



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

**School of Nursing**

*College of Health and Human Sciences*

# **Undergraduate Nursing**

## **Student Handbook**

**Spring 2023-Summer 2024**

## Table of Contents

<b>Section A: Introduction to the School of Nursing</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Preface .....	5
Welcome Letter from the Chair .....	6
History of the School of Nursing .....	7
NIU's Nursing Education Model.....	9
Nursing Program Mission, Vision and Values .....	9
School of Nursing Diversity Equity Inclusion Statement.....	10
Individual Student Outcomes .....	11
Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety: Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI) IHI Open School .....	11
<b>Section B: General Information</b> .....	<b>12</b>
MyNIU .....	12
Nursing Program Overview and Jump Start.....	13
University Resources Bookstore .....	13
Helpful Hints from Nursing Students and Faculty .....	15
<b>Section C: Professional and Student Codes</b> .....	<b>15</b>
American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses.....	15
Northern Illinois University Professional Standards for Nursing Students.....	16
<b>Section D: Academic Policies and Procedures</b> .....	<b>18</b>
Academic Integrity .....	18
Policy for Standardized Grading Scale .....	19
Course Withdrawals .....	19
Policy for Grading Undergraduate Clinical Courses.....	20
Northern Illinois University UG Nursing Clinicals Tardiness Policy.....	21
Policy Regarding D, F, and Unsatisfactory Grades in Nursing Courses .....	21
Testing Policy .....	21
Policy for Prerequisite Course Grades .....	22
Policy on Falsification of Clinical Hours .....	22
Student Success Policy.....	22
Academic Warning/Retention, Dismissal, and Appeal Policy .....	22
Policy for Referral to the Standards Committee for Progression or Retention .....	24
HESI Examinations: Promoting Academic Achievement.....	24
<b>Section E: Clinical and Practicum Policies</b> .....	<b>25</b>
Clinical and Practicum Courses: Policy Statement .....	25
General Policies Concerning Clinical Enrollment .....	25
Clinical Requirements .....	26

Drug Use and Testing .....	27
Human Patient Simulation (HPS) Laboratory Policies and Procedures .....	28
Policy on the Disclosure of HIV Status .....	29
Policy on Refusal to Care for a Patient.....	30
Uniform Policy.....	30
NIU Photo I.D. Badge .....	31
Confidentiality: Policy Statement.....	32
Standard Precautions Policy .....	32
Policy for Follow-up of Significant Exposure to Blood/Body Fluids.....	32
Policy for Follow-up of Significant Exposure to M. Tuberculosis .....	33
Significant Exposure Report.....	34
Dosage Calculation Exam and Medication Administration .....	35
Medication Administration Policy.....	36
Student Medication Administration Competency Checklist .....	36
<b>Section F: General Policies and Procedures .....</b>	<b>37</b>
Continuous Registration: Leave of Absence and Readmission Policy Statement.....	37
Core Performance Standards for Nursing Students.....	38
Disabilities or Chronic Health Problems: Policy for Students .....	39
Electronic Devices and Social Networking Policy .....	39
Enrollment in Nursing Courses: Policy Statement .....	40
Honors' Guidelines for Students Completing Honors' Capstone Projects.....	41
Independent Study in Nursing: NURS 350 .....	41
NCLEX-RN Criminal Background Checks .....	42
Portfolio Requirements:.....	42
RN Articulation Plan: Policy Statement.....	42
Student Complaint Process.....	43
Summer Internship Program .....	43
Student Fees: Policy Statement .....	44
Student Safety Policy.....	44
<b>Section G: Organizations .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Student Organizations.....	45
Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Omega Chapter .....	45
Undergraduate Nursing Student Advisory Committee Bylaws .....	45
Research Committee .....	46
General Faculty Committee.....	46
Undergraduate Curriculum and Evaluation Committee.....	46
Portfolio Subcommittee .....	46
Standards Committee .....	46



## **Section A: Introduction to the School of Nursing**

### **Preface**

This handbook is intended to provide students with reference information and to provide answers to commonly asked questions posed by new and returning students as they progress through their undergraduate program. The purpose of this handbook is to complement, not replace, the Northern Illinois University Catalog.

Students are required to review the handbook each year and submit signature documentation annually to the specified location. Students admitted to the pre-licensure track should submit the signature page to their Castle Branch account. RN-B.S. students should submit this page to their Typhon account annually and Castle Branch for NURS 463.

It is the responsibility of students to know and observe all regulations and procedures related to the program they are pursuing. Under no circumstances will a regulation be waived, or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of or contend that they were not informed of the regulations or procedures. Each student receives the link and directions to the Nursing Undergraduate Student Handbook at program overview sessions. It is the responsibility of the student to maintain knowledge of the content in the most current edition of the student handbook.

**Violation of any policy, statement, rule, law, or regulation, including the Student Professional Contract, may result in dismissal from the nursing program. All students at NIU are required to use their NIU Z-ID email account for correspondence. This is the method of official communication.**

All statements and policies published in this handbook are in effect for the period published on the cover of the handbook. Faculty reserve the right to change statements and policies during the year the handbook is in effect, with the provision that students are informed in writing of any changes.

## **Welcome Letter from the Chair**

Dear Future NIU Nurse,

On behalf of the faculty and staff, welcome to the NIU School of Nursing! I look forward to greeting all of you with excitement and a strong sense of purpose and optimism. We know how hard you worked to get here, and we are excited to help you achieve this monumental goal.

The NIU School of Nursing has a long-standing reputation as one of the best baccalaureate nursing programs in the region. Founded in 1959, we have over 8,000 alumni working in the region and beyond. When you graduate from this program, you will carry that tradition of excellence and reputation with you. Many of our faculty and staff are graduates of this program, including myself-it is special to each and every one of us and we look forward to sharing it with you.

The journey to become a professional nurse is one that challenges even the best among the class. It is a demanding course of study. We have a proven model of interactive and challenging instruction that clearly prepares our students for success on the NCLEX, and we offer a number of extracurricular opportunities, including evening workshops, and student organizations that focus on academic and career development. Continuous, extensive study, as well as engagement with your classmates and those you meet in clinical practices, is essential to master this program and to prepare you for safe and effective practice in the years ahead. You are encouraged to make full use of all the support nursing faculty and staff are available to provide. We suggest you make appointments and visit with them during office hours, interact as a nursing committee member, and ask questions in class. Our doors are always open to you.

Please familiarize yourself with this handbook, as it will introduce you to our policies, procedures, and resources. As a NIU Nursing student, you are responsible for your interactions with the school, our clinical partners, and the NIU community, and this handbook will be your guide. I encourage you to read and understand the information in it, especially our code of conduct.

I look forward to one day welcoming you as a colleague and fellow nurse into a profession that will bring you a lifetime of fulfillment and purpose. The friends and colleagues you make here will be lifelong.

**Kari Hickey PhD, RN**

Chair, School of Nursing  
Northern Illinois University

## History of the School of Nursing

The baccalaureate program in nursing at Northern Illinois University began in 1959 with 19 basic nursing majors and two faculty members. Dr. Annette S. Lefkowitz was appointed the director of the program and Dr. Ann M. Hart the assistant director. The baccalaureate curriculum has been approved by the Committee of Nurse Examiners of the Illinois Department of Regulation since its inception. The School of Nursing has had continuous accreditation by the National League for Nursing for the baccalaureate program since 1965 and for the master's program since 1973. In 2001, the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education became the accrediting agency for both programs.

The original School of Nursing was in a former private residence on Normal Road on the current site of the Founders Memorial Library. In 1969, the School of Nursing celebrated its 10th anniversary with a move into the north wing of the newly constructed Montgomery Hall. The new facility was large enough to accommodate the over 400 students and 22 faculty members and provided classroom space for all the nursing classes. In 1987, the School of Nursing again moved to new facilities to accommodate the still growing program. The new School of Nursing, located at the corner of Normal Road and Ridge Drive, is in a completely remodeled elementary school building. It is large enough to accommodate the offices for faculty, staff, academic advisors, graduate researchers, and teaching assistants. It also provides classrooms and laboratories for students.

Registered nurses were first admitted to the baccalaureate program in 1964. In the late 1970s, the School of Nursing began offering nursing courses in several off-campus locations. By the mid-1980s, RNs could complete the nursing component of the baccalaureate degree in Rockford, in the Fox Valley area, or on campus. In 1992, RN-B.S. degree completion courses were offered off campus at Hoffman Estates Educational Center, and in 1995 these courses were offered at the Rockford Regional Academic Center. Currently, the school offers this program completely online.

In 1968, the school implemented a master's program in nursing. Faculty designed the program so that students can continue employment and pursue their graduate studies; most graduate students are part-time and commute to NIU from all parts of northern Illinois. In 1994, the School of Nursing received authority to offer the master's degree off campus and began offering classes at the Hoffman Estates Educational Center.

In the fall of 1995, the School of Nursing began a post-master's Family Nurse Practitioner course of study. In 1999, the graduate school recognized the program for certificate status. Candidates in the certificate program must have a master's degree in nursing from an NLN- or CCNE-accredited program. Faculty configured the curriculum for part-time study, and it takes a minimum of four semesters to complete.

The School of Nursing also instituted distance learning in 1995 between the Hoffman Estates and Rockford campuses. This technology allowed the faculty member to be at one location while the course was transmitted to the other location via camera and a television screen. The technology allowed students to attend classes closer to where they live.

The first online course was developed and offered in 1999 for students in the Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate of Graduate Study program. By 2000, there were four online courses developed. In fall 2002, the entire Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Graduate Certificate program was offered online. As the School of Nursing continues to set the pace for the 21st century, it currently offers all the RN-B.S. Degree Completion courses and

most graduate courses online to enhance student access and flexibility in advancing their education and professional career options.

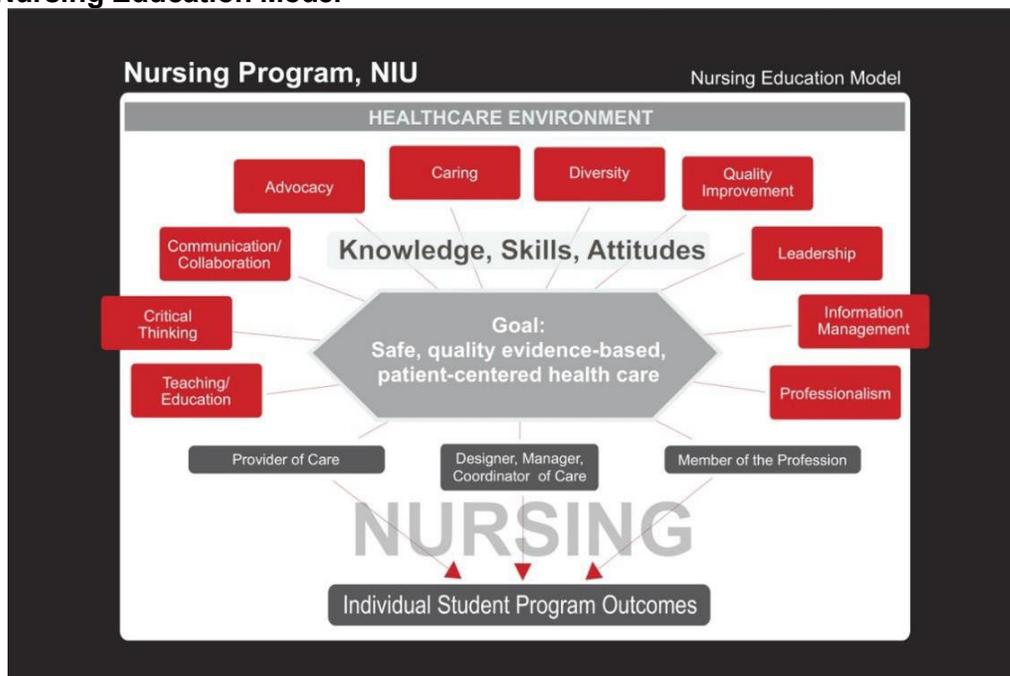
In 2000, the School of Nursing was awarded a \$1,039,000 grant from the U.S. Public Health Service, Health Resources Services Administration and Division of Nursing. The grant was written to expand the Adult Health Practitioner program, develop a rural-health nursing course, and offer courses via distance technology in the northwestern sections of Illinois. In 2001, the School of Nursing was awarded a Helen Fuld Grant to enhance the integration of community health throughout the undergraduate curriculum. In 2006, a Nurse Educator specialization was added to the graduate program.

