Health Care Policy in Perspective: Principles of Economics, Politics and Ethics
NUR 841
Sections 741, 732 and 735
COURSE SYLLABUS FOR WEB COURSE
2 Credits
Spring 2012

Catalog Course Description: Target Student Audience: Required for all students in the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Degree and the 'fast-track' of the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs in the College of Nursing. Description: Economic, political and regulatory environment of the U.S. health care system; quality, costs, equity in access of services; comparison of U.S. systems with those of other advanced industrial countries.

Additional Course Description: This two-credit web course is designed to provide an understanding of the economic, organizational and political environment in which advanced practice nurses spend a major part of their professional lives. Basic principles of economics are applied to illuminate how markets and governments interact in the financing and delivery of health care services. Two broad themes are addressed throughout the course: (1) how economic incentives and disincentives shape the decisions of consumers/patients, insurance companies and providers, and (2) how government rules and regulations directly or indirectly (through altering economic incentives) shape the decisions of consumers/patients, insurance companies and providers. The insights gained from an understanding of the basic economic and organizational principles underpinning the U.S. health care system will be applied to a discussion of such problems as access to care, quality of care, cost containment and rationing of care.

Course Objectives: Upon completion of NUR 841, the student should be able to:
1. Contrast and compare major features of the U.S. health care system to those of other advanced industrial countries.
2. Analyze the variety of public and private mechanisms for financing health care services.
3. Analyze the roles of nurses in the U.S. health care system vis-a-vis other health professionals and in international comparison.
4. Analyze how ethical principles, social policies and economic interests influence access, delivery and organization of health care.
5. Discuss principles of effectiveness, efficiency and cost to evaluate health care services.
6. Discuss principles of evaluation of health care policies based on population outcomes.

Prerequisites: NUR 801 or permission from instructor.

Co-requisites: None
Professional Standards & Guidelines: The curriculum is guided by the following documents:


Course Faculty:
1) Kathleen Poindexter, PhD, MSN, RN, CNE
   Assistant Professor, CNS Education concentration coordinator
   College of Nursing, A131 Life Sciences Building, Michigan State University
   Email: poindex9@msu.edu Office phone: (517) 355-8321

2) Jeanette Klemczak, RN, MSN, BSN, Chief Nurse Executive, State of Michigan
   College of Nursing, A205 Life Sciences Building, Michigan State University,
   or
   Capitol View Building, 7th Floor
   201 Townsend St., Lansing, MI 48913
   Email: klemczakj@michigan.gov Office phone: (517) 241-9841
   Website: www.michigan.gov/mdch/ocne

3) Teresa Wehrwein, PhD, RN, NEA-BC, Associate Professor and Associate Dean for Academic and Clinical Affairs
   College of Nursing, A220 Life Sciences Building, Michigan State University
   Email: teresa.wehrwein@hc.msu.edu Office phone: (517) 432-1172

Faculty responsibilities:

- Dr. Poindexter will be responsible for the overall course and respond to course questions and concerns.
- The course is team taught with each faculty member assuming responsibility for specified weekly lessons.
- Individual faculty will provide oversight to designated student teams throughout the semester assuming responsibility for evaluating student performance and awarding course grades to student team members.

Faculty Contact:

Faculty are available via email or by phone throughout the week. Please use the email located within the course ANGEL program to contact the appropriate faculty member. Email ought to be addressed to the specified faculty only and **not to the entire class** in an effort to reduce overall course emails and inappropriate messaging. Every effort will be made to return your email or call as soon as possible generally within 48 hours during regular week days. **Note:** During the weekends and Holidays faculty members may not be available.
a. Methodology:

NUR 841 is an asynchronous online course that requires students to log into the class several times per week to read email, announcements, discussions, and to complete the weekly lesson assignments. The course will incorporate weekly lessons that utilize a variety of teaching and learning strategies such as weekly presentations; webcasts; reading assignments; weekly group/individual activities; group projects; and discussion forums. Students are expected to review all assignment materials and actively engage with their peers as informed participants.

b. Weekly Lessons: Individual lessons will be available to the class at 8:00 am on Tuesday morning of each week and remain accessible for the duration of the course. Assignment due dates will be listed on the course calendar and on the appropriate discussion forums or drop boxes. All assignments must be posted or submitted in the appropriate discussion board or drop box no later than 10:00pm on the assigned due date. Late assignments or postings may not be accepted or evaluated for grading purposes unless prior arrangements have been established with the student’s assigned course faculty.

b. Required Texts: Required text can be obtained from the Spartan Bookstore located in the basement of Fee Hall or on the web at http://www.spartanbook.com.


