



REVIEW ARTICLE

Addressing Writing Deficiencies in Graduate Nursing Education: Strategies for Success

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ABSTRACT

Graduate nursing programs face persistent challenges in addressing students' academic writing deficiencies, a critical skill for scholarly and professional success. Writing struggles often stem from undergraduate curricula emphasizing clinical competency over writing development, leaving students ill-prepared for the demands of graduate-level scholarship. These deficiencies hinder academic progression, limit contributions to evidence-based practice, and slow the advancement of nursing science. The surge in doctoral nursing program enrollment, boosted by calls from the 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the 2017 American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for more nurses with advanced expertise, has amplified the urgency of addressing foundational writing skills in masters, Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and PhD programs^{33,34}. In 2021, the AACN reported 394 DNP programs launched since 2017 with 40,834 enrolled students, emphasizing the scale of the issue³³.

Writing challenges extend beyond nursing, affecting students across academic and professional disciplines. Increasingly, graduate faculty are burdened with teaching basic writing mechanics, diverting time and focus from course content. This trend underscores the need for innovative strategies to support writing development effectively. Notably, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) tools offers both promise and challenges in addressing writing deficiencies. AI-based grammar checkers, style editors, and newly-developed platforms provide immediate feedback and support revisions, but over-reliance on such tools may compromise critical thinking, originality, and independent writing skills. Therefore, academic programs must balance AI's benefits while maintaining academic integrity and fostering independent learning.

This article highlights the systemic nature of writing challenges in graduate nursing programs and presents a case study of an introductory course that incorporates comprehensive writing instruction and responsible AI use to bridge writing proficiency gaps. By embedding writing skills into the curriculum, and actively engaging faculty, nursing programs can equip students with the writing proficiency necessary for academic success and professional impact. Finally, a call to action underscores that nursing academia must lead systematic change to elevate writing proficiency, ensuring that graduates contribute meaningfully to their fields and the advancement of nursing science.

Introduction

In response to the calls from the 2011 Institute of Medicine (IOM) and the 2017 American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) for more nurses with advanced expertise, enrollment in doctoral programs in nursing has increased dramatically in the last two decades. By 2018, AACN reported that there were more than 300 DNP programs in the United States and almost 30,000 DNP students. By 2021, there were 394 DNP programs with 40,834 students enrolled, indicating the growing popularity of this advanced degree³³.

The increased enrollment in graduate studies has stressed the nation's nursing faculty, who now guide large numbers of nursing students through advanced graduate studies that culminate in either the Ph.D. or DNP degree. Both degrees require students to complete graduate dissertation research or scholarly papers and to contribute to nursing science through publications, presentations, and other means¹. These contributions are significant and unique because they emerge from both scientific evidence and clinical practice. However, knowledge dissemination in nursing is challenged by poor writing proficiency, evidenced early in graduate education^{1,2,3,4}.

Graduate nursing students frequently struggle to meet the rigorous demands of academic writing, a skill that underpins their success in advanced degree programs and professional practice¹. Writing proficiency is essential for disseminating research, securing funding, and advancing evidence-based practices. However, many nursing students lack the foundational skills necessary to articulate complex ideas clearly, concisely, and logically^{1,2}. These deficiencies jeopardize not only academic success but also the capacity of these future leaders to contribute meaningfully to the nursing profession and healthcare innovation^{1,3,4}. Notably, these challenges are not unique to nursing students but are evident across various professional programs, suggesting systemic gaps in writing education that extend beyond any single discipline^{2,5,6}.

The roots of these challenges often trace back to undergraduate nursing education, where clinical

and technical competencies are prioritized over writing instruction^{1,3,7}. Programs focus on preparing students to pass licensure exams, such as the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX), with limited emphasis on fostering academic writing skills^{3,8}. As a result, students frequently graduate without mastering critical elements of scholarly writing, such as constructing logical arguments, writing in the active voice, or synthesizing evidence coherently. These deficiencies become pronounced at the graduate level, where scholarly writing expectations are elevated, often leading to stress, frustration, and, in some cases, program attrition^{1,3,5,9}.

