Using Film to Enhance Students’ Interest in Public Health Nursing

Public health nursing is a challenging course to teach. Most baccalaureate nursing (BSN) students enter nursing school with a vision of acute care nursing practice. In contrast, they often have little previous exposure to the nurse’s role in public health. When adult learners do not readily understand why content is important to their future career, it can be difficult to engage them in the learning process. This assignment uses films to capture students’ interest in public health so they can develop a framework for concepts in this area of nursing and explore the nurse’s role in this specialty.

Films demonstrating specific nursing skills and patient encounters are an established component of nursing curricula. Feature films have also been successfully integrated into nursing courses. Hyde and Fife (2005) used the theory of constructivism to integrate feature films into a psychopathology nursing course. Parker and Faulk (2004) used Mezirow’s adult learning theory to guide them in the development of a feature film activity to engage RN-to-BSN students in a family systems course. This assignment uses an array of film resources outside of nursing and feature films to connect students to public health concepts.

Method

The Table lists films from a variety of sources that are appropriate for public health nursing. In this assignment, the films are viewed in class following a mini-lecture on the content that the film activity is designed to explore. Each film ranges in length from a minimum of 14 minutes to a maximum of 60 minutes.

Students are presented with a film activity guide that includes the corresponding course objectives and a variety of activities to complete and discuss based on the film content. For example, after watching the Discovery Channel dramatization, The Plague, students create both on the difference in the two models and the usefulness of these illustrations in the study of epidemiology. The film activities are a graded class activity.

Results

These film assignments successfully engage BSN students in the public health course content. The films used in the course are updated annually based on contemporary issues in public health.

Prior to the introduction of films in this course, students’ comments included statements such as “content is not really nursing” and “boring and dry material.” After the inclusion of the film activities, students’ comments included “I really enjoyed the films; they reinforced the course content” and “interesting combination of lectures, videos, and class discussions.”

The film activities will continue to be developed and integrated into the public health nursing course. There are many resources for interesting films, and the activities and assignments can be easily adapted to contemporary issues. Students’ interest in public health has increased, and several students from recent graduating classes have accepted a public health position after graduation.

References


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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Corresponding Course Content</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Most Dangerous Woman in America (Typhoid Mary)</td>
<td>Public health history and epidemiology</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/typhoid/">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/typhoid/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiological Terrorism: Just in Time Training for Hospital Clinicians</td>
<td>Disaster preparedness</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/justintime.asp">http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/justintime.asp</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Homeless in America</td>
<td>Vulnerable populations and program planning</td>
<td><a href="http://www.homelessinamericamovie.com">http://www.homelessinamericamovie.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Big as Life: Obesity in America</td>
<td>Vulnerable populations and program planning</td>
<td><a href="http://ffh.films.com/id/5155/Big_As_Life_Obesity_in_America.htm">http://ffh.films.com/id/5155/Big_As_Life_Obesity_in_America.htm</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rx for Survival</td>
<td>Politics and economics</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/rxforsurvival/">http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/rxforsurvival/</a></td>
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Conquering Evidence-Based Practice Using an Embedded Librarian and Online Search Tool

Developing information literacy skills can be challenging, especially in an online environment. One strategy is to use an embedded librarian and an online search tool to promote the development of information management skills in an online evidence-based practice (EBP) course.

Embedded Librarian

The main function of an embedded librarian focuses on bibliographic instruction such as assisting students in the development and mastery of effective search techniques. Immersion of campus librarians could prove instrumental in building students’ health information literacy skills essential to research. The relevance of a research problem can be supported by an embedded librarian by assisting students in reviewing, critiquing, and ranking manuscripts related to the health question. Thus, a nursing research course provides a logical context for the assessment of information management competencies and use of an embedded librarian.

In collaboration with another institution, graduate library science students were enrolled, or embedded, in the online courses, providing an additional resource to nursing students while also earning graduate credit in their own library program. The course instructor was responsible for ongoing supervision of the library students assigned to the research courses. The embedded librarian was enrolled as a teaching assistant and stayed in contact with students throughout the semester, sending out regular e-mails and suggestions. The embedded librarian assisted students in developing appropriate search techniques, helped to ensure that sources used were credible, and assisted students in developing properly formatted bibliographies.

Students’ comments reflected the perceived usefulness of the embedded librarian, although one student suggested that the embedded librarian should have conducted the searches for them. Future research is needed to explore the use of embedded librarians in online classes as the experience level of embedded librarians may have significant impact.

Online Search Tool

The online search tool was developed to provide structure to the formative review of literature assignment. The tool consists of rows that correspond to the six levels of Stetler’s evidence hierarchy (1998). The columns direct students to required design components for each level and suggestions for search engines, databases, and key words to assist them in their search.

The tool was also used to provide feedback on the formative search prior to completion of the final EBP paper. The EBP assignment focused on quality indicators from an ongoing quality initiative within a state-wide department of corrections. The quality indicators used included measures of routine health screenings. Students were able to select indicators of interest.

Identification of appropriate literature and completion of this tool constituted the formative assignment for managing information. The summative EBP paper further developed the review of literature, addressing aspects of information literacy related to integrating, analyzing, applying, and presenting information, and was rated using the department outcome rubric.

The managing information survey was used as a pre- and posttest measure of self-perception of information literacy. It is a 10-point Likert scale in five areas that include searching and screening, integrating, analyzing, applying, and presenting abilities (Ku, Sheu, & Kuo, 2007). Students reported a perceived increase in information skills of 22.6% for all five areas of information management.

Conclusion

Embedded librarians and online search tools are useful to students as they develop information literacy skills related to searching for and screening information. Using these strategies for formative and summative assignments allows students to develop additional information literacy skills needed to integrate, analyze, apply, and present information.

References


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