

Health Beyond Hospitals: Creating Experiential Learning Opportunities for Addressing Health Disparities

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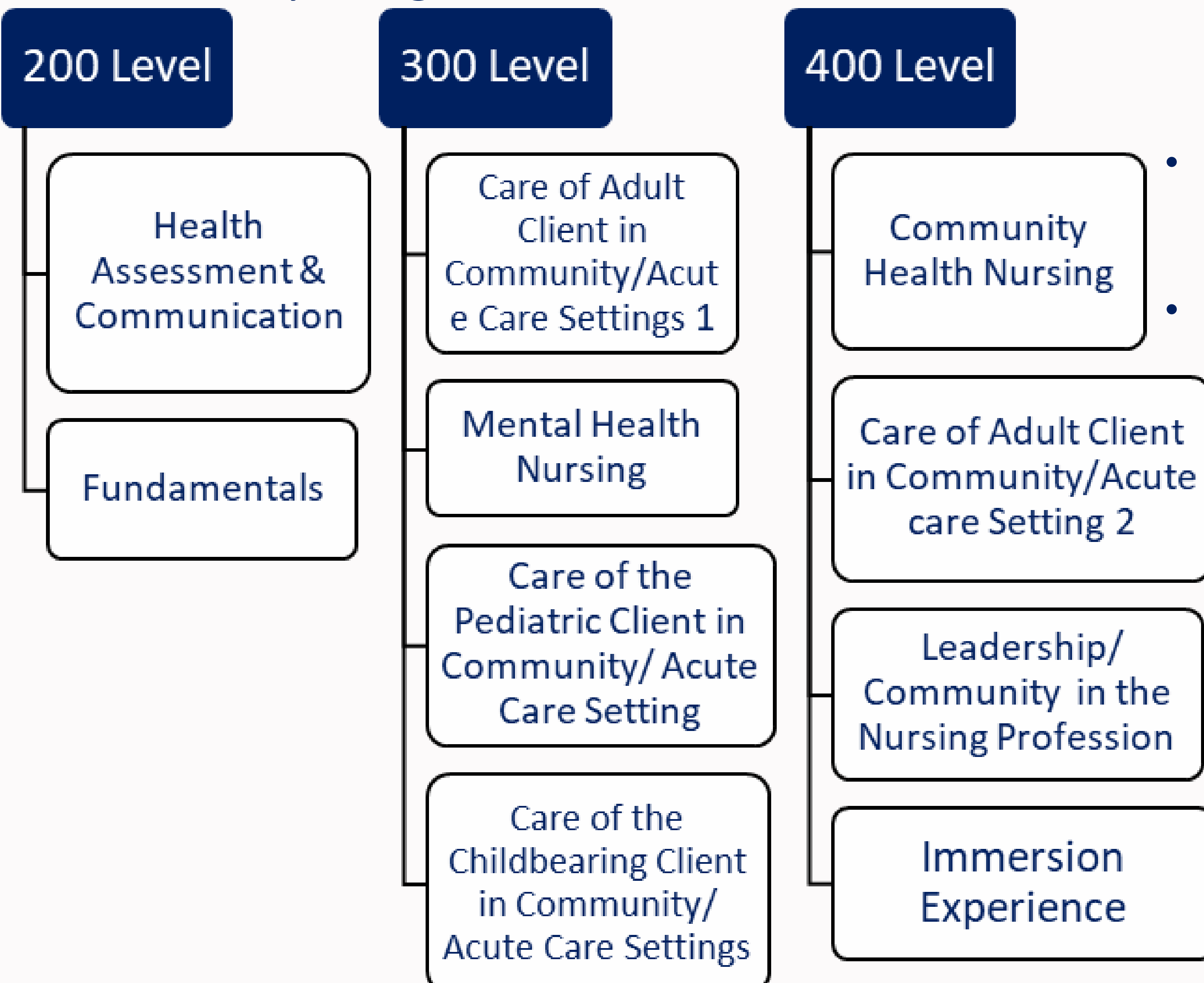


