EEQ CERT PILOT
FINDINGS & NOTEWORTHY PRACTICES

OCTOBER 2021

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PROJECT SUMMARY

In 2021, the Distance Education Accrediting Commission (DEAC) and Quality Assurance Commons (QA Commons) embarked upon a joint effort to evaluate how DEAC-accredited institutions prepare students for employability through the QA Commons Essential Employability Qualities Certification (EEQ CERT™) program. Three institutions completed participation in the pilot – Aspen University (Nursing), Martinsburg College (Medical Assisting), Bottega University (Communications).

EEQ Certification is the hallmark of quality in delivering education and training programs aligned to employability. Each program submitted a portfolio of evidence tied to QA Commons' Employability Framework. Portfolios are assessed and scored by experienced, independent Reviewers, trained by the QA Commons, with feedback reports provided.

QA Commons' Employability Framework is centered on eight Essential Employability Qualities (EEQs) that are not industry or discipline-specific, but represent the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences graduates need for their first job and a foundation for a lifetime of employed engagement. Five standards of care ensure programs are equipping students to be ready for the world of work.

Key findings of the pilot were:

- Strong alignment of the EEQs and their definitions to the DEAC standards - based on the requirement to promote "critical thinking, ethical reasoning, social responsibility, global citizenship, or lifelong learning."

- Employer Engagement was expected to be a strong area of concordance with EEQ CERT for DEAC programs. ("DEAC schools should be knocking this EEQ out of the park.") However, programs could do more to indicate how the feedback from the Program Advisory Group (which should be mostly employers) is used in curriculum development was a stumbling block.

- Career Support Services has weaker alignment between EEQ CERT and DEAC standards, however, many practices were deemed "noteworthy" and scores were strong.

- EEQ CERT is relevant to, and doable by, certificate programs in addition to degree programs

QA Commons finds that having specific examples of good practices and exercises is a great way to inspire programs around this employability work. The following collection of noteworthy practices were pulled from the portfolios from the EEQ CERT portfolios and are intended to spark additional creativity amongst the readers of this report.

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CATEGORY 1: EEQ PREPARATION

General

- All EEQs are mapped into existing learning expectations. The clarity of assignments and rubric presented for EEQ CERT is a strong indicator that this level of preparation is not a new integration for the faculty to consider, but a crucial part of the work that they do.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Given the fact that members of the Program Advisory Committee, who represent employers and industry leaders, continue to affirm that soft skills are critical to the overall development of the student, all EEQs are addressed in each course through the assessments, as well as the weekly discussion and collaboration between students and instructors.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The Program Learning Goals (PLGs) are intentionally based upon the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, which emphasizes such qualities and concepts as communication, interprofessional collaboration, evidence-based practice, quality improvement, patient safety, informatics, clinical inquiry & reasoning, critical thinking, cultural sensitivity, and professionalism. These are meant to enhance professional development, prepare for a broader scope of practice, and provide a better understanding of the cultural, political, economic, and social issues that affect patients and influence care delivery.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- The university implemented Assessment of Student Learning (ASL), a course-embedded assessment model that utilizes signature assignments and associated scoring rubrics to collect student learning data at the University Mission-Based Outcome (UMBO) and Program Learning Goal (PLG) levels for analysis and subsequent curriculum improvement.

  _ *Aspen University*

- Signature assignments provide students with an artifact that represents scaffolded learning across the course. Signature assignments are usually the final assignment for each course and take the form of a work-related project, a research paper, or a presentation.

  _ *Aspen University*

- The Assessment of Student Learning (ASL) framework and associated data are being used to provide evidence for the attainment and proficiency of the EEQs. Each UMBO and PLG are mapped to the overarching concepts of one or more of the EEQs.

  _ *Aspen University*

- The university uses the IRMA model of scaffold learning by which skills needed to achieve different PLGs typically need to be introduced (I) before they are reinforced (R), and reinforced before they are mastered (M) and mastered before they are applied (A).

