



LIFELINE

NEWSLETTER

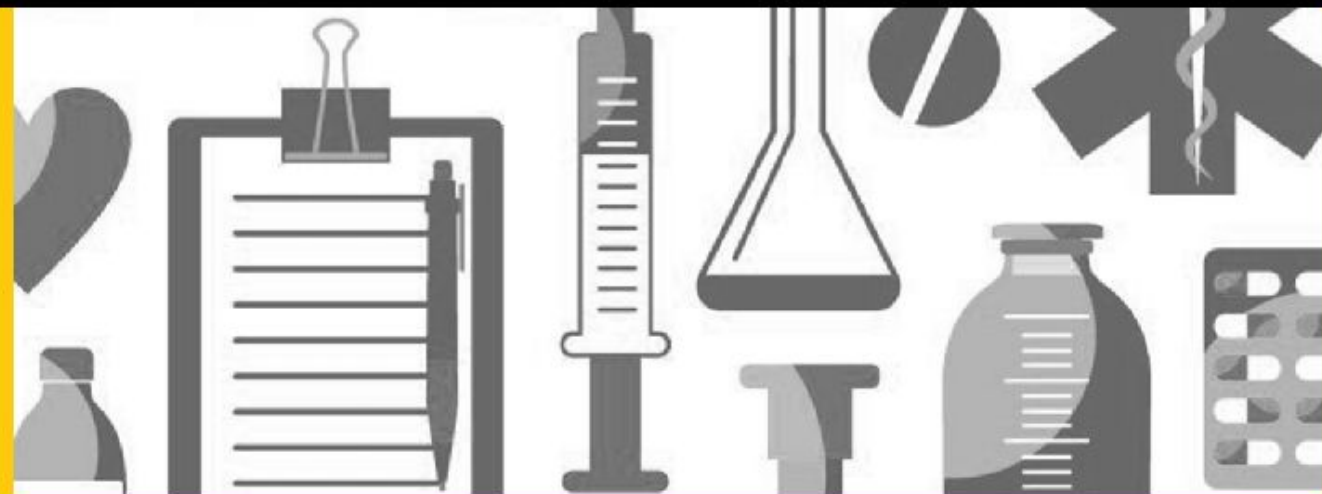


STUDENT NURSES'

ASSOCIATION

AT UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

ORLANDO



Editor's Piece

Amber Keller

SNA Media Director, Basic BSN '21

We have come to the end of another semester! It is a bittersweet feeling as the seniors in my cohort prepare for graduation. Thank you all for the opportunity to serve on the SNA Board as your Media Director! I am excited for **Sarah Stukey** to step into this role as next year's Media Director.

We had some exciting news at The National Student Nurses' Association Convention, which was held virtually in April this year. At convention, our Lifeline Newsletter was selected for the **National Award for Best Newsletter** which really reflects the dedication all of our SNA members who have submitted and have been involved this year!

In addition, we were recently nominated for the following among other Registered Student Organizations at UCF:

Outstanding Adaptation to Covid-19

Outstanding Advisor of the Year

Outstanding Officer of the Year (**Delainey Dietz**)

Service Organization of the Year

Social Organization of the Year

Also, SNA's Co-Advisor, **Mrs. Dorminy** was selected as this year's **advisor of the year!**

How Nursing School Will Continue to Impact My Career

Delainey Dietz

SNA Community Health Director, Basic BSN '21

A comment I heard from an alumnus last year that has stuck with me is how *“nursing school prepares you to survive your first day on the job.”* I can say without a doubt that, through our rigorous coursework and wide range of clinical experiences, I feel ready to start training. Beyond the books and clinicals, however, I feel like there are many other qualities that nursing school has helped us develop that will resonate throughout our careers.

Resilience

Nursing school is not easy, especially when it comes to juggling academics, extracurriculars, and a personal life. Looking back, there were so many weeks where I felt knocked down and had trouble seeing the finish line. Even though it may seem impossible sometimes, we have to continue moving forward for the sake of making even the smallest bit of progress toward the end goal. With this perspective gained from my experience throughout school, I feel like I am capable of bouncing back more easily from setbacks and more understanding that hard times are temporary.

