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Unitary Human Caring Science Embodied in Self/Soul and an AHNA Endorsed Holistic Nursing Curriculum

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This presentation addresses how Unitary Human Caring Science (UHCS) is expressed throughout a hybrid pre-licensure Bachelor of Science (BSN) nursing program. UHCS emerged from harmonic coherence of the theoretical works of Rogers (1970,1992), Newman (1994), Smith (1992), and Watson (2008, 2012). The faculty added the word “human” to emphasize the lived experience of caring within nursing situations. Additional curricular influences were holistic nursing perspectives, quantum physics, complexity science, and indigenous wisdom. Input from multicultural partners was elicited throughout curriculum development.

This theoretical framework is explicated by concepts central to the focus of the discipline of nursing as described by Newman, Smith, Pharris, and Jones (2008). In addition to the aforementioned, six National League for Nursing Integrating Concepts (NLN, 2010) form the foundational structure of the curriculum. Coupled with the lived experience and professional practice of nurse educators, clinicians and other outside advisors, the praxis of nursing is revealed. This curriculum received endorsement as an academic holistic nursing program by the American Holistic Nurses Credentialing Corporation (AHNCC) fall 2018. Endorsement attests to the distinction of this program and provides an opportunity for graduates to sit for the holistic nursing credentialing exam upon successful completion of the RN licensure exam.

UHCS is suffused in didactic, lab, simulation, and clinical opportunities throughout the entire student educational experience. Holistic approaches are explored alongside practices of Western medicine. Contemplative practices, including meditation and other self-care approaches, are fostered to develop resilience and compassion for self and others. Students develop caritas literacy, the enhanced awareness and perception of caring in human environments, through reflections, self-assessments, peer critiques, written and verbal assignments, and nursing skill evaluations. Examples of these components are included in the student’s e-portfolio summative assignment. A sampling of these tools along with a depiction of the curriculum structure will be presented for dialogue.

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