This course supports the assessment for SKT2. The course covers 4 competencies and represents 3 competency units.

Introduction

Nurses are increasingly being asked to gather data to learn the answers to questions that affect their professional practice. This course will expose you to the principles of scientific inquiry used in the study of professional problems.

Part of a nurse’s responsibility is not only becoming familiar with the relevant literature, but also having the capacity to add to it.

Watch the following video for an introduction to this course:

Competencies

This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 4 competencies:

- **Competency 508.2.1: Purpose of Literature Review**
  The graduate understands the purpose of conducting a literature review and understands its relationship to educational or healthcare research and practice.

- **Competency 508.2.2: Topic Selection**
  The graduate understands how to select appropriate research topics and research paradigms.

- **Competency 508.2.3: Resource Identification, Evaluation, and Selection**
  The graduate identifies, evaluates, and utilizes information resources in order to investigate specific research topics.

- **Competency 508.2.5: Develop a Literature Review**
  The graduate understands how to organize and develop a thorough and coherent literature review.

Nursing Dispositions Statement

Please review the [Statement of Nursing Dispositions](#).

Course Instructor Assistance

As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course instructors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts, mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course instructors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course instructor is the key to their success. Course instructors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you're studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don't work out on your first try, course instructors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You
should expect to work with course instructors for the duration of your coursework, so you are welcome to contact them as soon as you begin. Course instructors are fully committed to your success!

**Preparing for Success**

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Watch the following video for additional information on the Preparing for Success section:

*Note: View the video in full screen at 720p for best results.*

**Learning Resources**

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.

**Automatically Enrolled Learning Resources**

You will be automatically enrolled at the activity level for the following learning resources. Simply click on the links provided in the activities to access the learning materials.

**VitalSource E-Texts**

The following textbooks are available to you as e-texts within this course. You will be directly linked to the specific readings required within the activities that follow.


*Note: These e-texts are available to you as part of your program tuition and fees, but you may purchase hard copies at your own expense through a retailer of your choice. If you choose to do so, please use the ISBN listed to ensure that you receive the correct edition.*

**Other Learning Resources**

You will use the following learning resource for this course.

**APA Formatting with Purdue OWL**

Successful completion of this course requires an understanding and application of proper APA formatting. Please review the [Purdue OWL APA Formatting and Style Guide](#) for formatting guidelines and solutions for a range of citation types. If you find yourself in need of additional information on APA formatting, you are welcome to purchase a copy of the most recent edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association at your own expense.
Nursing Standards
You will be able to access Nursing Professional Standards as they apply to your program through the WGU Library. Please access these documents at the following website:

- **Nursing Standards E-Reserves**

Starting Your Research WGU Library Guide
You will access this research guide in the activities of this course. Please review the Starting Your Research guide for help with finding a topic and using the library.

**Purpose of Literature Review and Topic Selection**

One of the most rewarding elements of graduate school is identifying a real-world problem, creating its solution, and conducting either research or an evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the solution. Prerequisite to that, and supporting it throughout, is a thorough review and synthesis of the relevant literature or research.

You will study to understand the purpose of a literature review, the three research paradigms, and different research approaches in order to identify an appropriate research topic. You will also learn the characteristics of good topics so that you can select a topic that is manageable and of interest to you.

Watch the following video for an introduction to **Module 2: Purpose of Literature Review and Topic Selection**.

**Research Types and Literature Review**
You will become familiar with the purpose of a literature review. A good understanding of types of research and approaches will help you identify an appropriate topic for research.

This topic addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 508.2.1: Purpose of Literature Review**
  The graduate understands the purpose of conducting a literature review and understands its relationship to educational or healthcare research and practice.

- **Competency 508.2.2: Topic Selection**
  The graduate understands how to select appropriate research topics and research paradigms.

**Reading About Researching and Reviewing Literature**

Use the following questions to guide your reading:

- What are the major steps involved in conducting a research study?
- What is the purpose of literature review?
- What are the steps of conducting a literature review?

