NURS 150: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. **How can one class be 9 credits?!**

Think of this course as 6 different classes rolled into one. Each has a separate section in the course supplemental; it will help you to organize by dividing them into different notebooks.

- **Section I:** General information about the course, grades, policies etc…
- **Section II:** **Fundamentals:** the primary content in the course ("lecture").
- **Section III:** **Physical Assessment**
- **Section IV:** **Skills Learning Lab**
- **Section V:** **Medication Math**
- **Medical Terminology**
- **Section VI:** **Clinical Practicum**

2. **How do I know what topic to study for each class session?**

Use the Course Calendar to guide you. “Lecture” (Section II) is always on Monday and Wednesday mornings and the topic(s) for the day is listed on the calendar. Most exams over this content are on Mondays. Skills labs are also on Mondays and Wednesdays, but you will need to read the supplemental to know what to prepare for these labs each week. The calendar is very predictable once you get used to it. There is also an additional **Class and Exam Schedule** posted on NURS 150 D2L that will confirm the topics for each class and also clarify which topics will be on each exam.

3. **How should I prepare for class?**

Students in this program are mature adults who are expected to be responsible for their own education. *It is essential to understand that much of the content and knowledge required for success in this course must be learned independently, and will not be “covered” in class.* This is a new approach for many students and may require an entirely different way to study and prepare for both class and exams. The topic or units to be discussed are listed by date on the course calendar and also on the separate **Class and Exam Schedule** (posted). The required readings, homework, and any other preparation is available on the first page of each unit in the section of the course supplemental that correlates with the topic scheduled for that day.

The study questions with each unit are for student benefit (not turned in), and an excellent guideline for preparing for class. The ability to answer each question without notes is a good predictor for success in class and on the exams.

4. **What is Physical Assessment?**

Also referred to as “PA”, this part of the course teaches you the skills of obtaining a “history & physical” exam on a patient. A big focus is learning how to document on the patient’s medical record. PA only lasts for the first 5 weeks of the semester, before clinicals start. There is required homework for every lab. Physical assessment includes both a class on Thursdays and a correlating lab on the following Tuesday.
5. **What’s the difference between *Skills Labs* and *Physical Assessment Labs*?**

PA labs are where students practice assessment skills such as listening to heart sounds and finding pulses on each other while instructors observe and provide feedback. You'll need to bring your stethoscope, penlight, and medi-meter to each lab.

Skills labs help students learn patient care skills such as bathing, bedmaking, giving medications, catheterization etc… There is a separate orientation to these labs (see calendar for date/time). There is no “lecture” component of the skills labs. Students are expected to complete assigned readings, view video tapes of the skills and practice with their assigned lab teams on Mondays and then pass an evaluation the following Wednesday. The supplies required for these labs are purchased from Medical Locked Storage at the start of the semester.

6. **When will I get my clinical assignment?**

Clinicals start the sixth week of the semester (after PA). There will be 8 students in each group; one group on weekend mornings, one group on afternoons, and six groups on Thursday and Friday mornings. The times and dates are listed on the course calendar. All groups start in the nursing home and then move to the hospital, remaining together with their instructor. Students can rank their preferences for clinical days/times (but not facility) at the beginning of the semester, and an attempt will be made to honor these preferences if possible. Students are not assigned to clinical sites where they have an employment history at this level. Clinical assignments will not be posted until the fifth week of the semester, although students will be aware of which day/time slot they have been assigned earlier in order to arrange transportation, work, and childcare schedules. The specific site assignment pertains to this semester only; students will be divided into varying groups, days, times, and sites in upcoming semesters.

7. **When do I wear my uniform?**

The LCC Nursing Program maintains a strict uniform policy; see your LCC Nursing Student Handbook (posted online and distributed at orientation) for details. When the uniform is required, you must wear all of the uniform and be in compliance with all restrictions related to hair, jewelry, etc… in order to be meet program standards for professionalism. Please remember that whenever you are in uniform, your behavior represents the college and the Nursing Profession, whether you are involved in a course-related activity or not.

Uniforms are required:
- Whenever you’re in a clinical site (Nursing Home, Hospital, other)
- For all Physical Assessment Labs and the PA Competency Evaluation.

Uniforms are optional:
- In on-campus classrooms.
- In Skills Labs (if not wearing a uniform, students must wear a white lab coat over appropriate street clothes).

