

**ODESSA COLLEGE ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING PROGRAM  
SYLLABUS RNSG 1108, SPRING 2011**

**COURSE TITLE:** Dosage Calculations for Nursing

**CREDIT:** 1 hour

**PLACEMENT:** Prerequisite for program admission. Eight sections are offered every Spring and Fall Semester, and 2 are offered in Summer I and Summer 2. 20 Students are enrolled per section.

**PREREQUISITES:** NONE

**CO-REQUISITES:** NONE

**LICENSING/CERTIFICATION AGENCY:** TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING (BON)

**FACULTY:** Michelle Womack M.S.N., R.N.  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Dosage calculations emphasizes critical thinking techniques to effectively, accurately and safely calculate dosages of medications. It includes reading, interpreting and solving calculation problems encountered in the preparation of medication. This course involves measurements within the apothecary, avoirdupois and metric systems. Learners will review basic math skills and learn systems of measurement. They will also learn Dimensional Analysis for calculating dosages of oral, powdered and parenteral medications, pediatric and adult weight –based medication and intravenous medications. Course materials are available through the printed text, the text disc and tutoring sessions scheduled throughout the semester. This course is appropriate for preparatory of LVN and RN learners. There are due dates and times that will be enforced, but all materials needed to complete the course are available the first day of class and learners are encouraged to complete assignments early. The instructor is available for consultation and assistance via the internet, phone and scheduled tutoring times. (SCANS 3, 9).

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The learner will:

1. Demonstrate competency in basic arithmetic function.
2. Solves problems using a critical thinking approach,
3. Demonstrate the ability to convert between the metric, apothecary, and avoirdupois systems.
4. Use Dimensional Analysis to calculate accurate dosages.

5. Demonstrate the ability to calculate dosages based on body weight of pediatric and adult patients.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** Course objectives utilize the framework of Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs. Upon successful completion of this course, the learner will be able to: (PO=Corresponding Program Objective)

**Provider of Care:**

1. Demonstrate competency in basic arithmetic functions.
2. Solve problems using a critical thinking approach (PO#3, 7).
3. Accurately use and convert between Metric, Apothecary, and Avoirdupois (household) systems and be able to convert within each system. (PO #3).
4. Read dosage and medication information using accepted terminology and abbreviations.
5. Interpret medication orders.
6. Calculate dosages using basic systems of measurements.
7. Demonstrate knowledge of safe accurate medication calculation using Dimensional Analysis.
8. Utilize the information on medication labels to calculate prescribed dosages.
9. Calculate pediatric and adult medication dosages based on weight.
10. Calculate intravenous solution flow rates for elective and manual infusion systems.

**TEACHING/LEARNING METHODS:** The following methods may be incorporated into RNSG 1108:

1. online instructional methodology
2. examinations
3. tutoring.

**EVALUATION AND GRADING:**

Quizzes = 20%

Midterm exam = 40%

Final exam = 40%

Total = 100%

**GRADING SCALE:**

A	= 90-100
B	= 80-89
C	= 75-79
D	= 60-75
F	= 59 & Below

A final grade of C or higher must be attained in order to pass RNSG 1108. No grades will be rounded up to 75 to pass. (Example: 74.99 = grade of D.)

**UNIT OUTLINE:** Section 1: Refresher Math  
Section 2: Introduction to Drug Measures

Section 3: Reading Medication Labels and Syringe Calibrations  
Section 4: Dosage Calculation  
Section 5: Dosage Calculation from Body Weight and Body Surface area  
Section 6: Intravenous Calculations  
Section 7: Pediatric Medication Calculations

**SECTION OBJECTIVES:** (CO= Corresponding Course Objective)

### **Section 1: Refresher Math**

**(Review only will not be tested)**

**Chapter 1: Relative value, addition, and subtraction of decimals (CO #1)**

**Chapter 2: Multiplication and division of decimals (CO #1)**

**Chapter 3: Solving common fraction equations (CO #1)**

### **Section 2: Introduction to Drug Measures**

**(Review and Testing on Chapters 4 & 5)0**

**Chapter 4: Metric/International (SI) system (CO #1-4)**

The learner will:

1. List the commonly used units of measure in the metric system.
2. Express metric weights and volumes using correct notation rules.
3. Convert metric weights and volumes within the system.

**Chapter 5: Unit, percentage, milliequivalent, ratio, household, and apothecary, measures. (CO #1-4)**

The learner will recognize dosages:

1. Measured in units.
2. Measured as percentages.
3. Using ratio strengths.
4. Measured in milliequivalents.
5. In household measures.
6. In the apothecary measures.

