



A POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION

School of Health Sciences

Program: Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Option:

**NURS 1055****Professional Interpersonal Communication in  
Nursing Practice****Start Date:** January, 2009**End Date:** May, 2009**Total Hours:** 30 **Total Weeks:** 15**Term/Level:** 1 **Course Credits:** 2**Hours/Week:** 2 **Lecture:** **Lab:****Shop:** **Seminar:** **Other:****Corequisites****Course No.** **Course Name**

Practicum or instructor approval

**NURS 1055 is a Prerequisite for:****Course No.** **Course Name**

NURS 3032	Family Nursing Theory
NURS 3034	Nursing of Families Practicum
NURS 3036	Mental Health Issues in Nursing Practice
NURS 3038	Mental Health Nursing Practicum
NURS 2000	Applied Nursing Science 2
NURS 2030	Nursing Practicum 2
NURS 7055	Professional Interpersonal Communications for Leadership and Management in Nursing Practice

**■ Course Description**

In this introductory course students will engage in a discovery process aimed at learning about themselves and their interpersonal effectiveness for professional nursing practice. The student will study aspects of interpersonal communication theory and practice that promote competency in the establishment of respectful, meaningful, purposeful partnerships with clients and other health care colleagues. Emphasis will be placed on student recognition and development of their own unique interpersonal capacities, qualities, and communication skills. Students will increase their abilities to connect with and respond to the lived experiences of others. Students will understand nursing presence as a moral and ethical responsibility of the nurse.

Journaling, interactive exercises, class activities, role playing, research of relevant topics, and simulated patients are part of this course.

**■ Evaluation****Components**

Reflective Interpersonal Communication Journal	30%
Analysis of a Nursing Practice Experience	15%
Presentation of Research and Essays	25%
Final Exam: Short Answer and Multiple Choice	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Comments:**

- All components of this course must be completed to achieve a passing grade.
- Refer to assignment details at the end of the course outline and the course syllabus for guidelines, policies, and criteria for achieving a passing grade in each evaluation component.

■ **Course Learning Outcomes/Competencies**

Upon successful completion, the student will be able to:

1. Use nursing and interpersonal relationship theory to explain what it means to be present and in relationship and partnership in the nursing profession.
2. Recognize the unique interpersonal capacities, qualities, and skills they bring to nursing partnerships.
3. Analyze and critically evaluate their experiences and conversations with clients and health care colleagues for increased self-awareness and growth in interpersonal communication.
4. Demonstrate increased competency in their ability to connect with and respond to others in a meaningful way in classroom simulations and assignments.
5. Demonstrate an understanding of the concept of presence in their relationships with others and in nursing practice.
6. Use interpersonal knowledge and skills in clinical practice with clients and health care colleagues.
7. Initiate and build a communication toolbox for use in nursing practice.

■ **Verification**

I verify that the content of this course outline is current.

Linda Garratt  
Authoring Instructor

December 18, 2008  
Date

I verify that this course outline has been reviewed.

Jain Vemer  
Program Head/Chief Instructor

DECEMBER 18, 2008  
Date

I verify that this course outline complies with BCIT policy.

Pamela Adams  
Dean/Associate Dean

December 18, 2008  
Date

Note: Should changes be required to the content of this course outline, students will be given reasonable notice.

### ■ Instructor(s)

Linda Barratt  
(course leader)

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### ■ Learning Resources

#### Required:

There is no textbook for this course. There are selected readings in a booklet for sale in the bookstore.

#### Course Bibliography

An extensive bibliography is included in the course syllabus. This bibliography will assist students with their learning. Readings may also be suggested to individual students during the course. The research assignment for the course requires that students use some resources from the bibliography.

### ■ Information for Students

*(Information below can be adapted and supplemented as necessary.)*

The following statements are in accordance with the BCIT Student Regulations Policy 5002. To review the full policy, please refer to: <http://www.bcit.ca/~presoff/5002.pdf>.

#### Attendance/Illness:

In case of illness or other unavoidable cause of absence, the student must communicate as soon as possible with his/her instructor or Program Head or Chief Instructor, indicating the reason for the absence. Prolonged illness of three or more consecutive days must have a BCIT medical certificate sent to the department. Excessive absence may result in failure or immediate withdrawal from the course or program.

#### Cheating, Fabrication, Plagiarism, and/or Dishonesty:

**First Offense:** Any student in the School of Health Sciences involved in an initial act of academic misconduct — **cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and/or dishonesty** will receive a Zero (0) or Unsatisfactory (U) on the particular assignment and may receive a Zero (0) or Unsatisfactory (U) in the course, at the discretion of the Associate Dean.

**Second Offense:** Any student in the School of Health Sciences involved in a second act of academic misconduct — **cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and/or dishonesty** will receive a Zero (0) or Unsatisfactory (U) on the particular assignment and may receive a Zero (0) or Unsatisfactory (U) in the course, and the Associate Dean will recommend to the BCIT Vice-President, Education and/or President, that the student be expelled from the program.

