

**Faculty of Health/Graduate Studies
School of Nursing**

COURSE: GS/NURS 5100: Fall 2018
Theoretical and Philosophical Foundations of Nursing Science
Sections A & D

COURSE WEBPAGES:

Daagu e-learning platform <https://daagu.uit.yorku.ca>

Moodle website: <https://moodle.yorku.ca/moodle/course/view.php?id=133200>

COURSE PROFESSOR:

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Email is the preferred method of correspondence. When corresponding by email, please use your York U email account and begin the subject with the course number and section as I have approximately 200 students this term.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on the major ontological (*study of reality-what is*) schools of thought, including the assumptions, concepts, and theories that integrate the breadth and depth of nursing knowledge across domains of practice. Students explore, analyze, and critique specific concepts, nursing theories, and theoretical approaches aligned with nursing practices and connect these with their own philosophical beliefs and values about nursing through dialogue, reflection, and aesthetic inquiry.

EXPANDED COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This introductory course lays a conceptual foundation for other courses in the master's program. Students have opportunities to explore questions that are relevant in the context of their own nursing practice or praxis and that connect with different ontological approaches, including: **critical theory, positivism/post-positivism, complexity, and human science**. Students explore essential understandings and critical questions relating to the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of nursing as a science and discipline. Students are supported to develop their own critical questions and to search for answers in a community of inquiry and diverse views.

The course will introduce and explore foundational philosophical and theoretical concepts from the four major ontological schools of thought underpinning nursing science that are Critical Theory, Post-positivism, Complexity, and Human Science. Consistent with Master's level expectations, the course provides students with a conceptual understanding of the philosophical and theoretical breadth of the discipline enabling students to understand complex issues and judgements that are based on the scientific foundations of nursing science and knowledge.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Upon successful completion of the course, students will demonstrate the ability to:

1. Differentiate assumptions for core ontological schools of thought in nursing science.
2. Compare practice approaches across four ontological schools of thought.
3. Analyze conceptual links among nursing concepts/theories and ontological paradigms.
4. Develop a critical awareness of current challenges for each school of thought for advancing the discipline of nursing.

FOCUS OF THE COURSE/TEACHING-LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

The course is based on the essential understandings that nursing science is informed by multiple philosophical traditions that contribute to the discipline. In this course, the 4 ontological schools of thoughts (critical theory, post-positivism, complexity/relationality and human science) will be explored. As you begin, you will learn that the different schools of thought have different beliefs, assumptions and ways of examining and understanding the same issue. They also can have different implications for practice, research and how each one can relate to issues such as relational nursing practice (particularly in the present healthcare environment), ethical issues and social justice. Through our discussions and exploration, you will examine how these ontological schools of thought relate to your own perspectives of knowing that guides your present practice and how this will evolve and change over the next 12 weeks.

To help organize the ideas to be explored in the course, the course content is grouped into four broad thematic areas, as follows.

1. *Philosophical assumptions, science, & nursing*
This thematic area explores how different sciences are aligned with different philosophical assumptions that guide the way knowledge is understood and created.
2. *Knowledge development, science, & nursing practice*
This thematic area examines how knowledge as developed in the different traditions (Critical Theory, Post-positivism, Complexity/Relationality, and Human Science) informs nursing practice.
3. *Practice & ethical relating in nursing*
This thematic area invites students to consider the various ways ethical issues shows up in nursing practice with persons and groups, as a leader, researcher, and educator. How do these issues relate to the different ontological schools of thought in nursing science? Ethical relating can be viewed as an interpersonal issue, a policy issue, a research happening, and a political reality.
4. *Controversies & intersections in nursing science*
In our very complex world there are many different ideas and issues to consider when it comes to nursing science. Controversies reflect the reality that there are many different views and ways of thinking. Intersections help us see the points when ideas collide or come together to make sense. Both controversies and intersections are important to our evolving understanding of nursing science.

OVERVIEW OF THE TEACHING LEARNING APPROACH:

Daagu e-learning platform at <https://daagu.uit.yorku.ca>

The course's teaching-learning activities are informed by complexity pedagogy. Complexity pedagogy proposes that all persons learn together in a community of inquiry. This type of learning moves away from a course with "fixed" massive amounts of content developed by the teacher and passive learning. Instead, this method encourages teachers and learners to come together to engage, share and question, in order to better understand the concepts being discussed, be exposed to multiple views and interpretations to develop our own emergent thinking, life-long learning and a thirst for inquiry. This requires all of us to be responsible for not only our own learning but the learning of our colleagues and classmates.

