Appreciative Advising to Enhance Academic Major Satisfaction in Prenursing Students

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Nursing students' success and satisfaction with the major require early, proactive practices. This study examined two such practices utilized with prenursing students: freshman seminar and Appreciative Advising (AA). This study explored whether AA integrated into freshman seminar would impact prenursing students' academic major satisfaction. An advisor hosted four AA sessions in group format in freshman seminar throughout the first half of a 15-week semester. This one-group pretest/posttest investigation revealed prenursing students' ($n = 81$) academic major satisfaction improved at a statistically significant level ($Z = –4.11$, $p < .001$) with a medium effect ($r = .32$) after a first semester AA intervention.

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According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2018), the occupational demand for registered nurses (RNs) will increase 9% from 2020 to 2030, as fast as the average of other occupations. Additionally, 50% of the current nursing workforce is over 50 years old; and an aging nursing workforce and the increased demand for RNs will bring the total RNs needed to 1.09 million by 2024 (American Association of Colleges of Nursing [AACN], 2017, p. 1). By increasing the number of students who successfully complete a major in nursing, higher education can help alleviate the nursing shortage; yet attrition is a significant barrier with only 50% of nursing students graduating (Mooring, 2016).

One approach to reducing attrition is the freshman seminar course. Offered or required of first-year students, freshman seminars enhance scholastic achievement, improve persistence, and increase graduation rates (Black et al., 2016; Sobel, 2018; What Works Clearinghouse, 2016). These courses assist students in transitioning from high school to college by offering opportunities for campus assimilation (Barefoot & Fidler, 1992). Additionally, freshman seminars provide success strategies such as prioritization, study tips, career preparation, cultural etiquette, personal development, and information about campus resources (Barefoot & Fidler, 1992). Freshman seminars have repeatedly shown to increase student retention (Krahenbuhl, 2012; Laudicina, 2014; Wycoff, 2014) and engagement (Krahenbuhl, 2012; Laudicina, 2014; Lynn, 2008). Black et al. (2016) found that profession-related freshman seminar classes, including those for nursing students, were associated with higher retention rates than generalized courses. After analyzing data, Flanders (2013) highlighted the importance of freshman seminars as they discovered that freshman ($n = 1738$) who passed introductory classes in their selected major, such as freshman seminars, had a better probability (93.4%) of continuing with the major after the first semester. Students who passed had higher grade point averages (GPAs) than students who failed major-related freshman seminars (2.829 vs. 0.940); furthermore, GPA was a statistically significant predictor of retention from fall to spring (Effect Likelihood Ratio Test, p-value = .0001). Finally, students with 2.0 GPAs were more inclined (127 times) to withdraw than students with 3.0 GPAs.

In addition to the freshman seminar course, quality advising also increases student success (NACADA, 2017). Consistent social interaction between advisors and advisees increases student satisfaction and retention (Harrell & Reglin, 2018). Advising is of special importance during freshman and sophomore years as students are more likely to change their major during this period. Appropriately timed advising interventions can yield the most impact. In an investigation involving 1,725 students changing majors, Jaradat and Mustafa (2017) discovered freshman ($n = 469$) and sophomores ($n = 464$) were the groups most likely to change majors but did so significantly less when they regularly interacted with faculty members. The authors note the importance of these findings in relation to faculty and professional advising during the freshman and sophomore years.

Group advising is an emerging advising method to promote persistence within the major, foster higher GPAs, and decrease advising time (Davis et al., 2016). In a longitudinal study, Fox (2014) compared semester GPAs of two groups of freshman students ($n = 400$): those who received group advising ($n = 195$) versus those who

received individual advising ($n = 205$). For consistency, the same advisors counseled both the individual advising sample and the group advising sample. Fox found higher semester GPAs in students who were group advised (59% > 2.0 GPA) compared with individually advised (50% > 2.0 GPA). These differences were statistically significant ($p < .05$) in the spring but not in the fall. Group advising also correlated with significantly better retention rates during this period. Fox (2014) recommended future projects develop interactive group advising strategies that enhance problem solving, accountability, and campus resource use. Furthermore, Davis et al. (2016) found that group advising reduced advising time from 30 minutes to 7 minutes per student. Group advising can be particularly useful for professional skill development as it allows students to analyze problems, collaborate with peers, and strengthen social competencies (Johns & Wilson, 2018). Fox (2014) suggested students participating in group advising should be given the option of supplementary individualized sessions if necessary. Regarding nursing students, more research is needed to determine if group advising is beneficial. Shellenbarger and Hoffman (2016) suggested that nursing advisors consider group advising to provide universal nursing information and optional personalized meetings after group sessions to discuss private concerns.