The Nurse Educator specialization prepares nurses to plan and develop nursing curricula for both classroom nursing programs and a variety of health care settings. Between 2007 and 2009, the Nursing Program was awarded a total of \$1,060,000 in grant funding from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to expand the undergraduate program and to install a Human Patient Simulator Laboratory.

In July 2007, the Nursing, Public Health, and Health Education programs combined into one academic school and are now known as the School of Nursing and Health Studies. In October 2011, the Baccalaureate and Master's Nursing Programs were re-accredited for the next 10 years by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. In July 2016, NUHS was dissolved, and the nursing program returned to the School of Nursing.

Updated 5/01, Revised 6/03, 11/06, 7/07, 5/13, 5/16

## NIU's Nursing Education Model



### Nursing Program Mission, Vision and Values

**Mission:** To prepare graduates to be leaders in providing patient-centered care, fostering research, integrating knowledge, and improving health outcomes for all.

**Vision:** To be a regional center for excellence in nursing education and scholarship.

#### Values:

- **Commitment:** pledging to serve altruistically with respect for human dignity.
- **Integrity:** acting in accordance with an appropriate code of ethics and accepted standards of practice. Integrity is reflected in professional practice when the person is honest and provides care based on an ethical framework that is accepted within the profession.
- **Social Justice:** upholding moral, legal and humanistic principles. This value is reflected in professional practice when the person works to assume equitable treatment under the law and access to quality healthcare.
- **Responsiveness:** responding to the needs of constituents, in coordination with education, economic, political, and cultural systems. This value is fundamental because it relates to basic human rights.

#### Resources

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2013a). Standards of conduct. Retrieved from [www.aacn.nche.edu/cnl/certification/soc.pdf](http://www.aacn.nche.edu/cnl/certification/soc.pdf)

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2013b). Interdisciplinary education and practice. Retrieved from <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/publications/position/interdisciplinary-education-and-practice>

Darby, C., Valentine, N. Murray, C.J.L., De Silva, A. (n.d.). World Health Organization (WHO): Strategy on measuring responsiveness. Retrieved from [www.who.int/healthinfo/paper23.pdf](http://www.who.int/healthinfo/paper23.pdf)

Approved by NURS General Faculty Council 12/2/2013

## **School of Nursing Diversity Equity Inclusion Statement**

Caring is the essence of nursing. Inherent to caring is respect for dignity of people regardless of ability, ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexual-orientation, and socio-economic status. Diverse as we are, we are one School of Nursing committed to creating an anti-racist, inclusive, and safe learning environment by speaking up and taking action.

Approved by NURS General Faculty Council 9/12/2022

## Individual Student Outcomes

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
1. Demonstrates processes for safe, quality, patient-centered, evidence-based nursing care to individuals.	1. Provides safe, quality, patient-centered, evidence-based nursing care to individuals, families, and communities.	1. Evaluates safe, quality, patient-centered, evidence-based nursing care to individuals, families, and communities.
2. Demonstrates critical thinking/clinical reasoning when providing basic nursing care to individuals.	2. Uses critical thinking/clinical reasoning when providing nursing care.	2. Evaluates critical thinking/clinical reasoning when providing nursing care.
3. Describes quality improvement related to patient care.	3. Supports quality improvement processes related to patient care of individuals and families.	3. Implements quality improvement related to patient care.
4. Identifies collaborative relationships with members of the interdisciplinary team.	4. Participates in collaborative relationships with members of the interdisciplinary team.	4. Contributes to collaborative relationships with members of the interdisciplinary team.
5. Recognizes information management principles, techniques, and systems when providing nursing care.	5. Applies information management principles, techniques, and systems when providing nursing care.	5. Incorporates information management principles, techniques, and systems when providing nursing care.
6. Identifies the role of leadership for the purpose of providing and improving patient care.	6. Recognizes the leadership role in a variety of health care settings for the purpose of providing and improving patient care.	6. Provides leadership role in a variety of health care settings for the purpose of providing and improving patient care.
7. Defines professional, ethical, and legal principles while implementing the roles of the registered nurse as provider, designer, manager, coordinator of care, and member of the profession.	7. Applies professional, ethical, and legal principles while implementing the roles of the registered nurse as provider, designer, manager, coordinator of care, and member of the profession.	7. Integrates professional, ethical, and legal principles while implementing the roles of the registered nurse as provider, designer, manager, coordinator of care, and member of the profession.

Revised 3/7/2016

## Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety: Institute for Healthcare Improvement (IHI)

### IHI Open School

The IHI Open School offers more than 30 online courses to improve quality and safety training in healthcare. Through narrative, video, and interactive discussion, the courses create a dynamic learning environment to inspire students and health professionals at all levels.

**The Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety** requires students to complete a total of 13 courses covering topics in Quality Improvement, Patient Safety, Leadership, Person and Family-Centered Care, and Triple Aim for Population Health. Ultimately this sets NIU apart as a program dedicated to the improvement of quality and safety in health care. In addition, stakeholders have indicated a heightened interest in new graduate nurses who have completed this training.

## Required Courses for Basic Certificate in Quality and Safety

<b>Quality Improvement</b>	<b>Pre-licensure/RN-B.S. Course</b>
QI 101: Introduction to Health Care Improvement	NURS 432/NURS 312
QI 102: How to Improve with the Model for Improvement	NURS 432/NURS 312
QI 103: Testing and Measuring Changes with PDSA Cycles	NURS 432/NURS 432
QI 104: Interpreting Data: Run Charts, Control Charts, and....	NURS 432/NURS 432
QI 105: Leading Quality Improvement	NURS 432/NURS 432
<b>Patient Safety</b>	
PS 101: Introduction to Patient Safety	NURS 302/NURS 347
PS 102: From Error to Harm	NURS 305/NURS 347
PS 103: Human Factors and Safety	NURS 315/NURS 347
PS 104: Teamwork and Communication	NURS 336/NURS 488
PS 105: Responding to Adverse Events	NURS 336/NURS 488
<b>Leadership</b>	
L 101: Introduction and Health Care Leadership	NURS 432/NURS 432
<b>Person and Family-Centered Care</b>	
PFC 101: Introduction to Patient-Centered Care	NURS 315/NURS 347
<b>Triple Aim</b>	
TA 101: Introduction to the Triple Aim for Populations	NURS 419/NURS 419

### **Section B: General Information**

There are a variety of undergraduate student services available to you that are oriented to the unique needs of the undergraduate student. You will find more detail in the NIU Undergraduate Catalog.

### **MyNIU**

Be sure to check MyNIU for important information, safety bulletins, registration and records information, and many other items pertinent to your success as a student at NIU. Log in to [MyNIU](#) to register for classes, to check your schedule, financial aid, and to view your grades.

<b>Important Telephone Numbers and Resources</b>	
Main NIU Operator	815-753-1000
School of Nursing Main	815-753-1231
Undergraduate Nursing Program Director	815-753-1231
CHHS Undergraduate Academic Advisors	815-753-1891
Student Financial Aid Office	815-753-1395
NIU Police Department	815-753-1212
Bursar's Office	815-753-1885
NIU Library Information	815-753-1995
Weather Closing Information	815-753-6736 (888) 464-8673

Helpful links can be found here:

- [NIU Nursing Web Page](#)
- [Blackboard –Nursing Community](#)
- [NIU email account](#)

Emergency Action Plan for School of Nursing at: [Blackboard >> School of Nursing Organization >> Information >> School of Nursing Emergency Action Plan](#)

## **Nursing Program Overview and Jump Start**

*All pre-licensure students must attend the Nursing Program Overview and Jump Start before beginning nursing classes.* Information exchange and processing essential to functioning within the school occur at this mandatory overview. Students will have an opportunity to sign up for program overview sessions which are offered at various times throughout the year. The overview sessions are coordinated by the Nursing Pre-Licensure Coordinator. Undergraduate students who are admitted to the Nursing Program but do not attend any mandatory program overview session will lose their admission status to the Nursing Program and will need to reapply to the School of Nursing if future attendance is desired.

*All degree-completion students must complete the RN-B.S. Nursing Program Overview online via Blackboard within the first 5 weeks of their first semester in the RN to B.S. program.*

Students who do not complete this mandatory training will have holds placed on their accounts and will not be permitted to register for future courses until training is completed.

Approved 10/11/99; Reviewed 7/2007, 4/2010; Revised 5/2013, 5/2019

## **University Resources**

### **Bookstore**

The University Bookstore is located on the lower level of the Holmes Student Center and can be accessed at [NIU Bookstore Apparel, Merchandise, & Gifts \(bkstr.com\)](#) Required and recommended course materials are available at this location each semester. You can also visit this site for more information: [Textbooks and Course Materials Information for Students - NIU - Holmes Student Center](#)

### **Blackboard**

Blackboard™ is a course management system used campus wide at NIU. The system allows faculty to post materials, deliver tests and surveys, hold online discussions, and many other course-related functions. All currently enrolled students and teaching faculty have access to the Blackboard system. Students are held responsible for learning how to access and use Blackboard.

### **Bulletin Boards**

A variety of information concerning upcoming events, job postings, and announcements can be found on the bulletin boards and digital boards at various locations in the School of Nursing. Items are also posted on the Blackboard School of Nursing Organization page under Announcements.

### **Computers**

Each semester all pre-licensure nursing students are charged a computer fee. All students are expected to have at least a beginning level of skill working with computers. Many courses use web-based media and group discussions as a means of enhancing teaching/learning strategies. Electronic literature searches, and downloading of available abstracts, and full-text articles are available through the NIU Founders Memorial Library. *All students at NIU are required to use their NIU Z-ID email account for correspondence. This is the method of official communication.* It is the student's responsibility to check their NIU Z-ID email account. Networked personal computers are available in the School of Nursing computer lab. The computer lab contains the latest versions of Windows, Office, and other commonly used programs. The School of Nursing has a Laptop Loaner Program available for both long-term and short-term loans, providing laptops at no charge to currently enrolled undergraduate prelicensure nursing students. Please contact Mr. Carlos Garcia ([cgarcia9@niu.edu](mailto:cgarcia9@niu.edu)) for the application process.

### **Copy Machines**

There is a copy machine in the School of Nursing building for student use. Copy machines on campus require Huskie Bucks through a OneCard ID and do not take cash.

### **Health Care**

University Health Services managed by Northwestern Medicine provides primary health care to all registered students, full or part time, who have paid on-campus tuition and fees. Students are required to show their current valid NIU Photo ID before service is provided. Students may use Health Services whether or not they are enrolled in the NIU Student Medical Insurance Plan. The UHS offers hours to meet the scheduling needs of most students. Students may utilize the UHS to fulfill clinical requirements for TB screening, and required immunizations, and titers.

### **ID Cards/OneCards**

All students must obtain an NIU student Photo ID card. [Photo ID cards](#) (also called OneCards) are required to check books out of the library, use printers, and access a variety of NIU services. ID cards are obtained from the Holmes Student Center lower level across from the bookstore.

### **Library**

Founders Memorial Library is the main NIU library. The University Libraries contain over two million volumes as well as periodicals, government publications, microforms, maps, recordings, audiovisual materials, and electronic databases. NIU Libraries are participants in the I-Share Online Catalog System, a network involving 71 academic institutions throughout Illinois. NIU Libraries provide a variety of guides to collections and services. These materials are available at the information desk and at service sites throughout Founders Memorial Library. Online library resources and the interlibrary loan service are available to students, faculty, and staff at the NIU Outreach Centers in Hoffman Estates, Naperville, and Rockford. Please see the [library](#) page for more information.

### **Lounge and Lactation Room**

A lounge is available for use by all nursing students. The lounge has comfortable chairs and sofas to relax between classes. Vending machines are also available for snacks, pop, and water at the entrance of the building outside of the student lounge. There is a microwave and refrigerator for student use. There is also a private lactation room available to nursing mothers.

### **Parking at NIU**

Nursing students are required to have a university permit to park in the School of Nursing parking lots. The university parking sticker may be purchased at the Parking Division of the University Security Department. These permits are color-coded to correspond to the lots in which they may be used. Maps outlining the color-coded lots are available at the parking office. If you do not have a parking permit that is appropriate for the School of Nursing parking lots, you will need to park on the street or risk receiving a ticket. The School of Nursing parking lot requires a parking permit at all times including evenings and weekends. Please do not park in front of mailboxes in the residential area.

Revised 4/16/18

### **Smoking Policy**

NIU is a smoke-free facility, and neither smoking nor vaping are permitted near entrance doors.

