
Heather A. Vitko PhD, RN, CNL, CCRN, TCRN
2023

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Education

Undergraduate

1989-1993	Saint Francis University Loretto, Pennsylvania	BSN	Nursing
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Graduate

2009-2012	University of Pittsburgh Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	MSN Clinical Nurse Leader concentration	Nursing
2013-2018	Duquesne University Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	PhD	Nursing

Professional Licensure and Certifications

1993-present	Registered Nurse License	Pennsylvania Exp: 10/2024
2010-present	CCRN certification	AACN Exp: 6/2025
2012-present	Clinical Nurse Leader	CNC Exp: 12/2023
2016	Distance Education Certification	CETL
2018-present	TCRN certification	BCEN Exp: 7/2026

Clinical Certifications

Advanced Cardiac Life Support	American Heart Association
Pediatric Advanced Life Support	American Heart Association
Basic Life Support	American Heart Association

Appointments and Positions

Academic

2021-present	University of Pittsburgh Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania CNL Program Coordinator MSN Program Director	Associate Professor Department of Acute and Tertiary Care
2009-2021	Saint Francis University Loretto, Pennsylvania	Assistant Professor Nursing
2009-2011	Saint Francis University Loretto, Pennsylvania	Coordinator; Clinical Site, Skill lab Simulation lab
2005-2009	Saint Francis University Loretto, Pennsylvania	Adjunct Clinical Instructor

Additional responsibilities 2009-2011:

Clinical Site Coordinator: Responsible for securing sites, obtaining contracts, and scheduling all levels of clinical rotations; overseeing health and clinical clearances for students.

Skills Lab Coordinator: Responsible for ordering and maintaining supplies for the skills lab, skills instruction and remediation of students for three levels.

Simulation Lab Coordinator: Provide oversight for student simulation scenarios in most nursing courses, simulation scenario writing and assisting with computer programming of scenarios.

*Trained at the WISER center at the University of Pittsburgh

*Worked with the Center for Excellence for Remote and Medically Under-Served Areas (CERMUSA) to deliver simulation-based education to rural healthcare providers

2005-2009	Saint Francis University	Adjunct Clinical Instructor Medical-Surgical Clinical Critical Care Clinical
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Teaching Assistant:

2012-2013	University of Pittsburgh Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	Graduate Teaching Assistant Nursing Leadership
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**primary responsibility to design on-line courses from existing lecture materials in the RN Options program*

2013-2014	Duquesne University Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	Graduate Teaching Assistant Nursing Research, <i>on line</i>
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**primary responsibility to guide, mentor, and provide feedback to students and groups as they prepare evidence-based research presentations*

Proficient in the use of the following learning management systems and computer programs:

- LMS: Blackboard, Canvas
- Remote systems: Big Blue Button, Zoom, Skype
- Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher
- Utilized various applications and technologies to assist with telehealth services

Non-Academic

2022-present	Chan Soon-Shiong Medical Center At Windber	Staff Nurse, Critical Care and ED
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1999-2021	Memorial Medical Center Johnstown, Pennsylvania	Staff Nurse, Intensive Care
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**Since 2012 implemented CNL attributes of quality and safety at the bedside by leading various QI efforts within my unit, effecting policy change through presentations of evidence-based practices, and mentoring new nurses in improving patient outcomes at the microsystem level*

1998-1999	Somerset Hospital Somerset, Pennsylvania	Staff Nurse, Intensive Care Staff Nurse, 3A Telemetry Unit
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1996-1998	Laurel Wood Care Center Johnstown, Pennsylvania	Case Manager Staff Nurse, Intermediate Care Unit
1994-1996	Tri-County Home Agency Follansbee, West Virginia	Nursing Supervisor
1993-1994	Windber Hospital Windber, Pennsylvania	Staff Nurse, Palliative Care

Proficient in the use of / care of the client receiving the following intensive medical therapies:

