

**UNIVERSITY OF MOUNT UNION  
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

**DESCRIPTION OF THE NURSING PROGRAM**

The Department of Nursing shares the University's philosophy to foster the University's mission to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work and responsible citizenship. The nursing program curriculum fosters the development of the students' potential to become professional nurses with strong foundational and nursing knowledge, critical thinking skills, ethical values, effective communication, and commitment to the well-being of all people in our diverse community, as a responsible citizen and professional. The Department of Nursing also shares the University's commitment to service, excellence and integrity, and subscribes to the ideals of a liberal arts education with a strong science commitment and utilizes these resources to enhance nursing education.

The nursing curriculum is based on standards of nursing education from professional organizations, accreditation standards, state boards of nursing, and emerging societal needs related to healthcare. The curriculum reflects a commitment to evidenced-based nursing practice for individuals, families, and communities that is grounded in an understanding of societal factors that influence health status and the delivery of healthcare. The students are supported throughout the educational process with learning approaches that facilitate the development of critical thinking and diagnostic reasoning skills through the application of general education and clinical practice theory and knowledge in increasingly complex clinical situations. It is recognized that the development of the professional role and competencies of the nursing student for generalist practice requires developmental and sustained experiential and authentic learning opportunities in real world contexts across the entire nursing program.

This program offers a baccalaureate degree in nursing for pre-licensure applicants with a high school diploma and an accelerated program for applicants with a non-nursing baccalaureate degree. The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program prepares a generalist professional for license as a registered nurse. The program includes content and experiences across the lifespan. Completion of this program prepares the student to apply for licensure and take the National Council Licensing Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Graduates are prepared to practice as registered nurses in a variety of healthcare agencies and thus lead fulfilling lives, have meaningful work and pursue responsible citizenship.

***Purpose of the Nursing Program***

The purpose of the Baccalaureate Nursing Program is to provide excellence in nursing education and prepare well-educated competent professional nurses who provide quality nursing care with respect to; ethical standards, social justice, diversity, and human dignity. The goals of the BSN Program are to prepare:

1. Liberally educated nurses who are able to provide holistic nursing care;
2. Entry-level practitioners as generalist professional nurses; and

3. Baccalaureate nurses with an education that serves as a foundation for graduate and continuing lifelong learning.

### *Mission Statement of the Program*

The mission of the Nursing Program is to educate nurses who serve as leaders in the healthcare profession and promote health and wellness within our diverse community.

### *Philosophy of the Program*

The Nursing Program supports the University of Mount Union's mission to prepare students for fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship. The faculty in the nursing program recognizes the uniqueness of each student. The faculty encourages students to participate actively in the learning process to foster the development of their potential to become professional nurses with strong foundational and nursing knowledge, critical thinking skills, ethical values, and commitment to the well-being of all people in our diverse community.

Nursing education is an interactive teaching-learning process within an interdisciplinary curriculum. Faculty create an interactive teaching-learning environment that encourages students to be involved in the learning process and facilitate the students' competency in critical thinking and clinical reasoning inquiry, decision-making abilities, leadership skills, professionalism, ethical and value insights, caring, healing, communication, personal and social responsibility and accountability, and respect for diversity and human dignity. Learning is influenced by past experiences, values and skills. Learning is a life-long experience in which students obtain skills and values necessary for fulfilling their lives, obtaining meaningful work, and becoming responsible citizens. Teaching encompasses various ways of assisting students in and out of the classroom.

In line with many of the grand theorist of nursing, the philosophy of the nursing program centers around four foundational nursing concepts that include the **client, environment, health, and nursing**.

The faculty believe that the major focus of nursing is the **client**. The client for professional nurses may consist of individuals, families, groups, organizations, communities, and populations. The client is an individual who has dignity and inherent worth as an integrated holistic physical, psychological, social, and spiritual being. The client possesses values, beliefs, attitudes, and life experiences which influence interaction and existence with the environment. The client may serve various roles within a family, group, organization, and community to share responsibilities, transmit cultural values, and meet human needs and optimal health.

The **environment** provides a context for interactions and relationships for clients. The environment can be a source of internal and external stressors as well as a resource for clients. Clients are continuously interacting with their environments

to reach homeostasis throughout their lifespans, from conception to death. Homeostasis is a dynamic process attained by a client's ability to adapt to his or her environment to achieve an optimal level of health. Maladaptation to the environment disturbs homeostasis and creates illnesses and alterations in health.

