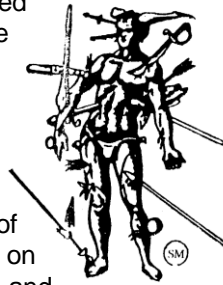


## Purpose and general course objectives

The Illinois TNS course is a standardized program facilitated by TNS Course Coordinators (TNSCCs) at hospitals approved by the Illinois Department of Public Health Division of EMS and Highway Safety (IDPH). The program is presented at the graduate level focusing on the emergent phase of trauma care with a strong emphasis on anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology and multidisciplinary patient management.



**Purpose:** The purpose of the TNS Course is to increase the competency of nurses in caring for injured patients. Emergency nursing is based on the nursing process. This requires excellent assessment skills, thorough knowledge of trauma care, timely interventions and continuous evaluation. Nurses who are able to effectively use higher-order thinking skills and reason critically may greatly influence the outcomes for critically injured patients.



### General course goals

Upon successful completion of the TNS Course, participants will

- promptly and accurately assess and record data about the health status of patients sustaining traumatic injuries.
- formulate nursing care priorities based on collected data.
- implement care within the TNS's scope of practice.
- evaluate the results of nursing and medical interventions by continued reassessment of the patient's status.
- modify the nursing care plan as the patient's condition changes. TNS Course; EMS Code Sec. IV, E.

### “Bottom Line”

The goal of this course is for nurses to develop an understanding of trauma that allows them to anticipate problems, recognize clues and/or signs of injury, and perform appropriate, timely interventions within their scope of practice allowing maximal recovery for each patient.

## Course schedule

A Course Agenda is provided in advance of the class. This schedule is subject to change based on unforeseen circumstances. Please be tolerant of last minute alterations if they become necessary. Classes begin at 9:00 am. Lunch is usually one hour to allow students time to try the local eating establishments outside of the hospital. Class usually ends by 5:00 pm.

## Keys for successful completion

It is **ESSENTIAL** that each student recognizes the intensity of the course and that **ACTIVE PARTICIPATION** (read...work) on your part is necessary to be successful.



***This course is not easy.*** It is taught at an advanced level and requires a good understanding of the relevant A&P and the fundamentals of excellent nursing care of trauma patients. The course is far more intensive than TNCC, ACLS or PALS - just consider the didactic hours spent in each (16 vs. over 80).

You will be presented with current, and at times, evolving theoretical concepts that will impact your practice. This often requires new learning or changing old practice paradigms, which is even more difficult to do. The final exams do not measure simple knowledge and recall. They presents patient scenarios and require application, evaluation, problem-solving and decision-making skills, including setting priorities appropriately.

### The good news

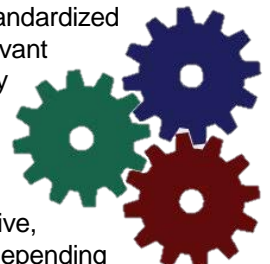
- You will be presented with the tools to be successful. It is up to you to use them effectively by active engagement in the learning process. A purely passive approach to learning in this course is rarely successful.
- If you knew it already, you wouldn't need to be here!
- Many others have gone before you and have been successful.
- We've modified the course based on feedback to maintain the high quality of education but also to make it as “student-centered” as possible.

## Curriculum design; course components

**Modules** - The modules address discrete topics, but have many interdependencies. They include core A&P, fluids & electrolytes, acid-base imbalances, shock, standardized approaches to assessment and management, and system-specific injuries.

**Format** - Modules have a fairly standardized format that includes objectives, relevant content, references, and study questions.

**Objectives** are used as the basis for class content and exam questions. They are written in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains depending on the nature of the behavior to be measured. Each module cover lists the specific objectives for that topic.



**Content** - Modules are updated as often as necessary to include current evidence-based practice and may reflect emerging concepts that haven't yet made it to your work environment. We need to be a learning community!

**Study questions** - Questions are included at the end of each module as a check for understanding. They reinforce key concepts and help prepare students for the quizzes and final written exam. They should be considered "homework". Answers may be reviewed periodically in class or the instructor may make a copy of the key available for review in the classroom.

**Class activities** – Instructional methods may include lectures, labs, discussions, scenarios, role playing, simulations, and other student-centered activities. They supplement the information provided in the course outlines and provide an interactive method of learning. While speakers and class activities vary across TNS sites, the objectives and core content presented should remain consistent.



Speakers are provided with a copy of the module associated with their presentation(s); but they may choose to present the information in their own style or share *even newer* information. While lectures should broaden our understanding of a topic; students are only responsible for knowing core content covered in the course outlines. Faculty will NOT necessarily follow the outlines in the order they are written. Students should be prepared to take notes for all presentations.



**Labs** - Help to apply theory into practice. Psychomotor objectives are written at the precision level for patient assessment. Students are required to understand selected "mandatory" skills well enough to verbalize their critical steps during the practical exam.

