

19th Global Nursing Education Conference

April 27-28, 2017 Las Vegas, USA



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Methods used to facilitate nursing students' critical thinking

Statement of Problem: Nursing students must learn how to critically think. Nursing's CT definition evolved from the 1990 CT consensus statement developed by experts from education, social sciences, physical sciences, and philosophy disciplines. The critical thinking in nursing consensus statement (CTNCS) consists of two categories: Habits of the mind and cognitive skills. The behavior dimensions in habits of the mind (HM) are perseverance, open-mindedness, flexibility, confidence, creativity, inquisitiveness, reflection, intellectual integrity, intuition, and contextual perspective. Cognitive skills (CS) dimensions are information seeking, discriminating, analyzing, transforming knowledge, predicting, applying standards, and logical reasoning. Through active learning students develop knowledge bases examine relationships between concepts and make patient-centered health care decisions.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to describe whether educational approaches faculty can be used to facilitate students' CT development with application of CTNCS.

Methodology, Findings & Theoretical Orientation: Education pedagogy and adult learning. Six course areas where faculty maximize students' CT in nursing with application of CTNCS include: written learner-centered course and lesson objectives; select essential reading assignments; provision of lesson slides before class; course delivery methods of blended-learning method or flipped-classroom approach; learning activities of in-class quizzes, case study discussion or team-based learning groups, and simulation, and application of CT knowledge on examinations. All CS dimensions are applicable in each of the six areas, while HM dimensions vary with the area, where students are expected to use critical thinking.

Conclusion: Faculty responsible for creating a learning environment that encourages students' CT development. Nursing educators need to develop CT assessment tools in nursing based on the 17 dimensions to verify best practice evidence of CT development.

Biography

Audrey E Nelson has expertise in teaching and promotion of students' critical thinking development. She has worked with student for more than 20 years to help the students be successful on course exams and NCLEX licensure exams. She has developed an independent technology course to promote study skills, time management and test taking strategies. She was inducted into the first cohort of the UNMC Interprofessional Education Academy in 2016.

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