Course Description:
This course focuses on the care of patients across the lifespan experiencing cognitive, mental and behavioral disorders. Emphasis is placed on management of patients facing emotional and psychological stressors as well as promoting and maintaining the mental health of individuals and families. Concepts of crisis intervention, therapeutic communication, anger management, and coping skills are integrated throughout the course. The community as a site for care and support services is addressed. Clinical experiences provide the student an opportunity to apply theoretical concepts and implement safe patient care to patients in selected mental health settings.

Course Competencies:
Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:
1. Perform a mental behavioral health assessment on patients with common mental health disorders
2. Develop an individualized, evidence-based plan of care that demonstrates an appreciation of a patient’s cultural, spiritual, and developmental variations and includes recommendations for the adoption of health-promoting behaviors.
3. Participate as a member of the inter-professional health care team when advocating for patients with common mental health disorders.
4. Demonstrate clinical decision making when participating in the provision of care to patients with common mental health disorders.
5. Apply knowledge of pharmacology, psychopathology, nutrition, and established evidence-based practices in the provision of care for patients with common mental health disorders.
6. Use verbal and nonverbal communication that promotes caring, therapeutic relationships with patients and their families, as well as professional relationships with members of the healthcare team.
7. Use health information systems and patient care technologies in an effective and secure manner when assessing and monitoring patients with multiple mental health disorders.
8. Provide health- and safety-related education based on the identified needs of patients and their families.
9. Use organizational, time management, priority-setting, and decision-making skills in the provision of care to patients with common mental health disorders.
10. Implement strategies that provide a safe environment for patients, self, and others while supporting quality improvement initiatives.
11. Adhere to ethical, legal and professional standards in the provision of care for patients with common mental health disorders.

Course Content:
Role of the Nurse and Standards of Practice in Mental Health Nursing
Unit Objectives:
A. Discuss the role and responsibilities of mental health/psychiatric nurses.
B. Identify major trends in mental health nursing.
C. Describe the standards of practice of psychiatric and mental health nursing according to the American Nurses Association Statement on the Scope and Standards of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing Practice.

Content Topic:
   a. Role of the nurse and standards of practice for mental health nursing
   b. Current trends in mental health nursing

Mental Health and Mental Health Issues

Unit Objectives:
A. Compare and contrast criteria for mental health and mental illness.
B. Discuss legal issues that may arise during mental health treatment such as the patient’s right to receive treatment, the patient’s right to refuse treatment, the patient's right to informed consent.
C. Describe factors that affect an individual’s mental health.
D. Identify attributes or signs of mental health issues.
E. Discuss how age, ethnicity, gender, education, culture, and belief system can affect developing, experiencing, and recovering from psychiatric disorders.
F. Identify settings in which mental health treatment is offered.
G. Discuss each category of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders multiaxial system.
H. Compare and contrast a DSM-V-TR diagnosis with a nursing diagnosis.
I. Identify how cultural influences could affect making a DSM-V-TR diagnosis

Content Topics:
   a. Mental illness criteria
   b. Legal /ethical issues in the mental health treatment
   c. Mental health treatment settings
   d. Mental health and diversity
   e. DSM-V

Principles of Therapeutic Communication and Application in the Mental Health Setting

Unit Objectives:
A. Describe the nature and goals of the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship.
B. Identify three factors that can interfere with accurate communication between nurse and patient.
C. Demonstrate four techniques that can enhance communication, and discuss what makes them effective during the communication process.
D. Discuss differences between verbal and non-verbal communication.
E. Discuss the effect on the communication process when there is a lack of understanding of cultural differences.
F. Discuss how confrontation, immediacy, nurse self-disclosure, and role playing can be used by the nurse in a therapeutic relationship.
G. Identify when there is a need for boundaries set between nurse and patient.
H. Describe the importance of self-awareness in the nurse-patient relationship.
I. Analyze therapeutic and non-therapeutic communication techniques.

