



**Dalhousie School of Health Sciences
Halifax, Nova Scotia**

Curriculum Framework

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Preamble

This document was created to provide a portrait of the graduate of the Bachelor of Health Science program and to show how learning experiences are structured over the four years of the program. The design allows students to progress toward achievement of the described professional qualities by thinking, communicating and acting in increasingly complex and sophisticated ways.

The program provides the student with discipline specific expertise and an interprofessional approach to health care.

The document contains four distinct segments:

1. Purpose of the Bachelor of Health Sciences Program.
2. A profile of the graduate.
3. A statement of the aims of undergraduate education at Dalhousie.
4. Outcome statements, supplemented by learning objectives which progress from year to year.

This document will be used in the following ways:

1. The Curriculum Committee will use it as a template to ensure that outcomes are being addressed and achieved by the discipline-specific curriculum of each professional stream and by the overall curriculum plan. The outcomes and objectives will be valuable tools as individual faculty members and the Committee creates and assesses proposals for curriculum revision.
2. Students enrolled in the BHSc program will be able to see how all of their learning experiences are connected into an integrated whole.
3. External stakeholders, such as the university community, professional associations, the clinical practice community (including preceptors), accrediting bodies and their survey teams, will find the information contained in this document useful in solidifying their understanding of the program. The document will be used in accreditation submissions, clinical education manuals, student manuals and other appropriate publications.

The purpose statement, graduate profile and outcomes substantiate our efforts to ensure that beginning practitioners holding a BHSc degree are well-prepared to meet the challenges of a complex and dynamic health system.

Purpose of the Bachelor of Health Science Program

In response to the needs of a changing health care environment, the shift in health care philosophy from treatment to prevention and promotion, the ever-increasing public expectations and demands for qualified health care professionals and the demands of professional associations, the QEII Health Sciences Centre in partnership with Dalhousie University developed the Bachelor of Health Science program.

The partnership capitalizes on the unique expertise of each to deliver this integrated degree model. The program encompasses the professional streams of Diagnostic Cytology, Diagnostic Medical Ultrasound, Nuclear Medicine Technology, Radiological Technology and Respiratory Therapy.

The BHSc is a four-year program that offers an interprofessional approach to providing the necessary discipline-specific content to challenge professional certification examinations and an array of science and health professional learning opportunities within a university context.. The program will provide students the opportunity to develop competencies to practice and as well to acquire additional expertise in their field along with the adaptability and leadership to contribute as part of a health care system. The program will graduate students who will be knowledgeable about the changing health care system and able to work professionally and ethically.

Graduates will have sufficient knowledge about research to contribute to evidence-based decisions. They will have strong communication and leadership skills and will be life-long learners.

Profile of the Graduate of the Bachelor of Health Science Program

Graduates of the BHSc program practice in their specific discipline and support interdisciplinary practice by working collaboratively with all other health care professionals. As members of the health care team, graduates are competent and compassionate professionals who respect diversity and provide care in an ethical manner. They are committed to advocating for quality care, promoting the profession and participating in life-long learning.

Graduates have intellectual curiosity, leadership abilities and a strong foundation for academic and career advancement. They use effective written and verbal communication skills. Graduates act as role models and mentors for other health care professionals and as health promoters for the general public.

Graduates have a strong professional identity that is demonstrated through their knowledge, skills and competencies unique to their scope of practice. They understand and respect a research environment and evidence-based practice. Graduates utilize research and technology to benefit all areas of professional practice.

Graduates are prepared to work in health care settings across a continuum ranging from acute care to rehabilitation, clinics, community-based agencies, home-care, long-term care and to provide care across the life cycle starting from prenatal to end-of-life. They are able to function effectively in both the public and private sectors, including private industry. Their adaptability, innovativeness and ability to work independently allow them to work in a caring way with diverse populations and perform effectively in a variety of settings. Degree graduates have the potential to pursue graduate studies in health-related fields.

A Statement of the Aims of Undergraduate Education at Dalhousie

Dalhousie University offers undergraduate education enriched by a long-standing institutional commitment to research and to graduate and professional education. The University tries to assist all its undergraduate students to become independent thinkers and articulate communicators, knowledgeable about their chosen disciplines or professions, conversant with a reasonable body of general knowledge, and committed to learning throughout their lives.

