

# Putting The Professor Into Perioperative Professionals: Graduating Nurses Who Are Already Serious About Surgery

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## BACKGROUND

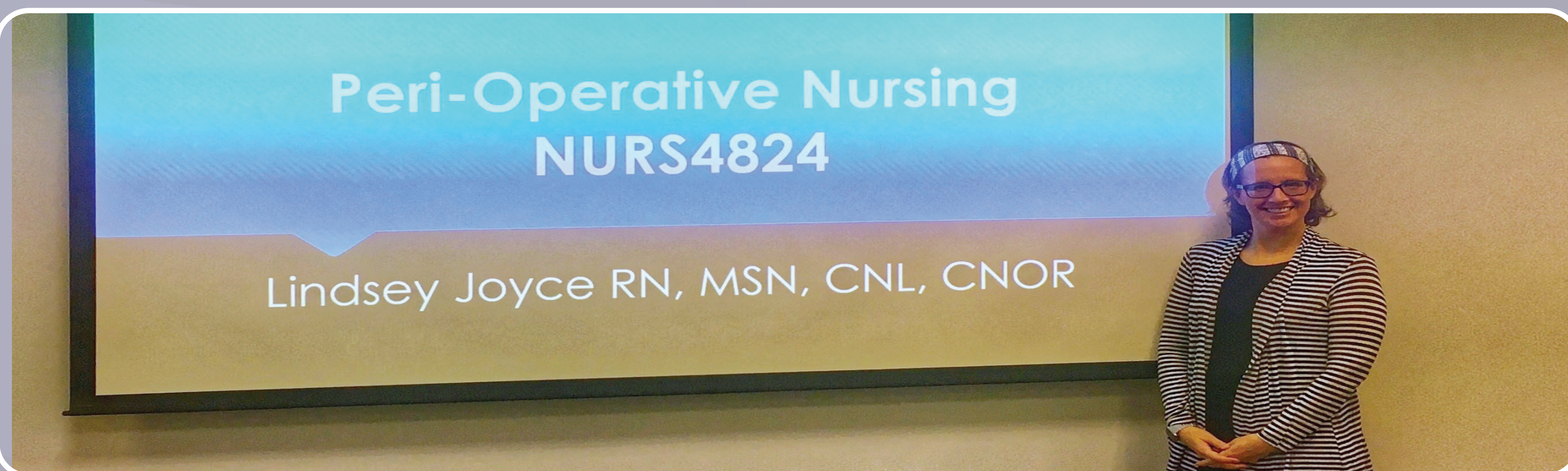
- An elective for undergraduate students was developed as a graduate student pilot project.
- Leveraging operating room (OR) nurse experience, a peri-operative nursing elective was created.
- After the pilot, the course was embedded into the curriculum.
- In Spring of 2020, the first Peri-Operative Nursing Elective was offered at St. Louis University School of Nursing.
- It is now in its third year being offered to students and is a popular course for elective credits.

## PROBLEM

- Limited exposure to the OR during nursing school clinicals.
- Students who do not receive OR experiences are unable to consider the OR as a career option.
- The OR, like many other areas in nursing, needs to consider nursing students for a pipeline of future OR nurses.

## METHODS AND COURSE DESIGN

- Hybrid course: online and in person lectures learning nursing roles and collaborating with other OR team members.
- Weekly discussion board questions and journals.
- 24 clinical hours in PreOp/PACU/OR working along side nurses taking care of surgical patients while experiencing a variety of surgical specialties.
- In-person presentation to class on surgery of their choice.



## RESULTS

- At least one student in each class has started their career directly in the OR as a new graduate.
- Students who have completed this course are working as OR nurses in St. Louis, Atlanta, and Chicago.
- Course enrollment is 10-15 students.

## CONCLUSIONS

- Many ORs are experiencing nursing shortages.
- Nursing students need exposure to the OR.
- An undergraduate elective course helps students gain OR experience and improves transition to the OR post-graduation.

*"This course allowed me to be part of the OR team, and get an in-depth view of how the OR works. Prior to this course, none of my nursing classes had included Perioperative nursing, but this course made me fall in love with it because I saw all of the different roles that nurses can have. More students should take this class for the perspective that it gives students."*