Content Topics:
   a. Therapeutic communication
b. The nurse-patient relationship

Therapeutic Modalities

Unit Objectives:
A. Describe the tenets behind the following therapeutic models: crisis intervention, client centered, cognitive behavioral therapy, psychoeducation.
B. Identify three types of crises and give an example of each.
C. Discuss primary goals and phases of crisis intervention.
D. Compare differences between primary, secondary, and tertiary intervention and appropriate interventions.
E. Identify areas to assess during crisis.
F. Identify basic principles of group work.
G. Describe the phases of group development.
H. Describe roles group members may adopt.
I. Discuss therapeutic factors that operate in all groups
J. Identify facilitating techniques used by the group leader.
K. Compare the characteristics of a healthy family functioning with a dysfunctional family functioning.
L. Identify several strategies for family intervention.
M. Describe the role of the nurse in family therapy.
N. Describe integrative care.
O. Describe various complementary and/or alternative therapies such as - massage, herbal medications, aromatherapy, acupuncture, acupressure, homeopathy, and chiropractic medicine.
P. Discuss how psychotropic drugs are used in mental health care.
Q. Describe how functions of the brain are altered by psychotropic drugs.
R. Identify major categories of psychotropic drugs and discuss the use, action, potential adverse and side effects, and nursing implications of the following:

Content Topics:

a. Antipsychotics (conventional, atypical)
b. Antidepressants (tricyclics, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) serotonin/norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (S/NRIs), monoamine oxidase inhibitors (MAOIs), atypical antidepressants)
c. Bipolar medications (mood-stabilizers, antipsychotics)
d. Sedative/hypnotics (benzodiazepines, benzodiazepine-like drugs, melatonin agonists, barbiturates)
e. Anxiolytics (benzodiazepines)
f. Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder drugs (amphetamines/dextroamphetamine, methylphenidate/dexamfetamine, methylxanthines, CNS stimulants,
g. Therapeutic treatment models
h. Crisis intervention
i. Complementary and alternative therapy in the mental health setting

Anxiety Disorders

Unit Objectives:
A. Identify predisposing factors of anxiety disorders.
B. Describe outcome criteria for each of the identified anxiety disorders.
C. Discuss the action, side effects, potential adverse reactions, and nursing implications for benzodiazepine medications.
D. Discuss coping strategies in the management of stress.
E. Describe clinical manifestations, goals, nursing interventions, and treatment of patients with anxiety disorders.
F. Explore the dynamics of anxiety disorders in the presence of other mental health disorders.

Content Topics:
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome
- Panic disorder
- Phobias
- Generalized anxiety disorders

### Mood Disorders

#### Unit Objectives:
A. Identify the main characteristics of selected mood disorders.
B. Describe biologic and psychosocial theories about the etiology of mood disorders.
C. Differentiate between normal grief reactions and pathological grief behaviors.
D. Describe the emotional, cognitive, behavioral, and physical symptoms associated with depression.
E. Describe three phases of treatment for mood disorders.
F. Identify outcomes, goals and planning for each phase of treatment for mood disorders.
G. Describe risk factors and clues that might signal suicidal thoughts.
H. Develop nursing interventions and communication strategies for patients with depression, mania, and suicide ideation.
I. Compare advantages, actions, side effects and nursing implications for mood stabilizing medications and antidepressants.
J. Discuss electroconvulsive therapy as used for mood disorders
K. Explore the dynamics of mood disorders in the presence of other mental health disorders.

Content Topics:
- Major depression
- Bipolar disorders
- Mania/hypomania
- Seasonal affective disorder
- Premenstrual dysphoric disorder

#### Personality Disorders

#### Unit Objectives:
A. Compare and contrast the main characteristics of the three clusters of personality disorders
B. Describe current treatment modalities for patients with personality disorders.
C. Describe the limitations in the use of medications to relieve symptoms associated with personality disorders.
D. Develop nursing interventions and communication strategies for patients with personality disorders.
E. Discuss the importance of setting and keeping clear boundaries when working with persons
with personality disorders.
F. Describe clinical manifestations, goals, nursing interventions, and treatment of patients with selected personality disorders.
G. Explore the dynamics of personality disorders in the presence of other mental health disorders.