In order to go on this quest, the *Daagu* e-learning platform will be used based on complexity-based teaching learning. The name *Daagu* is inspired from a nomadic tribe in Ethiopia called the Afaris. In the book *Getting to Maybe*, Westley et al. (2007) describe how this tribe, "believe it is a sacred responsibility to listen and share *dagu*-a word that means information. Being nomads, Afari families travel from place to place seeking better conditions for their cattle and themselves. When they meet another Afari family their first priority is to share what they have seen and heard about the environment, about health issues, about political tensions, about new relationships. They collectively make sense of the patterns emerging. The Afaris do not believe they can control the patterns, but that if they can understand them deeply, they can work within them and potentially nudge them." (p. 133-134).

The *Dagu* story is a metaphor for our course in that this process will inform our collaborative teaching and learning and our shared commitment for finding new ways of understanding the patterns of our practice, our discipline, and healthcare overall. To do this, it is important to remember that, **THERE ARE NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS!** We are all coming together from different places with points of view and understanding as a result of our own contextual, cultural, historical and experiential backgrounds.

Below you will find some definitions that describe different ways learners gain understanding and knowledge using *Daagu* and complexity pedagogy approaches as a community of inquiry.

Complexity Pedagogy Approaches:

Diversity: Difference is needed for deep thinking and critical understanding. Seeing only one way misses the complexities of life and learning. When diverse views are shared, new insights often surface and propel thinking and problem-solving in new ways as difference is considered and conversed about.

Emergent Learning: As students and teachers inter-relate, offering different views and posing different questions, new learning emerges in the shifts of understandings and perspectives. All students and teachers can create teachable moments by introducing different ways of thinking about and acting in various situations.

Emotional Awareness: We often sense or feel things before interpreting and understanding come into play. We are also always in relation to others and our environments. As a result, there are patterns to these relationships that can lead to an awareness and knowing in our bodies and feelings that is not typically explored in health sciences. It is important to reflect

on these felt and emotional experiences in life and health care and how they connect with ideas and different ways of thinking and knowing in order to more fully develop knowledge and openness.

Non-linearity: Life, living systems, thinking, and responding are all evolving historically, experientially, reflectively, and non-reflectively, in stops and starts, transformative leaps, and sometimes with unexplainable emergence. Change in living systems and processes cannot be controlled in simple formulas or directives. Living systems are continuously evolving in unpredictable ways.

Perturbations: Disruptions of the status quo created by challenging assumptions, providing alternative views, and asking different questions that expand understandings. Perturbations may point out paradox, ambiguity, and critical aspects of familiar ways of knowing.

Recursion: An iterative process of revisiting what one knows in order to see with new eyes, or looping back with the intent to discover again.

Reflection: A process of contemplation about one's thinking and actions in specific situations in order to better understand the pros and cons of different ways of thinking and acting.

Relationality: This concept indicates the ways people, things, ideas, preferences, and patterns connect and interrelate. An idea can link with many different experiences, an event might link with many memories, and a concept can connect with particular ideas across multiple contexts in a web of relationality.

EVIDENCE OF LEARNING:

The course teaching-learning activities are designed: 1) to engage you in exploring, discovering, and clarifying how your ideas connect with nursing science and nursing scholarship through reading, writing, and discussing; and 2) to enable you to achieve the program objectives and course learning outcomes.

Due Dates and Percentage of Course Grade

Evidence of Learning		Due Date (by Midnight)	Percentage of Course Grade
1	Short Scholarly Paper	October 14, 2018	25%
2	Final Scholarly Paper	November 18, 2018	40%
3	Ongoing Participation/Self-Evaluation	December 4, 2018	35%

1. Short Scholarly Paper (25%) due October 14, 2018 (See Moodle for more information)

In this paper you will: a) select one core nursing concept that is best described by each ontological tradition (four different concepts in total); b) locate relevant scholarly articles in nursing showing how each concept has informed nursing theory development and/or was used to guide nursing practice or research **Maximum 6 pages, not including cover page and references (APA 6th Edition format).**

