Bachelor of Science in Radiologic Sciences (BSRS) Program: Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration (615U)

Division or Department: School of Allied Health

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Northwestern State University's (NSU) Mission. Northwestern State University is a responsive, student-oriented institution committed to acquiring, creating, and disseminating knowledge through innovative teaching, research, and service. With its certificate, undergraduate, and graduate programs, Northwestern State University prepares its increasingly diverse student population to contribute to an inclusive global community with a steadfast dedication to improving our region, state, and nation.

NSU College of Nursing and School of Allied Health (CONSAH) Mission. Northwestern State University's College of Nursing and School of Allied Health advances the mission of the University through innovative teaching, experiential service learning, and scholarship. The College of Nursing and School of Allied Health offers quality healthcare education to a diverse student population to achieve their goal of becoming responsible healthcare providers who improve the health of our region, state, and nation.

BSRS Program Mission Statement. The BSRS Program follows the mission of the College of Nursing and School of Allied Health.

BSRS Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration Goals:

1. Provide students with the education and skills to function as an integral part of the health care community and the opportunity for advancement in the allied health professions.
2. Provide opportunities that will enhance the development of roles in the radiologic sciences professions.
3. Provide a foundation for radiologic science professionals to become lifelong learners and to strive for continued professional growth.

Methodology: The assessment process for the Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Concentration is as follows:

1. Course reports are completed by lead faculty at the end of each term in which the course is taught. Course reports include enrollment and completion data, aggregate grade distributions, relevant Student Learning Outcome (SLO) measures, actual results, and identified trends.
2. Course reports are stored electronically in the BSRS Teams Assessment folder and reviewed by the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration Coordinator.
3. BSRS faculty review and analyze assessment results annually by calendar year. Faculty compare actual results with established expected outcomes and identify actions for the following assessment cycle.
4. Course reports and related curriculum matters are reviewed by the School of Allied Health (SAH) Program Curriculum Committee. Faculty may provide

feedback regarding course delivery, student learning, assessment findings, and opportunities for improvement.

5. Student Learning Outcome measures, results, analyses, and decisions are incorporated into the annual BSRS Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration assessment report and submitted to the CONSAH Director of Assessment, Evaluation, and Planning for review.
6. BSRS faculty review the annual assessment findings, identify needed revisions or additional actions, and forward recommendations to the SAH Program Curriculum Committee. The SAH Program Curriculum Committee reviews significant findings and discusses proposed curricular or programmatic changes.
7. The completed assessment report is submitted to the CONSAH Dean for review and approval. Following approval, the report is forwarded for institutional assessment review. Significant findings and actions requiring broader programmatic consideration are presented to the CONSAH Academic Leadership Council.

Program Assessment Note: Beginning with the 2025 assessment cycle, the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration began reporting assessment findings separately to provide clearer evidence of student achievement, support concentration-specific analysis, and document the use of assessment results for continuous improvement. Available prior-year findings were included when sufficiently comparable data existed. When comparable prior-year data were not available, the 2025 results established baseline performance for the applicable measure.

Student Learning Outcomes

SLO 1. Students will perform quality sonographic procedures.

Measure 1.1. Students will perform quality sonographic procedures through completion of the Abdomen Complete Lab Proficiency in SONO 3810: Abdomen Sonography I. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 85% or higher by the second attempt.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 11 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 85% or higher on the Abdomen Complete Lab Proficiency by the second attempt. The mean score was 92.82%, with scores ranging from 86% to 97%. Students completed multiple scanning proficiencies throughout the semester, a practice examination, and formative feedback before the graded proficiency. Students who did not meet the benchmark on the first attempt received additional feedback and instructional support before completing a second attempt. The results demonstrated that students were able to integrate required scanning skills and achieve the level of proficiency necessary for clinical readiness.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (11/11) of students achieving a score of 85% or higher by the second attempt.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) require structured remediation with a course instructor for students who do not achieve the benchmark on the first attempt; 2) grade the scanning laboratory component on a pass-or-fail basis, with students required to achieve the established 85% benchmark before progressing; 3) encourage students experiencing difficulty with any component of the proficiency examination to meet individually with faculty; and 4) document all proficiency examination attempts in Trajecsys to support monitoring of student progress and competency attainment.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to use formative feedback, improve scanning performance, and demonstrate clinical readiness, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 1.2. Students will perform quality sonographic procedures through cumulative completed competency examination scores in SONO 3911: Clinic Sonography III, SONO 4511: Clinic Sonography IV, and SONO 4611: Clinic Sonography V. The expected outcome is for at least 80% of students to achieve a cumulative competency examination score of 85% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved a cumulative competency examination score of 85% or higher. Across 124 completed competency assessments, the mean score was 98.92%, with scores ranging from 80.87% to 100%. Although individual competency attempts included scores below 85%, each student's cumulative performance met the established benchmark. The findings demonstrated strong competency development and effective alignment among didactic instruction, laboratory preparation, clinical experiences, and competency evaluation.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving a cumulative competency examination score of 85% or higher.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) use a structured competency-progression model to support consistent development of clinical skills; 2) require students to demonstrate mastery by achieving a score of 85% or higher on each required clinical competency before progressing; 3) require students scoring below 85% to repeat the competency examination and retain an incomplete grade until mastery is demonstrated; 4) require structured open-laboratory remediation with the Clinical Coordinator before a third attempt when a student scores below 85% twice on the same competency; 5) record the successful demonstration of mastery as the final competency grade rather than averaging unsuccessful attempts; and 6) maintain alignment among didactic content, laboratory instruction, clinical experiences, and competency evaluations.

