What will you find in *The Scope*?

*The Scope* is a newsletter/magazine produced by the Duquesne University Student Nurses Association that displays unique perspectives from current students and faculty. You’ll find photographs of students collaborating, writing pieces on life-changing nursing experiences, and messages from faculty aiming to inspire.

*The Scope* is the proud recipient of the 2013, 2014, and 2016 Student Nurses Association of Pennsylvania Excellent Newsletter Award. President Morgan Gruender and Vice President Emily Churchill, pictured on the cover of this issue, have created such an established piece of work.

As BSN students are incredibly busy with work and with saving lives, please consider writing and giving your time to keep this newsletter going. Our goal is to make *The Scope* something that every Duquesne nursing student can look back on and be proud of.

We would love to hear your thoughts on this year’s newsletter. Please email all suggestions/comments/inquiries to us at either blissl@duq.edu or muellerh@duq.edu. All letters to the editors must include your name, contact information, and major.

All views expressed in *The Scope* are from each individual that contributed their time and work. Views do not represent the views of Duquesne University or Duquesne University School of Nursing. We look forward to producing something inspiring, collaborative, and memorable and sharing stories from all of our peers.

Best,

*Lauren Bliss & Hadley Mueller*

*BSN Class of 2021*
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Nursing from the Male Perspective
Male Senior Nursing Class of 2019

**Jon Naylor**

**Best thing:** Having the opportunity to provide quality and sometimes lifesaving care to people who desperately need nurses’ help.

**Worst thing:** Dealing with the assumptions, misconceptions, and the question, “why didn’t you become a doctor?”

**James Slavin**

**Best:** The feeling when my dad tells me how proud he is that his son is going to be a nurse.

**Worst:** Hearing the negative connotation that people sometimes use when talking about nursing.

**Joe Gabster**

**Best:** Having the ability to practice in a field that has typically been dominated by women and showing people that anyone can have success in whatever profession they desire are the best parts of being a male nurse.

**Worst:** I don’t believe there is a negative side to being a male nurse. It is all perception.

**Frankie Illuzzi**

**Best:** Having a career in nursing is more than just a job. It’s a forever fulfilling position that enables you to truly make differences in lives that would be far worse without your help.

**Worst:** I think the toughest thing to deal with as a nurse is trying to make decisions with 100% confidence 100% of the time. Some situations may mean life or death for the patient; the nurse has to be not only exact, but also extremely efficient when making these crucial decisions.
Khalid Rouilli

**Best:** We receive a lot of respect from other nurses in the workforce. This might be because of our small numbers, or maybe even due to the fact that we are a masculine figure in what has, over the years, been a feminine dominant profession. This in itself is a pro and a con.

Tommy Ecker

**Best:** Getting to help patients and their families at the most vulnerable times.

**Worst:** When the end of the road is met and you can’t do anything more.

Nick Battista

**Best:** Being a part of the change in diversity in a traditionally female-dominated field.

**Worst:** Overcoming negative opinions about being a male nurse.

Danny Ferriero

As a whole, I find the nursing profession to be very rewarding regardless of the nurse’s gender. I don’t think it makes a difference whether you are male or female.

Chris Collins

**Best:** The bond that occurs between you and other males in your class.

**Worst:** The assumption that all nurses are women even though nursing is for everyone.
Fighting for the Right to Education

Hadley Mueller, Sophomore

Historically, nurses have been admired for their compassionate and caring attitude. Unfortunately, these traits have not always been celebrated in males. Men and women may bring different strengths to the workplace, but they are all valuable. Both men and women should celebrate their softer, nurturing side, as well as their strong-willed and pragmatic side. These traits that may appear to be polar opposites, but they are both essential in nursing.

No matter our strengths or our sex, our commitment to our patients’ wellbeing is what makes us nurses. We learn to communicate with patients despite differences and barriers, so why can’t we do that with each other? We are inclusive and accepting about the patients that we treat, so why aren’t we like that with people who wish to join the ranks of our profession?

It is interesting to see a situation in which men have to fight for their right to be included in an organization. Typically, they hold the majority of the power. When the circumstances are flipped and men have to fight to be included, the shift in the relational dynamic between sexes is astounding.

Throughout history, women have had to fight for equality in education. Men had to do the same in nursing. Famously, Joe Hogan fought to be admitted to a female Bachelor of Science in Nursing program at the Mississippi University for Women. Hogan had already worked as a registered nurse at Golden Triangle Regional Hospital in Mississippi, but he wanted to get his bachelor’s degree. Hogan was not admitted to the program because of his sex, not a lack of qualification. In 1982, Hogan sued the nursing school for their institutionalized sexism. After he sued the Mississippi University for Women for excluding him from their nursing program based on his sex, all publicly funded nursing schools had to accept both women and men into their programs. This was a huge step towards inclusivity for the nursing profession.

