

Educational and Professional Goals

Angi Wood

School of Nursing, Old Dominion University

NURS 401: Professional Development for Baccalaureate Nursing

Cheryl Honeycutt, MSN, RN, CNE

March 6, 2022

Introduction and Interest in Nursing

As a senior in high school, I learned that my district offered a certified nursing assistant class as an elective. I enrolled in the course and thoroughly enjoyed the content and the clinical experiences. It was this class that piqued my interest in nursing as a profession. I am currently in my third of four semesters of the Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program at Tidewater Community College and mid-way through my first semester as a concurrent student seeking a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at Old Dominion University.

The journey from my first introduction to nursing in high school to my current enrollment status has spanned over twenty years. There are certainly more efficient routes to a career in nursing, but I appreciate every opportunity and experience along the way. As an adult student I recognize the ways in which my life experiences enhance my learning and application of the principles of nursing. For example, the experience of birthing a child only increases my understanding of the nursing process as it relates to taking care of maternity and newborn patients. Caring for an aging family member highlights the interpersonal skills and depth of knowledge regarding disease processes that I strive to develop as a future nurse. Although I am sorry I wasn't able to continue my nursing career as a young person I am grateful for the opportunity I have now to accomplish my long-held goal of becoming a nurse. Having waited so long for this chance I think I appreciate it more than I could have as a younger person, this has motivated me to attain a BSN as soon as I can, time is of the essence!

Goals

Educational Goals

One goal I have as a nursing student is related to nursing skills. In the clinical setting we can practice nursing skills. Students learn these skills on a theoretical basis and practice in a

laboratory setting, but the clinical setting is where one can apply this knowledge in a real-world situation. I have a list of skills that I have been taught and carry it with me during clinical. I mark off every time I can perform a nursing skill in the clinical setting. The purpose of doing this is to ensure that I am using my clinical hours to the highest benefit. As a student is helpful to perform nursing skills under the guidance of an instructor. It is my goal to have performed each skill on my list at least once during my clinical experience. Additionally, I hope to perform some skills, such as medication administration, numerous times under the supervision of instructors and nursing staff. I want to be a nurse who is thorough and safe while performing skills, practicing in the clinical setting is a good way to achieve this goal.

One cannot become a nurse without licensure, to that end I want to use my educational experience to increase my chances of passing the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN®). The examinations presented in nursing school mimic the style and type of questions found on the NCLEX-RN®. As a student I not only learn the content of each course, but I also learn how to think critically to apply the information to a real-world scenario that may be described on an exam question. Exam questions focus on such things as the basics of prioritizing care, hierarchy of needs, medication administration considerations, etc. Keeping this in mind as I study, I can develop critical thinking skills that enable me to formulate possible questions or scenarios that may be presented on an exam. Practicing exam questions is a great way to become more comfortable with the style of the NCLEX-RN®. The ultimate measure of success in this goal would be to pass the NCLEX-RN® exam. However, because each exam in the ADN program is formatted similarly to the NCLEX-RN® I can use my success or failure of nursing school exams to gauge my probable future success. Nursing school test scores inform my study techniques and emphases, thus making this goal two-fold. First, to

enhance my study techniques and secondly, to become a licensed nurse by passing the NCLEX-RN®.

Professional Goals

As a nurse I would like to work in the critical care setting. As my experience in nursing is limited, I do not have a clear knowledge of what area of critical care I would like to pursue, adult intensive care, pediatric intensive care, and trauma are all areas that I have thought about. The demands on a nurse in these areas of practice are immense and it would be untruthful of me to say that I don't have reservations, but I have a high respect for the knowledge base and skill set that one must have to be successful in these areas of practice. Patients treated in critical care and their family members require a level of care beyond a traditional medical and surgical unit. I want to work hard and learn as much as I can to be a safe, competent, and compassionate nurse in the critical care setting.

I have always been passionate about serving in my community. Over the years I have participated in many ways, from volunteering in a children's shelter to, serving meals to the homeless, to assembling hygiene kits, and more. One of the primary reasons I pursued a nursing career was the ability I would have to serve those with limited access to healthcare. I thrill at the thought that I can use my skills as a nurse to serve those in need. My aspirations in this area reach a global scale. Not only would I like to volunteer my services as a nurse to my own community, but I would love to travel to areas rural and exotic to assist with such efforts as, disaster relief, vaccination clinics, medical missions, etc. This goal coincides with my ambition of being a critical care nurse as I want to have a depth of knowledge sufficient to enable me to be of the greatest service.

Some of the personal strengths I rely on to help me achieve my goals are my work ethic and depth of caring. My ability to work hard heightens my study habits thus helping me to gain the knowledge I need to be an effective nurse. As a nurse is one who never stops learning, the trait of hard work is especially beneficial to me in this area. Nursing is not only a job that requires knowledge, but it often requires physical stamina. My ability to work hard physically is particularly helpful as it relates to the practice of nursing. Caring deeply about improving the health or aiding in the peaceful death of people is the motivation behind my nursing practice. It informs my goals and the energy I exert to become the best nurse I can.

Impatience is one weakness that I try to contain. It is hard to wait when someone's health is in the balance. I want to be able to fix everything immediately, but that isn't always how it works. I hope to control my impulse to be impatient and focus on the patient and prioritize their needs. As it relates to my educational and professional goals, I want to achieve them now, but I also recognize that things take time, and there is much value in experiencing the journey.

Conclusion

On my long path to the career of nursing I am excited about the prospect of achieving my goals of becoming a competent and safe nurse with a solid foundation of knowledge and skill. I look forward to using the attributes I develop as a nurse to care for the most critically ill. I hope to expand my nursing practice beyond the traditional health care setting to serve in my community and around the world.

The opportunity to reflect on my goals, strengths, and weaknesses has solidified my resolve to achieve my goals. In the day-to-day grind of nursing school, I had sort of lost sight of why I was doing this. In completing this assignment, I thought specifically about the service I hope to give in humanitarian efforts around the world and it has re-energized me.

Honor Code

“I pledge to support the Honor System of Old Dominion University. I will refrain from any form of academic dishonesty or deception, such as cheating or plagiarism. I am aware that as a member of the academic community it is my responsibility to turn in all suspected violators of the Honor Code. I will report to a hearing if summoned.” Angela Wood 3/4/2022