**Skills lab sheets** – Lists the key points and critical steps of each procedure in a checklist format. They are used as a learning tool and do not need to be turned in.

## Measurements of learning

Quizzes and exams measure achievement of objectives.



### Pre-test

- A practice exam has been constructed by Continental Testing Services (CTS) that mirrors the same blueprint as the final written exam. It is administered at the TNS site on the first and last day of class to determine each student's learning needs and progress. You are not expected to get a score >80% on the first attempt. You are expected to pass on the second attempt as your score on that exam may predict your likelihood of passing the state Final TNS exam.

- Each student will be allowed to review their answer sheet to see the areas in which they had strengths and weaknesses, but they cannot review the exam form against their answers.

### Quizzes



- Quizzes measure a student's progress in achieving the knowledge objectives and also identify future learning needs. TNSCCs create their own quizzes at each site.
- Quizzes at the ALGH/NCH site are given in class as closed book multiple choice assessments every week. They require dedicated study of the previous weeks' material and are designed to be valuable tools in preparing for the final written exam.
- Students must score a cumulative average of 80% or above on quizzes to be eligible to take the final exams.

### Final Practical Exam

- Consists of a trauma patient assessment during which the student evaluates and stabilizes a simulated critically injured patient within a 10-minute timeframe.
- Students are rated on the manner in which they perform a complete, organized assessment and verbalize the resuscitative and possible definitive interventions as described in the Patient Assessment course module and skill sheet.
- If a student experiences undue anxiety during the initial testing attempt, they may ask to be excused, exit the testing station for a brief period, and then try again, without any penalty. For further details see the TNS Practical Exam Guidelines.
- Passing is defined as performing all critical steps with precision in a reasonable order, in specified time frames, and attaining a minimum of 80% and no critical errors on the grading form.
- **Re-test Policy:** One retake is allowed. The student will be informed by the TNSCC immediately following the initial testing attempt if a retest is necessary and they will be allowed a second opportunity on the initial day of testing.
- All sites use standardized test scenarios and evaluation forms.
- Exam preceptors are qualified nurses.
- **Elimination of bias:** Preceptors shall not test students from their own institutions. The TNSCC may retest a student who fails the first time.



### Final written exam

- A 150-question exam is developed by Continental Testing Services (CTS) based on an exam blueprint and item bank created by the TNSCCs. Questions measure the achievement of course knowledge objectives and are referenced to content in the modules. All items are multiple-choice with only one correct answer. Exam validity and reliability is measured through a number of statistical analyses conducted by CTS in collaboration with the TNSCCs.
- The exam is offered at **PSI Testing Centers** using a computerized testing model where all applicants are given a fixed set of items from one of several active testing forms. A TNS Study Guide is available on line at the CTS site for TNS testing application and provides an exam outline and sample questions to practice prior to taking the test.
- **APPLICATION:** Specific information will be provided. The TNSCC will file a testing roster listing approved candidates with CTS immediately following the practical exam. Approved TNS candidates must **apply on-line** by going to [www.Continentaltesting.net](http://www.Continentaltesting.net). Have your nursing license and a credit card ready before you begin. The TNSCC will provide you with the program site code to enter when applying.
- **EXAM FEE:** \$25 payable by credit card on-line at the time the student registers.
- **TIMING:** You must register for and attempt the exam for the first time within **90 days** of the class roster being submitted by the TNSCC to CTS. Licensure must be accomplished within 12 months of the date you finished the TNS course.
- **SELECTING A TESTING CENTER:** When the application is complete, CTS will send you a PIN # and instructions via e-mail authorizing you to schedule an exam **MAKE SURE CTS HAS YOUR ACCURATE E-MAIL ADDRESS** so this message reaches you.

Testing centers are located all over Illinois and sites and their locations are available in the CTS exam information. You can select the site of your choice and a date and time available at that site. Sites will be proctored in person or remotely using video surveillance. If testing at a site that is a kiosk only (video surveillance), you will not be allowed paper or white board within the testing environment on which to write formulas or do calculations, etc. All math must be done using an onscreen calculator. Precepted environments allow use of pencil and paper or a white board with erasable marker that must be relinquished to the preceptor prior to leaving. Know your learning and testing style and chose your testing site carefully.



- **PASSING SCORE:** Minimum **80%** (120/150) to pass. You will be told if you passed or failed at the end of the exam. Official results will be mailed from CTS within 10-14 days of the exam.

If unsuccessful, the letter will contain scores with areas of targeted remediation.

**Re-test policy:** A total of 3 exam attempts are allowed. Must reapply to CTS and pay the exam fee for each attempt. (See [www.idph.state.il.us/ems](http://www.idph.state.il.us/ems) for retest policy)

### TNS CERTIFICATION

- Successful completion of course requirements and the final written and practical exams allows a nurse to be certified by IDPH as a Trauma Nurse Specialist.
- The link and PIN # for online licensure payment are provided in the successful exam letter from CTS. **Licensure fee: \$75** payable online to IDPH
- After receipt of the licensure fee, IDPH will mail the TNS license to the nurse at the address indicated on the exam application to CTS.

