

Loyola University Chicago

Educational Mission Statement

The mission of the Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing (SON) is to prepare baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral level nurses, and professional dietitians who, through a community-focused orientation, enhance the health of persons within communities and the larger global environment. In concert with the Jesuit Catholic educational mission of the University, the School of Nursing stresses excellence in teaching, research, service, and practice.

Marcella Niehoff

Philosophy Statement

School of Nursing

Introduction

The Marcella Niehoff School of Nursing is an integral part of Loyola University Chicago. Consistent with the University's educational mission, the School of Nursing community strives to embody the Jesuit ideal of living and caring for others. The School of Nursing offers curricula leading to baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees in nursing, and a bachelor degree and internship in dietetics through its Food and Nutrition programs. The following statements reflect core beliefs about nursing, nursing education, and dietetics. These beliefs are expanded upon in the conceptual definitions.

[School of Nursing homepage](#)

Beliefs About Nursing

Nursing is both a scientific discipline and a profession. The purpose of the discipline is to develop and disseminate knowledge of concern to nursing: persons, communities, environment, and health. Professional nursing is the practice of a scientific discipline that directly benefits society through decreasing disparities, promoting health, and ultimately enhancing the quality of life. The discipline of nursing is grounded in values and ethics. It also reflects advances in disciplinary and technological knowledge in an ever-expanding, multicultural society. Faculty believe that persons are created by God, have the right to live and die with dignity, to be accepted for their individual inherent worth, and to be responsible for decisions about their lives as well as benefit justly from the world's wealth of resources.

Beliefs About Nursing Education

Professional nursing education is conceptually based and evolves from a spirit of inquiry and search for truth. Loyola University Niehoff School of Nursing, as an urban institution, benefits from Chicago's exceptional cultural, economic, and human resources, and faculty believe that the use of these resources strengthens the educational experience of our students. The Niehoff School of Nursing has a long-standing commitment to the health of diverse populations in our urban setting and works to solve extant health problems. This includes decreasing disparity and promoting optimal health. Faculty believe that experiences in community-focused practice and research enhance achievement of program goals. Faculty believe they are educating students to be caregivers, managers, leaders, advocates, educators, and scholars. While faculty are committed to appreciating the uniqueness of each student, and accommodating their learning needs, students are expected to assume responsibility for their learning. The individual life experiences that each student brings to the program will influence the way that each develops their own practice of nursing. The curricula emphasize levels of prevention, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, cultural competence, ethics, scholarly inquiry, spirituality, and therapeutic interventions.

Beliefs About Dietetics

The science of dietetics, synthesized from the biological and psychosocial sciences, is applied to persons and communities in a variety of situations. Dietetics promotes optimal nutrition, health, and quality of life. Hence, competent dietetic practice is based on application of leadership, management, technology, and scientific inquiry through effective communication and collaboration.

Beliefs About Dietetics Education

To respond to the needs of society, Dietetic students must be prepared for ongoing professional development. To this end, the faculty provides an educational environment that stimulates critical thinking, promotes ethical values, and develops adaptability to dynamic practice environments.

Program Goals

The School of Nursing offers undergraduate, master's, and doctoral programs for the education of professional nurses, and an undergraduate and intern program for professional dietitians. Undergraduate nursing education prepares entry-level nurses and RN/BSN completion nurses who competently and professionally deliver nursing care using a community-focused orientation. The master's program prepares nurses to apply advanced disciplinary knowledge to specific and vulnerable populations. The role preparation for the master's program is advanced practice nurses and/or health care administrators. The goal of the doctoral program in nursing is to prepare scholars who improve human health through the development and expansion of knowledge. The goal of the undergraduate program in dietetics is to prepare individuals for dietetic internship programs, and/or to enter a graduate program in nutrition. The dietetics internship program prepares graduates with entry-level competencies, and readies them for the national registration examination. Goals for faculty include excellence in teaching to assist students to achieve expected results, and collective excellence in scholarship, service, and practice.

Expected Results: Student Outcomes

- - Retention, education, and graduation
 - Meeting the terminal objectives of the program
 - Passing NCLEX or certification exam
 - Employment in professional nursing or dietetics
 - Ethical practice with concern for social justice
 - Continuing study and/or lifelong learning
 - Leadership in the profession and the community

Expected Results: Faculty Accomplishments

Expected results for faculty are based on pursuing "excellence by the discovery, communication, dissemination and application of knowledge" (LUC Faculty Handbook, p. 29). SON faculty and administrators accept this standard as a guiding principle for collective achievement of excellence in teaching, in scholarship, in service to the University, the profession and the community, and in practice. However, faculty and administrators of the SON recognize that individual faculty contribute to this collective excellence according to their particular education, experience, abilities, and goals. Excellence in teaching is expected of all faculty, and faculty strive for mastery or excellence in scholarship, service and practice.

Nursing Curricular Objectives

BSN Program

At the completion of the program the student has the knowledge and skills to:

1. Apply a broad liberal arts education within the context of Jesuit traditions;
2. Articulate a philosophy of nursing which guides practice;
3. Practice competently, effectively, and ethically as an entry-level baccalaureate nurse in an increasingly technological patient care environment to promote health and quality of life of diverse persons and communities
4. Participate in activities that advance the profession of nursing including awareness and knowledge of health policy issues;
5. Use scholarly inquiry and research findings in implementing practice;
6. Possess the educational foundation for life-long learning, leadership, and graduate study in Nursing.