Read the following chapter in *Advanced Nursing Research*:
• **chapter 1 ("Identifying a Research Topic")**

Read the following chapter in *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*:

• **chapter 2 ("How Do You Find and Explore a Topic?")**

**Commonly Used Terms for Research Types and Literature Review**

Be able to define the following commonly used terms:

- analyze
- explain
- keywords
- classify
- prove or disprove
- technical writing
- discuss
- review of the literature
- meta-analysis
- survey
- compare and contrast
- evaluate

Record your findings.

**Selecting and Defining a Research Topic**

In this section, you will start to identify a topic for your research. First though, read about the characteristics of good research topics within the Tappen text and learn how to use the WGU online library in order to do online searches for literature. By the end of these activities, you should have identified enough sources for your literature review.

The topic you choose will lay the foundation of what you will build into a research proposal, meaning that your selection must meet the following criteria:

- It is measurable.
- It is manageable (not too broad or too narrow).
- It is relevant to your program goals.
- It is related to a problem in your specific area and is meaningful to you.

Access the [Starting Your Research](#) guide and read the following sections on the main page:

- Finding a Topic
- Tools for Gathering and Developing Ideas

Complete the following activity and post your answer on the message board.

When given the topic heading "Nursing Students and NCLEX Success," narrow down this topic,
and frame it as either a question or a problem statement. Use the following example to guide you:

- Program: MSN Education
  - Topic: NCLEX Success
    - Question 1: What are the factors that contribute to NCLEX success?
    - Question 2: How does an educational intervention impact NCLEX pass rates?

In each of the topics, cluster key words that might help you locate resources to explore the topic (e.g., NCLEX Success, NCLEX Strategies, Best Practices in NCLEX Success).

The topic you choose should align with your program requirements. For your eventual capstone, you will want to select a topic today that will follow you through to the end of your program.

**Topic Selection Performance Task**

Complete the following task in TaskStream:

- Lit. Review for Nrsng Rsrch: Topic Selection

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

It is always helpful to break your writing into sections using the required subtopics as subheadings. It is difficult for the reader to read a very long paragraph without breaks; it is equally difficult for you to check whether you have addressed each subtopic fully. For example, you can create a structure similar to the following:

- Level 1 Heading (Center this main heading in normal font type.): Topic Selection
- Level 2 Heading (This subheading should be flush to the left and in italics.): Introduction
- Level 2 Heading: Problem
- Level 2 Heading: Setting
- Level 2 Heading: Questions for Literature Review
- Level 2 Heading: Summary

Proofread the completed task carefully, check the APA style, and then submit it for evaluation in TaskStream. Make sure to keep a copy for yourself.

**Resource Identification, Evaluation, and Selection**

Your literature review will consist of several journal articles, research studies, dissertations, and other sources. You will begin to assemble sources, evaluate them, and get them ready for a literature review. This will form the base for the literature review required for your capstone, which you will understandably augment and expand as you learn more about your topic. You will need at least 10 references to cite when you write your literature review. This may mean you will review 20 or more sources to find 10 that are scholarly and reliable. In your final capstone you will add, modify, and refine this list to include at least 30 scholarly references.
Watch the following video for an introduction to Module 3: Resource Identification, Evaluation, & Selection.

Conducting Research Using the WGU Library Resources
As a student at an online university, it is imperative that you understand how to use an online library. The WGU Library offers access to abstracts and full-text articles from periodical journals, magazines, and newspapers.

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 508.2.3: Resource Identification, Evaluation, and Selection**
  The graduate identifies, evaluates, and utilizes information resources in order to investigate specific research topics.

Read in Your Textbooks About Conducting Research

Read the following in *Advanced Nursing Research*:

- **chapter 2 ("Reviewing the Literature")**

Read the following in *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*:

- **chapter 44 ("How Do You Find Information?")**

Define Commonly-Used Terms for Conducting Research

Be able to define the following list of commonly used terms:

- Boolean operators
- search engine
- annotated bibliography
- LISTSERVs
- academic directories
- field research
- databases
- academic integrity

Write the definitions in your notebook.