Note: Additional electronic references and journal articles will supplement the text as required readings throughout the course and linked within the appropriate lessons.

c. Optional Texts:


  http://www.minurses.org/nursing-practice/resources/legal-regs

Required Resources, References, Supplies

a. Course Requirements:

- ANGEL Help Line
  1.800.500.1554 (24 hrs, 7 days/week)
  517.355.2345 (24 hrs, 7 days/week)
  www.angel.msu.edu
- Always check with the ANGEL Help Line first!
Computer Hardware and Software requirements:

1. Computer
2. High speed internet access
3. Microsoft Office (The MSU Computer Store offers special pricing for students [http://cstore.msu.edu/](http://cstore.msu.edu/)).
4. Strongly recommend computer spyware and virus protection

Evaluation:

1. **Learning Assessments and Grading:** Assignments to be graded will include discussion forum postings; weekly lesson activities as assigned; group project; individual project and midterm exam. Specific assignment details and evaluation requirements will be available on-line.

   a. **Weekly Lesson Assignments:** (50%). Student discussion or activity expectations and evaluation criteria will be noted within the weekly lesson folders. Evaluation rubrics describing the evaluation criteria for discussion forum postings and lesson activities will be available under the lessons tab within the course documents folder: “course activities and evaluation rubrics.” Weekly lesson folders will open by 8:00 am each Tuesday. An exception to this rule is the first week, when access to the course is provided in the first day of the semester. Each student will be assigned to teams of 8 to 10 members the first week of class. Each team will be assigned a course faculty who will be responsible for facilitating and evaluating team activities over the course of the semester. Weekly discussion and or activity contributions must be posted in the assigned team discussion forums each week. They are due by no later than 10pm on Monday of each week in order to receive credit. No credit will be earned for late postings or submissions of assignments unless prior arrangements have been approved by the assigned team faculty. Your contributions to these discussions forums are a major part of the successful completion of this course. A rubric will be provided describing discussion forum expectations.

   b. **Mid-term exam:** (25%). The mid-term exam is an individual assessment that requires the student to answer questions utilizing an essay format. Students are required to complete the exam during the designated date and time offered unless there are extenuating circumstances and prior arrangements have been made with the course faculty. The mid-term will be available on **Wednesday, Feb. 29th, 2012 from 06:00 – 07:30 pm Eastern Standard Time.** The exam will be timed for 90 minutes. Students will be permitted to enter the exam only once and must complete and submit final questions within the 90 minutes of allotted time. The test is not considered to be an open book test and students are expected to complete the exam independently. **Students are expected to arrange personal schedules to be available to take the exam at that time.**

   c. **Group Project Paper:** (25%). All students in a group will receive the same project grade. Individual student points (up to one full grade) may be deducted from the awarded group grade based on peer evaluation of individual work effort and quality of contributions. Students will be placed in groups of 3-4 from within their designated teams. Student groups will be provided a series of questions relating to the new Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and charged with developing a single group paper (to be posted on the website) synthesizing the group’s collective responses. The project will focus on one of three topics in relation to the act: 1) access, 2) quality, or 3) cost in contrast to population health outcomes. Students are expected to apply concepts and analytical understanding gained in class to address these topics. Complete project details, evaluation rubric, project deadlines and completion dates will be noted within the course “course activities and evaluation rubrics” folder and noted on the course calendar. Peer evaluations will be required and taken into consideration when awarding individual points for the assignment. The group projects/group papers must be submitted as a Word file and uploaded to
the specific drop box. All word documents must be labeled appropriately by identifying the student, course, and assignment. Example: poindexter841grouppaper.doc. Papers will only be accepted as Word files in the drop box. Papers will not be accepted by FAX or by the postal or campus mail systems.

2. Course Grading Scale: Grades will be determined by adding all of the course activities together within a category and arriving at a specific number (point total) and percentage of overall course grade. The MSU 4.0 grading system will be utilized to report final course grades. Points will be rounded to whole numbers using the 0.5 rules. Points at $\geq 0.5$ will be rounded up while those $< 0.5$ will be rounded down to the nearest whole number. There is no opportunity for “extra credit” in this course. Grades will be posted electronically within two (2) weeks of the assignment due date. The following grading scale is used in this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 - 94</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-87</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86 – 80</td>
<td>3.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Minimum passing grade)</td>
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<tr>
<td>79 – 75</td>
<td>2.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>74 – 70</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>66 – 65</td>
<td>1.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>64 – 60</td>
<td>1.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 60</td>
<td>0.0</td>
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3. Course Evaluation

Final Course Grades are a weighted average of the combined assignments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Percentage of Overall Course Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation: * Discussions/Activities (10)</td>
<td>5 (each) 50 total</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam*</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project Paper**</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Total</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Indicates an individual activity whereas students will be evaluated and awarded points based on individual effort, degree of participation and quality of contributions. Substantive participation is an expectation of this course and is required in order to earn participation/activity points. Occasionally lessons will incorporate an activity which will require a team effort. Individual points will still be awarded based on individual student contributions and level of participation.

