

Pearson Learn

Teaching in Action

Faculty stories that inform and inspire.

Raising exam scores as students arrive ready to apply clinical judgment

With more than 20 years of teaching experience, Laura Vasel knows the goal of nursing education is clinical judgment, not just content knowledge. At Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia, she sees students entering the nursing program with different learning needs. Many come straight from high school with limited textbook-reading experience and are used to fast-paced video content. Traditional reading can feel overwhelming, so they often arrive in class without having completed it. Lecture time goes to revisiting content instead of applying it, and lecture alone cannot build the critical thinking they need.

> "The traditional lecture format we know is not as effective. So how can we meet the challenge of today's learners and do something differently?"

With Pearson Interactive Nursing, Laura set out to build readiness before class without compromising what students need to learn and still prepare them to pass the NCLEX with the transferable skills patient care requires.

Challenge

Helping nursing students arrive prepared and move from content knowledge to clinical judgment.

Solution

Pearson Interactive Nursing combined interactive lessons with performance insights and collaborative practice in class.

Impact

3% increase in overall exam scores versus the previous three cohorts, with stronger performance on targeted infectious disease content and greater confidence.

Laura Vasel
Professor & Assistant Director

Randolph-Macon College

Pediatrics

27 students

The Pearson Solution

With Pearson Interactive Nursing, Laura set out to build readiness before class without compromising what students need to learn and still prepare them to pass the NCLEX with the transferable skills patient care requires.

Laura assigned Interactive Nursing's interactive lessons as preparation before class. The content was almost identical to a traditional nursing textbook, but arrived in smaller, manageable increments with practice questions built in, rather than pages of dense text.

> "There was nothing in my review that was missing. As students go through the module, it makes them pause and do some practice questions, so it's not a separate product—it's integrated."

Before class, the instructor dashboard showed Laura who had worked through the modules, where students were confused and what to emphasize, so she knew where they were starting.

in class, she used escape-room activities for collaborative problem-solving. The lock-code format kept students from simply clicking through. They had to slow down and process each question, and the competitive, team-based setting kept them engaged.

> "The time spent in class was a lot more meaningful than it was in a traditional class, where I feel like I have to go back over everything."

The Impact

In spring 2026, Laura used Pearson Interactive Nursing to cover the Communicable Infectious Disease module in her course and what she saw was a meaningful difference in student outcomes.

She reported an approximately **3% increase in exam scores** compared with the previous three cohorts taking the same exam.

Looking closer, she compared the questions tied to the module with the same faculty-written questions from the previous three cohorts. Students performed better on that content, with roughly 75% or more answering correctly. Laura also observed greater student confidence.

In class, the escape rooms made students' clinical reasoning visible. Laura could hear teams talk through each answer, and when a team could not escape, she could step back and ask what went wrong, turning the miss into a lesson about content and about how to read a question.

Looking closer, she compared the
For Laura, the biggest benefit was time. Students arrived having worked through the content, so she spent less class time reinforcing it and more time guiding application.

Students performed better with roughly 75% answering questions correctly.

Educator Reflection

For Laura, Interactive Nursing bridges the gap between where today's learners enter the program and where faculty need them to be.

> "I really think that's our role as a faculty member: being able to facilitate that learning experience, clarify misconceptions and help students get from point A to point B so that they can be safe nurses."

Laura described Pearson Interactive Nursing as an economical solution that supports the teacher–student relationship rather than replacing faculty expertise.

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