**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth - College of Nursing**

**Rationale**

**NUR 214, 214 (H): Scholarly Inquiry in Nursing**

Cluster 1C – Intermediate Writing

Nurses need to know how to communicate with professional and appropriate written language. The goal of Scholarly Inquiry in Nursing is to introduce the nursing student to the peer reviewed literature, and encourage the student to apply critical evaluation of the research process to various types of research reports. The evaluation will be presented in the form of a written integrative review paper that will be completed with consultation from peers and faculty over the course of the entire semester. The student will learn to professionally critique the research process, read and synthesize information from multiple sources, and prepare a written summary using proper research concepts and language. Throughout the course, low stakes writing assignments will be used to prepare the student to write effectively for the nursing discipline. Proper grammar, APA formatting, and clarity of ideas in the written form will be emphasized. Additionally, writing will be used as a form of communication between the student and faculty, as some low stakes writing assignments will ask the student to discuss content areas that remain unclear or ask a question that he/she was too embarrassed to ask in class. Finally, low stakes writing assignments will be used by the faculty to evaluate the students’ understanding of readings, lectures, or as a free writing assignment where the student can demonstrate their competence in applying the information provided by the text, lecture, and/or faculty.

Scholarly Inquiry in Nursing is a natural fit for the Intermediate Writing Course of the University Studies curriculum. Building on the foundation of freshman writing courses (ENL 101 and ENL 102), sophomore nursing students are introduced to nursing specific literature with assignments that require a combination of comprehension, synthesis, and effective writing skills. This course meets once a week for three hours, and the implementation of at least ten low stakes writing assignments ensures that students are writing in the classroom at least weekly. Additionally, an abstract critique due at the beginning of the semester allows the faculty to gauge the writing competence of the class and tailor low stakes writing assignments to the needs of the students in a particular section. Meanwhile, the student continues to critically read and write on a weekly basis outside of the classroom, as the integrative review paper is a semester long assignment that applies content learned in the classroom into a written evaluation of current nursing literature.

**University of Massachusetts Dartmouth - College of Nursing**

**Master Syllabus**

**NUR 214, 214 (H): Scholarly Inquiry in Nursing**

**Cluster 1C – Intermediate Writing**

**Course:** NUR 214 and NUR 214 (H): Scholarly Inquiry in Nursing

**Credits:** 3 credits theory (150 class minutes)

**Placement in the Curriculum:** Level II

**Faculty:** TBD

**Prerequisites:** Sophomore standing in College of Nursing or with faculty permission

**Co-Requisites:** None

This University Studies Master Syllabus serves as a guide and standard for all instructors teaching an approved course in the University Studies program. Individual instructors have full academic freedom in teaching their courses, but as a condition of course approval, agree to focus on the outcomes listed below, to cover the identified material, to use these or comparable assignments as part of the course work, and to make available the agreed-upon artifacts for assessment of learning outcomes.

**Course Cap:** This course is offered every fall to eligible nursing students. Due to the writing demands of the course and timely feedback required from the course faculty, this course will be capped at 25 students.

**1C Criteria**

5. Intermediate Writing courses should have a lower number of students, in the 20 to 25 range.

6. Intermediate Writing courses should primarily be designed around single semester of work.

**Course Description:**

This knowledge foundation course, based on the American Nurses Association (2010) Scope and Standards of Practice, is designed to introduce the baccalaureate nursing student to the process of scholarly inquiry. The course focuses on preparing students to be consumers and users of research. The scholarly development of the discipline is presented to provide a historical perspective. Specific connections between theory, components of the research process, and their application to evidence-based practice are explored using nursing exemplars. Strengths and weaknesses of various quantitative and qualitative research designs are discussed, as is their appropriateness for investigating various practice-based problems. Building on the foundation of critical reading and writing I and II, this course will foster continued growth in student writing by integrating writing assignments with professional nursing critical thinking skills.

**Course-Specific Learning Objectives:**

1. Demonstrate integrity, honesty, accountability, and collegiality as a nursing student.

2. Discuss the history and future directions of nursing scholarship.

3. Discuss the connection between theory, research, and evidence-based practice.

4. Distinguish between professional journals and research journals.

5. Describe the steps of the research process

6. Describe the process of using evidence-based data in clinical practice.

7. Discuss ethical and legal issues inherent in nursing research.

8. Articulate a beginning understanding of specific quantitative and qualitative research designs.

9. Demonstrate a beginning ability to critically analyze a research report.

10. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of the research process by participating in a group project focusing on practice-based problems.

