



UNIVERSITY OF  
**CALGARY**  
NURSING

# **PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE IN NURSING**

**NURSING 705**

**Lecture 01**

**Faculty of Nursing  
University of Calgary**

**Fall 2011**

**Wednesday 0900 – 11:50 pm**

**September 12 – December 5, 2011**

**Room: PF 222**

**N705 Course Professor:**

Dr. Andrew Estefan

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## **PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE IN NURSING:** **Philosophical Traditions and Knowledge Production**

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Exploration of the major philosophical positions and their contributions to the generation and evaluation of knowledge. Examination of the development and evolution of nursing knowledge.

### **COURSE INTRODUCTION:**

In this course the generation of nursing knowledge will be explored from diverse philosophical traditions. Important questions that are addressed throughout the course include:

1. What, if anything, is distinct about nursing knowledge production & where is the overlap with other disciplines?
2. Which philosophical traditions provide guidance for nursing research, and in particular, for proposed doctoral research being developed by course participants?
3. How do you position as nurse researcher-scholar and why? What philosophical assumptions inform your selected research methodology?

This course introduces the relationship of philosophy, nursing knowledge production, and nursing research methodology through critical and comparative analysis of contemporary debates about nursing knowledge(s) and practice(s). Relevant philosophical traditions and debates (primarily Western) are analyzed to understand the evolution of a science culture in nursing, and the complexity of nursing as a professional practice discipline. How basic assumptions and philosophical premises from diverse philosophical traditions guide contemporary nursing knowledge production will be examined. Comparative critiques of nursing science and nursing knowledge production are emphasized. 'Scientific' nursing practices are explored for philosophical, historical, social, cultural and political investments. Selected readings, assignments, and weekly seminars offer opportunities to critically and comparatively analyze, discuss, synthesize and write reflections on:

- Knowledge traditions in nursing and specifically, theoretic and scientific knowledge production in nursing;
- Diverse points of view and philosophical-conceptual-theoretical perspectives in nursing.

### **LEARNER OUTCOMES**

1. Appraise and discuss distinctions between nursing philosophy, philosophy of science, and philosophy of nursing science.
2. Critically and comparatively analyze selected philosophical traditions related to the historical and contemporary evolution of nursing knowledge and nursing theory.
3. Identify, explore and articulate how particular philosophical traditions inform nursing knowledge production and advance the profession and the practices of nursing.
4. Generate questions to further inquiry relevant to linkages between nursing philosophy, nursing research methods, and nursing theory.
5. Actively engage with colleagues in scholarly debate, dialogue, and the sharing of written works wherein preferred positions are articulated, critiqued and extended within an atmosphere of value and respect for all views.
6. Develop critical understandings and logical arguments on selected topics and questions of interest to nursing.
7. Demonstrate scholarship in oral and written practices.

**DOCTORAL SEMINAR PARTICIPATION:**

Consistent and active participation in weekly seminars where assigned readings and participants' works in progress are discussed and analyzed is imperative given the engaged, interactive, experiential, and scholarly format. To engage in substantive and scholarly discussion and debate, it is important that each participant-scholar complete and reflect on the required weekly readings.

*It is expected that each participant-scholar will engage in in-depth discussion of the readings, generate questions and share observations, participating in exploration of diverse points of view. Respect for self, others, and for a range of perspectives and positions is expected.*

## Evaluation – Course Assignments

Your assignments for this course will focus on exploration of a preferred philosophical tradition/stance/position that could inform your doctoral research project. The first assignment is intended to contribute to your literature review that will inform a final paper. The second assignment provides you with an opportunity to lead a discussion seminar related to your evolving understanding of your selected philosophical position, and to try out your beginning theses for your paper based on the topic that you have selected for your final paper (third assignment).

**Begin** by identifying a philosophical tradition/stance/position that interests you, and that is related to the research method that you anticipate will guide your doctoral research project. Examples of these philosophical approaches could include:

- philosophy of science (eg. Contemporary empiricism; post-positivism)
- feminist philosophy
- interpretivist philosophy (eg. Hermeneutics, phenomenology)
- critical social theory

Please confirm your selected focus with the course professor.

### Assignment #1 - Bibliography

**Value: 25%**

**Due: October 11, 2011**

Select a total of 4 articles that focus on your selected philosophical tradition as follows:

- 2 articles that explicate the underpinnings, assumptions, and/or history of the philosophical tradition
- 2 articles that illustrate a research project that is based upon/informed by your selected philosophical tradition
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For each article, provide a one page (single spaced) summary explaining: (5% for each)

- the author's key thesis statement(s) that identify the purpose of the article
- summary of key points/assertions made by the author
- your statement of what you learned from the article; the questions that the authors raised that are relevant to your learning; how it is useful for your purposes

**The bibliography will conclude** with identification of the topic or issue that you have selected for the focus of the remaining course assignments. (5%)

This topic will be directly related to one of the following learner outcomes for this course:

- Critically and comparatively analyze selected philosophical traditions related to the historical and contemporary evolution of nursing knowledge and nursing theory.
- Identify, explore and articulate how particular philosophical traditions inform nursing knowledge production and advance the profession and the practices of nursing.
- Generate questions to further inquiry relevant to linkages between nursing research methods, nursing philosophy, and nursing theory.