  _ *Aspen University*

- The first course taken by students in any program within the institution is PF101 Academic Strategies (PF101). This course emphasizes academic preparation by including communication, problem-solving, ethical writing, professionalism, and learning, therefore, creating this idea of "Essential Employability Qualities" from the onset of enrollment**.**

  _ *Bottega University*

Communication

*Note that, while the first set of the examples in this section come from a Communications degree program, **MANY of the exercises could be adapted and utilized in just about ANY discipline**.*

- A course outcome of the program's introductory course is that students "demonstrate how identity, self-concept, and perception influence personal communication." Discussion exercises support this learning outcome. (Introduction to Communications; CM101)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A final project of the introductory course asks students to apply their knowledge of interpersonal communication to analyze and assess communication in an online or digital forum. By examining online communication through the lens of traditional interpersonal communication, students become more aware of the pitfalls associated with online communication and consider possible strategies to improve it. (Introduction to Communications; CM101)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- The final exam in an introductory course asks students to discuss (with examples) three ways in which an individual can increase self-awareness. (Introduction to Communications; CM101)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- Students are asked to discuss the origin of communication apprehension and tell why the following statement is a myth: "Avoid speaking anxiety by writing your speech out word-for-word and memorizing it." (Presentation Skills: CM220)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- The course final project requires students to create a presentation addressing one of several prompts. (Presentation Skills; CM220)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A required project has students prepare a slide show presentation for an editorial board meeting. Students are to propose an outline for a potential blog/print article about the rise of mass communications media during the past 200 years - in honor of the magazine's 200th anniversary. (Mass Communications: CM241)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A required project has students develop a PR plan for the organization. Students must prepare a PowerPoint presentation for the organization's CEO and Board of Directors that outlines the PR campaign. (Public Relations; CM241)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- Students are asked to analyze the importance of understanding the role of perception in communication. (Survey of Communication: CM301)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A discussion forum has students use medical language on the job. Students are asked, "Would you use the same language talking with your coworkers or other healthcare professionals that you would with your patients?" and " How do you ensure that your patients understand the information you are trying to communicate?" (Medical Terminology; MED101)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Students are asked to keep a "listening log" for part of their day - noting times when they exhibited competent listening behaviors, as well as times when listening became challenging. They must then summarize the details and analyze the log based on what you have learned so far in the course by discussing: "Which positive listening skills helped you listen?" "What made listening a challenge?" " What strategies could you apply to your listening challenges to improve your listening competence?" "Which effective communication techniques did the communicator use or not use?" "How did this affect your ability to listen and understand what they were trying to communicate?" (Professional Communication Skills: COM102)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- A discussion module is focused on how communication, such as email, can often cause tension, confusion, or other negative consequences due to misinterpretation. It is noted that tone is difficult through written communication. Students are asked to discuss specific ways they can ensure that their written communication to others is clear and effective in conveying the intended message and tone. Students are asked, "What steps can you take to ensure that your message is received as intended?" (Professional Communication Skills: COM102)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- An assignment reminds students that Medical Assistants must strive to provide the same quality of care to all their patients regardless of race or ethnicity and eliminate biased behavior toward any group of patients different from themselves. It is noted in the exercise that being

compassionate to cultural differences allows one to deliver services that are appropriate for the needs of a diverse patient population. Students must then: 1) List three differences that they may need to consider when dealing with a patient from a different ethnic/ cultural background, and 2) Briefly describe two communication techniques they may need to employ when working with a patient from another ethnic group. (Medical Office Procedures: MED135)

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- An exercise asks students to identify effective communication techniques, both in person, in writing, and on the telephone. (Medical Office Procedures: MED135)

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- An assignment asks students to create an educational handout, using Word, for patients managing diabetes. Students must be sure to use language that patients will be able to understand.

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- An assignment asks students to use the information from the (above) educational handout to create a PowerPoint presentation that will be used to educate patients on diabetes in a small group setting. Students must enhance their presentation using the concepts learned in the module such as the use of a design template, graphics, relevant videos, transitions, and animations. (Business Software Applications: MED116)

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- Students develop an understanding of the foundational theories of the profession of nursing from gender and multi-cultural perspectives. Students must describe barriers using the theory in practice and at least one method for overcoming each barrier. (Concepts and Theories in Nursing: N491)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students prepare a PowerPoint presentation and written summary on the health assessment and make an oral presentation with a visual aid. (Health Assessment; N495)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students interview a patient. doing a complete health assessment. (Health Assessment; N495)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students create and deliver a teaching plan that holistically addresses the patient to include physical, psychological, social, cultural, developmental, and spiritual goals. (Health Assessment; N495)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