This issue is not new to the profession. Recent national surveys reveal that 97% of graduate nursing papers contain grammatical errors, and only 13% demonstrate higher-order critical thinking skills¹. Faculty often struggle to support students who arrive unprepared for the rigorous demands of academic writing, with many noting a pervasive lack of clarity, logical flow, and technical proficiency in student submissions^{3,5,8,9}. This drift toward poor writing performance parallels the concept of "creeping normality," where gradual degradation of standards goes unnoticed until it becomes a systemic issue^{1,10}. Addressing these gaps requires a deliberate emphasis on academic writing as a cornerstone of graduate nursing education.

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) tools offers both opportunities and challenges in addressing this pervasive issue. Technologies such as grammar checkers and style editors can assist students in refining writing mechanics and improving the overall quality of their work^{11,12}. However, reliance on these tools without foundational writing instruction risks undermining critical thinking and independent writing capabilities. Strategic integration of AI tools into nursing curricula, paired with rigorous writing education, can support students in developing the skills necessary for academic and professional success.

This article explores the development of best practices for enhancing graduate-level writing

instruction in the age of AI. It offers a structured framework for integrating enhanced writing instruction into an introductory graduate course and presents an exploratory case study based on a pilot class implemented at the authors' institution. By prioritizing academic writing proficiency, nursing programs can prepare students to meet the demands of advanced practice and research, fostering their ability to contribute to the profession's ongoing advancement.

Developing Best Practices for Writing Instruction in Nursing in the Age of AI

THE ROOT CAUSES OF WRITING DEFICIENCIES

The academic writing deficiencies observed among graduate nursing students often stem from systemic gaps in undergraduate education⁴. Nursing programs typically emphasize clinical competencies and technical skills to prepare students for licensure exams like the NCLEX while deprioritizing academic writing instruction³. This focus results in students graduating without mastering critical writing skills, such as constructing logical arguments, using the active voice, and synthesizing ideas effectively⁵. Consequently, students entering graduate programs face significant challenges in meeting the elevated expectations for scholarly writing.

Undergraduate nursing curricula often lack structured writing courses or assignments that foster critical thinking and analytical abilities. Instead, students primarily engage in brief technical documentation, which fails to build the skills needed for complex academic work¹³. Faculty report that many graduate students struggle with basic mechanics, organization, and adherence to style guidelines, further exacerbating their writing deficiencies^{1,14}.

Beyond undergraduate preparation, the absence of targeted support systems in many graduate nursing programs exacerbates writing challenges. This lack of preparation manifests as difficulty producing logical, well-organized arguments and narratives in graduate-level assignments^{1,3,4,5}. Compressed by the heightened writing demands,

graduate students frequently experience stress, academic progression delays, and program attrition^{1,3,4}. Faculty often spend considerable time providing feedback on student papers, yet progress remains limited due to a lack of dedicated writing instruction resources⁶. University writing support centers, while valuable, are often underutilized by students who either lack awareness of these services or perceive their schedules as too constrained to seek help⁸. Without structured interventions, writing deficiencies persist, creating barriers to academic and professional achievement for nursing students.

Addressing these root causes requires a systemic shift in nursing education. Programs must balance the emphasis on clinical expertise with the development of academic writing skills. By incorporating writing-focused courses and integrating supportive tools, such as artificial intelligence (AI), nursing programs can better prepare students to meet the demands of graduate-level writing and advance their contributions to the field.

CONSEQUENCES OF WRITING DEFICIENCIES

Writing deficiencies among graduate nursing students significantly impede their academic success, professional development, and contributions to the nursing profession. At the academic level, poor writing skills often lead to delays in completing assignments, difficulties in advancing through graduate programs, and failure to meet critical milestones such as thesis or dissertation submission¹⁵. Faculty frequently report spending excessive time reviewing and providing feedback on student writing, yet often see minimal improvement, which increases frustration for both parties^{1,3,16,17}.

Inadequate writing skills limit nursing graduates' ability to effectively disseminate knowledge through scholarly publications, policy briefs, or clinical practice guidelines. Editors and publishers often reject manuscripts submitted by nurses due to issues such as lack of clarity, logical flow, and proper grammar, further hampering the visibility and impact of nursing research¹⁸. This lack of

dissemination undermines the profession's obligation to advance scientific knowledge and contribute to the advancement of evidence-based practice^{3,19}.

Moreover, writing deficiencies create substantial stress for students, often leading to disengagement and attrition in graduate programs^{1,3,5,9}. Many students experience anxiety and frustration when faced with the demanding expectations of graduate-level writing, particularly if they lack adequate preparation or support. This stress is compounded by the perception of faculty expectations as overly stringent, leading some students to abandon their academic goals^{1,3,17,19}.