### Assignment #2 – Student Led Classroom Presentation/Discussion

**Value: 25%**

**Due: week of November 15, 2011**

This presentation will link your exploration of your selected topic/issue identified in the previous assignment, and elaborate on your analysis of the topic as you are preparing for completion of the final paper (assignment #3). This is your opportunity to try out your thesis statement for your final paper, and to engage your classmates in discussion that will help you further evolve and develop your paper.

**By November 8**, you will recommend one reading relevant to your presentation for pre-reading by the rest of the class.

Your presentation will:

- clearly identify and explain the thesis statement that is the focus of your final paper (5%);
- offer an overview of your selected philosophical tradition (i.e. contemporary empiricism; post-positivism, feminist philosophy, interpretivist philosophy, critical social theory) (10%);
- pose discussion questions that orient your classmates to key issues pertinent to your analysis (5%)
- facilitate the seminar in a manner that actively engages your classmates in a dynamic exploration that is focused on the inquiry that you are exploring for the final assignment (5%)

**Assignment #3 – Final Paper****Value: 50%****Due: December 6, 2011****Maximum length: 20 pages (double spaced, excluding references)****Format: APA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition**

The final paper is based on assignments #1 and #2 above. The paper should illustrate and explore shifts in your understanding of a topic/issue related to your selected philosophical tradition/stance/position that could inform your doctoral research project.

**Rubric for Evaluating Formal Paper (Assignment #3)**

<b>Elements</b>	<b>Does not meet requirements(&lt;/= B-)</b>	<b>Meets requirements (B to B+)</b>	<b>Exceeds requirements (A- to A+)</b>
Thesis statement (Aim or purpose of paper; topic or question to be addressed)	Purpose of paper is difficult to identify, unclear or restatement of an obvious issue. Introduces topic that is not related to NURS 705 course intents.	Clearly describes the topic, issues or question that the paper seeks to answer. Significance of the topic is clear (who cares and why).	Purpose & significance of the paper are clearly identifiable, sophisticated & insightful, pushing beyond stereotyped questions. The thesis of an A+ paper is highly original, opening new arenas of discussion related to the selected topic.
Analysis/Synthesis	Assumptions and approach to philosophical analysis or inquiry are unclear. Points/statements often lack supporting evidence/literature. Quotes are poorly integrated & explored. Relies primarily on course materials and issues covered in class discussion. It is unclear how the author of the paper is making sense of the literature that is being cited.	Background assumptions and selected organizing framework are consistent with the selected philosophical tradition. Effectively incorporates examples from a reasonable cross-section of current literature to support key points. Quotes are well integrated, explored and discussed. Demonstrates ability to explain & critique, compare & contrast current literature. Uses several literature sources beyond course readings.	Clearly demonstrates ability to write, analyze and critique materials in a manner that illustrates fluid application of the selected philosophical tradition. Draws upon cutting edge, current, peer-reviewed literature in specific areas related to the paper topic. Excellent integration of quoted material. Demonstrates analytic depth and sophistication to critique current literature. Clearly links literature to personal experience and proposed dissertation project. The analysis & critique of an A+ paper poses essential questions about the topic that push inquiry and understanding well beyond readings and class discussion.
Argumentation	Simplistic view of topic. Little or no effort to grasp possible alternative views. May contain logical contradictions.	Counter-arguments are acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed or explored effectively.	Anticipates and successfully defuses or responds to counter-arguments. Makes novel connections to outside material that illuminates the thesis.
Conclusion	There is no clear conclusion, no attempted response to the question or issue posed in the purpose/thesis statement.	The thesis and its significance are restated, emphasizing the discovered importance, answers, or possibilities explored within the paper.	The thesis and its significance are restated, emphasizing the discovered importance, answers, or possibilities explored within the paper. Clearly proposes answers to questions such as "so what?" or "who cares?" and "what are the implications for the discipline of nursing &/or philosophical inquiry in nursing?" Poses questions that push readers toward thinking about new understandings of the topic.
Literary skill	Writing style is bland & factual, disconnected from the selected	Writes in a manner that is congruent with the selected philosophical tradition.	Demonstrates throughout a fluent capacity to write in a manner that illustrates and exemplifies the

	qualitative research tradition. Numerous errors in sentence structure, grammar, punctuation & diction.	Sentence structure, grammar punctuation & diction are strong with occasional minor errors.	selected philosophical tradition. Sentence structure, grammar punctuation & diction are excellent with negligible errors.
Style	Numerous errors in APA formatting and citations.	Follows APA (6 <sup>th</sup> Ed) format appropriately with few errors	Meticulous APA format is followed consistently.

