

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH AT BRADFORD
NURSING EDUCATION UNIT

MISSION

The Nursing Education Unit is dedicated to fair access to its programs to guarantee that a gender-, racially/ethnically-, and culturally diverse professional group will be ready to serve the community. The mission of the Nursing Education Unit is to prepare professional nurses for entry to practice at the associate degree level and to provide further education for the registered nurse, which includes advanced clinical skills and preparation for independent leadership and management roles in a variety of settings at the baccalaureate level of practice. Through high quality nursing education that facilitates a spirit of inquiry, fosters critical thought and sound nursing judgement, the professional nurse identity is formed. Programs within the Nursing Education Unit reflect a respect of diversity, a commitment to ethical and moral responsibilities, and strive for excellence while promoting holistic, patient-centered care to individuals, families, groups, and communities.

PHILOSOPHY

INDIVIDUAL

We believe the Individual to be a holistic being who integrates cultural, biological, intellectual, psychosocial and spiritual characteristics that makes him/her unique. The Individual interacts with a changing environment to maintain and fulfill his/her life potential.

The Individual's right to experience fullness of life is concomitant with his/her potential for growth and capacity for change, limited only by the degree to which his/her basic needs are met as he/she strives to maintain homeostasis in the presence of a stressful environment. Adaptation to stressors throughout the life cycle is contingent upon the Individual's age and level of development. The Individual has the responsibility and the right to participate actively in the decisions which impact upon health care in an atmosphere of dignity expressive of his/her own system of values and personal definition of health.

HEALTH

Health and illness are considered on a continuum. The Individual's location on the continuum is ever changing and dependent upon genetic, developmental, and environmental factors and the ability to mobilize resources. Health is the effective adaptation to internal and external stressors with the maintenance of homeostasis. Illness is the maladaptation to internal and external stressors with an imbalance in homeostasis.

NURSING

Nursing is a practice profession, an art, and a science that occurs in a variety of acute, long term, and community settings. The goal of nursing is to promote adaptation and the Individual's need for self-care, on a continuous basis across the life cycle. Nursing practice involves the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health. Nurses utilize theories/concepts from the natural and social sciences and nursing and health information technologies as a basis for critical thinking and problem solving.

Nursing practice is a caring relationship between the Individual and nurse that promotes culturally responsive health and quality of life and a dignified and peaceful death. Within the context of interprofessional teamwork, nurses are committed to relationship-centered care that makes accessible safe and cost effective quality care within an atmosphere that respects the dignity and worth of all persons. In

practice, nurses utilize the nursing process to provide, manage, advocate, collaborate, and delegate appropriately with others in the provision of care for clients with health needs.

Nurses recognize the value of nursing research and participate in the research process at varying levels to discover creative and innovative solutions to nursing practice problems. Nurses commit to a culture of excellence through the utilization of evidence-based research as the basis for decision making in practice. As members within the discipline of nursing, nurses are committed to lifelong professional growth, practice within the profession's scope and standards, and the ethical and legal frameworks of nursing.

NURSING EDUCATION

Nursing education is best achieved in an institution of higher learning where the program includes courses in general and professional education. Nursing education is an interactive process through which students are provided the opportunity to learn and apply the basic knowledge and behaviors necessary for competent nursing practice within the changing society. We recognize that there are many levels of nursing preparation. Advancement through the levels involves expansion of previously acquired knowledge and skills.

The Nursing Education Unit recognizes the individuality of each student by utilization of learning environments in which diverse approaches are used depending upon the needs of the learner. This includes but is not limited to the use of traditional didactic and clinical instruction, as well as hands on laboratory experiences and simulations.

Intellectual curiosity and creativity allow new patterns of behavior to emerge in a continuous process that places responsibility for achievement upon the student, who is limited only by level of ability and self-determination. Active participation in the educational process is the student's right. Individual differences in life experiences and potential for learning are reflected in the variety of methods and time frames through which students learn.

Students study the human experience over time, explore human creativity and expression, and examine moral, ethical, legal, and cultural dilemmas. Such preparation enables the graduate to face the challenges and opportunities in today's health care industry as it evolves as a result of rapid political, economic, scientific and cultural changes.

We recognize that the associate degree graduate (ASN) is prepared as a beginning practitioner to function in a structured setting. While the associate degree graduate requires skills necessary for basic clinical competence, active decision-making is based on a narrower general education focus. Graduates recognize the role of the nurse in the community setting. Furthermore, graduates are exposed to and can discuss ethical topics that affect health care decisions. At this level, graduates can identify problems related to nursing care and discuss the role of the nurse as researcher in proposing solutions to these problems. Within this framework, graduates are encouraged to engage in continuing education and pursue a baccalaureate degree in nursing.

As an autonomous decision maker, the baccalaureate graduate (RN-BSN) is prepared to practice in a technologically competitive clinical environment, which may include less structured community settings such as rehabilitative services and school nursing. Baccalaureate graduates possess proficiency that is more advanced and capabilities for independent leadership, management and advanced level assessment skills. With a broad general education focus, the baccalaureate graduate evaluates clinical situations utilizing an interprofessional collaborative framework and considers cultural, ethical and political issues. Moreover, graduates are prepared to critically evaluate and participate in the research process at a beginning level.

The baccalaureate graduate (RN-BSN) will demonstrate basic competencies within the general education curriculum that encompasses advanced level writing and informatics skills while focusing on adherence to professionally recognized standards. The baccalaureate prepared nurse engages in learning as a lifelong process.

SCHOLARSHIP

We embrace a broad concept of scholarship that reflects the art and science of nursing, based on Boyer's (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered* and operationalized through the AACN's (1999) *Position Statement on Defining Scholarship for the Discipline of Nursing*.

Recognizing the broad scope of the activities within nursing, scholarship goes beyond traditional boundaries of academic work and reflects the realities of the profession. Expansive scholarly activities tied to teaching, research, and practice, advance the goals, and ultimately the growth and development of the profession.

Hence, scholarship in nursing includes the *discovery* and development of new knowledge, the creative and innovative impartation or *teaching* of nursing to others, the *application* of knowledge to the realities of practice settings, and the *integration* of knowledge from nursing and other disciplines to our teaching, research, and practice commitments.

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (1999). *Position Statement on Defining Scholarship for the Discipline of Nursing*. Washington, DC: Author.

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This document serves as a guide to assist in career planning and evaluation of faculty within the context of the Policies and Procedures for Faculty Appointment, Reappointment, Promotion, and Tenure (University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, 2001).

Boyer, E. (1990). *Scholarship Reconsidered. Priorities for the Professoriate*. Princeton, NJ: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.