

PROCESS OF CURRICULUM PLANNING

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Nursing education is an instrument to bring about needed change in nursing practice with curriculum as its instrument to achieve the goals of nursing education, that is to bring about needed change in nursing practice according to the changing needs of the society and learner, utilizing available knowledge which is appropriate and communicable. Thus the challenge before nursing educators and administrators is what learning experiences to select for imparting education to nursing students at various levels of courses, so that the desired outcomes are possible with minimum time and resources. This necessitates to devote sufficient time for curriculum planning in nursing.

The word "Curriculum Planning" is comprised of two important concepts—Planning and Curriculum.

PLANNING

Planning is essentially a mental process. In other words planning is a thinking process of deciding:

What we believe about the thing to be done—formulation of philosophy

What is to be achieved—formulation of objectives

How should it be done—thinking of strategy of work

Who is to do it—thinking of resources in terms of man, money and material

Where it is to take place—thinking of place of activity

When it is to be done—thinking about the time of activity.

Who will interpret the activity to the community and other professional groups—thinking whether teacher, student or what categories of personnel should be eligible to interpret the activity.

How to know the results of the activity—thinking of evaluation of the work done.

What will be the approach to improve upon the strategy of work—thinking about research studies.

CURRICULUM

Lambertson defines curriculum as a composite of the entire range of experiences which the learner undergoes under the guidance of the school.

In more broad terms curriculum is regarded as all the experiences of the child for which the school assumes responsibility; includes subject-matter, teacher-pupil relationships, opportunities for pupil participation in group activities, social assemblies, use of local environment in learning and evaluation procedures; all aim to help children enrich their own lives and contribute to improvement of society through acquisition of useful information skills and attitudes.

Lambertson stresses that curriculum is a reflection of what a profession can and should be rather than a reflection of current practice. This statement of Lambertson connotes that curriculum is a dynamic concept and aims to improve the present and plan for the future, hence curriculum planning.

Curriculum planning will include all the thinking process mentioned under planning. In nursing, curriculum planning in short means a thinking process about a course of study to be undertaken for a group of students which includes: (i) What we believe about a nurse and her present and future responsibilities in relation to health needs of the society. (ii) Thinking about the meaning of a nurse and nursing. What we believe about nursing profession and its contribution in the health of the nation. Thinking for

a philosophy of nursing profession. (iii) To what extent a particular course will prepare nurses to meet the society's health needs—thinking for objectives of a course. (iv) From where are we going to get students for the course and what will be their expected educational and social background—thinking about the potentials of recruitment and minimum educational requirements (v) Who will teach and what will be their qualifications—thinking about faculty and their expected minimum educational background. (vi) What resources are available and what resources are to be procured—thinking about man, money and material at hand and to be sought. (vii) How to know the effectiveness of the strategy and who with what—thinking for evaluation, personnel to do it and tools to be used. (viii) What will be done to improve upon the activity to tailor with the emerging needs—thinking about action/pure research studies to improve upon the course.

Curriculum planning is followed by curriculum construction (Curriculum construction is different from curriculum planning in the sense that planning is only a thinking process whereas construction is putting that thinking into action) but both are necessary.

OUTLINE OF TASKS NECESSARY FOR DEVELOPING A CURRICULUM:

Formulate a philosophy of nursing education. A sound philosophy of nursing is based on beliefs about a nurse, a good citizen, nursing and education.

(a) Clarify values about the good person and the good nurse. (b) Clarify the role of the nurse in the health team (c) Clarify the role of the school in helping to develop the good person and good

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nurse. (d) Clarify values and meeting of good nursing faculty. (e) What do we believe about education? Should education consist of merely imparting information. (f) What do we see as the purpose of education? —Should education help the learner to change certain attitudes and develop critical and analytical thinking? —Should education consist of some information of facts or should it be future oriented? (g) What is the meaning of nursing? —Should it be procedure centered? —Should it be functional or comprehensive? —What does society think about nursing?

Infer objectives from :

(a) Studies of the learner. (b) Health needs of the community. (c) Resources available. (d) Views of subject specialists. (e) Available knowledge. (f) Needs of the future.

Formulate a theory of learning :

(a) Agree upon a definition of learning. (b) Agree upon important principles of learning. (c) Consider teachers role in teaching-learning process. (d) Consider students role in teaching-learning process.

Select objectives that are appropriate, significant and consistent by using criteria of the stated educational philosophy and theory of learning.

- (a) Definite behavioural and content aspects of objectives in sufficiently precise and specific terms that can be used as a guide for selection of teaching-learning experiences and devising evaluation instrument to measure their attainment.
- (b) State objectives in terms of changes desired in student behaviour in relation to defined areas of content.

Select learning experience derived from defined objectives (keep in

view the principles of learning).

Organize learning experiences—see that continuity, sequence, integration and correlation of different courses of studies.

Construct evaluation devices—these should be based on the behaviours and content defined in educational objectives.

Criteria for Curriculum Planning & Construction

Curriculum planning should :

Proceed in the selection of courses and course content, units and lessons that are in keeping with the philosophy of education and nursing education and the stated objectives which are developed on the basis of the present and future emerging health needs of the community.

Be a group process comprising of educators, and administrators and be completed in a democratic environment.

Be based on an agreed upon educational principles and psychological theories of learning.

Provide for reflective thinking and/or problem solving.

Take into account individual difference in the learning process.

Be based on the evaluation of existing programmes and followup studies of graduates.

Take into consideration the importance of transfer of learning from one situation to another.

Emphasis on self-activity.

Stress on continuity, sequence, integration and correlation and fusion of different courses.

Stress the importance of audio-visual aids in teaching-learning process.

Be a continuous activity in order to meet and plan for ever changing health needs of individuals, families and community at large.

Take into account the possible help from community and students.

Be based on research studies conducted at home and abroad in the field of general and nursing education.

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AN APPEAL

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