

COUNCIL ON TEACHING
Follow-Up Report for
Teaching in Higher Education Conference Award

Name: Heather Bair

Department/Unit: College of Nursing

Conference Attended: Northwestern Designing & Implementing Simulation-Based Mastery Learning Curricula

Date of Conference: 9/24-9/27

Award Amount: \$1500

Briefly summarize how your attendance at the conference enhanced your professional development and allowed you to gain a better understanding of teaching in your discipline or trends in higher education in general.

Attending the Simulation-Based Mastery Learning (SBML) course was an awesome opportunity that enhanced my professional growth as both a simulation educator and a curriculum leader. The experience helped me see not only the science behind mastery learning but also the nuances of how to implement it effectively in my own teaching. One of my biggest takeaways was the distinction between competence and mastery. While I have always held high standards for my students, this course challenged me to think about raising the bar further, ensuring that every learner achieves true mastery through deliberate practice and evidence-based minimum passing standards. The course also highlighted the importance of contributing to the science of mastery learning through research and publication. I now feel better equipped to capture data from our program, publish outcomes, and help advance the broader scholarship of simulation education practice.

Most importantly, the course directly impacts our next steps as a program. We are beginning the process of implementing mastery learning into our nurse anesthesia curriculum, and what I learned has given me both the confidence and the framework to guide this transformation. This is not just about improving our processes, but also about generating evidence that supports mastery learning as a powerful educational model in higher education.

How have you been able to share what you learned about teaching with your department, the University of Iowa, and/or beyond?

I have already shared what I learned with my anesthesia nursing faculty colleagues. The workshop provided practical tools including the mastery Angoff method to set mastery standards, structured checklists, and deliberate practice plans. Together, we are integrating these strategies into our nurse anesthesia curriculum, preparing to share our work with the College of Nursing at "lunch and learn", and applying mastery learning principles to simulations we facilitate at the American Association of Nurse Anesthesiology (AANA) Annual Congress. We are also committed to contributing to the science of mastery learning through publication, with one manuscript already under review and plans to expand on this foundation.