COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE

Nurs 595/695 Special Topics: Legal and Ethical Accountability in Client Care

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Study of ethical positions and legal factors influencing behavior and decision making in client care. Emphasis on developing a justifiable ethical framework with consequent rights, responsibilities and conflicts.

CREDIT AND TIME ALLOTMENT

2 (2,0) This course has two semester credits and meets for two hours of theory per week.

PREREQUISITES/CONCURRENTS

Open to senior nursing or health professional students and qualified graduate students in nursing or health related disciplines.

OVERVIEW OF COURSE

General Purpose of the Course - The course allows the senior or graduate student to develop an ethical framework and interpret the legal parameters which influence decision making in client care.

Placement of Course in Major - This course is designed to be a nursing elective which is applicable to all three functional roles: educator, patient care manager, and clinician.

Summary of Content in Terms of Curriculum Concepts and Subconcepts - The primary concept of this course is the Nurse Perspective of Accountability. Applying the Deliberative Process to the Internal Environment of the health provider's ethical beliefs, a personal position on legal and ethical accountability can be developed. The application of the Research Process to this position adds the theoretical dimension necessary to validate the position. The position can be incorporated into client care through the Professional Nursing Roles of: Therapeutic Agent, Collaborator and Advocate.

Major Theorists and Theoretical Formulations - Major ideas and theories are those abstracted from legal, biomedical ethics and nursing literature: Frankena, Beauchamp and Childress, Ramsey, Hemelt and Mackert. Ethical theory, nursing theory or conceptual framework may be selected by the student.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Curricular Concept/Subconcept | Course Objective
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Deliberative Process Assessment Nurse Perspectives Accountability | The student will:
1. Identify actions that reflect a legal or ethical position in various contexts of client care.

Nurse Perspectives Accountability Environment Internal | 2. Describe how ethical beliefs influence behavior.

Nurse Perspectives Accountability | 3. Relate ethical beliefs to position-taking.

Nurse Perspectives Accountability Professional Nsg. Role Therapeutic Agent | 4. Specify own position on legal and ethical issues in client care.


Professional Nsg. Role Collaborator Advocate Nurse Perspectives Accountability | 6. Identify the legal and ethical consequences of taking a position.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Active participation in seminar discussion. Group response to vignettes presented through films, filmstrips, video tapes and written case studies. Required and optional readings.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE

1. Informed participation in seminar discussions.
2. Journal exploring value structure applied to legal and ethical principles.
4. Seminar presentation on controversial ethical dilemma.
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UNIT OBJECTIVES:

Unit I: Identify components of an ethical dilemma
- Analyze historical factors influencing legal/ethical dilemmas
- State principles of legal accountability

Unit II: Identify moral principles which guide decision makers
- Contrast Deontological with Teleological orientations to ethical dilemmas
- Apply a model for ethical decision making to an ethical dilemma
- Discuss research findings which address ethical and legal decision making in client care

Unit III: Analyze the impact of the technological imperative on the client's right to decide
- Discuss the impact of long term care of a permanently disabled non-autonomous client on the family structure and the community.
- Discuss the economic impact of quality care for the permanently unconscious client
- Determine the risks involved in challenging the system as a client advocate