



**NURS 3103-101 Theories & Concepts: Introduction to Nursing  
Fall 2025**

**Wednesday 9:00 AM – 11:50 AM Centennial Hall 304**

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**Office hours: By appointment**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is an introduction to major concepts of concern in nursing: person, environment, nursing, and health. Nursing theories and ethical-legal principles related to professional nursing practice are studied. Also addressed are the concepts of critical thinking, communication, and cultural awareness in the context of nursing process.

**CREDIT HOURS:** Three (3) credit hours

**PREREQUISITE:** Declared Nursing Major: Sophomore standing

**LEARNING EXPERIENCES:** Includes reading and writing assignments, in-class lecture, online discussion and assignments, interactive learning activities including group presentations, guest presentations, and media.

### **Course Objectives and Competencies**

**American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials:** For further information regarding the AACN Essentials identified for each course objective, refer to [AACN BSN Essentials 2021](#)

**Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DECs):** In the DEC Competencies below, the following designations apply: I: Provider of Patient-centered Care, II: Coordinator of Care, III: Patient Safety Advocate, and IV: Member of the Health Care Team. For further information regarding the competencies identified for each course objective, refer to [Texas Board of Nursing DECs 2021](#)

**NCLEX-RN Test Plan:** The test plan is your guide for the specific topics you should understand and be able to apply critical thinking with prior to graduation. We will use the test plan during every class and activity of each semester. You can find the test plan at [NCLEX-RN Test Plan 2023](#). It is important for you to become very familiar with this information.

<b><i>Objectives</i></b>	<b>AACN Essentials</b>	<b>DEC Competencies</b>
1. Describe key "benchmarks" in the historical development of the profession of nursing.	1.1c., (I), (SC, D), (WDP)  1.1d (I), (SC, D), (WDP)	I: A, D
2. Describe behaviors required of nursing professionals and affirm commitment to adhere to professional behavior guidelines.	1.2b, (I), (SC, D) (WDP, CDM)  1.3b, (I), (LA, D), (WDP)  2.1a, (I), (SC), (CDM, HPC)  2.1b, (I), (SC), (CDM, HPC)  2.1c, (I), (SC), (CDM, HPC)  5.1a (I), (LA), (WDP)  5.1b, (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM)  5.2b (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM)  6.1a, (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM)  6.2d (I), (LA, D), (WDP, CDM)  9.5a (I), (LA, SC), (CDM)	I: A, B, C, D III: A, B
3. Become proficient in oral and written communication using medical terminology and speech easily understandable when giving report to other health professionals, communicating with patients and interdisciplinary team members.	2.2a, (I), (D), (WDP, CDM, HPC)  2.2b, (I), (D), (WDP, CDM)  2.2e, (I), (LA), (WDP)	IV: D

	<p>2.2f, (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, or HPC)</p> <p>2.9b, (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>2.9e (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>3.2c (I), (LA, D), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>4.1g, (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, or HPC)</p> <p>6.1b, (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>6.1e (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>6.3c, (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>6.4 (a, b, c, d), (I), (LA, D, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>8.1a, c, (I), (LA, D), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>8.2a (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>8.3a (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>9.2g (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, or HPC)</p>	
4. Describe the ethical and legal aspects and requirements for nursing practice in Texas	<p>1.2c, (I), (D), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>1.2d, (I), (D, P), (WDP, CDM, or HPC)</p> <p>1.2e, (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, or HPC)</p>	III: A

	<p>3.1i (I), (D, P), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>6.1f, (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>8.5b, (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>9.1 (a, b, c, d, e, f, g) (I), (LA, D), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>9.4b, (I), (LA), (CDM)</p> <p>9.4c, (I), (LA), (CDM)</p>	
5. Demonstrate the ability to search medical databases to discover evidence-based research journal articles to answer specific nursing questions.	<p>1.1b, (I), (D,P) (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>3.4c, (I), (LA), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>4.1a, (I), (LA, SC), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>4.1d, (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>4.1e (I), (P), (WDP, CDM, HPC)</p> <p>4.2b, (I), (SC), (CDM)</p>	<p>I: D</p> <p>III: C</p> <p>IV: C</p>
6. Explain the interrelationships among nursing theory, clinical judgment, and nursing practice.	<p>1.1a, (I), (D, LA), (WDP)</p> <p>1.2a, (I), (SR), (CDM)</p> <p>1.3c, (I), (SR), (CDM)</p> <p>4.1c, (I), (SC), (WDP, CDM)</p> <p>10.2d, (I), (LA, SC), (CDM)</p>	<p>I: D</p> <p>II: A</p> <p>III: A, C</p>

