

Holistic Admissions PowerPoint Script

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Slide 1: Introduction

Welcome to Holistic Admissions: How to be successful in the process. The practice of Holistic Admissions is increasing throughout our universities and colleges. It is a needed change to improve the process of choosing nursing school candidates and increase the diversity of the student body and profession. We are glad that you are taking the time to educate yourself about Holistic Admissions. In this presentation we will share why a Holistic Admissions process is important and how it differs from the traditional application process. You will learn about EAM - experiences, attributes, and metrics and how these components are used during the Holistic Admissions process. At the conclusion of this presentation, you will be well prepared to put your best self forward in your application to nursing school or the next step in your career.

Slide 2: Acknowledgement

The Premera Blue Cross is acknowledged for their generosity in funding \$1.8M to support an LPN-to-BSN Pathway grant which was awarded to Dr. Mary Baroni, PI (UW Bothell), and Co-PIs, Dr. Kristen Hosey (WVC), Dr. Kara LaValley (GRC), Dr. Kimberley Tucker (CBC) and Dr. Teri Woo (Saint Martin University). We are grateful that these individuals are leading the way to build holistic admissions into their programs and allocated support from the grant for the development of this presentation. Also, a special thanks goes to Dr. Diana Meyer and Tiffany Smith-Fromm for their work on this presentation.

Slide 3

We asked deans, directors, and faculty from Washington State nursing programs what they are looking for in an applicant to their programs and this word cloud represents what they told us. As can be seen from the word cloud that while academics are an essential element in candidate selection, it is not the only criteria considered; in fact, it is not even the most important one. Academics, measured by grades and tests, are easy to quantify, but will provide insight into only one dimension of an individual. Academics do not give us insight into whether the candidates have the heart, courage, perseverance, and resilience to excel in the nursing profession...to be the nurses we want caring for our families, communities, and ourselves.

The remaining critical elements that were expressed, readiness, commitment, experience, compassion, desire, flexibility, and resilience, to name just a few, require a more comprehensive evaluative approach...this is the holistic admissions process, and it is how we learn whether the candidates have the heart, courage, and resilience needed for academic and professional success.

Slide 4: Why is Holistic Admissions Important

So, why is holistic admissions important? The holistic admission process is important because it allows for colleges and universities to consider a much wider range of experiences and attributes that showcase nursing candidates in a more thoughtful and meaningful way. Furthermore, this process gives students the ability to tell their story. Another important factor is that when research is examined, the evidence states that students entering nursing school using holistic admissions are more diverse in ethnic background, experiences and how they see the world. The research also shows that this variety of nursing school students adds to the breadth and depth of learning, creating an environment that is rich and rewarding for students. Lastly, the holistic admissions process increases the diversity of our nursing workforce. It is important for our healthcare professionals to include nurses that represent our communities.

Slide 5: Components

Holistic admissions is a change from the traditional way that we do business in nursing admissions. Previously, an individual's opportunity to gain admissions to a nursing program was almost always based on criteria related to overall GPA, science GPA and admissions exam scores. With the introduction of holistic admissions, the ability to gain entry into a nursing program is no longer solely based on grades or admissions exams. Instead, the nursing candidate gets the opportunity to showcase themselves through a more thorough process that examines an individual's experiences, attributes, and metrics. These three components are reviewed in the admissions process to identify candidates that do not just make the grades for nursing but exemplify the characteristics of a nurse. While metrics are fairly straight forward, experiences and attributes bring out differences in the various candidates that are applying to nursing programs. Keep in mind as you are going through the holistic admissions process that experiences and attributes are often closely tied together or co-exist. As you review the following slides, please remember that all of these experiences and attributes are equally important, but may not all be relevant to you. Be sure to highlight those experiences and attributes that show the nursing programs who you are and remember that those become important to you.

Slide 6: Experiences

The first criteria of holistic admissions are your own experiences that you can draw from to showcase who you are in your nursing application. You can think of experiences unique to your journey and how they contribute to who you are today. Furthermore, these experiences can help to exhibit actions that may themselves be integral to the success of the nursing profession. Experiences are important to you, where you have come from and why you are here. One example is being a first-generation college student. This gives you an experience that would be different than someone whose family comes from a long line of college graduates.