As men are stepping into this field, we are reminded of how men and women are viewed as though they intrinsically have different strengths and abilities. In nursing, we must begin celebrating the different strengths that all nurses bring to their vocation. Nursing requires critical thinking and compassion; therefore, we should accept all people who are willing to do their very best for their patients by committing to a lifetime of learning.

We can all take a lesson from Hogan and stand up for ourselves and our patients. Hogan made way for other male nurses to have the same opportunity for education as females by fighting the administration. Hogan’s choice to sue the school of nursing fostered an attitude of endurance by contending for equal opportunity. In order to cultivate equality in nursing, men and women must coalesce and work towards inclusion together.

References:


Faculty Feature: *Experiences as a Male Nurse*

Chad Larkin, RN, BSN

So far in my 3 ½ year nursing career, my experience as a male nurse has been very positive. I am not going to lie, at first, I was a little anxious about starting into a career that is female-dominated. The men seemed to be few and far between in my nursing classes and clinical groups, which wasn’t necessarily a bad thing because I met my wife in nursing school at Duquesne! All of that aside, I have really enjoyed my time as a nurse. I have been in critical care for my entire nursing career and have loved every second of it. I believe that men bring a calming balance to the nursing profession. As in any career, it is beneficial to have different perspectives and different minds working together to solve a common problem. The addition of men into the nursing field has broadened perspectives. Men and women sometimes may see the same situation in a different light, and together we can accomplish more.

Aside from the occasional geriatric female patient that makes a comment about “how cute their nurse is!” or how they “can’t believe that a male is taking care of them!” I do not really encounter any negative feedback as a male nurse. I have had the opportunity to take part in leadership and educational roles in my career, where I have been a charge nurse, a preceptor to new nurses, and have recently become a clinical instructor for Duquesne University. I love the profession of nursing and do my best to give back and promote the profession equally, to both males and females. I am also in my second semester at Duquesne University’s Family Nurse Practitioner Program. I look forward to taking my nursing career to the next level by formulating care plans and caring for patients at the Primary Care Level as a Nurse Practitioner. I highly encourage everyone, male or female, who has thought about nursing to give it a try! It is a very fulfilling profession and you will not regret your choice!
Q&A: Male & Female Gender Role Perceptions in Nursing
Lauren Bliss and Hadley Mueller, Sophomores

What made you decide to study nursing? Have you ever felt like others have made assumptions about you based on this decision?

Jon Naylor: I first became fascinated with nursing after being in and out of the hospital numerous times when I was younger. The first people to calm me down in those situations were always the nurses. The main assumption always seems to be that nurses simply are not smart enough to become doctors. As all people involved in nursing know though, the role of a nurse and a doctor are vastly different. I enjoy caring for my patients, bonding with them, and being their advocate; therefore, nursing seemed to be a better fit for my personality.

Emily Hansson: I chose nursing because I grew up around it. My mom is a nurse and I grew to love the same area she has worked in for over 30 years – mother/baby. I never questioned nursing, and no one ever questioned my decision. I have been asked before why I don't want to go to med school or become a PA, but my answer is always that I don't want to leave direct patient care. That is where my passion lies – beside the patients. Choosing not to choose a more clinical path does not mean I can’t educate myself and master the science of my unit. I want to be clinically thinking while directly caring for patients.

How has studying nursing influenced your thoughts about gender roles? How has it helped you to overcome gender stereotyping?

Jon: I obviously entered into a heavily female dominated profession. Many assume that girls are more nurturing and therefore, seem to make better nurses. Through my studies and clinical experiences, I’ve realized gender is not what determines if you are a good nurse. In fact, gender has little to do with the role of nursing. The things that really matter is if you are intelligent, compassionate, and truly care for the wellbeing of your patient.

Emily: It feels wrong to say, but even to this day I sometimes catch myself feeling somewhat surprised when I see a male nurse on a unit. I think because I grew up with such a strong female figure in my life and not much a male figure, I subconsciously associated nurturing with females. I have gained a lot more respect for men as nurturing beings.

How has studying nursing affected how you perceive men and women? Do you typically see different strengths in men and women? If so, what differences do you see?

Jon: I don’t think my perception of men and women have changed. I always believed that individuals each have their own strengths and I don’t think gender has too much to do with it.

