

NURSING PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY/ORGANIZING FRAMEWORK

The Associate Degree Nursing program at Cuyahoga Community College is a career-oriented program that leads to a Certificate of Practical Nursing after completion of the first year, and then an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Nursing after completion of the second year. The nursing program is formulated in accordance with the standards outlined in the National League for Nursing (NLN) Competency Model, The Institute of Medicine's Quality and Safety Education Competencies (QSEN), The Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN), and the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). Specifically, the Faculty believe that the competencies outlined within NLN are central to the organizing framework that builds the curriculum. Furthermore, the Faculty believe that the QSEN competencies define the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the graduate nurse should possess to continuously improve the quality and safety of the healthcare systems within which they work (QSEN, 2018). The NLN and QSEN competencies are fundamental to the success of every graduate and serve as the basis of the Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for the first and second year of the nursing program.

Student achievement of the program SLOs depends on a learning environment built on educational theory that supports the mission and structure of the program, addresses the needs of the students, accomplishes the course SLOs, and achieves the program SLOs at the levels established by Faculty.

The underpinning of the philosophy stems from the work of educational and nursing theories such as adult cognitive learning theories and Benner's Theory of Novice to Expert to accomplish the goals outlined in each program's SLOs. Cognitive learning theory refers to an active, goal-oriented, meaningful learning environment. As current content is taught it relates to, and builds on, the learner's prior knowledge base.

Learning builds, moving from simple concepts and thinking to higher order thinking when applied to more complex patient situations. The Adult learning theory addresses the characteristics of the students in the nursing program. Aspects of adult learning theory used include the adult as a self-directed, actively engaged, problem-centered learner who needs and wants useful information that is readily adaptable to the learning situation. Faculty understand novice learners are rule-driven. Students are challenged to apply all the cognitive thinking skills that make up the concept of clinical judgment. As they progress through the program and enter the stage of Advance Beginner, they can apply higher order thinking in complex patient situations. Application of Benner's theory is helpful when teaching clinical judgment. The Faculty believe that the use of a concept-based curriculum provides the learning environment and tools to support this active engagement in life-long learning.