MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF NURSING

NUR 415 Core Competencies in Nursing III
Fall and Spring, 2004-2005

Section One:  Tuesday 8:00-9:50 a.m.
Designated Days
133 Akers and A131 Life Sciences – FALL
131 Life Sciences - SPRING

Louise Selanders, RN, EdD
William Corser, RN, PhD, CNAA
1. Course Description

NUR 415, Core Competencies in Nursing III, is a one-credit (1-0) senior-level seminar course that will meet regularly throughout the senior year as part of the BSN nursing curriculum. The purpose of this course is to enable senior students to enhance their critical thinking and test-taking skills as they apply their nursing program content to prospective patient care processes. Very little new content will actually be introduced during this course.

The organizing focus of the course will be the “Core Competencies of Nursing Practice” as defined by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing within the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) “State Board” examination.

A variety of teaching methods will be utilized during the two semesters for this course including group discussions, focused seminars, clinical content (i.e. Medical-Surgical, Pediatrics, and O.B.) exams, and a standardized Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) exam similar to the NCLEX-RN. Each of the course exams have been created by the Educational Resources Incorporated (ERI) Corporation, and customized according to the specific content and texts selected by the MSU College of Nursing. In general, the NUR 415 activities and materials related to critical thinking, content tests, and test-taking strategies will be presented during the Fall semester, with most of the self-assessment tests which more closely resemble the NCLEX-RN are scheduled during the first half of the Spring semester.

2. Course Objectives

Upon the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Synthesize information from the natural, social and nursing sciences and the research process to provide intermediate level nursing care needs to clients, families, groups and systems with multiple intersecting health care needs.

2. Use clinical decision making skills and the research process to evaluate case studies and clinical experiences at the novice professional level.

3. Participate in systems and organizational groups designed to monitor professional nursing role standards and expectations.

4. Use critical thinking to examine legal, ethical and cultural problems in nursing care and societal health.
3.) Readings

Required Texts:

1. ALL prior nursing and related course texts that used during your BSN program nursing courses will be required for this course. If a student had earlier opted to sell some of their used “clinical” textbook(s) during their sophomore/junior year(s), they should acquire a new/used copy (or reasonable substitute) for those particular area(s).

Optional Readings: (All of these readings are available on the MSU Library homepage).


Dr. Selanders and Dr. Corser also have a few other “critical thinking” books and articles that will be available for students to check out for a few days at a time. The CON Media Lab also has a nice supply of audio, audio/visual CDs available for students to use throughout the school year.

4. Course Faculty

William Corser, RN, PhD
A109 Life Sciences
355-0328
bill.corser@ht.msu.edu

Louise Selanders, RN, EdD
A202 Life Sciences
355-3804
selander@msu.edu

Office Hours: Louise: By Appointment.
Bill: Tuesdays from 10:00 to 12:00 Noon.
5. Course Policies

a. Student Evaluation: NUR 415 is a two-semester course that will be graded at the end of the spring semester on a “Pass/Fail” basis. In order to receive a passing grade for this course (and graduate from the program), each NUR 415 student must meet each of the three following requirements:

1. Attendance (or viewing the tape of the class/talking with the Instructor) for each class will be mandatory, as will participation in class activities.

2. Fall Semester: taking each of the following ERI exams:
   a. a “Nursing Practice Mathematics” exam; ELABORATE
   b. a “Critical Thinking Process Thinking” assessment exam;
   c. at least two nationally normed “Comprehensive Achievement Profile” (CAP) content exams for (a) Medical-Surgical, and (b) Pediatrics/Obstetrics and achieving a score equal to, or higher then, the national “Average Score” for all ERI nursing students across the country; OR
      re-taking the ERI exam(s) for which this level of score was not attained a second time after they have “remediated” by January 14, 2005.

3. Spring Semester: taking (a) two comprehensive “Pre-RN” and “RN Assessment” computerized exams in class, then (b) a nationally-normed and standardized “mock” state board CAT examination measuring students’ understanding of the NCLEX-RN core competencies during March, 2005. Each student will be required to either achieve a score equal to, or higher than the “National Average” (i.e. not the “Average Passing” score) for this exam, OR will take an equivalent ERI exam a second time after remediating and submitting a second exam printout to instructor by April 15th, 2005.

b. NUR 415 Remediation Plan: The purpose of NUR 415 remediation will be to provide you with additional learning resources and guidance if you may be at risk for not passing NCLEX the first time as evidenced by your score(s) on any ERI exam(s).

Course faculty will suggest that each remediating student review or complete any of the following materials:
- CON course textbook readings in the area of weakness;
- E.R.I. RN Enhancer practice exams on the Internet;
- E.R.I. audio tapes in CON Media Lab;
- (possible) CON tutors; and/or M.S.U. Learning Resource Center.

NOTE: any student who fails to complete ALL required exams and remediation activities by April 15th, 2005 will receive an “NP” (i.e. “Not Passed”) for NUR415. Neither Louise nor Bill will be looking for you to complete these course activities in a timely manner. Rather, YOU will be looking for US after most other students have completed their Spring semester because you have received an NP grade and failed to yet graduate from the nursing program.
5. Course Policies (contd.)

c. **Student Illnesses** - An email to Bill or Louise prior to each of the scheduled classes will be required if you expect to have your absence from a class recorded as an excused absence. Attendance means being present for the entire class period. Students are responsible for both reading assigned readings before class and reviewing materials presented in class. Students are expected to be active participants for all in-class group activities.