Advisors must consider the specific needs of nursing students. Nursing programs require critical thinking, decision-making, prioritization, time management, and clinical-related obligations. Mooring (2016) suggested that faculty advisors support nursing students through presence, caring, empowerment, and resource management. Other recommendations included learning communities, acclimation content, early identification of at-risk students, strengthening student-faculty rapport, advanced faculty member training, and proactive advising. The techniques and underpinnings of Appreciative Advising (AA) fit well with Mooring's recommendations for advising prenursing and nursing students. AA encourages advisors to guide students in discovering and developing talents through uplifting advisor-student interactions resulting in enhanced student achievement (Hutson et al., 2014). Early in the relationship, appreciative advisors utilize optimistic, open-ended questions while actively listening to form bonds with students (Hutson et al., 2014; Read et al., 2017). These techniques help students feel secure with on-campus support. Throughout the relationship, the advisor empowers students to cultivate skills needed to achieve personal and professional goals that are codeveloped between the advisor and student (Read et al., 2017). Throughout the maturation process, the advisor's role diminishes as the student reaches independence (Bloom et al., 2008). Bloom et al.'s (2008, p. 6) six AA phases include:

1. Disarm: greet student, build rapport
2. Discover: elicit student's talents, skills, and competencies
3. Dream: discuss student's aspirations
4. Design: codevelop a plan
5. Deliver: encourage student to achieve goals
6. Don't Settle: challenge student to continue growth

In the Disarm phase, the appreciative advisor creates a hospitable environment and serves as a resource person for the student. The advisor uses positive body language and verbiage in a comfortable office or classroom setting. Advisors share personal stories and interests to encourage connections. By the end of the Disarm phase, tensions should be diffused, and the student should feel they have a campus liaison (Bloom et al., 2008).

Next, the advisor uses the Discover phase to extract student's gifts, interests, and competencies through optimistic open-ended queries (Bloom et al., 2008). Asking students to describe what they are passionate about, what their greatest achievements entailed, or how they triumphed through a difficult situation helps to accomplish this discovery. The advisor attentively listens with open body language then questions the student with focused dialogue to uncover deep-rooted personal and professional desires. After interview completion, the advisor rephrases the stories and conversations to provide a positive summary for the student's continued reflection. These reflections will be helpful in the next phase (Bloom et al., 2008).

Moving into the Dream phase, the advisor stimulates optimistic discussions about the student's aspirations. Examples of lines of inquiry include asking where students would like to see themselves in 20 years or asking what a day in their future career-life would look like ideally. Advisors can also inquire about future hopes regardless of time, effort, or costs. This dreaming provides inspiration and helps students realize future goals. Advisors should encourage students to piece together elements from the Discover and Dream

phase to use in the Design phase (Bloom et al., 2008).

Next, the appreciative advisor uses the Design phase to codevelop a plan and foster student decision-making. During Design phase conversations, the advisor uses confident phrases to encourage self-efficacy such as "Good thinking" or "That's a wonderful idea." The appreciative advisor avoids talking above the student's knowledge capacity, uses clear verbiage without acronyms, and refers the student to resources in a timely and appropriate manner. To encourage referral success, the advisor explains why the referral is recommended while also dialoguing about any referral concerns (Bloom et al., 2008).

In the Deliver phase, the student takes initiative to carry out the Design phase plans. Empowerment from the previous phases and continued advisor support encourage student success and assurance. The advisor motivates students to use college time wisely and acknowledge academic possibilities. The Deliver phase ends with the advisor dispatching a student ready to embark on a clarified academic journey. The advisor should offer subsequent check-ins as necessary (Bloom et al., 2008).

The final phase, Don't Settle, provides students with either support or prodding based on individual needs. The advisor serves as a coach, empowering students to self-improve, revise academic plans, and set higher yet achievable standards. The advisor also acts as a cheerleader encouraging progress and reiterating personal strengths, resources available, and existing future possibilities. By the end of the Don't Settle phase, the student should reach independence (Bloom et al., 2008).

