Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi  
College of Nursing and Health Sciences  
NURS 5314-W01-RESEARCH METHODS IN ADVANCED NURSING PRACTICE  
Syllabus  
Fall 2017  

FACULTY:  Cathy L. Miller RN, PhD, CLNC-Associate Professor  
OFFICE:  Island Hall, 328G  
OFFICE HOURS:  Blackboard (Bb) mail for an appointment  
TELEPHONE:  (361) 825-4241  
E-MAIL:  Cathy.Miller@tamucc.edu  
FAX:  (361) 825-2484  
CREDITS:  3 semester hours  

COURSE DESCRIPTION:  
Critical examination of research methods in order to advance and integrate evidence into nursing practice and improve patient population outcomes. Particular attention is given to research appraisal and application, and the ethical aspects of research translation. This course is delivered through online technology.  

Prerequisites:  Graduate standing; completion of an introductory Nursing Research course and introductory Statistics course.  

Approach:  This course will build on your previous research and statistics knowledge to provide a more in depth and hands-on perspective of the conduct of research in the clinical setting. Although it is not feasible to cover all areas concerning research methods and statistics, topics have been chosen to facilitate practical application and interactive learning.  

Online presentation:  This course is delivered exclusively through online technology and may be accessed at http://Bb9.tamucc.edu . You will need to provide PowerPoint, word processing, and other software as needed to complete some requirements of this course. You may need to download collaborative tools such as the WebEx application.  

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

1. Critically appraise, integrate, and apply the best available research evidence from nursing and other sciences to advance nursing practice (*AACN Essentials I, IV, VI, and IX*).
2. Initiate a line of inquiry into comprehensive databases in order to generate meaningful evidence for nursing practice (*AACN Essentials IV, V, VI, VIII, and IX*).
3. Develop a plan to use new research knowledge to facilitate an evidenced-based practice for a specific target population (*AACN Essentials, I, IV, VI, and IX*).
4. Demonstrate an ability to translate theory and research into practice, while being mindful of ethical concerns for the protection of vulnerable groups.
5. Defend the concept of caring for populations, especially vulnerable populations, through the ethical conduct of research (*AACN Essentials I, III, IV, VI, VIII, and IX*).

**REQUIRED TEXTS AND RESOURCES:**

ISBN: 978-0-323-37758-4


**LEARNING EXPERIENCES:**

You can meet course objectives through successful completion of all assignments, thoughtful study of the textbook and other resources provided by me, your instructor, and earnest participation in discussions with peers throughout the course. While I will provide guidance and consultation, you are responsible for identification of individual learning needs, self-direction and motivation, seeking help when needed, and successful completion of the course requirements.

**COURSE TIME EXPECTATIONS:**

All assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the specified due date in the course schedule unless prior arrangements are made with me. Please note and remember that a 3 credit hour course requires a weekly time commitment of a 3-hour presence associated with 9 hours of preparation time. That expectation remains the same in an on-line course. The time spent in the course is set by your personal learning schedule. You should review Bb mail and announcements at least every 48 hours.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**
1. You are expected to have access to a computer that can support Bb applications and all related course materials. A backup plan should be in place if normal computer access becomes unavailable, i.e. arrange use of a computer elsewhere.

2. Any problems with technology, computer, internet, Bb or other applications should be dealt with through the IT (information technology) helpline at (361) 825-2692 or computer.helpline@tamucc.edu

3. Any problems understanding the assignments or due dates should be brought to my attention, preferably within the first week of class.

4. You are expected to complete the course orientation and Academic Honesty Statement prior to beginning work on course content.

5. All e-mail communication with me should occur through Bb, unless otherwise noted. You should review Bb mail and announcements at least every 48 hours.

6. All assignments are due by 11:59 pm on the scheduled date unless other arrangements have been made with me before the due date. Late work will be penalized with a 10% grade deduction/day for up to 3 days. However exceptions will be considered for extreme emergencies where pre-planning was not possible.

7. Respectful and timely participation in discussion forums is required. Since it is assumed each of you will be prepared for discussions, all contributions will be considered knowledgeable contributions. Disrespect in any form will NOT be tolerated.

8. All information disclosed through course chats or discussions is confidential and should not be shared with others outside the context of this course.

9. You should notify the faculty if you withdraw from the course and should not attempt to access course materials once you have withdrawn.

10. You are expected to complete a course evaluation at the end of the course.

11. You can expect that I will respond to Bb e-mail messages within 48 hours.

12. You can expect that I will grade assignments within 2 weeks of submission unless you are otherwise informed.

GUIDELINES FOR FORM AND STYLE OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS:

You are expected to follow instructions associated with the assignments for this course. If you are confused about an assignment, you should contact me in a timely manner to ensure satisfactory completion of the assignment by the due date. Unless otherwise instructed, each of you must adhere to the APA Publication Manual, 6th Edition guidelines for formatting and organizing written assignments.

