



Professional, Ethical and Legal Obligations in Nursing: A Critical Appraisal

Nursing 4320

Course Professor:

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RN, BScN, MPH

Online Course

Fall 2023

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N4320 Professional, Ethical, and Legal Obligations in Nursing: A Critical Appraisal

Calendar description:

This course will critically review ethical theories, the legal and ethical aspects of nurses' roles, and nursing's commitment to healthy public policy, social justice, and advocacy.

Expanded description:

This course is organized based on the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) Conceptual Framework for Organizing Competencies (CNO, 2014). In this course, learners will critically examine professional practice issues specifically focused on professionalism, nursing regulation, practice standards, ethical and legal aspects of nursing. This course also examines the evolving roles within nursing and addresses professional responsibility and accountability to healthy public policy, social justice, advocacy and patient safety. This course integrates multiple ways of knowing with emphasis on emancipatory knowing.

Course Goals:

1. Examine the leadership and professional culture of the nursing profession
2. Reflect on the historical and contemporary issues and trends in nursing and explore the influence of social, political, and personal power structures in assuming professional roles
3. Develop in-depth understanding of health professional legislation and nursing regulation including professional requirements as outlined in the *CNO Professional Standards & Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses*; *CNO Ethical Values*, and the *CNA Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses*
4. Critically examine selected moral, ethical and legal issues influencing nurses' ability and capacity to provide ethical, safe, knowledge-based quality health care from a health promotion and caring perspective in a variety of settings and contexts, and with a diverse client population across the life span
5. Develop an understanding of the fundamental elements of patient safety and nursing's role in contributing to a culture of patient safety.
6. Engage in learning activities with colleagues that promote debate, collaboration, consultation, cohesion, critical thinking, caring and reflection
7. Incorporate scholarship and critical reflection skills into one's own learning and nursing practice
8. Apply a reflective, inquisitive, self-evaluative, responsible, and accountable attitude and behavior with a commitment to lifelong learning

Major Concepts in the Course:

- Clients
- Health and Healthcare Policy
- Social Justice
- Professionalism: Accountability, Self-regulation
- Ethical Practice
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Relational Practice
- Critical Reflection
- Advocacy
- Social Determinants of Health
- Political Influences
- Patient Safety

Nursing Entry-to-Practice Competencies (CNO, 2020) addressed in the course:

- Clinician – 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.11, 1.15, 1.16, 1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20, 1.23, 1.25
- Professional – 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6
- Communicator – 3.1-3.5
- Collaborator – 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8
- Advocate – 5.1-5.6
- Educator – 6.1-6.10
- Leader – 7.1-7.18
- Professional – 8.1-8.7
- Scholar – 9.1-9.3, 9.6-9.8

Interprofessional Competencies (CIHC, 2010) addressed in the course:

- Learners/practitioners understand their own role and the roles of those in other professions, and use this knowledge appropriately to establish and achieve patient/client/family and community goals.
- Learners/practitioners understand the principles of team work dynamics and group/team processes to enable effective interprofessional collaboration.

Nursing Informatics Competencies (CASN, 2012) addressed in the course:

- Use relevant information and knowledge to support the delivery of evidence-informed patient care.
- Use information and communication technologies in accordance with professional and regulatory standards and workplace policies.
- Use information and communication technologies in the delivery of patient/client care.

How this course will contribute to your development as a professional nurse:

This course provides opportunities to explore nursing as a profession, including professional rights and responsibilities, as well as legal and ethical parameters. The course promotes the learners' understanding of the purpose and function of professional nursing regulatory organizations and associations, particularly in relation to ethical and legal elements of professional practice and the maintenance and improvement of the standards of care. Knowledge of course concepts is integrated through interactive learning activities, including analysis of case studies, among other learning strategies. These learning activities are designed to engage learners in critical reflection of professionalization, professionalism, and the professional practice of nursing. Opportunities will be provided for learners to reflect on their professional growth as beginning practitioners and to share their own nursing practice experiences with others.

How this course will contribute to your development as an interprofessional team member:

This course will provide students with insights as to how nurses enact their professional, legal and ethical obligations within an interprofessional environment. Learners will explore how professional standards guide their interactions with other members of the interprofessional team.

How we will work together:

In this online course, learning and teaching are a shared responsibility. The instructor's role is to guide, facilitate and support learning. As a learner, it is expected that you will be prepared to actively engage in the course material while grounded in reflective and critical thought. The course and accompanying learning activities are designed to foster discussion, debate, and critical examination of concepts relevant to professional, legal, and ethical aspects of nursing practice. Weekly presence and visits in the course site are expected since messages and updates are posted by the course instructor regularly. Group work will facilitate learning, and your active participation will support collaboration and sharing knowledge together. In order to create an interactive learning environment in the course site, learners will be asked to share within groups, their understanding of course material, their experiences, and to engage in reflection on their learning.