** Indicates a group project whereas team members will be awarded the same grade for the assignment. Team members are required to complete a peer evaluation of project contributions which will be taken into consideration prior to posting final group project grades. Points may be deducted per individual student member of the team based on peer evaluations. Maximum points deducted may not exceed 1 grade level. (Complete non-participation will result in a zero).
You will be able to view your grade summary at any time. If you find yourself experiencing academic difficulty in this course, contact your team faculty member as soon as you recognize this concern. Please do not postpone discussions until it is too late.

Students who require accommodations are encouraged to provide the faculty with the required documentation consistent with MSU policy so appropriate support can be implemented avoiding delay.

**Writing Requirements:**

It is expected that students will engage in a scholarly dialogue when conversing on the discussion board utilizing appropriate citations and referencing. The minimum expectation for writing is at a graduate level in accordance with the MSU CON graduate student handbook. APA format is essential for citations of work and a reference list is required for all postings and activities.

Student information and discussions within the course are private and confidential. Course documents and discussion forums are not to be shared with persons outside of the course. The ability to share information in an open and trusting environment is an essential component of the course and needs to be respected.

**Professionalism:**

Any submission that is deemed unprofessional, negative or inflammatory may be deleted by faculty. The expectation of this course is that everyone must treat each other with civility and respect! In particular, if you disagree, always acknowledge the other person’s point of view and provide documentation to support for your point of view. That way, fruitful discussions are stimulated. Incidents of incivility and disrespect will not be tolerated and may result in a loss of points.

**University & College Policies:**

The College of Nursing expects that students will demonstrate professional behavior in all situations. Specific expectations for clinical and other professional venues can be found in the appropriate handbook. You are responsible for reviewing and acting in accordance with the policies and procedures found in the following sources, including the following topics: Professionalism, Academic Integrity, Accommodations for Students with Disabilities, Disruptive Behavior, Attendance, Compliance, and Progression.

- CON Student handbook  [http://nursing.msu.edu/handbooks.asp](http://nursing.msu.edu/handbooks.asp)
- Information for Current Students—including Rights, Responsibilities and Regulations for Students [http://www.msu.edu/current/index.html](http://www.msu.edu/current/index.html)
- Academic Programs [http://www.reg.msu.edu/UCC/AcademicPrograms.asp](http://www.reg.msu.edu/UCC/AcademicPrograms.asp)
**Academic Integrity:** Article 2.3.3 of the Academic Freedom Report states that "The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards." In addition, the College of Nursing adheres to the policies on academic honesty as specified in General Student Regulations 1.0, Protection of Scholarship and Grades; the all-University Policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades; and Ordinance 17.00, Examinations. (See Spartan Life: Student Handbook and Resource Guide and/or the MSU Web site: www.msu.edu.) Therefore, unless authorized by your instructor, you are expected to complete all course assignments, including homework, lab work, quizzes, tests and exams, without assistance from any source. You are expected to develop original work for this course; therefore, you may not submit course work you completed for another course to satisfy the requirements for this course. Also, you are not authorized to use the www.allmsu.com Web site to complete any course work in NUR814. Students who violate MSU rules may receive a penalty grade, including--but not limited to--a failing grade on the assignment or in the course. Contact your instructor if you are unsure about the appropriateness of your course work. (See also http://www.msu.edu/unit/ombud/honestylinks.html)

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities should contact the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, call 353-9642 (voice), 355-1293 (TTY), or visit MyProfile.rcpd.msu.edu.

**Disruptive Behavior:** Article 2.3.5 of the Academic Freedom Report (AFR) for students at Michigan State University states: "The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned." Article 2.3.10 of the AFR states that "The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility." General Student Regulation 5.02 states: "No student shall . . . interfere with the functions and services of the University (for example, but not limited to, classes . . .) such that the function or service is obstructed or disrupted. Students whose conduct adversely affects the learning environment in this classroom may be subject to disciplinary action through the Student Faculty Judiciary process.

