

## UMKC SoNHS Philosophy of Nursing

The UMKC School of Nursing and Health Studies (SoNHS) nursing programs adhere to interacting and interdependent principles based on major concepts in the nursing paradigm (Humans, Environment, Health, and Nursing) and the tenets of professional nursing education, adult education, and distance education. This philosophy provides the foundation on which the School's nursing programs operate and is reflected in their goals and mission statements.

We see Humans as individuals with differing preferences and needs composed of diverse spiritual, physiological, psychological, developmental, and sociocultural dimensions. We believe that Humans possess inherent worth and dignity; the capacity to learn, decide, change, and assume responsibility; and innate potential for self-actualization and independence. We see Environment as internal and external factors and interacting contexts –social, physical, and perceived in nature - which affect Humans. We see Health as a dynamic state dependent upon environmental influences that help or hinder individuals in actively fulfilling needs. Health is facilitated by integrated functioning aimed at maximizing individual potential. Health care is a service people use to maintain wellness or manage their health-related needs. The health service industry, with nurses as an essential component, provides systems to address these needs. A leader on inter-professional healthcare teams, nursing is a profession which provides unique and collaborative contributions to the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of the optimal health of individuals, groups, and communities. The integration of both the art and the science of nursing forms the basis for holistic professional nursing.

Professional nursing practice provides theory and evidence-based care to humans in complex healthcare systems. As autonomous professionals, nurses are accountable to humans for health outcomes. As a collaborative professional, the nurse has an interdependent relationship with other health care providers. Professional nurses provide care based on the critical analysis of data arising from humans and their diverse internal and external environments. Professional nursing practice involves multiple roles - inquirer, leader, educator, clinical expert, and consultant - whose depth and breadth depend on educational preparation and adherence to professional values and standards as promulgated in the American Nurses' Association's Code of Ethics, Social Policy Statement, and Scope and Standards of Practice.

Graduates of the UMKC nursing programs are prepared to be dynamic professional nurse leaders in the healthcare system, especially with urban and underserved populations. Professional nursing education begins with a baccalaureate degree and continues through the doctoral level. Baccalaureate education allows individuals to acquire and use a broad knowledge base for entry, as a generalist, into the profession of nursing. It also enables Registered Nurses to become professional nurse generalists. The nurse generalist, using a holistic approach, meets the diverse health concerns of individuals, families, and communities. Masters level education enables baccalaureate-prepared nurses to build upon their undergraduate education to practice as nurse educators and clinical experts. Doctoral level advanced practice-focused education (the DNP) prepares advanced practice nurses as clinical scholars who contribute to evidence-based practice which positively impacts healthcare outcomes and assists in creating quality care unique to diverse groups. Advanced practice nurses are educated at both the MSN and DNP degree levels. Doctoral level research-focused education (the PhD) prepares graduates as nurse scholars who assume leadership roles in healthcare and education systems, advance nursing knowledge, conduct nursing research and help develop healthcare policies.

We apply the adult educational principles that learning is a life-long process in which adult learners actively participate; that adults are motivated to learn by a variety of factors; and that learners' life experiences have value. Distance education enhances learning, respects adult learners, and overcomes access barriers by providing a unique educational experience through technology.

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