## REQUIRED MATERIALS:

Black, B. P. (2020). *Professional nursing: concepts & challenges* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.). Elsevier.  
Engel, M. (2006). *The other end of the stethoscope*. Ella Press  
Paul, R. & Elder, L. (2016) *The thinker's guide for students on how to study & learn a discipline*. Foundation for Critical Thinking.  
Silvestri, L. A. & Silvestri, A. E. (2024). *Saunders 2024-2024 Clinical Judgment and Test-Taking Strategies*. Elsevier Health Sciences Division.  
TopHat Classroom Access Code (see D2L for instructions)

## COURSE EVALUATION:

No exams will be given in this course, although in-class quizzes and participation will be graded. Course requirements and percentages for computation of the final grade are weighted as follows:

<b>TopHat in-class participation/professionalism</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Discussion board assignments</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>Master Student Writing Assignments</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Ethical Dilemma Group Presentation</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Book Essay (Engel)</b>	<b>15%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

An overall course grade of **74%** or greater must be achieved to pass any nursing course. Grades will be based on the above computation and all assignment/evaluation components must be completed to receive a passing grade. **There is no extra credit available for this course. Also, there is no rounding up of grades in any nursing course.**

### MSU Department of Nursing Grading Scale:

90- 100 .....	A
80- 89 .....	B
74- 79 .....	C
65- 73 .....	D
64 and below .....	F

**TOPHAT and IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES (20%).** In-class participation will include quizzes on reading and discussion assignments and questions provided on TopHat during class. Students who are not in class will not be able to make up the points missed. If a student has an excused absence arranged with the instructor in advance and/or accompanied by a doctor's note, the points may be waived. Familiarity with TopHat is

important for making sure you are able to accumulate all possible points. Quizzes may be given on TopHat or on Exemplify.

**DISCUSSION BOARD ASSIGNMENTS (30%). See instructions and grading rubric posted on D2L.** Five discussion board assignments and instructions for completion can be found in the D2L table of contents. This assignment requires critical thinking about a question, writing a coherent essay (with good grammar, spelling and punctuation which are evaluated as part of the grade) about the question (including references), and then responding to at least two classmates' contributions.

**MASTER STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS (15%). See instructions and grading rubric posted on D2L.** This assignment consists of three essays to be written in response to critical thinking reading assignments from the Paul & Elder booklet.

**ENGEL REFLECTIVE RESPONSE (15%). See instructions and grading rubric posted on D2L.** This assignment is a reflective response to be written after reading Marcus Engel's *The Other End of the Stethoscope*. Instructions can be found in the dropbox in the D2L table of contents.

**ETHICAL ISSUE GROUP PRESENTATION (20 %) See instructions and grading rubric posted on D2L.** This is an opportunity for students to provide information and lead a discussion about an ethical dilemma. Principles for evaluating an ethical dilemma, and suggested topics will be discussed in class prior to beginning the assignment. 5% of the grade will be a group grade, and 10% will be an individual grade considering the assignment as well as group participation.

**REGARDING YOUR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:** Plagiarism may result in failure of the class and/or barring of continuance in the nursing program at MSU. By enrolling in this course, the student expressly grants MSU a "limited right" to all intellectual property created by the student for the purpose of this course. The "limited right" shall include but shall not be limited to the right to reproduce the student's work product in order to verify originality, and for educational purposes. **Ideas taken from another source, whether quoted or paraphrased must be documented using APA guidelines.**

**COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS.** Each student must have a computer or tablet and internet access. Most assignments and activities are online, including in-class activities. Assignments will have to be uploaded to submit for grading. It is your responsibility to have access to a working computer to bring to class daily and to complete assignments outside of class. Please bring your charger to use if needed during class or an exam.