**ADDRESS CHANGE:** If your address has changed: Go ON LINE and enter the new address at <https://emslicensing.dph.illinois.gov/Clients/ILDOHEM/SP/Private/OnlineServices.aspx>

**NAME CHANGES** must be processed with the IDPH EMS Division directly by contacting them at 217-785-2080. Submit copies of acceptable legal documents that verify the name change.

- The license contains a TNS number and specifies an expiration date. The TNS number should be the same as the individual's ECRN or other IDPH-granted certification numbers (paramedic, PHRN, Lead Instructor, etc.). It is **NOT** the same as the individual's NURSING LICENSE number and is not issued by the same State agency. All name and address changes must be filed with both state agencies.

### DO NOT DISCARD THE TNS CERTIFICATE.

Bring it to your supervisor for duplication. The certificate is valid for four years.

**TNS RECERTIFICATION:** You will receive a renewal notice (child support statement) from IDPH approximately 60-90 days prior to your TNS certification expiration date. Recertification may be accomplished by submitting approved CE on forms approved by IDPH and a signed child support statement to the nearest TNSCC or by passing the current final written exam for the program.

### Evaluations

Fair, objective evaluations help improve the program by providing feedback relative to the course and faculty.

- **Faculty** - Each speaker must be evaluated against the topic's objectives to provide CE credit. Forms will be provided at the time of the lecture and are collected before students leave for the day.



- **Course coordinator(s)** - Provides feedback to the TNSCC. An evaluation form is provided at the end of the course allowing a summative evaluation.
- **Course** - This form is also completed at the end of the course and tabulated results are provided to IDPH.

## GENERAL POLICIES

- **Academic honesty:**

Students shall not engage in, assist in, nor condone lying, cheating, or falsification of documents pursuant to their TNS education. Cheating on quizzes or exams violates more than core values or codes of professional ethics. It can affect the quality of care rendered to a patient.



Any student suspected of academic dishonesty will be dismissed from class and academically suspended pending an investigation. If allegations are sustained, the student will be dismissed from the program.

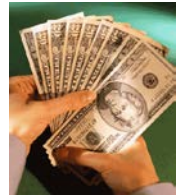
- **Attendance:** Class attendance is strongly encouraged to optimize learning opportunities. Students must complete all quizzes, exams, and labs. Absences from class will be reflected in a reduced number of CEUs awarded. Failure to complete a mandatory element will result in ineligibility to take the final exams.
- **Attire:** Please dress in business casual attire in good taste. Room temperature is often difficult to regulate for the comfort of all students. If you tend to feel cold, bring a sweater or wrap. If the temperature is uncomfortable, inform the TNSCC, so adjustments can be made.
- **Auditing:** Auditing of lectures by nurses and paramedics is allowed based on space availability and TNSCC approval. Auditing is awarded IDPH CEU credit on an hour for hour basis. Nurses may not audit more than 50% of the didactic portion and then sit for the Challenge Examination.
- **Breaks:** Brief breaks are given at least every 60-90 minutes.
- **CEUs** - Awarded based on each site-specific schedule via an IDPH site code and participant class attendance. Therefore the number of hours may vary from person to person.
- **Class etiquette:** Courtesy to speakers dictates that students make every effort to be on time and to refrain from unnecessary interruptions during a presentation.
- **Electronic devices:** Students are not allowed to access any personal social media while class is in session. Devices must be silenced and all electronic communication deferred until breaks unless an emergency. Recordings of classes may be made only at the instructor's discretion and prior approval.



**Food & beverage:** Food and beverage is allowed in the classroom as long as refuse is cleaned up before labs and before students leave for the day.



- **Parking:** Free surface parking is available in the lots noted on the NCH map.
- **Pins:** The TNS pin is a distinctive symbol of academic achievement and may be worn by those who gain TNS certification. Pins may be purchased for \$26 payable to NCH after passing the state exams.
- **Smoking:** NCH is a smoke-free environment. This includes the hospital, adjacent hospital grounds, and parking lots.
- **Tuition and fees: \$300.00.** Standard cost at all sites. Tuition covers the TNS course materials, refreshment breaks, faculty, labs, and practical exam fees. Please make checks payable to Northwest Community Hospital. Contact Kathy Fitzpatrick, to arrange payment at 847-618-4480 on or before the first day of class unless prior arrangements have been made with the TNSCC for an extended payment plan.



**Equal opportunity:** The TNS Program provides equal opportunity in education and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin age, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability as long as the candidate is able to perform all the essential professional functions of a TNS during the course with or without reasonable accommodation.

**Your success in this class is important to us.** If you have a disability (learning, physical, psychological or other) and may require some accommodation or modification in procedures, class activity, instruction, requirements, etc., please contact the TNSCC at the onset of class so reasonable accommodations can be made as appropriate and if possible.

## Welcome & Good Luck in the Course!

Contact information:

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