### Faculty of Nursing Graduate Program Grading System

Legend: *Italics - Criteria extracted from Faculty of Education grading scale.*

If the grade on your assignment is:	The percentage will be taken from:	If the total for all assignments is:	Your final grade will be:	
A+	4.0	3.95 - 4.00	A+	Outstanding <i>Elegant exposition of publication quality work that would make a significant, scholarly contribution to the area of investigation.</i>
A	4.0	3.85 – 3.94	A	Excellent - Superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. <i>Exceptional performance that goes beyond the specified requirements of the assignment, and demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter that includes the ability to critically assess and creatively apply knowledge to new situations.</i>
A-	3.7	3.50 – 3.84	A-	Very good performance <i>Clarity of thought and expression that reveals the rich meaning of and complex relationship between assumptions, ideas and actions, and includes a critical examination of the topic. Relevant reference material has been correctly documented and effectively integrated into a well developed line of thought.</i>
B+	3.3	3.15 – 3.49	B+	Good performance <i>Subject matter is generally understood at the literal level. Wide reading, critical questioning and creative insights may be absent. Prose style reveals a clear, logical, concise and coherent expression of ideas. Work displays conventional grammar, punctuation and spelling, with a minimum of errors.</i>
B	3.0	2.85 – 3.14	B	Satisfactory performance Note: The grade point value (3.0) associated with this grade is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program. <i>Subject matter is generally understood, but the work displays minimum scholarship. Some gaps in knowledge and inconsistencies in thinking may be evident. Lapses in clarity of expression and the development of a clear line of thought might be evident. Work may display consistent errors in conventional form and require heavy editing on the part of the instructor.</i>
B-	2.7	2.50 – 2.84	B-	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies <i>Work submitted at this level lacks understanding, absence of clarity of expression or insufficient command of conventional form such that content cannot be effectively conveyed.</i>
C+	2.3	2.15 – 2.49	C+	All grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.
C	2.0	1.85 – 2.14	C	
C-	1.7	1.50 – 1.84	C-	
D+	1.3	1.15 – 1.49	D+	
D	1.0	0.50 – 1.14	D	
F	0	0.00 – 0.49	F	

#### UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

You are responsible for understanding and complying with the academic regulations regarding intellectual honesty, plagiarism and academic misconduct as specified in the University of Calgary, Faculty of Graduate Studies Calendar 2010-2011. Intellectual honesty is expected at all times.

#### STUDENT MISCONDUCT



Plagiarism is a serious offence which will result in the following penalty and application:

1. In cases in which the dean and/or faculty is satisfied that a student is guilty of plagiarism, cheating or other academic misconduct in circumstances which suggest a clear intention to deceive or otherwise commit an academic offence, the normal penalty will be either suspension or expulsion from the faculty.
2. In cases in which the dean and/or faculty is satisfied that an offence has been committed, but doubt is left as to the existence of a clear intention to deceive or otherwise commit an academic offence, the normal penalty will be probation.
3. In cases where a student is found guilty of more than a single offence, the normal penalty will be expulsion from the faculty, and in the most serious cases, expulsion from the University.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged.

For further information on Student Misconduct Policies, please refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar 2010-2011, Academic Regulations, K. Student Misconduct: [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/)

#### **ACADEMIC WRITING**

The University supports the belief that throughout their University careers, students should be taught how to write well; therefore, written assignments in this course will be evaluated based on the required elements as well as quality academic writing.

For further information, please refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar 2011-2012, Academic Regulations, E. Course Information, E.2 Writing Across the Curriculum: [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/)

#### **REAPPRAISALS AND APPEALS**

For information on reappraisals and appeals, refer to the official online University of Calgary Calendar 2010-2011, Academic Regulations, I. Reappraisal of Grades and Academic Appeals: [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/)

Please note the 15 day timeline from the receipt of a mark and a request for reappraisal and/or appeal to the Associate Dean Graduate Programs.

#### **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation, you must officially register with the Disability Resource Centre. Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor within the first week of the start of this course.

Further information can be obtained at: [www.ucalgary.ca/drc/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/) or by calling 403-220-8237.

#### **UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY EMAIL ADDRESS**

The Faculty of Nursing requires all students to use a University of Calgary email address throughout their Nursing program. All university business will be directed to this address. Before you can start using your UofC email, you need to register for a free IT computing account.

To register for an account go to: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/it/>

Once your account has been activated, you will need to update your email address within your Student Centre.

**Remember to check your email regularly for course, program and advisory related correspondence.**