NURS 461 - Community Health Nursing Clinical

Problem: I teach community health nursing clinical. Nursing students partake in a variety of hands on learning experiences throughout the clinical experience. At the end of each clinical day we have a post-clinical conference or discussion. Students share their experiences for the day and discuss their community health client. After the first couple of weeks, post-clinical discussion can become mundane. Students often start giving negative feedback on the post-clinical discussions.

Solution: I decided to utilize research and journal articles as a foundation for the post-clinical discussions. A different research article was provided each week. Article topics are based on the various community health nursing roles to help increase their knowledge base.

Previous post-clinical group discussions: Students would share their experiences for the day and discuss their community health client. Students could ask each other questions and were encouraged to provide feedback on the client’s plan of care.

Revised post-clinical group discussion: I provided research or journal articles for students to read regarding a variety of community health nursing roles. Students would discuss the articles during the post-clinical conference. I would ask students questions and provide additional information about the topic. Students enjoyed the articles but had a hard time understanding what I wanted them to do.

Second revision to post-clinical group discussion: I decided to use the double entry journal assessment technique. The double entry journal assists students in preparing for the post-clinical discussion. The journals allow students to identify key points in the article and to reflect on the key points before coming to post-clinical discussions. The journals are not graded, however, written feedback is provided to each student.

Double Entry Journal

Description:
A double entry journal is a two-entry approach to note taking on assigned readings. In the first entry students note ideas and arguments that they find meaningful or controversial from the research article. In the second entry students explain why the passage was meaningful and how they would apply it in the community health setting. The double entry journal should be focused on a different research article each week.

Learning Objectives:
1. Engage in a dialogue with the research article.
2. Analyze ways the research fits with the community health nursing practice.

Procedure:
1. Select at least two passages from the assigned reading that are meaningful.
2. Divide the paper into two columns, research on the left and practice on the right.
3. In the left column, copy a short passage from the article. Be sure to cite the source, including page number.
4. In the right column, explain why you chose this passage, what you find meaningful about it, how you would agree or disagree with it, and some implications for community health practice. Use specific examples, illustrations and stories.

Example of Double Entry Journal


When working with school age children, “Don’t avoid asking questions that encourages children to express their thoughts, feelings, and memories of the event” (De Ranieri, et al., p. 72).

When I read the dos and don’ts for helping children and teens with issues of war and terrorism, I had conflicting feelings. As school nurses, should we really encourage children to talk to us about their father, mother, uncle, brother or someone else that is close to them who may be at war, just returned from war, or died at war? Shouldn’t a social worker handle these situations and the nurse handle the medical issues? Then I remembered how much we are encouraged to address psychosocial issues. When I first met my home care client everything appeared fine, it wasn’t until I actually asked her about husband’s death that I discovered everything wasn’t fine. She was suffering from depression. If I had not brought up the subject, she might not have opened up and got the help she needed. Children need to be able to acknowledge and express their fears/feelings in a safe environment. Psychosocial issues can affect their health, sleeping patterns, social interactions, and their ability to learn. Even though it is difficult for me, I understand that addressing psychosocial issues is an important part of nursing.

This passage upset me. I spent a day with a school nurse after 9/11. During my observation, many faculty and staff members would talk about the events in the main office. The nurse’s office is in hearing range; I wonder how many children heard these distressing conversations but didn’t

“Children under age 7 or 8 may be disturbed after witnessing scenes of destruction on television or by listening in on adult conversations; they may express their fears behaviorally instead of verbally” (p. 73).
say anything. This has made be conscious of what I (or other adults) say around children.