Thinking & Problem-Solving

- Students are asked to describe the basic concepts, techniques, and methodologies underlying the research process and their application in the study of nursing problems. Students must critically appraise research and summarize the knowledge available on the clinical problem. (Essentials of Nursing Research: N494)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- A course learning outcome is that students develop an understanding of the foundational theories and conceptual frameworks of the profession of nursing from gender and multicultural perspectives. Students are asked to describe barriers using the theory in practice and at least one method for overcoming each barrier, supporting the methods with sources. (Essentials of Nursing Research: N494)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- A mandatory Academic Success in Scholarly Writing course is required for all RN-BSN students. This undergraduate-level course acclimates students to the academic community by developing and refining the knowledge and skills needed to read and critically analyze scholarly texts, write essays of increasing complexity, and practice stages of the composing process. Students are introduced to principles of effective written communication and critical reading, with a focus on invention, drafting, revising, editing, and self-assessment of written scholarly work. (HUM410)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- A key learning outcome of an introductory course is to "apply critical thinking skills to various sources of information." The final project asks students to analyze a complicated social issue that lends itself to many different positions. Students must research the issue, determine their position, create a positional thesis statement and write a paper with an introduction, a concise topical background, an explanation of position, a justification of position, and a visual source. (Developing Critical Thinking Skills: CM110)

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A key learning outcome of an introductory course is to identify the characteristics of an argument. Exam questions ask students to identify argumentative methods, give examples of each, and compare and contrast different argumentative methods. In the final project, critical thinking skills are assessed through argumentation of a particular position. Considerable research and writing are required. (Developing Critical Thinking Skills: CM110) Note: ***This final project exercise could be applied to MANY disciplines.***

  _ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A key learning outcome is that students become more critical readers of research and be able to discuss the criteria by which trustworthiness in quantitative and qualitative research is judged. In the final exam, students are asked to compare and contrast the nature of different explanations

of a topic, demonstrating how each would offer a different "knowledge claim" about the topic. (Research Methods for Communication; CM225)

_ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- A key learning outcome is that students critically examine ways that distributors and controllers of mass media content can influence the interpretation of overt and covert messages including advertising, gatekeeping, propaganda, and factual information. (Mass Communication: CM251)

_ *AS in Communication, Bottega University*

- An exercise asks students to conduct research and advise what reform is needed (or has been suggested) to lower the cost of health care in the U.S. without compromising the quality of care that is given to patients. Thye must answer "Why?" and " How can these changes take place?" (Introduction to Medical Billing and Coding: MED115)

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- One of the first rules about assigning (medical) codes is that one can never code solely from the alphabetical index within the manuals. Students are asked, "Why is this such an important rule to follow?" and "What might happen if you skip the step of verifying either CPT or ICD-10- CM codes in the tabular section of the manual?" (Introduction to Medical Billing and Coding: MED115)

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Students are asked to research a case of fraud and/or abuse as it pertains to medical billing and/or medical coding and answer the following questions: 1) What were the charges? 2) What were the reasons for the charges? 3) Was the accused found guilty? If so, why? 5) What were the punishments? Do you feel that these were appropriate? (Introduction to Medical Billing and Coding: MED115)

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- A scenario states: "Patient Jane Johansen called the office today after receiving a statement in the mail showing her balance due as $47.00 after the insurance company had paid its portion. Ms. Johansen tells you that she stopped by the office last Monday and paid the balance in cash and wants to know why she is still receiving a bill. During the discussion, she tells you she cannot find the receipt and does not recall the name of the person she gave the money to." Students must come up with steps they should take to resolve the issue. (Introduction to Medical Billing and Coding: MED115)

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

Inquiry

- An assignment presents an overview of pain medications and how their overprescription has led to what is now coined as "the opioid epidemic." Students must ***conduct research and answer the questions***: 1) Why do you think that people often have the attitude that you cannot or will not become addicted to something that is recommended by a doctor? 2) List one other type of medication that can be used for the treatment of pain and list the side effects. 3) Are there any other ways, besides medication, to treat pain? Why do you think that these modalities are not used more often in place of medication? Please discuss. 4) Do you feel that a medical office bears the responsibility of ensuring that their patients are using prescribed medications safely? Please discuss. Answers must be written in your own words. Be sure to include the website URLs used in your research. (Medication Administration: MED145)
  _ Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College

- A course discussion is focused on the rise in the number of parents choosing not to vaccinate their children. Students must ***conduct research or use their own knowledge*** on this topic to determine why this is the case. Students are asked, "What are some of the reasons that parents are choosing not to vaccinate their children?" "Do you feel that their reasons are valid?" "Why or why not?" and "What can you do as a healthcare worker to alleviate some of these concerns?" Students must include the URL links for any sources used and content must be written in their own words. (Medication Administration: MED145)
  _ Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College