The AA framework is relatively young and deserves further research to determine its full potential. In its early years, Truschel (2008) explored use of the AA model to guide the advising of high-risk student volunteers ($n = 112$ [fall = 58; spring = 54]) with less than a 2.0 GPA and under 30 credit hours achieved. Throughout the first 5 weeks of a semester, students attended three AA sessions. The initial meeting established an advisor-advisee relationship and helped the student Discover strengths. The second session concentrated on Dreams and Designs in which advisors invited the students to discuss their aspirations. Students were encouraged to develop strategies for success utilizing their strengths. Their third session focused on the student's Destiny and allowed students to coordinate use of their personal assets to fulfill dreams, goals, and plans. After these AA sessions, students had significantly increased self-efficacy, self-esteem, motivation, and commitment. The advisor also mentioned feeling rewarded, energized, and inspired by the process.

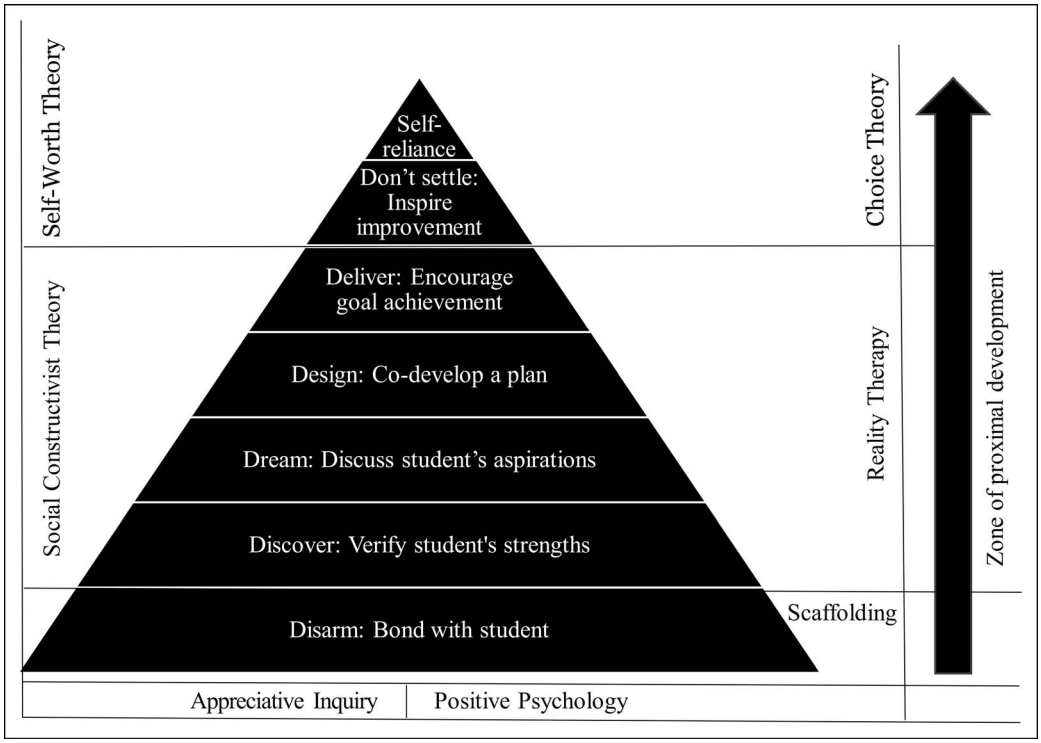
Using a mixed-methods, quasiexperimental, pretest–posttest design, Holton (2017) provided AA training to nursing advisors and sought to ascertain if AA influenced students' ($n = 772$) satisfaction. Overall student satisfaction with advising increased from 42% to 71% in 1 year with AA implementation [X^2 (1, $N = 772$) = 59.64, $p < 0.01$]. The University of North Carolina at Greensboro also used AA to advise prenursing majors ($n = 145$) who did not meet program requirements. Students indicated feeling more empowered to make academic decisions after AA. Forty-three percent stayed in the advising program, whereas 30% changed their major. The university began requiring AA interviews for all prenursing majors with GPAs less than 2.7 (Hutson & Bloom, 2007).