Slide 7: Examples of Leadership

Another example of an experience could be one that involved leadership. Leadership comes in many different forms. For example, perhaps you were the captain of a sports team, worked as a manager of a store or were part of student government in high school or college. You could be a leader of your family or of your youth group. The idea here is to look at all the different experiences that you have that speak to leadership and think about how to showcase them. The leadership experiences can be simple, but it is important that you speak positively to them. As you share your leadership experience, explain how you brought value to your position and ways you can translate that leadership experience into the nursing profession. If you have extensive experience in leadership, be sure to highlight that and how that will make you a better nurse.

Slide 8: Adversity

If you have experienced adversity, such as overcoming a disability (learning or physical), growing up poor, being an immigrant or refugee, getting fired or laid off from a job, suffering an injury or facing discrimination, and succeeded despite your challenges, this is a compelling story to tell.

Slide 9: Attributes

The attribute section in holistic admissions is a place where you get to shine as an individual. Attributes are qualities or characteristics that make you who you are and will add to the profession of nursing.

While some of your attributes can be captured by simply checking a box, others such as “shows perseverance” or “commitment to social justice” will be demonstrated as you share your experiences, in your essay, interview, or both. You will want to keep this in mind as you explore

ways to show how you are fit for the profession of nursing with others. Furthermore, this process also gives you the opportunity to highlight why you did or didn't get the grades you had hoped for. This may be because you were a part of a military family and you had to withdraw or because you are the breadwinner of your family and your responsibilities to them came first. Again, whatever the reason, it is important to tell your story and to stay true to who you are by highlighting what makes you unique and how you can positively impact the nursing profession.

We have shared many different attributes that are important in those that become nurses. Now we want to focus on just a few of them to help you think about yourself and how you can describe who you are in holistic admissions process. Let's take a closer look at perseverance, reside in a health professions shortage area, commitment to social justice, and values that align with nursing

Slide 10: Perseverance

Perseverance is in the category of courage. It is a demonstration of persistence and effort to complete a task or goal that has had challenges. It shows resilience and is one of the strengths that is associated with a life of engagement, that you are committed to staying the course when others may have called it quits. It is a desired quality in a nurse and is often expressed in our role as advocates for patients, families, and the community.

No one has a life completely without challenges. What have been yours? Are you a single parent or had to work full time, or both while completing your prerequisites? Did you once see a wrong or injustice (does not have to be global) and take action to find a solution that was met with resistance, yet you kept working toward your goal. Notice how you may be able to intertwine two attributes within one story. However you go about telling your story about perseverance and resilience, be sure to connect it to the profession of nursing whenever possible. This keeps you focused on the task at hand.

Slide 11: What is a health professions shortage area?

A health professions shortage area is defined in three ways. 1. It can be geographic. This would be defined as rural, inner city or tribal land. 2. A shortage area can be population specific. Such examples are folks working with people experiencing homelessness or migrant workers, and 3. a facility can be listed as a shortage area. Some facilities such as a county hospital, correctional facility or behavioral health would qualify. As you look to continuing your education, these shortage areas can provide you with funding opportunities as well.

Slide 12: Commitment to Social Justice

According to one source, “Human Rights Careers,” Social justice means “fairness as it manifests in society.” Examples given are fairness in healthcare, employment, housing and more. Social justice has four essential goals: human rights, access, participation, and equity. Thus, any stance that you have on fairness in society, access for all or equity would be considered examples. Specific examples include supporting affinity groups, recognizing one’s privilege and using the correct pronouns for our transgender community members. Utilizing examples or instances where you can create a story of lending to equity, human rights, access, or participation would make your application stronger. Keep in mind that though this is listed under “attribute” within holistic admissions, our attributes or the things that make us unique, are often exemplified by our actions. So, in the case of social justice and your commitment to it, it may be an experience that shows your commitment and highlights your attribute. We are complex beings, and our experiences and attributes are no less complex with how they work together to show who we are.