## **Writing Center**

Free tutoring is available through the Writing Center for all nursing students. This center provides an opportunity for students to work one-on-one with an experienced writer, specially trained to improve writing skills. Students can either walk-in or be referred by an instructor. Appointments are encouraged. For further information, call (815) 753-6636. Additionally, these services are available [online](#).

## **Webpage**

The [School of Nursing](#) website is a valuable tool for you to access recent changes and information regarding the nursing program, scholarship/grant opportunities, special events, and speakers, updated job opportunities, etc.

## **Additional Services**

In addition to the above services, there are a number of other offices that may be of interest. You may find more information about these and other services through the NIU Undergraduate Catalog or by contacting these departments individually.

## **Helpful Hints from Nursing Students and Faculty**

- Become active in the Student Nurses' Organization and the Northern Prairie Alliance.
- Save your books as they are needed in other classes.
- Work as a nurse's aide in the summer, be a summer-study extern, or participate in a summer internship program.
- Learn to use the library during your first semester at NIU.
- Learn to use the nursing computer lab during your first semester.
- Check all courses for pre-requisites and/or co-requisites.
- Keep your program of study current: for changes contact the Undergraduate Advisor.
- Check that you have been given credit for all transfer courses.
- Keep the documentation of your clinical requirements up to date.
- Become an active member of the school of nursing by serving on committees.
- Check bulletin boards for current notices regularly.
- Check Blackboard and your NIU Z-ID email account regularly to avoid missing important information.
- Take advantage of the opportunities to practice in the school's laboratories throughout your enrollment in the Nursing Program.
- Learn how to use all of the university's resources to your greatest advantage.
- Initiate your professional portfolio immediately and keep it up to date.

Revised 5/10/16

## **Section C: Professional and Student Codes**

### **American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses**

#### Provision 1

The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

#### Provision 2

The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

#### Provision 3

The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

#### Provision 4

The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

#### Provision 5

The nurse owes the same duties to oneself as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

#### Provision 6

The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

#### Provision 7

The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

#### Provision 8

The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

#### Provision 9

The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

#### References

American Nurses Association. (2015). Code of ethics for nurses. American Nurses Publishing. [ANA Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements](#)

**Professional Role** - The student conducts self as a professional role model at all times and in compliance with Standards of Practice Relative to Registered Nurses (OAC Chapter 4723-4) and the [ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements](#).

### Northern Illinois University Professional Standards for Nursing Students

#### Student Professionalism Standards and Expectations

Students enrolled in courses in Nursing at Northern Illinois University are required to remain responsible, professional, and courteous during all academic related activities, whether on-campus or off. All rules, regulations and policies of the classroom and other participating institutions should be followed appropriately. It is imperative that students exemplify personal and academic integrity in all settings affiliated with the Nursing Pro at NIU, as these behaviors are a direct reflection of the university's reputation within the surrounding community. Below is the Student Professionalism Contract, which outlines conduct, expected of a student enrolled in the Nursing at NIU.

According to this Student Professional Contract, students are expected to:

1. Provide competent and reliable services to patients, clients, students, and the public using sound judgment and discretion. This includes the following expectations:
  - a. Be prepared for the learning environment and actively participate in appropriate ways to ensure learning of key components

- b. Be on time
  - c. Be accountable
  - d. Seek guidance and clarification of student role when appropriate
2. Demonstrate respect and courtesy to others while engaged in the classroom or off-site course activities, emails, or any face-to-face interactions with faculty, staff and/or other students including (but not limited to):
  - a. Refrain from participating in side-conversations while other peers or instructors are speaking
  - b. Be considerate of other beliefs, opinions, and cultural practices
  - c. Execute discussions in a non-threatening and non-confrontational manner
  - d. Address all instructors, professors, and preceptors in a professional manner, utilizing the appropriate title, tone, and language.
3. Observe the rules and regulations of each classroom as outlined per syllabus and all clinical facilities including (but not limited to):
  - a. Proper use of equipment and other property
  - b. All materials of the facility should remain at the clinical site.
  - c. No distribution or possession, and/or being under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or controlled substances
  - d. Comply with all current health requirements, drug testing and criminal background requirements as outlined by the programs
  - e. No possession of or use of any type of weapon
  - f. Comply with cell phone or other electronic devices (iPod, iPad, electronic tablets, etc.) usage consistent with the policies of the classroom, clinical site, or other institution.
4. Maintain the confidentiality of individual and institutional information in accordance with current professional rules and laws.
5. Maintain proper dress, appearance, hygiene and decorum in accordance with the standards set by the program, clinical site, and nursing and healthcare profession.
6. Comply with the ethical and professional standards set by the nursing and healthcare profession and the programs including (but not limited to):
  - a. Never falsify documents regarding student performance
  - b. Consistent submission of documents and assignments that accurately reflect appropriate references and or citations
  - c. Function within the student role of the clinical or institutional setting

**I understand that the consequences for failing to comply with these expectations may include, but are not limited to, dismissal from the program, dismissal from the university, probation, removal from the course, postponement of the course, low course performance ratings, or an unsatisfactory course grade.**

I have read, understand, and will adhere to the NIU Standards for Nursing Students, regarding professional conduct, dress and attitude that includes, but is not limited to:

- Keeping informed by professional, legal, and ethical responsibilities and policies.
- Engaging in clinical internship and didactic course work that is enhanced by a reflective, collaborative, professional growth-centered culturally sensitive practice.
- Adhering to school and, if applicable, internship standards of professional dress.
- Conducting self ethically and professionally at all times.
- Working productively and cooperatively; being on time and in attendance when required and submitting complete assignments promptly.
- Ensuring that all forms of communication will be rendered in a professional manner and in keeping with HIPAA guidelines.

- Assuming personal responsibility for one's own performance.
- Displaying initiative by using resources appropriately.
- Initiating personal growth in clinical internship area(s), didactic classes, and/or instructional practices; including establishing goals for professional improvement.
- Inviting faculty and preceptor feedback and adjusting behavior and actions based on feedback.
- Demonstrating respect for patients, preceptors, other students, faculty, and administration.

**I understand that the consequences for failing to comply with these expectations may include, but are not limited to, dismissal from the program, dismissal from the university, probation, removal from the internship/clinical, postponement of the internship/clinical, low internship performance ratings, or an unsatisfactory internship/clinical grade.**

**My signature on the Undergraduate Student Handbook Signature Page at the end of this handbook acknowledges that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the Standards and that I fully understand the consequences for failing to meet any of those expectations. I also acknowledge my responsibility in fully understanding all expectations and corresponding policies, rules, laws, and regulations.**

## **Section D: Academic Policies and Procedures**

**Violation of any policy, statement, rule, law, or regulation, including the Student Professional Contract, may result in dismissal from the nursing program.**

### **Academic Integrity**

Students attending NIU are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Students who violate this policy must realize that disciplinary action will be taken up to and including expulsion. For more information on student and faculty rights and procedures relating to this matter see the general regulations of the Undergraduate/Graduate Catalog. Falsification of clinical hours required to meet course requirements is considered academic misconduct. In addition, as a condition of being a student in an NIU course, no student is authorized to share, disclose, or copy the content of any quiz, or examination, or other assessment method out of a courses. Students who fail to comply with this policy will receive an automatic course failure. Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as their work that which they have not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turn in a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging those sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever such action is taken, and the Office Student Conduct shall

receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition of the case which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a sanction greater than an F in the course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or flagrant violations), the faculty member shall refer the matter to the Office of Community Standards and Student Conduct making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report. Additional sanctions greater than an F in a course can be levied only through the University Judicial System. With regards to finding the student either responsible or not responsible for their action, the ruling of the Judicial Hearing Board shall be binding.

In cases where there is either a finding of responsibility or an admission of responsibility by the student, any recommendations by the hearing board regarding the course grade are non-binding on the instructor who remains solely responsible for assigning a course grade, consistent with the policies set forth in the course syllabus.

5/19/03, Reviewed 4/2010, 5/2011, 5/4/12

### **Policy for Standardized Grading Scale**

The NIU Nursing Program will not use the plus/minus grading scale for undergraduate courses. The standardized grading scale for the undergraduate Nursing Program is as follows:

93 - 100 = A  
85 - < 93 = B  
77 - < 85 = C  
68 - < 77 = D  
< 68 = F

All undergraduate clinical courses are graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory except NURS 303: Foundations of Nursing Clinical and NURS 463: Practicum in Leadership and Population-Focused Nursing.

A minimum average of 77% must be earned on exams to pass courses associated with clinical practice (NURS 304: Health Assessment, NURS 305: Foundations of Nursing; NURS 314: Mental Health Nursing; NURS 315: Adult Health I and NURS 318 : Adult Health II; NURS 319: Nursing Care of the Childbearing Family; NURS 419: Population-Focused Nursing; NURS 422: Child Health Nursing; and NURS 432: Processes for Nursing Leadership) and selected other courses (NURS 308: Alterations in Biological Systems; NURS 336: Pharmacology).

**The use, acquisition and/or distribution of test banks by any student in any course in the School of Nursing will result in an automatic course failure.**

Credit for additional assignments will only count toward final course grade if an average of 77% or higher on exams has been achieved. Students who have below the 77% average on exams in such courses will be awarded a final course grade based solely on the exam average. The course grade of a "D" or "F" will be assigned consistent with the established SON undergraduate grading scale. Final grades will not be rounded to the next whole number.

Revised 4/2010, 2/2013

Extra credit assignments, if offered, must be included in the course syllabus at the beginning of the semester.

GFC Approved 1.6.20.

### **Course Withdrawals**

Students may withdraw from a course by contacting the appropriate academic advisor. The deadlines for each term are found in the Undergraduate catalog and posted on the NIU website.

Faculty will award a grade of W for students who withdraw prior to the deadline. If a student wishes to withdraw from a course after the posted deadline, they must obtain approval from the College. Academic Regulations - Northern Illinois University - Acalog ACMS™ (niu.edu)

Any withdrawal or failure from a clinical course will require the student to retrack. Nursing students may not take two clinical courses in the same 8-week period unless approved by the Department Chair and will be contingent upon space availability.

### **Policy for Grading Undergraduate Clinical Courses**

#### **Occurrence Reports**

The Nursing Pre-Licensure Coordinator will maintain records of student Occurrence Reports. Students will receive an Occurrence Report for the following:

1. Failure to arrive on time or absence for any reason.
2. Inadequate knowledge of treatment and/or medications.
3. Not completing required assignments on time.
4. Inappropriate dress and/or noncompliance with the NIU School of Nursing dress code.
5. Behavior that would reflect negatively on the nursing profession and the NIU School of Nursing including but not limited to:
  - Violating patient privacy and confidentiality/Violation of HIPPA/confidentiality agreements
  - Using profane language in the healthcare or academic setting -
  - Appearing at the clinical site under the influence of chemical or illegal substances
  - Speaking or behaving in a manner to other students, faculty, staff, patients or visitors that is deemed inappropriate by the clinical and/or course faculty
  - Sleeping on the unit
  - Use of cell phone during clinical
  - Use of laptop for non-academic purposes
6. Leaving an assigned clinical/community experience prior to the time designated by the clinical instructor.
7. Failure to apply nursing principles/skills resulting in actual or potential harm to patient/s.

Two Occurrence Reports will result in course failure. Occurrence Reports are cumulative throughout the program. Four Occurrence Reports will result in dismissal from the program.

### **NIU Nursing Clinical Grading Guidelines**

All assignments must be completed with a grade of C (77%) or better in order to pass the clinical course.

#### **Automatic Course Failures:**

The agency reserves the right to prevent entry or request withdrawal from the clinical site for any student the agency believes constitutes a risk of harm to patients, employees or visitors who fail to follow the agency's policies and procedures. If nursing students are precluded from a clinical site by an agency, the NIU School of Nursing has no obligation to find an alternative clinical site for the student.

An absence on the clinical orientation day

Committing any life-threatening, or potentially life-threatening, error or action to patients, staff, faculty, or others in the environment.

Failure to obtain a Satisfactory rating for each course objective in the clinical evaluation to pass the course. An unsatisfactory rating in any course objective on the final evaluation will result in failure of the course.

**Any student who is absent for any reason (excused/unexcused) for 25% or more clinical days in a clinical course will earn an Unsatisfactory for that course. An absence on the first clinical day is an automatic Unsatisfactory for that course.**

For any missed clinical day due to NIU cancellation or faculty cancellation, there will be a clinical make-up assignment similar in scope and quality to the planned learning activities in that clinical setting on that particular (i.e., missed) clinical session.