### **Section 3: Reading medication labels and syringe calibrations**

#### **(Review only of Chapter 7. Review and Testing of Chapters 6, 8-11)**

#### **Chapter 6: Oral medication labels and dosage calculations (CO #1-5)**

The learner will:

1. Identify scored tablets, unscored tablets, and capsules.
2. Read drug labels to identify trade and generic names.
3. Locate dosage strengths and calculate average dosages.
4. Measure oral solutions using a medicine cup.

#### **Chapter 7: Safe medication administration**

#### **Chapter 8: Hypodermic syringe measurements (CO #1-7)**

The learner will measure parenteral solutions using:

1. A standard 3 mL syringe.
2. A tuberculin syringe (TB).
3. 5 and 10 mL syringes.
4. A 20 mL syringe.

#### **Chapter 9: Parenteral medication labels and dosage calculation (C #1-8)**

The Learner will:

1. Read parenteral solution labels and identify dosage strengths.
2. Calculate average parenteral dosages from the labels provided.
3. Measure parenteral dosages in metric, milliequivalent, unit, percentage, and ratio strengths using 3 mL, TB, percentage, 10 and 20mL syringes.

#### **Chapter 10: Reconstitution of powdered drugs (CO #1-8)**

The learner will:

1. Prepare solutions from powdered drugs using directions printed on vial labels.
2. Prepare solutions from powdered drugs using drug literature or inserts.
3. Determine expiration dates and times for reconstituted drugs.
4. Calculate simple dosages for reconstituted drugs.

#### **Chapter 11: Measuring insulin dosages (CO #1-8)**

The learner will:

1. Identify insulins in current use.
2. Discuss the difference between rapid-, short-, intermediate- and long-acting insulins.
3. Read insulin labels to identify type.

4. Read calibrations on 100 units/mL insulin syringes.
5. Measure single insulin dosages.
6. Measure combined insulin dosages.

#### **Section 4: Dosage calculations**

**(Review and Testing Chapter 12)**

#### **Chapter 12: Dosage calculation using dimensional analysis (CO #1-8)**

The learner will use dimensional analysis to calculate dosages.

#### **Section 5: Dosage calculations from body weight and surface area**

**(Review and Testing Chapter 13. Review only of Chapter 14)**

#### **Chapter 13: Adult and pediatric dosages based on body weight (CO #1-9)**

The learner will:

1. Convert body weight from lb. to kg.
2. Convert body weight from kg. to lb.
3. Calculate dosages using mcg/mg per kg or per lb..
4. Determine if dosages ordered are within the normal range.

#### **Chapter 14: Adult and pediatric dosages based on body surface area [BSA]**

#### **Section 6: Intravenous calculations**

**(Review only of Chapter 15& 19. Review and Testing Chapter 16-18)**

#### **Chapter 15: Introduction to IV therapy [skip pages 195-204]**

#### **Chapter 16: IV flow rate calculation (CO #1-10)**

The learner will:

1. Identify calibrations, in gtt/ml, on IV.
2. Calculate flow rates using dimensional analysis.
3. Recalculate flow rates to correct off-schedule infusions.

## **Chapter 17: Calculating IV infusion and completion times (CO #1-10)**

The learner will calculate:

1. Infusion times.
2. Completion times using international/military and standard time.
3. Infusion time to label IV bag/bottle with start, progress and completion times.

## **Chapter 18: IV medication and titration calculations (CO #1-10)**

The learner will calculate:

1. Flow rates to infuse ordered dosages.
2. Dosages and flow rates based on kg body weight.
3. Dosage and flow rate ranges for titrated medications.

## **Chapter 19: Heparin infusion calculations**

### **Section 7: Pediatric Medication Calculations**

**(Review only will not be Tested)**

## **Chapter 20: Pediatric oral and parenteral medications**

## **Chapter 21: Pediatric intravenous medications**

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

Curren, A. M. (2006). *Dimensional Analysis for Meds.* (4th. Ed.) Thompson Delmar Learning: United States.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

1. Testing times and dates will be announced in e-mail and in orientation. All testing is “take-home” and must be completed by hand. . The test are provided under “assignments.” Your midterm is weighted 40% of your grade and your final counts as 40% of your grade. Failure to turn a test at the proper time will result in a “zero” for that test.
2. The quizzes are provided in order to encourage practice and precision. They are weighted 20% of the course grade. The quizzes are provided under “assignments.” Quizzes 1-3 are due prior to the mid-term and quizzes 4-5 are due prior to the final. Failure to turn a quiz in at the proper time will result in a “zero” for that quiz.
3. You must show all of your work by hand in order to get credit for your work. These must be legible and must be hand written.

