





Nursing (NURS) 620

Culture and Health: Critical Perspectives

Status: Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode: [Paced study](#) 

Credits: 3

Area of study: Health

Prerequisites: For MHS Students: **MHST 601**
For MN-Gen Students: **NURS 608**

Corequisites: MHS and MN-Gen
Students: **MHST 603/NURS 603**

Precluded: None

Faculty: [Faculty of Health Disciplines](#) 

Overview

This course will critically examine the relationship between cultural variables and health/health care delivery. Students will explore how race/ethnicity, gender, social class, and the organization of health professions and health systems influence health and health care services to clients, particularly vulnerable or marginalized populations.

It is important to note that this course is not about approaches to health care that can be used with clients of any particular identifiable “ethnic grouping.”

Outline

MHST/NURS 620 consists of the following 6 units

Unit 1: Awareness: Understandings of Health and Culture

This unit has three purposes: to create awareness about the “journey to critical consciousness” that will we undertake in the course; to give us a chance to learn a bit about each other and our expectations for this course; and to start us on the path of developing awareness about the relationships between culture and health/health care.

Unit 2: Awareness: Critical Theory Perspectives

This unit has the following purposes: to help student develop awareness of the ways they think about phenomena, including culture and health; and to help students develop awareness of the perspectives of phenomena offered by critical theory.

Unit 3: Awareness: Discourse Analysis

This unit has the following purpose: to develop awareness of discourse analysis as an approach to reveal worldviews and power relations embedded in cultures that create inequities in health and health care delivery.

Unit 4: Reflection: Health and the Cultures of Social Class, Gender, Race/Ethnicity and Health Care Systems

The purpose of this unit is to provide the opportunity to reflect on cultural variables that influence health and health care delivery. We will apply principles of critical theory and discourse analysis to examine the relationships among health and the cultural variables of social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and health care systems.

Unit 5: Action: Transforming Health Care

The purpose of this unit is to explore how a critical perspective of health and culture can lead to actions to transform health care in a direction of equity.

Unit 6: Action: Risks and Rewards of a Critical Perspective

The purpose of the closing unit of the course is to consider the risks involved in bringing a critical perspective to your work and explore sources of support that will sustain you, in both your personal and professional lives, as you work to improve the health of your clients.

Learning outcomes

In this course, you will access health-related websites worldwide. You will also participate in email and computer conferencing with other students. Students are expected to connect to an Internet Service Provider at their own expense.

Special Course Features


In this course, you will access health-related websites worldwide. You will also participate in email and computer conferencing with other students. Students are expected to connect to an Internet Service Provider at their own expense.

Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

- 1.** Develop a contextual understanding of culture, including influences such as social class, gender, and ethnicity.
- 2.** Develop a critical understanding of how evidence is constructed and knowledge legitimized in differing worldviews.
- 3.** Develop a critical perspective of the relationships between culture and health/health care delivery.
- 4.** Suggest ways to apply a critical perspective of culture and health in health care leadership roles.
- 5.** Accept the personal challenge of awareness-reflection-action in personal and professional ways of thinking and doing.

Evaluation

In the MHS and MN:Gen programs, students must achieve an overall program GPA of 2.7 (B- or 70 percent), to graduate. The minimum passing grade requirement for each MHS and MN:Gen course is **C- (60 percent)** .

The following course activities will contribute to your course grade, with the percentage weighting of each activity as follows:

Activity	Weight
Conference	20%
Critical Forum Leadership	25%
Assignment 1	25%
Assignment 2	30%
Total	100%

Conference Participation (20%)

Each unit of the course includes a conference during which the class discusses the unit content with one another and the course instructor. Unit 4 has four separate conferences. These unit conferences are evaluated and your participation in the conferences is worth 20% of your course grade. You are expected to submit a self assessment of your participation to inform your instructor's grading of your participation.

Critical Forum Leadership (25%)

Critical forum leadership provides students the opportunity to lead a conference discussion on one of four topics related to culture and health. In the discussion, students apply principles of critical theory and discourse analysis to examine the relationships between health and variables that influence health: social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and the culture of health care systems.

Assignment 1: Critical Reflection on Discourse (25%)

Assignment 1 asks students to analyze the professional discourse around a health-related topic relevant to their practice settings or communities. Students

locate textual resources that comprise the professional discourse about a health-related topic and analyze this discourse to determine the ways the topic is discussed and understood.

Assignment 2: Action to Transform Health and Health Care (30%)

Assignment 2 asks students to discuss how the discourse from Assignment 1 is evident in their practice setting or community, the influence of this on health and/or health care delivery, and actions that could transform the discourse to improve health and/or health care delivery.

Materials

There is no print textbook for this course.

Online Materials

- Introduction: Provides essential information about the course materials, the design of the course, and the procedures you should follow to complete the course successfully.
- Schedule: Outlines the timing of course activities
- Units: There are 6 units in this course.
- Assessment: Outlines the assignments/evaluation procedures of the course.
- References: Listing of required readings, websites, and citations included in the units.




Technical Requirements

Computer System

In order to successfully complete this course, you must own or have ready access to certain computer hardware and software programs. For complete and up-to-date information on the minimum computer requirements required to complete the graduate nursing courses, visit the **Centre for Nursing and Health Studies** [↗](#) technical site.

Important links

- › [Academic advising](#) [↗](#)

- › [Program planning](#) 
- › [Request assistance](#) 
- › [Support services](#) 

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

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