#### Academic Misconduct:

Violations of academic integrity, including dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic performances are prohibited and will be handled in accordance with the 'Violations of Standards of Conduct' section of Policy 5002.

## ■ Information for Students (cont'd.)

### **Attempts:**

BCIT Nursing Program Student Guidelines, Policies and Procedures which are located online at <http://www.bcit.ca/health/nursing/> state: "Applicants who have any combination of two instances of withdrawal or failure in a Nursing Theory course will be readmitted to the program with written permission from the Associate Dean, who will detail any special considerations. Applicants who have any combination of two instances of withdrawal or failure in any Nursing Practicum course(s) for academic or performance reasons will not be readmitted to the program."

### **Accommodation:**

Any student who may require accommodation from BCIT because of a physical or mental disability should refer to BCIT's Policy on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (Policy #4501), and contact BCIT's Disability Resource Centre (SW1-2300, 604-451-6963) at the earliest possible time. Requests for accommodation must be made to the Disability Resource Centre, and should not be made to a course instructor or Program area.

Any student who needs special assistance in the event of a medical emergency or building evacuation (either because of a disability or for any other reason) should also promptly inform their course instructor(s) and the Disability Resource Centre of their personal circumstances.

## ■ Learning Process Threads

**Professionalism:** Students develop an understanding of the essential nature of interpersonal communication competency to professional nursing practice. They adhere to professional ethical standards and understand the moral and ethical responsibility of bearing witness and being present to others' experiences of health, quality of life, and health care.

**Communication:** Students thoughtfully discuss professional interpersonal communication verbally and in writing. They dialogue with colleagues and teachers in the process of learning. They work with colleagues and simulated patients to develop abilities in interpersonal communication. They commit to the essential nature of communication in professional nursing. Students anticipate interpersonal communication skills to be performed in class and prepare themselves to perform them. They are independent with some aspects of interpersonal communication learned this term, but may require assistance with others.

**Systematic Inquiry:** Students think and reflect about interpersonal communication by appreciating the research base, recognizing real and potential risks associated with communication, and making judgments about communication considering the context. Questioning, reflection, bearing witness, and feedback are the strategies that are used to facilitate reasoning and judgment in the application of interpersonal communication.

**Professional Growth:** Students take responsibility for their learning and growth. Students participate and reflect on all learning experiences to grow personally and professionally. Students examine their own reactions to interpersonal situations and develop strategies to improve their effectiveness.

**Creative Leadership:** Students are able to discriminate situations in which specific skills would be useful. Developing interpersonal awareness of self and others requires creativity and risk taking. Students are expected to make positive assumptions about each other's abilities and value individuality. Self-awareness and dialogue are essential to partnership.

**Participation:** Active participation in learning is critical in this course. Students will be expected to contribute to discussions, participate in class activities, and role play with classmates and simulated clients. Students will be expected to bring relevant client situations from practicum experiences to class. Students will be audiotaped and videotaped during this course.

## ■ Assignment Descriptions

### 1. Reflective Journal

A reflective journal in this course is used to develop self-awareness and ongoing learning goals for improved interpersonal competency in nursing practice. Students will consider how their own values, beliefs, history, culture, experiences, and attitudes affect their interpersonal communication. Awareness of self and how others may be affected by their communication will be reflected on. Course readings, class activities, and practicum experiences will be used to frame and stimulate this discovery process and dialogue. Students will be assisted to develop their abilities to write the journal for the first 6 weeks of the course. Students will receive individual written feedback on their journal at the end of week 6 (March 2). Students will be graded on the depth of self-exploration conducted and demonstrated degrees of commitment to the development of their interpersonal capacities.

Details of this assignment are contained in the course syllabus.

#### **Due Dates**

March 2 – Hand in journal for feedback

April 20 – Hand in journal for grading

May 4 – Present communication toolbox to class

### 2. Analysis of a Nursing Practice Experience

This analysis and critique of an experience and conversation with a client and/or family member will demonstrate students' understanding of and use of interpersonal communication theory and skills learned in the course. Students will write up the experience and the conversation, either whole or a segment of one that took place during their practicum experiences. They will critically reflect on and discuss the context of the conversation, meanings and understandings gained, and their attitudes, qualities, and interpersonal skills that influenced the experience.

Details of how to analyze the experience/conversation are contained in the course syllabus.

Due Date: March 23

### 3. Final Exam

The final exam will be a multiple choice and short answer exam and will take place during exam week. The exam will test all content covered in the course.

## ■ Assignment Descriptions (cont'd.)

### Class Presentation and Essay (group/individual)

Students will research and present a selected topic relevant to interpersonal communication in nursing practice. Students will also evaluate their own interpersonal communication during this process. Research will be conducted in small groups and findings will be presented and discussed with the class. A four-page group essay summarizing the topic and findings will form one part of the essay. A two-page individual student evaluation of their interpersonal communication during the assignment process will form the second part of the essay. A video/DVD record of each group's presentation will assist the student to evaluate their interpersonal communication. Suggested topics will focus on increasing student knowledge of interpersonal communication theory and practice for professional nursing.