The campus Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA) provides writing support both in person and in an online format. The contact at the Center is Noel Ballmer at 361-825-2254 and the web link is http://casa.tamucc.edu.
Another writing resource is http://www.grammarly.com/edu. The College of Nursing & Health Sciences has purchased a license for students to use this website. Attached to an Item in the Resources section of your Blackboard course menu is a PDF instruction guide providing access information. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss your writing needs.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING (SEE COURSE SCHEDULE FOR MORE DETAIL):**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Honesty Statement</td>
<td>ALL REQUIRED (Pass/Fail)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Introductions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plagiarism for Students Course Certificate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Pre-Test</td>
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<tr>
<td>Definitions &amp; Literature Search Exercise</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem of Interest Discussion</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Subjects Certification (CITI training)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction &amp; Methods Section</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evidence Table &amp; Alignment Paper</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Results &amp; Discussion Section</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrative Systematic Review of the Literature</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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**GRADING SCALE FOR COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES:**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75-82</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>67-74</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>Below 67</td>
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**PASS/FAIL REQUIRED ASSIGNMENTS:**

All of the Pass/Fail assignments and instructions can be found in the Introductory Unit. Look in the blue Course Menu on the left hand side of your Bb screen, click on the link labeled “Units/Lessons;” then click on “Introductory Unit.”
**Academic Honesty Statement:**
You are required to read the four sections of the Academic Honesty Statement document, complete the fifth section, and submit it through the Assignment link (in the Introductory Unit) certifying compliance with the Academic Honesty policy.

**Student Introductions and Discussions:**
Each of you enrolled in this course will become potential collaborators in professional ventures. The student introduction provides you with an opportunity to share your background, professional interests, and contact information to generate a peer network. **Additionally, you will also be deciding who your group members should be based on individual interests, strengths, weaknesses, and schedules.**

**Plagiarism for Students Course Certificate:**
The last required pass/fail assignment is an important one. Please go to http://research.tamucc.edu/compliance/citi-training.html and follow the instructions for the Plagiarism Course. Our advanced research course is writing intensive. It requires you to find, read, interpret, and cite the work of others in your own words. This is no small task. It is often difficult to know exactly what is considered plagiarism. This CITI online module defines and describes plagiarism and its penalties and teaches you how best to avoid it. The completion report should be saved in pdf format and submitted under the Assignment link in Bb. **This online module is required to continue with the course.**

**Research Pre-Test:**
Each of you is required to take an undergraduate level research Pre-test at the beginning of the course. Everyone is required to pass this test with an 80 or above before moving on with the rest of the course. The test is open-book and not timed. You may take it multiple times if necessary. This is done primarily for self-assessment purposes to help you see where your strengths and weaknesses lie. You will find the link that takes you to the Pre-Test within the Introductory Unit.

**GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:**
Below is a general description of your major assignments. More detailed instructions may be found on the Course Schedule, the Assignments tab, and within each specific Bb Unit tab.
Definitions and Literature Search Exercise:
This assignment is an introductory exercise to review general research concepts and get you into the mood for research. It familiarizes you with research “lingo” and helps you become comfortable maneuvering your way around a variety of research articles. 
This introductory assignment will count toward 10% of your final grade.

Problem of Interest Discussion
This first assignment is a way of getting your feet wet before plunging into the wide world of research. Before you can start your systematic review of the literature project you must decide on a clinical practice problem in your particular area of nursing expertise or interest. This problem or inconsistency in clinical practice must have had several research studies conducted in the last 5-10 years that inform or add to the solution to this problem. Through your literature review project, you will synthesize the findings of these research articles to make a clinical practice recommendation. In this full-group discussion, you will share your ideas for your clinical practice problem/topic with the class. You will support your peers by adding your opinions and literature you find to help their search.
This group discussion is extremely important and will count toward 10% of your final grade.

Human Subjects Certification (CITI Training):
Each of you is required to successfully complete TWO online courses concerning the ethical and responsible conduct of research on human subjects provided by CITI training, specifically: (1) SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL RESEARCH BASIC COURSE/REFRESHER (16 modules); and (2) RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (8 modules). A completion report will be generated by the CITI website when all modules have been successfully completed. These 2 reports (one for each of the above courses) should be saved in pdf format and submitted under the Assignment link in Bb.
*This assignment is time-consuming (at least 4 hours for most students). I recommend that you split these modules up and complete them in shorter intervals.
This assignment counts toward 10% of your final grade.

Assignments Building toward a Final Research Paper (Manuscript):
The following assignments build upon each other, culminating in the Integrative Systematic Review of the Literature Paper. A systematic review of the literature is the cornerstone of evidence-based practice and involves a systematic search for research evidence from studies investigating a certain clinical practice problem. You will undertake a systematic review focused on a problem of your choice. (You will have the option of working in groups of 2-3, or you are free to work individually.) Your overall goal will be to gather literature addressing your chosen problem, appraise its quality, summarize and synthesize findings of the studies you choose, and finally, make clinical practice recommendations to your peers based on the evidence you have
reviewed. Exciting, isn’t it? Through this series of assignments, you will compile the major components (sections) of a research report/manuscript.

