Communication in Nursing

In the Faculty of Nursing, you will be expected to communicate in three different ways, as you need to use interpersonal, academic, and nursing language.

We use *interpersonal language* in our daily lives to create and maintain relationships with other people. For instance, when we send an e-mail to a friend, start a conversation, ask for directions, or explain what we did over the weekend, we use interpersonal language. Although, this kind of English includes colloquial expressions, idioms, slang, and impolite language, I strongly discourage you from using slang or impolite expressions when speaking to professors, patients, or health care professionals. I also advise you to avoid this informal language in your academic writing.

**Academic language** is formal communication in a university environment. This kind of formal English is used in your writing assignments and in communicating with your professors in person, in assignments, or by e-mail. This section of the website outlines some of the most significant features of academic language. I also encourage you to read the document “Writing a Professional E-mail”.

**Nursing language** includes the technical language or jargon of the nursing profession. For instance, you will use nursing terminology to communicate with instructors and with other health care professionals regarding a patient’s condition, plan of care, and charting. However, it is important to remember that the majority of your patients will not understand nursing terminology. As a result, you will likely need to use interpersonal and formal language to communicate with the patient and the patient’s family members.