2. Final Scholarly Paper (40%) due November 18, 2018 (See Moodle for more information)

In this paper you will explore ONE selected nursing concept/phenomenon from the perspective of 3 of the 4 ontological traditions (Critical Theory, Post-positivism, Complexity, and Human Science). In doing so, you are to first address the history of the concept/phenomenon, how it has been defined [or evolved] over time, and then examine how it has informed and studied nursing practice through three of the 4 ontological views. **Maximum 8 pages, not including cover page and references (APA 6th Edition format)**

3. Participation (35%) due December 4, 2018 (See Moodle for more information)

There is a strong emphasis on collaborative learning in this course. All discussions over the 12 weeks will take place within the *Daagu* e-learning platform. Your grade will be based on the number of substantive postings/week; exploration and incorporation of readings and resources to support discussions; reflection of how your thinking and practice is changing in relation to your own and others' learning; application of complexity pedagogy approaches to guide your own and others' learning; and creativity in your postings (i.e. metaphors, images, YouTube, social media etc.).

On **December 4th** you will submit the completed participation evaluation rubric (found in Moodle) identifying your self-evaluation for each area of participation. You will also provide evidence and justifications of your performance throughout the course to substantiate your self-evaluation. **Maximum 2 pages double spaced and the completed self-evaluation rubric.**

****Please note**** the professor reserves the right to change the grade based on an end-of-term assessment and evaluation using the same criteria.

Grading:

The letter grade system is the fundamental system of assessment of course performance in graduate programs at York University. Grading of papers will be conducted in accordance with the Faculty of Graduate Studies regulations and standards (<http://gradstudies.yorku.ca/current-students/regulations/courses-grading/>) as below:

A+ Exceptional (90-100); A Excellent (85-89); A- High (84-80); B+ Highly Satisfactory (75-79); B Satisfactory (70-74); C Conditional (60-69); F Failure (0-59); I Incomplete.

A+ (Exceptional): Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques and exceptional skill and/or originality in the use of those concepts/techniques in satisfying the requirements of an assignment. 'Wow factor' present in several ways.

A- to A (High to Excellent): Thorough knowledge of concepts and/or techniques together with a high degree of skill and/or some elements of originality in satisfying the requirements of an assignment. 'Wow factor' present in at least one way.

The principle difference between an 'A+' and an 'A' or 'A-' assignment is that there are no identified areas for improvement in an 'A+' assignment and the creativity/innovation in A+ paper is evident in more than one way. The "Wow Factor" can be described as demonstrating excellence in overall understanding of the topics being discussed, original and creative thinking,

integration of the literature to support statements, well written, surprises and impresses the reader (in a good way) and a joy to read.

B+ to B (Highly Satisfactory to Satisfactory): The principle difference between an “A-” assignment and a “B+” assignment is in the quality of the discussion. A “B” grade is an assignment of good quality with no major weaknesses; it is similar to a “B+” assignment, but with less evidence of critical and analytical thinking.

C or less (Conditional): The principle difference between a “B” assignment and a “C” assignment is in the quality of the discussion, with the “C” assignment being more unclear than the “B” assignment. Also, a “C” assignment may have more errors in structure etc., than are acceptable.

Note: Some students think about assignments and papers as starting as 100% and then they lose marks for various reasons. Instead in this course, papers are submitted with no set value and earn grades according to the quality of YOUR work.

Assignment Submission:

Proper academic performance depends on students doing their work not only well, but on time. Accordingly, assignments for this course must be submitted to **Turnitin** (found on the Moodle site) by midnight on the due date specified for the assignment. All assignments must adhere to APA formatting (6th edition). There are multiple web sites to assist you in APA formatting. One comprehensive site can be found at:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/02/>

Lateness Penalty: Assignments received later than the due date will be penalized. Exceptions to the lateness penalty for extenuating circumstances such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., may be considered by the Course Director with supporting documentation (e.g., a doctor’s letter). Assignments submitted later than five calendar days without negotiation will not be accepted.

Late assignment deductions will be in place as follows:

1 day late (any time up to 24 hours after date/time due) 5% deducted from the assigned grade (e.g. mark of B+ would be reduced to B).