Thus, universities with nursing programs should consider innovative advising practices including AA and group advising aimed at student retention. AA enhances students' GPAs, self-actualization, time management, interpersonal relationships, satisfaction scores, self-efficacy, and retention rates (Holton, 2017; Hutson, 2010; Hutson et al., 2014; Truschel, 2008). Utilizing AA in a group setting can help to improve academic outcomes, student satisfaction, personal growth, and success (Holton, 2017; Hutson, et al., 2014; Johns & Wilson, 2018; Read et al., 2017).

Theoretical Framework

Bloom et al. (2008) developed AA as a theoretical framework to guide academic advising. AA's lineage stems from a variety of philosophies including positive psychology, Appreciative Inquiry (AI), reality therapy, self-worth theory, and social constructivist theory. The foundation of AA is positive psychology and AI (Bloom et al., 2008). Positive psychology focuses on the healthy side of human growth and development. It encourages acceptance of the past but promotes focusing on the future with excitement and optimism to optimize well-being. Positive psychology values health promotion, relationships, and transformative change at the personal level through interactions (Ackerman, 2022). Bloom et al. (2008) incorporated positive psychology into the AA framework to promote empowerment and transform

Figure 1. Theoretical Underpinnings and Application of Appreciative Advising Framework



prescriptive advising to a proactive approach utilizing optimistic interactions.

Like positive psychology, practitioners incorporated AI into AA to inspire improvement by cultivating assets as opposed to flaws (Bloom et al., 2008). The addition of AI provided an outline to the AA framework, in which a modified version of AI's 5-D Dimensional Cycle of Define, Discover, Dream, Design, and Destiny inspired change through inquiry (AI Commons, n.d.). Bloom et al. (2008) adapted the AI phases to Disarm, Discover, Dream, Design, Deliver, and Don't Settle. Bloom et al. (2008) also recommend that advisors employ reality therapy techniques in advising sessions. Reality therapy is based on choice therapy principles in which individuals make choices to fulfill basic human needs: survival, love and belonging, power, freedom, and fun (Glasser Institute for Choice Theory, 2017a). Reality therapy uses behavioral principles to motivate bonding and positive change. Advisors who utilize reality therapy keep the discussion focused on current tasks, avoid negative conversation such as condemning or blaming others, create specific objectives, and provide support in a nonbiased manner (Glasser Institute for Choice Theory, 2017b).

Other influences on the AA framework are Covington's (1984) self-worth theory and Vygotksy's (1978) social constructivist theory. Self-worth theory suggests students will alter scholarly behaviors to defend their self-worth. AA encourages advisors to help students discover their strengths and aspirations to build self-confidence and determination. This ultimately increases self-worth because self-confidence, achievement, and determination regulate self-worth (Bloom et al., 2008). Vygotsky's (1978) social constructivist theory states that information is learned in layers via experiences and socialization. Applied to AA, socialization between advisor and advisee includes reciprocated appreciation and teamwork for students to reach their full potential (Bloom et al., 2008; Vygotsky, 1978). The zone of proximal development (ZPD) and scaffolding are two Vygotsky-derived ideas incorporated into AA. ZPD identifies a difference between current development level obtained independently and

potential development level that could be obtained in the future with assistance (Vygotsky, 1978). Bloom et al. (2008) envisioned the appreciative advisor providing full support early in the relationship and reducing it as the student reaches self-efficacy and competence. From the onset, the advisor-advisee relationship is on a trajectory to dissolve, and the advisor encourages self-reliance. Scaffolding is eliminated once students no longer require assistance from the advisor.

To summarize, AA stems from a composite of multiple theories with a common goal of using advising and empowerment to help students discover and develop their full potential (Hutson et al., 2014). Since its inception in 2005, AA has been implemented on many campuses into a variety of settings such as special population advisement, graduate student advisement, and faculty/advisor development (Bloom et al., 2008). Professionals incorporated the framework into retention programs, first-year seminars, parental support initiatives, and student worker development (Buyarski et al., 2011; Cox & Naylor, 2018; Fippinger, 2009; Grogan, 2011; Wilson-James, 2016).