Textbooks and other resources:**Required:**

Keatings, M., & Adams, P. (2020). *Ethical and legal issues in Canadian nursing* (4th ed.). Elsevier Inc.

Recommended:

American Psychological Association. (2019). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). <https://doi.org/10.1037/0000165-000>

Weekly Schedule

Weeks begin on Mondays at 8:00 am and end on Sundays and at 11:55 pm.

Week/ Starts	Topic	Course Goals	Assignments (due end of week)
1 Sept 11	Course Overview: Professionalism, Regulation and the profession	1, 2	
2 Sept 18	Continuing competence and lifelong learning – CNO Quality Assurance program.	3, 6, 7, 8	Quality Assurance LP (20%)
3 Sept 25	Ethical Practice Part 1 - Theories, frameworks, principles, moral distress/moral residue, code of ethics	4	
4 Oct 2	Ethical Practice Part 2 Code of Ethics, Ethics practice standards	4	Quiz #1
5 Oct 9	The Legal Context for Practice: - Malpractice - Torts - Negligence - Vicarious liability	3, 6, 7	
6 Oct 16	Legislation - Consent - Substitute decision-maker - Confidentiality and privacy	3,6,7	Quiz #2
7 Oct 23	Patient Safety - Culture of safety - Excellent Care for All Act - Disclosure of Harm	3, 4, 5, 6, 7	
Oct 30	Fall Reading Week		
8 Nov 6	Ontario regulated health professions legislative framework – Part I: Regulation, Scope of practice, Standards, Fitness to Practice	3, 6, 7	
9 Nov 13	Ontario regulated health professions legislative framework – Part II: Working with others - Refusing assignments and discontinuing services - Disagreeing with the plan of care - Working with unregulated care providers - Interprofessional collaboration	1	Group Case Study assignment (30%)
10 Nov 20	Establishing, maintaining, and navigating boundaries in the therapeutic relationship: - Therapeutic boundaries - Sexual/physical/emotional abuse of clients	3, 6, 7	
11 Nov 27	Issues in the workplace: Incivility, violence, abuse Caregiver rights	6,7	
12 Dec 4	New Graduate Nurse Transition: Jurisprudence and NCLEX processes	All	

Opportunities to Demonstrate Learning

1. Quality Assurance Learning Plan – 20%

Due: Oct 1, 2023 at 11:55 pm (*deadline extended to accommodate rotation 1 placements*)

The purposes of this assignment are for you to familiarize yourself with the process of meeting the Quality Assurance requirements for the College of Nurses of Ontario (CNO) by engaging in self-reflection and identifying ways to become a lifelong learner.

Process:

- You will reflect on a situation from your clinical practice that provides an opportunity for growth and development.
- Using the template found on the OWL site, you will complete each section to reflect on your experiences, strengths, and opportunities for professional development.
- Based on your reflection, you will identify two (2) learning goals using the SMART goal format, will link your goals to the CNO's Code of Conduct, will identify three (3) learning activities for each goal, and will reflect on the experience of creating a learning plan.
- Completion of the independent study and readings in week 2 will assist you in completing this work.
- Submit the assignment electronically to the assignment tool in the course site – your paper must be in MS Word format on the template provided, using 12 font and single spaced.
Title page and reference list are not required.
- The file extension for an uploaded assignment must include the student's surname, initial and name of assignment e.g. ClarkJ_Quality Assurance Plan

Criteria for evaluation:

A marking rubric is available on the course site.

2. Online Quiz 1 – Ethics – 10%

Date: Opens October 2nd at 8:00 am and closes on October 8th at 11:55 pm

This online quiz will be based on readings and activities from weeks 3 and 4 on Ethical Practice. The quiz will be time limited with only one submission allowed and can be taken anytime from the time it opens until it closes to accommodate for clinical placement shifts.

3. Online Quiz 2 – Legal Context and Legislation – 10%

Date: Opens October 16th at 8:00 am and closes on October 22nd at 11:55 pm

This online quiz will be based on readings and activities from week 5 and 6 on Legal Context and Legislation. The quiz will be time limited with only one submission allowed and can be taken anytime from the time it opens until it closes to accommodate for clinical placement shifts.

4. Group Case Study Assignment – 30%

Due: Nov 19, 2023 at 11:55 PM

This assignment will be completed in groups of six (6). The case study assignment can be started **any time after week 4** (ethical practice content), and it is recommended that you work with other students in your placement block for ease of collaboration.