**Assignment 1: Introduction & Methods Section**
This assignment involves choosing your own clinical practice problem of interest, researching the background and significance of this problem in the world of health care, and specifying the steps you plan to take to conduct your systematic and very detailed review of this literature. This assignment will require you to write 5 short (well-constructed) paragraphs: (1) Significance and Background (2) Review of the Literature; (3) Statement of the Problem; and (4) Sampling/(Search Protocol) and Data Analysis method.

This is a major assignment as all others build on it. You will be able to continue improving this section as each time you turn in a new assignment, you will add it to your previous sections, including revisions from previous feedback.

*This portion of your systematic review will count toward 15% of your final grade.*

**Assignment 2: Evidence Table and Alignment Paper:**
This assignment is work intensive; so, put on your work boots! In this assignment, you will conduct the systematic search of the literature (fun-fun!), choose your studies based on appropriateness to your research question, appraise them for quality, and summarize/synthesize their findings by creating an Evidence Table. In other words, you are carrying out the methods you described in the first assignment. The second part of this assignment assists you in making sure your work is publication worthy. It is extremely important to the dissemination and publication value of your work that your clinical problem of interest, your research question, the purpose of your review, and the findings from the studies you have collected are in alignment.

*This major portion of your systematic review will count toward 15% of your final grade.*

**Assignment 3: Results/Discussion Outline:**
This assignment will continue your paper adding 5 more paragraphs: (1) a description of the characteristics of your studies as a whole, using your Evidence Table; (2) a culminating review of your overall findings and an explanation as to how they answer your research question (synthesis); (3) a discussion of your conclusions and how they compare to the work of others; (4) a description of at least 2 limitations of your review; and (5) the implications of your findings (clinical practice recommendations you can make based on the evidence you have compiled).

This section will be added to your first and you may include any further revisions of your Introduction, Methods, and Evidence Table.

*This portion of your systematic review will count toward 15% of your final grade.*

**Final Assignment: Integrative Systematic Review of the Literature Final Paper:**
This final assignment combines all your previous work into a professionally formatted manuscript which incorporates all previous feedback. Your final manuscript should include all sections you’ve worked on thus far, including your Evidence Table.
Your Integrative Systematic Review of the Literature Final Paper will count toward 25% of your final grade.

POLICIES:

Evaluation Input From Students
The faculty of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences places great value on evaluative input from students. Evaluation of courses, instructors and clinical facilities provides the College with important data which is used to strengthen the program. Data is analyzed as to trends and themes and is important to curriculum and sequencing decisions. All evaluations for courses posted are online. The online mechanism allows us the opportunity to tabulate and store information in order to analyze trends within the curriculum. Please be assured that this information is secured and not released until after grades are submitted. No names are available to faculty. In order to garner some reliability and validity, the College must have representative data from the student population. That representation, based on the literature, has been set at 70%. The College is anticipating that students will thoughtfully participate in the evaluation process which will assist the faculty with the growth of the program. A link to evaluations will be available on Blackboard toward the end of the semester. Thank you in advance for your assistance with the evaluation process.

Academic Integrity and Honesty
It is expected that University students will demonstrate a high level of maturity, self-direction, and ability to manage their own affairs. Students are viewed as individuals who possess the qualities of worth, dignity, and the capacity for self-direction in personal behavior. University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to a penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own). Please see the following sites for additional information:

- University Student Handbook and Code of Conduct: http://www.tamucc.edu/~students
- University catalog related to academic integrity and honesty: http://catalog.tamucc.edu/

Students with Disabilities
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at 361.825.5816 or visit the office in CCH 116. If you are a returning
veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disabilities Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816

Title IX
As part of the Texas A & M Corpus Christi University policy, pregnant students are urged to contact the Title IX office for facilitation of academic issues impacted by pregnancy, delivery and subsequent complications. Contact information: Mr. Samuel Ramirez, Title IX Coordinator or Ms. Rosie Ruiz, Deputy Title IX Coordinator (825-5826).

Grade Appeals Process
The College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CONHS) adheres to the University’s student grade appeal procedures described in Section 13.02.99.C2.01 (revised May, 2013) and follows those guidelines. See http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/Rules_Procedures/ for the University procedure and see http://conhs.tamucc.edu/shb/ for the CONHS process identified in the Student Handbook.

Support Services
Students are encouraged to seek faculty assistance in accessing University Services, including tutoring, health services, personal counseling, degree counseling, financial aid, learning resources, job/work placement, career guidance, and computer/technical support/instruction. If a student is interested in other support services provided by the University, the student is encouraged by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and the University to seek these services.

MILITARY STUDENTS

Active duty military personnel, military spouses, and veterans with special circumstances (e.g. deployment, drill requirements, disabilities) are welcome and encouraged to communicate these circumstances, in advance if possible, to the course and clinical instructors.