Emily: I have seen a man be more gentle and sympathetic than a woman, and I have seen a woman have more confidence to stand up for themselves than a man. Overall, I realize gender has nothing to do with nursing. Each bring different aspects to the table.

While in nursing school, were there any moments where you felt prejudice based on your gender?

Jon: I have never felt any prejudice in nursing school based on my gender, but I can say that it is definitely easier for professors and staff to recognize the things you do because males are the minority. There is no “blending in with the crowd.”

Emily: I never felt prejudice for being female in nursing, being that I am apart of the predominant gender in nursing. I can’t speak for men, though.
Summer Externship Experience
Emily Hansson, Senior

This past summer I was given the opportunity to be a part of a nurse externship program at Western Pennsylvania Hospital for eleven weeks. UPMC and Allegheny Health Network both offered these programs, and a large percentage of my junior nursing class participated in one of them or a program within their hometowns. I was unsure what the externship would entail; I was debating between it and a nurses aid position based on which would offer me more experience, being that this was my last summer to absorb any skills from a teaching environment outside of Duquesne. Evidently I chose the externship on a hematology-oncology, or bone marrow transplant unit, and later found out that I made the best decision of my nursing student career.

I set into my externship with two goals: I wanted to establish a thorough head to toe assessment and execute it with total confidence, and I wanted to learn the IV pumps inside and out. Sure I had experience with both of these areas, but I would have been lying if I said either felt even close to second nature. So Katie, my preceptor, took me under her wing and with the upmost patience and trust in me, showed me the ropes before giving me full control. She took any mistake I made and reinforced the correct way until it was engrained in me, all while never making me feel embarrassed. The staff on the unit was just as notable – the dynamic and their passion and love for the patients was so evident. I never saw a corner cut or rules broken to make their jobs easier. The interprofessional relationships were genuine, and the patients undoubtedly benefited from their teamwork. Not only did I gain invaluable knowledge in my eleven weeks, but also I saw what altruistic care through harmonious collaboration looked like.

Besides finding out that I have a weird love for peripheral sticks and inserting IVs, becoming a pro at quick lab and culture draws, and giving a meticulous hand off report, the most valuable skill I gained this summer was communication. I have always cared to establish relationships with patients because I am genuinely interested, but I also know that rapport makes both of our lives better. Some of these patients had three+ month stays – it was impossible not to grow close to them and their families. My heart broke when some of them passed away with no notice, and it was then that I finally realized how fast a prognosis can flip, something the nurses on my floor told me almost daily. On my last day as an extern, a patient and his wife cried as we said our goodbyes. We grew incredibly close over the eleven weeks, and as difficult as it was to leave, I never felt so solidified in my decision to enter nursing in that moment. Whole-heartedly caring for others while in return seeing the sincere appreciation for your work is a priceless gift.

Everything I learned this summer I cannot believe I went without before it. Especially since the Duquesne School of Nursing took away the transitions program, I highly, highly, HIGHLY suggest all nursing students to explore this opportunity to experience what 36 hours a week, every week, for eleven weeks feels like. I have spoken with many other students who were involved in a program, and all have agreed that it was the most profitable time as a student. It made me more excited to graduate, become more proficient, and fully experience the profession. And yes – my assessment is locked down and pumps are pie.
Duquesne University School of Nursing (DUSON) Alumni brunch is an annual event hosted during homecoming week. The brunch is an event sponsored by the Alumni Association that offers an opportunity for past Duquesne Nursing Students to celebrate reunions and raise awareness of the benefits of joining the Alumni Association. There were opportunities to shop nursing alumni jewelry, win one of the beautiful raffle items that had been donated, and join the alumni association or even apply for graduate programs directly onsite. Dean Mary Ellen Glasgow gave a speech and provided updates on the School of Nursing. The speaker invited to give a lovely talk was Christine Mabon who taught about the “Five Essential Friendships for Life” which was thought provoking and educational. Also, a representative of the Class of 1968 (who were celebrating their 50th reunion) shared memories of what nursing school was like way back when. Some students brought their old textbook, some which were multiple decades old, to show others what the textbooks were like back then and see the differences in knowledge. This year the DUSON Alumni were very proud to celebrate the completion of their $50,000 Endowed SON Alumni Association Scholarship. The annual brunch was wrapped up by announcing the raffle winners and offering the alumni students the opportunity to tour the simulation lab. After all the food was eaten, all the champagne sipped, and all the speeches given every guest was calling the event a success and were so excited for next year’s brunch.
The Essentials For Relaxation

Abbey Whitewood, Senior

**What are essential oils?** Essential oils are derived from certain plants, leaves, herbs, barks, and rinds. They are extracts, similar to something like vanilla extract, that you can use for different purposes including creams and bath gels to rubbing them in your skin or inhaling them from your hands or in a bath.

