



Degree Level Expectations for Graduates Receiving the Degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing Second-Entry Program

Introduction

The degree level expectations are based on the Ontario Council of Academic Vice Presidents (OCAV) Guidelines for University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations for Baccalaureate Degree (honours), the College of Nurses (2007) Entry-to-Practice Competencies and the Canadian Nurses Association (2007) Competencies.

Degree Level Expectations for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing

The Lawrence S. Bloomberg Faculty of Nursing has adopted the six categories of degree level expectations outlined in the OCAV Guidelines:

Depth and Breadth of Knowledge

Students develop a depth of knowledge and critical understanding of the key concepts, methodologies, current advances, theoretical approaches and assumptions in nursing. Nursing courses have a strong basis in nursing knowledge, health and social sciences, humanities, research methods, and ethics. Interdisciplinary approaches are the norm to explore and address the variety of illness experiences students encounter in both their classroom and clinical learning. Because students come into the program with previous university experience, generally a previous degree, they bring an additional breadth of knowledge to their studies.

Classroom discussions encourage students to bring their diverse backgrounds to bear on nursing issues and practices to foster the learning of all students. Students also develop an understanding of other professional perspectives and how they intersect with nursing through interprofessional learning opportunities with medical, pharmacy, dentistry, social work, occupational therapy and physiotherapy students. For example, students participate in the pain curriculum, a mandatory 20 hour curriculum, with students from across the health science departments/faculties.

Students develop the ability to gather, review, evaluate and interpret information and acquire a detailed knowledge of and experience in research in nursing. These skills are obtained through learning and applying the principles of evidence based practice throughout their program. The required research course also teaches both research methods and critical appraisal skills. Students with a particular interest in attaining advanced research skills can elect to work with a senior nursing researcher during the summer. This program is made available through a variety of funded opportunities.

Knowledge of Methodologies

Students attain the capacity to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches to solving problems using well established ideas and techniques. This capacity is fostered through the development of clinical judgment. Students learn to evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches in solving both clinical problems and more abstract problems. In their writing assignments and seminar presentations they are required to demonstrate the capacity to create a sustained argument that is based on clinical/research evidence and a range of theoretical perspectives. Because methodologies change with scientific developments, our students are kept

current by leading clinical experts and researchers who are involved in both teaching and curriculum development and renewal.

Application of Knowledge

Because nursing is a practice based discipline, knowledge of methodology and application of knowledge are closely related. The University's rich network of affiliated teaching hospitals and community partners means that students enter a variety of practice setting in hospitals and the community within weeks of entering the program. In these settings, as well as in the classroom, students develop the knowledge, ability and confidence to understand and manage complex clinical situations. The Faculty's Simulation Laboratory provides a controlled and supportive environment for students to apply knowledge and improve their clinical judgment and skill without undue anxiety. Over the course of the program as their abilities progress, students take on more independent work and clinical responsibility in a range of settings.

Communication Skills

Students engage in a variety of learning opportunities to develop superior communication skills in receiving and providing information orally and in writing. Writing skills are developed through significant writing assignments and the ability to argue effectively is acquired through interactions with peers and faculty.

A significant focus is placed on the acquisition of communication skills in relation to nursing clinical practice. Students learn to establish trust and rapport in interpersonal relationships with patients/clients and team members and learn to demonstrate respect for the values and beliefs of diverse people. Health teaching for individuals and groups, the documentation and verbal communication of care provided, and health and community assessment skills are all learned in the program.

Awareness of Limits of Knowledge

Throughout the program students are supported to recognize the limitations of their individual experience and knowledge, and to seek guidance from more experienced practitioners. Early in the program students encounter acutely ill patients in hospital. The immediacy of these experiences impresses upon students the importance of recognizing their own limitations to ensure patient safety. The limits of scientific knowledge to maintain human life also become evident.

Students also learn to engage in quality assurance exercises expected of regulated health care professionals in Ontario. These exercises develop students' capacity to assess their own learning needs, to obtain feedback from other health care team members, and to implement and evaluate their learning objectives.

Autonomy and Professional Capacity

Professional Standards of Nursing demand the exercise of effective decision-making in complex clinical contexts, team work, life-long, self-directed learning, and effective team work. The exercise of initiative, personal responsibility, and accountability is emphasized throughout the program. A large number of competencies in professional nursing relate to ethical practice and professional responsibility and accountability. Students learn to conduct their practice in accordance with the Canadian Nurses Association (2008) *Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*, the College of Nurses of Ontario (2008) *Practice Standard: Ethics*, and relevant legislation. They also are exposed to a number of ethical frameworks, ethical and legal issues and ethical decision-making processes in the classroom and clinical settings. The Faculty requires adherence to the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters to ensure that students' behaviour is consistent with academic integrity.

Other Degree Level Expectations

Students are expected to become active global citizens. Three capacities are required to develop global citizenship: 1) the critical examination of ourselves and our traditions; 2) the recognition that all persons are fellow citizens who deserve equal moral worth and consideration; 3) narrative

imagination, the ability to imagine what it might be like to be a person different from oneself. Central themes of the curriculum are diversity, social justice and global citizenship. Students begin by identifying their own diversity, through self-reflection on their family of origin and their own personal differences, in courses focusing on families in the childbearing years and older persons and their families. During these courses, student complete readings and assignments that identify best practices in caring for diverse patients and clients. In addition, a section on Global Health is contained in the course Primary Health Care: Nursing Perspectives course (NUR 461) and a Global Health elective course (NUR 480) is supported by global placements in Canada and internationally.