

Letters to the editor

Letters received from readers in response to articles and ideas published in ANS are regularly featured, providing an opportunity for constructive critique, discussion, disagreements, and comment intended to stimulate the development of nursing science. Unless otherwise stated, we assume that letters addressed to the editor are intended for publication with your name and affiliation. As many letters as possible are published. When space is limited and we cannot publish all letters received, we select letters reflecting the range of opinions and ideas received. If a letter merits a response from an ANS author or Open Forum participant, we will obtain a reply and publish letters.

To the Editor:

I have just finished reading with interest Dr. L. Huckabay's research article, "The effects of modularized instruction and traditional teaching techniques on cognitive and affective behaviors of student nurses," appearing in the April issue of ANS (3:3). I commend ANS and Dr. Huckabay for sharing this research, since it helps to fill some previous areas of lack in comparing teaching strategies, and it supports, in some areas, previous research about modularized versus traditional instruction and student opinions about modular learning. The author and your readers might be interested in also reading that research completed in 1974-1975 within the California State University and Colleges (CSUC) System. They are referred to reports of that research as follows:

Osborn WP, Thompson MA: Noncognitive factors affecting student mastery of learning modules. *Calif J Educ Res* 26:203-211, 1975.

Osborn WP, Thompson MA: Variables associated with student mastery of learning modules, in, *Communicating Nursing Research*, vol 9, *Nursing Research in the Bicentennial Year*. Boulder, Co, Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, April 1977, 167-179.

Thompson MA, Osborn WP: An investigation of variables having possible effect on student mastery of modules, in *Proceedings of Learning Resources Center Conference*. Bethesda, MD, National Medical Audiovisual Center, National Library of Medicine, 1980, pp 71-77.

The article did contain one rather serious oversight or mistake in relation to the status of use of modules in nursing programs in the CSUC system. In the introductory section about learning modules in the state system, Dr. Huckabay states that although there are various modular programs in other fields that "none of these programs has been in nursing." I feel compelled to correct that since San Jose State University's Department of Nursing has been using learning modules since 1973 and has been a leader in the development of modules within the system. In addition, a number of campuses were collaboratively involved in 1973-1976 in the development and sharing of modules among the various nursing programs. One faculty member on that intercampus project came from Dr. Huckabay's own campus; thus, I was surprised to see such an obvious gap in the knowledge of the author about previous work in the area of learning modules in nursing programs in California. I am sure that copies of the many reports about the Intercampus Nursing Project are available at California State University, Long Beach. If not, copies might be obtained by writing Marilyn Friedman at California State University, Los Angeles.

This oversight does not, of course, decrease the value of the research presented; however, it does make one wonder about the extent of literature search related to the topic and the level of awareness about what is going on within nursing education in California.

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Author's response:

This letter is in response to Ms. Martha Thompson's Letter to the Editor of ANS regarding my research study on "The Effects of Modularized Instruction and Traditional Teaching Techniques on Cognitive Learning and Affective Behaviors of Student Nurses," that was published in ANS 3:3 (April 1981) issue.

I appreciate Ms. Thompson's interest in my research study. I am sorry that I have not included her studies in my review of the literature. However, the literature search that was done at the time did not print out (cite) her studies. Two of the three citations that she has mentioned in her letter are not journals. It is possible that these do not print out in computer searches. The third one was a local California journal. The search did not reveal that either.

What I have stated in my study is correct. Both the California State University Colleges (CSUC) Chancellor's Newsletter (*Future Talk*, No. 2, Winter 1973), and Bevis and Bower's article on individualized learning modalities ("A Workshop in Individualized Learning Modalities," unpublished manuscript distrib-

uted at Workshop at the University of California, San Francisco, School of Nursing March 27-28, 1973), mentioned that those modularized programs that existed in the CSUC system were in natural sciences, business administration, and behavioral sciences. Nursing was not mentioned.

Of course, since then nursing departments have developed and used modularized instruction. However, because they are being used it does not mean that literature search is going to reveal them if they are not published in well-known journals. Second, some of the so-called "modularized instructions," that are being used in nursing are nothing more than a class syllabus. They have a list of course objectives and a reading list. According to my operational definition of an "independent learning module," they fall short of being optimum to enhance individualized learning.

I hope the above will answer her inquiry.

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