

Advanced Concepts for the Medical Professional

Senior Health Academy Course

Course Purpose

This course is a capstone course for the Health Careers Pathway. There are many topics and skills that are not addressed in your average health career preparation. This course covers many of those concepts including legal and ethical issues, therapeutic communication skills, cultural diversity, disease and body systems and the effect of life stages on treatment. Students finishing this course will be able to communicate with patients, families, and health care workers of all ages and cultures as well as being able to navigate appropriate legal documents for patients and deal with ethical dilemmas that may arise. As a culminating project, students will create a work portfolio that demonstrates their learning throughout the course. Elements to be included will be essays, legal documents and copies of multimedia presentations. An additional culminating activity which may be included would be student participation in a community health fair educating the public about a chronic illness and the culture(s) the illness most frequently affects.

Course Outline

Unit 1: Law and Ethics for Medical Careers

Unit 1 Overview

In this unit, students will be able to explain the importance of personal integrity, confidentiality and ethical behavior in the workplace.

Additionally, students will evaluate HIPAA and confidentiality under various circumstances. The legal implications of accurate written documentation will be reviewed through the use of case studies. Advance Directives will be introduced and students will do a written report on the importance of having an Advance Directive. Other topics introduced will be informed consent, Power of Attorney, Patient's Bill of Rights, and labor laws. The students will analyze legal documents and create applicable documents for their families. Ethical solutions to medical dilemmas including treatment of minors will also be studied. Students will evaluate patient requests for treatments, tests, medical exemptions and privileges. Concepts of Compliance and Adherence will be read about and discussed. Students will demonstrate their understanding by writing a narrative on a fictitious patient and describing the ethical solutions that would be used by a medical professional in dealing with the situation. Genetic Testing, Managed Care, and Conflicts of Interest and Obligation will be jigsawed. Students will then apply the information gained in the jigsaw to 4 different case studies and discuss each case and how it should be handled professionally in order to prove their comprehension of the material.

Unit 2 - Applying Concepts of Therapeutic Communication

Unit Overview

In unit one, students mastered the concepts of legal and ethical dilemmas. This unit extends the students' mastery to include required skills that are successful in therapeutic communications. Students will understand that effective communications with patients decrease stress, increase patient confidence and result in a positive and mutually beneficial experience for both the patient and the medical professional. Through a response to case studies the students will practice and refine their skills in the various methods of communicating with patients effectively, both orally and in writing. They will make connections between abstract concepts and authentic applications. Students will recognize the

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value of academic preparation for solving problems using critical thinking in performing therapeutic communication. Students will be exposed to a variety of real world scenarios where they will give appropriate feedback while applying therapeutic strategies. Each case study will enhance student's perception and attitude towards a real-world context, to provide a framework for further learning.

Unit Three- "Everyone is not like I am"

Unit Overview

In unit two students mastered and applied concepts in communication and touched on cultural diversity. This unit provides an overview of and a rationale for infusing cultural competence in health care. Cultural competence is the social awareness that everyone is not like I am, and that there are different cultures and backgrounds that affect how one thinks and behave, and that this awareness allows the healthcare worker to behave appropriately and perform effectively in culturally diverse environments.

"Cultural and linguistic competence is a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enables effective work in cross-cultural situations." (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services – Office of Minority Health)

According to Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989, there are five essential elements that contribute to a system's, institutions, or agency's ability to become more culturally competent which include:

Valuing diversity, having the capacity for cultural self-assessment, being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact, having institutionalized culture knowledge and having developed adaptations to service delivery reflecting an understanding of cultural diversity. Students will adapt to cultural scenarios and recognize and respond in an appropriate manner. At the end of this unit, health care students will demonstrate an understanding of the manner in which people of diverse cultures and belief systems perceive health and illness and will be able to respond to various pathological conditions that they may encounter with their patients (Association of American Medical Colleges, 2005).

Unit Four: Analyze body systems through pathological conditions

Unit Overview

In previous units students learned about the importance of communication and cultural competency. This unit covers the medical terminology and anatomy of five body systems so students can have a thorough understanding of communication skills needed in health care. The body systems will be explored using a case study approach to emphasize the importance of and practice the knowledge gained. The case of "Wake-up Call" from HASPI.org/Cardiovascular Case Study will cover the cardiovascular system using Heart Disease as the pathologic focus. Students will analyze and research the case study in order to identify the anatomy of the cardiovascular system, describe the flow of blood through the body, assess heart attack risk factors and create a treatment plan for the patient. "A Case of Pharyngitis" from HASPI.org/Respiratory Case Study will be used to cover the Lymphatic and Respiratory systems. Students will learn the anatomy and physiology of the two systems in order to investigate the case of pharyngitis and create a pamphlet describing the signs and symptoms and how various symptoms show that the body is fighting the illness. "Split my Brain" is the case study that will be used to teach the Nervous system. Students will research the anatomy of the brain and seizure

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disorders/brain injuries. They will distinguish the lobes of the brain and their functions, the path of neurological signals to and from the body including reflexes. Diagnostic and treatment procedures will be researched and students will explain which procedures they would expect to be ordered and cite evidence to support their decision. "The Girl Pulled Alive from the Ruins" will be used to discuss the endocrine system and tie all the body systems together. This HASPI.org case study is based on the effects of dehydration on a patient trapped in earthquake rubble. Students will be able to list and describe the organs of the endocrine system and evaluate which ones are most involved in the case study. Students will describe homeostatic mechanisms for regulating water balance, including: osmoreceptors, ADH, and renal responses; renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system; and baroreceptors, vascular responses, and selective organ perfusion. Students will develop their own earthquake survival plan emphasizing necessary elements to keep their endocrine and other systems functioning properly throughout the ordeal.

Unit 5: Applying prior concepts across the human lifespan

Unit Overview

Information from previous units will be used in addition to an analysis of the stages of growth and development to construct an understanding of communication strategies. These strategies will then be used to respond to questions and concerns regarding procedures and goals. Students will develop an understanding of how concepts of communication, culture and legal and ethical issues change according to the stages of growth and development and the client's normal or abnormal health status. The students will study different philosophies that relate to growth and development including Pavlov, Piaget, Freud, Kohlberg and Erikson. They will identify characteristics that are particular to each stage of life and summarize major life events as they impact health care practices and patient outcomes. Students will research a chronic illness and analyze its effect on the communication etc. the patient over their lifetime. Legal and ethical issues will be included as they relate to the treatment of minors. In addition, students will compare and contrast Engel's three processes for working through grief and Kubler-Ross's five stages of grief and dying. Students will investigate how culture, age and sex affect grief and death experiences. In addition, they will compare and contrast life-threatening responses to grief and death. Students will do a think, pair, share about the seven therapeutic responses to grief and death. Ethics related to hospice care will be analyzed as an option for the end of life in terminal illnesses. In the student's analysis of the legal documents related to the end of life, they will write expository reports that will examine and convey how those documents would change throughout life and depending on their state of health.