



Department of Nursing
Policy #019

Standardized Testing and Remediation

Status:	Approved 2016-10-11, Revised 2019-12-06, 2023-02-10, 2023-05-04
Effective:	2023-05-04
Initiated by:	Admission, Progression, Retention, and Graduation Committee
Relevant WAC, Standard or criterion:	WAC 246-840-519, WAC 246-840-537

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for standardized testing and remediation processes using the Health Education Systems, Inc. (HESI) examinations. The main purposes of integrating HESI exams throughout the BSN curriculum are to:

1. Allow assessment of students' current knowledge and development on topic, concept, and nursing process areas on a standardized exam; and provide information and motivation for students to begin the process of life-long learning.
2. Facilitate targeted remediation that first identifies knowledge deficiencies and then provides a thorough method to get up to speed on areas of deficiency.
3. Provide benchmark summative assessments to identify at-risk students for the exams which are highly predictive of NCLEX success.
4. Establish a benchmark proficiency of medication calculations for patient safety on clinical rotations and for clinical practice.
5. Gain NCLEX-style standardized test-taking experience.
6. Provide opportunities for focused remediation and practicing remediation best practices.

HESI Testing

The HESI exam is a computerized nursing test given online. It provides nursing students and faculty information on how well the student understands the content in a specific nursing course/topic relative to other students within their HU cohort and other students nationally. The HESI exam also helps familiarize students with NCLEX-style questions and standardized exam practices.

Additionally, research demonstrates that a 900 or higher score on the EXIT HESI exam is highly predictive of passing the NCLEX exam thus, it is important that students aim to achieve a score of 900 or higher on each HESI exam.

Scheduling:

HESI exams that are part of a course grade (except the Exit Exam) are scheduled in week 13 to 15 of the term with remediation due before the end of the term. Exact dates are in each class's syllabus and faculty should coordinate HESI scheduling within each cohort at the beginning of each term. The Exit Exam first attempt is scheduled in week 1 or 2 of the term and additional attempts are scheduled week 4 or after.

It is important that if a student has an excused absence that the student must arrange to take the HESI exam EARLIER, and not later than the scheduled date so that all students are granted ample time for remediation.

Incorporation of the HESI Exam into HU Nursing Courses:

There are eight (8) HESI exams mandated by this policy:

- Dosage calculations
- 3P's Custom HESI (or Pharmacology, Pathophysiology, and Physical Assessment, separately).
- Pediatrics
- Maternity
- Critical Care
- Medical-surgical
- Fundamentals
- Exit Exam

Term	HESI	Status	Benchmark	Versions	# of Qs
Sophomore Fall	Empirics			2	55
Sophomore Spring	Medication Calculation	Mandated	900	2	55
Sophomore Spring	3P's Custom HESI	Mandated		1	110
Junior Fall	Fundamentals	Mandated		2	55
Junior Fall	Nutrition			1	55
Jr/Sr Summer	Maternity	Mandated		2	55
Jr/Sr Summer	Critical Care	Mandated		2	55
Jr/Sr Summer	Pediatrics	Mandated		2	55
Jr/Sr Summer	Medical-Surgical	Mandated		2	55
Senior Spring	Exit Exam	Mandated	850	2	100

Mandated HESI Exams with Established Benchmarks:

1. HESI Dosage Calculations Exam:

The required benchmark for the Calculations HESI exam is ≥ 900 . Students who do not meet this benchmark on their first attempt will remediate under the supervision of the Course Head for NURS 300AL. Once remediation is complete, the students will take a second Calculations HESI Exam. Students who proceed to the Junior year without meeting this benchmark will be supervised at the level of a Sophomore student. Students must

complete the Calculations HESI with a ≥ 900 to proceed with clinicals for Junior Spring term – not doing so may significantly delay student progression in the BSN program.

2. **HESI Exit Exam:**

The HESI Exit Exam is administered during the final semester of the BSN program within NURS 418L. The benchmark for the Exit HESI exam is ≥ 850 .

Required HESI EXAMS and Course Points:

The total number of points a HESI exam and its remediation will contribute to course points is from 10-15% of the total course points. See Exhibit A below for an example of how a 10% contribution to a course grade affects a course grade and ability to pass a course.

Each course that uses a HESI exam must state the points and percentage of course grade allotted to the HESI exam and remediation and the process a student must complete in order for the remediation to be considered complete and successful. It is strongly encouraged that proportional scoring of exam score vs remediation increase in weight as students progress through the program, e.g. Sophomore Fall: 1/3 of points to HESI score, 2/3 of points to Remediation; Sophomore Spring: 1/2 HESI 1/2 Remediation; Junior Fall 2/3 HESI 1/3 Remediation, etc. The exact proportion of course grade for HESI score and remediation are determined by each course head.

