

Curriculum Conceptual Framework and Philosophy

University of Alberta, Faculty of
Nursing Undergraduate Programs



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF NURSING

INTRODUCTION

The BScN programs are guided by the Faculty of Nursing (UofA) Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan (2018-2023), the Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN) National Nursing Education Framework: Baccalaureate Essential Components, and the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta (CARNA) Entry-Level Competencies for the Practice of Registered Nurses. The philosophical underpinnings of the BScN programs include Pragmatism, Social Constructionism, Humanism, Constructivism and Critical Social Theory. These philosophies underpin two foundational conceptual frameworks: The Fundamentals of Care Framework (Kitson et al., 2013, Kitson, 2018) and the Fundamentals of Learning Framework, founded in Relational Inquiry and Pedagogy (Hartrick Doane & Varcoe).

HUMANS AS BIO-PSYCHO-SOCIAL-SPIRITUAL BEINGS

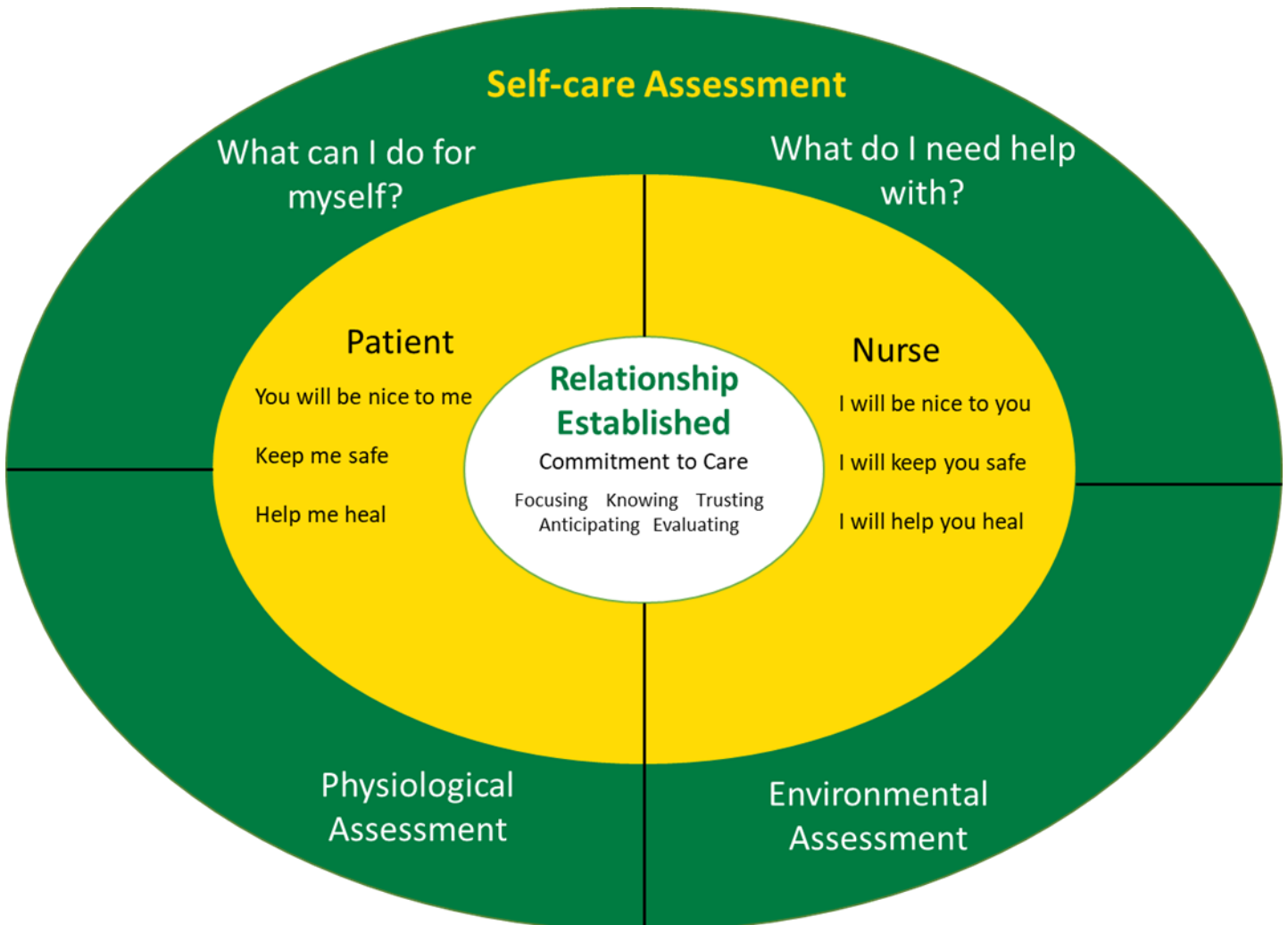
Foundations of nursing practice start with the human person. Both the registered nurse/nursing student and the patient/client are complex individuals and this complexity impacts the process and outcomes of nursing care. Having a holistic view of the person means that we recognize that all dimensions interact with and influence the other.