Maintain a good security program (of your choice) and keep your computer updated. It is a little inconvenient if your computer stops you during class because it has to complete an update. Your computer being down is not an acceptable reason for missing a deadline for an assignment. Computers and printers are available on campus in the library, the Computer lab in Clark Student Center, and in various buildings on campus. There are many places to access your on-line materials for class.

Extensive use of the MSU D2L learning management system (LMS) is required in all of your courses. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides the primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through your “my.msutexas.edu” Homepage. Technical information is available on the MSUTexas portal and your D2L home page. If you experience difficulties, please contact the [helpdesk@msutexas.edu](mailto:helpdesk@msutexas.edu). The helpdesk technicians are not able to personally work on your computer but may be able to help you with getting internet access and navigating the MSU portal and D2L

**LATE WORK, MAKE-UP WORK.** Nursing students, just like RNs at work, must practice following instructions and staying on schedule. Any time a student must be absent, or is unable to complete an assignment on time for any reason he or she should contact and inform the instructor of the situation as soon as possible. If notice is given, late written assignments will be accepted with **ten** percentage points per day late deducted from the grade. TopHat questions will not be reopened for grading after class.

### **MIDTERM PROGRESS**

In order to help students keep track of their progress toward course objectives, the instructor for this course will provide a Midterm Progress Report through each student’s WebWorld account. Midterm grades will not be reported on the student’s transcript; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. They simply give students an idea of where they stand at midpoint of the semester. Students earning below a C at the midway point should schedule a meeting with the professor and seek out tutoring through the Tutoring & Academic Support Programs (link to the website <https://msutexas.edu/academics/tasp/>).

### **INSTRUCTOR’S CLASS POLICIES**

**CITIZENSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM.** As a nursing student, you should always practice behaving as a professional nurse. That means treating others in a professional, respectful manner. Being late to class, leaving in the middle of class unless an emergency exists, failing to silence your cell phone, texting or surfing the web, talking in class instead of listening - these are behaviors that detract from your responsibility as a student, and from your classmates’ ability to get everything they need from the class. Children may not be brought to class per University policy. As a nursing student, you need to be in class and participating in order to get the most from your education. You will only be taking Introduction to Nursing one time (hopefully), and anything you miss out on now will be a problem for you in your future nursing courses. Students who demonstrate distracting behaviors will be asked to leave the classroom. If a student demonstrates continuing behaviors that are distracting to his/her classmates, the student may be administratively dropped from the course. Disregard for the attendance policy may also result in being dropped from the course.

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Refer to: [BSN Student Handbook](#) and [MSU Student Handbook](#)

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY & PROCEDURES**

This course adheres to the MSU Code of Conduct. In particular, academic dishonesty, however small, creates a breach in academic integrity. A student's participation in this course comes with the expectation that his or her work will be completed in full observance of the MSU Code of Student Conduct. A student should consult the current Student Handbook for answers to any questions about the code.

Students are encouraged to take full advantage of many resources available including online Desire 2 Learn course resources, Internet sites, other textbooks and journals, faculty, and peers when accomplishing objectives. This interactive collegial learning environment is conducive for life-long learning.

However, all components of the course are designed to represent the efforts of each student individually or each group of students individually when completing a group project and are not to be shared, copied, or plagiarized from other sources. When students submit their efforts for grading, they are attesting they abided by this rule.

Academic dishonesty includes cheating, collusion, plagiarism or the acquisition of tests or test questions and other academic materials such as test banks without the permission of the faculty. Cheating, collusion, or plagiarism is defined as: (1) cheating - intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, equipment, or study aids in any academic exercise; (2) collusion - the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing work offered for credit; (3) plagiarism - intentionally representing the words or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Academic dishonesty (cheating, collusion, plagiarism, etc.) will not be tolerated in this class. Whenever a student is unsure of whether a particular situation will be interpreted as academic dishonesty, he or she should ask the instructor for clarification.