Approved 4/12/2010 by General Faculty Council (Nursing); Amended 9/27/2010, 1/13/2014, 4/2015, 4/2023

### **Northern Illinois University UG Nursing Clinicals Tardiness Policy**

If the student is late on 2 days, the student shall earn an Unsatisfactory for that course. A student is considered late if not prepared to begin at the assigned clinical start time. Additional consideration will be at the instructor's discretion for extraordinary circumstances with third party documentation. This policy is effective for each 8-week clinical.

Amended GFC 10/4/2021

### **Policy Regarding D, F, and Unsatisfactory Grades in Nursing Courses**

Students must repeat, at NIU, any nursing course in which they receive a grade of D, F, or Unsatisfactory and receive a grade of C/Satisfactory or higher to progress in the nursing curriculum. Refer to the NIU Undergraduate Catalog for policies and procedures for repeating courses. In addition, students who receive a grade of D or F in a core nursing course\* will be required to enroll the following semester in NURS 380: a special topics course to promote academic achievement and career success.

\*Core nursing courses: 304, 305, 308, 314, 315, 318, 319, 336, 419, 422, 431, and 432. Revised 5/19/03, 4/2010, updated 9/14/15,

### **Testing Policy**

Professional conduct is demonstrated through compliance with the standards for behavior in the testing environment identified below.

- All belongings, including purses, coats, backpacks, wallets, hoodies, and scarves, must be placed in the area designated by the faculty member, and cannot be accessed during the exam.
- No electronic devices are allowed. This includes but is not limited to computers, cell phones, smart watches, fitness bands, earbuds, headphones. Exceptions will be made for medical devices.
- No head coverings are allowed. Exceptions can be discussed with the instructor prior to exam date.
- No food or drink allowed except a clear plastic water bottle without a paper label.
- Faculty/proctors have the authority to enforce the testing policy. .-
- Any students found noncompliant with the above may receive a zero grade for that exam.
- Attempts to see other students' work or share one's own work will be considered as evidence of cheating.
- Test questions cannot be discussed outside of the classroom.
- Breaks are at the discretion of the instructor.
- Missing the exam *with* prior approval may result in a point deduction and an alternative version of the exam.
- Missing the exam *without* making prior arrangements may result in a zero for the exam.

Test question appeals must be submitted within 1 week of review of exam utilizing the Test Item Query Form. Verbal appeals will not be considered.

Approved GFC 4/24/2023

### **Policy for Prerequisite Course Grades**

Nursing students/candidates must achieve a minimum grade of C or better in all nursing prerequisites.

Approved 2/1/99, Reviewed 4/2010

### **Policy on Falsification of Clinical Hours**

Falsification of clinical hours is considered academic misconduct.

Approved 1/24/2000, Revised 4/2010, Reviewed 4/2010

### **Student Success Policy**

Any student who receives an exam score of 80% or lower on their first exam will be referred to the student success coordinator and be required to set up a plan for success. Any student with an exam score below 77% or test average below 77% will be referred to the student success coordinator for help. Faculty will submit students' names who meet these criteria within one week of the exam date to the student success coordinator in writing or e-mail.

Approved 4/24/2023

### **Academic Warning/Retention, Dismissal, and Appeal Policy**

Nursing applicants and nursing majors must achieve a minimum grade of C or better in all nursing prerequisite courses that are taken before and after admission to the nursing major. Nursing students whose GPA falls below 2.50 will be immediately dismissed.

### **Academic Warning/Retention**

Students will receive an Academic Warning in the following circumstances:

1. Freshman nursing students who fail to achieve a GPA between 2.5 and 2.74 at the completion of the second semester.
2. R.N. students whose cumulative GPA falls between 2.5 and 2.74 after completing nine semester hours at NIU.
3. All other nursing students whose cumulative GPA is between 2.5 and 2.74
4. A nursing student who receives two grades of D or F or U in any combination of NURS courses.
5. Unprofessional behavior or actions which threaten the health and safety of patients, students, faculty, or staff are in violation of the Professional Conduct Attestation.

Students who receive an Academic Warning for a grade of D or F in a core nursing course (NURS 304, NURS 305, NURS 308, NURS 314, NURS 315, NURS 318, NURS 319, NURS 336, NURS 419, NURS 422, NURS 431, NURS 432) will be required to enroll in NURS 380 (Promoting Academic and Career Success in Nursing), the following semester. Students must then complete NURS 380 with a C or higher to continue in the nursing program. Also, in the following semester, students must repeat any required nursing course in which they received a grade of D, F, or U and complete the course(s) with a C or higher. **A second withdrawal from the same nursing course will result in dismissal from the nursing program. Students may only enroll in each NURS course a maximum of two (2) times.**

Students who receive an Academic Warning for unprofessional behavior (5) above will be required to comply with the professional standards outlined in the Professional Conduct attestation and sign a contract indicating that they will adhere to professional conduct at all times, and/or any additional measures that a faculty member deems necessary to meet safe and professional behaviors.

**Students may only receive one Academic Warning prior to dismissal.**

## **Dismissal**

1. Dismissal from the Nursing program for academic reasons if the requirements for successful remediation of the Academic Warning are not met. Additionally, students must maintain a GPA of 2.75 or greater during the semester following the academic warning period or will be dismissed. If the student is dismissed from the program, any petition for reentry will not be considered unless the student has experienced a catastrophic life event. Catastrophic is defined as a severe, unanticipated event involving or causing sudden great physical or emotional damage or suffering. This may be related to legal, medical, death, and/or family emergencies (see Appeal of Dismissal for Catastrophic reasons).

2. Dismissal for a student's confirmed positive drug tests who fails to provide appropriate documentation from a health care provider. There is no appeal.

3. Dismissal for failure to meet Professional Standards Procedure whose clinical performance constitutes unsafe practice as in #5 under Academic Warning. There is no appeal.

### **Procedures for Dismissal Review for failure to meet Professional Standards or whose clinical performance constitutes unsafe practice.**

Step 1: The instructor will notify the student of unprofessional conduct or unsafe practice. If a problem occurs in the clinical area, the student will not be allowed to continue in clinical practice until the concern has been addressed and remediated.

Step 2: The instructor will refer the concern to the appropriate Director who will refer to the Standards Committee for review after conferring with the chair of the School of Nursing.

Step 3: The chair of the Standards Committee will make every reasonable effort to schedule a date for the Standards Committee to review the dismissal charge within two weeks of student notification of dismissal due to unprofessional conduct. Every attempt shall be made to have the dismissal review face to face. In the event this is not possible, the dismissal review may be held via virtual conference call.

Step 4: Documentation from the SON administration, the instructor, and the student shall be provided for the Standards Committee members before the dismissal review using methods to ensure the confidentiality of information.

Step 5: The student and instructor shall be invited to address the committee and present their accounts of situations leading to the dismissal charge.

Step 6: Voting members of the Standards Committee shall decide on the dismissal charge based on a majority vote by secret ballot. The committee may recommend progression, conditional probation, or dismissal of the student. All proceedings shall be kept confidential.

Step 7: The Standards Committee will make recommendations by letter to the chair of the SON based on the vote.

Step 8: The Chair of the SON will determine the outcome, taking into account the recommendations of the Nursing Standards Committee. The chair may accept or reject the recommendations of the Standards Committee.

Step 9: In cases where the decision by the Chair of the SON is made to dismiss the student, the dismissal review documentation will be forwarded to the College of Health and Human Sciences Academic Dismissal Review and Reinstatement Committee, which will make the final decision regarding dismissal. The student may appeal the final dismissal decision to the dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences.

## **Appeal of Dismissal for Catastrophic Reasons**

If the student is dismissed from the program for academic reasons, a petition for reentry will be considered for a catastrophic life event that:

- (a) clearly impacted the student's ability to be successful in the program; and
- (b) is documented by a third party (medical, legal, or death documentation)

Reentry to the nursing program after dismissal is highly selective. Readmission decisions are based upon the student's clear potential for future academic success in their course work, including the Evolve HESI exams (based on previous coursework and transcripts). Reentry to the program is not guaranteed.

Reentry may be contingent on remedial study and verification that remediation has been successful as determined by the Committee in consultation with the faculty member and space availability.

To be considered for reentry into the nursing program after dismissal, the student must deliver a written petition requesting reentry to the Nursing Standards Committee for consideration who will determine if the student meets the criteria for readmission and has had a documented catastrophic event (defined above). The Chair of the School of Nursing will review the decision of the Standards Committee and will make an independent and final decision that may not be appealed.

It is the responsibility of students to secure a copy of the dismissal policy from the office of the School of Nursing. This policy is in the Undergraduate Nursing Handbook.

Approved 4/28/2014 Revised and approved by Standards 4/27/2020 Approved by GFC 5/1/2020 Revised and approved by Standards 6/29/2020  
Revised and approved by GFC 8/17/2020 Approved by College Curriculum Committee 11/06/20 Approved by Baccalaureate Curriculum  
Revised and approved by Standards 3/26/21  
Revised and approved by GFC on 4/5/2021, Updated 11/21

## **Policy for Referral to the Standards Committee for Progression or Retention**

Criteria:

1. Clinical performance or behavior in the classroom that does not meet professional standards\*, or that constitutes unsafe practice.\*\*
2. Failure to meet course objectives.
3. Absence in clinical course.
4. Falsification of clinical hours.
5. Violation of university policies on academic integrity as stated in the undergraduate catalog.
6. Students with confirmed positive drug tests and/or no sufficiently creditable explanation of relevant lawful conduct.
7. The Standards Committee does not participate in or have jurisdiction in grade appeals.

\*Unprofessional conduct is defined as any nursing action inconsistent with the ANA Code of Ethics or the policies of the School of Nursing.

\*\*Unsafe practice is defined as any nursing action inconsistent with the Illinois Nurse Practice Act or the ANA Standards of Clinical Practice or the policies of the School of Nursing.

Revised 1/24/00, Revised 11/13/01, 2/2013; Revised and approved 10/9/06, Reviewed 4/2010, 5/2014

## **HESI Examinations: Promoting Academic Achievement**

1. Health Education Systems, Inc. is a testing company specializing in producing standardized and custom tests for nursing schools. This company has a proven record of quality products which assist students in their readiness for success on the National Council of Licensing Examination for the Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN).
2. Nursing students at NIU are required to take HESI exams in designated courses throughout the curriculum. The exams are course requirements.

3. Any student who receives a HESI score below 700 will be required to enroll the following semester in NURS 380, a special topics course, to promote academic achievement and career success. Any exceptions will be noted in the course syllabi.
4. The HESI examination in NURS 318: Adult Health II is a mid-curricular check point. Students who earn less than the designated composite score on the HESI examination will not pass NURS 318 and will need to repeat the class. In addition, these students will be required to enroll in NURS 380: to promote academic achievement and career success the following semester.
5. Students enrolled in NURS 431: Transition to Professional Nursing will be required to take HESI exit examinations and the Computer Adaptive Testing (CAT) exam. HESI exit exams count for 50% of the NURS 431 course grade.
6. Failure to complete the HESI exam will result in an F for the final course grade for failure to complete all course requirements.

Revised 5/19/03, 2/20/0, 7/2007, 5/2008; Reviewed 4/2010, revised 11/2012, 5/2014, 1/12/2016, 4/16/18

## **Section E: Clinical and Practicum Policies**

### **Clinical and Practicum Courses: Policy Statement**

All students desiring to enroll in a clinical nursing course must have a program of study on file. This program of study tracks students through the nursing curriculum. Students are required to follow the assigned program of study. Students may change their program of study (track) only after consultation with the Undergraduate Academic Advisor.

Revised 05/18/07, 4/2010, Reviewed Standards 3/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **General Policies Concerning Clinical Enrollment**

1. All prerequisites (i.e., courses, proficiency tests) must be completed successfully at least one week prior to the first day of the semester in which the clinical is to be taken. Students should consult the Undergraduate Catalog for specific course prerequisites.
2. A clinical enrollment will be automatically nullified by:
  - a. Failure in a prerequisite course or the equivalent proficiency test.
  - b. A grade of incomplete in a prerequisite course.
  - c. Lack of reported scores on proficiency examinations for RN degree completion students who are required to meet this standard.
  - d. A deficiency in the total number of nursing hours required for the clinical course.
  - e. Failure to have the current documentation of clinical requirements on file with the clinical requirements vendor by the dates specified under Clinical Requirements.
3. Students may not enroll in a clinical nursing course that is scheduled on a unit where they currently work as employees of the agency (does not apply to RN-B.S. students).
4. A student who is scheduled for a clinical nursing course and subsequently is unable to enroll in the clinical as planned must notify the Pre-Licensure Program Coordinator in writing of this change of plan. This notification should be received as soon as possible but no later than 15 working days prior to the start of the semester.
5. For any missed clinical days due to NIU cancellation or faculty cancellation, there will be a clinical make-up assignment similar in scope and quality to the planned learning activities in that clinical setting on that particular (i.e., missed) clinical session.

