

AJN addresses a broad range of issues in clinical practice, the profession, and health care. In every issue, faculty will find topics relevant to courses they're teaching presented in ways that provoke thought and discussion.

The goals of *Teaching with AJN* are to:

1. Provide students and faculty with a quality resource for augmenting teaching and learning.
2. Contribute to the education of nurses.
3. Provide students and faculty with current, evidence-based information on clinical and policy issues relevant to nurses.
4. Stimulate discussion and debate on the important issues confronting nursing, patients, and health care.
5. Encourage students to become life-long learners, with nursing journals playing an important role in nurses' professional growth and development.

Here are some suggestions for using *AJN* in your curriculum:

1. Each issue of *AJN* includes one or more feature articles on clinical topics such as how suffering patients who are "decisionally capable" can realize their wish to hasten dying in a legal, peaceful, and dignified way; nursing's moral and ethical responsibilities during wartime; and nursing's challenge to address soaring sepsis rates among adults in hospitals. These features often carry CE credits, which are attractive to students who are already RNs. Ideas for using these articles include:
 - Assign them to students in didactic and clinical courses when they coincide with the course's focus. Because these articles represent cutting-edge, evidence-based information, they provide opportunities for discussion of changes in standards for nursing care. Students can compare what is recommended in the articles with what is proposed in textbooks and actually done in clinical settings.
 - Students can use *AJN* to prepare for a clinical assignment. When the article recommends approaches to care not used in students' clinical setting, this provides an opportunity for discussing tradition versus evidence for practice. The articles can serve to stimulate discussion between students and staff regarding rationales for current practice. Students might even propose to draft a change in a policy or procedure for presentation to the staff and nursing department. Such an experience also prepares students for translating research into practice, a highly valued skill in today's evidence-based practice environment.
 - RN and graduate students, in particular, could conduct a search of the current literature to examine ideas not discussed in the article and write a referenced letter to the editor about one or more of these.
 - Clinical features can become assigned readings in future courses.

2. Original research

We have received numerous letters commending the journal's original research for its clarity and readability. For example, several faculty wrote to us saying that they use the study "Preoperative Fasting: Old Habits Die Hard" (May 2002) for students to learn about critiquing research because it is clearly written and understandable, addresses an important nursing issue, was conducted by nurses, and provides a model of research that would encourage practicing nurses to think about similar issues in their clinical setting.

How can original research be used in your curriculum?

- Use it to teach research methods and statistics.
- Assign it to students for critiquing and then assign one or more students to write a letter to the editor to discuss limitations in the study not addressed by the authors.
- Studies such as "Women's Awareness of Ovarian Cancer" (September 2009) and " 'It Depends': Medical Residents' Perspectives on Working With Nurses" (July 2009) can be used to stimulate discussions in clinical conferences and classes on leadership, trends, fundamentals, etc., on the implications of the study for nurses' practice and patient care.

3. News

AJN's "In the News" pages and "AJN Reports" highlight important developments in nursing, health, and healthcare. Consider the following ideas:

- Spend the first moments of the class asking students to identify what they believe is the most important news report in that issue and why.
- "AJN Reports" often focuses on investigative news, covering an issue of importance to nurses that is not covered by other media. Assign students to do additional exploration of the issue by doing an online search of the topic, interviewing a nurse leader or source cited in the article regarding other aspects and views on the issue, and then writing and/or reporting on their own conclusions. Again, this could make for an excellent letter to the editor.
- Assign students to review several months' news columns, and then compare and contrast a nursing perspective on news topics against other non-nursing media reports.

4. "Editorials" and "Viewpoints"

Both of these pages are designed to provoke thought within the nursing community about important issues.

- Ask students to select one on which they disagreed or have additional thoughts and:
 - use it as a starting point for a verbal or written report on the topic
 - write their views in a letter to the editor.
- Use these columns and subsequent letters published in *AJN* to discuss how to critique and debate ideas (this is a skill that too few nurses demonstrate when they write or call *AJN* or authors).

5. Clinical Columns

Every month, *AJN* includes a variety of columns on topics such as emergencies, pain management, emerging infections, diabetes, etc. Students can:

- use them in care planning and assignments
- share them with nurses in their clinicals to discuss current practice in their facility
- write to the column coordinator, author, and/or editor on some aspect of the column
- share the practical advice in a column with patients as appropriate.

6. Other ideas for using *AJN*:

- Compare it to other nursing publications to discuss standards and issues in journalism and publishing, peer review standards, and conflicts of interest in publishing.
- Use *AJN*'s Web site [AJNOnline.com](http://ajnonline.com) and blog, [AJN Off the Charts](http://ajnoffthecharts.wordpress.com) (<http://ajnoffthecharts.wordpress.com>), to show students how to use Web-based content to augment print materials.
- Provide students with 5 or 10 minutes at the start of each class or once a month to discuss something they read in the journal that provoked a reaction or caused them to think differently or helped them in understanding something.
- Letters to the editor are always welcome and can be sent via e-mails (AJNletters@wolterskluwer.com). Letter writing encourages students to think about a topic and articulate their reactions to what they've read. Letters should not simply summarize the article. See the letters column for guidelines or go to <http://AJN.edmgr.com>.
- Use *AJN*'s author guidelines (<http://AJN.edmgr.com>) and articles to discuss issues in scholarly writing such as primary versus secondary sources, plagiarism, and proper referencing.

Thank you for becoming a part of *Teaching with AJN*. Please do not hesitate to contact Editorial Director Maureen Shawn Kennedy, MA, RN, at Shawn.Kennedy@WoltersKluwer.com if there is anything else we can do to make *AJN* a valuable resource for you, your students, and your curriculum.



Teaching with AJN

Student Sign-Up Form

YES. Begin a two-year* subscription to AJN and send an invoice for just \$39 — 76% off the \$84 annual single price — to each nursing student registered below.

*Contact Lisa.Whelan@WoltersKluwer.com about a one-year subscription rate.

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