

The Associate Degree Nursing program supports the mission of Mercer County Community College. The faculty is committed to providing high quality nursing education to meet the diverse and changing health-care needs of the community and to promote the development of qualified students prepared for the professional role of the entry level registered nurse. Students will be challenged to achieve their goals in a caring, creative and engaged learning environment.

The philosophy of the Associate Degree Nursing program is derived from the essential components of nursing, humans, health and environment. The foundation for the curriculum is based on the principles of patient-centered care, team work & collaboration, clinical reasoning, quality improvement, leadership, information technology, and safety. Based on these principles, faculty mentor, teach and encourage students to develop competency in the knowledge, skills and attitudes required to provide safe and effective nursing care.

The graduate of the Associate Degree Nursing program at Mercer County Community College is prepared to meet the educational competencies defined by the National League for Nursing (2010), Institute of Medicine (2004), and the Nurse Practice Act of New Jersey. Graduates of this program meet the requirements to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN).

A concept based approach to learning will provide the opportunity to apply adult learning theory to meet the needs of our diverse student population. Education is a life-long process that affords the learner the opportunity to develop intellectually, socially, and personally. Learning is a personal and active process that involves cognitive and psychomotor activities to fulfill ones potential. The student is a proactive participant in the learning process and is responsible for the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes through goal directed learning endeavors. The teaching-learning process is a collaborative experience between students and faculty where knowledge is shared and there is a commitment to excellence and mutual respect. Faculty shapes the educational environment which empowers students to become independent learners, to accept responsibility for life-long learning, and to develop professional behaviors.

Upon completion of the program the graduate is qualified to submit an application to take the NCLEX-RN® examination.

The nursing program uses the program's mission and philosophy to formulate program student learning outcomes which serve as the basis for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the nursing program curriculum.

The nursing faculty at Mercer County Community College defines the essential components of the curriculum as:

- Humans
Humans are complex, multidimensional and unique individuals possessing value and worth, and a member of a family, community and culturally diverse society. All humans

have dynamic bio-physical, psychological, socio-cultural, spiritual and developmental needs that contribute to health, quality of life and achievement of potential. All humans should be cared for, respected, nurtured, understood and assisted. In order to provide and manage care, nurses must view the individual at the center of any nursing activity.

- **Health**
Health is a dynamic, ever-changing state of mental, physical and spiritual well-being, which exists on a continuum from wellness to illness. An individual's needs for healthcare are determined by their position on the continuum. An individual's health is based on their cultural perceptions and beliefs of health and illness. The individual is responsible for and capable of identifying, learning and practicing health behaviors that can promote wellness, prevent illness, restore or maintain wellness or achieve a dignified death.
- **Environment**
The environment concept of nursing comprises all the internal and external factors that act on human beings and affect their behavior and development. This includes psychological, spiritual, social, physical and cultural forces as well as the environment in which nursing care is provided. The idea behind this concept is that the environment influences individual and collective health and that individuals who experience a positive, comfortable nursing environment are more likely to demonstrate good health versus those who receive a level of care that is lacking.
- **Nursing**
Nursing refers to the process of caring for the health of human beings and assisting individuals in meeting their needs while also teaching them the basics of caring for themselves. The responsibilities of the nursing profession are to promote good health, to prevent disease when possible, to promote healing in those who are ill and to ease the suffering of dying patients. The concept of nursing extends beyond the health care facility to the community and society as a whole, and views individual health and the environment as closely related. Nursing is defined as care that is tailored to the needs of individuals and that is provided in an efficient and effective manner.
- **Patient Centered Care**
The nurse will provide holistic patient centered care that identifies and recognizes an individual's preferences, values, and needs to promote human flourishing, by providing compassionate, coordinated, age and culturally appropriate, safe and effective care.
- **Collaboration**
Function effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality patient care.

- **Clinical Reasoning**
Clinical reasoning is the process of using nursing judgment through the spirit of inquiry to arrive at a decision regarding the prevention, diagnosis, or treatment of a clinical problem
- **Quality Improvement**
The use of criteria and improvement methods to monitor outcomes, design and test changes which lead to the continuous improvement of quality and safety.
- **Leadership**
The process of influencing people through one's professional identity to accomplish goals or to move toward group goal setting and achievement
- **Information Management**
The use of information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making.