**How are they used?** There are many purposes for essential oils. The most common use is aromatherapy. The oils can be rubbed on the hands and inhaled, breathed in through vapor using a hot shower, bath, or a diffuser, or simply used in air fresheners as an alternative to harsh chemicals. You have to make sure to do research to find which ones are appropriate to put on your body as well as inhale as many are not safe for certain kinds of application.

**Why are they used?** Many people use combinations of lavender, chamomile, and rosewater to calm the body. Lavender can be used as a sleep aid to help you fall asleep quicker and stay asleep. Eucalyptus can be used as an antimicrobial and can be used to alleviate cough and congestion. It can even be used as an insect repellant! In combination with peppermint, they can help reduce headaches and promote mental and muscular relaxation. Peppermint alone can help alleviate nausea, headache, upset stomach, gas, indigestion, and anxiety. One research study shows that peppermint can help with burnout and mental fatigue. (Any nurses over here?) Lemon, orange, grapefruit, eucalyptus, and cinnamon can help give you an extra boost of energy. Peppermint, helichrysum, and marjoram oils can be used for pain, tension, and swelling and lavender and eucalyptus can be used for easing muscle pain and swelling. As you can see, the possibilities with essential oils are endless. They can be beneficial for a range of health problems.

**Personal testimony:** I have been using essential oils for a few years now. My mom first started using them when I was in my early teens to help reduce stress and heal the body using an alternative method. I remember one time when I was really sick with an upper respiratory infection and I was super congested. My mom sat me down with a diffuser and put in a concoction of essential oils then placed a towel over my head and the diffuser. I sat like that for 10 or so minutes and my sinuses were cleared. I also just recently got a diffuser of my own and turn it on with some lavender oil when I am stressed and it helps calm me down. My mom uses dōTERRA and they have a combination called Digestzen. This blend is to help soothe an upset stomach. Let me tell you. I rub this thing on my stomach when it starts to feel sick and within five minutes I am feeling completely fine. It is honestly a life saver. My mom also found a combination for a bug spray and all-purpose house cleaner that we use frequently in our house.

**Anything else I should know?** When researching what essential oils to use, make sure to find one that is 100% oil. At minimum it should be GC/MS tested. It may take a while to comb through the fake oils, but you want to make sure that they are not diluted with anything when you buy them. You can test to see how pure it is at home by placing a single drop on a white piece of construction paper. If it evaporates quickly, and leaves no noticeable ring, it is pure. Some good examples are Young Living Essential Oils, dōTERRA, Plant Therapy Essential Oils, and Rocky Mountain Oils.

When using the oils, remember, a little goes a long way!

When putting them on the body, make sure to dilute with “real” oils (aka carrier oils), waxes, butters, alcohols, or other diluting measures.

Lastly, make sure to check the oils for toxicity to animals. Many animals including cats cannot be around certain types of diffusing oils as it is not digested by their liver.

**Disclaimer** Before trying, make sure to talk to your doctor for any possible interactions with medications you may be on!
Just Breathe: A Yoga Routine for Stress Relief

Julia Ciotti, Sophomore

You have a midterm on Tuesday, a quiz on Thursday, a clinical project due on Friday, and at least three homework assignments in between. On top of that, you are working a part-time job to try and earn some much-needed extra cash. All of these tests, assignments, and deadlines are overwhelming. Does this sound familiar? If you feel like your responsibilities are getting the best of you, you might want to give yoga a try.

By practicing deep breathing and yoga, you will allow your body and mind to cope with the pressure that nursing school brings. Yoga combines physical and mental health to bring you peace and relaxation. Contrary to popular beliefs, you do not need to attend an hour-long yoga class to experience its benefits. All you need is five minutes of quiet relaxation. Yoga can be done at various intensities and skill levels. The main components of yoga are the poses, breathing, and meditation. The methodical combination of these three facets brings the mind and body together as one peaceful unit.

Yoga has many potential health benefits. Numerous studies have shown that it may play a role in stress and anxiety reduction. Yoga may also improve your mood and overall sense of well-being. Likewise, it can increase your physical fitness in regards to balance, flexibility, and strength. It has also been suggested that yoga may play a role in successful management of cardiac disease and hypertension. In addition, links have been made between yoga practice and improvements in depression, pain, and insomnia.