Finding Sources

After choosing a topic, your next challenge is learning to navigate the different resources available.

Learn about research sources that are easy to follow and may help you examine the scope of your topic.

Access the [Starting Your Research](#) guide and read the directions under the Find Articles tab.
Go to the [WGU library](https://wgu.libguides.com) and:

- Locate an article relating to your topic using the main search
- Cite the articles using APA style

On the message board, post one of the references using APA formatting and include a statement describing the degree of difficulty or ease you experienced in accessing articles in the library.

**Using the WGU Library**

**The WGU Library**

Use the WGU Library to access the major nursing and healthcare databases (groups of journals) for literature searches. Using the WGU Library through the student portal will give you search results from WGU's subscriptions, which include over 21,000 full-text journals. You may also use other libraries available to you from your workplace. Be sure that you have accessed appropriate resources and have ample evidence for your topic.

**Learning to Search**

You will find basic search directions in the [Starting Your Research](https://wgu.libguides.com) guide, and many library tutorials available on the Guides tab in the library.

**Finding Full Text Articles**

When you use the WGU Library search box on the library home page to research a topic, you can set the results to “Limit To: Full Text.” This will allow you instant access to all articles in the search results. If you wish to see all research, not just those available to you immediately with full text, you can uncheck the "Full Text" box. You will then see citations for articles that are not within the subscriptions of the WGU Library, but may be relevant to your research topic. You can request the full-text articles by using the “Request an Article” link on the library homepage. Typically the librarians can get a copy for you from another library within several days.

**24/7 Chat with a Librarian**

A librarian is available to you via the 24/7 chat service on the Ask Us tab in the WGU Library. You are encouraged to use this service. Librarians know search terms, databases, MESH headings and more about how literature is stored, accessed, searched, and retrieved.

**Finding an Article**

Open the [WGU Library](https://wgu.libguides.com) and use the search box to search all library databases at once. To search individual databases, go to the Databases A-Z menu under the Quick Links tab. The Comprehensive Index for Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) is the most detailed nursing research database. Other health professions databases include Science Direct, Ovid, and Medline. Your librarian can help you with your literature search.

You may know of an article that already exists. Use the main library search box to search for a specific journal title and check to see if WGU has a subscription to this journal. You can use the “Request an Article” link under the Services tab if the WGU library does not have access to the journal.
Search for Sources

To effectively search for sources, use the following steps:

1. Develop a list of keywords to start your search. If your keywords generate too many sources, modify your keywords to be more specific. If they do not result in enough sources, modify your keywords until they generate enough. It is very likely that you may not find sources that directly relate to your subject matter. You may need to search for sources that are indirectly related to your topic and then go from there.

2. Scan the results to see which ones are related to your topic.

3. Check to see which sources have full-text articles.

4. Obtain as many primary sources, articles in peer-reviewed journals, and scholarly and published research studies or books as possible. Avoid too many sources from the Internet.

5. After you have obtained the items related to your topic, modify your keywords and search again until you have enough sources.

6. As mentioned before, you will need at least 10 references to cite when you write your literature review. This may mean you will review 20 sources to find 10 that are scholarly and reliable.

Note: For final capstone completion, you will be required to have a minimum of 30 sources.

Read About Evaluating Sources

Review the following chapter in *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*:

- chapter 45 ("How Do You Evaluate Sources?")

CARS Evaluation

After you have obtained enough sources, you must evaluate your sources for reliability. The CARS evaluation tool is recommended for such activities and can be found at the CARS Checklist website.

Create a table to report the results of your CARS evaluation. List the items in the left column and the criteria in the top row. Write your evaluation comments for each item under each criterion. Save what you have developed for use for RSKT Task 2, which you will complete in the next subject.