The nursing faculty believe that **health** is a dynamic state of balance between wellness and illness. Wellness is an active state of being healthy by living a lifestyle that promotes good physical, psychological, social, and spiritual health. A disturbance in health affects the balance and harmony of the individual, family, group, community, and population. Each person defines health in terms of his or her values, beliefs, knowledge, and person-environment interaction. Family, culture, community, and society influence one's personal perception of health. Stress can disrupt health. Health can be maximized and maintained by mobilizing resources, implementing therapeutic nursing interventions, and caring relationships.

The faculty believe **nursing** is a professional discipline that is built on nursing knowledge, theory, and research. The discipline of nursing integrates the arts, sciences, and caring into professional practice to assist clients to attain, maintain or restore their optimal level of functioning. Professional nursing is grounded in liberal arts education and requires knowledge in nursing, natural and behavioral sciences, arts, and the humanities. Professional nursing requires critical reasoning, clinical judgment, communication, and assessment skills.

The "Nursing Process" is used as a framework for delivery of care in practice. Nurses recognize the important distinction between disease and the individual's illness/wellness experience. Assisting patients to understand this distinction is an important aspect of nursing care. Nurses promote health, prevent disease and disability, and care for those who are ill or in the dying process. Nurses provide holistic nursing care that is comprehensive and focuses on the mind, body, and spirit, as well as emotions. A professional nurse understands the importance of holistic assessment to gain an in depth understating of physical, psychological, social, and spiritual wellbeing of a patient. Diagnosing the health status of the patient within the context of the patient's values is essential in providing a framework for planning, implementing, and evaluating outcomes of care.

The faculty believe that the professional nurse is a member of healthcare teams composed of professionals and other personnel that deliver treatment and services in complex, evolving healthcare systems. The nurse brings a unique blend of knowledge, skills, and attitudes to the healthcare team. The nurse demonstrates respect for autonomy, accountability, responsibility, human dignity, social justice, an ethical framework, professional development, and leadership in practice. The professional nurse provides patient-centered care that identifies, respects, and addresses patients' differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs. Patient-centered care also involves the coordination of continuous care, listening to, communicating with, and educating patients and caregivers regarding health, wellness, and disease management and prevention.

Program learning outcomes are derived from the mission and philosophy of the nursing program. They provide a framework for organization of content, skills, and expected professional behavior.

### ***Nursing Program Learning Outcomes***

The graduate of the Baccalaureate Nursing Program will:

1. Integrate knowledge from nursing, the sciences and the liberal arts to make nursing judgments based on evidence.
2. Prioritize quality, safe, and holistic care for diverse patient populations using the nursing process.
3. Collaborate and communicate effectively to deliver holistic patient-centered care.
4. Analyze organizational and system leadership factors impacting the nursing profession and practice.
5. Integrate professional and ethical standards into nursing practice.

### ***The Organizing Conceptual Framework of the Nursing Curriculum***

The nursing curriculum is designed to educate students to become competent practitioners and leaders in their profession. The Conceptual Framework of the Department of Nursing consists of the main four concepts of nursing and five (5) curriculum threads. The four main nursing concepts of Client, Environment, Health, and Nursing make up the foundational base of the conceptual framework. The client is the primary focus of the nursing care (center of the framework) that is continuously interacting with his/her environment to reach adaptation and optimal health. The Nurse makes the outermost circle of the framework to show the role of the nurse as a provider of patient-centered holistic care.

The curriculum threads spread vertically through the conceptual framework and main nursing concepts. These five (5) threads represent the Student Learning Outcomes that are developed and refined as the student progresses through the curriculum of the nursing program. These threads are:

1. Knowledge Integration: Students build upon previous knowledge and experiences learned during their course of study to draw conclusions, make decisions, and understand clients' needs, responses, and adaptation to external and internal stressors. This knowledge is acquired from nursing, sciences, arts, humanities, research evidence-based data, and life experiences.

2. **Client Centered Care:** Students learn to apply critical thinking in the design and implementation of quality, safe nursing care. The nursing process is used to develop a holistic, client-centered plan of care across the lifespan in a variety of healthcare settings to promote health, prevent disease, and maintain well-being for individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.
3. **Communication and Collaboration:** Students learn principles of effective communication with clients and the healthcare team. Verbal, written, and electronic communication are used to facilitate professional interactions to achieve quality, safe outcomes.
4. **Leadership:** Students explore various leadership roles that impact nursing practice and population health. Students learn about financial, social, cultural, environmental and global issues, guidelines and policies that influence healthcare, patient outcomes, quality improvement, and the advancement of the nursing profession.
5. **Professional and Ethics:** Students learn to model moral, ethical and legal conduct, demonstrate patient advocacy and accountability for personal and professional behavior, while upholding the scope and standards of professional nursing practice.

# Organizing Curriculum Conceptual Framework