Dalhousie assists its students to learn how to think for themselves. Students in all disciplines and professions can expect to develop skills and attitudes crucial for logical and independent thought. The faculty strives to teach students how to think, rather than what to think and to enable them to make fair-minded enquiries in their fields of study and into the broader ethical, cultural and social issues that shape our lives. An educated person thinks carefully, reconsiders received ideas, and leads an examined life. The development of these habits of mind is the primary goal of undergraduate study.

Dalhousie assists its students to express themselves, orally and in writing with clarity, precision and style. It does so, not only because communication skills permit the efficient transfer of information, but also because they make possible dialogues which lead to new ideas and to deeper appreciation of existing knowledge. Because a communal effort to exchange ideas and information is at the heart of university life, students in all disciplines and professions need opportunities to develop their skills in writing and in speaking at all levels of the undergraduate curriculum.

Dalhousie assists students to master a combination of specialized and general knowledge. The specialized knowledge acquired by undergraduates at Dalhousie varies from discipline to discipline and even from student to student. Such knowledge should include not only data skills, but also an understanding of the theories, structures and processes central to the discipline or profession in question, and awareness of their practical applications and ethical consequences. Undergraduate students at Dalhousie should become familiar with a significant body of general knowledge as well. All should become acquainted with concepts central to our own culture and those of others. All should acquire basic quantitative skills and some knowledge of the principles of science and technology. All should share a sense of history and an appreciation of achievements in literature, philosophy and the arts. Such general knowledge helps us not only to confront the practical demands of work and life, but also to comprehend more fully our experience of the human condition.

Dalhousie assists its students to develop the capacity for commitment to learning throughout their lives. Their educational experiences within and outside the classroom should be rich and diverse. By providing social, cultural, recreational and other opportunities for student involvement and leadership, Dalhousie acknowledges responsibility for promoting both personal and intellectual growth.

OUTCOME #1

Practice competently within the profession.

Year 1

- Understand the connection between theory, knowledge and skills gained with clinical practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to perform required competencies specific to profession.

Year 2

- Demonstrate integration of theory, knowledge and skills gained with clinical practice.
- Demonstrate the ability to perform the required competencies in an increasingly independent fashion.

Year 3

- Perform required competencies at the required level.

Year 4

- Maintain practice competence in discipline specific skills.
- Complement professional skills with enhanced knowledge in a specialty practice area.
- Practice in a competent manner, demonstrating advanced knowledge and skills in a specialty practice area.

OUTCOME #2

Practice in a professional, accountable and ethical manner.

Year 1

- Recognize ethical issues within the health care system.
- Show a basic understanding of the principles of accountability in professional life.
- Understand the concept of teamwork in the health care setting.

Year 2

- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the principles of ethical decision-making.
- Recognize the scope of accountability in professional life and demonstrate responsible actions.
- Recognize and demonstrate professionalism within the health care system.

Year 3

- Apply knowledge of ethics to situations encountered in practice to reach justifiable resolution.
- Consistently demonstrate professional accountability.
- Contribute professional expertise to health care decision-making and actions.

Year 4

- Practice in an ethical manner in clinical, research, educational and administrative realms.
- Practice in a way that recognizes and fulfills professional accountabilities.
- Utilize leadership abilities to enhance forming and participating in health care teams.

OUTCOME #3

Demonstrate care and compassion for diverse populations.

Year 1

- Identify the caring dimension of their professional role and develop caring relationships with individuals.
- Examine personal beliefs, values and attitudes.
- Identify the range and interplay of organizations that comprise the health system and the continuum of care.

Year 2

- Develop therapeutic caring relationships with individuals and families from diverse populations.
- Recognize individual personal context, including race, gender, culture, socio-economic situation, sexual orientation, religion, etc.
- Describe the contribution of all organizations comprising the health system and the continuum of care.

Year 3

- Analyze the effectiveness of caring interventions.
- Recognize the influence of diversity on individual health status and plan appropriate approaches.
- Integrate knowledge of the continuum of care in practicing in individual health settings.
- Practice competently in a variety of health care settings.

Year 4

- Evaluate the effectiveness of caring approaches and interventions.
- Demonstrate skill in individualizing interventions and advocating for the unique needs of diverse populations.
- Apply knowledge of the health care system and the continuum of care to advocacy initiatives directed toward policy change.

OUTCOME #4

Apply knowledge of basic science and health practice for effective problem-solving.

Year 1

- Demonstrate knowledge in basic sciences and health professions as a basis for professional practice.