From a broader perspective, the persistence of writing deficiencies in nursing education jeopardizes the profession's ability to address critical healthcare challenges effectively⁷. Strong writing skills are essential for articulating evidence-based solutions, advocating for resources, and influencing healthcare policy²². Without these skills, nursing professionals may struggle to lead initiatives that improve patient outcomes or shape the future of healthcare²⁰. Addressing these consequences requires a multifaceted approach that includes early intervention, robust writing support systems, and strategic use of AI tools^{1,3,7}. By prioritizing writing proficiency as a core competency, nursing programs can empower students to excel academically, contribute professionally, and uphold the integrity of the nursing discipline.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AS AN ADJUNCT FOR WRITING ENHANCEMENT

Integrating AI tools into nursing education offers promising solutions for addressing writing deficiencies among graduate nursing students. While AI technologies cannot replace the foundational skills required for effective academic writing, they serve as valuable adjuncts that enhance writing mechanics and efficiency²¹. By strategically incorporating AI into the writing process, nursing programs can empower students to produce clearer, more polished work while maintaining the focus on skill development and critical thinking.

BENEFITS OF WRITING INSTRUCTION

AI tools provide several practical advantages for graduate nursing students struggling with writing deficiencies. For instance, grammar and style checkers, such as Grammarly[®] and ProWritingAid[®], assist in identifying and correcting basic errors, enabling students to focus on refining content and arguments^{21,23}. Similarly, heuristic tools, like ChatGPT[®], can support brainstorming and outlining, helping students generate ideas and organize their thoughts more effectively^{1,24}. These tools also benefit English language learners by offering real-time feedback on sentence construction and language clarity, making academic writing more accessible^{25,26}.

Moreover, AI tools can facilitate reflective learning by providing instant feedback, allowing students to iteratively improve their drafts²⁷. For example, some AI applications highlight passive voice usage and suggest alternatives, aligning with the active writing style preferred in academic contexts^{27,28}. This iterative process enhances writing mechanics and fosters greater engagement with the material as students learn to recognize and correct their mistakes.

LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF AI

Despite these benefits, AI technologies also pose challenges that must be carefully managed. Over-reliance on AI tools can hinder the development of independent critical thinking and analytical skills essential for academic writing²⁹. Students who depend too heavily on AI to generate ideas or improve drafts may bypass the cognitive processes necessary for deep learning and intellectual growth^{15,30}.

Furthermore, AI-generated feedback is not always accurate or contextually appropriate. For instance, large language models (LLMs) like ChatGPT can "hallucinate" or fabricate information, leading students to include errors in their work^{24,25}. Additionally, AI tools may fail to account for the nuanced requirements of specific assignments, such as adherence to academic style guidelines or discipline-specific terminology^{21,30}. These limitations necessitate close faculty oversight and the

integration of AI as a supplementary, rather than primary, resource.

Ethical concerns surrounding plagiarism and originality also arise with AI use^{21,30}. Students may misuse AI tools to generate text that does not reflect their own intellectual efforts, raising questions about academic integrity. Additionally, AI-generated content may evade traditional plagiarism detection systems, making it more difficult for educators to identify instances of dishonesty^{28,30}. Clear guidelines and policies regarding the ethical use of AI in academic settings are essential to address these challenges³⁰.

BALANCING AI AND TRADITIONAL INSTRUCTION

The successful integration of AI into nursing education requires a balanced approach that emphasizes skill development alongside technological support. Faculty should guide students in using AI tools responsibly, highlighting their role as adjunct aids rather than replacements for writing proficiency^{2,6,31}. For example, AI can be

introduced as part of a structured writing process, where students use these tools for initial feedback but rely on faculty input for deeper revisions and content improvement^{21,30}.

Nursing programs can maximize their potential while minimizing risks by promoting ethical AI use and ensuring equitable access to these tools. This balanced approach allows students to benefit from the efficiency and support provided by AI technologies without compromising the integrity and quality of their academic writing.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NURSING PROGRAMS

To address the pervasive writing deficiencies among graduate nursing students, nursing programs must adopt comprehensive strategies that integrate writing instruction, leverage technology, and support faculty development. The recommendations contained in Table I aim to create a balanced approach that enhances students' writing proficiency while maintaining academic integrity and fostering critical thinking.