For each subsequent day late (each 24-hour period), the reduction increases as follows:

2 days late, 15%

3 days late, 30%

4 days late, 50%

5 or more days late, 100% (assignment given zero)

Extensions: Extensions are not normally granted and, if urgently required, an extension **MUST** be negotiated with me at least **48 hours** before the due date. Late grade penalties outlined in the syllabus will apply if an extension has not been granted. Documentation may be required.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AT YORK UNIVERSITY:

At York University, **academic honesty** is considered central to good scholarship. As faculty, we are committed to helping you to succeed and can offer many strategies to aid you in your pursuit of excellence. We recognize that you may experience pressure to achieve high grades, however, each of you has the final responsibility for ensuring that you maintain recognized standards of academic honesty. As a matter of university policy, all students must be held accountable for their actions in this respect. It's important for you to understand that consequences for failing to meet the standards of academic honesty can be personally and professionally devastating.

Students are **strongly encouraged** to read and adhere to the York University Senate Policy on Academic Honesty which is available at:

<http://secretariat-policies.info.yorku.ca/policies/academic-honesty-senate-policy-on/>

GUIDELINES FOR COURSE EXPERIENCE:

1. Positive interdependence: The group is connected by a common goal. For the class to succeed, all individuals must succeed.
2. Contribute to a respectful, welcoming, safe and inclusive learning environment that honours the knowledge and experiences of our diverse group of learners.
3. Individual accountability: Each of us is accountable for what we learn and for facilitating the learning of our classmates. (Please review the **Ongoing Participation Description** found on Moodle in **GS/NURS 5100 Resources to Get Started**)
4. Exchange of ideas and knowledge through substantive postings promotes continued learning.
5. Clarifying understanding of what each of us posts will result in consistency between all members' words and actions.
6. Respectfully and meaningfully recognize the contribution of others.
7. Posting any private or confidential content about clients, your practice setting, making disparaging comments about clinical sites, co-workers, instructors or students on social media sites, or posting audio or video recordings without express permission from the individual is prohibited. This includes any comments that are threatening, harassing, profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic or otherwise offensive.

Adapted from the College of Nurses' of Ontario *Practice Guidelines for Supporting Learners*, at http://www.cno.org/Global/docs/prac/44034_SupportLearners.pdf, and Vaughn, L., & Slinger, T. (2013). *Building a healthy work environment: A nursing resource team perspective*, 26, 70-77. doi:10.12927/cjnl.2013.23322. Retrieved from <http://www.longwoods.com/content/23322>

OUTLINE FOR WEEKLY CLASSES

**Week/
Date**

Theme/Content/Readings

Week 1
Sept 10-16

Part A: Welcome to NURS 5100

There are two parts to this week's class. In the first part I would like you to do the following, to get yourself more comfortable posting on the *Daagu* e-learning platform.

1. Ensure you have carefully read and reviewed the Course Outline!!
2. Follow the directions to register onto the Daagu e-learning platform outlined in the document *Login to Daagu Websire and Getting Started* found on Moodle under the section **GS/NURS 5100 Resources to Get Started**.
3. Once you have registered onto Daagu and created your profile (including a picture of yourself as your avatar), make your first posting completing the following:
 - Introduce yourself to the class by telling us who you are? What is important in your life? Where do you/did work?
 - Include your thoughts on going back to school and starting off with a philosophy course.
 - What you think of the course outline?
 - Post a picture (I like to find mind on Google Image) capturing how you feel right now.
 - Give a brief explanation of why you posted this picture.

****Please remember that there are NO RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS!
So be honest, but always respectful****

Part B: First Week Readings, Resources and Postings

To assist you in beginning this quest of inquiry, I am providing you with some articles and resources that helped me to begin to understand where philosophy originates from, the different ontological schools of thought in the nursing discipline and the language that is used to describe them.

First Week Readings and Resources:

This will be the only week there will be readings and resources provided. I am providing you some resources that are written in a language that is easier to understand to help you build your confidence and foundation of knowledge for this course. The videos are more lighthearted to help you get yourself wrapped around the concepts and hopefully help you begin to see that this is not an area to fear and you can most definitely apply this knowledge in your practice.

Videos and Internet Sites (I would start with these, but you don't have to).

1. What is Philosophy? Crash Course Philosophy #1. Retrieved from:
https://youtube.com/watch?v=1A_CAKYt3GY
This video begins to introduce you to the concepts related to philosophy. You do not have to watch the other Crash Course Philosophy Videos, unless you want to.