- The class discusses the reality that anyone involved in the medication prescribing, dispensing, and/ or administering processes could potentially cause a medication error. Students are asked, "In your opinion, should health professionals be penalized or punished for committing medication errors?" "If so, what should the consequences be?" "If not, why should there be no penalties or punishments?" "Would consequences improve patient safety moving forward?" and "What are ways you think patient safety could be improved in the future once a medication error has been committed?" (Medical Administration: MED145)
  _ Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College

- Students are asked to ***Identify*** researchable clinical nursing problems with the purpose of improving patient outcomes. Students must describe how they intend to operationalize the practice change in their practice environment. (Essentials of Nursing Research: N494)
  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- A required project has students develop a PR plan for an organization. The plan must include research to ***analyze*** the company's current needs and standing in the community, proper planning, communication tools, and an evaluation to measure the success of your campaign. (Public Relations: CM241)
  _ AS in Communication, Bottega University

- A key learning outcome is to ***evaluate*** concrete aspects of communication research and determine effective research techniques and methodologies, taking into consideration the advantages and limitations of each. In the final exam, students are asked to compare and contrast the ethnographic conversation, the depth interview, the focus interview, the narrative interview, and the postmodern interview with regard to their structure, goals, and relationship between the researcher and informant. (Research Methods in Communication: CM225)

  _ AS in Communication, Bottega University

Collaboration & Teamwork

- A discussion forum asks students to describe a working relationship they have had with a supervisor, peer, or subordinate that was either positive or negative and explain what made it that way. In their answer, students must consider concepts like teamwork, communication, conflict resolution, negotiation, and customer service. If the relationship was negative, what effective communication strategies could you have used to effectively manage and potentially change the negative relationship? Please discuss. (Medical Office Procedures: MED135)

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- There is class discussion around the role of the "scribe" (an unlicensed individual hired to enter information into the electronic health record or chart at the direction of a physician or licensed independent practitioner) and how their role relates to the medical assistant and provider. (Clinical Procedures: MED142)

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- Students are asked to describe the last time they felt uncomfortable in a situation involving another person, ideally a coworker, if applicable. "What were your feelings?" "Were you aware of the feelings of the other person or people involved?" "What thoughts went through your mind?" "How could you have better dealt with this situation using the skills you have learned in this course?"(Business Professionalism: BUS105)

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- A key learning outcome is to analyze how diversity affects the individual and the team. The final exam asks students to describe how the six areas of developing diversity consciousness relate to effective communication and teamwork. (Diversity and Inclusion: CM285)

  _ AS in Communication, Bottega University

- Students are introduced to Small Group Conflict. Strategies for managing conflict, conflict escalation, and the purpose for mediation and resolution are discussed. (Principles of Communication: CM101)

  _ AS in Communication, Bottega University

- Students partner and collaborate with a community partner to implement a health education project. (Community Nursing Health II: N493)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- A course learning outcome is to utilize skills for today's managers, including making decisions, and delegating, working in teams, resolving conflicts, and managing time. Students must discuss traits of nurse leaders. (Nursing Leadership & Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

Adaptable

- Most of the exercises (listed in this document) require students to explore, learn, and apply new roles, ideas and perspectives. Additionally, they help graduates understand the implications of an increasingly globally interconnected world and gain an ability to work effectively across a variety of environments, cultures, and perspectives.

  – *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- Students are expected to adapt nursing practice in response to economic, demographic, and social forces. Students must describe at least three ethical, legal, financial, and social challenges nurses face today in care delivery and provide at least one way to successfully overcome each challenge. (Issues and Trends in Professional Nursing: N490)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are expected to develop an appreciation of different types of reasoning. Students must provide three examples of how the theory applies to current practice and provide three positive patient outcomes resulting from utilizing the theory demonstrating use of reasoning. (Concepts and Theories in Nursing: N491)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- An assignment asks students: "Based on what you have learned about protocols in the medical office, how can a pandemic or outbreak trigger changes in procedures or protocols?" and "What would the changes be?" Students are to focus on what they consider to be the top five changes, base their response on the assumption that transmission will be primarily through exposure to respiratory droplets and direct contact with patients and their contaminated environments., and include research. (Clinical Procedures: Med142)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

