

# **Ambulatory Care Nursing Curriculum**

## **California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office**

This project was produced pursuant to grant agreement number 11-161-001. This project was supported by Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Improvement Act of 2006, Title 1, Part B. Funds awarded to Butte Community College by the Chancellor's Office, California Community College.

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### **Acknowledgements**

A special thanks to all the persons who assisted with this project: Starting with those who gave their time and expertise in achieving the statewide job analysis (DACUM) which provided the foundation for the curriculum; second, the Statewide Advisory Committee who provided direction to the project; third, the curriculum writers who freely shared their knowledge, experience and invaluable expertise of ambulatory nursing care; and finally the curriculum advisors Mary O'Connor and John Cordova who gave timely invaluable insight into this project. Thank you!

## **California Community Colleges Ambulatory Care Nursing Curriculum**

### **Introduction**

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, the Economic and Workforce Development Program's Health Care Initiative, and the Healthcare Workforce Initiative (HWI) are pleased to release this new curriculum for educators of ambulatory care nurses (RN) in California.

The new 2012 ambulatory nursing care curriculum was developed in many stages.

1. On November 13-14, 2003 a panel of ambulatory care nursing experts proficient and experienced in this field convened to determine the competency profile of a typical ambulatory care RN. They developed the DACUM (developed a curriculum), an outline of these nurses' competencies, behaviors, knowledge base, supplies/materials and skills. They also brainstormed the possible future trends and support needs of these nurses.
2. On May 3, 2010, this same aforementioned DACUM profile and job analysis was updated and revised to reflect current trends in the healthcare industry.
3. On December 5, 2011, a statewide Advisory Committee met to discuss the healthcare industry's perspective on the needs for current curricula, the development of its content, present and past utilization of curriculum, and its future implementation and application. As determined by this panel, some of the terminal goals for use of this curriculum are: "off the shelf" ready to use by nursing instructors; utilization in private and public organizations/colleges; incorporation of many modes of teaching delivery; to train RN nurses new to the ambulatory care setting; to train newly licensed RN nurses desiring to enter this area of work for the first time; use in a preceptor (orientation) programs; and use as a specialty course. Some disclaimers to the use of this curriculum are: it is not to be used for preparation or replacement or certification for the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nurses (AAACN) certification through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).
4. January 6, 2012 was the first Ambulatory Care Nursing Curriculum Writing Team meeting. After review of the revised DACUM and the current trends and requirements for ambulatory care RN nurses, the curriculum writing process and structure, statewide communication for our work, project timelines, curriculum topical outline, writing teams, topical sequencing, past experience in writing curriculum and any needs for coaching in writing were all discussed. Also discussed was the utilization of current teaching strategies in the curriculum writing. Such learning activities and websites are provided for the instructors who may desire to enhance content and provide additional learning options for students.
5. On April 23, 2012, the curriculum writing team met to discuss our progress, make any needed changes, clarify any processes, and write together as a team.

The team incorporated a consistent flow of topical threads as seen in the DACUM outline. We strove for continuity of content since seven writers were contributing to the whole product.

This curriculum can be used as a whole course or adapted by using parts as needed by the educational institutions and training centers. The documents that comprise the curriculum can be printed and used as they have been designed. Each document can be easily exported in its native format (MS Word), saved to the user's hard-disk drive, retrieved and augmented as desired using common word processing software. Each component is further sub-divided into "Modules" and "Topics". Valuable learning activities, scenarios, case studies, role playing and handouts are included in the curriculum.

There are five components to the curriculum: Clinical Practice, Communication, Professional Issues, Systems, and Education. Each component is divided into modules. Each module begins with a statement of purpose, terminology, objectives and references. The content is organized in a two-column table by objective and is correlated with specific learning activities. Appendices, handouts and sample activities are placed throughout each module.

The curriculum does not contain PowerPoint slides or transparencies for each module since it was felt that each instructor could develop presentations to meet the needs of their program and teaching style. In order to facilitate the development of presentations, a list of websites containing illustrations and images has been provided. Note: the URL's found in the curriculum were current at the time of publication.