These actions will support mastery-based progression, strengthen consistency across clinical sites, and sustain students' ability to perform quality sonographic procedures, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 2. Students will develop the assessment skills of an imaging professional.

Measure 2.1. Students will develop the assessment skills of an imaging professional through their average performance on the assessment examinations in ALHE 3840: Advanced Patient Care and Assessment. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve an average score of 80% or higher across the assessment examinations.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, 8 of the 9 students assessed (89%) achieved a mean score of 80% or higher across the Assessment Tests, while 1 student (11%) scored below the benchmark. The cohort mean was 85.63%, with scores ranging from 77.47% to 89.83%. Although the cohort mean exceeded the benchmark, the expected outcome required all students to achieve a mean score of 80% or higher. Review of the findings indicated a need to examine quiz format, question construction, cognitive level, difficulty, and alignment with the patient-assessment outcome.

Decision. In 2025, the target was not met, with 89% (8/9) of students achieving a mean score of 80% or higher across the Assessment Tests.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) review individual assessment formats and question types, with particular attention to cognitive level, difficulty, clarity, distractors, and overall performance; 2) analyze individual student performance and aggregate quiz-level results to identify patterns and areas of concern; 3) conduct targeted item analyses for quizzes with cohort averages below 80%; 4) revise quiz items as needed to strengthen alignment with application of knowledge, interpretation of patient information, and clinical decision-making; and 5) review the appropriateness of measuring performance by individual student averages versus quiz-level averages before revising the established benchmark.

These actions will improve the validity and usefulness of the assessment and strengthen students' ability to evaluate patient conditions and make appropriate imaging-related decisions, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 2.2. Students will develop the assessment skills of an imaging professional through completion of the Patient Simulation Scan Test in SONO 3900: Gynecology and Obstetrics Sonography I. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 77% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 9 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 77% or higher on the Patient Simulation Scan Test. The mean score was 93.89%, with scores ranging from

89% to 99%. The results demonstrated strong integration of applied scanning skills, case-based clinical reasoning, and professional reporting. Review of student performance identified technical factors, image annotations, and measurement accuracy as the areas in which points were most commonly lost.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (9/9) of students achieving a score of 77% or higher on the Patient Simulation Scan Test.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) incorporate structured technical-skills modules into scanning laboratory sessions through faculty demonstrations, guided practice, and standardized performance checklists; 2) strengthen instruction related to depth, gain, focal zones, probe positioning, image optimization, annotation, and measurement protocols; 3) provide standardized annotation templates and examples of professional image labeling; 4) add technical factors, annotations, and measurement criteria to the SONO 3900 Scan Test 1 rubric; and 5) distribute the revised rubric at the beginning of the course to promote transparency and early familiarity with performance expectations.

These actions will strengthen technical accuracy, documentation quality, clinical reasoning, and preparedness for simulation and clinical practice, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 3. Students will evaluate a clinical situation and perform accordingly using critical-thinking skills.