### Presentation Due Dates:

March 30, 2008	3 groups of 4 students
April 6, 2008	3 groups of 4 students

Selected topics will include:

1. Diversity in nursing practice and interpersonal communication.
  - a. Gender and communication
  - b. Individualistic versus community/collective cultural orientation
  - c. Generational differences and communication, e.g. generation X and millennials meet the baby boomers.
2. Emotional intelligence and the effects on interpersonal communication *or* how does emotional intelligence contribute to interpersonal competency in nursing practice.
3. The response of anger in the nurse-client relationship.
4. The uses of humor in professional interpersonal communication.
5. Communicating with distressed colleagues.
6. Anxiety and interpersonal communication competency.
7. Social location and privilege as a determinant of interpersonal communication.
8. Bearing witness as a phenomenon in the nurse-person relationship.
9. A study of interpersonal relationships complexity using current movie "*Away from Her*."
10. Communicating with a client where there is a language or speech barrier.
11. Communication with a client who is experiencing a delirium and/or a dementing process.

Details of this assignment are contained in the course syllabus.



# Bachelor of Science in Nursing

NURS 1055

Professional Interpersonal Communication  
in Nursing Practice

COURSE SYLLABUS: LEVEL 1

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Prepared by: Linda Barratt

Date: December, 2008





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## Class Schedule

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Jan. 19	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reflective Exercise                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>View and reflect on nurse-client scenario (DVD)</li> <li>Complete Beliefs Inventory</li> </ol> </li> <li>Review course outline and syllabus</li> <li>Construct the learning environment for teacher and student partnerships</li> <li>Discuss role of self-awareness in interpersonal skills development</li> </ol>	<p>Reading</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Becker Hentz, P., &amp; Lauterbach, S.S. (2005). Becoming self-reflective: Caring for self and others. <i>International Journal of Human Caring</i>, 9(1), 24–28.</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Question</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You’ve now learned that developing self-awareness is critical to the development of interpersonal skills for nursing practice. What is your reaction to this idea and having to use a reflective journal for this purpose? What challenges might you have with this process of discovery and learning?</li> </ol>
Jan. 26	<p>Relevant Concepts and Theory of Interpersonal Communication</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Philosophical foundations of humanism and phenomenology</li> <li>Relational constructs, qualities, and interpersonal communication skills of the nurse</li> <li>Being “present” and in relation with others for partnerships: nurse and client and nurse and colleagues</li> <li>Entering relationships and being with others: Building rapport</li> <li>Orientation to reflective journal for interpersonal skill awareness and development</li> </ol>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gregory, T. (2008). Nursing presence is powerful for patients and student nurses. In <i>Oncology Nursing Society e-newsletter — The Student Voice</i>.</li> <li>Guilmartin, N. (2002). <i>Healing conversations: What to say when you don’t know what to say</i>. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.                             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pages 4–7. <i>Please don’t ask me how I am, unless ...: Beginning a healing conversation</i>.</li> <li>pages 13–15. <i>Just listen: After a sudden loss</i>.</li> <li>pages 53–55. <i>Tuning out of your head, tuning into your heart</i>.</li> <li>pages 115–119. <i>How to be with someone who is in pain [physical and emotional pain or both]</i>.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
		<p>3. Stone, D., Patton, B., &amp; Heen, S. (1999). <i>Difficult conversations: How to discuss what matters most</i>. New York, NY: Penguin. Chapter 5: Have your feelings (or they will have you), pp. 85–107.</p> <p>Reflective Thinking Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When you read the Stone et al. chapter titled “Have your feelings...,” what did you learn about your beliefs about feelings and managing feelings? How might your beliefs and how you manage your feelings affect your listening abilities?</li> <li>2. Guilmartin’s reading suggests one of the ways to support people who are in physical or emotional pain is “to allow their tears.” How comfortable are you when others cry? How will you feel when a patient or a colleague cries?</li> <li>3. What meanings do you attach to people who cry? Where do those meanings come from? Your culture? Your upbringing? Your gender?</li> <li>4. How comfortable are you with expressions of emotions? Are there some emotions that you find more difficult to experience and manage in yourself and others? How might your answer to the previous question influence your nursing practice?</li> </ol>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Feb. 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpersonal communication skills for tuning in and accurately listening to others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>listening awareness</li> <li>perceptiveness</li> <li>active listening skills</li> </ul> </li> <li>Interpersonal communication to communicate an understanding of the other's experience and situation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>reassurance</li> <li>consolation (comforting responses)</li> <li>compassion</li> <li>empathic communication</li> </ul> </li> <li>In-class skill practice of active listening skills</li> </ol>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete the self-study guide on "Interpersonal Skills for Building Relationships and Meaningful Dialogue."