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**Integration of Software Technology in Informatics Nursing Curriculum**

*By Deborah Rastinehad PhD, RN, CWCN, COCN*

**ABSTRACT**

The dynamic evolution of information technology has implications on the methodology of teaching. As a result, faculty are challenged to develop and deliver coursework reflective of innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Faculty involved with Informatics Nursing curriculum face particular challenges because the foundational concepts of Informatics must be integrated with the software commonly used in informatics management systems.

The Excelsior College On-Line Informatics Program provides an inventive curriculum that combines foundational concepts of Informatics with software technology. For example, the course Data, Information and Knowledge consists of five modules that focus on the nature of data, the concepts of information and knowledge, and the principles of relational databases, systems operations and information systems. Course readings, software exercises, group discussions, informal chats, and faculty interactions are used to encourage the students to focus on both the process and project. Each student selects a healthcare issue or problem and then designs and creates a database that addresses the problem or issue. Integration of the technological aspects of database creation including the use of Microsoft Access is provided within the course using the college's server thereby enabling the faculty to easily view all aspects of the student's data base creation.

In this presentation, an overview of the course will be described. The end-of-course assessment designed to provide students with an opportunity to synthesize course content will be presented and the lessons learned from integration of software technology within the course will be discussed.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Deborah Rastinehad PhD, RN, CWCN, COCN**

Deborah Rastinehad is a faculty member in the School of Health Sciences at Excelsior College in Albany, New York. Dr. Rastinehad serves as the course administrator for Informatics component of the graduate nursing program and the Informatics certificate program.

Deborah is an active member of the American Medical Informatics Association, CARING, and the National League of Nursing. Deborah has presented at the International Congress in Nursing Informatics and the National League of Nursing.