OADN values the role of the educator. Being an effective educator can impact students and their patients for decades. It is for this reason that we promote professional certification as an educator. Obtaining the certification as a **Certified Nurse Educator (CNE)** denotes your dedication to your practice as a nurse educator.   Over the course of several months, the Education and Research Committee will post each of the 6 Competencies as identified in the Detailed Test Blueprint for the CNE Examination. These posts are brief summaries of where to focus your study for the competency with some tips for practical application in your role as nurse educator. This essay will focus on competency 2, *Facilitate Learner Development and Socialization.*

The CNE 2014 Candidate Handbook provides an in-depth explanation of certification and the test blueprint. The handbook can be downloaded at http://www.nln.org/professional-development-programs/Certification-for-Nurse-Educators/handbook . Here faculty will learn about the 150 item exam, the purpose of the exam, and how to qualify to take the exam.

CNE Major Content Area #2: Facilitate Learner Development and Socialization

Facilitate Learner Development and Socialization accounts for 14% of the CNE® Exam. This broad area covers learner styles and needs and how best to assist learners in meeting their professional development goals. The section regarding learner development guides the educator when ~~to~~ considering the diversity of learners and the impact ~~those~~ differences can have on ~~i~~ the learning experience and subsequent outcomes. The socialization aspect addresses the need for learners to be aware of many facets of the healthcare workplace and how to succeed in such a dynamic and challenging environment.

As faculty develops learning experiences for diverse learners, the goal should be helping the student "learn how to learn." Diversity in the classroom comes in many different areas and creates challenges for faculty. First of all, assessing the student's readiness to learn much occur in order for any new information to be received. Next, consider how different learners gravitate towards different learning styles (some state these are preferences as opposed to styles). Some common learning styles include visual, auditory and kinesthetic. In addition, there are also those learners who prefer a logical, social, solitary or multimodal approach to learning. Other theorists describe learners as convergers, divergers, assimilators, or accommodators. In today's nursing learning environment, there are a significant number of students who are adult learners. Many are studying nursing as a second career or are returning to nursing after a significant absence. It is important for faculty to realize that adults enter learning to create change. All the principles that guide adult learning such as relevance, self-direction, motivation, and active participation must be incorporated in order for the adult learner to benefit from the process. The faculty needs to take the role of facilitator rather than teacher especially when working with this population.

Most experts agree that it is beneficial to help students identify their personal style/preference so they can better understand how to study and manage learning. However for faculty, the diversity of styles raises some challenges. First, how do we simultaneously meet the needs of a group of people with a variety of styles and preferences as we teach? Second~~ly~~, as professionals, the students will not always be able to choose how to learn new information. The reality is that they will be called on to manage information in a variety of formats and in large amounts.

Faculty need to create learning experiences that are varied in approach and style. Students will benefit when concepts are taught in a way that closely resembles their preferences. At other times students will have the benefit of exposure to different methods of learning which may enhance their ability to adapt to a variety of environments. Another reason variety in teaching and learning experiences is beneficial is that the learners can observe and engage with other learners who may have different preferences, styles, perspectives, and backgrounds.

When learners are actively engaged in the learning experience, they can also benefit if they are paired with different learners. Faculty should facilitate engagement often with peers from a variety of backgrounds. If a student is always paired with someone who has similar preferences and background, they miss out on an opportunity to view learning, life and the profession from a different perspective.

Varied learning experiences and encouraging students to engage with a variety of peers can also assist in preventing students with disabilities, culturally diverse students, male students, LGBT students, and others from marginalization. When addressing the needs of all students, it is beneficial to provide opportunities to work with people from other cultures and life experiences. Changing student groups frequently (e.g. daily class, lab, clinical) facilitates the development of students' social skills, while they simultaneously learn how others learn. Understanding the diversity of perspective is essential in helping students succeed in the healthcare industry. Diverse learners also need affirmation from faculty that their perspective and orientation has value. This affirmation can come from asking learners to share how a concept may be viewed in their personal or home-life. For instance, if we are teaching students how to help patients manage their pain, this may present an excellent opportunity for students to reflect their own personal experiences with pain management and, if applicable, how their particular culture interprets pain and its management.

Many diverse learners may desire mentors. Faculty who are not of similar culture and background will do well to point students towards resources where they can connect with mentors. Here are some websites for organizations that may be able to help in this.

- National Black Nurses Association http://www.nbna.org/

- National Association of Hispanic Nurses http://www.nahnnet.org/

- National American Arab Nurses Association http://www.n-aana.org/

- American Assembly for Men in Nursing http://aamn.org/

- Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality http://www.glma.org/

- Nurses Christian Fellowship http://ncf-jcn.org/

Another aspect of this CNE competency is the incorporation of professional socialization in nursing. Professional socialization involves the ability to adopt the attitudes, values and beliefs in order to gain admission into the profession. An opportunity to effectively communicate and work with peers to improve the healthcare process is vital to the socialization of the new nurse. When students are working with a diverse group of peers, they will have the opportunity to send and receive feedback in a variety of ways. This skill can then be transferred upon graduation as an important part of their professional

practice as they collaborate daily with various members of the healthcare team including the patient and their family. Coaching from faculty on how to do this effectively and constructively is crucial.

The final aspect addresses Incivility in both the school and work environment and Service Learning. Incivility in the learning environment can take many forms and is a symptom of a much larger problem of academic dishonesty. Incivility in the workplace has become a significant issue. So significant that The Joint Commission issued a Sentinel Event Alert several years ago and is still in place today. Service Learning is an excellent way to integrate values with learning experiences. There are many ways that service learning can be implemented. However, one of the more common ways is through partnerships with various community organizations that deliver much needed services. Service Learning can enhance cultural competence for the learner while providing additional opportunities for students to enhance their nursing intervention skills. Examples such as Blood Pressure screening or Glucose monitoring clinics can help the student perfect these skills with a variety of patient populations while at the same time providing a valuable service such as identifying the patient at risk for hypertension or diabetes.

The CNE Competency #2, *Facilitate learner development and socialization,* is attained by creating dynamic learning experiences that replicate the actual healthcare environment. Recognizing the different ways students learn and providing a variety of learning methods can help students strengthen their ability develop as a professional who will make positive contributions to the profession of nursing.

References

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