</li> <li>Nichols, M.P. (1995). <i>The lost art of listening: How learning to listen can improve relationships</i>. New York: Guilford Press. pp. 1-22.</li> <li>Arnold, E., &amp; Boggs, K.U. (2007). <i>Developing therapeutic communication in the nurse-client relationship</i> (5th ed.). St. Louis, MO: Saunders. pp. 199-228. * This reading is to be read over the next <b>three</b> weeks.</li> <li>Cheyne, D. (2006). Sounds of silence. <i>Nursing Standard</i>, 21(9), 61.</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How would you describe your listening abilities?</li> <li>What new insights did you gain about your abilities from the required readings?</li> <li>What listening behaviors might you need to change to be a more effective communicator?</li> <li>How perceptive of others and yourself are you? What does being perceptive involve? How might you improve your perceptiveness?</li> <li>When you read the Stone et al. chapter titled "Have your feelings ...," what did you learn about your beliefs about feelings and managing feelings?</li> <li>How might your beliefs and how you manage feelings affect your listening abilities?</li> </ol>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Feb. 9	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interpersonal communication for inquiry and for increased understanding of the other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>minimal verbal and non-verbal prompts</li> <li>requests for information</li> <li>questioning skills and common questioning errors</li> <li>summarization and linking transitions</li> <li>questions to enhance partnership</li> </ul> </li> <li>Interpersonal communication skills for personal and professional safety and for taking responsibility for self Assertiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>respectful, responsible assertiveness</li> <li>keeping self and others emotionally and physically safe</li> <li>protecting your and others' self-esteem and integrity</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balzar Riley, J. (2008). <i>Communication in nursing</i>. St. Louis, MO: Mosby Elsevier. pp. 154–163. (Chapter 13: “Asking Questions”)</li> <li>Complete self-study guide on “Interpersonal Communication for Inquiry.”</li> <li>Balzar Riley, J. (2008). <i>Communication in nursing</i>. St. Louis, MO: Mosby Elsevier. pp. 2–16. (Chapter 1: “Responsible, Assertive, Caring Communication in Nursing”)</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Question</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The use of questions for inquiry and understanding are only effective if they “add value” to the process. What is your understanding of this idea? Try and think of an example when you asked a question that didn’t add value to a serious conversation and thus acted as a barrier to knowing the patient in a meaningful way.</li> </ol>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Feb. 16	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The process of self-observation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• recognition of and letting go habitual tendencies that act as barriers to interpersonal communication</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Skill Practice</li> </ol>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review self-study guides.</li> <li>2. Broome, M. (2006). Good communication can start with an offer of a cup of tea. <i>Nursing Standard</i>, 20(51), 25.</li> <li>3. Fortinash, K.M., &amp; Holoday Worret, P.A. (2004). <i>Psychiatric mental health nursing</i> (3rd ed.). pp. 131–132.</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What new insights have you gained about your assertiveness from the readings?</li> <li>2. Where do you fit on the passive to aggressive scale?</li> <li>3. Is your assertiveness situation specific? If so, identify these.</li> <li>4. What happens to your assertiveness when you don't get your own way or aren't getting your needs for attention met?</li> <li>5. What gets in the way of you being assertive?</li> </ol>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Feb. 23	<p>4 hours intensive skills development with simulated patients (approximately 18 students)</p> <p>Students #1 to #18 with Linda Students #19 to #24 and #49 to #60 with Laurie</p> <p>Remainder of students to work independently on course presentation</p>	<p>Readings for Intensive Skills classes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colvin, H. (2006). What it takes to be great. <i>Fortune</i>, 154(9), 1–5.</li> <li>Callanan, M., &amp; Kelley, P. (1997). <i>Final gifts: Understanding the special awareness, needs, and communications of the dying</i>. Chapters 1 and 2.</li> <li>Review self-study guides and the Arnold and Boggs' reading of February 2 class.</li> </ol>
Mar. 2	<p>Interpersonal communication for understanding the experience of illness/disease</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ovarian cancer survivors — a dialogue with students</li> </ul> <p>* Hand in Reflective Journal for feedback</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lockwood-Rayerman, S. (2006). Survivorship issues in ovarian cancer: A review. <i>Oncology Nursing Forum</i>, 33(3), 553–562.</li> <li>Bottorff, J.L., &amp; Morse, J.M. (1994). Identifying types of attending: Patterns of nurses' work. <i>Image: The Journal of Nursing Scholarship</i>, 26(1), 53–60.</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Think of the experience of illness — what does it mean to you? What are you like when you are sick, don't feel well? What experiences have you had with illness (self and others)? How have these experiences shaped your feelings and thoughts about illness? Is there a connection with these and your desire to be a nurse?</li> <li>This week in class women who are ovarian cancer survivors will be with us to talk about their experience of illness and life with this disease. Think about how you will inquire about their experience to gain a greater understanding of their experience. Formulate some questions you will ask them.</li> </ol>



Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Mar. 16	<p>4 hours intensive skills development with simulated patients</p> <p>Students #31 to #48 with Linda Students #25 to #30 and #61 to #72 with Laurie</p> <p>Remainder of students to work independently on course presentation</p>	<p>Readings for Intensive Skills classes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Colvin, H. (2006). What it takes to be great. <i>Fortune</i>, 154(9), 1-5.</li> <li>Callanan, M., &amp; Kelley, P. (1997). <i>Final gifts: Understanding the special awareness, needs, and communications of the dying</i>. Chapters 1 and 2.</li> <li>Review self-study guides and the Arnold and Boggs' reading of February 2 class.</li> </ol>
Mar. 23	<p>Skills development with scenarios from practicum experiences</p> <p>* Hand in Analysis of Practicum Experience assignment</p>	<p>Readings</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review self-study guides and the Arnold and Boggs' reading of February 2 class.</li> </ol> <p>Reflective Thinking Questions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Now that you have completed the intensive skills practice session, reflect on what you have learned about your own skills and about interpersonal communication in general.</li> <li>This week's class (March 23) will focus on further skill development. Please come to class with examples of practicum situations you would like to role play and/or discuss.</li> </ol>
Mar. 30	Group Presentations (3 groups of 4 students)	<p>Readings will be assigned by student groups</p> <p>* Please ensure students have received reading five days in advance of class</p>
Apr. 6	Group Presentations (3 groups of 4 students)	<p>Readings will be assigned by student groups</p> <p>* Please ensure students have received reading five days in advance of the class.</p>

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
Apr. 13	EASTER MONDAY — NO CLASS	
April 20	Managing expressions of anger in self and in others  * Hand in Reflective Journal for evaluation	Readings 1. Hollinworth, H., Clark, C., Harland, R., Johnson, L., & Partington, G. (2005). Understanding the arousal of anger: a patient-centred approach. <i>Nursing Standard</i> , 19(37), 41–47. 2. Zook, R. (1996). Take action before anger builds. <i>RN</i> , 59(4), 46–50. 3. Thomas, S.P. (2003). Anger: The mismanaged emotion. <i>MEDSURG Nursing</i> , 12(2), 103–110.
Apr. 27	Skill Development Helping patients and families experiencing losses associated with illness, dying, and death	Reading 1. Jonsdottir, H., Litchfield, M., & Pharris, M.D. (2004). The relational core of nursing practice as partnership. <i>Journal of Advanced Nursing</i> , 47(3), 241–250.  Reflective Thinking Questions 1. Jonsdottir et al. describe partnership in nursing as a process in which the nurse is present to the patient in an open caring attentiveness to whatever emerges in their dialogue (2003). How is this form of partnership achieved and what are its characteristics? 2. Reflect on how you practice partnership. How do you enter a patient's and/or a family member's world when they come to a "point in life when their way is not clear"? (p. 245)

Class Date	Outcome/Material Covered	Class Preparation: Readings and Reflective Thinking Questions
May 4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Presentation of your communication toolbox to the group</li><li>2. Debriefing of course experience</li><li>3. Course evaluation</li></ol> <p>— Course Ends —</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Prepare your toolbox (minimum of 3 and maximum of 6 items).</li><li>2. You will present 2 items of your choice to the class.</li><li>3. You will prepare a written list of all your items to hand in to the instructor.</li></ol>



# Assignment Guidelines: Reflective Interpersonal Communication Journal

## Purpose of Journal

This assignment is designed to promote your understanding of who you are and what you bring as a person to your nursing practice. In other words, the journal is designed to assist you to enhance your self-awareness, your conscious understanding of who you are in relationship to others and in particular self-awareness in your partnerships with patients, family members, and colleagues. In this assignment you will demonstrate your growing awareness of self in relation to others and your commitment to the enhancement of your interpersonal effectiveness for nursing practice.

## The Process of Journaling for Self-Awareness

Journaling for this course will consist of an in-depth reflection of your interpersonal effectiveness for nursing practice using all of your nursing experiences: classroom, practicum, readings, group work, etc. You will critically examine aspects of your interpersonal communication that are both known and not currently known or consciously acknowledged by you and that influence your interpersonal communication. In other words, you will engage in a mindful, deliberative process of learning about your interpersonal effectiveness for nursing practice.

During this process you may feel some discomfort. This is normal and is part of learning. This discomfort maybe alerting you to important interpersonal “blind spots” that are preventing you from developing capacities you already possess or prevent you from developing more effective interpersonal competency for nursing practice.

Bradberry and Greaves (2005) in their book *The Emotional Intelligence Quick Book* refer to this process as “leaning into the discomfort.” The authors’ research indicates:

the biggest obstacle to increased interpersonal competency is the tendency to avoid the discomfort that comes from increasing your self-awareness. More than two-thirds of the people we tested have great difficulty admitting their short comings .... leaning into your discomfort is the only way to change what you cannot manage yourself adequately if you ignore what you need to change (p. 92).

## A Word of Caution

This journal is *not* a replacement for counseling or therapy. Should you become in touch with aspects of yourself that are painful and difficult to cope with please seek counseling. Remember, you are in charge of this introspective process. A nurse who addresses his/her own personal issues is better able to engage with and address the issues of others. There is no shame in seeking professional help; it shows great courage and self-management and in nursing it is a standard for practice (CNBC).

