PREPARING PRACTICE-READY GRADUATES:

A Simulation Strategy to Strengthen Professional Identity and Workplace Readiness

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY 1901-2026

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INTRO

A decline in professional behaviors among nursing students has been observed:

- Poor communication
- Lack of accountability
- Disrespect towards peers and faculty

Unprofessional behaviors affect learning and quality of patient care. They can also lead to poor job satisfaction and increase in burnout (Cao et al, 2023). Nurse educators are essential in cultivating supportive learning environments to instill the core concepts of professionalism (Vabo et al, 2021).

There is a critical need to identify educational strategies that restore professional values in healthcare training programs.



METHODS

A two-group pre-post design was used for this quality improvement (QI) project.

This QI Project was implemented at the BSN program at Texas Woman's University, Houston campus on 90 first semester (junior) students and 100 third semester (senior) students from August to November 2025.

The intervention was conducted in a nursing simulation lab following best simulation standards practices.

- Pre-survey
- Scheduled professionalism education
  - Small groups (6-10 students)
  - PowerPoint presentation & discussion
  - Unprofessional simulation incorporating best practices
  - Debrief
  - Simulation demonstrating professional behaviors
- Post-survey

Implications for Undergraduate Nursing Education

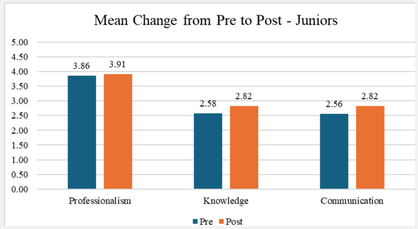


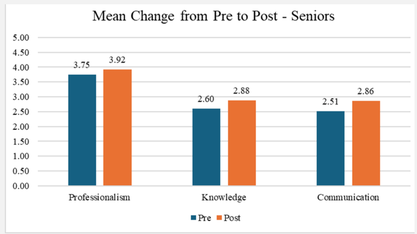
- Introduce and reinforce professional behaviors throughout the curriculum

- Incorporate professionalism focused simulation-based learning

- Faculty and nurse preceptors should model professional behavior for students

RESULTS





DISCUSSION

Follow-up tests indicated that there was a significant increase among seniors (p<.001), but not among juniors (p=.16).

There is strong evidence in the literature to support the integration of specifically designed educational content aimed at professional value development in undergraduate nurses (Antoniou et al., 2022).

This simulation-based teaching strategy aims at promoting professionalism and healthy work environments where nurses can experience long term success. Further development of this project potentiates broader implications and application to all healthcare professionals.

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