Revised 4/2010, 4/30/2015, Reviewed Standards 3/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **Guidelines for Student in Clinical Practice Settings**

In order to safeguard both students and clients in the clinical practice settings, it is imperative that students notify faculty of the following:

1. Any recent exposure to a communicable disease, (i.e., chicken pox)
2. Any elevated temperature in the 24 hours prior to going into the clinical practice setting

3. Any physical condition that might put themselves or others at risk. See Policy on disclosure of HIV status.

The clinical instructor will determine whether the student or client would be at risk if the student participates in clinical experiences. If the student has a physical condition that will limit them in client care activities for an extended period of time, the student's ability to complete the clinical requirements of the course with reasonable modifications will be assessed on an individual basis.

Approved 3/7/94, Reviewed 2/6/95; 2/12/96; Revised 2/12/96, Reviewed 7/2007, Reviewed Standards 3/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **Clinical Requirements**

Students newly admitted into the Nursing Program and RN to B.S. degree completion students taking NURS 463 will receive an electronic invite from the compliance vendor, Castle Branch, regarding the specific requirements and their due dates. Students will receive instructions regarding how to register on their website. **Pre-licensure students must submit documentation of all requirements by July 1; this deadline is for both entry and annual requirements.** Late student admits should submit proper documentation to Castle Branch prior to the first day of class for permission from the department to attend class.

RN degree completion students must submit proof of clinical requirements before they will be allowed to register for NURS 463. All documentation must be submitted by the deadline stated in the practicum planning packet.

Nursing Program health requirements are different from the standard university requirements. Students will be given instructions for all requirements upon registration based on the information in the electronic invite. Clinical requirements include the following items:

1. **Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening:** Criminal background check and drug screening are required and will be completed by Castle Branch upon registration with the site. The School of Nursing may not be able to place students in a clinical setting if there are positive findings on the drug screening or background check. As a result, the student may not be able to complete the requirements of the program.
2. **Handbook Acknowledgement Form:** All students will be required to read the Undergraduate Handbook in its entirety. Students are held accountable for all the information contained within the handbook. An acknowledgement form is available through the Castle Branch site. Students are required to download, sign, and submit the form back to the website.
3. **Proof of Health Insurance:** All students must submit proof of health insurance. If there are any changes to your health insurance coverage, you must submit the new information immediately. If you are utilizing NIU Student Health Insurance, contact the Student Health Insurance office 815-753-0122 to obtain proof of insurance.
4. **Professional Liability Insurance:** All students are covered by Professional Liability Insurance to the extent mandated by the clinical sites. This coverage is paid for with student fees when registering for clinical courses.
5. **Vaccinations and Proof of Immunity:** All students are required to provide vaccination and/or proof of immunity for the following communicable diseases:
  - COVID-19
  - Measles, Mumps, Rubella
  - Varicella
  - Hepatitis B
  - Two-step TB, annual one-step TB, or QuantiFERON® - TB Gold results
  - Seasonal influenza vaccination is due by **Nov. 1 annually.**
  - In addition, you will be required to show proof of vaccination for diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (Tdap).

These requirements are due on admission to the program and further instructions will be provided through Castle Branch. All students under series for a vaccine must always remain compliant until revaccination is complete, any required titers are achieved, or no further vaccinations are indicated. Students under series for a vaccination who fail to remain compliant during the semester will be removed from the clinical setting.

**Annual Renewable Requirements:**

Academic Integrity Tutorial  
American Heart Association Healthcare Provider Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) – 2 years  
COVID-19 Booster (pending)  
Handbook Acknowledgement Form  
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act HIPPA Training  
Influenza Vaccine  
Standard Precautions Training  
Tuberculosis (TB) testing  
State of Illinois RN license – May 31 biannually for all RNs

These requirements must be renewed annually and submitted by July 1. All requirements must remain current throughout the academic year and may not expire at any time during the semesters.

Failure to comply with any entry or renewal requirements by the designated deadline will result in the student being dropped and/or withdrawn from the clinical course **and a hold will be placed on registration until student is in compliance with all clinical requirements.** Failure to comply with any on-going vaccination requirements will result in a failure in the course. Clinical settings also include fundamentals lab, SIM lab, health assessment lab, and shadowing experiences.

Late admission students may be granted a four-week extension to complete clinical requirements with written permission from the Pre-Licensure Coordinator. All pre-licensure students are admitted into the nursing program provisionally until they have provided proof of meeting specific clinical requirements (such as criminal background check, drug testing, immunization, proof of immunity, TB test, CPR certification, and health insurance). Then, they will be fully admitted.

**Summer Clinical/Internship:**

Any students participating in a summer clinical or internship must be current at the onset of the clinical. All requirements must remain current throughout the clinical experience and may not expire during the clinical experience. Students who fail to comply will be dropped from the course.

Approved Nursing General Faculty Council Meeting 2/11/13. Updated 4/27/17

**RN-BS Completion Students: Employer Verification**

1. If you are currently employed, many of the clinical requirements necessary for enrollment in the nursing program have also been required and documented by your employer. You can submit verification from your employer for clinical requirements that you have completed.
2. Random verifications will be performed, and falsification of information will result in dismissal from the nursing program.

Approved by General Faculty 11/2/98; Revised 5/1/01, 5/19/03, 2/20/04, 4/19/04, 7/2007, 4/2010, 5/2014

**Drug Use and Testing**

In accordance with NIU policies, the School of Nursing will impose disciplinary sanctions upon any student found to be in violation of laws or policies relating to the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of drugs and alcohol.

Nursing students are required to have a ten-panel drug screen based on clinical affiliate's requirements. The School of Nursing follows the CHHS drug screening policy.

As an academic institution, we recognize that students may still be developing appropriate professional dispositions. The CHHS Drug Screening Policy is designed to allow students to make the behavioral adjustments necessary for future success while ensuring the maintenance of health and safety standards relevant to healthcare settings.

#### I. Possible Test Results and Outcomes

a. If the screening is negative, no additional testing will be required at that time. The student will be eligible for program continuation.

b. If the screening is positive, the student will be required to provide a medical rationale for the positive result and/or retest within 30 days of the positive test.\*

i. If the student can provide documentation (i.e., a valid prescription) for the substance that caused the positive drug test, the Medical Resource Officer (MRO) will override the positive test and no additional testing will be required at that time.

ii. If the positive test is not overridden by the MRO, the student must retest within 30 days of the positive test date.

1. If the retest is negative, no further testing will be required at that time. The student will be eligible for program continuation. Note that any future positive test not overridden by the MRO will result in immediate program dismissal.

2. A positive retest will result in immediate program dismissal.

#### II. Program Dismissal Resulting from Positive Screens

a. Two (2) positive drug screens, at any point, that are not over-ridden by the MRO will result in dismissal from the program following the same protocol as for other procedural violations (e.g., non-academic dismissal).

i. In order to appeal a dismissal decision, students must follow their program-specific policy.

b. The two (2) positive tests do not have to be sequential. For example, a positive test during the program admissions process and a second positive test during clinical placement will result in dismissal from the program.

\*In some cases, a clinical site may not allow students with any positive test to be placed. Thus, even a positive test overridden by the MRO may impact clinical placement options and time to degree completion.

Revised 11/13/01, 4/19/04, 06/01/05, 7/2007, Approved CHHS Senate 9/5/2023

### **Human Patient Simulation (HPS) Laboratory Policies and Procedures**

The following policies and procedures are in accordance with the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning Standards of Best Practice: Simulation (2011).

#### Purpose:

The purpose of the HPS Laboratory is to provide and maintain a safe and effective environment that promotes consistent, quality human patient simulation opportunities for all learners, as well

as a flexible teaching environment for faculty and staff. The purpose of the debriefing session that follows each simulation session is to allow students to reflect on the decisions that guided their actions without judgment, to identify strengths and weaknesses, and to consider alternative actions if necessary.

Confidentiality:

Students, faculty, and staff are expected to treat the simulation environment, and the patient information encountered in that environment, as confidential.

The sharing of content, events, and/or individual performances occurring during the simulation experience with nonparticipating students is strictly prohibited and will be considered a breach of professional conduct regarding confidentiality.

Each student will review and sign a confidentiality agreement prior to entering the simulation environment. This agreement will remain in effect for the duration of the student's enrollment in the nursing program. Breaches of this agreement will be considered professional misconduct and will be addressed according to School of Nursing policy (Standard II: Professional Integrity of Participant).

Professional Conduct:

The use of cell phones is strictly prohibited during simulation sessions and/or debriefing. If a student has an emergent need to have his/her cell phone available during the designated simulation time, the instructor must give approval prior to entering the clinical environment.

Students will be held to the same professional requirements that apply to any other clinical situation. These include but are not limited to:

1. Arrival at the clinical site on time and fully prepared.
2. Participation in required orientations.
3. Compliance with the NIU School of Nursing uniform policy unless otherwise indicated.
4. Maintenance of a professional demeanor at all times.

Failure to comply with standards of professional conduct will result in the student being instructed to leave the HPS Laboratory. If a student is required to leave a simulation session prior to its completion, the consequences will be the same as an unexcused absence from a hospital or community-based clinical experience.

Simulation Preparation:

Students will be expected to have all preparatory work complete prior to their simulation experience. Preparation sheets are available under the School of Nursing Blackboard site. Students who do not comply will be considered unprepared for clinical and subject to the corresponding consequences as outlined in the course syllabus.

**Policy on the Disclosure of HIV Status**

If a student chooses to disclose to the instructor that they are HIV-positive, the Illinois AIDS Confidentiality Act authorizes disclosure to "an agent of a health care facility or health care provider only on a need-to-know basis. "Need-to-know basis" is limited to care that involves handling of a needle or other sharp instruments in a body cavity or poorly visualized, confined anatomical site.

HIV testing cannot be required of students without written consent (IL AIDS Confidentiality Act, Section 4). An exception to HIV testing and disclosure occurs if a patient is involved in accidental direct skin or mucous membrane contact with the blood or bodily fluids of a health care worker which could transmit HIV. If the health care worker's test is positive, the patient

must be notified. (Sec. 7 (b)), IL Aids Confidentiality Act). Both ANA and AMA policies require testing of a health care provider in the above situation.

Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96, Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96, Reviewed Standards 3/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **Policy on Refusal to Care for a Patient**

Nursing care is to be delivered without prejudice. Refusal to participate in the care of a patient is only appropriate on the grounds of either patient advocacy, moral objection to a specific type of intervention, or significant risk to the health of the student.

Students refusing to care for a patient will state their objections in writing to their clinical faculty member. The faculty member will refer the objection to the Standards Committee for review.

Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96, Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96, Reviewed Standards 4/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **Uniform Policy**

Professional appearance: Students are required to comply with clinical site and Student Handbook Uniform Policy:

1. Visible tattoos must be concealed, if possible.
2. Jewelry and Piercing
  - a. Jewelry must be limited to one ring
  - b. All piercing is banned from clinical except one pair of stud earrings (non-dangling) no more than a ¼" in diameter worn in the earlobes.
3. Hair and beards
  - a. Hair must be clean and well kempt.
- b. Long hair must be restrained and pulled off the face above the shoulder to avoid patient contact and not interfere with patient care. Ponytails and/or braids must be secured above the shoulders.
  - c. Extreme, unnatural hair colors (fluorescent color, green, orange, red, etc.) are prohibited.
  - d. Beards and mustaches must be clean and trimmed. Beard coverings may be required in patient care areas
  - e. Face may not be obscured by hair or clothing.
4. Eyelashes
  - a. No false eyelashes or eyelash extensions are allowed.
5. Fingernails
  - a. Fingernails should be kept neat with nails no more than ¼" in length. Artificial nails are NOT allowed. This includes acrylic and gel artificial nails. No nail polish is allowed.
6. Odors
  - a. Students should present an appearance of cleanliness and should be especially free of odors that may be offensive to patients and others who may have allergies.
  - b. Colognes and perfumes should not be used.
  - c. Odors related to poor personal hygiene must be addressed.

