

PLU School of Nursing Philosophy

The Philosophy of the School of Nursing is guided by the mission and goals of Pacific Lutheran University and the mission of the School of Nursing. The university's mission is to develop knowledgeable individuals with an understanding of the human condition, an awareness of humane and spiritual values, and an ability to formulate and express ideas clearly and effectively. The university strives to empower its students for lives of thoughtful inquiry, service, leadership, and care for persons, the community, and the Earth. The School of Nursing faculty fully embraces these concepts and further hold beliefs about nursing, persons, environment and health which direct the development of programs and guide the educational process.

Nursing is an intellectual discipline that is both an art and a science. It is a profession rooted in service. Caring is the essence of nursing and the unifying focus for its knowledge, theory, and research. Guided by caring, nurses deliver humanistic health care in and across all environments to all persons – individuals, families, and communities. Built on a liberal arts education, nursing draws on the competencies, knowledge, and values that are needed to ensure that all persons achieve clinical, functional, adaptive, and eudemonistic health, or well being. As the context and scope of nursing practice changes, the role of the nurse continues to develop. Inherent in this role is the responsibility for political and social activism.

Persons are individual, families, and communities, and have inherent dignity and worth. Each has physical, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions, and is more than the sum of these parts. Their life experiences are influenced by their environments and their potential to exercise free will.

Environment is integral to, and inseparable from person, consisting of both internal and external realms of influence. Persons can optimize their health by making choices based on their understanding of environment. Environment includes the political, technological, economic, social, and cultural dimensions that are reflected in the health care delivery system.

Health and well being are defined by all persons within the constructs of the environment in which they live. The harmonious interconnectedness of the physical, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions of the person is necessary to achieve clinical, functional, adaptive, and eudemonistic health or well being. All persons have the right to access to health care and to participate in decisions affecting their health, quality of life, and death.

Education is a life – long process of reflection, intellectual challenge, and practice. Learning occurs in the context of relevant situations with thoughtful contemplation, and is most likely to occur where learners are self-motivated, active participants who accept responsibility for learning. Nursing education facilitates the learning process through the use of strategies that encourage creativity and critical thinking. A supportive environment for nursing education is one of caring in which all persons are respected, trusted, and nurtured. Through education, the faculty endeavor to develop and enhance learners' individual growth, professional practice, and social responsibility and leadership in increasingly complex health care environments.