Table I. Recommendations for Nursing Programs

Recommendation	Description	Course Content
Develop Mandatory Writing Courses	To establish a strong foundation, graduate nursing programs should include a dedicated writing course during the first semester.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover essential topics such as grammar, logical structure, academic tone, and adherence to style guidelines (e.g., APA format)^{1,3} • Include practical assignments that align with the specific writing tasks students will encounter, such as research papers, policy briefs, and evidence-based practice reports.⁵
Integrate AI Tools Responsibly	AI tools offer valuable support for writing development but educators must introduce these tools ethically and strategically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide training on using AI tools such as Grammarly, ChatGPT, and ProWritingAid to improve writing mechanics and generate initial ideas. • Emphasize that AI tools are supplementary aids, not substitutes for student effort or faculty guidance.²¹ • Establish clear policies on the ethical use of AI, including

Recommendation	Description	Course Content
<p>Establish Robust Writing Support Systems</p>	<p>Nursing programs should strengthen existing support systems to help students improve their writing skills.</p>	<p>transparency in acknowledging its use in assignments.³⁰</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing centers with tailored resources for nursing students, such as workshops on academic writing and individual consultations.² • Peer mentorship programs where advanced students provide feedback and guidance on writing assignments.¹⁷
<p>Promote Faculty Development</p>	<p>Faculty play a crucial role in improving student writing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer workshops and training on effective feedback techniques and the integration of AI tools in writing instruction.^{1,3} • Encourage faculty collaboration with writing centers to align writing support with course objectives.²
<p>Foster a Culture of Continuous Improvement</p>	<p>Cultivate a culture that values writing proficiency.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly revising curricula to incorporate emerging tools and best practices in writing instruction.³ • Engaging students in reflective writing practices to enhance critical thinking and self-assessment skills.²⁹
<p>Ensure Equitable Access to Writing Resources</p>	<p>Equity must remain a priority to ensure all students benefit from writing support initiatives.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to AI tools and writing center services for all students, including those in online or hybrid formats.³ • Address barriers such as technological disparities and time constraints that may prevent students from utilizing available resources.¹³

By implementing these recommendations, nursing programs can significantly improve the writing proficiency of graduate students, enabling them to excel academically and contribute meaningfully to the nursing profession.

CALL TO ACTION

The persistent issue of writing deficiencies among graduate nursing students demands urgent attention from nursing educators, program administrators,

and professional organizations^{1,3,6,17}. Addressing this challenge requires a dual approach: improving students’ writing skills while also ensuring faculty are equipped to provide effective guidance and serve as exemplars of strong academic writing. By prioritizing writing proficiency at all levels, nursing programs can foster a culture of writing excellence that empowers students and advances the profession. What would fostering such a culture entail, and what steps would need to be implemented for

success? We offer the following concrete recommendations to achieve these goals for a culture of excellence in graduate nursing programs.

First, prioritize writing proficiency in nursing education, especially in Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), Ph.D., and Masters in Nursing programs. Graduate nursing programs must recognize writing proficiency as a foundational skill critical for academic success and professional contributions. To address this, programs should:

1. *Integrate mandatory writing courses*: Introduce writing-intensive courses in the first semester of graduate programs to establish a strong foundation in grammar, structure, academic tone, and adherence to style guidelines¹⁶.

2. *Incorporate writing proficiency across the curriculum*: Embed writing assignments throughout coursework, ensuring continuous skill development and application.

Second, leverage technology ethically and strategically. AI tools offer valuable support for writing development but must be integrated thoughtfully to avoid over-reliance. Programs should:

1. *Train students and faculty*: Provide training on the effective and ethical use of AI tools, emphasizing their role as supplementary aids rather than replacements for critical thinking and independent writing³².

2. *Establish ethical guidelines*: Develop policies that guide the appropriate use of AI in academic writing, promoting transparency and accountability.

Third, enhance faculty writing proficiency and engagement. Faculty play a pivotal role in developing students' writing skills. To fulfill this role effectively, faculty must also enhance their writing proficiency. Programs should:

1. *Invest in faculty development*: Offer workshops and professional development opportunities to improve faculty writing skills and familiarize them with AI tools for writing instruction.

2. *Encourage faculty scholarship*: Promote a culture of writing among faculty by supporting collaborative research projects, peer-review

activities, and publication efforts that model strong writing practices for students^{1,3}.

