

## DEPARTMENT OF NURSING EDUCATION AND HEALTH STUDIES

### COURSE OUTLINE – Winter I 2026

#### NS 3270 (A3/L1/AC1/AC2): Mental Health and Wellness in Nursing – 6 (3-0-3) UT 180 Hours for 6 Weeks

Northwestern Polytechnic acknowledges that our campuses are located on Treaty 8 territory, the ancestral and present-day home to many diverse First Nations, Metis, and Inuit people. We are grateful to work, live and learn on the traditional territory of Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation, who are the original caretakers of this land.

We acknowledge the history of this land and we are thankful for the opportunity to walk together in friendship, where we will encourage and promote positive change for present and future generations.

|                      |                                                                      |                                                                          |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>   | Kelly McNaught, RN, MN<br>Course Leader<br>Lecture and Lab           | Tamara VanTassell, RN, MN<br>Clinical (Detox Unit)                       |
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| <b>OFFICE HOURS:</b> | By appointment.                                                      |                                                                          |

|                      |                                                                        |
|----------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>INSTRUCTOR:</b>   | Cary-Anne McTaggart, RN, MN<br>Clinical (Unit 11)                      |
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| <b>OFFICE HOURS:</b> |                                                                        |

**Note:** Students are expected to familiarize themselves with this course outline, the Undergraduate Nursing Programs Student Manual, and the NS 3270 myClass page online.

**CALENDAR DESCRIPTION:**

This course in mental health provides opportunities to acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote wellness through safe, ethical nursing practice in a variety of contexts. The focus will be on mental well-being throughout the lifespan. Learning experiences will provide students with an understanding of the mental health nursing process. The clinical hours listed are the total number of hours and will be offered over 6 weeks. Note: Available only to Nursing students.

**PREREQUISITE(S)/COREQUISITE:**

NS2160, NS2240, NS2250

**REQUIRED TEXT/RESOURCE MATERIALS:**

Students are responsible for obtaining the required course materials listed below. Failure to acquire these resources may limit a student's ability to meet course requirements and could negatively impact their success in the course and program.

Alberta Health Services. (2022, October 7). *Guide to Alberta's Mental Health Act*.

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/hp/mha/if-hp-mha-guide.pdf> (posted on myClass)

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). American Psychological Association. Or NWP's Learning Commons:

<https://libguides.nwpolytech.ca/apa/whatis>

Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. (2017). *Entry-to-Practice Mental Health and Addiction Competencies for Undergraduate Nursing Education in Canada*. [https://www.casn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Mental-health-Competencies\\_EN\\_FINAL-3-Oct-26-2015.pdf](https://www.casn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Mental-health-Competencies_EN_FINAL-3-Oct-26-2015.pdf) (posted on myClass)

Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing. (2017). *Entry-to-Practice Mental Health and Addiction Competencies for Undergraduate Nursing Education in Canada*. [https://www.casn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Mental-health-Competencies\\_EN\\_FINAL-3-Oct-26-2015.pdf](https://www.casn.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Mental-health-Competencies_EN_FINAL-3-Oct-26-2015.pdf) (posted on myClass)

Canadian Nurses Association. (2017). *Code of ethics for registered nurses*. <https://www.cna-aic.ca/-/media/cna/page-content/pdf-en/code-of-ethics-2017-edition-secure-interactive> (posted on myClass)

College of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2023). *Professional boundaries for registered nurses: Guidelines for the nurse-client relationship*. <https://nurses.ab.ca/media/wh2dakm2/professional-boundaries-guidelines-for-the-nurse-client-relationship-2022.pdf> (posted on myClass)

College of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2023). *Practice standards for registrants*.

<https://nurses.ab.ca/media/h5ff0jit/14-practice-standards-for-registrants-2023.pdf> (posted on myClass)

Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing (EAQ) 4th edition Next Gen is available through the NWP Polytechnic bookstore. This is a required online NCLEX prep resource. The EAQ will assist students with

preparing to write the NCLEX-RN registration exam. This resource will provide students with a 36-month online review/prep course to use as they progress through the BScN program.

Government of Alberta. (May 15, 2025). *Mental Health Act, RSA 2000, c M-13*. <https://kings-printer.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/M13.pdf> (posted on myClass)

Pollard, C. L., Jakubec, S. L., & Jordan Halter, M. (2023). *Varcarolis's Canadian psychiatric mental health nursing: A clinical approach* (3rd ed.). Elsevier Canada.