If you can spare five minutes of your time, here is a quick and effective restorative yoga routine you can try. First get away from noise and other distractions. Once you have found a quiet place to sit, close your eyes. Breathe deeply in through your nose and out through your mouth. Focus on your breaths and direct all your energy on your own being. While continuing to breathe, clear your mind of all your worries and tasks. Try not to think about anything besides your breathing for the entire five minutes. When you have cleared your mind, stretch your shoulders by reaching one arm behind your back as far as you can. Then, reach above your head and pull your elbow down towards your spine. Repeat this with both arms. You may also want to interlock your arms and hold them out in front of your body. Next, you will release your neck muscles by tilting your ear towards one shoulder and then the other. Finally, stretch your back by bending at the waist and reaching down to your toes. Hold each of the poses for 10 to 15 seconds.

Those stretches should release the tension from your overworked muscles. That short yoga session will help you reset your brain and body. By taking five minutes to improve your mental and physical health, you will be able to focus and study to the best of your ability. If you truly center yourself during that time, you will notice a positive difference in your mindset. As we have all learned, in order to provide the best care to others, we must first take care of ourselves.
NCLEX Practice Question!

A client is treated for cardiac dysrhythmias. The health care provider prescribes the calcium channel blocker verapamil, 80 mg orally every 6 hours. Which assessment finding does the nurse identify as a serious adverse effect of the medication?

A.) Dizziness

B.) Flushed skin.

C.) Mood changes.

D.) Peripheral edema.
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<tr>
<td>Libra</td>
<td>Brace yourselves: registration is coming. Prepare yourselves and get your Plan A and B or even C schedules ready to go. Stay at that computer at 7 am and don't give up until you get all your classes.</td>
<td>September 23–October 22</td>
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<td>Aries</td>
<td>Keep seeing red? Time to change up your wardrobe then! The half moon this month is a good sign of wealth of Aries, so take a shopping spree with your next paycheck!</td>
<td>March 21–April 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scorpio</td>
<td>That 30 degree weather change really messed up your juju, Scorpio, so take this month to find your balance again. Grab a fellow Libra to help you out.</td>
<td>October 23–November 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taurus</td>
<td>Midterms are over and time to finally relax a little. NOT. Keep that grind going on, Taurus. Jupiter will align with Uranus on the 28th making it the best day to be productive. Take advantage and get ahead of your stuff.</td>
<td>April 20–May 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagittarius</td>
<td>It’s Halloween season, and that means trying to find the perfect costume for your parties. Look no further! Why look around when you already have your clinical scrubs probably covered with MRSA. Scary, right?</td>
<td>November 22–December 21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gemini</td>
<td>Think you’re seeing double? Well you probably are because everyone is breaking out the basic Anorak jacket with leggings and riding boots. We’re not judging. Nothing beats a causal put together outfit.</td>
<td>May 21–June 20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capricorn</td>
<td>You thrive in the Halloween season, Capricorn. Or should I say candy corn?! You’re never too old to trick or treat. It might be a little weird but if you wear the right costume, you should pass as a kid.</td>
<td>December 22–January 19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cancer</td>
<td>Nothing worse than the Sunday scaries and having to prepare for another week. Don’t be so anxious. Your month is going to go by smoothly thanks to the meteor shower of the Orionids. They will shower you in peace.</td>
<td>June 21–July 22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aquarius</td>
<td>Oh SNAP!...Convention that is! Think about becoming more involved in DUSNA and try to attend the annual SNAP Convention. It’s a great opportunity to make professional connections and get closer with your fellow nursing students.</td>
<td>January 20–February 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leo</td>
<td>Thanksgiving break is on the horizon. Everyone is itching to go home after a long semester. Make sure to make your travel plans ASAP. The force from Mars will push you to procrastinate (as if you didn’t already with midterms) until those tickets are $$$$$$$</td>
<td>July 23–August 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pisces</td>
<td>Don’t be afraid to venture into the unknown. With registration coming up for the spring semester, try something new. You’ll be surprised of your choice but still have fun.</td>
<td>February 19–March 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virgo</td>
<td>Halfway through the semester, halfway through clinicals! You might not be on your favorite floor right now, but trust me, Virgo, you’ll soon see something really cool happen. Pay close attention on the 17th and it’ll come.</td>
<td>August 23–September 22</td>
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Interested in writing for *The Scope*?

We are always looking for new writers. Contact Lauren Bliss or Hadley Mueller for more details!

blissl@duq.edu
muellerh@duq.edu

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NCLEX

**ANSWER : C**

Mood changes are an indication that the client is experiencing a serious adverse effect related to verapamil. The nurse should report the assessment finding to the health care provider. Other serious adverse effects include hepatotoxicity, heart failure, myocardial infarction, and confusion.

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