In the case of illness resulting in absence, a healthcare provider’s statement may be required at the discretion of the course instructor. If the instructor cannot be reached, the student is expected to call the College of Nursing Office (355-6524) and leave a message regarding the reason for the absence.

d. **Academic Dishonesty** - Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If dishonest practices are observed or suspected in any form, the student will be reported to the College of Nursing Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for disciplinary action. A “Failed” course grade may be issued.

e. **Communication Devices** – All electronic communication devices are to be **turned off** while students are in class. There is no taping of classes, lectures, or presentations allowed without prior permission.

f. **Weather Related Policies** - This course will meet as scheduled unless the University cancels classes.

g. **Student Responsibilities**: This syllabus is not an irrevocable contract, but rather a tool designed to help you plan your time and preparation for the NCLEX-RN. The information presented in the syllabus and the accompanying assignment schedule is subject to change. Your instructor will announce any deviations from the syllabus in class (or via class e-mails). The student is held responsible for all materials covered in class and for any changes in the syllabus that are announced in class (or via e-mail). The student is also held responsible for being available for the schedule time period, date, and location of each course exam and the scheduled due dates for all assignments.

h. **Student Concerns/Questions**: If a student has any concerns or questions regarding this course, (s)he is expected to express their concern(s) or question(s) to the NUR 415 Course Instructors of your NUR 415 section. If the student does not feel that their concern or question has been adequately addressed after doing so, they can then refer their concerns to the College of Nursing Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Dr. Judith Vinson.

i. **NUR 415 Rules of Conduct**: Student behavioral expectations pursuant to the campus “Academic Freedom for Students at M.S.U.” Policy 2.3.5 and the College of Nursing Undergraduate Handbook will be observed during this course. Copies of this set of behavioral expectations and associated course instructor options are available from Bill for anyone’s’ thoughtful perusal.
6. Study Plan Development

Each student is expected to develop a personalized study plan and timelines as part of his/her preparation for the N-CLEX exam. It should be understood that the process of preparation is three-pronged. 1.) NUR 215-315-415 sequence which focuses on immediate content and test taking skills. NUR 415 in particular will focus on identifying content areas of deficiency and N-CLEX format. 2.) ERI review at end of semester which focuses on specific content areas. 3.) An external preparation course such as KAPLAN which focuses on the structure of N-CLEX and how to take individual questions. IN addition, students will need to have a personal study plan which is both realistic and comprehensive. See calendar for due dates.
### 7. Class Schedule

**Fall, 2004 Semester**

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<tr>
<td>Tuesday, Aug 31st</td>
<td><strong>Course Introduction &amp; Review of Syllabus.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Read and Bring your syllabus.</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday, Sept 14th</td>
<td><strong>“The NCLEX-RN Examination”</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday, Sept 28th</td>
<td><strong>“Intro. to Critical Thinking in Nursing Practice.”</strong></td>
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<td>- Class Activity: students will take the ERI Critical Thinking Process Test (50 questions, one hour).&lt;br&gt;<strong>ASSIGNED:</strong> Your TYPED Study Plan</td>
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<td>Tuesday, October 12th</td>
<td><strong>Critical Thinking Case Studies</strong></td>
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<td><strong>ASSIGNED:</strong> Review of assigned case studies (to be handed out on 09/28/04).&lt;br&gt;<strong>MATH TEST</strong></td>
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<td>Tuesday, October 19th</td>
<td><strong>Review and discussion</strong> of results of Critical Thinking Process and Mathematics Exams.</td>
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<td>Tuesday, October 26th</td>
<td><strong>CAP Exam:</strong> (Medical-Surgical)“Nursing Care of the Adult I and II. (180 items, up to 2 hours).</td>
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<td>Tuesday, November 9th</td>
<td><strong>CAP Exam:</strong> “Pediatric and Obstetrical Nursing Care.”&lt;br&gt;(180 items, up to 2 hours).</td>
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<td>Tuesday, Nov. 23rd</td>
<td><strong>Review and discussion of both CAP Exams</strong>&lt;br&gt;- sign up for Spring semester exams&lt;br&gt;- Review of Remediation Plan for CAP exam(s) as needed.&lt;br&gt;<strong>ASSIGNED:</strong> Remediate by 01/15/05 as needed</td>
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### Spring, 2005 Semester

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| **Friday, January 28th**<br>8:00 am to 11:00 a.m. OR 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. | - Exam: “Pre-RN” Examination  
(240 items, up to **three** hours). The scheduling of this exam will take place during Fall semester. |
| **Tuesday, February 1st**<br>9:00 am | - **Class Review and Discussion:** Review and discussion of Pre RN examination performance. |
| **Friday, Feb 25th**<br>8:00 am to 12:00 Noon OR 12:30 Noon to 4:30 pm | - Examination: “RN Assessment” Examination (E.R.I., 2002) (190 to 225 items, up to **four** hours). The scheduling of this exam will take place during Fall semester. |
| **Tuesday, March 1st**<br>9:00 a.m. | - **Class Review and Discussion:** Review and discussion of RN Assessment examination performance.  
**ASSIGNED:** Remediate by 04/15/04 as needed and submit first and second exam printoff. |
| **During March, 2004 (on student’s own schedule)** | “**Mock NCLEX-RN Exam**” (75 to 225 items, up to four hours) on the Internet.  
**ASSIGNED:** Remediate by 04/15/04 as needed and submit first and second exam printoff. |

**NOTE:** an optional **FREE** four-day post-graduation workshop will be provided by ERI at the College of Nursing (and at various other Detroit-area sites) regarding preparation for the NCLEX-RN exam in either May, or early June, 2005.