Again, this curriculum is **not** to be used for preparation or replacement or certification for the American Academy of Ambulatory Care Nurses (AAACN) or certification through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC).

It is hoped that educators will find this curriculum useful and user-friendly. The content may be duplicated and distributed freely, however they are not intended for resale. The Chancellors' Office and the Health Care Initiative (HWI) are proud of our products and are confident in their value to educational institutions and our industry partners. Concerns regarding errors or misinformation encountered while using this curricula should be brought to the attention of the Healthcare Workforce Initiative (HWI) at <http://ca-hwi.org>.

Thank you for your interest in the Ambulatory Care Nursing Curriculum! It is hoped you find the content helpful and useful for the entry-level ambulatory care RN nurse.

Suzanne H. Tang APRN, MSN, FNP  
Project Coordinator

## **Ambulatory Care Nursing Curriculum**

### **History and Background**

#### **History**

Ambulatory care nursing has gained a place as a specialty in nursing practice in the profession of nursing. Current practice of the professional ambulatory care nurse has changed and matured since the twentieth century. The growth of the profession has accelerated especially in the last quarter century. Shifts in health care delivery with an emphasis on ambulatory care, increased technology, increased knowledge in health and illness, health care funding, and the aging population directly affected the expansion of ambulatory care nurse's role within health care. As we enter the twenty-first century, the ambulatory care nurse's scope of practice is will expand more in responsibility and competencies. In the job analysis using the DACUM process, it was found that a wide range of skills and a broad understanding of ambulatory medical care are required to function effectively. The curriculum content was selected and developed based upon the list of competencies defined by the job analysis.

#### **Purpose of the Curriculum**

This model curriculum for the entry ambulatory care nurse provides a framework for the educators to prepare the learner to become an effective multi-skilled professional of the health care team.

#### **Goals:**

The terminal goals for use of this curriculum are:

1. Provide "off-the-shelf" ready to use by nursing instructors.
2. Utilize in private and public organizations/colleges.
3. Incorporate different teaching strategies.
4. Use to train RN nurses new to the ambulatory care setting.
5. Use to train newly licensed RN nurses desiring to enter this area of work for the first time.
6. Use in preceptor (orientation) programs and use as a specialty course.
7. Comply with the regulations established by the State of California.
8. Achieve entry level competencies which would satisfy industry needs.

#### **Philosophy Statement**

The Advisory Committee and the Curriculum Committee members agree that the ambulatory care nurse is an integral multi-skilled professional of the health care team, working under the supervision of the health care provider. The ambulatory care nurse has an interdependent role acting as an agent for the health care provider and a consumer advocate by providing professional and technical support in an empathetic and caring manner.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

### **Student Learning Outcomes for Core Component**

1. Communication Skills:
  - Listen actively and respectfully to analyze the substance of others comments.
  - Speak in an understandable and organized fashion to explain their ideas, express their feelings, or support a conclusion.
  - Utilize therapeutic communication when interacting with clients.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of clients in all communication.
  - Write in an organized and grammatically correct fashion utilizing principles of health care documentation.
2. Thinking and Reasoning:
  - Demonstrate critical thinking by logically solving problems and explaining their rationale.
3. Information Competency:
  - Use technology effectively and responsibly at a level that is necessary to achieve personal, professional and educational success.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of patient records both hard copy and electronic.
4. Diversity:
  - Demonstrate individual responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for diverse peoples and cultures including those with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and different abilities.
5. Civic Responsibility:
  - Show accountability for making ethical and legal decisions as they relate to the delivery of care in the medical assistant role.
  - Demonstrate personal integrity and professional accountability.
6. Life Skills:
  - Work effectively in a group.
  - Demonstrate time management and organizational skills.
  - Demonstrate work ethic and customer service skills.
7. Career Development:
  - Develop commitment to lifelong learning.

### **Student Learning Outcomes for Clinical Component**

1. Communication Skills:
  - Listen actively and respectfully to analyze the substance of others comments.
  - Speak in an understandable and organized fashion to explain their ideas, express their feelings, or support a conclusion.
  - Use therapeutic communication based on the developmental level of the patient and family to accomplish patient education.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of clients in all communication.