Slide 13: Values that align with nursing

When you think of a nurse what are the words that come to mind? Hopefully, you think of words like compassion, empathy, advocate, love, integrity, trust, and the list goes on. Remember, this application is about showcasing who you are. So, what kinds of things would you imagine that you have done in your life that aligns with some of the words presented? It could be volunteering your time at the homeless shelter or in the hospital. Another example could be advocating for a family member who is undergoing medical treatment or just needing assistance in life. Displaying compassion means showing up without judgment, taking people where they are. Perhaps you read to children in your spare time either at their school or in Sunday school. Whatever the case may be, you should try to connect your attributes that align with the profession back to how you show up in your daily life.

Whether the school you apply to uses essays, individual, or group interviews, they will prompt you by asking questions. These examples given above are provided to you to help you think about how you might frame your responses incorporating your own experiences and attributes in an essay or an interview.

Slide 14: Metrics

Academic metrics are the black and white components of holistic admissions. These are the grades you earn or exam scores you receive.

The easiest information to share in the application process are those items that can be captured with a check box, for examples, speaking more than one language or first-generation college student. And of course, your grades are displayed on your transcripts. That it is easier to

recognize does not make this information more or less important than sharing your experiences and expressing other attributes that are valuable within nurses and the nursing profession.

Slide 15: Questions

To learn more about you, the schools will ask questions. And there are many ways that questions can be phrased to learn about your experiences and attributes that nursing programs value. These questions allow you to share who you are, how your experiences have prepared you for nursing school and the profession, and why you chose nursing for a career. Schools use a variety of strategies to learn your story, essays, individual or group interviews, or having you submit a video of yourself responding to the questions. Since the goal of holistic admissions is to diversify the student population and nursing profession, you may be asked about your experiences with diverse individuals. Diversity encompasses many components, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and more. Share how getting to know and interacting with individuals different from you has influenced your view of the world and how you approach challenges. While we don't know exactly what questions you may be asked, we can give you examples that have been used by many nursing programs. Be sure to download this list to help you think about how to respond the questions asked during your application process.

Slide 16: How can you prepare for holistic admissions

There are several things that you can do while waiting to apply to a nursing school. Most nurses would tell a potential future nurse to go and work in patient care. This may mean getting your Nursing Assistant - Certified credential and actively taking care of patients. There is no better way to know whether or not nursing is for you than actually getting involved in the care of another human. You may also need to evaluate where you are in your timeline. IF you are ready to apply now, be sure to brush up on your writing and speaking skills as these are very important to the safety of patients and your colleagues. Furthermore, you will want to:

- Begin to actively engage in conversations with your family regarding support needed in nursing school
- Seek out different study methods that may work for you
- Practice interviewing
- Seek assistance with editing your essay
- Demonstrate what makes you different from others - activities, interests, values, beliefs
- Begin self-care, if not already participating in this

If you are just beginning to explore nursing school and you do not plan to apply for more than 1 year, some other things you may want to do are:

- Contact admissions counselor and nursing advisors
- Complete all pre-requisite courses

- Explore different nursing programs ensuring specific requirements for each are met
- Seek volunteer opportunities such as in a hospital or clinic
- Work as a Nursing Assistant Certified or technician in a medical facility

Slide 17: Identify schools that are part of the grant

While there are many nursing programs in Washington State, this slide highlights the four LPN to BSN programs that are part of the Premera Blue Cross Grant. Links to each school involved in the Premera Blue Cross Grant have been provided below in the Description Section.

Slide 18: QR Code Slide: Conclusion

Holistic Admission is changing the way candidates for nursing programs are chosen in a positive way and is improving the diversity, equity, and inclusion of the student body and the nursing profession. If you have specific questions about the application process, please reach out to the admissions office of the nursing schools you are applying to for assistance.

We hope that whether you are applying to a nursing school that utilizes holistic admissions or doesn't that you have found this information helpful to showcase who you are and how you will positively influence the field of nursing. Before you leave the WCN YOUTUBE channel, be sure to check out the resources that we have provided for you in the description section. You can also scan the QR code listed on this slide to be directly connected to the resources as well. Thank you for taking the time to view this presentation and good luck in your future nursing education endeavors