

**Mt. San Antonio College  
Associate Degree Nursing  
Curriculum Threads**

**Legal Aspects**

Legal concepts involve the ideas of right and wrong behavior. In the practice of nursing, nurses need to understand how the profession, society, and the patient define these concepts and to be able to define them for themselves. It is critical that all nursing care occur within the boundaries of the nurse's legal scope of practice. It is one of the program terminal objectives that Mt.SAC nursing graduates are able to act in accordance with current legal responsibilities of the registered nurse by recognizing and assuming responsibility for his/her own professional behavior. Legal aspects concepts are integrated throughout the Mt.SAC Nursing Program curriculum.

**NURS 1A - The Nursing Process I**

**Objectives**

1. Function within the scope of practice for the first semester nursing student.
2. Identify and appropriately use resources in clinical to seek additional information regarding client status, unfamiliar procedures, medications and/or treatments.
3. Discuss types of Elderly abuse.
4. Describe Patient Bill of Rights.

## NURS 1B - The Nursing Process II

### Objectives

1. Discuss the client's rights to health care according to the Patient's Bill of Rights and the implications for nursing.
2. Describe legal concepts as they apply to nursing, related to informed consents, incident reports, living wills and professional liability.
3. Identify areas of potential liability for nurses and ways nursing students can minimize chance of liability while providing for hygiene, exercise, safety, pain management, nutrition, fluid and electrolytes, medications, wound care, infection control, and documentation for clients.
4. State components of a legal M.D. medication order and detect any errors in the order.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of appropriate reporting guidelines by identifying chain of command.
6. Correct errors in charting as indicated by facility's policy and instructional guidelines
7. Locate and review clinical agency policy and procedure manuals and guidelines for standards of practice.
8. Discuss the staffing concept of "floating" and its impact on the legal roles, rights and responsibilities of professional nurses.
9. Identify nursing professionals in expanded career roles and observe their functions in the acute care setting (e.g. clinical specialist. Nurse administrator).
10. Be able to state legal implications of charting and errors in charting; demonstrate awareness in actions related to charting.
11. State consequences of falsification of records and avoid participation in falsifying records.
12. Describe the purpose of the incident report and correct procedure for its completion.
13. Identify the purpose of nurse practice acts and standards for nursing and how they are applied to the clinical setting.

14. Cite client rights and hospital legal responsibility in access to and provision of foreign language interpreters as needed.
15. Clearly state each assigned clients advanced directive requests including level of code status.
16. Identify basic nursing care errors in assessment, planning, and intervention which may result in negligence.
17. Describe the purpose of the incident report and correct procedure for its completion.
18. Identify the purpose of nurse practice acts and standards for nursing and how they are applied to the clinical setting.
19. Function within the scope of practice for the first semester nursing student.
20. Identify and appropriately use resources in clinical to seek additional information regarding client status, unfamiliar procedures, medications and/or treatments.

## **NURS 3 – Medical-Surgical Nursing - Locomotion/Sensation/Integument/Oncology/Immunology**

### **Objectives**

1. Identify issues of confidentiality in the client with HIV and or AIDS, and review hospital policies and procedures regarding testing, disclosure, etc.
2. Charting is legible, factual, complete and pertinent to identified nursing diagnoses.
3. Discuss legal, ethical, and social issues related to care of clients with oncologic and immunologic conditions.
4. Function within the scope of practice for the Nursing 3 student.
5. Identify and appropriately use resources in clinical to seek additional information regarding client status, unfamiliar procedures, medications and/or treatments.

## **NURS 4 – Maternity Nursing**

### **Objectives**

1. Graphic charting of labor/delivery data.
2. Adhere to proper identification policies and procedures for both the mother and the newborn.
3. Personal behavior in clinical situations conforms to legal responsibilities of the registered nurse/student
  - following attendance guidelines.
  - following the dress code policy.
  - turning in assigned work by due date.
4. Establishes priorities for care based on established protocols and instructional guidelines.