Background

- The **upstream thinking** approach focuses on **preventing problems** at their source rather than just treating symptoms.
- Focuses on **prevention** rather than treatment
- Addresses **root causes** of poor health (poverty, housing, education)
- Promotes **health equity** and supports vulnerable populations
- Enhances community partnerships and interdisciplinary **collaboration**
- Shifts nursing roles toward **advocacy, education, and systems-level change**
- Improves **long-term outcomes and reduces healthcare costs**

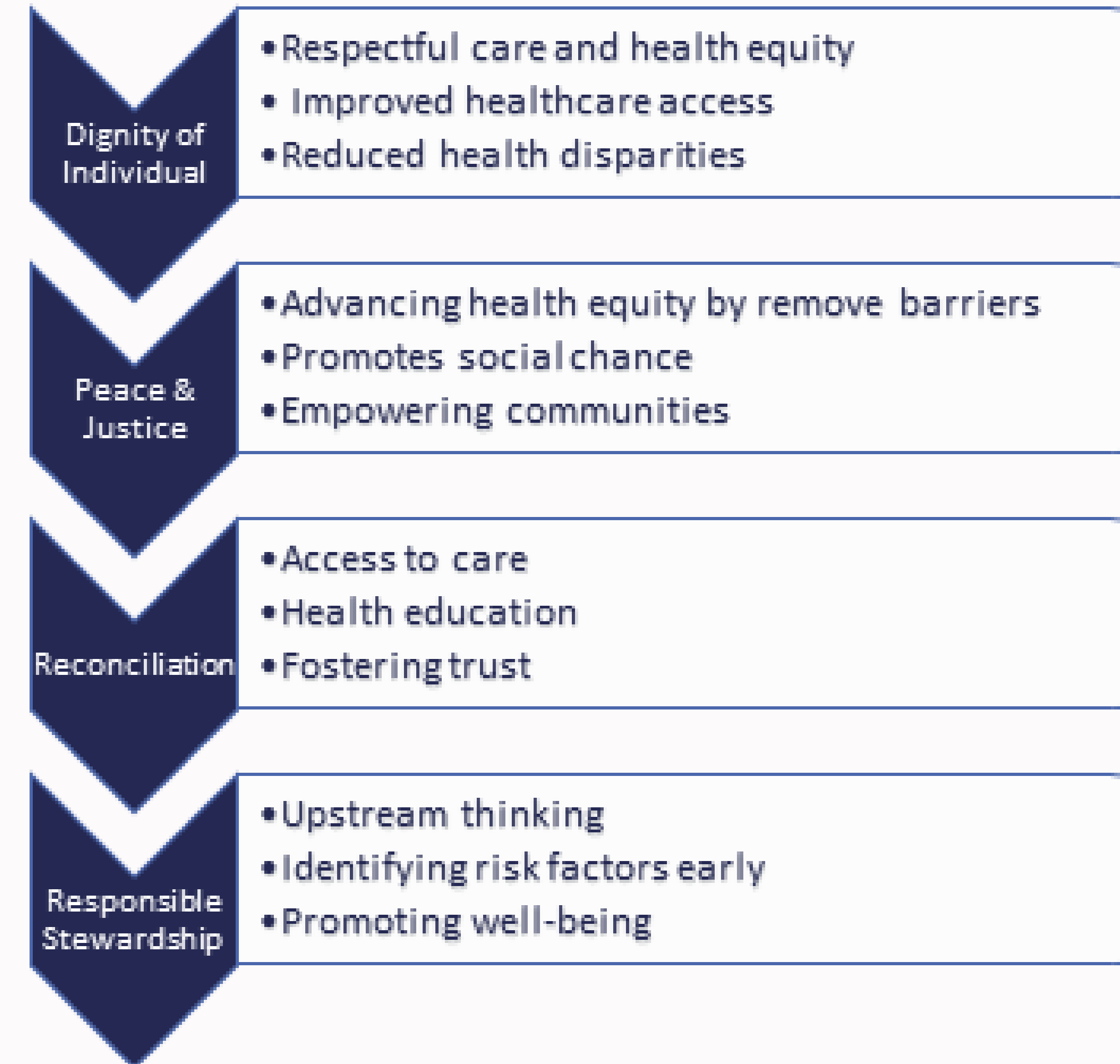
Methods & Implementation

Community integrated across the curriculum



Purpose

Connection to Franciscan Values

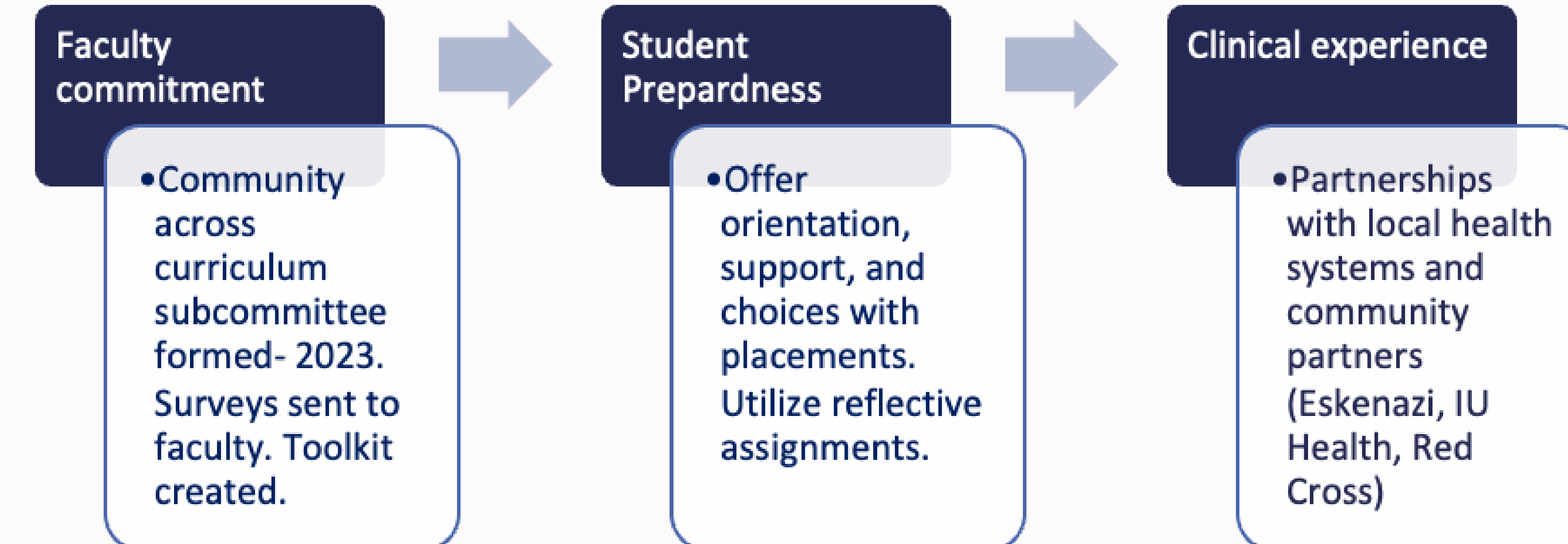


Results

- "During this clinical experience I noted that the staff were very **culturally attuned** to their patients' needs and were very driven to provide resources, so the patients had **better health outcomes.**"
- "This is probably one of the first clinical experiences where I felt the **facility genuinely did something to help their patients outside of medical treatments.**"
- "This clinical rotation has taught me that **prevention strategies** and community health are extremely important in **maintaining healthy outcomes for patients.**"



Challenges



Future Steps

- Utilize **simulation strategies** to enhance learning (Poverty SIM, VR etc.)
- **Strengthen partnerships** with local organizations and stakeholders
- Develop faculty training on **community engagement** and **upstream strategies**
- Create **interdisciplinary projects** that address **social determinants of health**
- Evaluate **impact** through **student feedback** and **community outcomes**
- **Secure funding/support** to sustain and grow the initiative

References

- *Healthy People 2030*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. <https://odphp.health.gov/healthypeople>
- Nies M. & McEwen M. (2024). *Community/public health nursing: Promoting the health of populations*, 8th ed. St. Louis, Missouri, Elsevier.