MSN Program

At the completion of the program, the student has the knowledge and skills to:

1. Achieve understanding of ethical and moral issues in advanced nursing practice within a Judeo-Christian context;
2. Analyze selected concepts, models and theories from nursing science and related disciplines for application in advanced practice;

3. Integrate theoretical and practice knowledge bases into advanced nursing practice to meet the needs of diverse populations at risk;
4. Interpret nursing research for application in advanced nursing practice;
5. Collaborate in nursing research as appropriate;
6. Implement knowledge of policy and the advanced practice specialty in leadership activities to improve the health of individuals, families and communities;
7. Obtain an educational foundation for doctoral study in nursing.

Conceptual Framework of the Nursing Curriculum

Educational Process: Community-Focused Curricula

This conceptual framework represents the faculty's belief that nursing practice arises out of the mutual interaction of person, community, environment, nursing, and health. The community-focused curriculum provides a structure for the student's educational journey to professional nurse, providing a means for the student to explore the many dimensions of nursing and gain knowledge of nursing practice from beginner to advanced practitioner of nursing.

The concepts of the curriculum and curricular themes are integrated into the conceptual framework. The framework then becomes the tool by which courses are developed. This ensures the integration of concepts and themes throughout the nursing program. A student's knowledge will increase in breadth and depth as the student moves through the program. Freshman and sophomore year focus on health and wellness; junior year on normal and chronic health states, and senior year on acute care and a synthesis of their previous experience. The **value context** within which the educational process of the Niehoff School of Nursing takes place is the Jesuit Educational Mission of respect for the human person and the belief that learning is a way of seeking and finding God. Community-focus is an orientation of educational process and nursing practice. The educational process emphasizes the generation and development of community as a life experience, integral to persons and their environment. This orientation to practice emphasizes the role of nursing in enhancing the health of persons within the context of their communities and the larger environment.

Major Conceptual Definitions of the Framework

Major concepts of the community-focused curriculum include person, community, environment, health, and nursing. Persons are created by God, have the right to live and die with dignity, to be accepted for their individual inherent worth, and to be responsible for decisions about their lives and the common good. A **community** is a group of persons with a common identity and/or common goals. Communities exist in dynamic interchange with each other and the environment. People co-exist in multiple communities, and persons and communities have reciprocal relationships. **Environment** is the context within and through which persons and communities interact. **Health** is a dynamic state of well-being possessed by persons and communities. Culture, spirituality, values, and social norms may influence personal and community perceptions of health. Persons may have unique perceptions of health, and they have the right to define their own health. Communities establish criteria for levels of health that may supercede individual preferences. **Nursing** is both a scientific discipline and a profession. The focus of the discipline is persons, communities, environment, and health. Professional nursing is the practice of the scientific discipline that directly benefits society through the enhancement of health and ultimately the quality of life. **Nursing Practice** is the diagnosis and treatment of actual and potential health states, and is operationalized through the use of nursing standardized vocabulary. It includes the functional, physiological, psychosocial, and environmental domains.

Curricular Themes

The curricula of the Niehoff School of Nursing emphasize increasing competence in levels of prevention, collaboration, communication, critical thinking, cultural competence, ethics, scholarly inquiry, spirituality, and therapeutic nursing interventions. The curricular themes deepen and broaden as the student's progress throughout the curriculum. The concept of **Levels of Prevention** is a philosophical consideration that embraces a commitment to wellness, conscious desire to prevent illness and disease, and the belief that health restoration is essential. Levels of prevention include the concepts of primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. **Collaboration** is the process of making decisions with other people regarding health care. Knowledge of health care systems includes an understanding of the organization and environment in which nursing and health care is provided. Health care policy

shapes health care systems and helps determine accessibility, accountability, and affordability. (**The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education**, ACCN, 1998, p. 15). **Communication** is the process by which information, ideas, and feelings are interchanged. It involves symbols, such as written words, gestures, images, and spoken language. It arises from inherent capacities, sociocultural background, environment, attitudes, past experiences, knowledge of subject matter, and ability to relate to others. It is also affected by technological advances in health care and how they impact communication systems. **Critical Thinking** is a self-reflective, cognitive process that seeks to uncover truth within a specific context. Critical thinking is evidenced when skills such as analysis, inference, synthesis, and evaluation are used. Critical thinking results in deliberate and focused data collection, accurate analysis of data, and reflective judgment based on the use of a nursing standardized vocabulary. It is foundational to professional practice and scholarly activities. **Cultural Competence** is the ability to understand and appreciate cultural, ethnic, and individual diversity, and to practice in a culturally sensitive fashion. **Ethics** includes values, codes, and principles that govern decisions in nursing practice, conduct, and relationships. Skill and knowledge in resolving conflicts related to role obligations and personal beliefs are necessary (1). Values essential to the practice of professional nursing include caring, altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, empowerment, learning, excellence, spirituality, social justice, and the common good. **Scholarly Inquiry** is an ongoing endeavor of faculty and students in which critical thinking skills are developed and used, and in which knowledge is created and transmitted. From inquiry flows scholarship which includes teaching and learning independently and with others; using a framework to guide nursing practice; participating in research as consumers, and members of professional organizations; using research findings in practice; designing and conducting nursing-related theoretical, applied, and philosophical studies; and disseminating research findings. **Spirituality** is the ability to experience and integrate meaning and purpose in life through a person's connectedness with self, others, art, music, literature, nature or a power greater than oneself (2). **Therapeutic Nursing Interventions** are actions involving critical-thinking designed to assist movement toward mutually agreed upon health outcomes. Implementation of therapeutic nursing interventions requires the use of nursing standardized vocabulary, cognitive processes, psychosocial and psychomotor skills.

1. AACN. 1998. *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education*, p. 14
2. Burkhart, L. & Solari-Twadell, P. A. 2001. Differentiating spirituality and religiousness through a review of the nursing literature. *Nursing Diagnosis: The International Journal of Nursing Language and Classification*, 12(2), 45-54.

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