The purposes of this assignment are for you to explore, critically analyze, and respond to a current ethical and legal issue facing the profession in today's health care context. This assignment will reflect your ability to work as a group and to apply course theory and concepts to professional nursing practice. Case scenarios, marking rubric and assignment template will be available on the course OWL site.

Process:

- Choose **ONE** of the case scenarios provided on the course OWL site and use the template provided
- Following the template, summarize the case chosen and one (1) possible course of action
- Complete the analysis of the case by considering the chosen course of action from a theoretical perspective, taking into account the values of the individuals, ethical principles involved and appropriate practice standards/guidelines from the College of Nurses of Ontario
- Describe an alternative course of action and why it was not chosen by the group.
- Reflect on how the process of completing this case analysis will inform your nursing practice in the future
- Use of at least six evidence-informed scholarly articles and other sources of knowledge to justify your analysis
- One student of the group will submit the assignment electronically to the assignment tool in the course site – your paper must be in MS Word format on the template provided
- The file extension for an uploaded assignment must include all students' surname, initial and name of assignment e.g. ClarkJLeeM...Group Case study

Criteria for evaluation:

A marking rubric is available on the course site. APA formatting is required for all references, including a reference list.

5. Final Exam - 30%

Date: During University Final Exam Period

The final exam will be based on course content and will focus on application of learning to situations one might find in practice. The exam will be administered in an online format at a time to be determined during the final exam period.

Summary of Opportunities to Demonstrate Learning

OPPORTUNITIES TO DEMONSTRATE LEARNING	VALUE	DUE DATE
1. Quality Assurance Learning Plan	20%	Oct 1, 2023 at 11:55 pm
2. Online quiz 1– Ethics	10%	Opens Oct 2, 2023 until Oct 8, 2023
3. Online quiz 2– Legal context	10%	Opens Oct 16, 2023 until Oct 22, 2023
4. Group Case Study Assignment	30%	Nov 19, 2023 at 11:55 pm
5. Final Exam	30%	During University Final Exam Period

Students and faculty are required to read the Undergraduate Programs Manual and be familiar with its contents. The Program Manual is available on OWL in the Undergraduate Student Information (<https://owl.uwo.ca>).

Policies

All policies related to assignments are in the Undergraduate Programs Manual on the Western web site at owl.uwo.ca. Please read the policies on Accommodation for Medical Illness-Undergraduate Students and Student Medical Certificate.

Assignments and Exams

Please refer to the Undergraduate Academic Policy Manual for information on penalties for late assignments, re-grading of assignments, and the protocol for missed mid-term or final exams.

Scholarly Requirements

In this program, scholarly writing is a requirement. Therefore, all scholarly papers will follow the seventh edition of the Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (2019), which includes guidelines for both content and format. In addition, all other writing will follow APA (7th ed.) format when citing or referring to an author's work or ideas. Failure to do so is unethical and is plagiarism.

Plagiarism

Student work is expected to be original. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and could lead to expulsion from the nursing program. You are plagiarizing if you insert a phrase, sentence or paragraph taken directly from another author without acknowledging the work to belong to him/her. Similarly, you are plagiarizing if you paraphrase or summarize another author's ideas without acknowledging that the ideas belong to someone else. You are self-plagiarizing when you reuse all or part of an assignment that you previously submitted. Students can not present their credited work as new scholarship. You may be asked to submit your work, at the discretion of the course instructor, to turnitin.com to verify originality (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar)

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_189

Mental Health

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to the following links for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

MentalHealth@Western https://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing

Learning Skills Services

The Student Development Centre at Western provides free support for all students to strengthen their skills and improve or maintain their academic performance. The focus is on helping students learn and study more effectively so that they can achieve their academic goals. You can find out more about this service at www.sdc.uwo.ca/learning

Review of Graded Assignments

After a graded assignment is returned, a student's first step is to take time to reflect on the assignment description in the syllabus, on the feedback provided by the original marker within the assignment, and on the marking rubric. If a student cannot understand the meaning or intent behind the feedback received, they may submit a written request to the original marker for an informal consultation to review the assignment grade. The request must include documentation of grounds, based on the marker's feedback, to support the assignment review. An assignment will not be reviewed simply because a student is unhappy with the grade received, or they believe the mark does not reflect the effort they put into completing the assignment. Students who need assistance with their writing skills should contact on-campus resources for support.

Western Site: <http://writing.uwo.ca>

If, after the assignment review, a student still believes they have grounds with supporting documentation their grade was unfairly calculated, they may request a formal appeal of the grade in accordance with the policy for academic appeals.

Western Site: Undergraduate Student Academic Appeal

https://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_178

Western Site: <https://www.uwo.ca/ombuds>

Please see decision tree below.