Collaboration

I have never met a community as understanding of one another as those in nursing school! Between rushing to sign up for clinicals together and trying

to figure out what content will be on the next test, we've really been through a lot together. I am grateful to have a group of people who I trust to understand my worries, and who are all so eager to complete group projects on time. Collaborating with my fellow officers in SNA as well as my peers in classes has given me a whole new sense of the importance of teamwork, and that it is okay to ask for help sometimes. This is especially important in nursing, where I have learned it is important to ask questions about anything you are unsure about in order to provide the best and safest patient care.

Staying Positive

I was raised on the mantra "*there is a fine line between tragedy and humor,*" but I do not think I fully understood it until these last few years of school. It essentially means that your perspective on a situation can affect how you respond to it; will you let it break you down, or will you laugh it off? There have been *many* days where I have just felt off and as if everything was going wrong. On these days especially, I try to find something to smile or laugh about. It might be a funny patient or something as simple as a cat video that helps me realize there is still room for humor and happiness, even if the day is looking bleak. In our careers, it is guaranteed that we will have tough days, but nursing school sets the foundation for helping us learn how to stay positive when it seems nearly impossible.

I am so excited for everything to come and to begin my nursing career, but I can honestly say I will miss school! Thank you to all my peers, advisors, and fellow officers for making it an unforgettable experience!

President's Corner

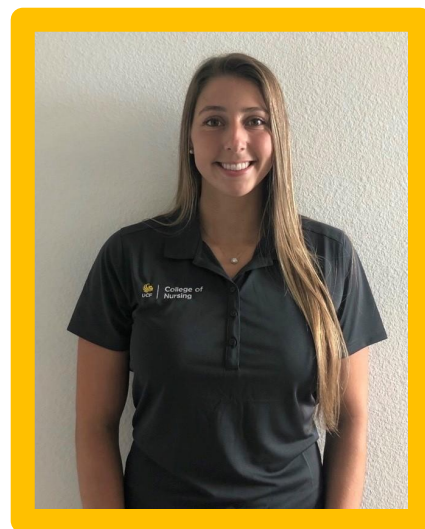
Samantha Cooney

SNA President, Basic BSN '21

This past week, UCF's SNA attended the 2021 NSNA Convention held virtually over zoom. The event was a huge success! Two of our officers, Josee Etienne and Chloe Frye, defended their resolution titled *"In Support of Increasing Awareness on the Lack of Pain Assessments on Patients of Color."* Upon review of over 150 members, it officially passed at the national level! We are so proud and excited to see the changes this resolution will bring!

At convention, there were many break out sessions that discussed a variety of different types of nursing fields, career opportunities, and study tips. There were courses to obtain an American Red Cross Disaster Certification and NCLEX review sessions for the senior and accel members. There were also morning yoga classes for meditation! We are so grateful to have been given the opportunity to attend national convention this year!

SNA is very excited to welcome the new board in our April meeting, with Erin Tonkin being the new president! There are many plans for some fun events in the upcoming months so stay tuned! As always, charge on!



Final Semester of Nursing School

Amanda Shover

SNA Secretary, Basic BSN '21

As I am weeks away from graduating nursing school, I wanted to reflect on the journey I have had thus far, but more specifically, this final semester.

Nursing school, as we all know, is by no means easy, and the final semester wraps up so much that you have learned and puts it into clinical practice in practicum. I was fortunate to do my senior practicum on a critical care unit and build upon my knowledge while really working on my hands-on practice. If you're anything like me, I learn best by doing, and practicum made this possible. In choosing a site, my advice would be to rank your preferences most realistically to you. For me, my patient population was most important, and then my shift, hospital, and finally location. You will have the option to do whichever you prefer, so really put some thought into it! Even if it all doesn't work out the way you dreamed it would, you will have an amazing experience. How do I know? Because practicum is less about the patient population and everything about the energy and attitude you bring to the floor every day!