Vallerand, A. H., Sanoski, C. A., & Quiring, C. (2020). *Davis' drug guide for nurses* (17th ed.). F.A. Davis. Or NWP's paid subscription Canadian Pharmacists Association. (2024). *CPS: The Canadian standard for drug and therapeutic content*. <https://www.myrxtx.ca/search>

**\*All previously required textbooks and resources will be used as references throughout the program. Please retain your copies as they may be required in future courses.**

**DELIVERY MODE(S): In-person (classroom)** - This type of course will be delivered on campus in a specific classroom, which will be indicated on your timetable. Students are expected to attend labs, lectures, and clinical shifts in person.

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote wellness through safe, ethical nursing care in a variety of mental health contexts.
2. Apply relevant concepts to mental health well-being throughout the lifespan.
3. Utilize all aspects of the nursing process in a variety of mental health contexts.
4. Transform prior learning of therapeutic communication and relational practice.
5. Appreciate the ethical obligations of nurses working with vulnerable and diverse populations.

#### **TRANSFERABILITY:**

Please consult the Alberta Transfer Guide for more information. You may check to ensure the transferability of this course at the Alberta Transfer Guide main page <http://www.transferalberta.alberta.ca>.

**\*\* A grade of D or D+ may not be acceptable for transfer to other post-secondary institutions. Students are cautioned that it is their responsibility to contact the receiving institutions to ensure transferability.**

#### **EVALUATIONS:**

The final grade is based on the following assessments. There are no additional assignments or marks provided in the course.

| Course Components                                                                                                                                          | Due Dates                                                                                                            | Weight              | Learning Outcomes # |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Safemedicate Module Exams                                                                                                                                  | January 6, 2026                                                                                                      | Pass/Fail           | 1                   |
| Suicide Prevention, Risk Assessment, and Management (SPRAM) Modules                                                                                        | January 11, 2026, by 2359h                                                                                           | Pass/Fail           | 1-5                 |
| Knowledge Checks                                                                                                                                           | Every Sunday by 2359h                                                                                                | 10%                 | 1-3                 |
| Journaling Assignment                                                                                                                                      | January 25, 2026, by 2359h<br>February 8, 2026, by 2359h                                                             | 10%<br>10%          | 1-2, 4-5            |
| Student-Led Simulation Assignment:<br>- Part A: Teaching Plan<br>- Simulation Recording<br>- Part B: Self-Reflection<br>- Part C: Peer Simulation Critique | January 30, 2026, by 2359h<br>February 1, 2026, by 2359h<br>February 6, 2026, by 0800h<br>February 9, 2026, by 2359h | 20%<br><br>5%<br>5% | 1-5                 |
| Final Exam                                                                                                                                                 | February 9, 2026                                                                                                     | 30%                 | 1-3                 |
| Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing (EAQ) Modules:<br>- Mental Health Disorders and Addictions<br>- Treatment of Mental Health Disorders                            | February 13, 2026, by 2359h<br>February 13, 2026, by 2359h                                                           | 5%<br>5%            | 1-3<br>1-3          |
| Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT):<br>- Midterm<br>- Final                                                                                                    | January 23, 2026, by 0800h<br>February 13, 2026, by 0800h                                                            | Pass/Fail           | 1-5                 |

As part of NWP's commitment to academic integrity, all written assignments submitted by students will be reviewed using Turnitin software, an online plagiarism detection tool, to verify originality and ensure academic integrity. Turnitin compares student work to a vast database of academic sources, publications, and previously submitted assignments to identify potential instances of plagiarism or improper citation(s). By enrolling in this course, students acknowledge and consent to the use of Turnitin for assignment submissions.

Students with exam-related accommodations must register them in Accommodate by the deadline.

#### **Safemedicate Modules Examinations:**

Year 3 students enrolled in NS 3270 will be tested on the following:

- Essential Skills
- Body Surface
- IV Therapy

Students who do not achieve 90% in any of the tested modules will be required to re-write the exam for that module. Students will have three opportunities to achieve 90% on all Safemedicate module exams. If a student is not able to achieve 90% after the third attempt, they will not be able to attend the clinical

course and may be asked to withdraw from the program. If a student returns to the nursing program after a program interruption, and a different medication calculation program has been instituted, the student will be responsible for purchasing the new program and writing the medication math calculation exam that is currently being used.

### **Suicide Prevention, Risk Assessment, and Management (SPRAM) Modules:**

SPRAM is an eLearning series consisting of 9 modules that respond to the foundational learning needs of health practitioners working in Addiction and Mental Health (AMH). The content supports developing foundational competence in suicide prevention, risk assessment, and managing individuals at-risk for suicide. The SPRAM is accessed through your AHS MyLearningLink. This is a pass/ fail component. Upon completion, submit a copy to the drop box on myClass.

