



REGIONAL HEALTH OCCUPATIONS RESOURCE CENTER

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An Economic and Workforce Development Initiative

TIPS FOR NURSING STUDENT SUCCESS

“Nurses should be caring, sympathetic, responsible, and detail oriented. They must be able to direct or supervise others, correctly assess patients’ conditions, and determine when consultation is required. They need emotional stability to cope with human suffering, emergencies, and other stresses.” Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2006-07 Edition*

Traits that work *against* success:

Traits that work *toward* success:

Poor time management skills; tendency to procrastinate; tendency to fall behind and do last-minute catch-up; uncomfortable with fast paced situations; frequently late. Difficulty with working hard for a sustained period of time. Poor goal-setting skills. Tendency to quit when the going gets tough.	Does not procrastinate; puts in consistent and sustained effort; willing to put in the hours required in order keep up; seeks help with time management and study skills; trims down outside demands by reducing work hours, asking for family help and support and delegating chores to spouse, children or others in the home. Achievement and goal-oriented.
Intolerant of demanding personalities or certain personality traits; difficulty dealing with certain age groups; tendency to avoid or shy away from those with certain religious preferences, cultures, political views, lifestyle choices, etc.	Tolerates and perhaps even embraces the differences in others; recognizes diversity as a positive influence on society and on the learning environment; values the individual as a fellow-human being.
Easily stressed when faced with multiple demands and/or emergency situations; difficulty with multi-tasking; difficulty refocusing after interruptions.	Able to stay calm and to control personal reactions to stressful events; able to re-focus and re-prioritize actions despite multiple demands and interruptions. Good short-term memory; detail-oriented.
Sensitive to others’ opinions; easily demoralized or offended by perceived acts of discrimination, racism or by less-than-respectful treatment by others.	Able to face negativity with courage, understanding and with humor (not taking it personally); able to diffuse anger with calm reactions; able to face disrespectful behavior with self-respect, respect in return and appropriate assertiveness to be treated in a civilized manner.
Uncomfortable with authority figures; fearful to “rock the boat”. Trouble being a self-advocate (or advocate for others) due to the confrontation required.	Able to stand-up to authority with respect and assertiveness if the situation calls for intervention; able to let your needs be known if it’s in the best interest of the situation at hand (mutual goals).
Tendency to look to others for help with minor decisions; indecisive; uncomfortable in a lead position or as a chief decision-maker.	Able to “take the lead” in a situation where knowledge allows it and training demands it. Able to direct others correctly, step-by-step and to think quickly in emergency situations.
Uncomfortable with “average” scores or grades; easily discouraged; perfectionist tendencies; generally inflexible with one’s own performance or the performance of others.	Able to readjust self-expectations as needed without becoming discouraged; recognizing that new situations require a different approach; allowing for occasional mistakes but also going after the knowledge required to avoid the same mistake in the future.
Tendency to “cover-up” mistakes; tendency to minimize mistakes. Tendency to tell a “little white lie” in order to “save face”.	Values learning-from-mistakes more than holding on to a spotless image. Values the safety of others over self-preservation. Willing to take responsibility for actions and to deal with unintentional errors with courage and honesty.
Tendency to attribute the cause for a new task or concept being particularly difficult or challenging to personal inadequacy; tendency to avoid challenges.	Faces obstacles and difficulties as new challenges to overcome in order to reach a goal; recognizes that it’s time for more effort, more time-investment or time to ask for help (i.e. tutoring).

Academic Considerations:

In addition to possessing the traits above which contribute to success, students need to be academically prepared to be successful in nursing programs. Students who have maintained higher grade point averages (i.e. 3.0 or better) in English, math, and sciences (and who have not repeated any science courses) are significantly more likely to succeed.

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Source: Nursing Student Retention: Understanding the Process and Making a Difference, by Marianne R. Jeffreys, copyright, July 2004.

This program is supported by Workforce Investment Act Funds for Associate Degree Nursing (RN) Programs, grant agreement number 05-0109-02. Funds were awarded to Santa Barbara City College as fiscal agent for the South Coast by the Chancellors Office, California Community Colleges.

G: Nursing_Student_Tips_Side-B/Gov’s WIA/Vocational Prep, Created 10/26/06, updated 10/31/06