## NURS 5 – Psychiatric Nursing

### Objectives

1. Compare and contrast the terms ethics and bioethics and identify five principles of bioethics.
2. Discuss at least five patient rights, including the client's right to treatment, right to refuse treatment and right to informed consent.
3. Identify the steps nurses are advised to take if they suspect negligence or illegal activity on the part of a professional colleague or peer.
4. Apply legal considerations of patient privilege (a) after a patient has died, (b) if the patient test positive for human immunodeficiency virus, or (c) if the patient's employer states a "need to know."
5. Provide explanations for situations in which health care professional have a duty to break patient confidentiality.
6. Discuss patient's civil rights and how they pertain to restraint and seclusion.
7. Develop awareness of the balance between the patient's rights and the right's of society with respect to the following legal concepts relevant in nursing and psychiatric mental health nursing: (a) duty to intervene, (b) documentation, and (c) confidentiality.
8. Identify legal terminology (e.g., torts, negligence, malpractice) applicable to psychiatric nursing and explain the significance of each term.
9. Identify role of therapeutic person/student in the milieu setting.
10. Complete the Reading Assignment:
  - a. Varcarolis Chapter 7 Legal and Ethical Guidelines for Safe Practice

## **NURS 6 – Pediatric Nursing**

### **Objectives**

1. State three factors thought to be associated with child abuse.
2. State four areas of the history that should arouse suspicion of child abuse.
3. Describe the nursing care of the abused child.
4. Identify instances in which informed consent is required and in which minors may be considered emancipated.
5. Identify and conform to role of pediatric nursing team member.

## **NURS 7 – Medical-Surgical Nursing – Nutrition / Elimination / Surgical Asepsis**

### **Objectives**

1. Recognize own limitations and seek assistance of team leader and/or instructor, when appropriate.
2. Interpret the significance of data related to the preoperative patient's health status and operative risk.
3. Explain the components and purpose of informed consent for surgery.
4. Discuss ethical and legal issues related to pain and pain management.
5. Review the following information provided by the Board of Registered Nursing regarding pain management:
  - a. Pain Management Policy
  - b. Curriculum Guidelines for Pain management Content
  - c. Pain Assessment: The Fifth Vital Sign
  - d. The Nurse's Role in Pain Management
6. Discuss and implement informed consent for pain management.
7. Check Physician's order and prepare medications utilizing 10 patient rights (Including compatibility of intravenous fluid/medications)
8. Chart factual and actual information, pertinent to client condition, therapy, etc. in accordance with nursing program and hospital policy.
9. Conform to expectations specified in objectives for 3<sup>rd</sup> semester nursing student.
10. Act as patient advocate.



## **NURS 8– Medical-Surgical Nursing – Circulation and Oxygenation**

### **Objectives**

1. Discuss the leadership role of the nurse in decision - making related to critically ill clients.
2. Function as a responsible nursing team member, demonstrating increasing leadership responsibility.
3. Safely administer drugs and gases and observe the client's reaction to these medicinal agents.
4. Utilize principles involved in the safe ad-ministra-tion of medications via oral, parenteral, topical and installation methods.
5. Demonstrate awareness of responsibilities of the Nursing Student in the care of critically ill clients and assume responsibility for own actions.
6. Demonstrate recording and reporting responsibilities with emphasis upon the critically ill client.
7. Perform CPR in emergency situation, based upon American Heart Association or American Red Cross criteria/standards.
8. Identify and describe the legal responsibilities of the nurse.
9. Conform to expectations of second year nursing student.
10. Act as patient advocate.

## **NURS 10 – Medical-Surgical Nursing – Integration/Regulation**

### **Objectives**

1. Keep informed regarding course objectives, requirements, and any changes in program policies.
2. Identify the general nursing policies, procedures and nursing responsibilities for clients undergoing neuro-diagnostic procedures.
3. Identify and describe the legal responsibilities of the nurse.
4. Recognize safety hazards in environment and react to minimize dangers to self and others.
5. Expand personal-professional value system associated with the nurse's role in leadership and responsibilities.
6. Conform to expectations of second year nursing student.
7. Act as patient advocate.

## NURS 11 – Preceptorship in Nursing

### Objectives

In addition to laboratory objectives from previous courses (which include personal hygiene, human sexuality, cultural diversity, nutrition, pharmacology, legal aspects, social/ethical aspects, management/leadership threads) the laboratory objectives are as follows:

1. Utilizing nursing knowledge, skills and protocols to assure an environment conducive to restoration and maintenance of clients in clinical settings, including medical surgical settings and any areas where clinical objectives can be met, the preceptee will:
  - a. Apply theoretical base to clinical practice.
  - b. Demonstrate effective interpersonal communication skills.
  - c. Demonstrate skills in written communication.
  - d. Demonstrate professional accountability.
  - e. Demonstrate application of the nursing process.
  - f. Demonstrate clinical skills appropriate to entry level practitioner.
  - g. Demonstrate increasing skills in decision making, priority setting, problem solving and organization.
  - h. Demonstrate leadership skills.
  - i. Demonstrate problem solving and skill attainment.
  - j. Demonstrate critical thinking.