11. Investigate nursing research data-bases.

12. Explore information systems for entering, analyzing, and retrieving data.

**University Studies Learning Outcomes:**

1. Read with comprehension and critically interpret and evaluate written work in discipline- specific contexts.
2. Demonstrate rhetorically effective, discipline-specific writing for appropriate audiences.
3. Demonstrate, at an advanced level of competence, use of discipline-specific control of language, modes of development and formal conventions.
4. Demonstrate intermediate information literacy skills by selecting, evaluating, integrating and documenting information gathered from multiple sources into discipline-specific writing.

**Examples of Required Texts:**

American Psychological Association. (2010). Publication manual of the American

Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Fain, J.A. (2009). Reading, understanding, and applying nursing research. (3rd ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis.

**Example Evaluative Criteria:**

1. Paper #1 Abstract Critique (3-5 pages excluding title page and references) (10%)
2. Paper #2 Integrative Review (8-10 pages, excluding title page, abstract, appendices and references) (25%)
3. Peer Review of Paper #2 Integrative Review (2 pages) (5%)
4. Low Stakes Writing Assignment (1 page) completed at least 10 times a semester for a total of ten written pages (10%)

*[50% of total grade is a combination of formal writing, peer critique, and low stakes writing]*

1. In the form of quiz/test during the semester and/or Group Project (40%)
2. Contribution to Class Discussion, Attendance (10%)

*[50% of total grade is a combination of quizzes/tests, group research project, and class*

*discussion/attendance]*

**1C Criteria.**

**1.** **Intermediate Writing courses employ writing as a method for deepening student learning.** Assignments in the course ask students to practice working in writing with concepts central to the course content.

**2. Faculty provide feedback, on-going guidance, and clear expectations for "effective" written response.**

**3. Writing accounts for 40 to 60 percent of the final grade.** Students must complete all writing assignments to pass the course.

**4. Students must complete at least 20 pages of writing**. Informal (pre-writing, low stakes, and free-writing) and formal writing may be included in this final count.

**Paper #1 Abstract Critique (US Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3):**

The student will select a research abstract that will be approved by the course faculty on a specific nursing topic or nursing problem. The student will critique the abstract, using the research language presented in the class and textbook, particularly noting the application of findings into nursing practice. The student will submit a written paper in proper APA 6th edition format. The student will hand in the abstract along with the final paper. The paper will not exceed five typed pages (title page and reference list excluded from page count).

**Sample Grading Criteria for Abstract Critique**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Critique Section | Details | Points |
| Problem and Purpose | Is there a clear problem statement (definition, significance, background)?  Is the purpose of the study clear (variables, population, setting)? | 10 |
| Methodology | Are the sample, instruments, and research design identified and described briefly? | 10 |
| Results | Are the results summarized? | 5 |
| Conclusions | Are the findings/conclusions stated? | 5 |
| Writing style | Is the abstract well written and easy to understand? | 5 |
| Significance | Is the research topic important? Why or why not?  Is the research topic significant enough to generate nursing knowledge? | 5 |
| Overview | Does the abstract give the reader a good idea of what the study is about?  Was it feasible for the researcher to study this research topic? | 10 |
| Organization | Logical flow to critique | 10 |
| Content | Includes all critique sections | 20 |
| Format | Grammar, spelling, sentence structure, writing style, APA format (6th ed.) | 20 |
|  |  | =100 points |

**Paper #2 Integrative Review (US Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4):**

The integrative review process allows the student to systematically analyze and summarize past research on a given topic to make a conclusion about the current state of the nursing knowledge in a given content area. The integrative literature review can also be used to evaluate the strength of the scientific evidence, identify gaps in current research, identify the need for future research, build a bridge between related areas of work, identify central issues in an area, generate a research question, identify a theoretical or conceptual framework, and explore which research methods have been used successfully.

The student will select of topical area of interest and relevant to nursing research. The student is expected to conduct a literature search on the topical area through the use of on-line databases such as CINAHL and PSYCHINFO as learned during an earlier week in the semester. The student will compile a set number of research-based articles (TBD by faculty of record) and use as the basis of the integrative review. The student is encouraged to meet with the faculty at least once while writing the integrative review for consultation. Several low stakes writing assignments will prepare the student for proper citing and referencing according to APA format, as well as proper use of grammar and research concepts within the body of the paper. One peer review will occur prior to the final submission.