Principled and Ethical

- Students are expected to articulate their own philosophical base for nursing practice, including the knowledge, values, beliefs, standards, and ethical principles that influence their practice. Students must describe nursing theories that they base their own nursing practice upon detailing their knowledge, values, and principles are associated with those theories. (Concepts and Theories in Nursing: N491)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are asked to research and find a recent health information security breach and answer the following questions: "What was the breach?" "How did it take place?" "Were the criminals caught?" "How?" "How could the breach have been prevented and what type of security measures should be put in place to stop the incident from happening again?"
  (Electronic Health Records: MED110)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Class discussion notes that healthcare professionals can sometimes face difficult decisions about medical treatment that involve moral principles, religious beliefs, or professional guidelines. (Generally, ethical questions arise when the right thing to do is not clear or when people disagree about what is best for a person who is ill due to their own personal viewpoints.) Students must pick an ethical issue (assisted suicide, eugenics, gene therapy, human enhancement, life extension, life support, surrogacy, 33 or vaccination, or another issue of choice), and discuss it from all three of the central paradigms of ethics, autonomy, beneficence, and distributive justice. Students are asked if viewing the issue from these three perspectives altered their original viewpoint. (Medical Office Procedures; MED135)

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- The Comprehensive Capstone Simulation assignment for the program and requires a demonstration of ethics and principles to complete it successfully.

  – *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Students learn the public relations profession is a multifaceted profession with a rich history and opportunities for ethical dilemmas. A course final project asks students to examine some of the ethical dilemmas that they may face as public relations professionals. (Public Relations: CM241)

  – *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- A key course learning outcome is that students are able to explain the ethical rights and dilemmas facing both corporations and employees. A final project puts students in the position of CEO and has them make a decision around a sticky and complex ethical situation. (Communications Ethics: CM310)

  – *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- A key course learning outcome is to differentiate ethics, morals, rights, duties, and the theories of ethical decision-making. An exam question asks students to describe at least three separate business decisions made on a routine basis. For each decision, students must describe at least two ways in which business ethics influence the decision-making process and to examine how the process would differ if ethics were not part of the process. Students must provide detailed rationale to support their responses. (Communication Ethics: CM310)

  – AS in Communications, Bottega University

Responsible and Professional

- An assignment asks students, "In your own words, discuss the benefits and challenges/ risks of using social media in a workplace setting. Provide at least three examples of each. Be sure to include any sources used in your answer. (Business Professionalism; BUS105)

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- An exercise notes that if a patient lacks trust in Electronic Health Records (EHRs) and Health Information Exchanges (HIEs), they may not want to disclose health information which could have life-threatening consequences. Students are asked to research, list, and discuss three ways that a patient's privacy is at risk in the Electronic Health Records system and discuss ways of mitigating these risks. (Electronic Health Records: MED110)

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- Students are asked to consider the following scenario: Avery is beginning her second week at her practicum. She has been assigned to a site where she will gain a lot of valuable experience. She is not happy about putting in hours and not getting paid for them. Avery feels that this is just another part of her school experience and, therefore, she can skip whenever she feels like it. She has already been 10 minutes late on three occasions and has missed one whole day. What does her practicum performance say about Avery as a medical assistant? What does Avery's performance say about her school? What impact could her performance have on her career? (Certification Preparation and Career Development: MED146)

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- A program learning outcome is Professionalism and the inherent values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice as fundamental to the discipline of nursing.

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- An Essential Program Learning Outcome is Inter-professionalism - demonstrating communication and collaboration among and between healthcare professionals who are critical to delivering high quality and safe patient care.

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- Students must discuss how the leadership strategies can be used in their own professional nursing practice and discuss their professional growth regarding the chosen leadership topic.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

Learning

- At the end of each course, the student is provided an opportunity to evaluate the course, the instructor, **and** himself/herself regarding knowledge and understanding of the coursework.

  _ AS in Communications, Bottega University

- Students are asked to analyze communication skills needed for a multicultural and generational workforce to manage conflict, promote a culture of safety, and promote individual and organizational growth and development. Students must **evaluate personal strengths**, **weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to their leadership career advancement** with support from research. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students must incorporate new skills and knowledge to promote safety, manage conflict and promote growth and development. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students must complete a learning needs assessment for their community of interest and create an education project tailored to meet those learning needs. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are asked to explain the integration of professional values, personal competence, and interpersonal skills and their importance in the leadership and management roles of the professional nurse. Students must describe the leadership strategies in nursing practice by examining at least three different nursing roles (e.g. bedside nurse, public health nurse, Chief Nursing Officer, unit manager, etc.). (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are asked to analyze characteristics needed by a leader/manager in the current and emerging health care arena. Students must discuss how the leadership strategies can be used in their own professional nursing practice and discuss their professional growth regarding the chosen leadership topic. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are asked to analyze a community assessment to plan a health teaching project that meets the needs of communities and populations. Students must **use new assessment tools** to

collect information and use it as a basis to create educational materials to improve the learning of nurses and patients. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students are asked to identify one long-term academic or career goal. Identify two related medium-term and two related short-term goals that will help achieve their long-term goal. They must identify specific, measurable, achievable, relevant activities to achieve their identified goals within a certain timeframe. They are asked to write, in no particular order, a list of 20 things they did over the past 7 days and compare the list to the goals. If your goals and activities do not align, students are asked what can they do to fix this? H (Business Professionalism: BUS105)

