

Department:

Practical Nursing

Course Description:

This course is designed to explore issues related to aging adults. Course content addresses the impact of ageism, alterations in physiological and psychosocial functioning, and the role of the practical nurse in caring for older adult clients across a continuum of care.

Course Competencies:

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Examine the impact of ageism on client demographics, economic status, family dynamics, and health care needs.
2. Identify psycho-social, spiritual and cultural considerations related to the care of aging adults.
3. Identify anticipated alterations of physiological functioning in aging adults.
4. Discuss focused nursing assessment unique to aging adults including functional, environmental, risk, and setting specific assessments.
5. Explore health promotion and disease prevention for aging adults.
6. Differentiate between restorative and rehabilitative care.
7. Differentiate among varying types of end-of-life and palliative care and the nurse's role in their provision.
8. Explore the role of the practical nurse in caring for aging adults in a variety of care settings.
9. Explore legal and ethical considerations in caring for aging adults.

Course Content:

- A. Ageism
 1. Define ageism.
 2. Identify personal and social attitudes regarding aging.
 3. Describe major economic concerns of aging
 4. Describe changes in family dynamics
 5. Discuss elder abuse.
 6. Identify current trends and demographics
- B. Alterations in physiological functioning associated with the aging process.
 1. Describe expected, acute and chronic changes in an older adult's body systems.
 2. Relate these changes to the aging process.
- C. Psycho-social, spiritual and cultural considerations
 1. Identify Cognitive-perceptual issues related to the aging adult.
 2. Explore concepts related to self-perception and self-concept
 3. Examine changing roles and relationships.
 4. Discuss stress reduction and coping mechanisms.
 5. Consider common values and beliefs.

6. Explore effective communication techniques and resources for the aging adult.
 7. Discuss loss and grief associated with aging and increased vulnerability.
 8. Discuss sexuality in aging adults.
 9. Explore factors affecting the aging family.
 10. Identify the impact of spirituality and cultural rituals and beliefs.
- D. End-of-Life and Palliative Care
1. Explore the range of care options related to end of life care.
 2. Differentiate between palliative, hospice, and comfort care.
 3. Explore nursing interventions that support end of life care
 4. Identify strategies to promote pain management, pain, and rest.
- E. Restorative and Rehabilitative Care
1. Discuss Interdisciplinary collaboration.
 2. Examine strategies to promote mobility.
 3. Outline planning, documentation and client teaching relative to restorative and rehabilitative care.
- F. Role of the practical nurse across the continuum of care for aging adults.
1. Describe factors which increase vulnerability in the aging adult.
 2. Discuss options for care of the aging adult in the community.
 3. Discuss options for care for the aging adult in a variety of healthcare facilities.
 4. Explore the continuum of care for aging adults.
 5. Examine expectations related to professionalism across the continuum of care.
 6. Discuss the nurse's role as an advocate for the aging adult.
- G. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention
1. Introduction to health promotion and disease prevention for aging adults.
 2. Discuss polypharmacy.
 3. Examine client teaching for safe administration of medication.
 4. Identify immunization needs of aging adults.
 5. Identify evidence-based practice related to skin care.
 6. Explore client education techniques for the aging adult
 7. Outline nutrition and hydration needs of aging adults.
 8. Discuss measures to promote safety, modify the environment and mitigate fall risk.
- H. Legal and Ethical Issues
1. Discuss advanced directives.
 2. Outline Client rights in healthcare settings.
 3. Identify reporting requirements for elder abuse.
 4. Differentiate among sources of funding for care.
 5. Describe how HIPAA is applied across the continuum of care.
- I. Health assessment
1. Review considerations for performing health assessments and the aging adult client.
 2. Describe the components of a functional assessment.
 3. Outline considerations for completing an environmental assessment.
 4. Describe techniques for physical assessment of the aging adult client.
 5. Outline components of a psychosocial assessment.
 6. Describe federal, state, and facility specific assessment requirements.

Learning Assessments:

Course competencies will be evaluated by the use of tests, quizzes, worksheets, reflection papers, nursing journal reviews, library research, individual projects, and group projects.

Instructional Materials:

Textbook:

Dahlkemper, T. (2025). *Caring for Older Adults Holistically* 8th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company. ISBN: 13-978-0-8036-8992-3

Polan, E., Taylor, D., (2023). *Journey Across the Life Span: Human Development and Health Promotion* (7th Ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company. ISBN 13: 978-1-7196-4591-1

Doenges, M. & Moorhouse, M. (2024). *Nursing Care Plans: Guidelines for Individualizing Client Care Across the Life Span* (11th ed.). Philadelphia, PA: F.A. Davis Company. ISBN-13: 978-0-8036-6086-1

Online: ATI Comprehensive Review and Testing Package for PNs

Guidelines for Requesting Accommodations Based on Documented Disability or Medical Condition

It is the intention of Highland Community College to work toward full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to make instructional programs accessible to all people, and to provide reasonable accommodations according to the law.

Students should understand that it is their responsibility to self-identify their need(s) for accommodation and that they must provide current, comprehensive diagnosis of a specific disability or medical condition from a qualified professional in order to receive services. Documentation must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s). Documentation should be provided in a timely manner prior to or early in the semester so that the requested accommodation can be considered and, if warranted, arranged.

In order to begin the process all students **must** complete the “Disabilities Self-Identification Form” on our [Disability Services website](#).

This form can also be accessed at the Highland Community College homepage under Students Services/Student Resources/Disability Service or by contacting the Disabilities Coordinator.

A Note on Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

Highland Community College seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX, and College policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Highland Community College encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to report to the Vice President for Student Services, the Human Resources Director or complete an [online report](#) about what happened so that they can get the support they need and Highland Community College can respond appropriately.

There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Highland Community College is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please review our [Equity Grievance Policy](#).