Fourth, mentor and engage students by focusing on writing proficiency. Faculty should:

1. *Provide constructive feedback*: Focus feedback on higher-order concerns such as argument structure, clarity, and logical flow before addressing grammar and mechanics^{14,16}.

2. *Incorporate reflective writing*: Use reflective writing exercises to foster critical thinking and self-assessment skills among students^{3,16,29}.

Fifth, build programs that provide comprehensive support systems to address writing deficiencies. These could include:

1. *Writing centers*: Collaborate with campus writing centers to provide tailored resources, workshops, and consultations for nursing students²⁹.

2. *Peer mentorship programs*: Pair advanced students with peers to provide feedback and guidance on writing assignments¹⁵.

Sixth, promote a culture of writing excellence by creating a culture that values writing proficiency, requires systemic changes, and collective action:

1. *Engage professional organizations*: Collaborate with bodies like the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) to establish best practice and writing instruction standards³³.

2. *Foster accountability*: Regularly assess program outcomes related to writing proficiency and align them with broader professional goals²⁰.

The persistent writing deficiencies in graduate nursing education represent a critical challenge and an opportunity. Faculty must lead the way by enhancing their own writing skills, providing targeted mentorship, and advocating for systemic changes. Nursing programs must prioritize writing proficiency, ethically integrate technology, and foster a culture of excellence that values faculty and student development. By taking these actions, nursing education can prepare graduates to excel academically, lead professionally, and contribute meaningfully to the advancement of healthcare.

CONCLUSION

Graduate nursing students face significant challenges in academic writing, a skill critical to their success as scholars and practitioners^{1,3,22}. Writing deficiencies not only hinder their academic progress but also limit their ability to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of nursing science and practice^{1,3}. Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted approach that prioritizes writing proficiency as a core component of nursing education while leveraging innovative tools and fostering faculty development. The integration of writing-intensive courses, ethical and strategic use of AI, and robust support systems can significantly enhance students' writing abilities^{4,7}. By embedding structured writing instruction into the curriculum and providing access to AI tools, programs can help students refine their skills while maintaining the focus on critical thinking and originality. Furthermore, writing centers and peer mentorship initiatives offer invaluable resources to guide students through the complexities of academic writing^{3,4}.

Faculty play a pivotal role in this process. For nursing educators to effectively mentor students, they must themselves demonstrate proficiency in academic writing. Through professional development opportunities, collaborative scholarship, and thoughtful integration of AI into teaching, faculty can model strong writing practices and provide the targeted feedback necessary for student growth³¹. Creating a culture of writing excellence in nursing education demands systemic change and collective action. Faculty, administrators, and professional organizations must collaborate to address persistent deficiencies, promote ethical standards, and champion writing as a cornerstone of nursing practice. Equitable access to resources, ongoing curriculum enhancement, and a commitment to continuous improvement are essential to achieving this goal^{1,3,7}.

Ultimately, by equipping nursing students with the tools and support to succeed as skilled writers, programs can empower them to lead, innovate, and advocate effectively in the evolving healthcare landscape. This commitment to writing proficiency

is not only an investment in students' academic and professional success but also a vital contribution to the future of nursing as a science and a discipline.

Case Study: Integrating Writing Proficiency in a Gradual-Level Orientation Course

Addressing graduate nursing students' writing deficiencies requires intentional curriculum design. This case study outlines an integrated approach to embedding writing instruction and AI tools into the first semester of a graduate nursing program. The Catholic University of America Conway School of Nursing course, as outlined below, focuses on building foundational writing skills while promoting the ethical and effective use of AI technologies.

COURSE OVERVIEW

The course - NURS 916D Seminar in Nursing Scholarship - is an 8-week online course introduced in the first semester of the graduate nursing program. Designed with a writing-intensive module treaded throughout the course, it targets common deficiencies identified among graduate nursing students, including grammar, logical flow, active voice usage, and adherence to academic style guidelines³. By integrating weekly readings and exercises from *Write!* by Johnson and Rulo³ and *Lessons in Clarity and Grace* by Williams and Bizup¹⁶, the course fosters writing proficiency without needing a separate writing course.

Students do not receive direct course points for assignment completion, but they lose points if assignments remain incomplete. This approach underscores the importance of participation and engagement in the learning process.