Content Topics:
   a. Cluster A/ paranoid, schizoid, and schizotypal personality disorders
   b. Cluster B/ antisocial, borderline, and narcissistic personality disorders
   c. Cluster C/ dependent, obsessive-compulsive, avoidant personality disorders

Psychotic Disorders

Unit Objectives:
A. Define schizophrenia.
B. Describe the progression of symptoms from prodromal to the acute phase of schizophrenia.
C. Describe five basic categories of schizophrenia.
D. Differentiate among the three phases of schizophrenia regarding symptoms, focus of care, and needs for intervention.
E. Discuss non-pharmacological treatment modalities for patients with schizophrenia that may be beneficial.
F. Describe effective strategies of individual, group, and family therapies that may helpful for patients with schizophrenia and their families.
G. Describe three common problems associated with severe mental illness.
H. Discuss behavioral and psychological manifestations of severe mental illness in relation to the person's ability to function, their families, and others.
I. Identify evidence-based practices for the care of the severely mentally ill.
J. Discuss the importance of medication and the need for the severely mentally ill to adhere to the regimen
K. Discuss properties of the traditional and atypical antipsychotic drugs.
L. Describe clinical manifestations, goals, nursing interventions, and treatment of patients with selected psychotic disorders.
M. Explore the dynamics of psychotic disorders in the presence of other mental health disorders.

Content Topics:
   a. Target symptoms of schizophrenia
   b. Indications for use of medications
   c. Adverse effects/toxic effects of indicated medications
   d. Patient/family teaching

Abuse and Violence

Unit Objectives:
A. Describe the cycle of violence in reference to individual violence and family violence.
B. Describe personality characteristics of an abusive adult.
C. Identify factors that predispose a child or spouse to physical violence.
D. Describe legal responsibilities of health care providers in documentation and reporting of suspected or known family abuse.
E. Discuss assessment indicators and interventions for child, adult, and elder abuse.
**F.** Identify common reactions and nursing interventions for acute and long-term phases of rape-trauma syndrome.

**G.** Describe nursing interventions for prevention and management of aggressive behaviors.

**H.** Identify factors that may be useful in predicting violent behavior.

**Content Topics:**

a. State reporting systems and law  
b. Role of domestic shelters and advocacy groups  
c. Rape-trauma syndrome  
d. The cycle of violence  
e. Characteristics of the abuser

**Cognitive Impairment Disorders in the Older Adult**

**Unit Objectives:**

A. Discuss the demographics of the older population and the impact on mental health care.

B. Identify components of an assessment of the healthy geriatric patient and the patient with cognitive impairment.

C. Identify the clinical manifestations of a patient with Alzheimer’s disease.

D. Discuss identified behaviors, goals, and nursing interventions associated with mental health problems in the older adult.

E. Describe potential barriers to mental health care for the older adult.

F. Explore the dynamics of cognitive impairment disorders in the presence of other mental health disorders.

**Content Topics:**

a. Mental health care and the older adult  
b. Alzheimer’s disease – diagnosis and treatment  
c. Cholinesterase inhibitors  
d. Cognitive impairments with mental health co-morbidities

**Psychiatric Disorders of Children and Adolescents**

**Unit Objectives:**

A. Discuss factors that contribute to child and adolescent psychiatric disorders.

B. Describe treatment modalities for selected disorders of childhood and adolescence.

C. Describe the nurse’s role in administering medications used to treat psychiatric disorders in children and adolescence.

D. Describe clinical manifestations and intervention strategies for selected disorders that affect children and adolescents.

**Content Topics:**

a. Autism spectrum disorders  
b. Attention deficit hyperactive disorder  
c. Separation anxiety disorder  
d. Mood disorders  
e. Conduct disorder  
f. Adjustment disorders  
g. Discuss the medications for children and adolescents with mental health disorders
Community-based Mental Health Nursing

Unit Objectives:
A. Distinguish between goals and interventions of mental health care in the hospital and the community.
B. Describe the role of the nurse as a member of the interdisciplinary team in caring for chronically ill and/or homeless mentally ill in the community.
C. Discuss the continuum of psychiatric care from the acute care setting to the community setting.
D. Identify community resources for the chronically and/or homeless mentally ill.
E. Discuss barriers to mental health treatment in the community setting.

