



Why do graduate nursing students need government information?

Throughout the curriculum, there is an **emphasis on policy, advocacy, and how they can make their professional voices heard**. They need to know what's going on and how to participate in the legislative/regulatory/policymaking process.

Their coursework also emphasizes **learning about the communities they serve**, sometimes through a formal community assessment.

Many students also volunteer in their own communities and advocate for new practices and policies to improve health outcomes. ("In addition to being involved in the School-sponsored community partnerships [in New Haven], the majority of our faculty, students and staff also volunteer at institutions and not for profit organizations where they live and work." nursing.yale.edu/ysn-community)

Government information is part of the information literacy package. The *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Nursing* were approved by the Association of College and Research Libraries in October 2013.

Outreach

Collaboration is essential for outreach. Without Yale's School of Nursing Librarian (Janene Batten), I wouldn't be aware of as many instructional opportunities or of the government information needs of students and faculty.

A strong relationship with the School of Nursing Librarian has led to **co-teaching** (orientations for the Nursing Management, Policy and Leadership program and the Doctor of Nursing Practice program; extensive instruction in the "Evidence" course). Janene also attends my solo instruction sessions (Contexts of Care; Community Health Nursing; and Health Policy, Leadership and Systems) for **support and reinforcement**.

Instruction & reference

What do they need?

- ★ Demographic data
- ★ Health & related statistics, often at a fairly local or granular level
- ★ Legislation, pending or otherwise
- ★ Regulations, pending or otherwise
- ★ Other policy materials including reports, white papers, and government websites

What do they want?

- ★ Lightweight tools for mapping and analysis
- ★ Resources that aggregate statistics and information relevant to health research
- ★ Free tools they can use after grad school, possibly in settings without access to expensive subscription databases
- ★ Strategies for making sense of government information that recognize that they operate under time constraints and are pulled in many academic and professional directions

Selected resources that get their attention and answer their questions

- ★ **Social Explorer** – Census and American Community Survey data (socialexplorer.com)
- ★ **Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA)** – make maps and reports using data on demographics, environment, food systems, health, and the local economy (assessment.communitycommons.org)
- ★ **Congress.gov or Scout** (scout.sunlightfoundation.com) for legislative tracking
- ★ **Regulations.gov** to participate in the regulatory process
- ★ **Google site:** search to identify information on federal, state, or local government websites; **filetype:** search to identify PDFs or spreadsheets (XLS)



Spare them the history lesson. Their research topics usually require current information.

Provide just enough context to help them find and use information. They don't need to hold the print *Federal Register* to understand the regulatory process.

Emphasize efficient search techniques in real-world resources. Using Google as a possible starting point for government information allows them to begin with a familiar tool.

Put links to resources and research guides, instruction slides, and handouts **in a place that makes sense** for them. YSN students primarily interact with library resources through the YSN-specific library portal (nursing.medicine.yale.edu).

Some programs are low-residency, so **follow-up support is often at a distance**. Do they prefer email, phone, or chat assistance? Work with the School of Nursing Librarian to determine best practices for communication.