There are two main options for assigning course points for a HESI exam which can be chosen by the course head - see Exhibit B below. Factors that would favor “option 1” are in courses offered early in the BSN program (i.e., sophomores) and the relative importance/predictability of NCLEX success of that given exam. Factors that would favor “option 2” are students in their senior year taking exams with high predictability of NCLEX success (e.g., the Exit Exam).

Other HESI Exams:

Other specialty HESI exams not listed as mandated exams are integrated into courses at the discretion of each course head and guidelines for scoring and remediation should be explained in the course syllabus.

Exam Security and Academic Honesty:

HESI test items, including the post-exam review with rationale are secure items and must not be copied or pictures taken of exam items, and exam items must otherwise not be shared. Any notes taken during the exam must be turned in to the proctor at the completion of the exam. Any distribution of exam items or rationales, or any academic dishonesty on the HESI exam will be dealt with in strict accordance with Department of Nursing and Heritage University professionalism policies, other applicable policies, and the student handbook.

Remediation Process for all HESI Exams:

Research indicates that proper remediation improves a student’s critical thinking, reasoning, and test taking skills. Remediation requirements should be clearly stated in the course syllabus. All students are required to complete all remediation materials following each HESI exam. For every HESI, students will complete all assigned case studies and access and remediate content of all packets in their remediation journal. Additional remediation activities may be required by faculty and will also be described in the course syllabus. To improve student success, remediation check-in appointments will occur with the Student Success Specialist and/or faculty at completion of ~50% of case studies

and packets. Remediation appointments for each HESI are required for all Sophomores, and for Juniors and Seniors scoring below 850.

Procedure for Remediation:

1. All students will remain at their testing station to review missed questions after completion of their HESI exam. This is a one-time only opportunity to directly review the exam questions and rationales – exam questions and answers are not available for review once an exam is closed. Students are encouraged to take notes to reinforce understanding, however, these notes cannot be taken from the testing room.
2. Once students have completed the HESI exam, individualized remediation materials can be accessed through their Evolve account.
3. All students are required to complete all remediation materials following each HESI exam. Additional remediation activities may be required by faculty and will also be described in the course syllabus.
4. Remediation check-in appointments will occur with the Student Success Specialist and/or faculty at completion of ~50% of case studies and packets. Remediation appointments for each HESI are required for all Sophomores, and for Juniors and Seniors scoring below 850. Faculty will meet with remediating students to determine that the student is learning and filling in gaps in understanding key concepts.
5. Students will submit their remediation journal per instructions in each class syllabus to be assessed for completeness and quality by the Student Success Specialist and/or faculty.

Basic Remediation Practices

The term “remediation” means “the process of correcting”. In the context of education and HESI exams the functional interpretation should be, “to study again”. Students should use the same study techniques that they have developed that work for their learning, as well as explore other methods. These techniques include but are not limited to things like:

- Summarize the content that you are given in your own words
- Pretend you are explaining a concept to someone with no background knowledge and/or in as simple terms as possible
- Define unfamiliar terminology and explaining/summarizing it in your own words
- Identify exemplars of concepts from clinical experience, narrative stories, or online resources
- Draw it out, create a cartoon, create a flow chart, color-code, etc.
- Write your own quiz items about the material (and quiz a classmate!)
- Compare and contrast how one concept or process is similar and different to something else you know about
- Make bullet points
- Make flash cards
- If using Adaptive Quizzing as remediation after HESI exams, use Custom Exams and not Mastery Exams. Additionally, it is advised that only one content area be selected for each weakness area (as opposed to combining multiple topic areas into a quiz with more questions). Ask the course instructor or Student Success Specialist for additional assistance in choosing appropriate Adaptive Quizzing content as needed.
- HESI Case Studies that are not used in class assignments can also be used. Ask the course instructor for additional assistance in choosing appropriate case studies as needed.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: Is there a time limit for HESI exams?

A: No, this policy does not set a time limit for taking HESI exams. There are of course practical limits on time due to availability of a proctor, availability of the testing room, the time a student's next class begins, etc. Course heads may set a specific time limit. Most specialty HESI exams are 55 items, meaning a 2 hour block would permit over 2 minutes per question.

Q: Can different students take the exam at different times?

A: Yes, if a student has an excused absence that the student must arrange to take the HESI exam EARLIER, and not later than the scheduled date, and the specific remediation materials may not become available to the student for approximately 24 hours after exam closure.

Q: Which exams have second versions/retakes?