Measure 3.1. Students will evaluate a clinical situation and perform accordingly using critical-thinking skills through completion of the Abdominal Pathology Presentation in SONO 3810: Abdomen Sonography I. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 11 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Abdominal Pathology Presentation. The mean score was 96%, with scores ranging from 83% to 100%. The results demonstrated that students were able to evaluate clinical information, connect pathology with appropriate sonographic findings, and communicate their analyses effectively. Review of the completed presentations indicated that students would benefit from additional guidance regarding organization and the importance of addressing all required components.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (11/11) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Abdominal Pathology Presentation.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) review and revise the Abdominal Pathology Presentation guidelines; 2) allow students to present throughout the semester rather than at a single point; 3) review the guidelines in class and provide recommendations

for organizing presentation slides; and 4) emphasize that students should present as though teaching an audience with no prior knowledge of the topic.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to apply pathology knowledge, organize clinical information, and communicate critical-thinking processes, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 3.2. Students will evaluate a clinical situation and perform accordingly using critical-thinking skills through cumulative results from the Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment criterion on the Sonographer Evaluation Form in SONO 3911: Clinic Sonography III, SONO 4511: Clinic Sonography IV, and SONO 4611: Clinic Sonography V. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment criterion. The mean score was 96.38%, with scores ranging from 84% to 100%. The findings demonstrated consistently high achievement in students' ability to evaluate diagnostic information, apply clinical reasoning, and respond appropriately to clinical situations. The results also indicated effective alignment among didactic instruction, laboratory preparation, clinical training, and professional evaluation expectations.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment criterion.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) align simulation and laboratory activities with clinical-judgment expectations; 2) provide targeted feedback on diagnostic reasoning, critical-thinking processes, and clinical responses during laboratory, simulation, and clinical evaluations; and 3) maintain alignment among instruction, clinical training, and professional evaluation practices across SONO 3911, SONO 4511, and SONO 4611.

These actions will sustain students' development of critical thinking, clinical judgment, and diagnostic decision-making competencies, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 4. Students will critically evaluate and assess challenges within the healthcare administrative setting.

Measure 4.1. Students will critically evaluate and assess challenges within the healthcare administrative setting through completion of the Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation in ALHE 4610: Introduction to Health Care Quality. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was not met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, 5 of the 6 students assessed (83%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation, while 1 student (17%) scored below the benchmark. The mean score was 95.4%, with scores ranging from 77% to 100%. Although most students demonstrated strong performance, the expected outcome required all students to meet the benchmark. Review of the grading structure indicated that required peer-review activities in Feedback Fruits may have affected the overall assignment grade without directly measuring mastery of the quality-management outcome.

Decision. In 2025, the target was not met, with 83% (5/6) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) evaluate the Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation as a standalone grade; 2) remove Feedback Fruits participation from the weighted project grade; 3) require students to submit presentations directly in Moodle and post them in a discussion forum; and 4) grade peer responses and the reflection activity separately within the discussion-forum category.

These actions will strengthen alignment between the assessment and the intended learning outcome and ensure that results more accurately reflect students' ability to analyze healthcare quality challenges and present improvement recommendations, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 4.2. Students will critically evaluate and assess challenges within the healthcare administrative setting through completion of the Case Study Project in ALHE 4630: Healthcare Organization and Management. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Case Study Project. The mean score was 99%, with scores ranging from 98.5% to 100%. The findings demonstrated that students were able to evaluate administrative challenges, identify relevant organizational concerns, and develop appropriate management responses.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Case Study Project.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) provide additional and more frequent reminders regarding assignment due dates; and 2) require students to submit

designated portions of the case study as draft checkpoints to support progress monitoring and timely engagement.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to critically evaluate healthcare administrative challenges and develop evidence-informed solutions, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional advocacy.

Measure 5.1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional advocacy through completion of the Chapter 4 Discussion Forum assignment in SONO 3320: Foundations of Sonography and Patient Care. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 11 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Chapter 4 Discussion Forum assignment. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The findings demonstrated that students understood the importance of professional advocacy. Review of the measure also identified an opportunity to assess application of advocacy more directly and to incorporate interprofessional communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (11/11) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Chapter 4 Discussion Forum assignment.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) replace the midterm examination in SONO 3320 with a recorded presentation requiring students to demonstrate understanding and application of professional advocacy, interprofessional communication, teamwork, and conflict resolution; 2) provide preparation guidance at the beginning of the semester; and 3) evaluate the presentation using criteria aligned with the applicable program and accreditation expectations.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to understand and apply professional advocacy within sonography and interprofessional healthcare settings, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 5.2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of professional advocacy through completion of the Service-Learning Project in ALHE 3840: Advanced Patient Care and Assessment. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 9 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Service-Learning Project. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The findings demonstrated that students successfully completed service activities and reflected on their responsibilities to the profession and community.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (9/9) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Service-Learning Project.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) provide feedback at each stage of the project, including the approval request, timesheet, reflection, and presentation; 2) clearly remind students that all four components are required and contribute to the final project grade; and 3) monitor student progress and contact students early when components are missing or delayed.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to demonstrate professional advocacy through service, reflection, and communication, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 6. Students will integrate adherence to professional behaviors.