Example:

Table 1, Results of CARS Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Credibility</th>
<th>Accuracy</th>
<th>Reasonableness</th>
<th>Support</th>
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</table>
In your CARS table, for each criterion, you will need to provide some narrative details to justify your determination that each of the sources is appropriate. The following website has a lot of details for CARS:

- "Evaluating Websites"

Although the focus of the site is for website evaluation, not research article evaluation, the questions in the CARS checklist might give you some hints of how to evaluate a source. (Caution: Do not simply use a numerical rubric like those you can find on the site.)

Literature Review, Part I

A literature review is a summary and interpretation of the literature on your topic. It is a comprehensive survey of publications in your field of interest. A literature review should be a survey of what others have already done or have found on your topic. Sources should include scholarly articles from reputable sources, like refereed journals and publications.

A review of literature is done for several reasons,

- to learn more about your topic if you are not a subject-matter expert,
- to find out what other researchers have learned about your topic,
- to modify or adjust your research proposal based on what has been learned from others,
- to learn more about how others have tried to solve a problem you may have identified, and
- to review current trends and issues.

You will review and annotate your chosen sources.

Watch the following video for an introduction to Module 4: Literature Review, Part 1.

Conduct an Annotated Bibliography

Before you write up the final literature review, it is important that you annotate all the sources you have obtained using APA guidelines. This section discusses some recommended steps you can use to create an annotated bibliography. A good annotated bibliography will lay a solid foundation for your final literature review.

This topic addresses the following competency:
• Competency 508.2.5: Develop a Literature Review
  The graduate understands how to organize and develop a thorough and coherent literature review.

Annotating Sources

Read the following section in *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*:

• section 46a ("How Do You Annotate Research Materials?") of chapter 46 ("How Do You Use Sources Responsibly?")

The following full-text articles are available in the WGU Library:


Recommended Steps to Annotate All the Sources

1. Create a blank text document and save it.
2. Type up the full APA citation (consult the Purdue OWL APA Formatting and Style Guide) for one of your obtained sources (an article or a book) and save it.
3. Read the source, take notes summarizing the content (focus), and describe the usefulness, limitations, and audience for which it is intended.
4. Summarize any conclusions or findings the author(s) may have made.
5. Describe your reaction to the item.
6. During your reading, if you find something interesting, write it down and use quotation marks at the beginning and end of the quote, indicating the page number where you got the quote. Never quote a passage without adding the quotation marks and page number.
7. Type up your notes under the citation and save the document.
8. Double-check to make sure you have enough information for the source.
9. Insert a couple of blank lines and then type up the citation for the second source.
11. Do the same for each of the selected sources.
12. When finished, check for spelling errors or content errors. Save the document and print it out.
13. You have now created an annotated bibliography.

The process described above is only one way of completing an annotated bibliography. You can also visit the following web pages for more information about annotated bibliographies:
Complete the following task in TaskStream:

- Lit. Review for Nrsng Rsrch: Literature Review Sources

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

This task is a combination of the previous activities you have completed, including what you have written for Task 1. Following the task directions, put everything in one document and submit it for evaluation.

For an example of format, look at the previous activity found under the subject "Research Types and Literature Review" in this course.

**Literature Review, Part II**

In previous activities, you gathered sources and evaluated their credibility, accuracy, reasonableness, and support. You have also reviewed and annotated all of your selected sources. Now you are going to synthesize the same sources by writing up your literature review for your last task. You will do this by using the annotated bibliography you created. Before you start to write your literature review, it is important that you understand the differences between an annotated bibliography and a literature review.

Watch the following video for an introduction to Module 5: Literature Review, Part 2.

**Writing Your Literature Review**

Before you write, review the difference between an annotated bibliography and a literature review. An annotated bibliography serves as the starting point for your literature review, which is a synthesis of all the selected sources you have annotated in the annotated bibliography. Your annotated bibliography is a list of items with notes under each item; your literature review should be organized into subtopics, reporting the findings you summarized from your sources on what worked, what did not, and why.