Part of learning to embrace others as they are, requires understanding that those with whom we must relate (including peers, faculty, patients/clients) are experiencing and understanding health at the intersection of sex, gender, age, race, culture, education and multiple other influences. These unique individuals are then required to navigate and make decisions about their health and life within a structure/system that is oppressive (Crenshaw, 1991). Learning and nursing alongside others with a lens of Intersectionality benefits student, nurse and patient/client as each can gain a more holistic understanding of the barriers and facilitators to relationships (student:faculty, student:patient, nurse:patient) and ultimately health.

FUNDAMENTALS OF CARE FRAMEWORK

The Fundamentals of Care Framework was created to clearly frame and drive transformation in healthcare. The Fundamentals of Care Framework provides a focus on basic care fundamentals, relationships and person-centered practices, even amidst growing complexity and contextual challenges. This framework is a pragmatic organizer for students who are learning to become nurses, in addition to a blueprint for wider innovative healthcare transformation (Kitson, et al., 2013; Kitson, 2018). Below, two graphics summarize the elements of the Fundamentals of Care Framework in nursing.

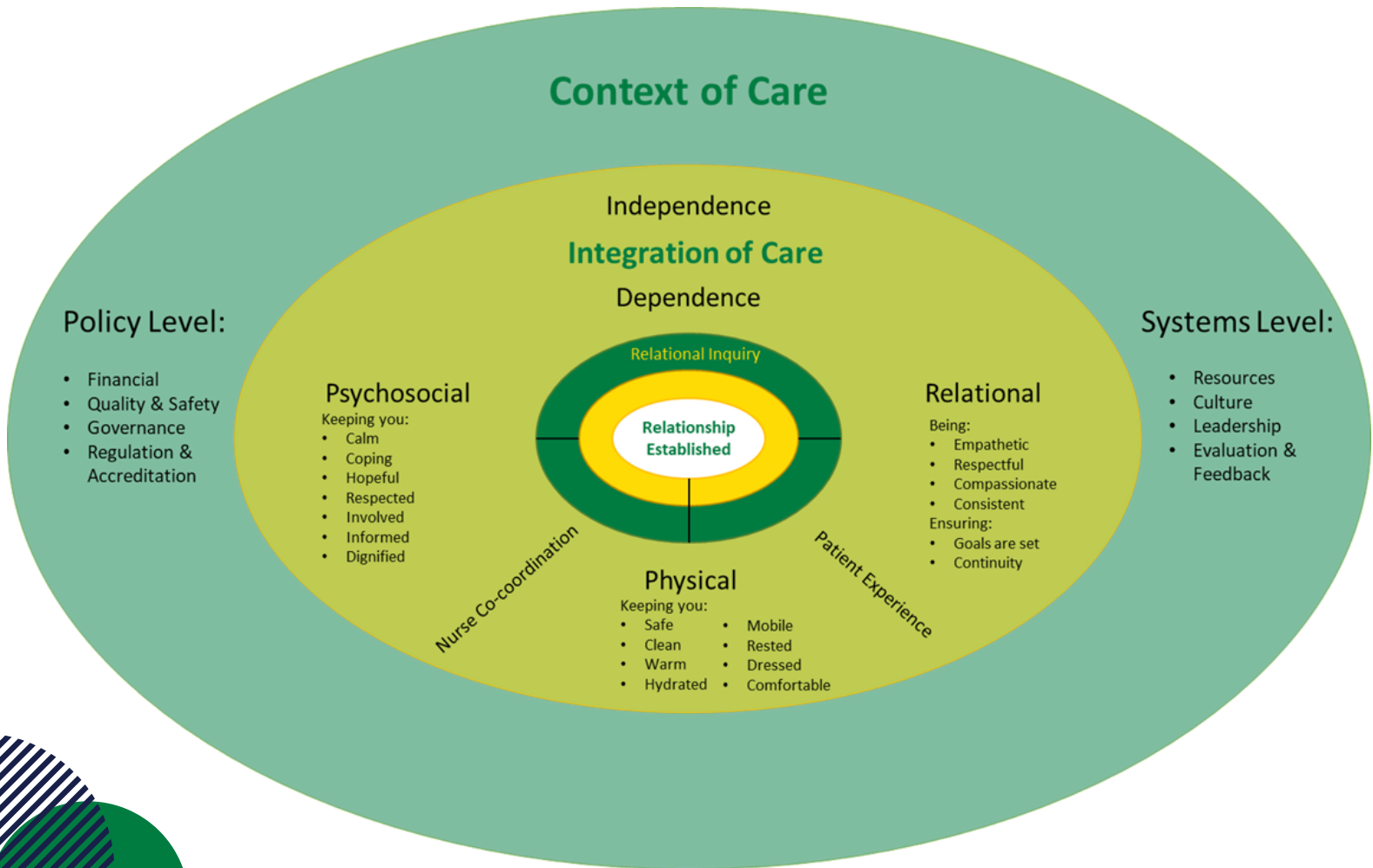
Fundamentals of Care Framework Part A



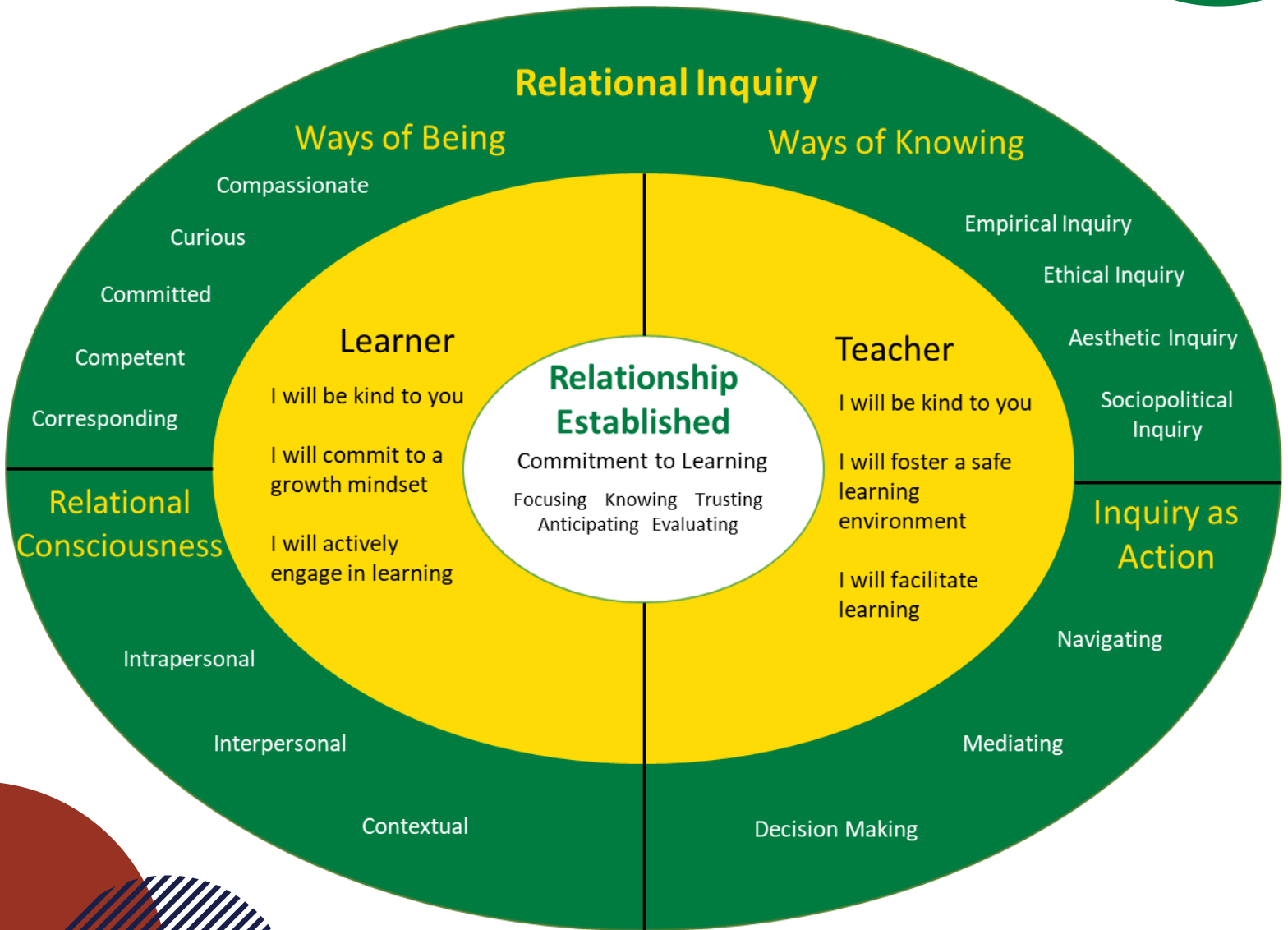
The Fundamentals of Care Framework is resonant with and supports the BScN programs focus on relationship-centered care and educational practices. The link between the practice and education of nurses is one that needs to be intentionally upheld, living similar values and beliefs in both the teaching to be, and being a nurse.

The Fundamentals of Learning Framework for the Faculty of Nursing, Undergraduate Programs is directly aligned with the Fundamentals of Care Framework, specifically the elements of context, relational practice and the critical importance of developing positive relationships with those with whom we work closely (patients, families, populations and students) to positively affect outcomes.

