Doane College

NRS 220 / HIS 220 - Cultural Aspects of Health and Illness
3 Credit Hours

Instructor:
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Required Text:


Course Description:

Course Description. This course focuses on the health attitudes, beliefs, and practices of culturally diverse populations in the United States. Students will learn the cultural, ethnic, sociological, economic, and political factors that influence beliefs, values, and practices in relation to health, illness, wellness management, and health seeking behaviors. Upon completion of the course, students will have a heightened awareness of the range of cultural behaviors and the need to understand people’s actions from their own cultural perspective in health and illness.

Understanding a culture’s influence on individuals and group members is very important to healthcare providers. Health care attitudes reflect the basic worldview and values of a culture, such as how we relate to nature, other people, time, being, society versus community, children versus elders and independence versus dependence. Illness behavior determines who is vulnerable to illness and who agrees to become a patient—since only about one third of the ill will see a physician.

Cultural values determine how one will behave as a patient and what it means to be ill and especially to be a hospital patient. They affect decisions about a patient's treatment and who makes the decisions. Cultural differences create problems in communication, rapport, physical examination and treatment compliance and follow through. The special meaning of medicines and diet requires particular attention. The perception of physical pain and psychologic distress varies from culture to culture and affects the attitudes and effectiveness of care-givers as much as of patients. Religious beliefs and attitudes about death, which have many cultural variations, are especially relevant to hospital-based treatment. Linguistic and cultural interpreters can be essential; they are more available than realized, though there are pitfalls in their use. Finally, one must recognize that individual characteristics may outweigh the ethnic and that a good caring relationship can compensate for many cultural missteps.

Course Learning Objectives:
1. Understand the importance of a culture’s influence on individuals and group members, and that health care attitudes reflect the basic world view and values of a culture.

2. Understand that cultural values determine how one will behave as a patient and what it means to be ill, and that cultural differences may create problems in communication, rapport, physical examination and treatment compliance and follow through.

3. Be aware of the diversity of cultures and how culture can affect the choice health care.

4. Be aware that perception of physical pain and psychologic distress varies from culture to culture and affects the attitudes and effectiveness of care-givers as much as of patients.

5. Understand that religious beliefs and attitudes about death, which have many cultural variations, are especially relevant to hospital-based treatment.

6. Understand the relationships of change in technologies, medical progress, patient needs, and provider dilemmas to the social structure and reform of the health care system.

**Class Format:**

Nursing 220 will be a combination of discussions and class presentations and the submission of writings as listed in the Syllabus. The instructor will introduce subjects, initiate discussions and guide those conversations. Subject matter for discussion will include the topics as listed in the syllabus in addition to issues initiated by the students.

Because of the seminar nature of this class, attendance is required. Students will gain the most from the class through participation in discussions and student interaction. Every student is expected to participate and should be prepared to discuss the required readings for each class.

**Class Attendance:**

Attendance is required through active and interactive participation. When class is not in session, the student will submit a response via e-mail to peers and the instructor.

Please feel free to call and/or e-mail me at any time. I am very willing to assist and I will make every effort to provide you with additional help or explanations at any time, just let me know.

This class is meant to be interesting and engaging. The topic of Culture is current and it affects every one of you. I want you to be able to understand the course topics and relate them to your current and future practice.

I am excited to be able to teach you in this format! Opinions and alternative points of view are welcome and encouraged but cannot, of themselves, substitute for knowledge of the literature. Each unit will begin with an open dialogue and discussion of the session’s learning objectives.
Class sessions will involve a combination of group discussions, readings, and student presentations. The course emphasis is on readings, group discussions, and student presentations. Students should be well prepared, having read the assigned readings prior to each weekly unit in order to complete the discussion board in a timely fashion.

**Grading Criteria:**

Students will be expected to complete the assigned readings, submit research articles, attend and participate in class discussions, and present their assignments during weekly sessions. This will be discussed in further detail during the initial meeting.

Class Presentation: Discussion related to two different Cultures of interest (30 points)

Class Presentation: Discussion related to a specific Therapeutic Modality (10 points)

Submission and discussion of 2 research articles pertinent to your Culture of interest and class discussion of those articles (@5 points each) (20 points)

Submission of 2 research articles pertinent to your Therapeutic Modality and class discussion of those articles (@ 5 points each) (20 points)

Compare/Contrast Paper pertinent to two Cultures of choice. (70 points)

Class Participation @ 5 points per class x 5 classes (25 points)

Self Portrait Paper-share your background (5 points)

Total points possible 200 points

190-200 = A+

180-199 = A

170-179 = B

160-169 = C

150-159 = D

Below 150 = F

A grade of 70% must be attained in order to pass the course

Grades will not be scaled

**Expectations:**

All school policies are to be followed as stated in the student handbook.
All course requirements must be met in order to successfully complete the course.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY:**

Academic integrity is an essential and necessary component of this program.