Content Topics:
- Nursing in the community mental health setting
- Providing care for the mentally ill in the community

Clinical Objectives:
A. Implement nursing care to patients, families, and groups across the lifespan from diverse backgrounds in the mental health setting that is compassionate, age and culturally appropriate and based on a patient's preferences, values and needs
B. Perform a general health assessment including physiological, psychological, sociological, and spiritual needs of patients and families across the lifespan experiencing unstable, acute mental health alterations in the mental health setting.
C. Use the nursing process to guide the delivery of patient care to achieve optimal outcomes
D. Use clinical decision making when providing mental health nursing care based on evaluation of patient needs.
E. Advocate for patients and families regarding mental health nursing care issues.
F. Use verbal and nonverbal communication that promotes caring, therapeutic relationships with mental health patients and their families.
G. Observe the inter-professional healthcare team in the provision of safe, quality patient-centered mental health care.
H. Use communication techniques that support sharing patient-related information with members of the healthcare team.
I. Identify reliable sources for locating best current evidence and clinical practice guidelines for use in the mental health setting.
J. Use best practice resources when developing individualized patient-centered plans of care.
K. Identify gaps between current patient outcomes and desired patient outcomes in a variety of mental health settings
L. Identify safety risks and environmental hazards in the mental health settings.
M. Use evidence-based information and patient care technology in the provision of safe, quality patient-centered care.
N. Implement strategies that protect the integrity of patient information when providing patient-centered care in the mental health setting.
O. Practice nursing in a professional, ethical, and legal manner while providing patient-centered, standard-based nursing care in the mental health setting.
   a. Identify professional standards of nursing practice that guide practice in the mental health setting.
b. Display professional accountability and responsibility in the mental clinical settings.
c. Describe how ethical principles and legal tenets guide nursing practice in the mental health setting.
d. Describe how regulatory guidelines and institution policies guide nursing practice in the mental health setting.

P. Describe how leadership, management, and priority-setting skills are used to support safe, quality patient-centered care.
a. Identify the nurse’s role in regard to delegating tasks to appropriate members of the health care team.

Q. Provide patient education
   a. Collect data to determine health-related education needs of real and simulated mental health patients.
   b. Develop a health-related teaching plan that addresses an identified education need for real and simulated mental health patients.
   c. Practice providing health-related education to real and simulated mental health patients.

Learning Assessments:
Course competencies will be assessed by the use of individual and group assignments, skill performance, quizzes, proctored exams, written or graphic presentations, participation, and a comprehensive final exam. Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) Comprehensive Testing is used in this course and may be used as the capstone final. The First Day Handout will provide specific details on assignments, exams, grading scale, course schedule, and class policies.

Instructional Materials:
Lippincott’s DocuCare Online v 0.2, Lippincott Williams & Wilkins, 2013, ISBN-13: 9781451186871

Guidelines for Requesting Accommodations Based on Documented Disability or Medical Condition
It is the intention of Highland Community College to work toward full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, to make instructional programs accessible to all people, and to provide reasonable accommodations according to the law.
Students should understand that it is their responsibility to self-identify their need(s) for accommodation and that they must provide current, comprehensive diagnosis of a specific disability or medical condition from a qualified professional in order to receive services. Documentation must include specific recommendations for accommodation(s). Documentation should be provided in a timely
manner prior to or early in the semester so that the requested accommodation can be considered and, if warranted, arranged.

In order to begin the process all students must complete the “Disabilities Self-Identification Form” at this link: https://highlandcc.edu/pages/disability-services.

This form can also be accessed at the Highland Community College homepage under Students Services/Student Resources/Disability Service or by contacting the Disabilities Coordinator.