



**COWLEY COLLEGE  
& Area Vocational Technical School**

**COURSE PROCEDURE FOR**

**LEGAL AND ETHICAL ISSUES IN HEALTHCARE  
ALH5253 3 Credit Hours**

**Student Level:**

This course is open to students on the college level in either the Freshman or Sophomore year.

**Catalog Description:**

**ALH5253 - Legal and Ethical Issues in Healthcare (3 hrs.)**

This course is designed to help the student gain an understanding of legal and ethical issues faced by health care practitioners. Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to define ethics, describe contemporary legal and ethical issues in healthcare, and describe patient rights.

**Prerequisites:**

None.

**Controlling Purpose:**

This course is designed to help the student gain an understanding of legal and ethical issues faced by health care practitioners.

**Learner Outcomes:**

Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to define ethics, describe contemporary legal and ethical issues in healthcare, and describe patient rights.

**Units Outcomes and Clock Hours of Instruction for Core Curriculum:**

The following outline defines the minimum core content not including the final examination period. Instructors may add other material as time allows.

Evaluation Key:

- A = All major and minor goals have been achieved and the achievement level is considerably above the minimum required for doing more advanced work in the same field.
- B = All major goals have been achieved, but the student has failed to achieve some of the less important goals. However, the student has progressed to the point where the goals of work at the next level can be easily achieved.
- C = All major goals have been achieved, but many of the minor goals have not been achieved. In this grade range, the minimum level of proficiency represents a person

who has achieved the major goals to the minimum amount of preparation necessary for taking more advanced work in the same field, but without any major handicap of inadequacy in his background.

- D = A few of the major goals have been achieved, but the student's achievement is so limited that he is not well prepared to work at a more advanced level in the same field.
- F = Failing, will be computed in GPA and hours attempted.
- N = No instruction or training in this area.

**UNIT 1: KBOR ALIGNED COMPETENCIES**

Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will be able to describe legal and ethical issues in healthcare.

| A | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the legal system in the United States  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the use of the health records as a legal document  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Examine the concept of patient's rights and the role that healthcare professionals play in protecting these rights                              |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Distinguish among the variety of regulations affecting health care including HIPAA, AIDS/HIV, mental health and drug and alcohol health records |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Explain the different types of consents   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Explore the role that health professionals play in the legal environment  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify the essential elements for establishing negligence   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Justify various positions on ethical issues in healthcare   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Summarize the legal and ethical issues involving electronic health records  |

**UNIT 2: INTRODUCTION TO ETHICS**

Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of ethics.

| A | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies  |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Explain what ethics is, its importance, and its application to ethical dilemmas.             |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the concepts of morality, codes of conduct, and moral judgments.                    |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Understand relevant "ethical theories and principles."                                       |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe virtue ethics and values and how they more clearly describe one's moral character.  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Explain why courage is often considered to be the "ladder on which all other virtues mount." |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe why there is a declining trust in the politics of health care.                      |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Understand how religious ethics can affect one's moral character.                            |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Explain the concept of "situational ethics" and how changes in circumstances                 |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  | can alter one's behavior.  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Describe the concepts of "ethical relativism" and one's "moral compass." |

| <b>UNIT 3: CONTEMPORARY ETHICAL DILEMMAS</b>   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of ethics. |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| A  | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies   |
|  |   |   |   |   |   | Better understand ethical concepts and how they can be applied in the resolution of health care ethical dilemmas.   |
|  |   |   |   |   |   | Have a better understanding of the following common ethical dilemmas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abortion</li> <li>• AIDS</li> <li>• Artificial insemination</li> <li>• Organ donations</li> <li>• Research, experimentation, and clinical trials</li> <li>• Sterilization</li> <li>• Wrongful birth, wrongful life, and wrongful conception</li> <li>• Surrogacy</li> <li>• Human genetics</li> </ul>  |
|  |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the human struggle to survive.   |
|  |   |   |   |   |   | Explain the issues involved in the following end-of-life dilemmas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Euthanasia</li> <li>• Assisted suicide</li> <li>• Oregon's Death with Dignity Act</li> <li>• Patient Self-Determination Act of 1990</li> <li>• Advance directives (e.g., living will, durable power of attorney)</li> <li>• Surrogate decision making</li> <li>• Futility of treatment</li> <li>• Withdrawal of treatment</li> <li>• Do-not-resuscitate orders</li> </ul> |