Come to all of your shifts eager to learn and open to opportunities to try because the 14 shifts really do fly by! This is one of our last chances to be in the clinical setting, and the last time wearing UCF scrubs, so make it memorable! While you may feel a little lost at times, I would bet that you will leave the unit feeling like you have a new home there. Even if you don't, you will definitely learn a lot! Let your preceptor know your goals for practicum and work with them to see how you can achieve these skills such as inserting a peripheral IV, performing tracheostomy care, providing education to families, giving SBAR report to a physician, giving a full bedside shift report to the new oncoming nurse, and SO much more! **Write down your goals and seek opportunities!**

On top of practicum, don't lose sight of your other courses as they are also so important. Critical care lecture was super helpful in giving a full refresher course on all of the body systems in nursing care similar to Adult I & II while also incorporating new information that may apply to your practicum site or future workplace. You'll learn all about ventilator settings, code blues, CRRT, blood transfusions, etc. It may seem overwhelming, but we are so lucky to have this class in our curriculum. I have felt that this class has also served as a good start to studying for the NCLEX!

Lastly, applying for jobs for post-graduation... everyone has a different opinion on this, but I will share my process. I started in January just deciding in what area I wanted to work and what hospitals were around. For me, I am moving out-of-state so this was a necessary step, but for others staying in Orlando, this may be already done! Around mid-February, I was finalizing my resume and cover letter and submitting applications! It may seem a little

early, but the process does take time, so always give yourself more than you think you will need. By the end of February-early March, I was landing interviews and sharpening up these skills. **The interview is the time to market yourself!** You will want to do everything you can to prepare yourself for the interview. No matter what, you will probably be a little nervous, but the interviewer knows this and it will not stop you from doing a great job!

Start by doing tons of practice questions, some of which I practiced were:

“Tell me a little bit about yourself and why you got into nursing”

“Tell me about a time you had to care for a difficult patient or family”

“What made you apply to our hospital?”

“Why do you want to get into critical care/cardiac/labor and delivery/etc. nursing?”

“What are some of your strengths and weaknesses?”

“What are some things you do for self-care?”

When they are finished asking you questions, definitely have some questions for them as well! Just as much as they are looking for a qualified candidate to work for their facility, you are looking for a place to start your first RN job, and you want to know what you are getting into!

Some questions I would ask in my interviews were:

“What is your nurse-to-patient ratio and what would be some reasons you would need to flex up or down?”

“What does a successful new graduate nurse on this floor look like to you?”

Lifeline Newsletter

Student Nurses' Association – UCF Orlando

Personally, I do not think it is a bad idea to ask when you may hear back about the position or the next steps in the hiring process whether that question be directed to your recruiter or your interviewer. After the interview, send a follow-up email to your interviewer thanking them for the opportunity to speak with them! Keep it short but personalized to your experience. Also, dress professionally. You can never be too overdressed, but you can definitely be underdressed! The job application can be long, but always keep in touch with your recruiter, and do not want too long to start applying! *BEST OF LUCK in your final semester of nursing school... you made it this far and you are ALMOST THERE!*

You are coming from **UCF, the best nursing school ever**, and you will be so prepared!



Things I Wish I Knew Before Starting Nursing School

Hope Wegge

SNA Fundraising Director, Basic BSN '21

Everyone said it was going to be over in the blink of an eye, that I'd be walking across that stage before I knew it, and I would be a real nurse if I was ready or not. I always brushed it off and just kept focusing on what that week ahead of me had in store. But then the next week went by, then the next week, now here we are 2 weeks until graduation... WOW. If I said nursing school went by fast, it would be an understatement, even though I really felt those long days of class, clinical, and studying (which I'm sure everyone can relate to). After these 2 years, I've had some time to reflect on the journey this program takes you on and thought I would share some things that I wish someone would've told me before starting nursing school.

- **You'll get your "aha" moment.**
 - Before entering clinicals, I knew I always liked helping people, but I hadn't experienced a real connection with a patient before. One day, I had a patient who I was told was extremely hard of hearing to the point where you had to yell in order for her to hear you. After interacting with the patient and family, I asked the husband, *"Does your wife have a hearing aid by any chance?"* He replied, *"Actually she does, we just don't know how to put the batteries in."* I then looked at the hearing aid, figured

out how to put it together, and gave it to the patient for her to wear. As she turned it on, she looked at me and her face lit up, almost teary-eyed. She was so thankful I took the extra second to acknowledge and assist her with something as simple as that. This motivated me to be that person that goes the extra mile and treats patients the way I would want to be cared for.

