

BACKGROUND

- In the workplace, graduate nursing students require effective writing and other communication skills that support the Institute for Healthcare Improvement “Quadruple Aim” of improving the patient experience and health of populations, reducing healthcare cost, and promoting joy in the workplace.¹ Students possessing strong writing and communication skills are needed to lead and contribute to organizational achievement,² such as the the quadruple aim.
- Students enter graduate programs with varying levels of writing skills and communication knowledge. Results of our previous pre-post test with the writing website³ shows that students require practice.⁴ Evidence shows that graduate students benefit from academic writing and scholarship support by faculty and programs.⁴
- This writing practice involves information literacy, which includes using Track Changes, Grammarly, and navigating databases. The creation of Professional Foundations for Graduate Nursing Course focuses on writing and information literacy.

METHODS

Our study aimed to examine graduate student knowledge and attitudes related to graduate level academic writing using technology and professional communication following the completion of the Professional Foundations for Graduate Nursing Course.

Our study used a mixed method approach. We used a pre- and post-survey design with a convenience sample of students MSN $n = 35$ (11) and DNP $n = 26$ (24) who were enrolled in the professional foundations course. Student and faculty focus groups were evaluated at the conclusion of the course.

IRB approval obtained, and survey and focus group responses remained aggregated and anonymous.

REFERENCES

¹Institute for Healthcare Improvement (2023). *The IHI triple aim*. <https://www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/TripleAim/Pages/default.aspx#:~:text=It%20is%20IHI's%20belief%20that,ca pita%20cost%20of%20health%20care>

²Johnson, J. E., & Rulo, K. (2018). Problem in the profession: How and why writing skills in nursing must be improved. *Journal of Professional Nursing*, 35(2019), 57-64

³Baron, K., & Leggett-Fife, D. (2020). *Professional writing for nurses*. <https://www.weber.edu/ProfessionalWritingForNurses/default.html>

⁴Aldrich, C., & Gallogly, A. (2020). Review: Re/writing the center: Approaches to supporting graduate students in the writing center by Susan Lawrence and Terry Myers Zawacki. *Writing Center Journal*, 38(1-2), 305+.
<https://go.gale.com/ps/i.do?p=AONE&u=ogde72764&id=GALE|A665148912&v=2.1&it=r&sid=summon&asid=12>

INTERVENTIONS

The Professional Foundations for Graduate Nursing Course is offered in a seven-week block format. The course information includes academic writing, professional communication proficiency, technology application, and professional presentations (see modules listed below). Students completed an anonymous pre-test before beginning the course and post-test after completing the course regarding their perceptions of improved knowledge and skills. Faculty and student focus groups were held seven weeks into the next semester.

- Unit A: Introduction to Scholarly Graduate Projects—Evidence Table
- Unit B: Achievement of Writing Readiness—Personalize List for Writing Tips
- Unit C: Achievement of Writing Proficiency—Mini Project
- Unit D: Preparation for Professional Presentations—PowerPoint
- Unit E: Integration of Artifacts Into Portfolium—Creation and Upload