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Application of Skills in Work-Relevant Contexts

- Students have numerous opportunities to apply learning in work-relevant contexts. For example, students complete a course (Health Assessment: N95) that incorporates virtual patient assessments in work settings in a simulated environment called ShadowHealth.

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- The student's internship with a nursing leader focuses on the application of learning in an actual work setting that is documented. (Nursing Leadership and Management: N496)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students complete a community health project that is site-specific within a work setting. During the community health project, students are required to maintain logs of their professional experiences and activities. (Community Health Nursing II: N493)

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- ***Throughout*** the program, students are provided with opportunities to engage in simulations typical of workplace experiences for medical assistants. This leverages the use of technology to provide students the opportunity to apply learning in work-based scenarios.

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- The final course in the program is a Comprehensive Capstone Simulation involving the ability to compile and maintain patients' electronic medical records and ensure completeness, accuracy, security, confidentiality, and 35 compliance with regulations. (Certification Preparation and Career Development: MED146)

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- The program offers an externship opportunity for students who successfully complete the Medical Assisting program. The 46 externship is 160 hours in length. Medical Assisting

externships include shadowing, observing, and assisting experienced professionals who work in the field. The externship supports the American Association of Medical Assistant (AAMA) Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) professional certification and the American Medical Technologists Registered Medical Assistant (RMA) certification. The college has hired two Externship Partnership Coordinators to assist to maintain partnerships, externship opportunities, and resources.

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- A Billing Capstone Simulation provides a realistic Electronic Health Records software system to enable practice applying the concepts learned in the course. Students work through various scenarios and tasks and receive automatic feedback on performance. This activity aids in promoting hands-on preparation of the concepts covered in the course. (Medical Billing and Coding: MED115)

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

Communication (to students) of Exit Proficiencies

- The program description within the course catalog and on the University website expresses the expectation of outcomes and what the student will do upon completion of the program. "The Associate of Science in Communication degree program focuses on the basic communication skills highly sought after in relationships, business, and industry. Individuals who communicate well, adapt to social and economic change, function as team players, analyze issues, and solve problems are vital in today's workforce."

– *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

Assessment of (EEQ) Exit Proficiencies

- In two of the core courses (Presentation Skills; CM220 and Communication Ethics; CM310) an EEQ Final Project is a self-assessment of their attainments of the EEQs. Instructors then assess students on the same criteria. Students are assessed from the instructor's perspective is added to the student's comments. Both student and instructor are required to give a detailed explanation with examples of why he/she has rated the qualities as such and the instructor is required to do the same. By having these **benchmarks at two intervals in the program,** students are provided input on further development needs or remediation by the instructional staff. At the first benchmark, the EEQ evaluation is to also be reviewed by the Academic Team so a comprehensive analysis can be performed to better assist the student. In the second/final evaluation, the student is assessed on a "potential" graduate level and must attain a 70% or better on all qualities for graduation.

– *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The end of the program checklist requires the registrar to perform a degree audit of the satisfactory completion of all coursework. In addition, the graduation checklist survey also covers information about the depth of knowledge, the satisfaction with material and instruction, and the preparation for work.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- In the Capstone Simulations, the Certificate of Completion for the assignment displays only when students have completed 60 minutes of study time within the simulation and receive a minimum of 80% on the Test mode of the simulation.

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Aspen's University Mission-Based Outcomes are aligned in conjunction with the Program Learning Goals, the Course Learning Objectives (CLO). The learning target is 85% of undergraduate students will meet plus exceed expectations for each of the following UMBOs: Ethical Professionalism, Effective Communication for Creating Change, Active Leadership, Critical Thinking and Analytical Reasoning, and Technological Literacy.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- A signature assignment is a student artifact that represents scaffolded learning across a course. It is usually the final assignment of the course. The signature assignment is summative in nature only and directly measures course learning objectives, program learning goals, and university mission-based outcomes for both assignment grading and assessment of student learning purposes. The learning target indicates that 85% of the students will meet plus exceed expectations on the reported criteria related to the outcomes on the SAR assignments.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

Verifiable Records

- The program incorporates stackable credentials.