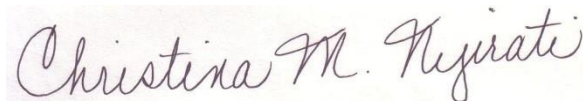
A: All of the mandated exams per this policy have second versions available for purchase except the 3P's because it is a custom-built HESI. However, students may be able to take the individual specialty "Assessment," "Pharmacology," and/or "Pathophysiology" HESI exams as second take options for the 3P's HESI if needed.

Q: Can faculty view a student's remediation topics?

A: Yes. Faculty should meet with students after students have completed at least half (and/or all) of their remediation. Faculty can view the accessed materials in the HESI portal. Faculty should review each student's exam report and the entire student group's report to view individual and group areas of strengths and weakness in knowledge, knowledge domain, and in nursing step/action.

Forms

There are no forms associated with this policy.



Signature: _____

Exhibit A: How Assigning 10% of a Course's Points to the HESI Exam score Affects the Overall Course Score/Grade.

Note: these examples are for a course with 400 points with a HESI score worth 10%. Remediation points are not included in these examples.

Example 1 demonstrates that a student who comes into the HESI exam with a high A- of other course points in the course, will not fail the course due to the HESI exam.

Other Course Points/%		Current Grade	HESI Score	HESI Points	Course Score	Final Grade
332	92.2%	A-	>900	40	93.0%	A
332	92.2%	A-	850-899	37	92.3%	A-
332	92.2%	A-	800-849	33	91.3%	A-
332	92.2%	A-	750-799	28	90.0%	A-
332	92.2%	A-	700-749	22	88.5%	B+
332	92.2%	A-	600-699	15	86.8%	B
332	92.2%	A-	<600	7	84.8%	B

Example 2 demonstrates that a student coming in with a high B grade in the course could potentially fail the course (C+) if they performed poorly on the HESI exam. This person could potentially improve their course grade to a B+ if they do well on the HESI exam.

Other Course Points/%		Current Grade	HESI Score	HESI Points	Course Score	Final Grade
310	86.1%	B	>900	40	87.5%	B+
310	86.1%	B	850-899	37	86.8%	B
310	86.1%	B	800-849	33	85.8%	B
310	86.1%	B	750-799	28	84.5%	B
310	86.1%	B	700-749	22	83.0%	B
310	86.1%	B	600-699	15	81.3%	B-
310	86.1%	B	<600	7	79.3%	C+

Example 3 demonstrates that a student coming into the HESI with a low B- needs to score at least 750 on the exam to maintain a grade of B- in the course. A score of 749 would result in a grade of C or C+ and a score of 850 or greater would result in a grade of B in the course.

Other Course Points/%		Current Grade	HESI Score	HESI Points	Course Score	Final Grade
292	81.1%	B-	>900	40	83.0%	B
292	81.1%	B-	850-899	37	82.3%	B-
292	81.1%	B-	800-849	33	81.3%	B-
292	81.1%	B-	750-799	28	80.0%	B-
292	81.1%	B-	700-749	22	78.5%	C+
292	81.1%	B-	600-699	15	76.8%	C
292	81.1%	B-	<600	7	74.8%	C

Example 4: demonstrates that a student coming into the HESI exam with a low C+ in the course could potentially pass the course, but the absolute best the student could achieve is a grade of B- for the course.

Other Course Points/%		Current Grade	HESI Score	HESI Points	Course Score	Final Grade
280	77.8%	C+	>900	40	80.0%	B-
280	77.8%	C+	850-899	37	79.3%	C+
280	77.8%	C+	800-849	33	78.3%	C+
280	77.8%	C+	750-799	28	77.0%	C+
280	77.8%	C+	700-749	22	75.5%	C
280	77.8%	C+	600-699	15	73.8%	C
280	77.8%	C+	<600	7	71.8%	C-

Exhibit B: Main Options for Assigning Course Points for a HESI Exam

Adjust accordingly dependent on individual course points.

Option 1:

HESI Score	Prediction of NCLEX Success	NURS300A Course Points	
≥ 900	“Recommended performance”	40 points (100%)	
850-899	“Acceptable performance”	37 points (92.5%)	
800-849	“Near acceptable performance”	33 points (82.5%)	
750-799	“Below acceptable performance”	28 points (70%)	
700-749	“Well below acceptable; needs further preparation”	22 points (55%)	
600-699	“Well below acceptable; needs further preparation”	15 points (37.5%)	
≤ 599	“Well below acceptable; needs further preparation”	7 points (17.5%)	

Option 2:

HESI Score:	Prediction of NCLEX Success:	NURS418L Course Points:
≥ 900	“Recommended performance”	40 points
850-899	“Acceptable performance”	35 points (87.5%)
800-849	“Near acceptable performance”	30 points (75%)
≤ 799	“Below acceptable performance”	20 points (50%)