COURSE NUMBER:        MSN 7350

COURSE TITLE:         Forensic Nursing: Clinical and Legal Implications

I. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will provide the student with the skills to:

1. Discuss the origins of the practice of forensic nursing and the roles forensic nurses play in patient care in our health care delivery systems.
2. Recognize that violence in our society is a public health issue which burdens already over utilized health care systems.
3. Analyze principles and techniques of forensic nursing assessment, screening, and evidence collection and documentation in the forensic sciences.
4. Identify mechanisms of injury, the human response to injury, and differentiate disease from injury in forensic populations.
5. Describe components of specific social issues adaptable to forensic nursing applications within healthcare systems.
6. Compare and contrast the criminal and civil justice systems utilizing forensic nurses as expert witnesses, and how forensic nurses can help shape public health care policy.

II. SUPPLEMENTAL OBJECTIVES

1. **Discuss the origins of the practice of forensic nursing and the roles forensic nurses play in patient care in our health care delivery systems.**
   - Definition of forensic nursing and overview of the specialty
   - History and development of forensic nursing
   - Concepts and theories related to and utilized in forensic nursing: nursing theories and borrowed theories such as victimology, traumatology and perpetrator theories
   - Interdisciplinary collaboration models: interaction of justice, political, and social systems with health care delivery systems.
   - Characteristics of forensic clients and settings
   - Identification of self-awareness techniques, self-reflection necessary for objective and effective forensic nursing practice
   - Roles for the MSN forensic/legal nurse consultant

2. **Recognize that violence in our society is a public health issue which burdens already over utilized health care systems.**
   - National crime statistics and the significance of violence in the health care system
   - Violence against women
   - Violence in the healthcare workplace
   - Human Rights violations
   - Environmental terrorism and mass disasters
3. **Analyze principles and techniques of forensic nursing assessment, screening, and evidence collection and documentation in the forensic sciences.**
   - Evidence collection and preservation
   - Biological evidence in criminal investigations
   - DNA and CODIS projects
   - Forensic toxicology
   - Principles of forensic photography
   - Crime scene processing
   - Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE)

**Identify mechanisms of injury, the human response to injury, and differentiate disease from injury in forensic populations.**
   - Differentiation of disease and injury (unintentional vs. intentional)
   - Forensic applications of basic nursing, medical sciences – applications to forensic populations
   - Utilization of advanced path physiology, advanced pharmacology and advanced physical and health assessment in forensic populations
   - Advanced documentation and interviewing techniques
   - Wound documentation from the forensic nursing perspective

4. **Describe components of specific social issues adaptable to forensic nursing applications within healthcare systems.**
   - Intimate partner violence
   - Child abuse
   - Elder abuse
   - Male victims of interpersonal violence
   - Death investigations and the forensic nurse
   - The sequelae of violent acts upon clients

5. **Compare and contrast the criminal and civil justice systems utilizing forensic nurses as expert witnesses, and how forensic nurses can help shape public health care policy**
   - The forensic nurse as an expert witness
   - The forensic nurse as a legal nurse consultant
   - Daubert and its effect on expert witness testimony; factors affecting credibility of forensic nurses on the witness stand.
   - Strategies for effective communication of forensic issues with different communities (professional, legal and lay communities)
   - Examination of existing nurse practice acts and other legislation impacting the effective and autonomous practice of advanced practice forensic nursing (locally, nationally and internationally).

6. **Recognize organizations and institutions involved in the development, implementation, and credentialing of forensic nursing professionals and academic opportunities in programs for forensic nursing.**
   - International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) – national organizations and local chapters
   - American Board of Medical-Legal Death Investigators (ABDMI)
   - Overview of Advanced Practice or Masters level programs in forensic nursing
   - Career paths for the forensic nurse.

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