### **Knowledge Checks:**

Students will complete timed, open-book quizzes on myClass every week on topics covered in the course. The purpose of the knowledge checks is to reinforce key concepts, encourage timely engagement with course readings, and promote active learning. The quizzes will provide immediate feedback to students on their understanding of the material and highlight areas for further study.

### **Journaling Assignment:**

Students will complete a journaling assignment designed to promote self-reflection, critical thinking, and professional growth. Through reflective writing, students will process their experiences, link theory to practice, and evaluate their use of therapeutic communication and interventions. Journaling provides a structured opportunity for students to explore their emotional responses, consider ethical and professional issues, and identify areas for ongoing development. This process supports deeper learning, enhances clinical reasoning, and fosters the self-awareness necessary for effective mental health nursing practice.

### **Student-Led Simulation Assignment:**

The purpose of the student-led simulation assignment is to provide nursing students with an opportunity to integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical skills through the development and facilitation of realistic, evidence-informed mental health scenarios. This assignment fosters critical thinking, clinical judgment, communication, and collaboration while enhancing students' confidence and competence in conducting mental health assessments, applying therapeutic communication techniques, and reflecting on professional practice within a safe and supportive learning environment.

The assignment is divided into three parts:

#### **Part A: Student-Led Simulation: Teaching Plan (Group Assignment)**

With a partner (ideally from the same clinical group), students will design a mental health simulation focused on a specific mental health or substance use disorder. Each pair of students will complete and submit a Student-Led Simulation: Teaching Plan Template (posted on myClass) together. The teaching plan will outline the learning objectives for the student-led

simulation, the patient's mental health diagnosis and clinical focus, the patient's profile and presenting situation, the scene setup, the patient's role, the nurse's role, and prebriefing. Both students in each pair will receive the same grade for the Student-Led Simulation Teaching Plan.

**Note:** After completing the teaching plan, each pair of students will need to record themselves acting out the simulation. The students' recording will need to demonstrate the components outlined in the teaching plan. The recordings will be reviewed during the lab to allow students to critique and reflect on each pair's simulation scenario.

### **Part B: Student-Led Simulation: Self-Reflection**

After developing and participating in the student-led simulation, each student will **independently** complete a Student-Led Simulation: Self-Reflection (posted on myClass). The self-reflection will support emotional insight, clinical growth, and ongoing development of therapeutic communication and professional presence.

### **Part C: Peer Critique & Reflection**

Students will have the opportunity to review their peers' simulation recordings and will complete a Peer Critique and Reflection (posted on myClass) for each. The peer critique and reflection will focus on identifying effective strategies used during the simulation and areas for improvement, and lessons gained from observing others engage in therapeutic mental health care.

### **Final Exam:**

Students will complete a two-hour final exam that assesses all major topics covered in the course. Student absences from the exam will be graded as zero. A physician's note will be required for absences due to illness. A student who has missed a final exam because of incapacitating mental and/or physical illness or other extenuating circumstances must provide a notice of absence and a physician's sick note when applicable. Unexcused student absences from this exam will be graded as zero. Please see the Final Examination Policy at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/leadership/policies/display?ID=37>

### **Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT):**

Evaluations of the student's clinical performance will be completed using the clinical assessment tool (CAT) (posted on myClass). Students will be required to complete and submit a self-assessment using the CAT, on specified dates, along with examples of how they met the requirements for each of the domains from clinical practice. At midterm, the student will complete the midterm sections, providing 2-3 examples of how they are meeting each competency or how they will continue to work on meeting the competency. A formative and written CAT will be completed by the clinical instructor and provided to the student at the end of the course.

**A pass on the Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT) requires the student to demonstrate competence and achievement of a PASS in each of the six domains. A FAIL on any part of the Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT) will result in a course failure.**

**Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing (EAQ) Modules:**

Adaptive quizzes using the Elsevier platform are utilized throughout the BScN Program. Modules specific to mental health have been assigned at the *Intermediate Mastery* level. This is to increase knowledge, identify gaps in knowledge, and become adept at this testing method, which is used to access professional registration post-graduation. The modules will open on the course start date and the course code to register will be posted on myClass.

**Note:** Students who have completed the modules specific to mental health assigned for this course, and have reached an *Intermediate Master* level, will be required to complete a minimum of 50 questions for each module.

**GRADING CRITERIA:**

Please note that most universities will not accept your course for transfer credit **IF** your grade is **less than C-**.