Measure 6.1. Students will integrate adherence to professional behaviors through results from the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion on the Sonographer Evaluation Form in SONO 4511: Clinic Sonography IV. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve an average score of 90% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved an average score of 90% or higher on the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The results demonstrated strong adherence to professional behaviors, ethical standards, and clinical expectations during SONO 4511 experiences.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving an average score of 90% or higher on the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) continue reinforcing professionalism and ethical conduct through standardized evaluation practices and clear behavioral expectations; 2) maintain collaboration with clinical evaluators; and 3) maintain alignment among didactic instruction, clinical training, and professional evaluation practices.

These actions will sustain consistent development of professionalism and ethical conduct during SONO 4511 clinical experiences, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 6.2. Students will integrate adherence to professional behaviors through results from the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion on the Sonographer Evaluation Form in SONO 4611: Clinic Sonography V. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve an average score of 90% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved an average score of 90% or higher on the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The results demonstrated strong adherence to professional standards, ethical practice, and clinical professionalism during SONO 4611 experiences.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving an average score of 90% or higher on the Professionalism and Ethical Conduct criterion.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) share the Sonographer Evaluation Form and rubric with clinical instructors and students before clinical rotations; 2) conduct a midterm sonographer evaluation to identify concerns and provide timely intervention; 3) maintain collaboration with clinical partners and standardized assessment practices; and 4) conduct clinical-site visits and random faculty check-ins to observe student professionalism, reinforce expectations, and provide feedback.

These actions will strengthen transparency, consistency, and early intervention related to professional and ethical conduct, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 7. Students will develop oral communication skills.

Measure 7.1. Students will develop oral communication skills through completion of the Communication Lab Proficiency in SONO 3211: Introduction to Clinic. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to complete the required ten-step process without assistance.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 11 students assessed (100%) completed the ten-step communication process without assistance. The results demonstrated that students were able to communicate appropriately during the simulated patient-care and examination process. Review of the measure indicated that a scored rubric with documented feedback would provide stronger and more consistent evidence of oral communication performance.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (11/11) of students completing the ten-step communication process without assistance.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise the proficiency check-off form to include a scoring rubric and feedback section; 2) assign 10 points to each of the 10 required steps for a total of 100 points; 3) revise the expected outcome so that 100% of students must achieve a score of 90% or higher; and 4) retain the assignment as pass or fail, with a score of 90% required to pass.

These actions will improve consistency in evaluation, strengthen documentation of feedback, and provide clearer evidence of students' oral communication skills, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 7.2. Students will develop oral communication skills through cumulative results from the Communication Skills criterion on the Sonographer Evaluation Form in SONO 3911: Clinic Sonography III, SONO 4511: Clinic Sonography IV, and SONO 4611: Clinic Sonography V. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve an average score of 90% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 6 students assessed (100%) achieved an average score of 90% or higher on the Communication Skills criterion. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The findings demonstrated strong communication with patients and members of the healthcare team, appropriate use of professional terminology, and willingness to seek clarification when needed.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (6/6) of students achieving an average score of 90% or higher on the Communication Skills criterion.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) review clinical instructor evaluations after each rotation and post scores and comments in the Moodle gradebook; 2) discuss evaluation findings during midterm and final faculty evaluations; 3) require students scoring below the established clinical benchmark to meet with the Clinical Coordinator and revisit performance at the subsequent evaluation; 4) conduct in-person meetings when clinical instructor comments warrant additional discussion; and 5) continue clinical-site visits to reinforce communication expectations.

These actions will strengthen feedback, early intervention, and students' ability to communicate effectively with patients and healthcare professionals, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

SLO 8. Students will develop written communication skills.

