Operating Policy and Procedure

SON OP 30.400 - Interrater Reliability for Written Assignments Policy

PURPOSE
The purpose of the School of Nursing Interrater Reliability for Written Assignments Operating Policy and Procedure (SON OP) is to have guidelines/policies for performing interrater reliability reviews of students’ written work including care plans as required by the Board of Nurse Examiners for the State of Texas.

REVIEW
This OP will be reviewed biennially by September 1 of each even numbered year (ENY) by the applicable Associate Dean/Department Chair, with recommendations for revisions forwarded to the Dean of the School of Nursing.

POLICY/PROCEDURE

The faculty of each nursing program will use a uniform format to grade written assignments. Measuring instruments (grading rubrics) will be developed for all written assignments utilizing weighted criteria appropriate to the course level. This policy ensures accuracy and consistency of grading of written work submitted by students in a course taught by more than one faculty member.

At the beginning of each semester in which new assignments or new and/or modified grading rubrics are used, all course faculty will complete a blind review of the assignment utilizing the appropriate grading tool. Aggregate interrater reliability information is collected at the end of each course via the End of Course Summary.

Calculating Interrater Reliability

1. Calculate the mean of all faculty grades on the selected assignments.
2. Determine the number of agreements and disagreements. Using the grading scale of 100, an agreement is considered to be within the range of +5 to –5 points of the mean. Disagreements are those scores which fall outside this range.
3. Estimate the interrater reliability by using the following formula (Woods & Catanzaro, 1988):
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   \text{Interrater reliability} = \frac{\text{# of agreements}}{\text{Total # agreements & disagreements}} \times \text{(% agreement)}
   \]
4. An 85% interrater agreement between faculty is considered acceptable and reliable.

Faculty New to a Course

As part of orientation to a course, lead faculty will present a prior assignment to the faculty with the applicable rubric for assessment. If no previous assignment is available, a submission from the current semester will be selected. After the assignment is completed by the faculty, the interrater reliability score will be calculated by lead faculty based upon prior aggregate scores. The scores will be reviewed with the faculty along with discussion on any disagreements falling outside the recognized range of +5 to -5 points to ensure the faculty is in alignment with the use of the rubric.

Failure To Assure Interrater Reliability

If the interrater agreement is less than 85%, the faculty will evaluate where discrepancies in grading exist with subsequent changes to the rubric or assignment followed by re-evaluation. Grading should reflect agreement among faculty after reviewing discrepancies.
In The Event Of A Written Assignment Which Earns A Failing Grade

If a written assignment earns a failing grade the faculty responsible for grading that assignment will have another faculty who is teaching in the course* evaluate the assignment. In such cases, the assignment should be graded using an unmarked set of grading criteria identical to the criteria used for the original grade. The original grade will stand if the second grade is within +/- 5 points of the original grade. If the second grade is greater than +/- 5 points of the original, the two faculty should reach a consensus regarding the grade given for the student.

*In cases where there is only one faculty member teaching the course, the second faculty member should be someone who has recently taught in the course and is familiar with the assignments.

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