Appreciative Advising increases student satisfaction (Holton, 2017). Particularly, satisfaction with academic major links more to retention than general, overall university-related satisfaction (Kim & Okboon, 2017). Thus, academic major satisfaction is the college student's equivalent to job satisfaction (Nauta, 2007). Higher major satisfaction correlates with academic and social integration and academic achievement (Kim & Okboon, 2017; Nauta, 2007). For these reasons, institutions and specialized programs such as nursing continuously look for ways to assess student satisfaction. Nauta's (2007) Academic Major Satisfaction Scale quantifies how satisfied students are with their chosen major.

Because of the importance of major satisfaction in relation to persistence in the major, this study investigated whether use of the AA approach administered in a group setting related to increased major satisfaction among prenursing students. The investigator utilized the AA framework to provide group advising to prenursing students. Academic major satisfaction was assessed before and after all AA group advising was completed.

Methods

Sample and Setting

The project took place at a rural, public 4-year university in the Southeastern United States. More than 7,000 students from 45 states and 22 countries attend this institution. From 2008 to 2017, approximately 78.6% of undergraduate students were White, 13.4% African American, 2.8% Hispanic, and 5.2% other races. The nursing curriculum at the university is unique because of a 3-year clinical design in which competitive admittance occurs in the sophomore year. Therefore, labeling the sample as prenursing students is appropriate. The university provides a two-credit-hour freshman seminar course to students transitioning from high school to college. Students are assigned into sections of this freshman seminar based on their major. The convenience sample used in this study was pulled from full-time students enrolled in a first semester freshman seminar class for the nursing major. Regardless of survey participation, all students experienced AA.

Instrumentation

This study used the *Academic Major Satisfaction Scale* (AMSS; Nauta, 2007) with the permission of the scale's author. This six-question survey utilizes a 5-point Likert-style response choice ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The total score on the scale is computed by averaging all question responses, and scale totals range from 1 to 5, with high scores indicating greater satisfaction.

After creating the AMSS, Nauta (2007) analyzed the scale in two studies (first: $n = 195$, $\alpha = .94$; second: $n = 244$, $\alpha = 0.90$). Both investigations confirmed AMSS as a unidimensional tool with predictive validity in identifying degree persisters from nonpersisters. The first study reassessed major change after 2 years, while the second study reassessed after 1 year. The AMSS positively correlated with GPAs ($r(78) = .35$, $p < .05$) and career decision self-efficacy ($r(244) = .45$, $p < .001$) and negatively correlated with career-choice anxiety ($r(244) = -.50$, $p < .001$) and generalized indecisiveness ($r(244) = -.30$, $p < .001$). Each AMSS question had a medium (Cohen's $d = 0.5$) or higher effect size.

Procedure

After obtaining IRB approval, two proxies recruited participants and collected the consent and surveys. The investigator and course instructors were not present during recruitment, consent, and data collection. After giving informed consent, participants completed the *Academic Major Satisfaction Scale*. Then, one appreciative

advisor (the researcher) conducted four AA sessions in group format in the freshman seminar during the first half of a 15-week semester. The advisor developed lesson plans to guide these sessions. Use of the AA framework and the timing of advising tasks throughout the seminar were different from previous freshman seminars.

Empowerment and encouragement were central themes of all AA sessions. The advising agenda included sharing success stories, extracting student's strengths, reviewing success strategies, minimizing barriers, formulating goals, and designing academic plans. The advisor also encouraged students to discuss potential problems and solutions with each other and with the advisor. Students received attendance credit in freshman seminar for each session. None of the activities were graded. Faculty members allowed students to meet the appreciative advisor privately for attendance credit for missed sessions.

Session 1 included the Disarm and Discover phases of AA. For the Disarm phase, the advisor shared a personal story of academic challenges and strategies used to succeed. Then, students wrote a nonconfidential story of overcoming a past challenge. For the Discover phase, students shared this personal story with tablemates, and each table discussed three successful qualities of each student. After the session, the advisor wrote a personalized notecard further validating each student's intrinsic strengths based on the shared story.