## General Directions for the Assignment

*\* Read all of these directions before you begin your journal.*

1. You will write in your journal 6 times during the 12 weeks of the course.
2. Your journal is a dialogue between you and your instructor and is private, specific to you.
3. You will be given assistance on *how to* complete the journal during the first 5 weeks of class.
4. You will hand in your cumulative journal (weeks 2 to 5) for instructor feedback on March 2.  
In your feedback, you may be directed to specific readings in the bibliography to assist you.
5. You will hand in your cumulative journal (weeks 2 to 12) for grading on April 20.
6. You may choose to write your journal in a special booklet or type it on your computer.
7. If you are referring to insights you gained from a particular article, book, or expert, be sure to acknowledge the sources (APA Guidelines).
8. Use a title cover page with your name, class time, and instructor.
9. Please use **double space** and **one side** of the paper.
10. Follow the guidelines provided for all parts of the journal.
11. Use "I" language.

### Due Dates:

- March 2 — hand in assignment for feedback
- April 20 — hand in journal for grading
- May 4 — completion of toolbox and presentation to class

### Guidelines for Writing the Journal

These guidelines are designed to give you some structure to the process of journaling for self-awareness. You must complete all parts of this assignment. They are as follows:

Part 1: Integration of theory to reflective process

Part 2: Learning goals derived from awareness gained

Part 3: Interpersonal communication toolbox

## Guidelines for Each Part of the Assignment

### Part 1: Integration of Theory to Your Reflective Process

In this section of the journal you will reflect on your NURS 1055 classes and clinical experiences with regard to your interpersonal communication. You will identify insights you are gaining about your interpersonal communication and yourself. In addition, you will apply theory to your insights and to the experiences you write about. For example, if during your clinical experiences you are caring for a patient who is dying, you will integrate theory on death and dying and/or how to communicate with a person who is approaching death. You are encouraged to use the course readings and the readings from the bibliography for these discussions. Your discussion is **not** meant to be an academic discussion of a topic. It is meant to add depth to your discussion of your own interpersonal communication skill development and awareness.

The weekly reflective questions in your course syllabus (class schedule) can also assist you in this reflective process as they are designed to have you think about aspects of your interpersonal communication you may have never examined.

### Part 2: Learning Goals

Once you have written part 1 determine your learning goals or revise your previous journal entry's learning goals. State these clearly and specifically, for example:

*My goal is to ask more appropriate questions when I am seeking information. I tend to overuse closed questions and often reach a dead end. I need to ask more open questions and use other skills.*

Once you've identified these goals indicate how you plan to work on these goals:

*I will stop myself when I hear myself about to ask a closed question and reframe the question or use a different inquiry skill.*

*I will practice using open questions and minimal prompts all week long with colleagues, patients, family, and friends.*

*I will ask my colleagues, family, and friends to stop me when I ask closed questions.*

### Part 3: Communication Toolbox

A communication toolbox is a collection of books, handouts, articles, specific conversations, movies, and skills that resonated with you and that you found particularly helpful to your interpersonal communication development during this course — anything that contributed to your development.

You will contribute a minimum of 3 and a maximum of 6 items between January 26 and April 20. This toolbox will be completed by May 4 and will be presented in class.

### **Evaluation of Your Reflective Interpersonal Communication Journal**

This journal is worth 30% of your final grade. You will receive marks for the following:

1. Completion of the journal as outlined in the guidelines. (1 mark)
2. Reflection, analysis, and discussion of NURS 1055 classroom experiences and clinical experiences that illustrate particular insights you are gaining about your own interpersonal communication. (10 marks)
3. Degree and relevancy of theory you have integrated into your experiences and insights. (10 marks)
4. Establishment of realistic and clear goals for increased interpersonal competency. (3 marks)
5. Evidence to support that goals are being worked on and are being revised with journal entries. (3 marks)
6. Relevant contributions to your toolbox. (3 marks)



## Assignment Guidelines: Analysis and Critique of a Nursing Practice Experience and Conversation

### Purpose

This analysis and critique of an experience and conversation with a client and/or family members will demonstrate your understanding of and use of interpersonal communication theory and skills learned in this course. You will describe the experience including a write-up of the conversation, either whole or a segment of one that took place during your practicum experiences. Then you will critically reflect on and discuss the context of the conversations, meanings and understandings gained, as well as your attitudes, feelings, beliefs, thoughts, qualities, and interpersonal skills that influenced the experience.

### Due date:

- Week 8 — March 23
- Value: 15%

### How to Do the Assignment

- \* *Read all the directions* before you start the assignment including before you select a practicum experience to analyze.

### This Assignment Has Three Parts:

- Part 1: Selection of a practicum experience (1)
- Part 2: Description of the experience including a write-up of the conversation either whole or a segment that took place. (3)
- Part 3: Analysis and critique of the experience. (11)

### Part 1: Selection of a Practicum Experience

During the weeks before this assignment is due be mindful of the interpersonal experiences you are having with patients and/or family members. Your reflective journal may contain discussions about particular experiences that raised some issues, emotions, or concerns for you and/or your patients. That is the kind of experience and conversation to use for this assignment.