Measure 8.1. Students will develop written communication skills through completion of the Research Proposal Paper in ALHE 4520: Research in Healthcare. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 5 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Research Proposal Paper. The mean score was 90.4%, with scores ranging from 88% to 94%. Students used Feedback Fruits for peer review and writing feedback, and faculty provided an APA-formatted template and academic writing activities. The findings demonstrated strong written communication and successful organization of research ideas.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (5/5) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Research Proposal Paper.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) revise the Research Proposal Paper assignment to eliminate use of Feedback Fruits; 2) require students to post a structured summary of their proposals in a course discussion forum; 3) require peer feedback through guided questions; and 4) streamline the peer-review process to reduce technological barriers and promote focused academic discussion.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to communicate research ideas clearly, participate in scholarly peer review, and apply academic writing conventions, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Measure 8.2. Students will develop written communication skills through completion of the Soundwaves in Harmony Assignment in SONO 3910: Abdomen Sonography II. The expected outcome is for 100% of students to achieve a score of 80% or higher.

Finding. Target was met.

Analysis. Comparable concentration-level data were not available for the prior assessment cycle. Therefore, the 2025 results establish baseline performance for this measure.

In 2025, all 9 students assessed (100%) achieved a score of 80% or higher on the Soundwaves in Harmony Assignment. The mean score was 100%, with no score variability. The findings demonstrated students' ability to organize ideas, communicate technical content clearly, and express disciplinary knowledge in a creative written format.

Decision. In 2025, the target was met, with 100% (9/9) of students achieving a score of 80% or higher on the Soundwaves in Harmony Assignment.

Based on analysis of the 2025 results, faculty will implement the following actions in 2026 to drive the cycle of improvement: 1) model high-quality examples of conceptual explanation through sample lyrics and written excerpts; 2) emphasize clarity, accuracy, precise terminology, and conceptual correctness in written expression; and 3) reinforce collaborative academic writing practices, equitable participation, peer review, and shared responsibility for written content quality.

These actions will strengthen students' ability to communicate technical sonographic concepts accurately and effectively in written form, thereby continuing to advance the cycle of improvement.

Comprehensive Summary of Key Evidence of Improvements Based on Analysis of Results

Beginning with the 2025 assessment cycle, the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration began reporting assessment findings separately from the broader BSRS Program. The 2025 findings establish baseline concentration-level performance for the measures included in this report and provide a foundation for future trend analysis. Assessment results were used to identify improvements at the course, assignment, clinical, rubric, communication, remediation, and data-collection levels.

Clinical Competence and Patient Assessment

Students demonstrated strong performance on the Abdomen Complete Lab Proficiency, cumulative clinical competency examinations, and Patient Simulation Scan Test. Opportunities for improvement included strengthening mastery-based progression, structured remediation, documentation in Trajecsys, technical scanning instruction, annotation standards, measurement accuracy, and rubric transparency.

The ALHE 3840 Assessment Tests did not meet the expected outcome because one student scored below the benchmark. This finding prompted a review of assessment format, item quality, cognitive level, and alignment with the intended patient-assessment outcome.

Critical Thinking, Clinical Judgment, and Healthcare Administration

Both clinical critical-thinking measures met the expected outcomes, demonstrating strong performance on the Abdominal Pathology Presentation and the Critical Thinking and Clinical Judgment criterion on the Sonographer Evaluation Form. Planned improvements include clearer presentation guidance, additional opportunities to present throughout the semester, stronger alignment of simulation and laboratory activities with clinical-judgment expectations, and targeted feedback on diagnostic reasoning.

The Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation did not meet the expected outcome because one student scored below the benchmark. Review of the grading structure identified the need to separate peer participation from the project grade so the measure more directly evaluates quality-management competency. The Case Study Project met the expected outcome and will be strengthened through additional reminders and draft checkpoints.

Professional Advocacy and Professional Behavior

All four measures related to professional advocacy and professional behavior met the expected outcomes. Students demonstrated understanding of advocacy, completed service-learning requirements, and earned strong professionalism and ethical-conduct ratings in clinical courses.

Planned improvements include a new advocacy-focused midterm presentation, staged feedback on service-learning components, increased transparency regarding clinical

evaluation expectations, midterm sonographer evaluations, and additional clinical-site observations and check-ins.

Oral and Written Communication

All four oral- and written-communication measures met the expected outcomes in 2025. Students successfully completed the Communication Lab Proficiency, demonstrated strong communication skills during clinical evaluations, achieved the benchmark on the Research Proposal Paper, and demonstrated effective written communication through the Soundwaves in Harmony Assignment.