2. The research paradigm-methodology, epistemology and ontology-explained in simple language.

<http://salmapatel.co.uk/academia/the-research-paradigm-methodology-epistemology-and-ontology-explained-in-simple-language>

The information on this site breaks down the key concepts in a way that is easier to understand. You may find the video interesting, or not. It is your choice to whether you watch it.

3. There is a lot of new material and language to learn and you may be in need of a smile....
Monty Python-Philosophers World Cup
Retrieved from <https://youtube.com/watch?v=92vV3QGagck>

Readings

1. Carper, B. (1978). Fundamental patterns of knowing in nursing. Retrieved from http://samples.jbpub.com/9780763765705/65705_CH03_V1xx.pdf

This is a seminal article written in 1978 as the importance of nursing theories and identifying the patterns of knowledge in nursing was being recognized.

2. Scotland, J. (2012). Exploring the philosophical underpinnings of research: Relating ontology and epistemology to the methodology and methods of the scientific, interpretive, and critical research paradigms. *English Language Teaching*, 5 (9), 9-16. doi:10.5539/elt.v5n9p9

While this is not an article about nursing, it provides a good overview of the philosophical underpinnings of knowledge development.

3. McIntyre, M., & McDonald, C. (2013). Contemplating the fit and utility of nursing theory and nursing scholarship informed by the social sciences and humanities. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 36 (1), 10-17. doi: 10.1097/ANS.0b013e31828077bc
4. Hoeck, B. & Delmar, C. (2017). Theoretical development in the context of nursing-the hidden epistemology of nursing theory. *Nursing Philosophy*, 19 (1), e12196. <https://doi.org/10.1111/nup.12196>

This article describes the basic concepts and starts to raise important questions about evidence based practice.

Critical Questions to get you started:

The following questions will help guide your thinking, reflection and examination of your ideas within the thematic areas. The questions relate to the philosophical and theoretical underpinnings of nursing as a science and discipline for you to explore. While I don't expect you to answer all these questions in the first week, these are the type of questions you need to be asking yourself over the next 12 weeks. If you are wondering what to include in your posting, you can also refer to *Ongoing Participation Discussion* on Moodle **GS/NURS 5100**

Resources to Get Started.

1. Within a paradigm, what do the words, ontology, epistemology, methodology, and methods mean?
 2. What foundational ontologies, epistemologies and methods do each of the 4 philosophical/ontological traditions (critical theory, post-positivism, complexity/relationality and human science) within nursing science use? What are the similarities and differences (intersectionality)?
 3. What is the relationship between theory and philosophy?
 4. What are core values and concepts in existing nursing theories and how do they relate to the 4 ontological schools of thought in the nursing discipline?
 5. While science is one way to inform the nursing discipline, what are other ways that the nursing discipline is informed?
 6. How does knowledge enable ethical and unethical practices?
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Week 2
Sept 17-23

Some core readings and resources are provided (**See Moodle for GS/NURS 5100 Resources to Get Started**) as a **STARTING** point to facilitate you beginning to engage, question, and reflect. They are included to assist you in beginning to understand the 4 ontological schools of thought in the nursing discipline. However, these resources are only to get you started. You don't have to read them all. Pick and choose what interests you, jump from one topic to another.

until

Week 12
Nov 26-Dec

****Please note**** that there is an expectation that once you begin to be familiar with the course content and the *Daagu* platform, you will identify your own areas of interest to explore related to the course objectives, concepts and the 4 ontological schools of thought and thematic areas. You will then find resources to assist you in your own and other's learning through posting and discussing what you have found.

If you are wondering what to include in your posting, you can also refer to *Ongoing Participation Discussion* on Moodle **GS/NURS 5100 Resources to Get Started**.

Week 5
Oct 8-14

Reading Week (October 6-12) No postings required.

Short Scholarly Paper Due on Sunday October 14 by 11:59 pm. Submit paper on **Turnitin** found on our Moodle site

Week 10
Nov 12-18

Final Scholarly Paper Due on Sunday November 18 by 11:59 pm. Submit paper on **Turnitin** found on our Moodle Site

Week 12
Nov 26-Dec 4

Last Week, You made it!

Self-Evaluation is due on Tuesday December 4 by 11:59 pm. Submit self-evaluation on **Turnitin** on our Moodle Site.