Students are required to be in clean, well-pressed uniforms or business casual attire as specified by the clinical experience. Shoes and shoelaces must be clean. On any day that students appear for a clinical course in unkempt, unclean, or inappropriate attire (denim clothes, jeans, cord pants that are touching the floor, clothing that does not fit properly, etc.) they will be dismissed from clinical for the day and be considered absent. Deviations from this policy due to cultural or religious reasons will need to be approved by the Standards Committee.

Uniform Policy for Clinical Courses in Hospital Settings:

- A red uniform top from designated vendor.
- Black uniform pants. Jogger style scrub pants are not allowed.
- A black scrub jacket from the approved vendor is optional
- White, black, or gray non-porous shoes that covers the entire foot (including heels and toes), and socks.
- Stethoscope, watch with second hand, and a black ball point pen.

- No smart watches allowed

Uniform Policy for Clinical Courses in Community Settings:

1. The NIU nursing program uniform or the attire specified by the community health agency.
2. Clean, quiet shoes.
3. Students must wear the photo ID badge.
4. Students must follow the professional appearance policies and standards.

Examples of Inappropriate and Appropriate Dress appear below:

Inappropriate Dress:

- Denim jeans or jean-styled pants
- Leggings/yoga pants
- T-shirts not worn as undergarments
- Sleeveless or spaghetti strap shirts or blouses worn without a covering garment such as a jacket or sweater.
- Blouses, shirts, or sweaters that do not cover the back, shoulders or stomach
- Shorts
- Mini skirts
- Workout wear (e.g., warm-ups, sweatshirts, sweatpants, jogging suits)
- Sheer or low-cut garments without an underlayer
- Clothing with slogans or graphics
- Clothes that are faded, worn, or unkempt

Appropriate Dress:

- Dress slacks
- Business casual slacks and pants (e.g., chinos, Docker-type slacks, khakis)
- Skirts of appropriate length
- Dresses of appropriate length
- Dress shirts/blouses
- Sweaters/vests
- Dress shoes/dress boots/business casual shoes (e.g., loafers, bucks, topsiders)

NIU Photo ID Badge

- Must always be worn during clinical

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list but rather a standard for acceptable attire. Students are required to comply with clinical site and Student handbook Uniform Policy.

Approved by GFC 3/21/2011, reviewed 5/2015, Updated 9/14/15. Updated 4/27/17, Updated 4/10/18, Updated 10/3/2022.

**NIU Photo I.D. Badge**

- Must always be worn during clinical
- The photo I.D. badge is provided to you by the School of Nursing and must be worn at all times during clinical.
- The photo I.D. badge will list your first name and NIU undergraduate student.
- Photo ID's are available in the Nursing Main Office, room 190.
- Call 815-753-6557 to schedule an appointment to have your picture taken for your photo I.D. badge.
- The Nursing Main Office is open between the hours of 8 a.m. to noon and 1-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.
- The NIU nursing student photo I.D. will be distributed to pre-licensure students during NURS 303.
- Students who lose their photo I.D. badge or are retracked will be assessed a

replacement fee.

### **Confidentiality: Policy Statement**

The concept of the right of individuals to privacy is taught throughout the nursing curriculum. The right to privacy is grounded in moral reasoning as well as federal legislation titled the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act. Privacy rights must be protected by maintaining confidentiality.

On a routine basis, the faculty addresses the legal, moral and professional consequences of breaches of confidentiality. The profession of nursing respects the autonomy of every individual and always demands the maintenance of confidentiality. All students are held accountable for meeting HIPAA requirements.

The faculty and students of the Nursing Program support the right to confidentiality for all individuals.

Approved 3/5/90; Reviewed 3/5/93; 2/14/94; 2/6/95; Revised 5/19/03, 04/22/2010, Reviewed Standards 3/2022, GFC 5/2022

### **Standard Precautions Policy**

To eliminate or minimize occupational exposure to all blood-borne pathogens, the most significant being Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), all nursing students are required to follow Universal Precautions by Federal Law: Occupational Safety and Health Administration Part 1910:1030 - Occupational exposure to blood-borne pathogens. These precautions are outlined in the nursing program's Universal Precautions Procedures. Completion of a standard precautions educational program on a yearly basis is required of all students enrolled in clinical courses.

Approved 8/23/88, Revised 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 11/7/94, Reviewed 2/6/95

The training and quiz can be found in Blackboard by clicking on the Community tab and then clicking on Clinical Requirements – Nursing tab under the School of Nursing section. For students who are RNs, standard precautions training may be completed in the following ways:

1. Completion of the nursing educational program, as outlined above.
2. Submission of written documentation of training from a clinical agency that includes the following information on the agency letterhead: the date of the training, the type of training completed (standard precautions training required), and the signature of the instructor/educational coordinator.
3. Written documentation that the RN student has taught standard precautions content. This documentation must be on the agency letterhead, signed by the educational coordinator or another appropriate individual, and indicate the date of the last course taught by the RN. The date of the last course/program presented will serve as the date for documentation.

Approved 11/7/94, Reviewed 2/6/95, 4/2010

To aid you in self-protection in the clinical area consult the recommendations set by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. For the most recent CDC guidelines, please see the [CDC guidelines](#).

Revised and Approved 3/5/93, Reviewed 2/6/95, Revised 7/07, 4/2010

### **Policy for Follow-up of Significant Exposure to Blood/Body Fluids**

If a student experiences significant exposure to blood/body fluids during the clinical experience the following actions are to be implemented:

1. The student will immediately report the significant exposure to the instructor and will follow the clinical agency's protocol for exposure/injury.
2. If the student refuses any part of the diagnostic testing and/or treatment, the student will be required to sign the "Informed Refusal for Post Exposure Medical Evaluation" form.
3. The student and faculty member will complete the School of Nursing "Significant

Exposure Report". This report will be placed in a separate confidential file maintained by the Office Supervisor of the School of Nursing. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the NIU University Health Service.

4. As with all health care expenses, payment for treatment is the responsibility of the student.

Approved 3/5/93, Revised 2/6/94, 7/2007

### **Policy for Follow-up of Significant Exposure to M. Tuberculosis**

If a student experiences significant exposure to a TB patient during the clinical experience, and appropriate precautions were not observed at the time of exposure, the following actions are to be implemented:

1. The student will immediately report the significant exposure to the instructor and will follow the clinical agency's protocol for exposure/injury.
2. It is recommended that the student receive a health care professional's evaluation and counseling that provides the student with information on the CDC recommendations.
3. If the student refuses any part of the diagnostic testing and/or treatment, the student will be required to sign the "Informed Refusal for Post-Exposure Medical Evaluation" form.
4. The student and faculty member will complete the School of Nursing "Significant Exposure Report". This report will be placed in a separate confidential file in the School of Nursing and a copy will be forwarded to the NIU University Student Health Service.
5. As with all health care expenses, payment for treatment is the responsibility of the student.

Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96; Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96; Revised 7/2007, Reviewed 4/2010

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
School of Nursing

**Significant Exposure Report**

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ SS#: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Address and Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Permanent Address and Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and Time of Report of Incident to Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

Agency/Facility and Department/Floor/Unit Where Incident Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type and brand of device involved in incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Exposure: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The above-named student has been advised of the current policies and procedures for significant exposures consistent with current laws and regulations.

Instructor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Dosage Calculation Exam and Medication Administration**

### **Mandatory Medication Dosage Calculation**

Students are expected to comply with the NIU academic integrity statement as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalogue.

### **Examination**

The medication dosage calculation exams are standardized and pre-approved.

- a. All students enrolled in clinical courses are required to complete a medication dosage calculation examination.
- b. Dosage calculation exams are deployed through individual clinical courses.
- c. Students will have 30 minutes to complete the exam (unless documented need for additional time is provided from the DRC) the dosage calculation exam.
- d. Failure to pass the exam in 3 attempts results in an Unsatisfactory grade for the course.
- e. Students in tracks 2 through 4 must complete all 3 attempts (if needed) by the start of the 2nd clinical day. Students enrolled in NURS 303 must complete all 3 attempts by the end of week 9.
- f. Students may not administer medications in the clinical setting until they have passed a dosage calculation exam at the benchmark set for that clinical course.
- g. Versions one and two of the test will be administered online via Blackboard. Those wishing to take the third test in person may contact the test administrator to arrange to take it at the School of Nursing.
- h. Paper and pencil test review will take place on an individual basis by appointment only.
- i. The use of calculators is recommended; however, no other resources (e.g., cell phones, textbooks, etc.) may be used. Use of scientific calculators is prohibited.
- j. All work must be shown on a scratch paper that is numbered for each problem. This scratch paper must be submitted to the instructor to receive credit.

Revised 1/15/16, Updated 4/16/18, 11/21/18, 3/4/19, 2/6/2023

### **Grading**

1. Students must achieve the following scores to pass
  - a. Track 1: 90%
  - b. Tracks 2-5: 100%
  - c.
2. Results will be provided immediately following the exam. In the case of emergency, the test will be administered on paper. Students will be notified of results within 24 hours.
3. Students who remove, copy, or photograph the test will be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct.
4. Questions about test results should be directed to the test administrator within 48 hours of testing.

### **Remediation:**

Students who do not pass the first attempt should reach out to the Student Success Coordinator to meet with a med math tutor.

Revised 1/15/16, Updated 4/16/18, 11/21/18, 3/4/19, 2/6/2023

**Medication Administration Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to assure student competency in medication administration and patient safety.

The following is a description of the faculty and student responsibilities for medication administration.

1. Clinical faculty members are responsible for validating student medication competency by the following methods and completing the Student Medication Competency Checklist.
2. In order to be eligible to pass medications with clinical faculty, the student will:
  - a. Pass the med math test at the required benchmark.
  - b. Demonstrate skill proficiency in medication administration in all routes. Routes of medication administration to be determined by clinical course/institution.
  - c. Demonstrate proficient application of six medication rights (right patient, medication, route, time, dosage, and documentation).
  - d. State the following information for medications administered- generic/trade name, classification, mechanism of action, reason for patient receiving medication, side effects, contraindications, normal dose, normal route, and relevant nursing implications.
  - e. Utilize required pharmacology references during the clinical course.
3. The clinical faculty will notify the student when medication competency has been achieved utilizing the Medication Administration Competency Checklist.
4. If a student does not demonstrate medication competency, remediation will be required in the Nursing Skills Lab. Faculty will assure that remediation has been completed prior to administering any medication with student.
5. Students at any level must be supervised by the clinical instructor when preparing and administering medications.

**Student Medication Administration Competency Checklist**

The faculty member assessed that the following student is competent in medication administration based on the following criteria. Enter the date in the criteria box for all that apply to this student.

Criteria	Criteria met	Criteria not met Remediation date
Pass Med Math Test		
Demonstrated skill competency relevant to this clinical course/institution		
Demonstrated competent application of the six medication rights		
Stated essential information for medication administered		
Utilized required pharmacology references		

Faculty Member Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Course and Clinical Rotation Number \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Verification of completion of Student Medication Competency Checklist must be submitted with the final student evaluation.

Approved GFC 12/2/19. To be reviewed Fall 2020 and biannually thereafter, revised/approved Standards 4/2022, GFC 5/2022.

## **Section F: General Policies and Procedures**

### **Continuous Registration: Leave of Absence and Readmission Policy Statement**

#### **Leave of Absence (LOA)**

Nursing majors must maintain continuous registration in the university. A student who interrupts registration (excluding the summer session) without obtaining an official Leave of Absence from the Nursing Undergraduate Academic Advisor will be withdrawn from the nursing major.

If it should become necessary for a student to withdraw from the university for reasons not academic, the student may request a Leave of Absence from the School of Nursing. The request must be written and predate the student's official withdrawal from the University. The request must include the reason for the request and the length of leave being requested.

Each leave of absence will be decided on its own merits. The following will be considered in the decision-making process:

1. Reason for the request.
2. Potential for resolution of the problem within the period of the LOA.
3. Consequences of the LOA in terms of its impact on future course work.

Leave of Absence decisions will take one of the following forms:

1. An unconditional LOA, in which case the student would be automatically readmitted to the program at a specified time.
2. A conditional LOA, in which case the student would be readmitted to the program at the specified time and contingent upon compliance with any conditions outlined at the time the leave is granted.