This policy requires that you immediately and cheerfully offer the benefit of your knowledge and skills to any fellow student who needs your help. If someone helps you, whether a fellow student, the author of a book/article, a family member, a pastor or priest, a coworker or anyone who has assisted you, then please give them credit. That’s called citing a source. Always show respect for the ideas or words of others by giving them the credit. **Failure to show respect will result in an “F”**.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** New regulations under the Higher Education Act require us to verify the identity of a person doing work in a class if we receive assignments, etc. from that student electronically. We can comply with this regulation if our students submit coursework to teachers electronically from their Doane College e-mail address or through Blackboard, because the college issued that address, ID, and password. For that reason, I can only send assignments to your Doane e-mail address, and I can only accept assignments submitted to me from your Doane e-mail address.
## Readings

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Reading Assignments/Projects</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 Initial Meeting 08/17/15 Grand Island</td>
<td>Introduction to Course: Objective #1</td>
<td>Getting to know you!</td>
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<td>Chapter 1- The Concept of Culture</td>
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<td>Week 2 08/24/15</td>
<td>Cultural Values Objective #2</td>
<td>Chapter 7: Developing Cultural Sensitivity</td>
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<td>Begin Literature Review for articles related to two Cultures of Choice for class presentation and paper. Submit review.</td>
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<td>Week 3 08/31/15 Grand Island</td>
<td>Therapeutic Modalities Objective #3</td>
<td>Chapter 4: Therapeutic Modalities: A Cross-Cultural Perspective</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>Week 4 09/07/15 (Labor Day) NO CLASS</td>
<td>History, Culture &amp; the Healthcare System Objective #6</td>
<td>Chapter 5: Biomedicine: Emergence and Evolution in Cultural Context</td>
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<td>Review Literature. Submit brief synopsis of two articles pertinent to the topic.</td>
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<td>Week 5 09/14/15</td>
<td>Changes in Health Care Objective #4</td>
<td>Chapter 6: Reforming Medicine Discussion &amp; Class Presentations</td>
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<td>Week 6 09/21/15 Grand Island</td>
<td>Religious Beliefs and Attitudes Objective #5</td>
<td>Chapter 3: Health and Illness Over Life Course Discussion &amp; Class Presentations</td>
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<td>Week 7 09/28/15 Grand Island</td>
<td>Family, Social Class and Gender</td>
<td>Chapter 2: The Health-Related Consequences of Social Structure</td>
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<td>Discussion &amp; Class Presentations</td>
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<td>Week 8 10/05/15 Grand Island</td>
<td>Changes and Challenges</td>
<td>Chapter 8: Putting Ideas into Practice: Complex Contemporary Challenges</td>
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Choosing your culture:
Develop a plan of care for one health issue specific to that culture. Many cultures may have problems related to diabetes or hypertension. If possible, please choose a something other than those two issues.

Explain how you would provide patient education to this population.

Addendum

Culture. (The following are suggested Cultures. Please feel free to research and present on other Cultures of interest). If you find something of interest, please communicate via the discussion board, so that we have a wide variety of submissions.

Aborigine
American Amish
Arab Americans
Australia
Brazil
Cambodia
Chinese Culture
Cherokee Indians
Cubans
Deaf/Hearing Impaired Culture
Filipinos
The Akans of Ghana
Greek
Gypsies
Haitian Culture
Hawaiian Culture
Hispanic Culture
Hispanic, Tri-cities
Homeless Population
Homeless Veterans
Hungarian Culture
India
Inuit Culture
Iranians
Italy vs. American Italian
Japanese
Jewish Culture
Koreans
Mexican Americans
Modified People
Mormon Culture
Native American (Additional tribes-compare and contrast)
New Zealand Culture
Peruvian
Puerto Ricans
Russian Culture
Single Mothers
Somalia (Tri-Cities)
Spokane Indian Tribe
Sudanese
Vietnamese

**Therapeutic Modalities**

Complementary and Alternative Therapies
Chiropractic Medicine
Curanderos
Doula
Folk Medicine
Magical Practitioners: Healers, Sorcerers
Modern/Traditional Medicine
Naturalistic Practitioners: Herbalists, Chemists, Surgeons, Body-workers, Midwives
Placebo Effect
Religious: Priests, Shamans
Quackery