

RESP-380: PROFESSIONALISM, ETHICS AND LEADERSHIP IN RESPIRATORY CARE

Effective Term

Fall 2026

CC Approval

03/06/2026

AS Approval

03/12/2026

BOT Approval

03/19/2026

SECTION A - Course Data Elements
Send Workflow to Initiator

No

CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

Discipline
Minimum Qualifications
And/Or

Respiratory Technician (Any Degree and Professional Experience)

Subject Code

RESP - Respiratory Care

Course Number

380

Department

Respiratory Therapy

Division

Health Occupations (HEOC)

Full Course Title

Professionalism, Ethics and Leadership in Respiratory Care

Short Title

Professionalism, Ethics, Leade

CB03 TOP Code

1210.00 - *Respiratory Care/Therapy

CIP Code

51.0908

CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

CB09 SAM Code

B - Advanced Occupational

Rationale

New upper division course for the Respiratory Care Baccalaureate Program.

SECTION B - Course Description

Catalog Course Description

This course examines the legal, ethical, and professional leadership responsibilities of the BSRC-prepared therapist. This course bridges the transition from technical clinician to professional leader, focusing on the California Respiratory Care Practice Act, bioethics in end-of-life care, and the therapist's role in hospital quality improvement, healthcare informatics, and patient safety initiatives.

SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

Open Entry/Open Exit

No

Repeatability

Not Repeatable

Grading Options

Letter Grade Only

Allow Audit

No

Requisites

Limitation on Enrollment

Enrollment is limited to students accepted into the Respiratory Care Baccalaureate Degree program.

SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

Units

3.00

Lecture Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Contact Hours

54

Total Student Hours

162

Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

Online Delivery Methods

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent

SECTION E - Course Content

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Interpret the California Respiratory Care Practice Act and its application to daily clinical ethics and legal responsibilities.
2.	Assess the impact of interprofessional communication and leadership on patient outcomes and clinical efficiency.
3.	Identify the role of the respiratory therapist in leading hospital-wide quality improvement and patient safety protocols.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Define the scope of practice as outlined by the Respiratory Care Board of California.
2.	Contrast ethical theories (autonomy, beneficence, justice) in end-of-life care.
3.	Analyze the impact of Value-Based Purchasing on respiratory care departments.
4.	Apply the California Respiratory Care Practice Act to ethical dilemmas in the workplace.
5.	Propose a Quality Improvement (QI) project to reduce hospital readmission for COPD patients.
6.	Define the scope of practice as outlined by the Respiratory Care Board of California.
7.	Analyze the impact of Value-Based Purchasing on respiratory care departments.

Course Content

1. Legal and Regulatory Frameworks
 - a. The California Business and Professions Code
 - b. Title 22 and Joint Commission standards
 - c. Mandated reporting
2. Ethics in Healthcare:
 - a. Ethical dilemmas in the ICU
 - b. Patient advocacy and the Right to Die
3. Leadership and Quality
 - a. Lean Six Sigma basics in healthcare
 - b. Root Cause Analysis (RCA) for adverse events
4. Bioethics
 - a. End-of-life care
 - b. DNR/DNI orders
 - c. Patient Bill of Rights
5. Informatics
 - a. Electronic Health Record (EHR) optimization
 - b. Data privacy (HIPAA)
6. Management
 - a. Budgeting basics
 - b. Staffing ratios
 - c. Lean Six Sigma in healthcare

Methods of Instruction

Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Group Work	Using a shared Canvas Wiki or Google Doc, student groups are tasked with auditing a "mock" respiratory department policy. Each student must contribute at least two specific red-line edits to the policy based on current Joint Commission (TJC) standards and justify their changes in the document's comment section.
Critique	A structured session where students peer-review "Leadership Portfolios." Students provide feedback on professional goal statements, resumes for leadership roles, and a 5-year plan for clinical specialization.
Activity	Students are assigned roles (e.g., Ethics Officer, Family Member, Physician, RT) and conduct a simulated hospital ethics committee meeting to decide on a course of action for a contentious end-of-life case involving a long-term ventilated patient.

Online Adaptation

Types	Examples of learning activities
Lecture	"Socratic Seminar" style Zoom discussion regarding the legalities of "Scope of Practice" and the role of the Respiratory Care Board (RCB).
Discussion	In a threaded discussion forum, the instructor presents a contentious ethical scenario (e.g., withdrawal of care on a long-term vent patient). Students are assigned specific professional roles and must post a Position Statement using evidence from the California Respiratory Care Practice Act. They must then respond to opposing viewpoints to reach a consensus.

Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards
 Chat Rooms
 Discussion Boards
 E-mail Communication
 Telephone Conversations
 Video or Teleconferencing

Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Discussions
 Group Work

Course design is accessible

Yes

Methods of Evaluation**Methods of Evaluation**

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Portfolios	<p>Students will develop a digital portfolio consisting of three distinct professional artifacts designed for a healthcare administration audience.</p> <p>Artifact 1 (Staff Education): A 5-minute narrated presentation designed to train staff on a specific change in the California Respiratory Care Practice Act or a new ethical Scope of Practice guideline.</p> <p>Artifact 2 (Professional Advocacy): A formal Letter to the Board addressing a current legislative issue affecting respiratory care in California, demonstrating the ability to advocate for the profession at a state level.</p> <p>Artifact 3 (Strategic Career Mapping): A comprehensive 5-year professional development plan that identifies specific leadership competencies to be acquired, advanced specialty credentials (e.g., ACCS, NPS), and a plan for interprofessional committee involvement.</p> <p>Evaluation: Submissions are evaluated via a rubric focusing on professional communication, alignment with state regulatory standards, and leadership initiative.</p>
Projects	Students design a PowerPoint presentation for a "Hospital Board" proposing a new RT-led patient education program, evaluated by a rubric on feasibility and evidence-based justification.

Assignments**Reading Assignments**

Example 1. The complete *California Respiratory Care Practice Act*.
 Example 2. AARC white papers on "The Value of the BSRC-prepared Therapist."

Writing Assignments

Example 1. A 3-page "Ethical Position Paper" on a contentious ICU case.
 Example 2. A "Professional Development Plan" outlining a 5-year goal path.

Outside-of-Class Assignments

Example 1. Interview with a Lead RT or Department Manager regarding "Workflow Challenges."

Example 2. Audit of a mock patient chart for "Compliance and Documentation Standards."

SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials**Material Type**

Textbook

Author

Paola, F.

Title

Ethical and Legal Aspects of Health Care Practice

Edition/Version

1st

Publisher

Jones & Bartlett Learning

Year

2024

ISBN #

9781284178395

SECTION G - Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity**How does your course and/or course outline of record reflect strategies for accommodating and engaging diverse student populations, advancing equitable outcomes, and fostering inclusion for all students?**

The Respiratory Care program at Napa Valley College is committed to equitable student outcomes through the use of Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This course utilizes diverse case studies that highlight health disparities in respiratory disease among marginalized communities. By providing multi-modal instruction and various pathways for assessment, we ensure that students of all backgrounds and learning styles are positioned to succeed as future leaders in healthcare.

Course Codes (Admin Only)**CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status**

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

CB11 Course Classification Status

Y - Credit Course

CB13 Special Class Status

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

CB23 Funding Agency Category

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

CB24 Program Course Status

Program Applicable

Allow Pass/No Pass

No

Only Pass/No Pass

No