- *Neurological:* External ventricular drain, Subdural monitor, Intraparenchymal monitor, Lumbar epidural drain, continuous EEG monitoring and titration of pentobarbital
- *Pulmonary:* Oral/Nasal/Tracheal Mechanical Ventilation (all modes), Independent lung ventilation and titration of chemical paralytics, chest tubes, s/p thoracotomy procedures
- *Cardiovascular:* S/P coronary revascularization procedures, intra-aortic balloon pumps, extra-corporeal membranous oxygenation, valve replacement/repair, transcatheter aortic valve replacement, pulmonary artery catheter monitoring, arterial pressure monitoring, titration of vasopressor and inotropic medications
- *Renal:* Peritoneal dialysis, continuous renal replacement therapy, continuous bladder irrigation, intra-abdominal pressure monitoring
- *Skin/Wound:* Complex traumatic/surgical/infectious wound dressings, vacuum-assisted closure (VAC) therapy, complex ostomy care

Membership in Professional Organizations

2021-present	Clinical Nurse Leader Association (CNLA)
2005-present	American Association of Critical Care Nurses (National) Greater Johnstown Chapter of AACN (Local) Positions Held: *Membership & Engagement Chairperson 2020-2023 *Secretary 2020-2023 *Immediate Past President 2020-2021 *President 2019-2020 *President-Elect 2018-2019 *Board of Directors 2015-2018
2012	Sigma Theta Tau, Nursing Honor Society Pittsburgh Chapter
2011-2017	American Association of University Women

Publications

Hodgson, J., Locke, R., Vitko, H., & Flaisher-Grinberg, S. (2020). Associations between personality and nomophobia among undergraduate college students. *Spectrum*; 11(1), 3-14.

Vitko, H., & Troxell, J. (2018). Probiotics in the critical care unit: Fad, fact, or fiction? *Journal of Emergency and Critical Care Medicine*; 2:95.

Vitko, H., Sekula, K., & Schreiber, M. (2017). Probiotics for trauma patients; Should we be taking a precautionary approach? *Journal of Trauma Nursing*; 24(1), 46-52.

Consultation

2018-present Peer Review Editor: American Journal of Nursing

2013-present Reviewer: Lilly, L.L., Collins, S.R., Harrington, S., & Snyder, J. (2014, 2018). *Pharmacology and the nursing process* (7th ed., 8th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby-Elsevier.

2013-2015 Consult for CERMUSA in writing curriculum to educate rural healthcare providers in emergency care; served as wound expert for using telehealth technology for rural home care nurses in the community setting

Capriotti, T. M., & Frizzell, J. P. (2020). *Pathophysiology: Introductory concepts and clinical perspectives*. F.A. Davis Company. Chapter and content reviewer.

Hart, M.N., & Loeffler, A.G. (2012). *Introduction to human disease; Pathophysiology for health professionals*. Sudbury, MA: Jones & Bartlett. Chapter and content reviewer.

Poster Presentations

Exploring the communication needs of ICU patients that are mechanically ventilated and spontaneously awakened from sedation: A mini-study. Presented at the Graduate Research Symposium, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, November 6, 2015.

Presentations: Regional, National & International

Delivery of holistic quality care amidst pandemic: In the eyes of a Clinical Nurse Leader. Invited speaker, Third Annual Virtual Convention, Scientific Meeting and General Assembly of the Philippine Nurses Association, Oriental Mindoro Chapter, Philippines, December 18, 2021.

Probiotics for the Prevention of Infection in Trauma Patients: The Fad, the Facts, and the Fiction. Invited presenter, Keystone Emergency and Trauma Summit, Nemaacolin Woodlands Resort, May 22 & 23, 2019.

Has Health Care Gone to the Dogs? The Benefits of Animal-Assisted Therapy in the ICU. Presented through the Conemaugh Learning Institute, Journal club, October 18, 2018. Resulted in unit and hospital-wide policy change.

Unpeeling the Banana Bag. Presented through the Conemaugh Learning Institute, Journal Club, July 17, 2017.

Stop the Bleed. Presented at various school districts in Cambria and Somerset counties, through the Division of Trauma Services, Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, April 2017-present.

Sideshow Illusion: Post ICU Syndrome. Presented at the Winter Education Carnival, Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, Johnstown, PA, December 4, 2015.