Year 2

- Apply knowledge in basic sciences and health professions to profession-specific courses and clinical problem-solving.

Year 3

- Evaluate effectiveness of problem-solving and clinical decisions based on the integration of knowledge from theoretical courses.
- Demonstrate effective problem-solving and clinical judgment in practice situations.

Year 4

- Demonstrate effective problem-solving in all practice areas.
- Apply an evidence based approach to problem solving and clinical judgment in all practice areas.

OUTCOME #5

Demonstrate leadership within the profession and the health care system.

Year 1

- Identify professional standards of practice as they relate to profession.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the principles and styles of leadership.
- Demonstrate an awareness of the responsibilities of student association membership and student representation on committees.

Year 2

- Practice and evaluate performance in relation to professional standards of practice.
- Develop skills/methods of effective leadership approaches.
- Promote a positive atmosphere by sharing knowledge and expertise with fellow students.

Year 3

- Ensure that professional standards of practice are fully developed and maintained.
- Practice and maintain leadership skills in interactions with colleagues and other members of the health care team.
- Share ideas/knowledge and expertise with colleagues, patients and other members of the health care team.

Year 4

- Promote professional standards of practice in the greater health care community.
- Assume a leadership role in promoting health care administration and management opportunities.
- Set educational goals for maintaining ongoing professional competence.

OUTCOME #6

Communicate effectively in all aspects of the profession.

Year 1

- Understand and apply the principles of verbal/nonverbal communication when interacting with individuals and their families
- Understand and apply the principles of verbal/nonverbal communication when interacting with other health professionals and health care teams
- Understand and apply the principles of written communication when interacting with individuals, families, and other health professionals

Year 2

- Communicate with individuals and families in a respectful, caring and direct fashion, tailoring strategies to reflect an understanding of the specifics of each interaction
- Communicate with other health professionals and health care teams in a respectful way that demonstrates an ability to adapt and refine the principles according to the particular situation
- Prepare major papers that analyze a topic and include a review of relevant and current literature
- Chart patient information in an acceptable manner

Year 3

- Demonstrate command of a range of communication strategies when interacting with individuals and families
- Demonstrate effective command of a range of communication strategies when interacting with other health professionals and health care teams
- Consistently produce written work that meets requirements.

Year 4

- Communicate with individuals and families in a respectful way that demonstrates an ability to adapt and refine the principles according to the particular situation
- Communicate effectively with other health professionals and health care teams to support optimum patient care and opportunities for interprofessional interaction in research, education and administration
- Write with clarity, precision and style

OUTCOME #7

Demonstrate critical thinking and innovation in the application of knowledge gained from clinical, academic and research experiences.

Year 1

- Reflect upon personal values regarding health and health professionals.
- Understand the role of science as a resource and a basis for practice.
- Become familiar with literature relevant to professional practice.

Year 2

- Use theory and experience as bases for reflective practice.
- Identify and evaluate how practice informs theory as well as how theory informs practice.
- Critically examine information from a variety of data sources.
- Use research findings as resources in developing practice.

Year 3

- Apply knowledge for analysis and problem solving clinical dilemmas by traditional and non traditional methods.
- Apply theoretical knowledge to the solution of clinical problems.
- Seek out research that is relevant to practice.

Year 4

- Apply knowledge, critical thinking, and research to improve and enhance clinical practice.
- Integrate theoretical and clinical strands of learning into a composite model of professional practice.
- Contribute to the identification of research questions and pursue research opportunities.

OUTCOME #8

Value lifelong learning and continuing professional development.

Year 1

- Demonstrate intellectual curiosity by identifying available resources for exploring areas of interest.
- Recognize the role of professional associations and the need for continuing professional development.
- Investigate the benefits of student membership in the professional association and attend, as possible, association-sponsored meetings/workshops/educational sessions and/or facility-based in-services.

Year 2

- Identify areas of interest within the broad scope of the curriculum and explore ways of learning more about them.
- Identify sources for continuing professional development.
- Participate in a minimum of one professional development activity.

Year 3

- Utilize resources for problem-solving and carrying out independent study and research.
- Evaluate clinical standards and reflect on the benefits of continuing professional development.
- Attend rounds and other learning sessions as available.

Year 4

- Initiate and actively pursue independent inquiry.
- Accept responsibility for continuing professional development by identifying strengths and areas for further development and formulating a long-term plan.
- Seek out learning sessions related to specialty practice and area of concentration and participate in them as possible.