



Course Syllabus: Ethics in Healthcare

**College of Robert D. & Carol Gunn College of Health Sciences &
Human Services
NURS 4703**

Summer 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Stacey J. Machado, DNP, MS, RN
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 am - 1pm
Office phone: (940) 397 - 4046
Cell Phone: (580) 583 - 5457 (emergencies) texts and calls
E-mail: stacey.machado@msutexas.edu

Course Description

1. This course builds on the ethical and legal foundations for professional nursing practice and health care services. Ethical, legal, and moral/social principles along with the ANA Code for Nurses are applied to common and complex health care related situations.
2. The course provides an opportunity to assess ethical and legal issues confronting nurses in a variety of health care delivery settings.
3. The course focuses on identification and analysis of legal and ethical concepts and principles underlying nursing and health care.
4. This course includes information required for examination of ethical decision-making in clinical practice. The focus is on values clarification, ethical theory, ethical decision-making models, and professional ethical standards. Emphasis is on ethical obligations of professional nurses in their roles as citizens, members of a profession, providers of care, and designers and managers of care.

5. AACN Essentials: For further information regarding the AACN Essentials identified for each course objective, refer to:
<https://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/0/PDFs/Publications/Essentials-2021.pdf>

Course Objectives		
Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:	AACN	DECs
1. Describe the ethical theories in relation to morality, laws and social practices and policies.	II,III,V,VI,VIII,IX.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIB,IID,IIE / IIIB,IVB.
2. Define and apply the principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, veracity, justice, and fidelity to common and complex health care and professional situations including economics, access to care, and personal rights.	II,III,IV,V,VI,VIII.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIB,IIC,IID / IIE,IIIB,IVA, IVB,IVD.
3. Describe the process of ethical-decision-making as it relates to nursing practice and the nurse: person/patient/family/community relationships	II,III,IV,V,VI,VII,VIII, IX.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIA,IIB,IIC / IID,IIE,IIIB, IVA,IVB,IVC,IVD.
4. Compare and contrast law and ethics related to health care services including end of life issues.	II,III,IV,V,VI,VIII,IX.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIA,IIB,IIC / IID,IIE,IIIB,IIIC, IVA,IVB,IVC,IVD.
5. Apply American Nurses Association (ANA) Code for Nurses to clinical and other professional situations.	III,IV,V,VI,VII,VIII,IX.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIA,IID,IIE / IIF,IIIA,IIIB, IIIC,IIID,IIIE,IIIF,IVA, IVB,IVD,IVF,IVG.
6. Demonstrate communications in engagement /crucial conversations related to complex and controversial ethics, law, and professional practice issues.	II,III,IV,V,VII,VII,VIII / IX.	IA,IB,IC,ID,IIA,IIB,IIC, IID,IIE,IIF,IIG, IIH,IIIB,IIIC,IIID,IVA, IVB,IVC.IVD.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Required textbooks

Butts, J.B., & Rich, K.L. (2022). Nursing ethics: Across the curriculum and into practice. (6th ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Bartlett Learning.

References

Bagnasco et al.,(2018). Ethical dimensions of paediatric nursing: A rapid evidence assessment. *Nursing Ethics*. 25(1),111-122. DOI: 10.1177/0969733016631161.

Lachman, V.C. (2009). Practical use of the nursing code of ethics, *Harvard Business Review* (2017). HBR guide to emotional intelligence. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press.

[Nursing Ethics]. (January 3, 2017). Nursing ethics: Understanding ethics in nursing [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PZNI6vix8Q>

Student Handbook

Refer to [MSU Texas 2025 - 2026 Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Refer to [MSU Texas Academic Honesty Policy & Procedure](#)

****Use of AI Tools:****

The use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, QuillBot) is not permitted for any assignment unless explicitly approved. All work must reflect original student thought. Violations may be treated as academic dishonesty. For further guidance on MSU Texas Policy and, please refer to [MSU Texas AI Tools and Resource Home](#).

Grading

Table 1: Percentage allocated to each assignment –

Assignments	Percentage
Discussions	25%
Ethical Dilemma Paper	25%
My Sister's Keeper Ethical Dilemma Paper	25%
Case Study Paper	25%
Total	100%

Table 2: Total points for final grade. There will be no rounding of final course grades.

Grade	Points
A	90 to 100
B	80 to 89
C	79 to 74
D	65 to 73
F	64 and below

Projects Required

Assignments vary in each module, and each assignment has its own rubric for completion and grading. Written work is to be completed and submitted electronically in the appropriate assignment (drop box) on D2L and submitted by 10:59 pm Central Time on due date. A course average of at least **74%** is required to pass this course. **No rounding of final grades** per the WSON handbook. Faculty reserves the right to make changes at any time to this syllabus.

Discussion Board

You must post a substantive response to each of the required questions. A substantive response is constructive and adds value to the weekly discussions. Substantive responses should be at least 150 words in length. Your responses need to reflect critical thought and demonstrate an understanding of the relevant concepts. All factual knowledge must be supported with appropriate APA citation of source. Response to the discussion board questions must be posted by 10:59 PM Central Standard Time on or before the due date on the Discussion Board section in the appropriate Discussion Question thread as stated in the course outline. **Discussion responses (initial) posted more than 2 days late and or in the wrong thread will not be accepted. Peer response post will not be accepted late.**

Late initial postings will receive a 10-point deduction for each day late and will not be accepted if posted more than 1 day late. It is the responsibility of the student to post the assignment on the correct thread by 10:59 PM Central Standard Time on or prior to the due date. Participation in the classroom discussion is required. In addition to posting your responses to the discussion questions you must post a substantive comment to at least two of your classmate's posts. This post may be made anytime during the week but must

be made prior to the close of the week before the due date and time. Each peer response must have at least one accompanying APA citation. Peer Posts made after the due date and time of the week will not be accepted for credit.