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Digital Badges, tied to the EEQs, are planned through the Martinsburg College Badge Program.

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- In addition to the Digital Badge program, as a result of the EEQ CERT submission, the program is implementing an expanded Competencies and Experiential Learning Record for graduates of the program. This record will be in addition to the traditional transcript that students receive. The Record will include additional training that the student has taken at the college outside of their prescribed course of study. This training may include attending seminars, workshops, or taking additional courses in work-relevant areas such as diversity, inclusion, networking. The Record will

include the EEQ Badges that have been earned, externship experiences, and volunteer experiences verified by the college.

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- Throughout each program, students are encouraged to keep folders of their submissions for each course to serve as examples of competency of each of the outcomes as well as the EEQs to provide a comprehensive sampling of their abilities. These comprehensive samples of student work include all assessments and discussions, including any presentations. In the Canvas LMS, all project submissions are retained for historical purposes.

_ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- Students have access to verifiable records to document their achievements of PLGs and associated EEQs. Students receive documentation which they can readily share with employers/external parties.

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Certificates of Completion are given for each ShadowHealth Simulation module. Associated program learning outcomes and EEQs are noted.

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

CATEGORY 2: CAREER SUPPORT SERVICES

- The Career Resource Center is linked in all syllabi provided; this demonstrates that the faculty remains committed to providing this resource to students even in the distance learning environment.

_ *BS Nursing, Aspen University*

- The attention to career guidance information on the Altitude page and the events included in the Nursing Student Café is an invaluable resource as they include discussions with former students and provides general career advice in a publicly available venue. (Altitude is the official blog of Aspen University that features informative and engaging nursing articles, university news, and inspiring stories from our community about student life and professional accomplishments.)

_ *BS Nursing, Aspen University*

- Onboarding for faculty includes close oversight for mentoring aspects related to curriculum, communication, grading, feedback, and course/program progression. A dedicated faculty orientation mentor coordinates onboarding prior to faculty assuming support of students.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Aspen University maintains a social media presence by which the program provides students tips on employment integration and career advancement.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Students take a Career Strategies course as a culmination of their studies. In this course, a formal portfolio is created as the final project. As part of the graduation process, the checklist includes ensuring the student has a professional resume, portfolio, LinkedIn account, and cover letter which remains on file with the Career Services documentation. All students take this course and are expected to pass the course with proficiency.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The institution engages the Career Services Department in helping to identify skill sets needed for jobs and placement, which informs program learning outcomes.

  _ *Bottega University*

- The program has a relationship with the Career Services Department. For instance, the program has asked Career Services to verify with qualitative and observational data whether the quantitative information they are using to inform the program seems valid.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The Externship Program offers opportunities for post-graduation placement, a promising program to chart students to employability.

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- Students are required to complete a 3-credit course, Certification Preparation and Career Development (MED146), as part of the program. The course content includes resume preparation, cover letters, job search strategies, the importance of networking, social media profiles, what employers want most in employees, career success tips. In addition, the course includes a Learning Lab in Workplace Readiness and a Capstone Career Simulation Project in which students complete an assignment that is representative of a typical medical office environment, working with electronic health records.

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- Upon graduation, all students participate in a meeting with the Career Services Manager where they are asked for feedback regarding the program.

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- The Excel at Work program, which is available to all graduates of the Medical Assisting program, allows students to access the course content and online classroom for up to 12 months postgraduation at no charge. This is designed to assist students who may need to refresh their knowledge of the program content. In addition, the Excel at Work program provides additional training in areas that are typical of the modern workplace such as diversity, inclusion, working with difficult people, emotional intelligence, and navigating through organizational change. The Excel at Work program is available to graduates at no charge. This is also a benefit for employers who hire the college's graduates. In addition, the college offers another program to graduates, the Career & Personal Advancement Program. This program is designed to provide graduates with the tools required for career development and personal growth.

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- The program incorporates career laddering.