Drugs and bugs: Using probiotics in the acute care setting. Presented at "Current Issues in Acute Care 2015" sponsored by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses, Pennsylvania Highlands Community College, October 23, 2015.

Drugs & Bugs: The role of probiotics in the Acute Care Setting. Presented through the Conemaugh Learning Institute, Journal club, August 20, 2015. Resulted in hospital-wide practice change.

Wake up and breathe, now what? The increasing importance of effective communication with mechanically ventilated patients. Presented at the chapter meeting, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, Greater Johnstown Chapter, January 19, 2014.

Diseases making headlines; what's behind the ice bucket challenge, EBV and EV-D68. Presented to the American Association of Medical Assistants and Coders, 2014.

Measuring gastric residual volume; what does the evidence say? Presented at CMMC critical care journal club, 2013. Resulted in hospital-wide practice changes.

OSHA guidelines, Blood borne pathogens for the Healthcare Worker. Windber Medical Center, 2012.

Providing quality care; QSEN at the bedside. University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, 2011 and 2012.

Guest lecturer, RN Options NUR 1074 Professional Development and Practicum. Primary faculty Dr. Irene Kane.

Guest lecturer, Nursing Leadership NURSP 2292: Leadership Development. Primary faculty Dr. Rose Hoffman

Vitko, H., Wendekier, C. (2010). *An interdisciplinary approach to discharge planning*. Presented at the Rural Telehealth and Advanced Technologies Conference, Johnstown, PA. (Invited speaker)

Performing peritoneal dialysis in the acute care setting. Presented to nursing staff at the Nursing Excellence Education Practicum, Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, 2009.

Assessment and treatment of sepsis. Presented to nursing staff at the Nursing Excellence Education Practicum, Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center, 2008.

Grants and Funding

Conference grant awarded from the Saint Francis University Faculty Development Committee

2019: \$2000 award to attend the CNL Summit in Tampa, Florida

Grant from the 1889 Foundation for faculty and students to attend conferences

2017: \$2000 award to attend Geriatric Trauma regional conference

2018: \$1500 award to attend Golden Years Geriatric local conference

2019: \$1750 award to attend American Association of Critical Care Nurses regional conference

Research grants awarded from the Saint Francis University Office of student research

2017: \$1000 award to fund faculty-led student research on measures to reduce test anxiety

2018: \$1200 award to fund faculty-led student research on relationship of personality traits and cell phone addiction

Grant from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies

2014: \$2500 award toward purchase of lifesaving equipment for a local daycare

Teaching

Saint Francis University School of Health Sciences and Education

MLE 509: Advanced Core Concepts of Health, *on-line**, primary faculty

Graduate level pathophysiology, pharmacology, and assessment

CORE 407: Healthcare Literacy, primary faculty

Senior level capstone course

NURS499: Student Research

Mentor students over 3 semesters in the design, implementation, and writing process

Chronic Alterations in Health, *face to face and on-line**, primary faculty

Senior level didactic and lab content

Human Growth & Development, *on-line, hybrid, and face to face**

Sophomore level didactic content

Pathophysiology/Pharmacology 1 and 2, *face to face and on-line**, primary faculty

Didactic instruction over two semesters, seven credits

Life-Threatening Alterations/Critical Care Nursing, primary faculty

Didactic, Clinical, Simulation and Lab components, four credits

Nursing Assessment, lab faculty, primary faculty

Clinical, Simulation and Lab components

Fundamentals of Nursing

Skills Lab and Simulation components

Acute Alterations in Health/Medical-Surgical Nursing

Lab, clinical, and simulation components

Service**University Committees, University of Pittsburgh**

2023	Professional Development & Education Committee
2022-2023	Chair, MSN Council
2022-2023	Nursing Research Advisory Committee, UPMC
2022-2023	MSN Comprehensive Exam Committee
2022-2023	Committee on Implementation of AACN Essentials
2022-2023	Faculty Advisor, Delta Tau Delta

