

Writing Reflective Narratives: Embracing Cultural Diversity in Nursing Students

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"As writing instructors at the Hunter-Bellevue School of Nursing, we've found our nursing students are eager to craft their personal and clinical experience into poems, blog posts, and narrative essays. It can be thrilling to witness their transformation, as they begin to understand the power of their own stories when told in 'artful' and 'insightful' ways."

Stubenrauch, J., and Jacobson, J. The Value of Story in Debating Health Care Reform. Blog Post, Dec. 14, 2012, at <http://centerforhealthmediapolicy.com/2012/12/14/the-value-of-story/>

Donald Murray

"Instead of teaching finished writing we should teach unfinished writing and glory in its unfinishedness. . . . To be a teacher of a process such as this takes qualities too few of us have, but which most of us can develop. We have to be quiet, to listen, to respond. We are not the initiator or the motivator; we are the reader, the recipient."

Newkirk, Thomas, & Miller, Lisa, eds. (2009). *The Essential Don Murray: Lessons from America's Greatest Writing Teacher*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann. Pages 2-3.

Louise DeSalvo

"I believe, fundamentally, that writing is about cultivating and practicing autonomy. It is the way healing begins, especially if, in the past, our autonomy has been seriously compromised or even stolen from us. . . . Choosing--or rather, finding--our own subject, one that is personally, deeply significant, then, is the first step of the process."

DeSalvo, Louise. (2000). *Writing as a Way of Healing: How Telling Our Stories Transforms Our Lives*. Boston: Beacon Press. Page 51.

Goals: The student will...

1. Develop a daily writing practice.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the elements of style for a scholarly paper.
3. Produce a personal essay on a topic that matters to the student.
4. Write a blog post as part of the class's exploration of social media as a public health tool.
5. Write a brief response to a literary text on illness or an aspect of health care.
6. Describe the ways in which clear writing is essential to clinical practice.
7. Reflect on the approach and effectiveness of others' writings.
8. Discuss the variety of ways patients and caregivers express their relationships to health, illness, treatment, recovery, and dying, and how those expressions are reflective of cultural differences.
9. Discuss the ways in which reflective writing and close reading may be used to improve clinical and interpersonal skills and enhance well being.
10. Develop a personal plan for improving one's own writing, including the use of multi-media writing resources.

Assignments & Grading

I. Personal Narrative Essay (2 drafts)	Graded
II. Response to a Literary Work (2 drafts)	Pass/Fail
III. Blog Post (2 drafts)	Pass/Fail
IV. Two One-on-One Conferences with Instructors	Pass/Fail
V. Discussion Board on a Qualitative Study (3 hours)	Pass/Fail
VI. A Memo to a Nursing Supervisor	Pass/Fail
VII. Grammar Guide Exercises	Pass/Fail
VIII. APA Manual, Readings, and Discussion	Pass/Fail
IX. Class Participation (workshop, discussion)	Pass/Fail

Rita Charon & Nellie Hermann

"Representing one's experience in language is perhaps the most forceful means by which one can render it visible and, hence, comprehensible. Writing is how one reflects on one's experience. It is as if that which is experienced has to be somehow 'gotten outside' of the person so that it can be apprehended and then comprehended."

Charon, Rita, & Hermann, Nellie. Commentary: a sense of story, or why teach reflective writing? *Academic Medicine* 2012;87(1):5-7.