**Sample Grading Criteria for Integrative Review**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Critique Section | Details | Points |
| Title page | Title, Author, Academic Institution, Running Head, Page number | 3 |
| Abstract | Overview of review (Purpose, Methods, Results, Discussion) | 5 |
| Introduction | Purpose, incidence/prevalence of problem, research questions/hypothesis. Identify the study variables. Does the reader have a clear understanding of the problem and why it is important to nursing practice | 10 |
| Literature Review | Specifically describe the search method used to obtain list of articles. Synthesis of the literature already conducted on this topic. What is the known about this topic and what are the gaps? Describe any opposing arguments or difference in findings from previous researchers. | 10 |
| Methods | Research design, sample, setting, data collection procedures, and instruments. Address similarities, inappropriate use of methods and recommendations for strengthening methods in future studies. | 15 |
| Results | Provide a summary of the data analysis/calculations, descriptive statistics, independent T-tests, narrative analysis. What was similar, what was different? | 20 |
| Discussion | Integration of results, interpretation of results in relation to the purpose of study.  Identify limitations and future directions. | 15 |
| References | APA Format | 5 |
| Tables | APA Format | 5 |
| Appendices | Include measures | 2 |
| Format | Logical flow, grammar, spelling, sentence structure, writing style, APA format (6th ed.) | 10 |
|  |  | = 100 points |

**Peer Review of Paper #2 (US Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3):**

Peer-review is the act of having another writer read what you have written and respond in terms of your writing effectiveness. The peer-reviewer attempts to identify the strength and weaknesses in the writing, and then suggests strategies for revisions. The intent is for the specific piece of writing to be improved, but also for future writing submissions to be more comprehensive. Each student will be paired. Based on the course outline determined by the faculty, the peer-reviewer will be provided a clean draft of the paper. Using the grading criteria listed in the syllabus, the peer-reviewer will assign points, making note of strengths and weaknesses. The peer-reviewer will then prepare a response (1-2 pages) which includes, at a minimum, the following criteria: 1) What was learned from this paper? 2) What was clear/unclear in this paper? 3) How will this topic contribute to nursing practice? 4) Recommendations for the writer to improve the paper (grammar, spelling, APA format, being concise, providing examples/citations from the literature). This assignment prepares the writer and peer-reviewer for the submission process of scholarly writing in the nursing discipline.

**Sample Grading Rubric for Peer-Reviewer**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Criteria | Points |
| The peer review process was conducted professionally, with a combination of positive comments and recommendations for improvement. The reviewer provided a summary of what was learned from the paper and highlighted the purpose of the project, including the significance to nursing practice. Areas of concern within the written paper are targeted with suggestions for improvement provided to the writer in a constructive manner.  Edited draft paper, completed grading criteria, and peer response is stapled together with a cover page and is turned in on time | 3 |
| The peer review process was conducted professionally. The reviewer did not include all of the criteria outlined in peer review assignment.  Edited draft paper, completed grading criteria, and peer response is stapled together with a cover page and is turned in on time | 2 |
| The peer review process is not conducted professionally. The reviewer does not address the purpose of the project and/or the significance to nursing practice. There are few to no recommendations for improvement.  Edited draft paper, completed grading criteria, and peer response is stapled together with a cover page and is turned in on time | 1 |
| Assignment not completed on time | 0 |

**Sample Low Stakes Writing (LSW) Assignments (US Learning Outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4):**

Low-stakes writing encourages student involvement in course ideas, helps students keep up with readings and put content in their own words, helps instructors to see whether or not students are understanding course material, and prepares students for high-stakes assignments. A total of ten assignments will be calculated into the student’s final grade. Examples of low stakes writing assignments to be employed in this may course include, but are not limited to:

1. Provide the students with a journal article that has the abstract removed. Instruct the student to read the journal article and write an abstract for it, summarizing the main points of the author(s) in their own words. Students should be able to identify the main thesis, the data collecting procedure, the findings, and the conclusions in their abstract.
2. Provide the student with a review of the literature from a current research article. Ask the student to propose an appropriate research hypothesis or research question based on what is known and what is not known about the topic. The student must write how their thinking concluded in such hypothesis/question.
3. QQTP: In class, write a one-page QQTP sheet that includes the following information from the reading: 1) a **q**uestion prompted by the reading. 2) a **q**uotation from the reading that you found compelling, controversial, puzzling, or otherwise remarkable, 3) a brief idea or set of ideas you can use as **t**alking **p**oints in class discussion.
4. If the instructor uses a quiz/test as part of the course evaluation method: Have the student reflect on their preparation for and performance on the quiz/test; 1) how much of the reading was done? 2) how much time was spent studying? 3) and when (night before test?)? 4) are notes taken in class? when you read?
5. Minute Paper: To be written quickly and submitted at the end of the class. “What was the most important thing that you learned today?” “What were the main points of today’s lecture?” “What questions do you have or what material remains unclear?” Begin the next class meeting by reading aloud selected themes.
6. When lecturing on challenging material, stop for a few minutes and ask students to respond to a writing prompt like this: “If you have understood my lecture so far, summarize my main points in your own words. If you are currently confused about something, please write about to me what is puzzling you; ask me the questions you need answered.”
7. After a group presentation, the student will write a peer-evaluation of the group presentation including “What was the most important thing that you learned from the presentation?” “What were the main points of the presentation?” “What questions do you have or what material remains unclear?”
8. Each member of the group will provide an one page summary of how the group approached meeting the objective of the group presentation, how each member contributed to the presentation, and what, if any, conflicts came about during the group work and how conflicts were solved.
9. Provide students with the first page of multiple journal articles and instruct them to create a reference list in APA 6th edition format.
10. Provide students with a page of multiple paragraphs. Each paragraph should contain grammatical and sentence structure errors. Students will rewrite each paragraph using correct grammar and writing.

**Sample Grading Criteria for Low Stakes Writing Assignments**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| √+ (3) | Completed with excellent effort |
| √ (2) | Completed with good effort |
| √- (1) | Completed with little effort |
| 0 | Not completed |

**Evidence-Based Practice Group Project**

Throughout your coursework and your professional career you will be asked to give presentations of a scholarly nature. Also, as a baccalaureate-prepared nurse, your role will be to interpret and apply your research findings in your clinical practice. Baccalaureate nurses are often members of evidence-based practice committees in their work setting. In this assignment you will work as a group to deliver an EBP presentation with the goal of sharing research findings and implications for their application with your peers. Based on the integrative review paper, student groups will identify a researchable question with assistance from faculty. PowerPoint will be used by student groups for their presentations and each group member must have a speaking part during the presentation.

**Sample Grading Criteria for Project**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Criteria | Details | Points |
| Statement of the Problem | Purpose, incidence/prevalence of problem, research questions/hypothesis. Identify the study variables. Does the reader have a clear understanding of the problem and why it is important to nursing practice | 10 |
| Literature Review | Specifically describe the search method used to obtain list of articles. Synthesis of the literature already conducted on this topic. What is the known about this topic and what are the gaps? Describe any opposing arguments or difference in findings from previous researchers. | 10 |
| Comparison | Provide a summary/comparison of the research questions, methods, strengths, limitations of the articles used. What did you learn from the analysis? Present this information in a way that demonstrates your understanding of research concepts and content. | 30 |
| Application | How can this information be used in practice? What limitations need to be addressed when applying information into practice? | 30 |
| Presentation | Captures the audience attention  Delivered in professional manner with professional attire  Minimal use of notes. Maintains eye contact  Initiates conversation/discussion | 10 |
| Slides | Visual slides are creative and organized. Slides are in logical order  Slides are concise. Tables are neat | 10 |
|  |  | 100 points |

**Sample Topical Outline**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Class | Content | Related Learning Activity |
| 1 | Introduction to Nursing Research. Evidence-Based Practice | LSW #1 |
| 2 | The Research Process. Identifying a Problem  Critiquing the Literature | LSW #2 |
| 3 | Using Databases for Information Gathering  Research Reports & Professional Journal Articles | LSW #3 |
| 4 | Ethics in Nursing Research | Paper #1 Abstract Critique Due LSW #4 |
| 5 | Theory & Conceptual Models in Nursing Research | LSW #5 |
| 6 | Formulating the Hypothesis & Research Questions  Selecting a Research Design | LSW #6 |
| 7 | Principles of Measurement  Reliability and Validity | LSW #7 |
| 8 | Selecting the Sample and Setting  Data Collection Measures | LSW #8. Draft Integrative Review due for Peer Review |
| 9 | Analyzing the Data | Peer Review of Paper #2 |
| 10 | Interpreting and Reporting Research Findings  Critiquing Research Reports | LSW #9 |
| 11 | Qualitative Research | LSW #10 |
| 12 | Group Presentations if applicable | Quiz/Test |
| 13 | Course/Faculty Evaluations | Integrative Review Due |