The course aims to:

1. Strengthen critical thinking and argumentation skills essential for scholarly writing.
2. Encourage precise and active writing by eliminating the use of weak copulatives and requiring students to write in the active voice.
3. Equip students with the tools to handle high-level academic projects, including PhD dissertations,

DNP scholarly papers, and Master of Science in Nursing capstone project manuscripts.

4. Foster accountability and engagement in writing practices through an immersive iterative learning process.

5. Foster ethical and strategic use of AI tools in the writing process.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

The course employs a blended approach, integrating traditional instruction with AI tools to support students' writing development. Key components include:

Elimination of the Verb "To Be":

Students are strictly prohibited from using any form of the verb "to be" in all written communications, including assignments, discussions, and emails. This requirement compels students to adopt stronger, more specific verbs, resulting in precise and dynamic writing. Students develop an active and engaging academic writing style by avoiding passive voice and weak copulatives.

INTERACTIVE LECTURES:

Topics cover grammar fundamentals, logical organization, academic tone, and style guidelines (e.g., APA format).

Special sessions on writing literature reviews and synthesizing evidence, key skills for graduate nursing research.⁵

AI-SUPPORTED ASSIGNMENTS:

Students must install and use Grammarly® grammar checkers and style editors to revise early drafts of their assignments, focusing on sentence structure, clarity, and mechanics¹⁴.

ETHICAL USE OF AI:

Dedicated modules emphasize the ethical use of AI, including its role as a supplementary tool rather than a substitute for student effort. Faculty provide real-world examples of ethical dilemmas involving AI misuse³⁰.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND ENGAGEMENT:

Students who fail to engage in the immersive experience or neglect assignments face the possibility of enrolling in a formal writing course.

This ensures that all students meet the program's rigorous writing expectations.

FACULTY FEEDBACK MECHANISMS:

Faculty provide detailed feedback on successive drafts, focusing on higher-order concerns such as argument structure, coherence, and logical flow. Peer-review discussion post exercises help students critique and refine their work collaboratively, fostering critical analysis and engagement.

COURSE CAPSTONE PROJECT:

Students complete a scholarly grant concept paper suitable for submission to a grantor organization. The project integrates skills developed throughout the course, from argument construction to final editing.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Initial implementation of the course yielded promising results. Faculty observed significant improvements in students' writing clarity, logical flow, and adherence to academic standards. Students report significant improvements in writing clarity, precision, and the use of the active voice. Additionally, the initiative increased their confidence in their writing abilities, and students reported feeling less overwhelmed by the demands of graduate-level assignments. The strategic integration of AI tools helped students refine their mechanics while allowing faculty to focus on deeper, conceptual feedback⁷.

After completing the course, students were invited to provide feedback through a course evaluation. Their responses included: "*The diverse learning assignments effectively prepare you for graduate courses and graduate-level writing,*" and "*The weekly writing assignments enhanced my learning and strengthened my writing skills!*". These reflections underscore the course's impact on building confidence and competence in advanced academic writing.

STUDENT SURVEY: FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

To obtain further qualitative and quantitative student feedback, the course professor invited students to complete an optional and informal

eight-item *Feedback Questionnaire* (Figure 1) via email. After completion, students emailed their

responses to an individual unaffiliated with course instruction for survey review and analysis.

Figure 1: Feedback Questionnaire

Feedback Questionnaire	
1. Helpfulness: How helpful did you find the weekly writing refreshers?	<input type="checkbox"/> Very helpful <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat helpful <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Not very helpful <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all helpful
2. Relevance of <i>Write!</i> Chapters: Did the chapters from <i>Write!</i> effectively reorient you to writing proficiency basics?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, very effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhat effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Not very effectively <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all
3. Challenge Level: Were the refresher assignments appropriately challenging?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, just right <input type="checkbox"/> Too challenging <input type="checkbox"/> Too easy
4. Continuing Writing Refreshers: Should the writing refreshers remain a part of the NURS 916D course?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
5. Skill Application: Have the writing proficiency skills gained in NURS 916D benefited you in subsequent courses?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, significantly <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> No
6. Preparation for Future Writing: Do you feel better prepared for future graduate-level writing assignments because of the writing content in NURS 916D?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, definitely <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, somewhat <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> No
7. Pre-Program Writing Course: Would requiring a writing proficiency course before starting the graduate program benefit future students?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Additional Comments: Please share any other thoughts or suggestions about the writing refresher exercises:	

Survey Findings:

HELPFULNESS OF WEEKLY WRITING REFRESHERS

A majority of survey respondents rated the weekly writing refreshers as "Very Helpful," with many others finding them "Somewhat Helpful." These findings underscore the perceived value of integrating regular writing practice into the course structure, as students appreciated the opportunity to enhance their writing through structured, iterative exercises.