The amount of time granted for a LOA will range from one semester to a maximum of one academic year. Students requesting a LOA for one academic year will be apprised of the need to repeat nursing courses to assure current knowledge and skills.

Students who were not on an official Leave of Absence and were withdrawn from the nursing major must file an application for readmission to the university and the Nursing major.

Applications for readmission will be reviewed at the same time as all other applications to the nursing major using the current admission criteria.

Approved 5/8/79; Revised and Approved 11/21/88; Reviewed 2/5/90, 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 2/14/94, 2/6/95, 11/6/95; Revised and Approved 5/1/01, 7/2007; Reviewed 4/2010

#### **Readmission**

It is expected that nursing students will maintain continuous enrollment once the professional nursing course sequence is begun. Students with an approved Leave of Absence and students who are in good standing and readmitted after withdrawing from the nursing program may be required to retake appropriate courses to demonstrate current knowledge and skills. Repeated courses will not count toward the university's graduation requirement of 120 credits. Nursing courses completed more than five years prior to readmission will need to be retaken to meet the major requirements.

## **Core Performance Standards for Nursing Students**

All students interested in enrolling and remaining in the undergraduate nursing program at NIU must possess the performance component skills necessary to assess a patient's biopsychosocial needs; analyze collected data in order to identify patient problems; plan and implement independent and collaborative interventions; and evaluate the care provided and the patient's responses to care. Specific observation, communication, motor, cognitive, psychosocial, and behavioral requirements provide candidates with the ability to carry out the responsibilities of a student nurse providing direct or indirect patient care. A student must, with or without reasonable accommodation, possess these performance component skills upon admission to the nursing program and maintain these essential components throughout the program. The activities/attributes listed below are not all inclusive.

1. Manual Dexterity
  - a. Use sterile techniques; insert catheters (Foley, NG, IV)
  - b. Perform venipunctures
  - c. Prepare and administer medications (PO, IM, IV)
  - d. Manipulate small objects (lancet, stopcock)
  - e. Open and close medication containers
2. Mobility
  - a. Remain at patient's side for a prolonged period of time for purposes of monitoring and frequent assessments
  - b. Perform CPR
  - c. Assist in lifting and moving patients and patient care materials (bed, chair)
  - d. Move independently to and from patient care areas
3. Processing Patient Information
  - a. Respond to communication from patients with or without direct view of patient's face
  - b. Respond to monitor alarms, emergency signals, call bells from patients, and orders in a rapid and effective manner
  - c. Accurately assess blood pressures, heart, lung, vascular, and abdominal sounds
  - d. Accurately read a thermometer; identify cyanosis, absence of respirations, and movements of patients rapidly and accurately
  - e. Accurately process printed and computerized information on medication containers and physicians' orders, monitor equipment calibrations, printed documents, flow sheets, graphic sheets, medication administration records, and other medical records
4. Math Competency
  - a. Tell time
  - b. Use measuring tools (tape measure, scale)
  - c. Add, subtract, multiply, and divide
  - d. Record numbers
  - e. Calculate medication dosages (PO, Sub-q, IM, IV) and intravenous solution rates
5. Emotional Stability
  - a. Provide emotional support to patients
  - b. Adapt rapidly to environmental changes and multiple task demands (new admission, patient going to therapy or surgery)
  - c. Maintain adequate concentration and attention in patient care settings
  - d. Maintain behavioral decorum in stressful situations (avoid inappropriate laughter, jokes, comments)
6. Cognitive Processing
  - a. Transfer knowledge from one situation to another (classroom to patient care)

- b. Assess patient needs based on understanding and synthesis of patient information (know comorbidities, complex problems)
  - c. Develop effective care plans based on assessments; prioritize tasks to ensure patient safety and standards of care (administer medications and treatments on time)
  - d. Organize and retain information in basic knowledge and skills areas (frequently administers medications and treatments)
7. Critical Thinking
- a. Identify cause and effect relationships (religious, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic)
  - b. Sequence information in a manner that is logical and understood by others
  - c. Make sound clinical judgments and decisions based on standards of nursing care; seek assistance when clinical situation requires a higher level of expertise/experience
8. Interpersonal/Communication Skills
- a. Respect differences in patients; establish and maintain effective working relations with patients, co-workers, faculty, and student colleagues
  - b. Teach and provide information in an accurate and effective manner
  - c. Report critical patient information to other caregivers
  - d. Convey information to others through graphic, print, and/or electronic media in an accurate, timely, and comprehensible manner

Revised and approved 2/12/01 Revised and approved 10/9/06 Reviewed 7/2007, 4/2010

### **Disabilities or Chronic Health Problems: Policy for Students**

Resources and services to assist students with disabilities or chronic health problems are available at NIU. Students who would benefit from such services are encouraged to contact the [Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#) as soon as they arrive on the campus or when a need for such services arises.

The nursing faculty is willing to make reasonable accommodations in nursing courses for students with documented disabilities or chronic health problems when the faculty is informed of the student's needs.

Approved by Standards Committee 4/8/96; Approved by General Faculty 4/15/96, Reviewed 7/2007, 4/2010

### **Electronic Devices and Social Networking Policy**

1. Students must recognize that they have an ethical and legal responsibility to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times including, but not limited to, in online media. The standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstances.

2. Students must read, understand, and follow all policies and procedures of the clinical agency when it comes to confidentiality, privacy, security and safeguarding of patients and their information. If students have any questions about those policies and procedures, those questions should be presented to the clinical supervisor or faculty member for resolution.

3. Students must abide by any clinical agency policies and procedures regarding use of employer-owned computers, cameras, and other electronic devices and use of personal devices while in the clinical agency. If unsure of agency policies, students should check with their faculty (or clinical supervisor, if different) about permissible devices that can be used in clinical agency. Students should not text, email, take photos without permission of the faculty member, or receive telephone calls in the classroom, or patient care areas of clinical agencies or in the patient's home.

4. Students may not record protected health information (PHI) about patients on personal

devices, including cell phones. This includes, but is not limited to, taking pictures or videos of patients on personal cell phones.

a. Students are forbidden to share any information or photos via any social media that is obtained through the nursing student-patient relationship, unless specifically authorized by their clinical agency.

b. Use of any electronic devices to store/enter any type of client information against the policies and procedures of the clinical agency can be a violation of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and may result in disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from the program.

5. Students may not post online or on social media information about patients; especially the identity of patients by name or any information that may lead to the identification of a patient.

6. Students must maintain professional boundaries with patients when using social media. Social media contact with patients is not acceptable and other online contact with patients must only be done pursuant to the policies and procedures of the clinical agency.

7. Students should promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy issue pursuant to the policies and procedures of the clinical agency.

8. Students who fail to follow the directions of a faculty member or the clinical agency policy and procedures may incur disciplinary action resulting in suspension and/or dismissal.

9. Students are encouraged to maintain positive relationships in the workplace/learning environment and are discouraged from making any online or social media comments about other students, faculty, the clinical agencies and/or their employees, or clinical assignments/learning activities that are disruptive, untruthful, and/or not conducive to the professional or educational setting, even if they are not identified.

10. Students should check with their faculty) about permissible devices that can be used in the classroom. Faculty members have the right to instruct students to turn off laptops and other devices, and to stow those devices in secure places, in any class or agency.

11. All electronic devices, including cell phones, need to be turned off and stowed in the front of the classroom during quizzes, exams, and any other times designated by the faculty member.

Modified from American Nurses Association (2011). Principles for social networking and the nurse. Silver Spring, MD: ANA.

Approved 11/2012, Revised 5/1/2015, 4/16/18, Revised 8.17.20

### **Enrollment in Nursing Courses: Policy Statement**

Enrollment in undergraduate nursing courses is restricted to admitted nursing majors. All admitted nursing majors must have an approved program of study on file in the School of Nursing. This program of study tracks the student through their required coursework, including the nursing curriculum, and the student is obligated to follow the assigned program of study exactly as it is written and approved by the Undergraduate Academic Advisor. A program of study may be changed with the approval of the Undergraduate Academic Advisor.

RN-BS degree completion students are required to plan their sequence of courses (track) for all courses. NURS 347: Concepts of Professional Nursing must be the first course taken by RN-B.S. students. NURS 463: Practicum in Leadership and Population-Focused Nursing must be

the last course taken. Students who choose to change their course sequencing (tracking) must make a re-tracking appointment with their advisor; this is especially critical for NURS 463. Retracking of undergraduate students for nursing courses is done only if there is space available. In the event space is not available, students who need to be retracked will need to wait until space is available in the needed course(s).

Approved 1/8/79; Revised and Approved 11/21/88, 3/8/94 10/23/95; Reviewed 3/5/90, 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 2/6/95; Approved 10/11/99; Reviewed 7/2007, 4/2010; Revised 8/2016; Updated 4/16/18

### **Honors' Guidelines for Students Completing Honors' Capstone Projects**

1. Students interested in completing Capstone Projects must identify and contact a faculty mentor at least one semester in advance of implementation as most faculty are able to advise a limited number of students each semester. Only tenured/tenure-track faculty (professor, associate professor, assistant professor) can mentor Capstone Projects. Nursing students who are interested in working with a nursing faculty member who is not tenured/tenure-track can approach that faculty member to see if collaboration with a tenured/tenure-track faculty member is possible.
2. Students completing Capstone Projects must enroll in NURS 499 (Senior Project in Nursing). This course can be taken for one to three credit hours per semester up to a maximum of six hours. If desired, the credit hours may be divided across two semesters to permit a focus on proposal development and project preparation during one semester followed by completion of the project and writing the summary of the project in the following semester.
3. Preparation for Capstone Projects that involve data collection or other research methodologies must be started no later than midterm of the semester before the project is to be undertaken. It is required that students whose proposed Capstone Projects involve data collection be mentored by a nursing faculty member who is currently doing related research or using related research methodologies. Students may visit [Research - NIU - College of Health and Human Sciences](#) on the College of Health and Human Sciences' website to identify a potential faculty mentor.
4. All nursing students completing Capstone Projects that involve human subjects data collection (this includes using available data collected from human subjects and primary data collection from human subjects) are required to complete and submit the Institutional Review Board Screening Form (found on the Research Compliance website) to determine whether IRB approval is required.
5. Students will not be permitted to recruit other students as participants in Capstone Project studies.
6. Students completing Capstone Projects must be familiar with the University Honors Program deadlines for the submission of Capstone proposals and final reports. The faculty mentor will establish and document a clear timeline including expectations, deadlines, and the consequences for missing deadlines with the student to ensure successful completion of the project. The student is responsible for meeting all agreed upon deadlines.

Approved by GFC 12/15, Revised 4/16/18

### **Independent Study in Nursing: NURS 350**

The purpose of an independent study is to provide students with an opportunity to explore an area of interest in nursing in further depth than the normal curriculum would allow. Admitted nursing students who have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and have completed 20 semester hours of nursing classes are eligible to enroll in NURS 350: Independent Study in the School of Nursing.

Students take the initiative in structuring an independent study. It is up to the student to develop an idea and seek out a faculty member with whom to work. The faculty member helps the student to develop their idea into a proposal and supervises the implementation of the proposal.

It takes some time to develop a proposal for an independent study, so students should plan accordingly. The following action guidelines may help a student who is interested:

1. Obtain a "Proposal for NURS 350: Independent Study" packet in Room 190.
2. Make arrangements with a nursing faculty member to supervise the study.
3. Working with your faculty member, complete the packet.
4. Submit the proposal for signatures of approval - to faculty member and then to the Undergraduate Nursing Program Director.

Once all the signatures are obtained, the reference number is released to the student for registration purposes. This process must be completed by the end of the fourth week of the fall or spring semester. For the Summer Internship, the process must be completed by the end of the first week.

### **NCLEX-RN Criminal Background Checks**

The Illinois Department of Financial Aid and Professional Regulation requires graduating seniors to submit to fingerprint processing from the Illinois Department of State Police or its designated agent.

Revised 5/1/01, 4/19/04, 5/18/07, 4/2010, 5/2022

### **Portfolio Requirements:**

Each nursing student is required to save and maintain a portfolio of assignments, consisting of examples of his or her best written work, which must be submitted at the end of the final semester of the nursing program. The portfolios are assessed by the faculty to evaluate the effectiveness of the nursing curriculum in preparing students to achieve the program's student learning outcomes (SLOs). The portfolio is also intended to enable students to understand their professional nursing development in the program, based on the design of the curriculum and the SLOs.