Late Work

No Late assignments will be accepted during this summer course. Only in the absolute case of unavoidable extenuating circumstance with faculty notification will Late assignments be accepted. And only then, for each day past the assignment initial due date would **10-points** for each day the assignment is late will be deducted. Assignments more than two days later will not be accepted.

Important Dates

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" June 17, 2026

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. **Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. **Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both

liability and resource limitations, however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

Instructor Drop. An instructor may drop a student any time during the semester for excessive absences, for consistently failing to meet class assignments, for an indifferent attitude or for lack of engagement in the online learning environment. For example, failure to participate in online discussions as scheduled and on time is considered being absent. Prior to dropping a student from the class, the instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning. An instructor's drop of a student takes precedence over the student-initiated course drop later. The instructor will assign a grade of **WF** or **F** in the 6th week of a 10-week summer term. After this time, the grade will be an F. The date the Office of the Registrar receives the instructor drop form is the official drop date. If a student does not maintain enrollment for one long semester they will be placed on inactive status. If a student were to withdraw for a second time from the same and or any nursing course and or received a second **D** or **F** in the same and or any nursing course, even if the student has repeated a course and received a grade of **C** or above the student will be dismissed from the program. **All submissions earning a Turn-it In Similarity score above 20% will receive a 30-point deduction. Students may submit assignments as many times as needed before the due/date and time to review and revise as needed to earn a Turn-it In Similarity score at or less than 20%. Only the last submission before the due date and time will be graded.**

Acceptable and Unacceptable Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) is permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Fine-tuning your research questions
- Checking grammar and style

The use of generative AI tools is not permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Impersonating you in classroom contexts, such as by using the tool to compose discussion board
- prompts assigned to you or content that you put into a Zoom chat.

- Completing group work that your group has assigned you unless it is mutually agreed upon that you may utilize the tool.
- Writing a draft of a writing assignment.
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments.

You are responsible for the information you submit based on an AI query (for instance, it does not violate intellectual property laws or contain misinformation or unethical content). Your use of AI tools must be appropriately documented and cited to stay compliant with university policies on academic honesty.

Any assignment that is found to have used generative AI tools in unauthorized ways will be given a grade of zero. When in doubt about permitted usage, please ask for clarification. Turnitin AI detection scores are used as one indicator of potential AI use; however, they are not considered definitive proof on their own.

Assignments with a Turnitin AI detection scores above 20% may be subject to additional review and may receive a grade of zero if the instructor determines that unauthorized AI use has occurred.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the ***Schedule of Classes*** each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

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 Student Wellness Center, Email: disabilityservices@msutexas.edu.

Disability website: [DSSWebpage](#)

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

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

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.

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

Individual course grades are not allowed to be appealed. Students who wish to appeal a Final overall course grade should consult the Midwestern State University [Undergraduate Catalog](#)

Notice

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

Course Schedule

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
<p>Week 1 Course Orientation, Introduction to Ethics, Introduction to Bioethics and Ethical Decision making, and Ethics in Professional Nursing Practice</p>	<p>Readings Butts & Rich Chapter 1,2,& 3 Watch Video Nursing Ethics Understanding Ethics In Nursing Review Slides Chapter 1, 2, & 3</p> <p>Discussion Board Four Topics Method for Analysis of Clinical Ethics Cases Use the Four Topics Method to analyze a specific clinical ethics case. Choose a case that you are familiar with and discuss how personal ethics can impact your ability to objectively analyze the clinical case chosen.</p>	<p>Discussion for week 1 Initial discussion posts due by Friday, 10:59PM Central Standard time. The 2 peer posts are due by Sunday, by 10:59 PM Central Standard Time.</p>

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 2 Reproductive Issues and Nursing Ethics, Infant and Child Nursing Ethics, Adolescent Nursing Ethics, and Adult Health Nursing Ethics	Readings Butts & Rich Chapter 4, 5, 6 & 7. Review Slides 4, 5, 6, and 7. Read article Bagnasco et al., (2018). Ethical dimensions of paediatric nursing: A rapid evidence assessment. Nursing Ethics. 25(1), 111-122. DOI:10.117709699733016631161.	Ethical Dilemma Paper due in D2L Assignments by Sunday 10:59 PM Central Standard Time

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 3 Ethics and the Nursing Care of Elders and Ethical Issues in End-of-Life Nursing Care	Readings Butts & Rich Chapter 8 and 9. Review Slides Chapter 8 and 9. Watch Video The Conversation Project Video Review The Conversation Materials The Conversation Project Materials Watch My Sister's Keeper Video Trailer My Sister's Keeper Trailer	Discussion for week 3 Initial discussion posts due by Friday 10:59 PM Central Standard Time. The 2 peer posts are due by Sunday 10:59PM Central Standard Time. Assignment: My Sister's Keeper Ethical Dilemma Paper due in D2L Assignments by Sunday 10:59 PM Central Standard Time

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 4 Psychiatric/Mental Health Nursing Ethics	Readings Butts & Rich, Chapter 10 and Chapter 11. Review Slides 10 and 11.	Discussion for week 4 Assignment: Case Study Paper due in D2L Assignments by Sunday 10:59 PM Central Standard

Week	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 5 Ethics in Organizations and Leadership and ANA Code of Ethics	Readings Butts & Rich Chapter 12. Review Slides Chapter 12. Watch You Tube Seven Signs of Ethical Collapse	Discussion for week 5 Initial discussion post for <u>both posts</u> are due by Thursday 10:59 Central Standard Time. No Late work accepted this week due to course closing on Friday at 11:59 pm. No peer responses due this week.