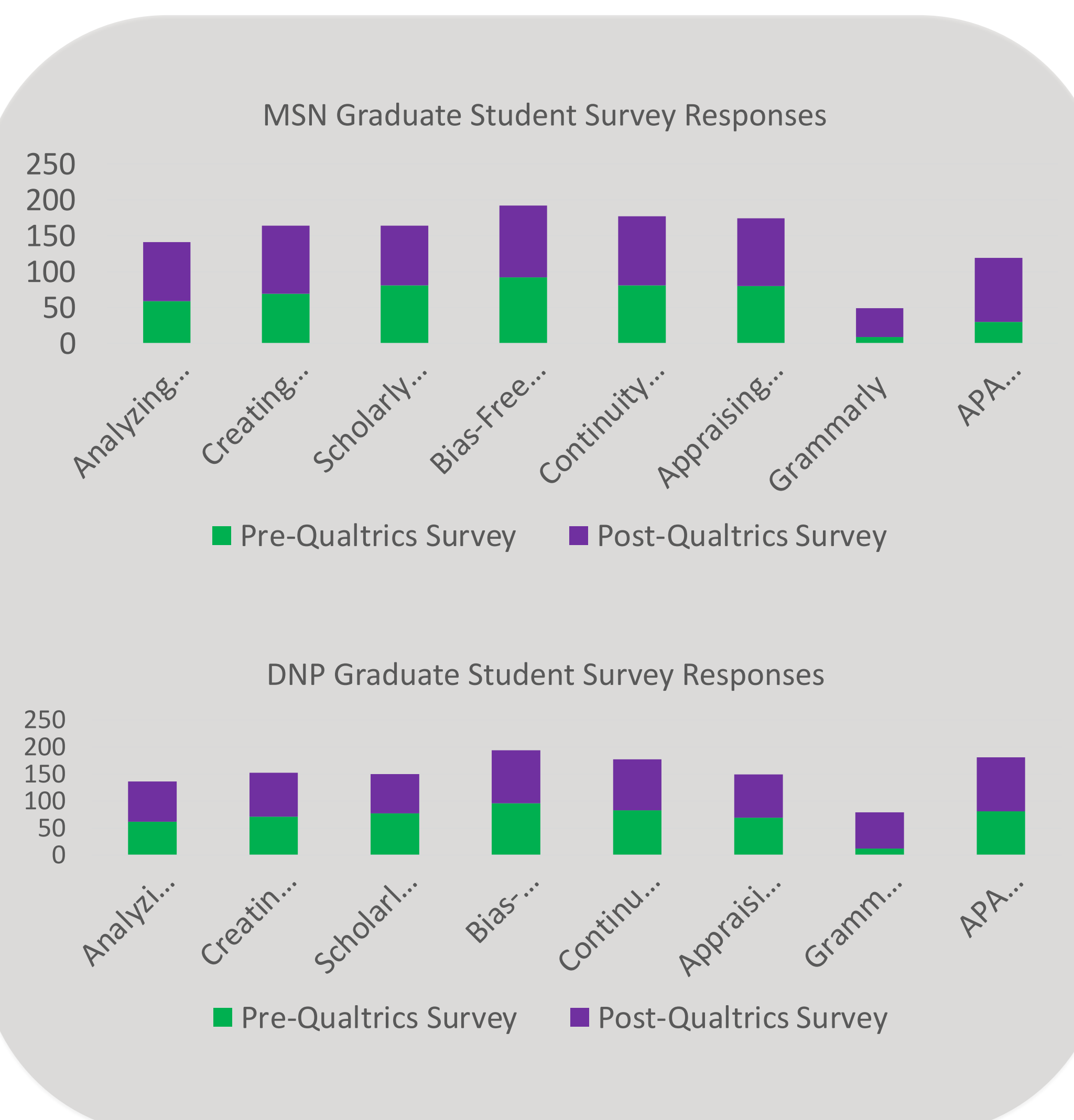
RESULTS & IMPACTS

Our study revealed that students taking the Professional Foundations Course reported increased knowledge and skills in the following areas regarding academic writing, learning technologies, and professional communication. Specifically, the survey data showed student improvement in the following:

- Analyzing evidence
- Creating presentations
- Using scholarly writing and grammar
- Implementing bias-free language
- Incorporating continuity of flow
- Appraising evidence
- Using Grammarly



During the focus groups, students reported that course teaching and learning activities prepared them for success in graduate level courses. A majority of faculty teaching subsequent graduate level courses reported an improvement in students writing after completing the course.



CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the data from our study indicated that the graduate Professional Foundations Course achieved our primary learning objectives of preparing students for gradate academic level writing, integrating technology, and communicating professionally. The Professional Foundations Course fills the student learning gap identified in graduate studies and continues to undergo revisions based on faculty and student feedback, improving students’ writing skills, academic confidence, and learning experiences.