This topic addresses the following competency:

- **Competency 508.2.5: Develop a Literature Review**
  The graduate understands how to organize and develop a thorough and coherent literature review.

**Conducting a Literature Review**

Read the following section in *The Scott Foresman Handbook for Writers*:

- section 46b (“Should You Summarize or Paraphrase Research Materials?”) of chapter
**Writing Your Literature Review**

**Suggested Steps for Writing Your Literature Review**

1. Review your annotated bibliography. You should have completed this in the previous section. Correct any content errors, spelling errors, etc.
2. Cut out each citation with your notes for the item.
3. Read the notes for each citation carefully and categorize it with a meaningful label.
4. Sort and group the citations to create subtopics.
5. You will need to read and reread your notes so that you can classify all citations into two to four categories. Each category will become your subsection in the literature review. Synthesize the resources for each group of sources.
6. When you write, summarize and paraphrase your sources.
7. Include an introduction at the beginning and a summary at the end.
8. For each theme or subtopic, provide ample evidence from the sources to support your theme.

**Writing Tips**

- Be sure to use your own writing to summarize and reflect on the sources.
- Provide in-text citations that are complete and accurate according to APA format.

**Example of In-Text Citation**

Now you are going to review in-text citations and annotate them, that is, make a list of the sources that includes a summary or description of the main points covered in an article. This is the first step toward writing your literature review.

*Note: The period is placed after the closing parenthesis when the quote is not a complete sentence.*

1. Quote your sources as appropriate within your writing.
2. Cite at least two sources for each paragraph. Do not cite one source per paragraph, which is the style of an annotated bibliography. A great way to synthesize sources is to cite more than one source at one time when the sources have similar findings.
3. Provide guidance in your writing to help the reader move from one sentence to the next. Do not group together multiple ideas that are not related to the point you want to make in a paragraph. Keep in mind that the reader may not be familiar with your literature. The art of your writing is to walk the reader step-by-step through your report of your findings by using transitions and linking words to connect sentences, paragraphs, and sections.
4. Be careful not to write a long paragraph without citing any sources.
5. Make sure you do not discuss your own problem or project in this review of literature.
6. Create a list of APA-styled references at the end of the review.

**Literature Review Performance Task**

Complete the following task in [TaskStream]: 
• Lit. Review for Nrsng Rsrch: Literature Review

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment" tab in this course.

This task is the last activity. It requires you to write a formal review summarizing the literature related to your topic. Within the sections of your literature review, use your sources to provide relevant support for your research problem by discussing the following points:

• influencing factors given a specific research topic
• barriers to resolution of identified problem
• best practices related to your research topic

Following the task directions, put everything in one document and submit it in TaskStream for evaluation. It is always helpful to break your writing into sections using subheadings. For this task, do not use the task elements as subheadings.

For subheadings, refer back to the activity entitled "Writing Your Literature Review." Subheadings for this task should be the themes of your findings. For an example of format, look at the previous activity found under the subject "Research Types and Literature Review" in this course.

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessment associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessment, schedule and complete your assessment now.

**The WGU Library**

The WGU Library is available online to WGU students 24 hours a day.

For more information about using the WGU Library, view the following videos on The WGU Channel:

Introducing the WGU library

*Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...":* download video.

Searching the WGU library

*Note: To download this video, right-click the following link and choose "Save as...":* download video.
Center for Writing Excellence: The WGU Writing Center

If you need help with any part of the writing or revision process, contact the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). Whatever your needs—writing anxiety, grammar, general college writing concerns, or even ESL language-related writing issues—the CWE is available to help you. The CWE offers personalized individual sessions and weekly group webinars. For an appointment, please e-mail writingcenter@wgu.edu.

Feedback

WGU values your input! If you have comments, concerns, or suggestions for improvement of this course, please submit your feedback using the following form:

- Course Feedback