8. **What is class like?**

It’s assumed that everyone has completed the required preparation and class will start by asking students how best to use the time allotted, i.e. what should be discussed, explained, or demonstrated during class time. Each class is based on what students found confusing or missing from the assigned readings, new or additional content-related information and what
the instructor believes past students have found difficult. Students will be held responsible for any content presented in class, regardless of whether it was listed in the unit outline or addressed in the study questions.

Students will use a classroom response system ("clicker") to provide anonymous feedback in order to help determine understanding. There will be regular in-class “teamwork projects” to complete during class time as a method to help students comprehend and retain information. Brace yourself 😊, you will be called on randomly to answer questions and explain concepts to the rest of the class. This can be intimidating, but you are always welcome to call on the rest of your team for support and assistance with your response.

9. **What is a “flipped classroom”**?

Some course units will be provided in this format in order to use class time more efficiently. For these units, students are required to complete readings and/or view assigned (narrated) PowerPoint presentations prior to class. The entire class time will be devoted to projects, assignments, group work, and quizzes etc... with no lecture format whatsoever.

10. **What are the exams like?**

There are 7 exams over the “lecture” component of the course, and 2 exams over just physical assessment content. Each exam will consist of 50 questions. The exam must be completed within the time limit imposed by the program policy of a maximum of 1.8 minutes per question for Level I students. Exams are designed to prepare students for success on the NCLEX-RN credentialing exam and will include (but are not limited to) a variety of question formats such as multiple choice, True/False, matching, short answer and “alternate format” questions (ex: drawing pictures, identifying sites etc…). Students will be able to review the exam “key” once the entire class has completed the exam or a make-up exam.

One strategy to help beginning students improve test-taking skills is to provide a collaborative exam following the first lecture exams. On days when a collaborative exam is scheduled, students will not be allowed to remove notes or textbooks from the classroom after leaving the exam. Once the allotted exam time is complete, students will return to the classroom and retake the exam as a team. This allows for immediate feedback from the group as to what a question was asking, and what the rationale was for arriving at the correct answer. Based on the group grade, students may gain an additional 1-2 points on their individual exam score. It is not possible to have your exam grade lowered as a result of this group exam.

11. **How do I know what content will be on each exam?**

See the Class & Exam Schedule to clarify the units/topics on each exam. Although NURS 150 exams are not cumulative per se, they do build on previously learned material. Students should be aware of content missed on previous exams in order to restudy that material and avoid missing future questions as a result of this lack of understanding.

12. **What if I am sick on an exam day?**

Per LCC Nursing Program policy, students must notify the instructor by phone or email of any expected absence prior to the start of the exam. The student will be contacted after class to arrange a make-up exam. Make-up exams may be different from the exam taken by the rest of the class.
13. **Are there any papers required in the course?**

There are 2 papers required in NURS 150; due dates for both are listed on the calendar. All students will complete a written assignment called the “Elderly Interview” which is described in Physical Assessment (Section III). The second assignment requires the student to interview a person from another culture and to complete a written paper based on guidelines provided in Section II of the supplemental in Unit XVII: Culture and Spiritual Diversity. Many students choose to complete an alternate Cultural Partnership project instead of the paper; details will be presented in class.

14. **How will I be graded in this course?**

Details about the grading scale and grading process are presented in Section I of the course supplemental. To summarize, the course grade is based on 7 lecture exams, 2 physical assessment exams, 2 papers, 6 medical terminology quizzes, and the cumulative points earned on the in-class teamwork projects. All portions of the course must be passed individually in order to pass the course as a whole (example: it is not possible to fail clinicals and pass the academic portion of the course).

Each component of the course has its own standards and/or requirements that are written in the corresponding section of the course supplemental. For example, in order to pass the physical assessment portion of the course, students must pass the two PA exams with a combined average of 76%, pass the PA Competency Evaluation, and meet any conditions of probation (if applicable) in PA Labs. Clinicals are graded pass/fail based on weekly evaluation criteria. Students will receive an “Incomplete” in the course if required assignments are not submitted. Please ask the instructor for clarification if there is any confusion about the requirements for passing NURS 150. It is the policy of the Nursing Program not to “round” exam or course grades, e.g. if a 91% is required for a 4.0 grade, the student will receive a 3.5 for a grade of 90.9%.