- **It's going to be tough.**

- Actually, many people told me this beforehand LOL. I'll admit, there were days where I was so



overwhelmed with all the due dates, studying and expectations. My friends aren't in a rigorous program like this, so it was difficult to make plans and for them to understand. These exams will be challenging, you will have to study countless hours and you will be tired. However, what I wasn't told is that these hard classes are going to prepare you to be the best nurse. Looking back, did I love having to study and take extra time to understand difficult material? Probably not. But it has made me that much more of a knowledgeable, responsible, and most importantly: safe nurse. The picture above is my graduation cap, which says, "*It always seems impossible until it's done.*" I couldn't relate to this quote more, so I decided to use it. It really did seem impossible, but I'm here to tell you, you can do anything you put your mind to.

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- **You will have a life.**
 - I was always scared when people said, *“Say goodbye to your social life in nursing school.”* I prepared to not see my friends and family but I quickly realized; this is not true. Everyone’s nursing journey is different, but nursing is not your whole life. Time management is KEY to balancing your social life and school. I recommend Google Calendar... trust me, its life changing. I would write down everything school related which allows you to set social things around school and make time for yourself!
 - **Don’t be so hard on yourself.**
 - I am extremely guilty of this one. I’m sure many of you all are perfectionists and have Type A personalities. I can truly say this is a blessing and a curse. The accomplishments, good grades, and success are a beautiful thing, but you can start to put unnecessary pressure on yourself which leads to even more additional stress. Take the time to take care of yourself and realize that you do not need to be perfect. Do the best you can and remember how awesome you are.
 - **Appreciate and take in each day.**
 - Most of us were counting down the days until graduation since our first day of nursing school. I mean, who wants to be in a super hard program longer than we have to? I thought this way in the beginning at first, but then I realized, that as a student, you have a safety net because you’re not expected to know everything. But once you’re graduated, you’re responsible for skills and knowledge. Instead of wishing nursing school was over every day, embrace it and learn as much as possible.

Dealing with Death

Leah Utt

SNA Clubhouse Director, Accelerated BSN '21

Earlier this year, it happened - my first patient death. Despite being in the medical field for a while, this was something I had evaded while working in low stakes outpatient care. But the perfect storm of COVID, an unfamiliar team, and a sick patient wouldn't let me hide any longer.

I met her first working as a tech on the PCU. She had caught COVID. I remember that she was my favorite patient of the day. She was a talker and I had to try to convince her to relax since her oxygen levels would desaturate. Although she was on oxygen, she was doing relatively well. I happened to be in the room when the doctor came to see her, he seemed optimistic about her recovery despite her comorbidities. I went home after my shift without giving her a second thought.

A week later I was put in the ICU. At first it was just another day. I saw my patient from last week, but she looked completely different. I didn't even recognize her walking past her room, but once I saw her name it clicked. Where was the talkative, sweet lady? Instead, she was dejected, exhausted, and discouraged. The CPAP machine rendered her unable to communicate, her fingers purple and bruised from frequent blood sugar checks, legs stiff after a week of bedrest. The critical care doctor decided earlier that it was time to intubate. After the doctor explained everything, she consented. When her husband came to visit, I helped him gear up into his PPE, both of us beautifully naïve that he was actually saying goodbye.

Unexpectedly, she coded after the intubation. It was honestly a whirlwind. Once the code was called, people flooded in – the chaplain, managers, nurses, and onlookers. I stood next to the doorway already sweating in all the PPE, next to go in and help with CPR. There was so much confusion. Finally, the doctor came and started leading the team. I clearly remember the nurse at the code cart drawing up meds and watching her hands shake with adrenaline; it was almost comforting knowing that she was nervous too. The code was brutal and macabre, the patient was naked and vulnerable. Unfortunately, none of the interventions worked and she died.

First, I felt nothing, then an exhausting adrenaline crash. I still had the rest of my shift to work and other people to take care of. Finally, on the drive home I let myself cry. It was such a bizarre experience, a patient who came in walking and talking a week ago, now gone. Since then, I've had a few more patients pass away and it still incredibly difficult to process, but it does get a little easier.

The most valuable lesson I learned from this experience is how to let things go. The best advice I received was from Mrs. Dorminy. She told me about a coworker she had who drove over a bridge on his route to the hospital. On his way to work, driving over the bridge, is when he would start mentally preparing for work. On his way home, driving back over the bridge, he would stop thinking about work no matter what had happened during the day. Since then, I've implemented that into my post-shift routine. Whatever happens during the day goes down the drain when I get home and I take a shower and I'm able to let it go.

