Selecting Concepts

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What is a Concept

- An organizing principle
- A *unifying* classification of information
- An abstract or generic idea generalized from particular instances*
- A fundamental category of existence
- A mental construction representing categories of information that contain defining attributes

*http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/concept
Concept: A Category of Existence

- Mind makes a generalization: tree
- Extracts similarities from other examples or experiences
  - Spruce
  - Elm, etc
- Simplification enables higher level thinking
  - Comparison
  - Reflection
  - Abstraction
- Learning for clinical application
Concept Based Curriculum

- Movement from content–loaded curriculum to concept based
- Concepts provide organizational structure
  - Curriculum
  - Courses
- Concepts represent nursing practice
- Concept application through exemplars and interrelated concepts
Selecting Concepts

How to Begin

- Where does the process of selecting concepts start when it is a part of a curriculum revision?
- Which comes first?
  - Development of the concepts
  - Development of the outcomes or competencies
- Proposed solution:
  - Do processes simultaneously*

Selecting Concepts

Challenges and Barriers

- Curriculum decisions and concept selection can be emotional
- Debate can potentially be endless, depending on
  - Who is present
  - Movement of faculty from old curriculum or BTTWHADI
- Academic freedom: stretching the definition
Which and How Many Concepts?

- Represent important practice phenomena
- Commonly seen in the literature
  - Logical
  - Used consistently
- Apply to broadest group of patients of various ages, across various health care stages
- Useful for education delivery / application
- No set rule on number of concepts
Selecting Concepts

What is the Evidence Base?

- Limited literature
- Benchmarking to validate concept selection*

Methods:
- Concept Committee debated concept categories, parameters, themes, specific concepts
- Survey of 10 nursing programs (7 BSN, 3 ADN) that were known to have a concept-based curriculum

*Giddens, et al. Journal of Nursing Education. 2012;51(9); 511-515.
Selecting Concepts
What is the Evidence Base?

- Findings
  - Total of 104 concepts
    - 18 unique to only one list
    - 32 on 2-4 lists
    - Remaining 54, present on 50% or more of lists, became the benchmark list
  - Benchmark 54 organized in categories:
    - Attribute Concepts, Health and Illness, and Professional Nursing

*Giddens, et al. Journal of Nursing Education. 2012;51(9); 511-515.*
Process of Concept Selection

- Identify content of curriculum*
  - AACN BSN Essentials
- Search for themes
  - Sift through imperatives in the courses
- Learn from others:
  - Giddens and University of New Mexico
  - North Carolina concept-based approach to learning
- Focus on Health and Illness courses (I, II, & III)
  - Biophysical and Psychosocial

Defining Concepts

- What are the features?
  - Critical attributes
- Features must be both necessary and sufficient for membership into a class of things covered by a particular concept
- To check whether something is a member of the class, you compare its qualities to the features in the definition
Process of Defining Concepts

- Dictionaries: medical and mainstream
- Definitions created by previous thought leaders
  - UNM
  - NC
- Meshing: White board
- Reviewing
- Finalizing
Framework of Concept Organization

- Sort through, develop framework to organize concept categories
- Promotes understanding of concepts and their context within related health care concepts
- Potential Framework Elements
  - Domains
  - Threads
  - Themes
Concept Categories

- Example:
  - Health and Illness Concepts
    - Biophysical and Psychosocial
  - Professional
  - Healthcare environment
Organizing the Concepts

Giddens* (53 Concepts)

Organizing the Concepts
North Carolina*

3 Domains
- Operate within the broader environment
- Themes within Individual Domain
- Concepts (49)

## Organizing the Concepts

*University of Kansas (Draft) (~65)*

### KU School of Nursing Concept

**Provider of Direct & Indirect Care; Designer, Coordinator Manager of Care (Proposed)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Environment</th>
<th>Working within Teams, Organizations &amp; Systems (Care Coordination)</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Population Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Oneself &amp; Others</td>
<td>Professional identity</td>
<td>Health Care Systems</td>
<td>Quality &amp; Safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture</td>
<td>integrity &amp; Respect</td>
<td>Health Care Finance</td>
<td>Quality improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culture competence</td>
<td>Excellence</td>
<td>Legal Considerations</td>
<td>Evidence based practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring</td>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
<td>Core measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Reasoning*</td>
<td>Ethical Comportment</td>
<td>Patient Care</td>
<td>Pay for performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Dynamics</td>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>Informatics</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Literacy</td>
<td>Life-long learning</td>
<td>Teamwork and Collaboration*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patient Centered Care</td>
<td>Reflection</td>
<td>Change</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transformational thinking</td>
<td>Health care quality</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ways of knowing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virtues significant to nursing—compassion, integrity, humility and courage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moral Distress</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Health & Illness Concepts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biophysical Concepts</th>
<th>Psychosocial Concepts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semester I Nurs 332 – 3 credit hours</strong></td>
<td><strong>Semester I Nurs 332 – 3 credit hours</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Health Promotion &amp; Illness Prevention</td>
<td>2. Clinical Reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mobility</td>
<td>3. Interpersonal Relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Comfort</td>
<td>4. Stress &amp; coping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Nutrition</td>
<td>5. Patient Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Infection</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Inflammation</td>
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**Mega Concept → Theme → Concept**
Curricular Emphasis

- Determine course where concept will be emphasized
  - Course objectives
  - Course hours
Concepts by Course: Example

- Professional Nursing Image
- Advocacy
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- Ethics

NURS 334: Professional Development II
Application of the Concepts
*Classroom and Clinical*

**Exemplars**

Example or model used to illustrate the concepts

Provide content knowledge

- CAD/ACS
- Hypovolemic Shock
- Heart Failure
- Stroke
- Sepsis

Perfusion
Selecting Exemplars

- Based on incidence and prevalence
  - CDC leading causes of death
  - CDC highest request for information
  - CDC top ten cancers
  - Healthy People 2020 health indicators
  - Top admission diagnosis for emergency department at a large academic medical center
- Relevance to course content
## Concepts/Exemplars in a Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Health and Illness Concepts</th>
<th>Exemplars</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Development</td>
<td>Prematurity (infant)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Autism (child)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dementia (elder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Dynamics</td>
<td>Alcoholism</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Family ecosystem assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fluid and electrolyte balance</td>
<td>Renal failure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Gastroenteritis</td>
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<td>Burn</td>
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<td>Preeclampsia</td>
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Dynamic Process

- Concept list revisions
  - Nursing in a changing healthcare environment
  - Curriculum evaluation and revisions
  - Developmental stages of concept-based curriculum
- Refine the framework for concepts
Maintaining Momentum

- Conflicting responsibilities for faculty
  - Curriculum development
  - Teaching
  - Advising
- Changing team members*
  - People come and go, pick up new responsibilities
  - Process may progress and receded from
- Leadership*
  - Ability to identify strengths of team members
  - Neutral, good mediator, maintain focus on necessary steps

References


