

MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND OUTCOME STATEMENTS

Mission

The mission of Heartland Community College's Nursing Program is to provide equitable access for the local community to quality nursing education within a caring and supportive environment. Our goal is to prepare nurses who can successfully practice in an increasingly complex healthcare environment, and recognize the importance of being lifelong learners. We believe the following values are essential and fundamental to the nursing education program at Heartland Community College:

Caring: A culture of caring, as a fundamental part of the nursing profession, characterizes our concern and consideration for the whole person, our commitment to the common good, and our outreach to those who are vulnerable. All organizational activities are managed in a participative and person-centered way, demonstrating an ability to understand the needs of others and a commitment to act always in the best interests of all stakeholders (National League for Nursing, 2024).

Clinical Judgement: As one of the key attributes of professional nursing, clinical judgment refers to the process by which nurses make decisions based on nursing knowledge (evidence, theories, ways/patterns of knowing), other disciplinary knowledge, critical thinking, and clinical reasoning. This process is used to understand and interpret information in the delivery of care. Clinical decision-making based on clinical judgment is directly related to care outcomes (American Association of Colleges of Nursing, 2024).

Diversity and Inclusion: A culture of inclusive excellence encompasses many identities, influenced by the intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious and political beliefs, or other ideologies. It also addresses behaviors across academic and health enterprises. Differences affect innovation so we must work to understand both ourselves and one another. By acknowledging the legitimacy of us all, we move beyond mere tolerance to celebrating the richness that differences bring forth (National League for Nursing, 2024).

Integrity: A culture of integrity is evident when principles of open communication, ethical decision-making, and humility are encouraged, expected, and demonstrated consistently. Not only is doing the right thing simply how we do business, but our actions reveal our commitment to truth-telling and to how we always see ourselves from the perspective of others in a larger community (National League for Nursing, 2024).

Lifelong Learning: Professional growth requires a commitment to lifelong learning. Such learning includes continuing education and self-study, networking with professional colleagues, professional reading, achieving specialty certification, and seeking advanced degrees. Nurses must continue to learn about new concepts, issues, concerns, controversies, and healthcare ethics relevant to the current and evolving scope and standards of nursing practice (American Nurses Association, 2015).

Patient-Centered Care: Recognize the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for the patient's preferences, values, and needs (Quality and Safety Education for Nurses, 2022).

Philosophy

The HCC Associate Degree Nursing Program is an integral part of Heartland Community College and as such, derives its philosophy from the vision, mission, values, and goals of the college. The philosophy guides the faculty in providing learner-centered quality educational opportunities, which will ultimately promote healthcare in the diverse communities served by the college.

The faculty believes that a concept-based curriculum model is best suited for equipping nursing students who are skilled in transferring their understanding of pertinent concepts across multiple areas of nursing practice and making connections to current and future learning experiences (Dailey, 2018). The faculty has identified the core elements of individual, environment, healthcare, nursing, and teaching/learning to provide the organizational framework around which the concepts are organized. The faculty also believes that learning occurs through the layering of concepts, from simple to complex.

Individual

The faculty respects the dignity and rights of all individuals regardless of the factors contributing to the individual's health status. The worth of an individual is not affected by illness, ability, socioeconomic status, functional status, or proximity to death. Inherent in the rights of individuals is the right to actively participate in their health care decisions after being given accurate, complete, and understandable information in a manner that facilitates an informed decision (ANA, 2015, Provision 1.3 and 1.4).

Environment

The faculty defines the environment as the sum of all internal and external factors affecting health. Social determinants of health are an important group of non-medical factors in the environment and must be recognized for the substantial influence exerted on an individual's or community's health. An environment of trust can be established when factors such as culture, value systems, religious or spiritual beliefs, lifestyle, social support systems, sexual orientation or gender expression, and primary language are considered during the promotion of health and wellness (ANA, 2015, Provision 1.2).

Healthcare

Respect is extended to all who require and receive care in the promotion of health, prevention of illness and injury, restoration of health, alleviation of pain and suffering, or provision of supportive care. Optimal healthcare enables the individual to live with as much physical,

emotional, social, and religious or spiritual well-being as possible and reflects the individual's own values. Supportive healthcare at the end of life is particularly important to alleviate physical and emotional suffering for the individual and their family/significant others (ANA, 2015, Provision 1.3).

Healthcare is provided through collaboration and teamwork in primary care, secondary care, tertiary care, and the public health setting.

Nursing

Nursing is comprised of the promotion, protection, and restoration of health and well-being; prevention of illness and injury; and the relief of suffering in the care of individuals, groups, families, and communities (ANA, 2015). Nurses must possess scientific knowledge from evidence-based sources that provide a foundation for understanding systematic assessments and observations of persons in their care. Through caring, empathy, compassion, and the development of therapeutic relationships with individuals, families, and communities, the nurse blends the art of nursing with the scientific foundation for nursing practice. It is with this blending of art and science that nurses can be the calm in an often chaotic experience with individuals in their care (2021, Motter, Hassler, & Anthony).

Teaching/Learning

The faculty is committed to the belief that the learner must be actively engaged in the learning process, must be open to new experiences, and willing to undergo the process of change. Faculty also believes that a close correlation between theory and clinical practice is essential to provide the context for learning and set the stage for beginning the clinical judgment process. The teaching/learning process involves a collaborative relationship between faculty and students in which there is mutual respect for intellectual exploration, professional development, and personal growth. The goal of the teaching/learning process is the realization of the student's abilities and potential through the utilization of critical thinking.

The faculty believes that a graduate of the Heartland Community College Associate Degree Nursing Program is well prepared to pass the NCLEX-RN and practice in an entry-level professional nursing position. The faculty also believes in the concept of lifelong learning and encourages students to pursue further academic degrees in nursing. The faculty also believes that those individuals who benefit from public education have a corresponding responsibility of service to their community.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the Associate Degree Nursing Program the graduate will be able to:

- Integrate critical thinking skills to improve client outcomes in a variety of situations. (Adapted from *The Foundation for Critical Thinking*, 2017, <http://www.criticalthinking.org>)
- Implement effective communication skills while demonstrating an inclusive approach that recognizes and respects diversity.
- Integrate data and information technology to formulate clinical judgments. (Adapted from QSEN *Competencies Pre-Licensure KSAs* <http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas/#informatics>)
- Make judgments in practice, substantiated with evidence, that integrate nursing science in the provision of safe, quality patient-centered care in the promotion of health of individuals within a family and community context. (From NLN, 2010, *Outcomes and Competencies for Graduates*, p. 34)
- Implement one's role as a nurse in ways that reflect integrity, responsibility, and legal/ethical practices. (From NLN, 2010, *Outcomes and Competencies for Graduates*, p. 35)
- Function effectively within nursing and interdisciplinary teams, fostering mutual respect, collaboration, and teamwork to achieve quality patient care (Adapted from QSEN *Competencies Pre-Licensure KSAs* http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas/#patient-centered_care)

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