

## **COURSE OUTLINE** **Nutrition and the Older Adult**

### **Course Description**

NR 236. Nutrition and the Older Adult. 1 hour credit. Prerequisites: NR 105 with a C or better, or RN/LPN, or instructor approval. This course will enable the student to understand the nutritional requirements for the older adult. Normal physiological changes during the aging process and common health problems will be discussed in relation to the nutritional needs of the older adult. The student will explore lifestyle, economic, environmental, social factors influencing nutritional needs. Butler Community College is approved as a provider of continuing education by the Kansas State Board of Nursing. This course may be taken for continuing education credit in lieu of college credit hours.

### **Course Relevance**

Recognizing the increased number of older adults in the healthcare system, nurses need to have specialized knowledge about how older adults nutritional needs can be altered due to normal physiological changes, common health problems and economic, environmental and social factors. The information learned in this course about nutrition and the impact on the older adult will enable the student to care more effectively for older adults in his/her clinical practice.

### **Required Materials**

Ebersole, P. Hess, P., & Luggen, A.S. (2004). *Towards healthy aging: Human needs and nursing response*. (6<sup>th</sup> ed.). St. Louis, MO: Mosby.

### **Learning Outcomes**

The intention is for the student to be able to

1. Assess the nutritional status an older adult recognizing the potential for malnutrition due to physiologic aging changes, common health problems, lifestyle, economic, environmental and social factors
2. Develop a nutritional plan for an older adult based on assessment data

### **Primary Learning PACT Skills that will be DEVELOPED and/or documented in this course**

Through the student's involvement in this course, he/she will develop his/her ability in the following primary PACT skill areas:

1. Problem Solving
  - Through the analyses of case studies and written discussion, the student will develop problem solving skills.

Secondary skills (developed but not documented):  
Internet Use

## Computer Literacy

### Major Summative Assessment Task(s)

These learning outcomes and the primary Learning PACT skills will be demonstrated by

1. Analyzing and developing a nutrition plan examining the dietary intake of an older adult, including identifying the potential for malnutrition due to lifestyle, social, economic and environmental factors

### Course Content

- I. Themes – Key recurring concepts that run throughout this course:
  - A. Normal physiological changes in the older adult
  - B. Recommended nutritional daily requirements for the older adult
  - C. Nursing process
- II. Issues – Key areas of conflict that must be understood in order to achieve the intended outcome:
  - A. Gerontology nursing knowledge versus general nursing practice
  - B. End of life nutritional care versus the nurse's personal values
- III. Concepts – Key concepts that must be understood to address the issues:
  - A. Ethics
  - B. End of life issues
  - C. Impact of gerontology nurses on the care of older adults
  - D. Difference in presentation of common health problems in older adults
- IV. Skills/Competencies – Actions that are essential to achieve the course outcomes:
  - A. Explain how normal physiologic changes in the older adult alter the nutritional requirements of the older adult.
  - B. Explain the relationship between the diet, use of over the counter medications, complementary therapies and prescribed drugs.
  - C. Assess the patient's health status, lifestyle, diet, cultural, and environment factors and the impact on the nutritional health of the older adult.
  - D. Develop a nutritional plan, including a teaching plan, based on assessment data for an older adult.
  - E. Discuss end of life nutritional support care.

### Learning Units

- I. Normal physiological changes in the older adult that influence nutritional requirements
  - A. Cardiovascular
  - B. Respiratory
  - C. Gastrointestinal
  - D. Renal
  - E. Hepatic
  - F. Body mass/fluid balance
- II. Nutritional requirements of the older adult
  - A. Protein

- B. Calcium
- C. Fiber
- D. Vitamins
- E. Minerals
- F. Water

### III. Factors influencing the nutritional intake of the older adult

- A. Common health problems
  1. Cardiovascular disorders
  2. Respiratory disorders
  3. Gastrointestinal disorders
  4. Renal disorders
  5. Hepatic disorders
  6. Endocrine
  7. Fluid balance disorders
  8. Neurological disorders
  9. Musculoskeletal disorders
  10. Immunologic disorders
  11. Sensory disorders
- B. Lifestyle and social factors
- C. Economic factors
- D. Environmental factors
- E. Prescription drugs, over the counter drugs and herbal products

### IV. End of life nutritional support

#### **Learning Activities**

Learning activities will be geared toward achieving the intended course outcomes through textbook readings, online tutorials, study guides, case studies, nursing journals and discussion board participation with class members and instructor.

#### **Grade Determination**

The student will be graded on assessment tasks, written assignments, quizzes, discussion participation and other methods of evaluation at the discretion of the instructor.