

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to explore the relationships among racial equity and undergraduate nursing school course exams in a large, urban university.

Background

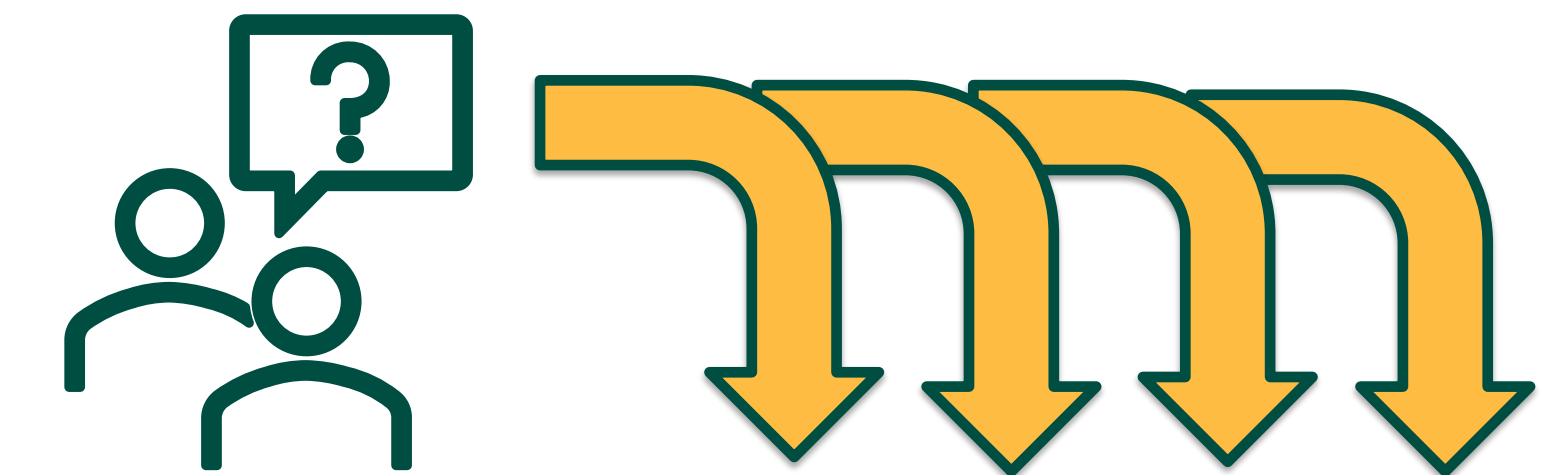
- 36.5% of students in the College of Nursing (CON) self-identify with an underrepresented racial identity. The highest percent identify as Black or African American (12.2%) (WSU OIRA, 2021).
- The University has an “F” for graduation rates in the USC Race and Equity Center 50-State Report Card (Harper & Simmons, 2019). The 6-year graduation rate for Black students is less than half of the rate for White students (NCES, n.d.).
- “Faculty have an ethical obligation to ensure that ... tests ... are ... fair to all test takers” (NLN, 2020).
- Faculty should conduct research on testing practices and the impact of these practices on student diversity, progression, and retention (NLN, 2020).

Rationale

- Classes rely on students’ examination scores to determine a student’s success in the course. Most of the undergraduate classes in the CON require a 75% pass rate on exams to pass the course.
- The exam statistics are generally reviewed by each individual instructor, but the results are not disaggregated to determine if students of color have different success rates on exams than their peers.
- The university Social Justice Action Committee Report recommends examining “race and other differences in student success outcomes” (2021).

Implementation Plan

1. Obtain demographic information on individual students from the last 3 years
2. Obtain individual student exam scores for undergraduate nursing classes with the highest attrition rates from the last 3 years
3. Ascertain student use of campus and college resources for academic success
4. Identify correlations between racial identity and exams scores, graduation, & NCLEX pass rates



Objectives

- To determine if there is a correlation between racial identity and exam success in the College of Nursing
- To identify resource utilization by students who failed exams and recognize if there is a difference in utilization based on racial identity
- To understand if there is a correlation between racial identity and BSN progression and completion in the College of Nursing

Next Steps

- If the data support that the exam scores vary by race, methods of evaluating student performance will be explored.
- Data relevant to the validity of the exams will also be evaluated.
- Further research into the impact of different demographic and social determinant data on exam scores.
- Replication of the studies at the graduate school level and across the university