Gentle Reminders

Sadie Richards

SNA Vice President, Basic BSN '21

As my nursing school journey has been coming to an end, I began to self-reflect. I thought about what I did well and what I wish I had done differently. After doing some soul-searching, I came up with a few things that I that I would like to share with you all, in hopes that it will help you as you are going through your own journey.

1. **Take a break to take a breath**--We all know how demanding nursing school can get and how difficult it can be sometimes to balance everything from classes, clinicals, and labs, to extracurriculars and just day-to-day life. Nevertheless, it's crucial in the midst of all the demands of nursing school, that you take some time throughout your days to take some deep breaths and re-ground yourself because those small moments will really make a difference.
2. **Make time for self-care**--I used to hear people say this a lot throughout nursing school, but I never really implemented it as much as I should have. I wish I did. Self-care is just like taking a break to take a breath except you are dedicating a certain amount of time to do something for yourself that you enjoy. Self-care can look different for many people. For some, it might be *going to the gym* or *spending time with loved ones*, and for others, it could be *taking a bubble bath* or *watching an episode of your favorite movie*. Yes, nursing school is important and should be your priority as a student, but so are you and

your mental health. Making time for self-care will help prevent burnout as a student nurse and help to give you a reboot of some sort, which will result in better well-being and might even help you be more productive.

3. **A's are great but they are not everything**--I feel like as students, it's great that we set high standards for ourselves and that we work hard to be the best that we can be, but we can sometimes get so caught up in being perfect that we put an unhealthy amount of pressure on ourselves. This can end up doing more harm than good, in terms of our mental health and overall well-being. Yes, continue to strive for excellence, but don't forget to take breaks, and make time to do the things you enjoy outside of nursing school. If you don't do so great on an exam, it is not the end of the world. Figure out how you can improve, pick yourself up, and move forward.
4. **Give yourself grace**--I know many of you will be able to relate to me when I say that I have always been my toughest critic. I gave myself no room for errors and would harshly scold myself if I messed up on something. It became exhausting. Until one day, I asked myself, "*would you treat someone else like this if they made a mistake?*" I thought, "*no I wouldn't. I would be more kind.*" Then, I thought to myself, "*why not extend that same kindness you would give to others to yourself?*" That moment changed my entire perspective. Ever since then, I've practiced being kinder to myself and giving myself grace. I encourage you to do the same. The next time you catch yourself being overly critical and harsh to yourself, stop and give yourself grace. Remind yourself that you are doing the best that you can, and everything is going to be ok.

Announcements & Upcoming Events!



To submit your work to the next newsletter, contact Sarah!

ucfsnaorlwebmaster@gmail.com

Next General Meeting:

May 26th at 1700!

Contact Info for the 2020-2021 SNA Board!



President	Samantha Cooney	ucfsnaorlpresident@gmail.com
Vice President	Sadie Richards	ucfsnaorvicepresident@gmail.com
Secretary	Amanda Shover	ucfsnaorlsecretary@gmail.com
Treasurer	Chloe Frye	ucfsnaorltreasurer@gmail.com
Clubhouse Director	Leah Utt	ucfsnaorclubhouse@gmail.com
Historian	Audrey Been	ucfsnaorlhistorian@gmail.com
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Breakthrough to Nursing Director	Natalie Klosinski	ucfsnaorlb2n@gmail.com
Media Director	Amber Keller	ucfsnaorlwebmaster@gmail.com
Community Health Director	Delainey Dietz	ucfsnaorlcommunity@gmail.com
Fundraising Chair	Hope Wegge	ucfsnaorlfundraising@gmail.com
Accelerated Liaison	Megan Donnelly	ucfsnaorlaccelliaison@gmail.com
Advisor	Dr. Brian Peach	Brian.Peach@ucf.edu
Advisor	Kate Dorminy	Kate.Dorminy@ucf.edu

Social Media

Facebook: Student Nurses Association: UCF -Orlando
Instagram: @snaucforlando
Website: snaucforlando.com

2021-22 Board
COMING SOON!!

