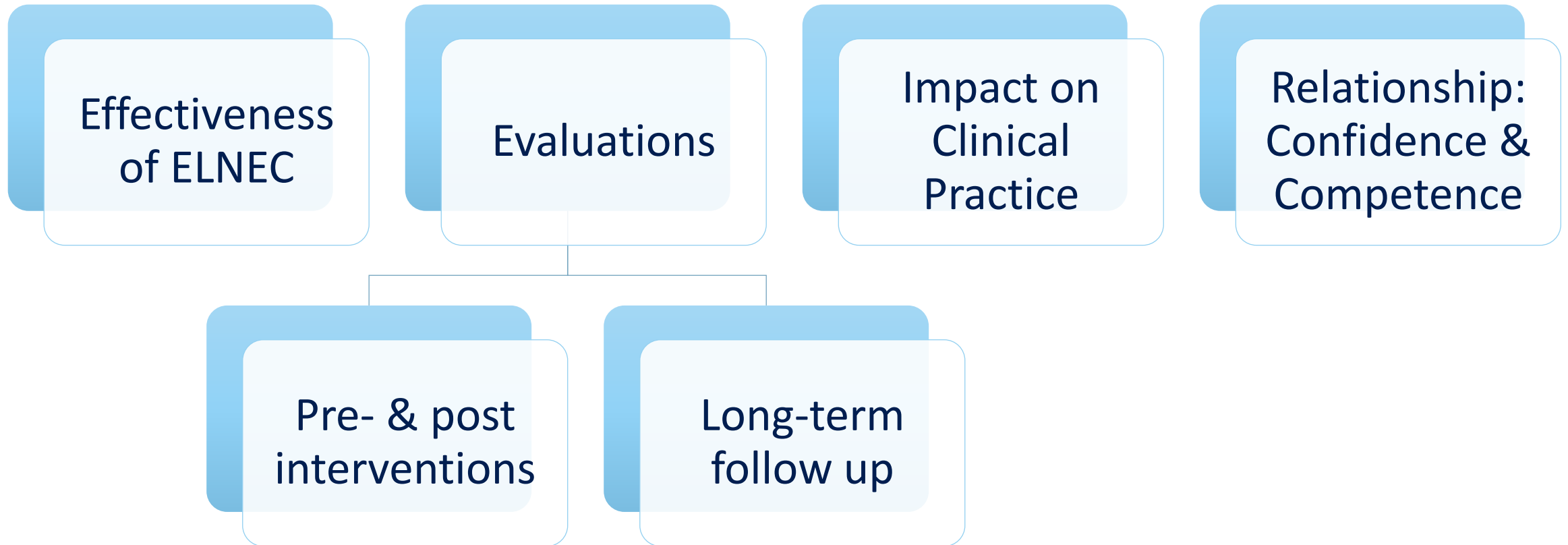


Single institution



Self-perceived confidence

Future Research



Conclusions

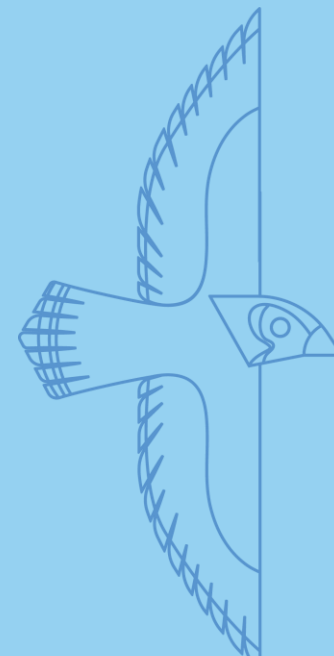
EMPOWERING nurses for palliative care

Improves
students'
confidence

Integrate
ELNEC in
curriculum

Explore long-
term impact
of ELNEC

Q&A



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