

# Nursing Strategies for Enhancing Population Health

Ana Coutinho\*

Department of Nursing, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

**Corresponding author:** Ana Coutinho, Department of Nursing, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile, E-mail: Coutinho\_a@gmail.com

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## Description

The American Association of the Colleges of Nursing (AACN) has stressed the importance of the liberal arts as a foundation of nursing education that supports the development of clinical reasoning and judgments in their recently updated essentials for professional nursing education. The term liberal arts include specific disciplines such as the humanities, social sciences and sciences.

The humanities encompass the study of how people process and document the human experience” and include literature, art, history, languages and philosophy. The humanities allow for expression through art and literature, exploration of what it means to be human in philosophy and examination of meaning across time via history. In their classic work using the arts and humanities to teach nursing: A Creative Approach, Valiga and Brüderle state the following regarding the humanities

If educators are to help nursing students learn what it means to be human, they must guide students to examine their attitudes toward life, the place of individual in society, the nature of our common humanity, the significance of human endeavors and the relationships and responsibilities of individuals to one another. There must be a focus on people, their experiences, their response to and interpretation of the world around them and the meanings they make. The humanities provide such a focus and a forum for this kind of examination.

Changing demographics, globalization, epidemiology, technology and politics require humanities to be included in nursing curricula as increased contact with patients from varying backgrounds requires proficiency in navigating personal differences, which exposure to the humanities can support. Additionally, the humanities assist one in developing the ability to translate thoughts and emotions effectively. As such, the humanities serve an important purpose in nursing education, enabling learners to be able to examine how nurses and nursing can have an impact on and in turn how our commonality can have an impact on nursing.

## Nursing Education

A key question regarding nursing education and the humanities is when the inclusion of humanities curriculum should take place in baccalaureate nursing programs. In many

nursing programs, humanities courses are taken as core either before or alongside upper-level nursing coursework, with little to no integration taking place. In her foundational article, Hermann noted that when humanities content is taught in separate coursework, the connections between the humanities courses and the learning needs of the professional nurse may be lost. Benner et al. reported that nursing curriculum rich in the humanities and sciences will play an increasingly important role in health care. More recently, the AACN supported the integration of the liberal arts, including the humanities, in nursing education.

A literature search revealed two previous literature reviews exploring the use of art-based pedagogy in nursing education. First, Rieger et al. conducted a mixed methods systematic review of the literature examining art-based pedagogy among undergraduate nursing students. They found that arts-based pedagogy facilitated learning in the cognitive and affective domains. Second, Obara et al. recently completed a literature review of Arts-Based Pedagogy (ABP) using qualitative thematic analysis to identify key theoretical foundations of ABP.

They also explored examples of art-inspired strategies and recommendations for using ABP in nursing education at the undergraduate and graduate level. Obara et al. noted that ABP was based on the philosophies and theories of nursing and education and that “ABP may be well suited to human services disciplines such as nursing as they trigger creativity and require reflection”. Whittemore and Knafl noted that the integrative review is the only method that allows for multiple methodologies and “has the potential to play a greater role in evidence-based practice for nursing”. Since Obara et al. used a general literature review with thematic analysis, it is felt that using an integrative review method will strengthen the body of evidence regarding the use of humanities in baccalaureate nursing education from the last five years. Additionally, as Obara et al. and Rieger et al. focused on art-based pedagogy, the current integrative review will explore a more inclusive humanities focus to expand knowledge on the use of humanities in nursing courses. The purpose of this current research was to conduct an integrative review of the literature to explore the use of the humanities in baccalaureate nursing programs. Nurses play a key role in the health of Americans.

Unfortunately, the nation is expected to experience an increasing nursing shortage due to nurses retiring or leaving the profession and growing healthcare needs. In this context, it is

important to prepare nursing students to be practice-ready graduates. To accomplish this goal, students must learn domain knowledge that is reflective of current nursing practices and have ample experiential learning opportunities, which require close collaboration between academia and practice in nursing education. Traditionally, faculty members who have developed nursing curriculum and the course content are mainly from within academia. The aims of the article are to describe prior efforts in academia-practice collaboration for baccalaureate-

level nursing education and to propose the innovative Nursing Education and Practice Continuum model, which expands our team's successful collaborative projects. The model conceptualizes nursing education as a continuum between academia and practice, which constantly interact and evolve, and facilitates co-building and co-implementing nursing education courses for both students and practicing nurses. Nursing practice is also a continuum between experiential learning and practice after graduation.