Because you will analyze your experience choose one where a patient and/or family member expressed an issue, concern, or emotions while you were with them and where you attempted to gain understanding of their concern and to respond to them in a meaningful way. In other words, **avoid choosing an experience where you were engaging in social conversation or were explaining a procedure such as a psychomotor skill.** However, if a patient and/or family member raises a concern or issue during a social conversation and/or nursing procedure and you attempted to engage in a more meaningful conversation you may use that experience.

- \* The conversation should have a minimum of ten (10) verbal responses by you for this assignment.

## Part 2: Description of the Experience and Conversation

In this part of the assignment you will describe your experience to include:

- (a) The context of the experience — the physical, emotional, social, economic, political, and spiritual variables that influence person-to-person experiences:
  - Physical — time, place, person (age and ethnicity)
  - Emotional — the emotional tone (both you and patient) at the beginning, during, and at the end of the conversation
  - Social and/or cultural — the effect or significance, if any, of age, gender, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, language, family relationships, employment, etc. on the conversation
  - Patient's reason for hospitalization
  - Your history with the patient/family member
  - Your previous experience that influenced the conversation
- (b) A recording of the conversation that formed part of the experience.
  - Write the conversation up in a table format using columns for verbal and non-verbal communication and skill/response used as that will make it easier for analysis.
  - Record all verbatim statements (verbal conversation) made by you and the patient and/or family member
  - Record all non-verbal communication that accompanied all verbatim statements (you and patient and/or family member)
  - Record the type of response and/or skill used in the appropriate columns
  - Number **your** verbal responses
  - \* See Appendix A for a copy of a sample table
- (c) Any goals you had entering the conversation or that emerged during the conversation. You must be specific and not simply state you wanted to talk with the patient. Examples of a goal a nurse may have when approaching a patient are:
  - Connect with the patient's experience
  - Explore an issue in more depth for greater understanding (state issue)
  - Support the patient's strengths and abilities
  - Focus on the patient's attention or a particular concern (state concern)

## Part 3: Analysis and Critique of your Experience

*Experience is not what happens to us, it is what we make of what happens to us.*

— Aldous Huxley

This part of the assignment asks that you critically analyze in detail what happened and what you have made of this experience in terms of your effectiveness with interpersonal communication. You will examine your professional presence, your responses, and your patient's responses to determine the degree and nature of partnership (relationship), and shared meaning achieved. You will determine what listening and inquiry skills you used or didn't use to encourage your client to expand on their issue and the accuracy of your understanding when responding to the client's issues. Finally, you will

identify barriers that interfered with partnership and shared meanings. You will use the following criteria to conduct and write up your analysis and critique.

- (a) Critically evaluate and determine how effectively you demonstrated respect, interest, genuineness, and professional presence during the experience.
  - Your introduction of self to patient/family member
  - Ability to set a supportive and professional tone
  - Maintained appropriate eye contact
  - Used touch or avoided touch appropriately
  - Posture that conveyed attentiveness and warmth
  - Appropriate smiling
  - Your use of appropriate, professional language and was polite
  - What you said and did to appear credible and trustworthy
- (b) Critically evaluate your ability to actively listen and respond effectively to patient or family member's issue or concern.
  - How did you demonstrate listening awareness and what interfered with this
    - ▶ tuned into and focused attention on the other person
    - ▶ able to be "in the moment" with the other
  - Demonstrated appropriate use of active listening skills to respond to what patient was saying both verbally and non-verbally. Evaluate each of your responses for effectiveness
    - ▶ reflected feeling
    - ▶ paraphrased content
    - ▶ clarified content, feelings, and thinking
    - ▶ picked up on non-verbal communication and validated its meaning
    - ▶ used brief attentive silences
    - ▶ summarization
  - Demonstrated appropriate and effective use of skills to elicit more information for increased understanding. Evaluate each of your responses for effectiveness
    - ▶ minimal prompts
    - ▶ requests for more information
    - ▶ restated key word or thoughts client expressed
    - ▶ used questions that added value to the process (type, amount, and timing)
    - ▶ summarization to focus client
    - ▶ used non-verbal prompts
  - Demonstrated sensitivity and understanding of the other person's experience and situation
    - ▶ gave appropriate soothing and reassuring responses (evaluate these)
    - ▶ gave informative reassurance (evaluate these)
    - ▶ accurately perceived other's experience and feelings and was able to communicate that to the other (empathic communication) (evaluate these)

- (c) Identified barriers that interfered with partnerships and shared meaning.
  - Your attitudes, beliefs, and feelings about the patient/family member
  - Your habitual tendencies, e.g., defensiveness, minimizing
  - Anxiety
  - Incorrect use of a communication skill(s)
  - Premature problem solving and advice
  - Inadequate repertoire of interpersonal communication skills
- (d) Effect of conversation as a whole to your relationship with patient/family member.
  - Response of the patient/family member at the end of the conversation and in subsequent conversations
  - Your thoughts, feelings, and behavior at the end of the conversation and in subsequent conversations
- (e) Key learning from this experience.

