N531: Rural Health: Needs and Perceptions
Credits: 3; lecture 2, lab 1
Semesters offered: Fall
Co-requisites: N569
Pre-requisites:

Course Description: This course focuses on health needs and perceptions of individuals and subgroups in rural areas. Rural environments, including communities and individuals, will be assessed. Data addressing health concerns from a variety of sources will be examined through systematic approaches.

Course Objectives:

1. Explain the historical development and the emerging nature of rural nursing theory.

2. Collect quantitative health-related information about specific rural locales.

3. Collect qualitative data regarding health perceptions and needs of individuals and subgroups in rural areas.

4. Apply a systematic framework to the analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

5. Examine the complimentary roles of a variety of data sources in understanding health and rural communities.

6. Compare collected information with current literature about perceptions and needs of rural persons.

7. Discuss how rural nursing theory is applied to nursing practice roles.

Content and Concepts:

A. Rural nursing theory
   -historical development
   -present status

B. Dimensions: health-environment-person-nurse
   -health (e.g., rural definitions -- “ability to work,” health seeking behavior)
   -environment (e.g., isolation, distance)
   -person (e.g., insider/outsider, oldtimer/newcomer)
   -nursing (e.g., informal caregivers, generalist, confidentiality of information)

C. Assessing and analyzing health perceptions and needs:
   -individuals' views
   -approaches to interviewing
   -systematic framework for analysis

D. Existing sources of information
   -literature
   -local/regional data addressing:
     -common health problems
E. Synthesis
- complimentary perspectives from different types of data and methods of analysis
- common themes across communities
- nursing practice roles in response to identified health needs and perceptions

Recommended Learning Activities:

Presentation/class discussion:
- class discussion
- student presentations
- identified readings
- lecture
- discussion of case-scenarios

Clinical lab: Identify a rural community (i.e., may be a specific site or may be a community bound together by culture, age, gender, ethnicity, or type of work). Use a systematic approach to collect data from residents addressing their perspectives of health or a particular aspect of health. Analyze and interpret these data in a clear and concise way. Locate and examine existing data addressing health characteristics of the community -- these data may be obtained from local or regional health indices. Summarize the health perceptions of the community in a scholarly paper.

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