NU 509: Nursing Ethics
Syllabus
C5:2012

COURSE START DATE: July 9, 2012
ONLINE DATES: July 9 – July 15; July 21 – August 17, 2012
ON CAMPUS DATES: July 16 – July 20
COURSE END DATE: August 17, 2012

COURSE DESCRIPTION

For more information on this course, including the official course description and any prerequisites, can be found in the GPS Catalog at http://www.sjcme.edu/gpscatalog/

COURSE INTRODUCTION
Welcome to NU 509, Nursing Ethics.

This course provides an opportunity for you to assess ethical and legal issues confronting nurses and other health care providers in a variety of health care delivery settings. It focuses on the identification and analysis of legal and ethical concepts and principles underlying nursing and health care. Each unit of content is an opportunity for you to explore current ethical and legal issues that impact professional nursing and health care practice. The course also examines concepts, theories, and values applied in ethical decision-making that are related to a variety of ethical dilemmas in nursing practice and health care. It promotes a review of legal concepts and regulations under which professional nurses’ practice and notes that ethical and legal issues are often not mutually exclusive.

In Unit 1, an overview of ethics in nursing and health care is provided. A review of fundamental legal concepts related to ethics is presented followed by an opportunity to complete an Ethics Self-Assessment. The Ethics Self-Assessment is intended for your personal use to assist you in thinking about your ethics-related leadership and actions.

Unit 2 provides a more in-depth look into the law related to nursing practice. Case studies illustrate nursing negligence, liability, and malpractice.

Unit 3 focuses on an application of ethics to practice. During Unit 3, you will submit a review of literature on the Ethical Issue Paper due in Unit 5.

Scope of practice is the focus of Unit 4, and codes of ethics are reviewed. Deviations from the standard of care and methods for minimizing potential risks are also discussed. Learning activities during Unit 4 provide opportunities to focus on conflict self-assessment and evaluate Internet sites of professional nursing organizations.
In **Unit 5**, ethical dilemmas pertinent to nursing practice and health care are discussed. Case studies in bioethics are presented for review to illustrate the impact of legal and ethical issues in health care and current nursing practice.

The final assessment of this course is an Ethical Issue Paper due after Unit 5. The Ethical Issue Paper consists of a written paper that focuses on a selected ethical issue topic of your choice pertaining to nursing ethics. The topic must be approved by your course instructor. This Final Project incorporates and builds on all five units of study.

Providing high-quality care in a time of dwindling resources presents today’s nurse with enormous legal and ethical challenges. This course provides an opportunity to review the fundamentals of nursing ethics and basic legal concepts related to ethical practice. Nurses need ethical and legal guidance to confront the daily challenges created by increased need and decreasing financial resources. Discussions about the ethical and legal challenges confronting nurses and other health care providers should be stimulating and insightful.

In order to be successful in the course, some helpful strategies include reading criteria for assignments carefully (including grading rubrics), and taking time to prepare your responses to assignments. Course and unit assignments are designed to assist you in your personal and professional growth and to support you throughout your professional career. Self-reflect upon your professional practice. Do you follow the code of ethical behavior established by your facility and professional organizations? What do you do when confronted with an ethical dilemma? How do you currently make those “hard-to-make” decisions? Are you aware of any influences in your conduct and practice as a professional?

Upon reviewing the Nursing Ethics course objectives, consider one or two objectives that specifically apply to you and your future career and professional goals. I look forward to working with you in this course.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon completion of this course, you should be able to do the following:

1. Examine the major ethical theories and ethical principles influencing ethical decision-making.

2. Explore contemporary moral, legal, and ethical concepts that affect the practice of nurses and other health care providers.

3. Evaluate legal principles that must be considered when making health care decisions.
COURSE FORMAT

This is an accelerated five week online course with an additional week in the classroom, providing the opportunity to continue the online dialogue in a group setting. You will acquire the skills outlined in the course objectives through the following:

- Readings from the textbook and required online readings, which may include case studies.
- Lecture notes
- Active dialogue with your instructor and fellow learners via the course Discussion boards
- Active dialogue and discussion in person with your instructor and classmates.

COURSE GUIDELINES

Because this is an accelerated course and the onsite component of the course occurs on week 2, it is recommended that you complete as much of the assigned reading in advance of the onsite attendance as possible.

Please note that assignments need to be submitted once a grade/feedback has been received for prior Unit.

PLEASE NOTE: If life gets in the way of your online/onsite classroom responsibilities, please notify your instructor/academic advisor as soon as you are aware that events may occur that may inhibit you from participating at the required level within the timeline of the course.