### **Submitting Written Assignments**

You are to submit a hard copy of the written assignment (stapled upper left corner, no folders).

The 10% per day penalty will apply to assignments submitted after 1600 hours on the due dates. An extension of a due date for reasonable cause may be negotiated with the course instructor at least 24 hours before the assignment is due.

Students are advised to retain a copy (hard or soft copy) of assignments until one week after the end of exam week.

# Assignment Guidelines: Presentation and Essay of an Interpersonal Communication Topic

## Assignment Guidelines

### Purpose

In this assignment you will gain knowledge of relevant interpersonal communication theory for professional nursing practice. The research you conduct will augment your understanding of interpersonal theory that contributes to your own and your colleagues' knowledge.

### Presentation and Essay Due Dates

March 30

April 6

Assignments submitted after the submission date for each section will have **10% per day deducted** from the total grade of the assignment (25%). Extensions will be granted for very serious extenuating circumstances only and 24-hour notice is required. **Please plan ahead.**

### Parts to this Assignment

- Part 1: Small Group research of a relevant topic and preparation of a 20-minute presentation and Summary Essay.
- Part 2: Small Group presentation of topic to class with Summary Essay to instructor.

### How to do this Assignment: The Process

- You will be assigned to work in a group of 4 students.
- Your group will select a topic to research from the list of topics provided in the syllabus, page 21.
- Your group will research the topic and prepare a 20-minute presentation for the class and a 4-page summary of your findings to hand in at the presentation.

## **Part 1**

### **Requirements of the Presentation and Summary Essay (3 marks)**

1. A minimum of 3 references from the course bibliography must be used.
2. A minimum of 2 other academic and/or relevant references must be used.
3. Five days prior their presentation each group will assign a reading to the class in preparation for their presentation.
4. All students (in the group) must participate in the research, presentation, and in writing the summary of findings.
5. The presentation must engage students in a dialogue and/or learning activity.
6. Marks will be given for clearly demonstrating use of interpersonal communication skills among the group while presenting and during the presentation.

### **Criteria for Research and Presentation of Topic (16 marks)**

1. Orientation to and engagement of audience to topic.
2. Topic description
  - relevant definitions and explanations of terms
  - relevant philosophical and/or historical perspectives
  - significant theorists, critiques of topic, ideas
3. Relevance to interpersonal communication skills
  - establishment of relationship with others
  - achieving shared meaning of others' experience
  - personal growth
4. Relevance to nursing practice
  - nurse-client partnerships
  - nurse-colleague partnerships
  - collaborative nursing practice
  - personal and professional growth
5. Appropriate learning activity for class
  - stimulate interest in topic
  - stimulate introspection
6. Organization and delivery of research findings
  - focused presentation of ideas by presenters
  - incorporated opportunities for dialogue
  - demonstrate abilities to connect and engage the audience (warmth, respect, and enthusiasm for topic)
  - demonstrate use of interpersonal communication skills during presentation
  - evidence of teamwork

## Part 2

### Criteria for Summary of Findings (6 marks)

1. Summarize relevant findings and applications to professional interpersonal communication in nursing.
2. Follow APA style and format.
3. Paper doesn't exceed 4 pages; single space, title cover sheet.

### Topics for Presentations

1. Diversity in nursing practice and interpersonal communication  
Topics: A. Gender and communication  
B. Individualistic versus community/collective cultural orientation  
C. Generational differences and communication, e.g., Generation X and Millennials meet the Baby Boomers
  2. Emotional intelligence and the effects on interpersonal communication *OR* How does emotional intelligence contribute to interpersonal competency in nursing practice *OR* What do feelings have to do with professional nursing practice
  3. The response of anger in the nurse-client relationship
  4. The use of humor in professional interpersonal communication in nursing practice
  5. Anxiety and interpersonal communication competency
  6. Social location and privilege as a determinant of interpersonal communication
  7. Communicating with distressed colleagues
  8. Bearing witness as a phenomenon in nurse-person relationship
  9. Communication with a patient, where there is a language or speech barrier
  10. Communication with a patient who is experiencing a delirium and/or a dementing process
- \* It is recommended that each group meet briefly with their instructor at least once prior to their presentation for guidance.

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(Therapeutic Communication: Principles and Effective Practice)
- <http://www.queendom.com/tests/index.htm>  
(Communication Skills Tests)
- [www.natcom.org](http://www.natcom.org)  
(National Communication Association)
- <http://novaonline.nv.cc.va.nus/eli/spdiotd/interper/index.html>  
(Perception and Interpersonal Communication)

## **APPENDIX A**

### **RECORD OF CONVERSATION**

## Record of Conversation

[illegible]

## Record of Conversation

[illegible]