15. **What are “Teamwork Projects” and how do they affect my grade?**

Nurses work in collaboration with other members of the health care team. Therefore, team-building begins in the very first semester. Students will work in a team in the skills labs, the PA labs, the classroom, and in the clinical site. Teamwork projects are assigned randomly throughout the semester and are completed within the class session. The total number of these projects varies, and they are not typically announced or scheduled in advance. The grade is based on attendance and completion of projects divided by the number of classes in which projects were assigned.

16. **What does the Medical Terminology component of the course involve?**

Section V lists each of the abbreviations, definitions, etc. that NURS 150 students are expected to know. There are written directions in this section describing the process for taking these (6) quizzes, and what content will be covered on each quiz. Please make yourself fully aware of the due date for completion of each quiz (with a 76% grade or better) listed on the course calendar. Failure to complete the quiz by the due date will result in a grade of zero, however the student must still take and pass the quiz in order to pass the course. Students who have successfully completed a Medical Terminology course may choose to “comp out” (see details in Section V).
17. How do I prepare for the Medication Math test?

Nursing students have to pass a computer-based medication math competency quiz with a grade of 90% or better in each course in the nursing program in order to decrease the likelihood of medication errors. Be sure to access the Medication Math Resources posted on the Nursing Program D2L site. Simple calculators will be provided. Level I students are allowed 70 minutes to complete this 20 question quiz. Students who do not pass the first quiz will be given an opportunity to retake the quiz after seeking remediation; registration for a NURS 119 Math workshop is strongly advised. Level I students are given a third and final attempt to pass the quiz prior to the due date listed on the course calendar.

Previous pharmacology textbooks provide a good math review, as do the materials, electronic quizzes, and animations related to medication math accessible on the DavisPlus website (see the calculating medications math textbook).

18. What should I do if I’m struggling or not doing well in the course?

Get help as soon as you feel any concern that you are falling behind or if any exam grade is less than 76%. Many students feel embarrassed to seek help until they are in danger of failing the course or until they are placed on Academic Probation. Remember, this is your education, you have worked hard to get into this course and doing poorly on exams (or in other course requirements) can really shake your confidence. Feel free to email or approach the instructor in class about setting up an appointment. There will also be a Supplemental Instructor (SI) scheduled on Mondays every week. Your classmates can also help you by forming study groups or meeting before or after class to review concepts. Use the discussion board often! Feel free to post course related questions like “I didn’t understand …, or can someone explain …, or did anyone find information about …?

Be aware that there is a strong correlation between hours of employment and success in the class; some students are just working too many hours to devote the necessary time to be successful in this program. Balancing the need for an income with the time needed to study is a tough challenge and one each student has to figure out. The LCC Counseling Department and the Women’s Resource Center (for men too) are two places to seek out support for these and other non-academic issues.

Many students feel overwhelmed and confused at the beginning of the semester. Some don’t do well on the first exams, or feel lost trying to figure out how and what to study. It is important to know that you are not alone; you must reach out and get the support you need as soon as you feel overly stressed and anxious. Students who struggle in the first weeks of the course often do very well with a little extra guidance and academic support. Please know that our goal is to help you achieve your best, and to successfully pass this course and progress to the next level.

19. Should I register for the optional NURS 119 workshops?

Yes, if at all possible. There are three different workshops available for Level I students, each specifically designed to help Fundamentals students adjust to the program and learn valuable skills for success. These workshops vary in number of credits, and therefore costs. They are intended to address the needs of beginning students, without causing additional burden in terms of homework or other assignments. Past students have rated these workshops very highly. This is also a great way to pick up some additional credits that are truly valuable in order to meet financial aid requirements.
Please be aware that the first weeks of nursing school can be pretty stressful; there is a lot of new information and a lot to try to keep straight and to organize. A few things are bound to go wrong on both your side and mine. There will be misunderstandings, misprints in the supplemental, equipment failures, room changes, cars that won’t start, books that are sold out, mistakes on the calendar, kids that get sick etc… etc… All of these things just help prepare you for the day-to-day changes and challenges of a nursing career! Try to focus on the positives, look for the good in people, and let go of as much stress as possible. Take a couple of deep breaths and before you know it you’ll be in the swing of things and these first few weeks will all be behind you.