| <b>UNIT 4: INTRODUCTION TO LAW</b>  |   |   |   |   |   |                                |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|--------------------------------|
| Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of the law. |   |   |   |   |   |                                |
| A   | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies          |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify and explain tort law. |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  | Identify and describe criminal law and how it applies to health professionals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal trial</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Manslaughter</li> </ul>   |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Describe the elements of negligence and how they apply to health professionals.   |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Identify and describe intentional torts and how they apply to health professionals, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assault and battery</li> <li>• False imprisonment</li> <li>• Defamation of character</li> <li>• Invasion of privacy</li> <li>• Infliction of mental distress</li> </ul> |

**UNIT 5: INTRODUCTION TO LAW**  
Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of the law.

| A | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify and explain tort law.  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify and describe criminal law and how it applies to health professionals, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criminal trial</li> <li>• Fraud</li> <li>• Manslaughter</li> </ul>   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the elements of negligence and how they apply to health professionals.   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify and describe intentional torts and how they apply to health professionals, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assault and battery</li> <li>• False imprisonment</li> <li>• Defamation of character</li> <li>• Invasion of privacy</li> <li>• Infliction of mental distress</li> </ul> |

**UNIT 6: HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS' ETHICAL AND LEGAL ISSUES**  
Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of the law.

| A | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Understand how ethics and the law impact health care professionals. |

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|  |  |  |  |  |  | Recognize similarities in the various professional codes of ethics.  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Understand how ethical and legal issues described in any single case have applicability to the various health professions. |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Explain the difference between the certification and licensure of a health care professional.                              |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Describe the principles of medical ethics.   |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | Discuss the credentialing process for physicians.  |

**UNIT 7: PATIENT RIGHTS, PATIENT CONSENT, & PATIENT ABUSE**

Outcomes: Upon completion of the unit, the student will gain an understanding of the law.

| A | B | C | D | F | N | Specific Competencies   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe and understand patient rights.   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe and understand patient responsibilities.   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe a patient's right to self-determination.   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe consent and its various aspects, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed consent</li> <li>• Consent and ethical codes</li> <li>• Assessing capacity to consent</li> <li>• Adequacy of consent</li> <li>• Proof of consent</li> <li>• Authorization of consent</li> <li>• Implied consent</li> <li>• Right to refuse treatment</li> <li>• Statutory consent</li> </ul> |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Understand the pervasiveness of senior and child abuse.   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Identify the signs of abuse.  |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | Describe the reporting requirements of abuse.   |

**Projects Required:**

As assigned by the instructor.

**Textbook:**

Contact Bookstore for current textbook.

**Materials/Equipment Required:**

None

**Attendance Policy:**

Students should adhere to the attendance policy outlined by the instructor in the course syllabus.

**Grading Policy:**

The grading policy will be outlined by the instructor in the course syllabus.

**Maximum class size:**

Based on classroom occupancy

**Course Time Frame:**

The U.S. Department of Education, Higher Learning Commission and the Kansas Board of Regents define credit hour and have specific regulations that the college must follow when developing, teaching and assessing the educational aspects of the college. A credit hour is an amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally-established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester hour of credit or an equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time. The number of semester hours of credit allowed for each distance education or blended hybrid courses shall be assigned by the college based on the amount of time needed to achieve the same course outcomes in a purely face-to-face format.

**Refer to the following policies:**

[402.00 Academic Code of Conduct](#)

[263.00 Student Appeal of Course Grades](#)

[403.00 Student Code of Conduct](#)

**Disability Services Program:**

Cowley College, in recognition of state and federal laws, will accommodate a student with a documented disability. If a student has a disability which may impact work in this class and which requires accommodations, contact the Disability Services Coordinator.