

## Reaching the Corners: Nursing Students

Nursing students are natural leaders, self-motivated, and concerned about the needs of others. They experience rigorous academics as well as caring for people who are in distress and pain. How can you engage nursing students on your campus to follow Jesus and influence other students and faculty in the nursing school? Here are contextualized growth strategies for developing nursing students into caring and compassionate nurses who love Jesus and serve others in their lives and in their profession. InterVarsity's focused ministry for nursing students and nurses is [Nurses Christian Fellowship](#).

### Contextualizing the Drivers for Growth

#### 1. NSO: Key Points of Context

- Meet nursing students in the nursing school and invite them to engage with the big questions of life or explore how they can be a transformative influence in their school.
- Create a box on your contact cards for "Nursing Major."
- *Freshmen/Sophomores* are usually in a **pre-nursing program** (regular classes) and are more likely to attend chapter activities and training events.
- *Juniors/Seniors* are usually in the intense **nursing program** and are less able to attend chapter activities due to full classes and clinical schedules.

#### 2. FOLLOW UP: Key Points of Context

- Be aware of where nursing students are in their course of study—pre-nursing or nursing.
- Invite nursing students to develop their leadership skills, grow deeper spiritually, and care for others like Jesus so they can reach their corner of campus.

#### 3. PLANTING SMALL GROUPS: Key Points of Context

*The goal is to establish a witnessing community within the nursing school.*

- Present topics of interest to nursing students, such as caring for people in distress, spiritually caring for others, dealing with pain and suffering, Christian character.
- An excellent content resource is NCF's [Journal of Christian Nursing](#). Many free articles and resources can be downloaded, including a special column for nursing students, [Student TXI](#).
- Equip pre-nursing students to plant, lead, & grow small groups *before* entering nursing program.
- The nursing program has easy on-ramps for ministry—students are in clinical communities or cohorts (usually by semester) and have opportunities for natural spiritual conversations, discipleship, and evangelism.
- Start small groups/communities in the nursing program that meet at creative times—meals, between classes, late afternoon. Ask students for the best time for their community.
- Use contextualized resources to equip students. Email [NCF@intervarsity.org](mailto:NCF@intervarsity.org) for NCF Campus *Vitals* newsletter. See specialized resources just for InterVarsity staff at <http://ncf-icn.org/students/intervarsity-staff-ministry-nursing-students>.
- Consider a Pocket Proxe outreach, such as [Scars](#), [Fake](#), or [Who Will You Be](#).

### Contextualizing the Developmental Pathway

## 1. Challenges in the Developmental Pathway

- Develop *pre-nursing* students as leaders *before* they enter the intense nursing program.
- Juniors and seniors may only be able to attend small groups and not chapter large group or special training events due to the demanding and competitive nature of the nursing program and scheduling off-site clinical rotations.

## 2. How to Modify the Developmental Pathway

- Purposely cast vision *early* with pre-nursing students (freshman and sophomores) to develop them as chapter members > apprentices > leaders so they are ready to be leaders in the nursing program as juniors and seniors.
- Juniors and seniors need training adapted to their needs and schedules for Bible study training, network mapping, prayer walking, prayer ministry, thresholds of conversion, initiating trust-building spiritual conversations, vision casting, leadership development, etc.

## Contextualizing Coaching for Growth

### 1. Coaching Staff

- Understand the culture and language of nursing school. Learn the difference between pre-nursing and nursing programs. Understand the stresses, fears and time constraints of each year.
- Develop pre-nursing students for leadership, discipleship and evangelism *before* they enter the nursing program when they have time to participate in InterVarsity ministry and training.
- Be flexible and schedule your time wisely with students in the nursing program. They have challenging schedules with classes and clinicals at odd hours (early morning, night, weekends).

### 2. Coaching Students

- Pre-nursing majors are in a highly competitive environment to gain acceptance to the nursing school. Leadership responsibilities may involve a high cost.
- Nursing majors are at high risk for over-commitment, resulting in stress, discouragement, or a sense of failure. They may need help prioritizing and narrowing their leadership commitments.
- Nursing majors need a caring community of people who understand and encourage them.
- Many nursing majors have high spiritual interest. They experience hard realities of illness and death in patient care and they want to understand *why* there is pain, suffering, brokenness. These natural questions provide opportunities for Christians to invite their friends to explore faith.
- Nursing students want to know how to meet the spiritual needs of their patients. This leads to natural spiritual questions and conversations.
- Plan frequent debriefs on what they are learning and experiencing in their classrooms and clinical rotations.

## Key Contacts

- **Timothy Lin**, National Director of Student Ministries, [tim.lin@intervarsity.org](mailto:tim.lin@intervarsity.org).
- **Bonnie Hann**, NCF Campus Liaison, [bhann@intervarsity.org](mailto:bhann@intervarsity.org) (contact at early interest)
- **Kathy Schoonover-Shoffner**, NCF National Director, [ksshoffner@intervarsity.org](mailto:ksshoffner@intervarsity.org)
- When starting to reach nursing students, utilize contextualized resources for [students](#) and [staff](#) on the NCF website at [www.ncf-icn.org/](http://www.ncf-icn.org/).