2. Thinking and Reasoning:
  - Demonstrate critical thinking by logically solving problems and explaining their rationale.
3. Information Competency:
  - Use technology effectively and responsibly at a level that is necessary to achieve personal, professional and educational success.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of patients and their records.
4. Diversity:
  - Demonstrate individual responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for diverse peoples and cultures including those with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and different abilities.
5. Civic Responsibility:
  - Identify federal and state legislative standards and policies regulating medical assistant scope of practice.
  - Demonstrate safe performance in the medical assistant clinical role
6. Life Skills:
  - Work effectively in a group.
  - Demonstrate time management and organizational skills.
  - Demonstrate work ethic and customer service.
  - Demonstrate caring behaviors to the patients, families, and healthcare team.
7. Career Development:
  - Recognize the need to become life-long learner in order to keep current in healthcare issues related to the medical assistant clinical role.

### **Student Learning Outcomes for Administrative Component**

1. Communication Skills:
  - Listen actively and respectfully to analyze the substance of others comments.
  - Speak in an understandable and organized fashion to explain their ideas, express their feelings, or support a conclusion.
  - Utilize therapeutic communication when interacting with clients.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of clients in all communication.
2. Thinking and Reasoning:
  - Demonstrate critical thinking by logically solving problems and explaining their rationale.
3. Information Competency:
  - Use technology effectively and responsibly at a level that is necessary to achieve personal, professional and educational success.
  - Maintain confidentiality and privacy of patients and their records.
4. Diversity:
  - Demonstrate individual responsibility, personal integrity, and respect for diverse peoples and cultures including those with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds and different abilities.

5. Civic Responsibility:
  - Demonstrate personal integrity and professional accountability.
6. Life Skills:
  - Work effectively in a group.
  - Demonstrate time management and organizational skills.
  - Demonstrate work ethic and customer service skills.
7. Career Development:
  - Develop commitment to lifelong learning.

## Organization of the Content

In order to meet the different educational settings and curriculum needs, the ambulatory care nursing curriculum content was divided into five components: Clinical Practice, Communication, Professional Issues, Systems, and Education. Each component is packaged individually and divided into modules. Each module is organized into topics. The Curriculum Writing Committee and the Statewide Advisory Committee members made recommendations to the content of each topic. It was felt that instructors would modify the content to their classroom needs.

The components are organized so that shorter programs can be designed. The components should prepare the learner for the front and back office roles. The student may choose to focus on either the administrative and/or the clinical components, dependent upon where they plan to work, their interest, or their educational goals.

In addition, it was recommended that a minimum of five components be presented to prepare an entry level ambulatory care nurse. This course includes classroom lecture and learning activities. Additional hours will be needed for the externship and/or lab experience, which provides the student with the necessary skills for practice. The approximate content hours assigned to each component are:

### Component I: Professional Practice

#### Objectives

1-2	Professional Responsibility	1.5 hour
3	Core Principles of Specialization	1 hour
4	Leadership Roles	0.5 hour
5	Competency Testing	1 hour
6	Ethical Decision Making	0.5 hour
7	Maintaining Current in Practice	0.5 hour
8	Specialty Certification	0.5 hour
9	Participation in Community and Organizational Projects	1 hour
10	Professional Activities	0.5 hour
11	Membership in Professional Organizations	1 hour
Total		8 hours

### Component II: Clinical Practice

Module A	Assessment	4 hours
Module B	Care Management	4 hours
Module C	Triage	2 hours
Module D	Telepractice	5 hours
Module E	Medication Management	4 hours
Module F	Clinical Procedures	3 hours

Total 22 hours

**Component III:  
Communication**

Module A	Inter-professional Communication	4 hours
Module B	Documentation	3 hours
Module C	Barriers	3 hour
Total		10 hours

**Component IV: Systems**

Module A	Operations	15 hours
Module B	Quality Improvement	5 hours
Module C	Professional Trends	3 hours
Total		23 hours

**Component V: Education**

Module A	Patient Education	7 hours
Module B	Staff Education	15 hours
Total		22 hours

Course Length: Approximately 85 hours or a 4.5 unit course in a 16-week semester  
(lecture and clinical teaching 5.3 hours/week)