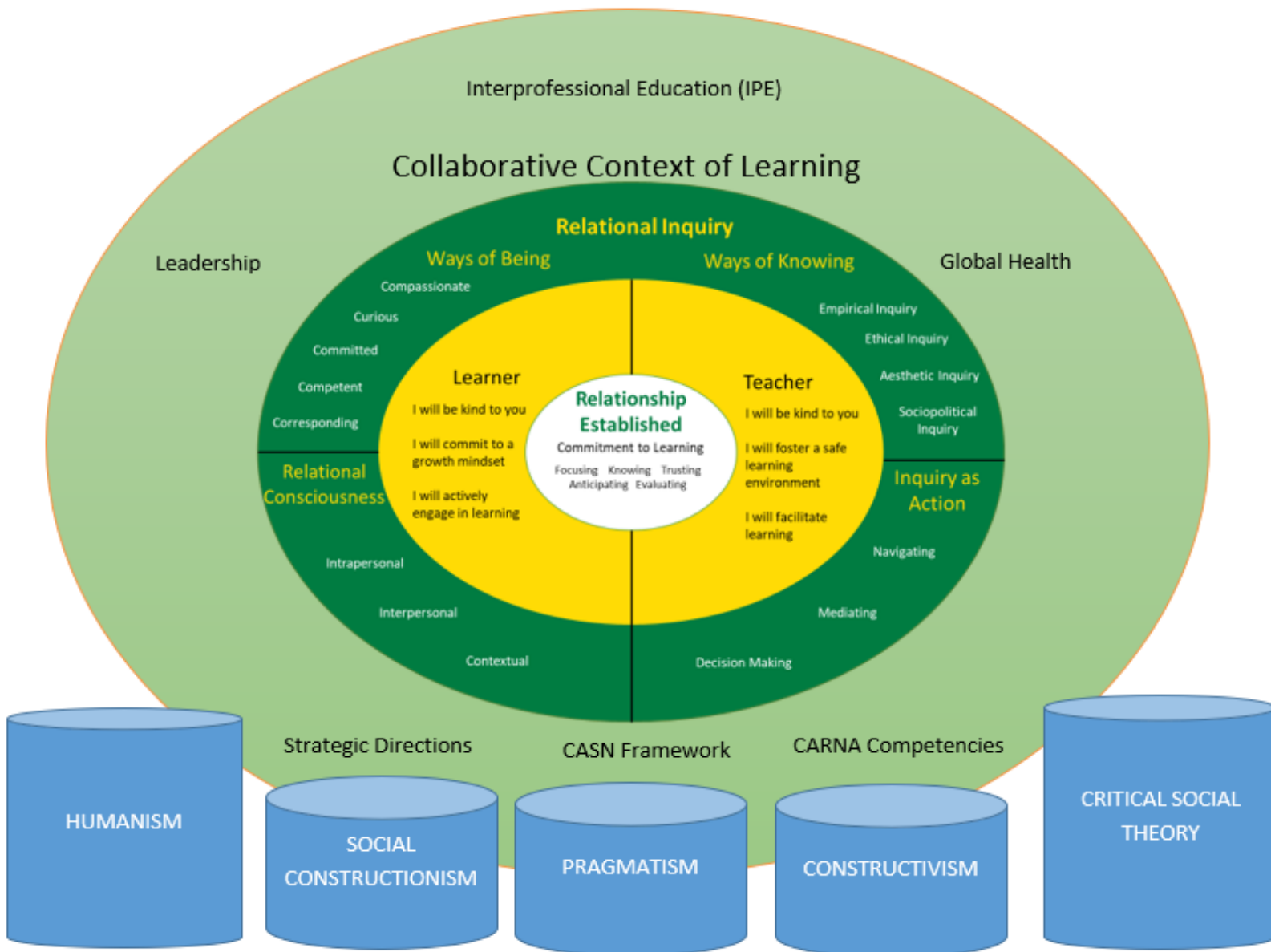
Fundamentals of Care Framework Part B



Relational Inquiry and Fundamentals of Care Conceptual Framework for Learning



Relational Inquiry and Fundamentals of Care Conceptual Framework for Learning



Mirrored to each other, these two frameworks are meant to ensure congruency between learning and practice environments, emphasizing the importance of each concept in all relationships and interactions. The wider educational context is a key environment where these frameworks overlap. Nursing research and knowledge form the foundation of learning and practice.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning encompasses philosophical beliefs about teaching and learning; critical thinking/clinical reasoning and ways of knowing; the impact of context on learning; as well as concepts for nursing practice.