Opportunities for improvement included strengthening scoring criteria, documentation of feedback, clinical evaluation follow-up, peer-review processes, and expectations for clarity, accuracy, organization, professional terminology, and collaborative writing.

Assessment and Program Evaluation

Diagnostic Medical Sonography faculty identified opportunities to improve alignment among Student Learning Outcomes, assessment instruments, assignment requirements, grading rubrics, and expected outcomes. The findings also demonstrated the need for more focused measures, item-level analysis, clearer grading criteria, consistent documentation of feedback, and earlier intervention when students are at risk of not meeting a benchmark.

Separate concentration-level reporting provided an opportunity to review existing measures, replace the previous lettered format with consecutively numbered measures, clarify expected outcomes, and strengthen consistency in assessment reporting.

The 2025 findings also demonstrated that rigorous expected outcomes requiring 100% of students to meet the benchmark may result in a measure being classified as unmet when only one student scores below the benchmark. These results were nevertheless used to identify specific student needs, strengthen assessment processes, and develop targeted actions for the 2026 assessment cycle.

Overall Evidence of Improvement

Students met the established target for 14 of the 16 measures reported in 2025. Evidence of achievement included strong performance in sonographic procedures and clinical competencies, successful performance on the Patient Simulation Scan Test, sustained clinical judgment and critical-thinking skills, achievement on the healthcare-administration Case Study Project, strong professional advocacy and professional-behavior outcomes, and achievement of all oral- and written-communication measures.

The two unmet measures were the Assessment Tests in ALHE 3840: Advanced Patient Care and Assessment and the Quality Management Proposal Project Presentation in ALHE 4610: Introduction to Health Care Quality. In each instance, most students achieved the benchmark, but the measure did not meet the concentration’s expected outcome requiring 100% achievement.

Review of these findings identified opportunities to strengthen assessment alignment, question and rubric design, assignment structure, student guidance, progress monitoring, and documentation of feedback. Collectively, the findings demonstrate continued use of assessment results to strengthen student learning and advance the cycle of improvement within the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration.

Plan of Action Moving Forward

Based on analysis of the 2025 assessment results, Diagnostic Medical Sonography faculty will implement the following actions during the 2026 assessment cycle to strengthen student learning, improve consistency in assessment practices, and continue the cycle of improvement.

Clinical Competence and Remediation

Mastery-based progression will be strengthened through structured remediation, required demonstration of competency before progression, open-laboratory support, individual faculty meetings, and documentation of all proficiency attempts in Trajecsys. Alignment among didactic instruction, laboratory preparation, clinical experiences, and competency evaluations will continue to be reviewed.

Assessment Validity and Rubric Alignment

Assessment tools and rubrics will be reviewed and revised to improve clarity, cognitive alignment, scoring consistency, and usefulness of results. This work will include item analysis of ALHE 3840 assessments, revision of the SONO 3900 Scan Test 1 rubric, separation of peer participation from the Quality Management Proposal Project grade, and development of a scored rubric for the Communication Lab Proficiency.

Clinical Judgment, Technical Skills, and Simulation

Simulation and laboratory activities will be aligned more intentionally with clinical-judgment expectations. Structured technical-skills modules, guided practice, standardized performance checklists, annotation templates, measurement protocols, and targeted feedback will be incorporated to strengthen technical accuracy, clinical reasoning, and preparedness for patient simulation and clinical practice.

Professionalism, Advocacy, and Clinical Evaluation

A new advocacy-focused midterm presentation will be implemented in SONO 3320. Service-learning feedback will be provided at each stage of the project. Sonographer evaluation criteria will be shared before clinical rotations, midterm evaluations will be conducted, and clinical-site visits and random faculty check-ins will be used to reinforce professionalism, ethical conduct, and communication expectations.

Communication and Scholarly Writing

Oral and written communication will be supported through clearer scoring criteria, documented feedback, clinical evaluation follow-up, model assignments, guided peer review, and explicit expectations for clarity, accuracy, terminology, organization, and collaborative writing.

Expected Impact

These actions are expected to strengthen clinical competence, assessment validity, technical performance, clinical judgment, professionalism, advocacy, oral communication, and written communication. They will also improve transparency, consistency, early intervention, and the usefulness of assessment data for concentration-level decision-making. Collectively, the planned actions will support continued improvement in the Diagnostic Medical Sonography Concentration and provide a stronger foundation for future trend analysis.