Session 2 embraced the Dream and Design phases of AA. The advisor dispersed the handwritten cards and assessed how students were adapting to college life. For the Dream phase, the advisor asked students to envision what life should look like in 10 years. Students then penned these dreams on the activity sheet. The advisor instructed students to discuss with tablemates and list at least one short- and one long-term goal on the activity sheet. The advisor guided students in creating realistic goals and shared resources and success strategies to help students reach goals and dreams. The advisor used the remaining time to discuss general advising information such as important dates, degree planning, dropping/adding classes, financial aid information, and the nursing program application process.

Session 3 concluded the Design phase with a collaborative education plan. The advisor discussed 4- and 5-year degree plan options. Next, the advisor informed students about course requirements and answered questions. Students formulated plans A and B on the activity sheet. The Deliver phase activity included open dialogue about barriers encountered and solutions to negate the obstacles. The advisor again discussed success strategies and campus resources to help students obtain goals. Students shared a success story from the semester with tablemates, then each table shared a success story with the assembly. Then, all students celebrated achievements.

Session 4 ended the intervention with the Don't Settle phase of AA. The advisor assessed student progress through dialogue. The advisor empowered students to improve academic behaviors by focusing on small victories. For example, the advisor asked how many students attended the university's free tutoring center with a round of applause afterward. The advisor then instructed students to list on the activity sheet and share with tablemates specific strategies to improve academically or personally. At the end of the session, the advisor introduced students to nursing faculty members and academic advisors. After the last AA visit, participants again completed the AMSS.

Results

The purpose of the study was to assess whether implementing AA in freshman seminar impacted prenursing students' academic major satisfaction (AMS) at a 4-year institution. The research question was "Does Appreciative Advising influence academic major satisfaction for prenursing students enrolled in freshman seminar?" The a priori power analysis using G*Power with the input parameters of two tailed, 0.50 effect size, 0.05 error probability, and 0.80 power revealed the need for 34 ($n = 34$) participants (Faul et al., 2007). The response rate for this capstone project was 70%. Of the 115 students registered for nursing freshman seminar, 81 ($n = 81$) met the inclusion criteria and participated in both the pre and postintervention surveys. The demographics of the sample revealed a relatively homogenous sample of students who were female (85.2%, $f = 69$), White (85.2%, $f = 69$), 18 years old (90.1%, $f = 73$), and unemployed (72.8%, $f = 59$). The researcher also recorded student attendance rates for AA visits as follows: visit one 94.7% *($f = 109$)*, visit two 90.4% *($f = 109$),* visit three 87.8% ($f = 101$), and visit four 71.3% ($f = 82$). Of note, the last AA session fell on the Friday before fall break.

Next, the investigator assessed descriptive statistics, which revealed skewed data. The histograms and normal Q-Q plots of the total AMSS pretest scores, total AMSS posttest scores, and the difference between them all showed a positive skew with the tail on the histogram longer on the right side of the distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov statistic was also significant ($p < .001$) indicating nonnormal distribution. Next, the investigator reviewed the means and trimmed means of both the pretest and posttest AMS scores. The pretest's mean was 2.49 ($SD = .024$) with a trimmed mean of 2.48. The posttest's mean was 2.69 ($SD = .046$) with a trimmed mean of 2.66. The investigator concluded extreme scores did not manipulate the data, as the means and trimmed means for both the pretest and posttest were similar. Because the data violated the assumptions of normality, the investigator ran the Wilcoxon signed-rank test; Pallant (2016) recommends running nonparametric tests, such as the Wilcoxon signed-rank test, when data are skewed.

The investigator then ran inferential statistics using the Wilcoxon signed rank test to assess significance at $p < .05$. The Wilcoxon signed rank test revealed a statistically significant improved AMS scores following the AA sessions, $Z = -4.11$, $p < .001$, with a medium effect size ($r = .32$). Students' median score increased from preprogram ($Md = 2.33$; *IQR*: 2.33, 2.67) to postprogram ($Md = 2.67$; *IQR*: 2.33, 2.92). The investigator assessed Cronbach's alpha for Nauta's six question AMSS (2007), which was .92 for the pretest and .96 for the posttest, confirming reliability.

