NRSG 435: Spirituality in Health Care
Credits: 2 R/D
Semester Offered: F, Sp
Prerequisites: PSYX 100 and NRS 115, or consent of instructor

Course Description

This course explores aspects of spirituality and the use of spiritually-based therapies in healthcare from various faith traditions. Spiritual assessment and spirituality-based strategies to promote health and wellness are emphasized. Although a multidisciplinary approach to spiritual care is presented, a nursing perspective is highlighted.

Course Objectives: The student will:

1. Explore aspects of spirituality and their implications to spiritual and biopsychosocial health.
2. Discuss strategies for supporting the use of various spiritual therapies.
3. Enhance spiritual self-awareness as it applies to implementing spirituality-based interventions.
4. Students will demonstrate behaviors that are congruent with the ANA Code of Ethics, Scope and Standards of Practice, and Social Policy Statements in all class related interactions..(F6-9, 12-13, T2,3,6,8,13)

Recommended Content and Concepts:

1. Exploring Spirituality
   Definitions: spirituality, religion, morality, ethics, clients, suffering
   Levels of spiritual development:
   Undifferentiated Faith
   Intuitive-Projective Faith
   Mythic-Literal Faith
   Synthetic-Conventional Faith
   Individuative-Reflective Faith
   Conjunctive Faith
   Universalizing Faith
   Cultural influences on spirituality:
   Culture not ethnicity
   Belief and ritual synthesis
   Historical overview of spirituality in health care:
   Religious orders and early hospitals
   Nightingale’s emphasis on spirituality
Health systems managed by religious denominations
Modern “despiritualization” of health care

Theories of spiritual health:
- Whole person / holistic theories
- Caring theories (Henderson, Neuman, Watson)
- Theories of meaning (Frankl, Marris, Janoff-Bulman)
- Stress theory (Lazarus)

Professional mandates:
- JCAHO
- Organization mission statements
- Professional codes of ethics

Implications for healthcare providers:
- Integration of theory and ethics
- Reclaiming the obligation to provide spiritual care

Roles of the Interdisciplinary Team:
- Nursing
- Medicine
- Chaplains
- Social workers
- Clergy
- Parish nurses
- Healers
- Others

2. Spiritual Assessment and Diagnosis:
- Spiritual self-awareness
- Nouwen’s “The wounded healer”
- Importance of self-awareness and self-exploration
- Guidelines for improving spiritual self-awareness
  - Connecting/Disconnecting
  - Journeying
  - Transforming
  - Skill acquisition
  - Washing away

3. Spiritual assessment of clients:
- Foundations of spirituality (Model by Dossey)
  - Meaning/Purpose
  - Inner strength
  - Interconnections
- Other models (Maloney & Kloss; Pruyser; Fitchett)
- Guidelines for conducting an assessment
- Assessment strategies
  - Timing
  - Establishing rapport
  - Language
  - Non-verbal indicators
Family/ community assessment
Review of questionnaires
Assessment barriers
Lack of time
Discomfort of the person conducting the assessment
Listening barriers

4. Diagnosing spiritual distress:
   NANDA
   American Psychiatric Association
   Risk factors for spiritual distress

5. Harmful religiosity:
   Religious practices in conflict with healthcare practices
   Non-supportive actions from faith communities
   Proselytizing from healthcare providers
   Inappropriate provider self-disclosure

6. Provision of Spiritual Care:
   Planning for care
   Spiritual resources
   Establishment of goals
   Implementing care
   Communication strategies
   Presencing
   Reflecting a caring attitude
   Exploration through questioning
   Strategies to enhance meaning
   Encouraging resiliency
   Encouraging client self-disclosure
   Supporting spiritual health through rituals
   Prayer
   Meditation
   Cultural rituals
   Buddhism
   Christianity
   Hinduism
   Islam
   Judaism
   Native American Religiosity
   Nurturing spirituality
   Engaging the spirit
   Storytelling
   Journal writing
   The arts
   Caring for the Anon-religious

Suggested Student Learning Activities:
Readings
Discussions
Personal journaling
Case study (popular novel detailing a client’s spiritual journey of health)
Structured interview of clergy regarding health/ illness
Observational experiences (parish nurse, chaplain)
Spiritual care planning
Spiritual self-awareness exercises

Approved by UAAC: March 25, 2013
Approved by Faculty: May 3, 2013