

WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINES: NURSING

Professional nurses need writing for: patient charts, staff memos, patient education documents, policies for healthcare facilities, research articles, & persuading policymakers.

AUDIENCE

Other healthcare providers, patients, and healthcare facility staff/administration. All have different needs and backgrounds; tailor use of specialized terminology accordingly.

STYLE CONVENTIONS

- Writing should be objective, grounded in data
- Patients' condition should be thoroughly described
- Confidentiality and sensitivity are stressed (clients' initials are often used)
- First-person can be used but stay objective
- Patients are increasingly referred to as "clients"
- Conclusions should be based on accurate and detailed information
- Passive voice is used when describing procedures or recording observations
- Paraphrasing rather than direct quotation is preferred
- Use APA formatting

TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS

- **Statements of Philosophy:** Include personal philosophy of nursing, principles you value, what experiences shaped career path, plan to put principles into practice, and specialization
- **Practice Papers:** Include detailed client history and a nursing diagnosis of the client's health problems, interventions recommended for the client, rationales for interventions, expected outcomes, and actual, observed outcomes
- **Research Papers:** Investigate and report on a relevant topic, typically required to use as many as 25 scholarly articles; either offers a research question that reaches a conclusion OR synthesizes information to answer questions about a nursing practice
- **Literature Reviews:** Synthesize published work and summarize arguments or findings
- **Reflective Narratives:** Describe caring for a client or what happened to a client while coping with an illness
- **Position Papers:** Take a stance on a controversial issue in the field; support an argument with evidence from published research; show evidence and reasoning that may support opposing position; make clear why the issue is controversial

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHILE WRITING

- What information should you collect from a patient based on their condition? Does the data indicate normal or abnormal stats? What interventions should you take and why? How do you care for a patient with chronic pain?
- Evidence can be qualitative or quantitative; examples include: Lab results, chart data, research findings in a journal article, direct observation of a patient



Georgia College Writing Center
writing.center@gcsu.edu

Schedule an appointment through the Unify portal

