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

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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
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2013-2018	Duquesne University Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	PhD	Nursing
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**Professional Licensure and Certifications**

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

Advanced Cardiac 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 Windber, Pennsylvania	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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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**

2022-present                      Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC) Board of Commissioners  
-2022-present Vice-Chair

2021-present                      Clinical Nurse Leader Association (CNLA)

2005-present                      American Association of Critical Care Nurses (National)  
Greater Johnstown Chapter of AACN (chapter closed  
2023)

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**

Vitko, H, Troxell, J., & Sherwood, P. (2023) Probiotics for infection prevention in trauma and critical illness, *Journal of Trauma Nursing*, 30(5), 296-304.

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). <i>Pharmacology and the nursing process</i> (7 <sup>th</sup> ed., 8 <sup>th</sup> 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, Nemacolin 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

### University of Pittsburgh, Department of Acute and Tertiary Care

**NURSP 2095: Contemporary Issues in Nursing**

**NURSP 2096: Clinical Nurse Leader Practicum 1**

**NURSP 2097: Clinical Nurse Leader Practicum 2**

**NUR 0001: First Year Nursing Seminar**

**NUR 3052: Manuscript Development**

**NUR 1135: Transition to Professional Nursing**

### 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
2023-present	School-wide Curriculum 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**

2023	Highlands Health Free Medical Clinic, RN patient care and grant writer
2021-2023	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, gun  
safety, and sun safety. Yearly invited presenter.
- 2007-2011                      Volunteer representative, Junior Achievement

**Award and Recognition**

- 2020                              *Club Advisor of the Year*  
Excellence Award for Outstanding Service awarded by Saint Francis University,  
Student Government Association