**Attendance:** Students whose names do not appear on the official class list for this course may not attend this class. Students who fail to attend by the fifth day of the semester, may be dropped from the course.

College of Nursing policies regarding Professional Development Guidelines [found in CON Student Handbooks at CON website]. Students are responsible for the information found in the CON MSN Student Handbook.

**Additional Course Policies:**

**Absence from class:**

Participation is expected each week. If a student is going to be absent from class for a week (or more) and is unable to complete an assignment on time, he/she must inform the instructor in advance to be formally excused and still receive credit for the assignment. Illness and personal emergencies are considered excused absences. *Vacations will not be considered excused absences and late assignments will not be excused for this reason.* For all reasons, students must inform the instructor in writing explaining the reason for absence at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Emails received later than this will not be accepted and the student’s assignment will not be accepted. Students who miss more than three consecutive weeks of class, i.e., who do not participate actively in class activities, and who have not communicated with faculty to be excused from class, will receive a failing grade of 0.0 in the course.
Course Calendar:

The course calendar will identify the weekly lessons, title, corresponding dates and assignment due dates. Within the Angel course, weekly lesson folders will be located under the lesson tabs and identified by week number and title. For example, the first week's content is in a folder entitled, “Week #1: Introduction to Health Policy and Politics in Nursing and Health Care.”

When to Look for Course Materials:

In this course, each Tuesday is considered the beginning day of a new week. An exception to this rule is the first week, when access to the course is provided in the first day of the semester.

Comments on Discussion Expectations:

Each week, Discussion Questions or activities will be posted in the weekly Lessons Folder. These questions generally refer to the material (textbooks and online sources) students are assigned to read for that week. While the questions probe factual knowledge of some of the assigned material, they are primarily geared towards helping students discuss and highlight the critical issues involved in health care policy. Discussions of health care policy involve not only questions of fact, but also questions of value, e.g., attitudes towards the role of government in a market economy, attitudes concerning individual responsibility, views of justice, and so forth, etc. Everyone may not necessarily all agree about such values, and there is absolutely no requirement that anyone agrees with the views of the instructors or fellow students! Instead, the primary purpose of the discussions is to demonstrate understanding and can describe (a) the factual basis for a particular policy position and (b) the underlying value (ethical principle) that leads a person to advocate a particular policy.

Throughout each week's discussion, the faculty will monitor student conversations and will contribute to the discussion as necessary to facilitate student learning. However, the discussions are meant to be primarily discussions among the class members. From time to time, faculty may post additional questions that arise out of the week's discussions. It is of the utmost importance that no one feels constrained or intimidated to the point they are concerned about posting a comment or asking a question.

With these thoughts about group discussions in mind, here are some more specific suggestions that may be helpful during weekly online discussions:

(1) There is no need that your first comments for a week address ALL posted discussion questions. Start with one and let others tackle different questions first.

(2) Initial contributions should be short "to get the ball rolling."

(3) Come back later in the week and address other questions as well as the contributions of your fellow students.

(4) Past experience shows that some students are always among the first to make their contributions and others have a tendency to follow. In this class, all students are required to be first discussants at some point during the course (this will be monitored!).

(5) Given that the start of the new week is on Tuesdays, it is expected that initial contributions would start no later than the following Friday.

(6) The weekly discussions are meant to be both a learning tool and a way for faculty to check your progress in grasping the course material. While opinions and values are certainly part of
policy discussions, your contributions should primarily reflect your grasp of the material and the policy issues. Show us how the concepts and facts introduced in the course material and readings help you think more clearly about the policy issues at hand!

(7) As a final rule, remember that these discussion groups occur in a public forum. That means, that you can present your and any point of view as vigorously as you like, as long as you avoid personal attacks on others. Appropriate grammar, spelling, style, and referencing are required.

Your comments should include the following 8 critical elements to obtain the maximum score. Please familiarize yourself with the criteria.

1. Analysis: discussing relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas; identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.

2. Application: provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual situations; discusses the implications of theory for practice; demonstrates applied level of understanding.

3. Elaboration: builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings/overviews by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information; provides original insights or responses, integrates multiple views. (Just saying "ditto" or "I agree" is not considered elaboration).

4. Evaluation & Feedback: assesses the accuracy, reasonableness, or quality of ideas; provides constructive feedback to classmates.

5. Presentation: writing style at graduate level; appropriate language usage; correct grammar; spelling accurate; appropriate terminology utilized; concise & precise; creative & interesting to read; 1st name signed at the end of the post.