Discussion

One advisor initiated four group advising sessions within freshman seminar during the first half of a 15-week semester. The advisor formulated lessons plans based on Bloom et al.'s (2008) Appreciative Advising Theoretical Framework. All sessions included empowerment and encouragement. The advising agenda included sharing success stories, extracting student's strengths, reviewing success strategies, minimizing barriers, formulating goals, and designing academic plans. AMS was assessed twice: first, before project implementation, and then again after the fourth advising session. Findings indicated statistically significant improved AMS after AA sessions. Results from this study confirm that one advisor may influence multiple students' major satisfaction through meaningful relationships and agendas. High AMS scores are consistent with persistent students (Nauta, 2007), which suggests these students are more likely to retain nursing as their major.

Hutson's (2010) project also integrated the AA framework into freshman seminar with promising results, finding higher student ($n = 571$) self-efficacy levels ($p < .001$). Holton (2017) likewise found nursing students' overall satisfaction increased from 42% to 71% after AA implementation [X^2 (1, $N = 772$) = 59.64, $p < 0.01$]. However, Kim and Okboon (2017) suggested major satisfaction associates more with retention than general university-related satisfaction surveys. Thus, this study helped to fill a knowledge gap as to whether AA could improve AMS for nursing majors.

Nursing programs and other careers in high demand could benefit from implementing low-cost retention strategies such as Appreciative Advising. Jeffreys (2014) and Mooring (2016) endorse preemptive strategies such as providing acclimation content, socialization, student-faculty rapport, and proactive advising to combat attrition. Group advising can reduce advising time while strengthening students' professional skill development as it allows students to analyze problems, collaborate with peers, and strengthen social competencies (Johns & Wilson, 2018). Freshman seminar is an ideal course for hosting group advising as most curricula have similar goals with preemptive advising. Although proactive advising and freshman seminars have been shown to enhance student satisfaction and retention (Harrell & Reglin, 2018), more research is needed to explore best practices for nursing students. Students need advisors who provide care and support while empowering students (Mooring, 2016). One advisor implemented AA during nursing freshman seminar class time over the first half of a semester, and AMS improved for 81 students, suggesting that academic institutions would benefit from integrating AA throughout existing courses like freshman seminar.

A strength of this study is that faculty members and students were complementary of the program. Faculty members commented that the program should remain a permanent fixture in freshman seminar. One of the student success counselors affirmed students were better informed and more proactive with major-related decisions. She reported receiving less frantic calls to drop a course or change majors. Academic advisors reported that their advising times diminished because students were prepared and had already formulated a plan for the next semester. Moreover, students were

receptive to the activities and often shared deeply personal stories with tablemates and the appreciative advisor.

This project utilized a convenience sample, but future research could replicate this study using randomized samples with a control group. Including multisite programs throughout the United States would allow more generalizability. Tracking the graduation rates of nursing students after completing the AA program could indicate long-term benefits. Future research focusing on freshman- and sophomore-directed advising practices could also be beneficial as students are more likely to change majors during this time (Jaradat & Mustafa, 2017). Group advising also demands further investigation. Group advising with an AA approach with prenursing/nursing students throughout freshman and sophomore years may be a retention-saving intervention. Another recommendation would be for AMS to be further explored among various majors in the United States as major satisfaction is one of the most significant predictors of student retention (Hauser, 2014). Nursing programs are eager to develop recruiting and retention strategies and programs to diminish the nursing shortage. Additional research could inform the development of these.

Limitations

Using a convenience sample of prenursing students from one physical location limited findings. Even so, the sample size ($n = 81$) was more robust than the a priori power analysis ($n = 34$) recommendation. Over time students could have matured, therefore naturally improving AMS. The short time of this project, around 7 weeks, may have decreased this threat to validity. Although attendance was obtained, this study did not evaluate each student's degree of participation in freshman seminar. Because the population included only students enrolled in freshman seminar, the sample was a delimitation.

Conclusions

Schools of nursing are in a formative position to help curb the nursing shortage. Unfortunately, nursing schools cannot produce the number of graduates required for the current health care need (AACN, 2017). Student attrition and diminished nursing major numbers are common barriers to creating more nurses. The findings from this study suggest that AA could be a valuable tool to enhance nursing students' major satisfaction. Integrating AA into freshman seminars for nursing majors empowers students early in their academic careers and may improve major satisfaction and retention. Incorporating Appreciative Advising into freshman seminars is also a versatile, cost-effective tool that can be used to assist in the retention of nursing students who are essential to relieve an aging workforce.

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