REQUIRED TEXT(s)


If you have any questions regarding your course materials, please contact your academic advisor and/or our book vendor EdMap. You can reach EdMap by phone 1-(800)-274-9104 or website at http://www.edmapbookstore.com/storefront/index/STJSP

CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1 - Online
Topic: Unit 1 Introduction to Ethics
Lesson 1.1
Basics Intro to Ethics
Basic Legal Concepts
Required Readings: Guido 5th ed. text: Chapters 1, 2

Assignments: Written assignment Explore an Ethical Issue for Final Project

Activity: Ethics Self assessment post (Angel Lesson 1.1)

Week 2 – On campus
Topic: Unit 2
Lesson 2.1 Fundamentals
Lesson 2.2 In the Workplace

Onsite Learning in Applied Ethics
- Monday: Intro to Ethics
- Tuesday: Legal/Workplace Issues
- Wednesday: Application to Practice
- Thursday: Scope of Practice
- Friday: Implications for Practice

Required Readings: Guido 5th text: Chapter 3, 9 and 19

Assignments:
- Onsite participation
  - Written assignment Euthanasia Pro vs. Con
  - Activity and Post (Angel Lesson 2.1 Life or Death?)

Week 3 – Online
Topic: Unit 3
Application to Practice
Lesson 3.1 Liability in the Workplace
Lesson 3.2 Violations

Required Readings: Guido Chapters 5-7

Assignments: Written Assignment: Review of the Literature

Activity and Post (Angel Lesson 3.1 A Call to Action)

Week 4 – Online
Topic: Unit 4 Scope of Practice
Lesson 4.1 Rules
Lesson 4.2 Employment Issues
Required Readings: Guido Chapters 11, 12, 14
Assignments: Written Assignment 4.1 The Role of Nursing
Written Assignment 4.2 Ethical Position

Activity and Post (Angel Lesson 4.1 Standards)

Week 5 – Online
Topic: Unit 5 Impact on Practice
Lesson 5.1 In the Facility
Lesson 5.2 In the Community
Required Readings: Guido chapters 17-20

Assignments: Written Assignment 5.1 Ethical Dilemma

Written Assignment 5.2 Pandemic: What would you do?

No activity or post assignment

Week 6 – Online
Topic: Final Project
Required Readings:
Review readings, lecture notes
Assignments:

COURSE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Current information regarding College policies affecting your course can be found on the Resources/Policy section of the course homepage. On this page, you will find vital information, including the following:

- Current Student Handbook, outlining course-specific policies
- Access to support resources, including advising and online tutorial services
- Student Success Guides

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments should be submitted via the Assignment Submission Form on your ANGEL course site.

EVALUATION

10% of your Course Grade, Written assignment and online activities
Unit 2: 10% of your Course Grade, Written assignment and online activities

Unit 3: 15% of your Course Grade, Written assignment and online activities

Unit 4: 15% of your Course Grade, Two written assignments (need to submitted together for unit to be graded)

Unit 5: 15% of your Course Grade, Two written assignments and online activity (need to submitted together for unit to be graded)

Final Project: 20% of your Course Grade (Ethical Issue Paper)

Onsite participation 15% of your Course Grade
Welcome Fellow Learners,

Experience:
I have been part of the adjunct graduate faculty at Saint Joseph’s College for twelve years. I earned two bachelor’s degrees in nursing and psychology, as well as a master’s in adult mental health nursing from the University of Southern Maine. The combination of patient care and case management experience affords me a unique perspective and understanding of patient/ customer/ employer needs and the challenges within the healthcare system.

Getting to know you:
I appreciate that each student brings a unique perspective to his/ her academic activities. It is valuable for me to better understand your background and what you bring to the course in terms of training, education and experience. Please send me an e-mail or brief note of introduction and interest before you submit your first assignment.

Getting to know me:
I live in Portland, Maine about 18 miles from the college with my husband and our 7 year old son Jacob. My 26 year old stepson graduated from college and is beginning his career. We enjoy the beach (yes you can swim in Maine), gardening, and Acadia National Park.

Getting in touch:
If I can be of assistance please contact me by e-mail or phone.
HOW DO I ACCESS DISABILITIES SERVICES?

Anyone who would like information or needs access to accommodations or services related to disabilities should contact the college’s Accommodations Office. Please contact your Academic Advisor or refer to the Student Handbook for more information.

This course was developed by Saint Joseph’s College of Maine for the exclusive use of students enrolled in the College’s Division of Graduate and Professional Studies.

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