University Committees, Saint Francis University

2019-2022	Co-Chair, Institutional Review Board *Review approximately 100 IRB applications per year *Secured internal monies to implement electronic submission/tracking software *Wrote policies and procedures for student submissions
2018-2022	Committee on Release time, Overload, Stipends, and Adjunct
2018-2022	Committee on Graduate Studies
2018-2022	Spiritual Advisor, Phi Delta Kappa sorority *Received the Excellence Award for Outstanding Advisor in 2020
2018-2020	Faculty Athletic Mentor & Team Chaplain, Field Hockey
2017-2022	Mentor for student-led research *Multiple publications with students in peer-reviewed journals
2017-2022	Planning Committee, Annual Interprofessional Healthcare Challenge *Part of committee that instated Interprofessional Simulation, received the “Innovations in Education” award from the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.
2017-2022	Curriculum Committee, MSN
2016	Search Committee faculty, Masters of Cancer Care
2013-2016	Student Affairs Committee *Committee Chair 2015/2016
2010-2015	Co-founder and organizer of the annual Free Health Screening Clinic *Planned and implemented free Health screenings in which multiple healthcare providers offered free or reduced cost services to the rural and medically underserved in the community.
2010-2014	Simulation Task Force, co-chair, School of Health Sciences *Implemented interprofessional simulation within the School of Health Sciences
2010-2022	Curriculum Committee, Department of Nursing
2009-2022	Nursing Faculty Organization

2012-2022	Interprofessional Education Committee *2018 Recipient of the AACN's "Innovation in Teaching Award"
2010-2016	Clinical Education Committee, School of Health Sciences
2011	Day of Reflection, co-chair and Master of Ceremonies
2010-2012	Level 1 and 2 coordinator, Nursing Department
2010	Presenter, Science Day for high school students *Led students interested in a health care field through basic assessment techniques and basic wound care and first aid
2010	Faculty Search Committee
2010	Ad Hoc Committee, Systematic Evaluation Planning

Other Professional Activities

2020-2023	Secretary & Membership engagement, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, GJC chapter
2019-2020	President, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, GJC chapter
2018 – 2019	President-elect, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, GJC chapter
2015-2018	Board of Directors, American Association of Critical Care Nurses, GJC chapter
2018-2019	Practicum Graduate Student Mentor, Chamberlain University *Mentor MSN students in course map writing, test derivation, and lecture delivery in the academic setting
2017-2018	Dissertation Committee, Nova Southeastern University
2011	Advisory Committee, Conemaugh School of Nursing
2006-2010	Proctor, Critical Care Nursing Skills Competency Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center *Ensure staff nurse proficiency in advanced monitoring equipment in the critical care setting
2006-2008	Simulation and didactic Education for Graduate Nurses Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center *Led newly hired nurses through simulations of assessment skills and recognition of need to escalate care

Volunteer Community Activities

2021-present	Backyard Ministries; provides food and devotionals for families in need
2020-present	Backpack program; provides food and supplies for school-age children in need
2019-present	Christian community outreach; provides hot meals for those in need
2019 (March 30)	UPMC IBD Unite, Conference Panel
2017 - 2020	UPMC IBD Connect, Patient Support Volunteer
2017-2020	Community Presenter and Facilitator “Stop the Bleed” Program *Present life-saving techniques in hemorrhage control to school teachers and staff, part of a nation-wide initiative in the wake of school shootings
2007-2019	Yearly Red Ribbon week presenter, Forest Hills Elementary School *Present the danger of drugs to elementary school children
2011-2015	Board of Directors, Richland Academy Montessori School
2011-2020	Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers, American Heart Association *Conducted numerous classes for area nursing and medical assistant students, at no charge
2011-2020	Community Instructor, American Heart Association Basic Life Support, Heart Saver, First Aid *Conducted numerous classes for high school students, day care staff, and community members at no charge
2010-2013	Administration of no-cost Influenza vaccinations to rural communities Saint Francis University, Community Outreach
2007-2019	Developed, Implemented Injury Prevention Programs for elementary children Forest Hills School District *Taught elementary students the importance of seatbelts, bicycle helmets, gunsafety, and sun safety. Yearly invited presenter.
2007-2011	Volunteer representative, Junior Achievement

Award and Recognition

2020	<i>Club Advisor of the Year</i> Excellence Award for Outstanding Service awarded by Saint Francis University, Student Government Association
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