- Philosophically, the BScN Programs recognize that students are adult learners. In accordance with the underlying assumptions about adult learners, the BScN Program encourage engaged, contextually situated and active learning with the belief that new knowledge is constructed by building on an internal representation of existing knowledge through a personal interpretation of experience (Knowles, 1980). Ultimately, students are encouraged to engage meaningfully in socially and globally responsible ways of being and to become strong leaders in health care.
- Nursing students are encouraged to use reflection and research for self-development, as critical self-reflection can transform perceptions regarding what constitutes best evidence and practice. Critical self-reflection broadens nurses' horizons to help them accept diversity or differences that are proven to be effective to meet the client's needs, which is an essential skill in the modern health care environment, and one that is supported by the BScN Programs.
- Conceptual learning is increasingly viewed as a major trend in nursing education. Concepts are used as unifying classifications or principles for framing learning to manage knowledge that is increasing exponentially. By gaining understanding of a core set of concepts, a student can recognize and understand similarities and recurring characteristics that can be applied in various nursing contexts (Giddens, 2017).

The Fundamentals of Learning Framework's Five Philosophies and Theories

Humanism: Humanism is relational and nurses use observation skills and reflective abilities to understand how each individual's past experiences shape their reality. Nurses develop an authentic presence within the nurse-patient relationship to understand and engage each patient/client and their family while integrating scientific evidence and practical wisdom, all focused on the patient experience, healing and growth.

Pragmatism: As a philosophy influenced by John Dewey, we believe the focus on practical consequences or real effects are key components of meaning and truth. An idea or theory is true insofar as it works in a practical sense and enhances our ability to get things done on a day to day basis. Pragmatism also focuses on the importance of growth as a main aim of education and of society.

Social Constructionism: This theory stems from the desire to understand reality, knowing there are multiple realities based on those who create them. From a social constructionist lens, we take to be the truth about the world around us depends greatly on the social relationships of which we are a part.

Constructivism: This philosophy stems from an educational context where learning is an active and contextualized process of constructing knowledge. Knowledge is not just passively acquired but constructed based on personal experiences and prior learning.

Critical Social Theory: This metatheoretical framework emphasizes that all knowledge is value laden, historical and is filtered through social influences (Browne, 2000). This theory underscores the importance of understanding the meaning behind language, power and oppressive forces that need to be considered in nursing and nursing education.

REFERENCES

- Browne, A.J. (2000). The potential contributions of critical social theory to nursing science. *Canadian Journal of Nursing Research*, 32(2), 35-55. Retrieved from <http://login.ezproxy.library.ualberta.ca/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rzh&AN=107148271&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2011). Scope of practice for registered nurses. Retrieved from http://www.nurses.ab.ca/content/dam/carna/pdfs/DocumentList/Standards/RN_ScopeOfPractice_May2011.pdf
- College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2013). Entry-to-practice competencies for the registered nurses profession. Edmonton, AB: Author. Retrieved from http://www.nurses.ab.ca/content/dam/carna/pdfs/DocumentList/Standards/RN_EntryPracticeCompetencies_May2013.pdf
- College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2019). Entry-level competencies for the practice of registered nurses. Edmonton, AB: Author. Retrieved from https://www.nurses.ab.ca/docs/default-source/document-library/standards/entry-to-practice-competencies-for-the-registered-nurses-profession.pdf?sfvrsn=15c1005a_12
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: intersectionality, identity politics and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.
- Giddens, J. F. (2017). *Concepts for nursing practice*. (2nd ed.). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier.
- Kitson, A. L. (2018). The Fundamentals of Care Framework as a Point-of-Care Nursing Theory. *Nursing Research*, 67(2), 99-107. doi:10.1097/NNR.0000000000000271
- Kitson, A., Conroy, T., Kuluski, K., Locock, L. & Lyons, R. (2013). Reclaiming and redefining the Fundamentals of Care: Nursing's response to meeting patients' basic human needs. Adelaide, South Australia: School of Nursing, the University of Adelaide.
- Knowles, M.S. (1980). *The modern practice of adult education: From pedagogy to andragogy*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall/Cambridge.



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF NURSING