  _ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

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CATEGORY 3: EMPLOYER ENGAGEMENT

- The Program Advisory Council meets annually to assess the program to ensure its alignment with employers' needs and current industry trends and that it leads to jobs in related professions. Once the Program Advisory Council reviews the existing program outcomes and makes suggestions for revision, the Academic Leadership Team reviews the suggested revisions and determines the course development needs to support the revised program outcomes and course materials, using Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) and specific industry experts. The SME works closely with the instructional designer and updates the needed outcomes and curriculum.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- Program Advisory Council members are asked to review some student work during the council meeting to determine the level needed for each degree and critique its relevance.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- Program faculty are employers/practitioners who provide feedback to improve the program.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- As a requirement of the Apprenticeship program, the Career Services Specialist meets with the employer monthly to discuss how the apprentice is doing, what projects he/she has worked on, how the apprentice is interacting with other employees, and what skills need to be enhanced with the apprentice. In addition, the specialist also meets with the apprentice to see how he/she is progressing on the job, if the number of weekly hours are being met for the program,

and what skills the apprentice feels need to be enhanced. This process provides deep input from the employer on the program and the output of the employee. In addition, the apprentice can receive coaching on "on-the-job" interactions, problem-solving, collaboration techniques, etc. from the Career Services Specialist.

_ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The institution hosts a monthly "DevMeet" to bring together alumni to network and to meet area employers and hear about the positions available in their businesses.

_ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The Medical Assisting program was introduced (in October 2020) due to the demand for Medical Assistants, based on labor market data projections. The program was developed with input from the college's Healthcare-Medical Advisory Council, information from the Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, and other relevant sources that enabled the college to conduct an occupational demand analysis, the National Healthcare Association (NHA), the American Association of Medical Assistants (AAMA), the American Medical Technologists Association (AMT) and Subject Matter Experts. The program tracks to industry certifications offered by the AAMA, AMT, and NHA.

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- The Program Advisory Board includes a range of experts with administrative and practitioner experience.

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- Instructors are current or former practitioners in the field of medical assisting.

_ *Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College*

- The Program Advisory Board acts in an advisory and consultative capacity to promote, assist, and perpetuate the goals and objectives of the program. Roles and responsibilities of advisory boards and their function:
    - Identify emerging health care needs that may require programmatic and institutional response.
    - Provide an opportunity for the exchange of viewpoints between business/professional persons, alumni, and academicians as they relate to nursing education.
    - Provide a direct liaison between faculty and the community for the purpose of promoting the activities and mission of the Aspen University nursing program and the nursing profession.
    - Advise and inform the EAC on local, state, and national perceptions regarding nursing education and the nursing profession, suggest possible avenues for marketing the program.

_ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- The employer survey has items addressing each of the major learning outcome categories, which is an important practice to ensure that the program receives feedback that provides routes for action in particular subject areas. This evidence suggests that information about graduates is regularly collected and reported on.

  _ *BS in Nursing, Aspen University*

CATEGORY 4: STUDENT AND ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

- Students are invited to participate on the Curriculum and Advisory Committees and the program has clear and documented venues to listen to its students.

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- Data Dialogs are conducted with students, alumni, faculty, and stakeholders to hear program outcomes and data collected as a bi-annual opportunity to review a charity of programmatic data and to recommend change as a result.

  _ *RN-BSN, Aspen University*

- Graduates of the program are surveyed at the time of graduation and again at six months after graduation to obtain information on employment and for information about whether courses in their programs supported the new position.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- Alumni are surveyed on an annual basis. If working in the field, they will be surveyed six months and one year on the job.

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  Note: QA Commons encourages programs to do these types of surveys BEYOND six months

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CATEGORY 5: PUBLIC INFORMATION

- Bottega University hosts a landing page for the EEQs, with an explanation for each skill.

  _ *AS in Communications, Bottega University*

- The program publishes program learning goals and course learning objectives (CLOs) in several locations to ensure access to students.

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- Potential salaries and job outlooks for nurses who obtain a BSN are listed on our website. Aspects for accreditation support are also provided in addition to transparency of tuition and affordability including the associated cost of the program. The RN-BSN Handbook is also publicly available.

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- Aspen University does provide information related to salaries and employment statistics on the RN-BSN webpage: https://www.aspen.edu/nursing/rn-bsn/

  _ RN-BSN, Aspen University

- Program information is readily available to the public through the institutional website, catalog, and brochure/flyer. This information includes a program overview, program outcomes, course summaries, typical duties of medical assistants, program length, and career information with links to relevant DOL information. The program costs are listed under the Tuition and Fees link on the website.

  _ Certificate in Medical Assisting, Martinsburg College

- The college provides student outcomes information on its website which includes completion rate data, (incorporating time to completion) and is disaggregated by gender, race, and ethnicity.
  _ Martinsburg College

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