Unless otherwise specified, the use of Automated Writing Tools, including chatGPT and similar artificial intelligence (AI) tools, is strictly prohibited in this course, even when properly attributed. The use of automated writing tools is considered plagiarism (as defined by SRRR 9.3) and will be handled in accordance with existing policy.

Any student found to be academically dishonest as defined above and under each assignment will automatically receive a grade of "0" on the assignment.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES**



## **INSTRUCTOR DROP POLICY**

An instructor may drop a student at any time during the semester for excessive absences (four per long semester course), for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude, or for disruptive conduct. The instructor must give the students a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop of a later date. The instructor will assign a grade of either WF or F through the 8th week of a long 45 hours semester, the 6th week of a 10 week summer term, or the 11th class day of a 4 or 5 week summer term consisting of 20 days. After these periods, the grade will be an F. The date the instructor drop form is received in the Office of the Registrar is the official drop date. Refer to page 27 at <https://msutexas.edu/student-life/assets/files/handbook.pdf>.

## **DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES**

Midwestern State University is committed to providing equal access for qualified students with disabilities to all university courses and programs, and by law all students with disabilities are guaranteed a learning environment that provides reasonable accommodation of their disability. This guarantee is provided through Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA reads: "No qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, or activities of a public entity, or be subject to discrimination by any such entity." The Director of Disability Support Services serves as the ADA Coordinator and may be contacted at (940) 397.4140, TDD (940) 397.4515, or 3410 Taft Blvd., Clark Student Center 168.

## **COLLEGE POLICIES**

### **WEATHER CLOSURE PRACTICES**

Student safety is the number one consideration in regards to travel for bad weather. If it is icy or snowing in your area, e-mail your faculty to explain the situation. Use common sense in regards to travel.

The MSU Nursing Program will follow the MSU campus practices for closure. If the campus closes, classes will go on-line using Zoom via D2L or another platform designated by your professor. For guidance of weather closure practices for MSU campus see guidance via the MSU webpage.

### **SMOKING/TOBACCO POLICY**

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

### **CAMPUS CARRY RULES/POLICIES**

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

## **ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY**

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

## **GRADE APPEAL PROCESS**

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the MSUTexas [Undergraduate Catalog](#).

## **CAMPUS CARRY**

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

## **ACTIVE SHOOTER**

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [Safety / Emergency Procedures](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: ["Run. Hide. Fight."](#)

### *Notice*

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

## **FINAL WORD**

Being a nursing student is different from being a student in a lot of other majors. Your education is no longer about learning things for passing an exam and adding an A to your transcript. You are learning the things you need to know when you are responsible for another person's life. Your nursing license is a statement to the public that you know

certain things, and that people can depend on that. You need to practice and learn this stuff just like you practiced for a choir contest, or a softball tournament, or a piano recital, or maybe learning how to fly an airplane. You can't just know it, you have to know it well - how to do it and why, and be able to explain it to others. The sooner you begin using this kind of studying, the better you will do in all of your nursing classes and throughout your professional life. There is no other way to look at it.

Nursing students have stress, no doubt about that. When you feel stressed and worried about "getting it," try to imagine what you need that information for. Think about your patients and your career plans. Take time for self-care, getting enough sleep and exercise, and manage your time wisely – try to be disciplined about your reading and studying. Organization and time management are the keys to success. Keeping a journal helps keep your mind organized, and if you are feeling stressed, writing in the journal sometimes helps you understand why, and what might help you feel better. Making it through nursing school is definitely do-able, but you have to have the intention to do whatever it takes to learn the things you have to know to practice nursing safely. Faculty are here to help... if you feel you are having trouble, talking to a faculty member, advisor, or tutor sooner rather than later is really important. We might have some ideas that could be helpful to you!

**The details of this syllabus are subject to amendment or change** if needed to assure alliance with University and School of Nursing policies and procedures. Any changes will be made after sufficient notice to students.