6. Promptness & Initiative: demonstrates engagement during the week by starting (initiating) & creating discussion threads; attempts to motivate the group discussion; presents creative approaches to the topic; contributes readily to the conversation but does not dominate it; supports &/or leads others in discussion.

7. References: Posts should be supported by appropriate evidence with citations or links to the reference included within the post. The American Psychological Association (APA) writing style should be used for citing references & the presentation style of the work (required).

8. Reflection and Meaning Making: describes thoughtfully what something means or the new insights it provides; raises questions as seeds for clarification or further discussion; thoughtful approach to content; correlates to personal & professional experiences.
Discussions: Point Allocation Criteria

Final evaluation of the reference posts are based on quality and not on quantity of the interaction. Overall points will be awarded based on the degree to which the submissions contribute to the creation of a learning environment and incorporate the critical elements for discussion forum contributions. Students must show evidence of engagement throughout the week and postings that reflect application of the assigned lesson materials. Awarding of points will be based on the following criteria. **Individual points may be deducted for postings that contain inappropriate grammar, spelling, style, or APA referencing.**

- 5 points: Postings reflect at least 6 of the 8 critical elements throughout the week.
- 4 points: Postings in which 5 out of 8 of the critical elements are present throughout the week.
- 3 points: Postings in which 4 out of 8 critical elements are present throughout the week.
- 2 points: Minimal postings in which some critical elements are present.
- 1 point: Minimum of 1 comment posted for the week.
- 0 points: A lack of postings or postings that reflect unprofessional or unacceptable comments (lacking professional or collegial attitude; disrespectful; inappropriate terminology or slang).
## Semester Calendar

Lessons Open at 8:00 am Tuesday

**NUR 841 Spring 2012 Calendar**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson/Date</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1 – 1/10    | Poindexter | **Course Review & Introduction to Policy in Nursing**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 1: Emphasis on chapters. 1, 3, 5, 7, 8, & 9). | Course Introduction and Reading Assignments |
| 2 – 1/17    | Poindexter | **Policy in Nursing and Health Care: Part 2**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 3: Emphasis on chapters. 39, 40, 41, & 42). | Lesson policy activity/Discussion posting |
| 3 – 1/24    | Wehrwein | **Health Care Economics**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 2: chapters. 15 & 16). | Lesson Activity/Discussion posting |
| 4 – 1/31    | Wehrwein | **Health Care Finance**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 2: chapters. 15, 17, 18 & 21). | Lesson Activity/Discussion posting |
| 5 – 2/7     | Wehrwein | **Health Care Delivery System**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 2: chapters. 13). | Lesson Activity/Discussion posting |
| 6 – 2/14    | Klemczak | **Cost and Quality**  
*Reading Assignments*  
(Unit 2: chapters. 31, 32 & 33). | Lesson Activity/Discussion posting |
| 7 – 2/21    | Klemczak | **Access to Health Care**  
*Reading Assignments*  

Weekly lesson Assignments due Monday evening by 10:00 pm unless otherwise indicated.

*Additional Reading assignments will be identified within the weekly lesson folders.*
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>Activity/Assignments</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8 – 2/28</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Mid-Term Exam:</strong> Wednesday</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Term Exam Feb. 29th: from 6:00 – 7:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/5-3/9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break Week</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 – 3/13</td>
<td>Poindexter</td>
<td><strong>Health Policy Group Project</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10 – 3/20</td>
<td>Wehrwein</td>
<td><strong>Health Care Labor Force</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Reading Assignments</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>11 – 3/27</td>
<td>Klemczak</td>
<td><strong>Nursing Regulation and Licensing of Health Professionals</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Reading Assignments</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12 – 4/3</td>
<td>Klemczak</td>
<td><strong>Policy and Professionalism: Issues Related to Nursing</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Reading Assignments</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>13 – 4/10</td>
<td>Poindexter</td>
<td><strong>Global Health Care Systems</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>Reading Assignments</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>14 – 4/16</td>
<td>Poindexter</td>
<td><strong>International Nursing and Health Care</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>Reading Assignments</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>15 – 4/24</td>
<td>Class</td>
<td><strong>Presentation of Group Paper to Course Members</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Post Group Paper in discussion forum</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete Course and Peer Evaluations</td>
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</tbody>
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*Detailed calendar and assignments will be available in the angel course management system for download. Calendar revisions may occur at the discretion of the faculty when necessary. Students will be notified of revisions via email and an updated calendar will be posted.*