**Grading Chart for courses with Alpha Grading:**

| Alpha Grade | 4-point Equivalent | Percentage Guidelines |  | Alpha Grade | 4-point Equivalent | Percentage Guidelines |
|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------|--|-------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| A+          | 4.0                | 95-100                |  | C+          | 2.3                | 67-69                 |
| A           | 4.0                | 85-94                 |  | C           | 2.0                | 63-66                 |
| A-          | 3.7                | 80-84                 |  | C-          | 1.7                | 60-62                 |
| B+          | 3.3                | 77-79                 |  | D+          | 1.3                | 55-59                 |
| B           | 3.0                | 73-76                 |  | D           | 1.0                | 50-54                 |
| B-          | 2.7                | 70-72                 |  | F           | 0.0                | 00-49                 |

**COURSE SCHEDULE/TENTATIVE TIMELINE:**

| Date                | Topic                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| January 6-9, 2026   | <b>Orientation:</b><br>General NS 3270 Orientation/Mental Status Examination<br>Safemedicate Module Examinations<br>Detox and Unit 11 Orientations<br>Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NVCi)<br>Code White Simulation & Restraints |
| January 12-16, 2026 | <b>Lecture:</b> Anxiety & Related Disorders<br><b>Lab:</b> Depressive Disorders<br><b>Clinical</b> (Please refer to clinical schedule)                                                                                            |
| January 19-23, 2026 | <b>Lecture:</b> Bipolar Disorders                                                                                                                                                                                                 |

|                     |                                                                                                                                                              |
|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                     | <b>Lab:</b> Schizophrenia Spectrum & Other Psychotic Disorders<br><b>Clinical</b> (Please refer to clinical schedule)                                        |
| January 26-30, 2026 | <b>Lecture:</b> Psychoactive Substance Use Disorders & Treatment<br><b>Lab:</b> Personality Disorders<br><b>Clinical</b> (Please refer to clinical schedule) |
| February 2-6, 2026  | <b>Lecture:</b> Feeding and Eating Disorders<br><b>Lab:</b> Student-Led Simulations<br><b>Clinical</b> (Please refer to clinical schedule)                   |
| February 9-13, 2026 | <b>Lecture:</b> Student-Led Simulations<br><b>Lab:</b> Final Examination<br><b>Clinical</b> (Please refer to clinical schedule)                              |

#### **REQUIRED CLINICAL EXPERIENCES:**

Students must achieve a PASS on the Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT) to pass the course.

#### **Clinical Practice Preparation:**

Professional responsibility for nursing students includes clinical practice preparation related to evidence-informed practice and patient safety. Preparation includes appropriate understanding, synthesis, and integration of relevant knowledge. To be adequately prepared for clinical experiences, students will participate in activities outside of their scheduled clinical course hours. Activities can include specific clinical patient preparation, clinical site orientation, and review of the textbook and relevant articles. Clinical practice preparation is required in addition to direct course hours. Students who are not adequately prepared to provide safe and competent patient care will not participate in clinical activities. Being unprepared for clinical practice demonstrates unprofessional behavior and will be reflected in the student's clinical assessment.

Professional responsibility for nursing students also includes clinical shifts. **All clinical absences must be reported to their clinical instructor AND the clinical agency prior to the commencement of the clinical shift. Students are responsible to consult with their clinical instructor to make up for missed clinical shifts.** Unexplained clinical absences demonstrate unprofessional behavior and will be reflected in the student's clinical assessment and may put the student at risk for failure.

#### **Clinical Practice:**

Clinical practice will take place in agencies dealing with mental health and/or addiction issues in acute care psychiatric settings. In the event of an **unavoidable absence**, students are **required to notify the clinical instructor and clinical site as soon as possible.**

##### **Acute Care Psychiatry (Unit 11):**

- The student will be directly supervised by a clinical instructor and will collaborate with the multi-disciplinary team in consultation with the instructor to learn and practice the art of caring for individuals with acute variances in mental health.
- The student is responsible for reviewing the Mental Status Examination (MSE) and mental health disorders, along with relevant nursing management and psychotherapeutics.

- Alberta Health Services (AHS) and NWP identification must always be worn. The dress code is modest casual wear that aligns with the AHS dress code. Blue jeans, tight pants, shorts, exposed midriffs, and open-toed shoes are not permitted.

#### **Detoxification Unit (Northern Addictions Centre):**

- The student will be directly supervised by a clinical instructor and will collaborate with the multi-disciplinary team in consultation with the instructor to learn and practice the art of caring for individuals with acute variances in mental health who have a history of substance use.
- The student is responsible for reviewing the Mental Status Examination (MSE), the Open Education Resource document available on MyClass, common mental health disorders, the trauma-informed toolkit, and familiarize yourself with therapeutic communication and harm reduction principles.
- Alberta Health Services (AHS) and NWP identification must always be worn. Do not wear a tag with your last name displayed. The dress code is modest casual wear that aligns with the AHS dress code. Blue jeans, tight pants, shorts, exposed midriffs, and open-toed shoes are not permitted.

#### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Students should refer to the Policy on Student Rights and Responsibilities at:

<https://www.nwpolytech.ca/leadership/policies>

**\*\*Note:** All Academic and Administrative policies and procedures are available on the same page.

#### **STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT:**

Academic conduct will not be tolerated. For a more precise definition of academic misconduct and its consequences, refer to the Student Rights and Responsibilities policy available

at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/leadership/policies>

**\*\*Note:** All Academic and Administrative policies and procedures are available on the same page.

#### **Course-Specific AI Guidelines:**

To align with institutional standards and support student learning, the following applies:

- **Permitted Uses** (with disclosure):
  - Brainstorming ideas.
  - Grammar/spelling checks or rephrasing for clarity.
  - Outlining sections or organizing content structure.
- **Prohibited Uses:**
  - Using AI to generate full assignments or clinical content without substantial revision and original contribution.
  - Submitting AI-generated content as your own work without disclosure.
- **Mandatory Disclosure:**

For any permitted AI use, include a statement in your assignment such as:

*"I used [tool name] to [purpose, e.g., brainstorm ideas / rephrase sentences]. I reviewed and revised the output to ensure it reflects my own clinical knowledge and meets the assignment requirements."*

If students are unsure whether their intended AI use is appropriate, they need to ask the instructor **before** submitting their work.

Students are encouraged to refer to NWP's Student Rights & Responsibilities and Academic Misconduct Procedure for detailed information on misconduct definitions and penalties.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

#### **Important Dates:**

Students are to refer to the 2025-2026 *Important Dates* at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/leadership/registrar/important-dates> for important academic and program-specific dates and deadlines for the upcoming academic year.

#### **Nursing Program Policies:**

Students are to refer to the 2025-2026 *Northwestern Polytechnic Academic Calendar* at <https://www.nwpolytech.ca/programs/academic-calendar#/content/67c08c95ec4a8de317429896> and the *University of Alberta Collaborative Baccalaureate Nursing Program with Northwestern Polytechnic Student Handbook* at <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1eT5ZtjnsFn8oGk9jdu-Rh2eZoRKs-x6-s3Edy0lFQqU/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.mg635bag4vv> for specific nursing program policies that may pertain to the course.

#### **Course Material and Announcements:**

The NWP Faculty of Nursing creates a myClass site for all undergraduate nursing courses. Students are expected to access and become familiar with their myClass site at the beginning of each course and to access their myClass site regularly throughout the course. Failure to do so may result in students missing important course-related information, resources, instructor feedback, and announcements. General NWP Faculty of Nursing (FON) and course announcements will be made on myClass.

#### **Assignment Policy:**

All assignments, examinations, and quizzes weighted 10% or greater must be completed to obtain credit in the course and be permitted to write the final examination, if applicable.

Students are expected to make every effort to complete assignments on time. Assignment submissions are expected on the date determined by the faculty. If extensions are necessary, please ask your instructor. The granting of extensions is at the discretion of the instructor. Late assignments will have 5% of total marks (or one letter grade) for the assignment deducted for each day/partial day (including weekend days) beyond the due time. For example, a paper marked as B+ would receive an adjusted grade of B if handed in one day late. After 5 days, a grade of 0 will be awarded to the assignment. Papers/assignments may not be rewritten for a higher grade. When submitting assignments

electronically, it is the student's responsibility to ensure the assignment has been received. Concerns regarding grading are to be discussed with the faculty member involved.

**Fitness to Practice:**

As students studying in the health profession, it is important to assess your fitness to practice before and during each clinical day as part of your professional responsibility. Please review the CRNA Requisite Skill List from pages 5 to 9 and the Faculty of Nursing Fitness to Practice: Implications for Undergraduate Nursing Students document as posted on the NS 3270 myClass site or at this website: <https://www.ualberta.ca/nursing/media-library/fitness-to-practice-and-requisite-skills-and-abilities-uofa-undergraduate-nursing-may-2021.pdf> to identify if any circumstances may limit you from performing care for patients/clients. If you have concerns about your fitness to practice, contact the NS3270 course leader and your clinical instructor.

**Specialized Support and Disability Services:**

Students who require accommodations in this course due to disability affecting mobility, vision, hearing, learning, or mental or physical health are advised to discuss their needs with NWP's Student Services and the course instructor.