RELEVANCE OF WRITE!³ CHAPTERS

All students described the chapters from *Write!*³ as effective, with most respondents indicating they "Very Effectively" reoriented them to writing proficiency basics. Others found the chapters "Somewhat Effective." This feedback validates the selection of *Write!*³ as a core text, reflecting its alignment with the course's goal of reinforcing fundamental writing principles.

APPROPRIATENESS OF CHALLENGE LEVEL

All survey respondents considered the assignments "Just Right" regarding challenge level. This balance ensured that tasks were sufficiently rigorous to promote growth without being overwhelming. Comments from students further highlighted the assignments' practical applicability and alignment with real-world academic demands.

CONTINUATION OF WRITING REFRESHERS

An overwhelming majority supported retaining the writing refreshers as a component of the *Seminar in Nursing Scholarship* course. This strong endorsement demonstrates the critical role these exercises play in building student confidence and proficiency.

SKILL APPLICATION AND LONG-TERM BENEFITS

The course's impact extends beyond immediate writing improvements. Many students reported that skills gained in the course significantly benefited them in subsequent graduate-level assignments. Furthermore, a large proportion indicated feeling "Better Prepared" for future academic writing tasks, crediting the course with instilling a robust foundation for tackling complex projects such as dissertations and capstone papers.

INSIGHTS ON PRE-PROGRAM WRITING COURSES

When asked about the potential benefit of a pre-program writing course, all respondents agreed that such a requirement would help future students. This finding suggests that early intervention could further bolster the writing preparedness of incoming graduate nursing students.

QUALITATIVE FEEDBACK: STUDENT VOICES

Qualitative responses provided rich context to the survey results. One student shared, "I thoroughly enjoyed the class. I graduated from an international nursing program, and this course bridged the gap in my academic writing skills." Another noted, "The weekly writing refreshers were invaluable in re-establishing good writing habits and refining my scholarly tone." A final student stated that "the well-structured assignments made the content easy to digest with just the right amount of information."

However, a minority of students expressed challenges with adopting the active voice requirement, emphasizing the need for additional guidance and examples during the early weeks of the course.

Discussion

The survey findings affirm the transformative impact of integrating graduate writing exercises into the *Seminar in Nursing Scholarship* course. Students consistently recognized the program's value in developing clarity, precision, and confidence in their writing. By embedding writing instruction into the curriculum and leveraging foundational texts such as *Write!*³ and *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*¹⁶, the course equips graduate nursing students with the skills necessary for academic and professional success. Future enhancements may include offering preparatory workshops for incoming students and refining instructional strategies to address common challenges with active voice construction.

Students who embrace the writing immersion experience report significant improvements in clarity, precision, and the use of active voice. Faculty note marked advancements in the quality

of student work, including stronger argumentation and adherence to academic rigor. These students excel in subsequent writing-intensive tasks such as scholarly papers and dissertations, demonstrating the long-term benefits of the course.

Conversely, students who resist the immersive process often struggle with future assignments. Faculty observe that these students face difficulties tackling complex projects like the PhD dissertation, DNP scholarly paper, or MSN capstone manuscript, underscoring the importance of early engagement in the course.

While the course proved effective, it revealed challenges such as the need for additional faculty training on their writing proficiency and the use of Grammarly[®]. Ongoing efforts may include offering workshops for faculty on incorporating AI into teaching and partnering with the campus writing center to ensure equitable support for all students. By combining writing instruction with ethical AI use, this approach equips graduate nursing students with the skills necessary to succeed academically and professionally. It also

demonstrates the potential of integrating technology thoughtfully into curricula to enhance learning outcomes.

The *Seminar in Nursing Scholarship* course exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to integrating writing instruction into nursing education. By focusing on eliminating weak constructions and promoting active voice, students develop the ability to communicate ideas with clarity, precision, and authority. This transformative learning experience reshapes writing skills early in students' academic journey, preparing them for lasting success in both academic and professional settings.

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