4. You can mail or bring your quizzes and test to the OC Associate Degree Nursing Department in CT 221. It is open from 7:30 – 12:00 a.m., 1:00-4:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday and 7:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on Fridays during the spring and fall semesters. In the summer it is open from 7:30-12:00 a.m. and 1:00-5:00 p.m. Monday thru Thursday during the summer sessions.
5. You may reach me by telephone 432-413-4198 or e-mail me at [mwomack@grandecom.net](mailto:mwomack@grandecom.net) to discuss specific problems, assignments or other issues with me. I will make every effort to get back to you within 48 hours. I am available for tutoring on campus on dates set up at the beginning of the semester.
- 6.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** No campus attendance is required.

**ABSENCE FROM EXAMS:** If you will be late turning in an exam you must notify the instructor 36 hours prior to the due date and time. It is your responsibility to arrange to complete all exams and to complete the course on time.

**Military Time Explained:** Your book does not explain military time so I am including this summary to explain how military time is calculated. All hospitals, pharmacies, clinics, etc. use this way of marking time since it is less confusing and more accurate.

Military time works on a 24 hour clock instead of 2, 12 hour periods. It is a more accurate way of communicating time to other people (either verbally or in writing) and so it is used in medicine. All numbers after noon continue to rise rather than go back to start at 1 again. Thus 1 p.m. is 1300 in military time and 2 p.m. is 1400. Likewise one minute before midnight would be 2359. One minute after midnight would be 0001. Any time in the a.m. will begin with a “0” to make it most clear. Thus 2 a.m. becomes 0200 (pronounced “oh two hundred”), 6 a.m. is 0600 (pronounced “oh six hundred”).

*Use the above instructions to answer questions in the quizzes.*

**COURSE MATERIALS:**

Dimensional Analysis for Meds 4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Student Practice Software disc located in the back of the book  
Teacher’s Tips (located on Blackboard)  
Internet

Dimensional analysis is a systematic method of problem solving that avoids the use of formulas. It is much easier to learn one method that works for all problem solving. It requires a working knowledge of conversion factors and equivalencies. Equivalent factors are factors that are equal to each other. For example: [3 ft = 1 yard] is an equivalent or has

the same value. Flipping the equation [1 yard = 3 ft] does not change its value. The same is true with [36 inches = 1 yard] and [1 yard = 36 inches]. Conversion factors are equivalents that are necessary for moving between the different systems of measurement [apothecary, metric, and household].

Steps for using Dimensional Analysis:

1. Carefully read the problem. Determine the GIVEN QUANTITY (which is given to you in the problem).
2. Determine what unit the WANTED QUANTITY (answer) is supposed to be in (ml or mg or minutes, etc.).
3. Determine what CONVERSION FACTORS you will need to use. Some may be given to you in the problem (like how many mg/ml) while others we expect you to know (like how many cc in a teaspoon).
4. SET UP: Dimensional Analysis problems are set up like fractions, with a numerator (top number/s) and a denominator (bottom number/s). You need to set up the problem so that the unwanted units are canceled out. If you are given mg on top, and you really want the answer to ml, you would set up the problem using a ml to mg conversion (given in the problem) and place mg on the bottom, so the mg cancel out. [I know this really doesn't make sense but hang in there, it gets easier as you work the problems].
5. Cross out the units that cancel out, leaving nothing but the wanted quantity.
6. Do the basic math. Solve the problem by using basic math (no algebra needed). Multiply the numbers across. Divide the top number by the bottom number. You now have the correct answer!

Sample Problem:

\*Ordered: Ceclor 500 mg

\*Wanted Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_ ml.

\*Conversion factor: 400 mg /5 ml (given in the problem)

\*Set up

$$\frac{5 \text{ ml } 500 \text{ mg}}{400 \text{ mg } 1 \text{ dose}}$$

\*Do the basic math.

- a. Multiply the numbers across, then divide the number on top by the number on bottom.

$$(500 \times 5) \div 400 = 6.25$$

**COURSE CALENDAR:** Deadlines and due dates are posted on the e-mail set to everyone at the beginning of class and under the "Announcement" located on Blackboard.