The portfolio consists of:

- A Portfolio Reflection – the student's narrative explaining how the SLOs were met by the student in the program through various learning activities and assignments.
- Saved copies of at least four written assignments that are representative of the student's best work, reflecting achievement of SLOs.
  - Examples:
    - EBP paper from Nursing Research
    - Process recording from mental health clinical
    - Nursing Informatics consumer education paper
    - Case study
    - Care plans (with or without concept maps)
    - Gerontology paper
    - Honors program projects
    - Leadership paper

Copies of assignments must be submitted without grades or faculty comments; however, students are encouraged to use the feedback provided by the faculty member to make the suggested revisions prior to submission in the portfolio. Assignments submitted as part of the student's portfolio are identified only by the Z-ID not the student's name. Please see Portfolio Resources for Students under the School of Nursing Organization Blackboard for more information.

Revised 5/19/03, 2/20/04, 4/2010, 5/2013, 4/2015; Updated 4/27/17, 4/16/18, 10/7/19

### **RN Articulation Plan: Policy Statement**

RNs who begin NIU nursing classes within five years of graduating from a two-to-three-year,

state-approved program will be granted the appropriate number of escrow credits. Any baccalaureate nursing courses completed five years prior to admission/readmission must be repeated. RNs who graduated over five years ago from a nursing program will be automatically granted the appropriate number of escrow credits provided they have practiced as a registered nurse within the last five years. Registered nurses who graduated more than five years ago who have not practiced as a registered nurse within the last five years will need to demonstrate competency through successful completion of an approved refresher course.

Credits will be held in escrow until the RN has successfully completed 12 credit hours of NIU coursework.

#### Posting of Proficiency Credit on Transcript:

Proficiency credit will be awarded only after the student has been admitted to the School of Nursing. All proficiency credit awarded at NIU will be entered on the student's academic record. However, proficiency credit awarded by NIU will only be entered on transcripts (i.e., a copy of the academic record) of students who have successfully completed 12 credit hours of NIU coursework including the bridge course, NURS 347.

#### Extra-departmental Requirements:

RNs enrolled in NIU's RN-B.S. degree completion program may begin taking nursing courses prior to completing extra-departmental requirements. RNs are encouraged to discuss this option with the Nursing Undergraduate Academic Advisor.

Approved 1/8/79; Revised and Approved 11/21/88; Reviewed 3/5/90; Revised and Approved 2/21/91, 3/6/92, 3/5/93; Reviewed 2/6/95; Revised and Approved 5/3/99 Revised 5/24/99; Revised 5/19/03; Reviewed 7/2007; Revised 4/22/2010, 4/16/18

### **Student Complaint Process**

The School of Nursing values the student body voice and will endeavor to address complaints in a fair, timely manner with the utmost transparency. In general, complaints should be brought to the appropriate faculty member first, then, if unresolved, should go to the Director of the Undergraduate Program. If still unresolved, the issue should be taken to the Chair of the School of Nursing. The Dean or Associate Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences may be asked to intervene if the issues cannot be resolved at the School level. Students should refrain from contacting university-level officials, such as the Provost or the President, without first trying to resolve issues through the chain of command just described.

Students should take their academic, course-related issues directly to their instructor, either verbally or in writing. It is important to understand that instructors have authority and jurisdiction over the administration of their courses, however unethical practices or egregious actions by the instructor should be raised to the Chair's attention through a formal complaint.

A formal complaint is one that is submitted in writing by a student through one of the following methods: an email to the [nursing school](#) address, an email to the Director of the Undergraduate Program, a letter delivered or mailed to the nursing front office, a submission to the suggestion box outside room 189 or through the Student Advisory Council. The School of Nursing leadership will make every effort to provide a response in writing to all complaints that are not anonymous. Questions pertaining to the student complaint process can be directed to the School's Director of Operations.

### **Summer Internship Program**

The purpose of the summer internship program for nursing students is to provide clinical experience through on-the-job training.

## The Interns

Up to eight interns per clinical site are selected through a competitive application process. During the application process, interns complete an application form and participate in an interview with nursing staff/faculty.

During the selection process, the following are considered:

1. Level in the curriculum: Those closest applicants to graduation are given priority for participation. Students must have completed their first full adult health clinical prior to the internship to apply for the program.
2. Applicant goals: Applicants are asked to submit goals for the internship experience. This allows faculty to be certain that students are seeking an internship for the right reasons and that students have realistic expectations for the experience.
3. Interpersonal skills: Well developed interpersonal skills, which allow the student to quickly develop positive working relationships with hospital staff, patients and so forth, cannot be over emphasized. This quality is assessed through the personal interview with each applicant.
4. GPA: While there is not a specific GPA required for application purposes, the nursing program requires a minimum GPA of 2.75 (4-point scale) to progress through the program. GPA is one of many criteria for selection, and those with higher GPAs will receive a higher score for that component.
5. Extra-curricular activities: Another component of selection is the student's involvement in activities outside of class including volunteer activities, part-time work in the health-care field, and university club involvement.

Revised 4/16/18

### **Student Fees: Policy Statement**

There are extra fees charged to students taking nursing courses. These course related fees are charged the semester that the student is enrolled in a course. These fees help to cover extra costs involved in producing certain courses (i.e., professional liability insurance, lab materials, supplies, models and technology).

These fees may be billed on the student's original bill for the semester or in a separate billing, depending on how the student registered for courses.

Approved 3/5/90; Reviewed 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 2/6/95; Revised 5/19/03, Revised 6/2007, 5/2013; Reviewed 4/2010

### **Student Safety Policy**

Students in community-based clinical experiences involving home health care shall be accompanied by the NIU faculty or agency preceptor who delivers care to the student's assigned client during the initial visit and any other visit, if the environment is judged problematic by either the agency, the NIU faculty, or if issues of safety have been raised by the student. Students will visit the client's home only during prearranged agreed-upon clinical hours as defined in the course syllabus and will not provide clients and/or family members with personal transportation nor will they return to the client's home once the clinical experience is completed. Students who have any questions related to safety must contact their instructor or preceptor immediately.

## **Section G: Organizations**

The School of Nursing offers students the opportunity to take part in a variety of organizations and committees. Students are encouraged to become active and involved both on campus and within the School of Nursing. Such involvement offers students an additional learning experience in leadership and professionalism, enables faculty to write more informed reference letters, and captures the attention of prospective employers.

## **Student Organizations**

All students who have been admitted to the nursing major are encouraged to participate in a nursing student organization such as the Student Nurses Organization (SNO) and/or American Assembly for Men in Nursing. The SNO/AAMN office is located off the student lounge in the School of Nursing. Meeting dates are posted in the School of Nursing. Further information is available from the [Student Nurses Organization](#).

## **Sigma Theta Tau International, Beta Omega Chapter**

Sigma Theta Tau International is the Honor Society of Nursing. Membership in the organization is an honor conferred on students in baccalaureate and graduate programs who have demonstrated excellence in their nursing programs. Graduates of baccalaureate programs who demonstrate excellence in leadership positions are also eligible for membership consideration.

Membership is available by invitation and assumes acceptance of the purposes of the society and the responsibility to participate in achieving its goals.

The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau International include:

1. Recognition of superior achievement
2. Recognition of the development of leadership qualities
3. Fostering of high professional standards
4. Encouragement of creative work
5. Strengthening of commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession

## **Undergraduate Nursing Student Advisory Committee Bylaws**

This committee works with the Director of the Undergraduate Nursing Program in an advisory capacity. Its bylaws are as follows:

### Functions of the committee:

1. Advise nursing administration and faculty on matters of direct concern to students.
2. Advise nursing student representatives to the College of Health and Human Sciences Student Advisory Committee.
3. Student volunteers will be solicited for the School of Nursing and the College of Health and Human Sciences Student Advisory Committee.
4. Conduct elections and prepare forms for the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award (EUTA) and the Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction award (EUIA).
5. Appoint four members for Grade Review Panel.
6. Appoint two student members for General Faculty Council (GFC) meeting attendance
7. Appoint two student members to the Undergraduate Curriculum and Evaluation Committee.
8. Appoint one student member to the Standards Committee.

### Membership:

The Committee will be composed of at least seven student members elected from the total nursing student body. There will be an elected student representative from each of the five undergraduate pre-licensure nursing tracks, one student member from the Student Nurses Organization (SNO), and one student member from Northern Prairie Alliance (NPA).

The elected student position will be for the duration of the student's enrollment in the program. If a student is unable to serve the entire duration of his or her term, the student will be replaced by another elected student representative.

- a. The Director of the Undergraduate Program is an ex-officio member.
- b. The Chair and Secretary of the Committee will be elected from among the student members of the Committee.

### Voting:

1. A quorum shall consist of 50% of committee members.
2. Meetings may be called with at least one-week notice.
3. Official minutes of the meetings will be posted electronically in the School of Nursing Outlook Group site.

Reviewed 10/2010, 10/2018, 4/2019; Approved by NUHS GFC 11/29/10; Approved by SON GFC 11/21/16, 11/19/18 and 04/01/19

### **Research Committee**

This committee includes two to four students: one or two undergraduates and one or two graduates. The committee promotes SON research activities of the faculty and students. This committee meets as needed.

### **General Faculty Committee**

This group includes all faculty members in the nursing program as well as six student members, three undergraduates and three graduates. This group makes final decisions on policy for the nursing program. It meets on Monday mornings three or four times each semester.

### **Undergraduate Curriculum and Evaluation Committee**

This committee includes two undergraduate student members: one pre-licensure student and one RN-B.S. The committee coordinates the implementation of the nursing curriculum and all evaluations of the program. This group reviews courses and ideas for courses, changes in the curriculum, etc. They also ensure that the planned evaluations of the program are conducted, review the results, and make recommendations to the faculty. This group typically meets on Mondays once or twice each month.

### **Portfolio Subcommittee**

This committee oversees the process of evaluating the undergraduate nursing program outcomes through the assessment of portfolios. Student involvement (undergraduate and graduate) is welcomed. This subcommittee is involved in all aspects of the portfolio assessment process, informing students about portfolio collection and assessment, serving as a resource for students and faculty, and analyzing and reporting the results.

### **Standards Committee**

This committee includes two student members - one undergraduate and one graduate student. The committee develops and evaluates policies and criteria for admission to nursing and for retention in the program. This committee also oversees scholarship awards and develops the standards-related sections of the student handbook. Meetings typically occur on Mondays approximately once each month.

Updated 9/14/15

## Undergraduate Nursing Student Handbook Acknowledgment Signature Page



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

School of Nursing

College of Health and Human Sciences

The student handbook can be found [online](#) or from the nursing homepage >> Resources >> Resources for Students >> Undergraduate Nursing Handbook (PDF). Review the most current undergraduate nursing student handbook. **Your initials next to each statement below and signature at the bottom of this page** indicate that you have read, understand, and will adhere to the contents of the Undergraduate Nursing Student Handbook. Violation of any policy, statement, rule, law or regulation, including the Student Professional Contract, may result in dismissal from the nursing program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read, understand, and will adhere to the **Professional and Student Codes**: ANA Code of Ethics and Northern Illinois University Professional Standards for Nursing Students

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read, understand, and will adhere to the **Academic Policies and Procedures**, including but not limited to: Academic Integrity; Standardized Grading Scale; Course Withdrawals; Policy for Grading Undergraduate Clinical Courses; Northern Illinois University UG Nursing Clinicals Tardiness; Policy Regarding D, F, and Unsatisfactory Grades in Nursing Courses; Prerequisite Course Grades; Falsification of Clinical Hours; Academic Warning/Retention, Dismissal, and Appeal; Referral to the Standards Committee for Progression or Retention; and HESI Examinations

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read, understand, and will adhere to the **Clinical and Practicum Policies**, including but not limited to: Clinical and Practicum Policy Statement; Clinical Enrollment; Clinical Requirements; Drug Use and Testing, Human Patient Simulation Laboratory; Disclosure of HIV Status; Refusal to Care for a Patient; Uniform Policy; NIU Photo I.D. Badge; Confidentiality; NCLEX-RN Criminal Background Checks; Standard Precautions; Follow-up of Significant Exposure to Blood/Body Fluids; Follow-up of Significant Exposure to M. Tuberculosis; Medication Dosage Calculation Examination; Medication Administration

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read, understand, and will adhere to the **General Policies**, including but not limited to: Leave of Absence and Readmission; Core Performance Standards for Nursing Student, Disabilities or Chronic Health Problems; Electronic Devices and Social Networking; Enrollment in Nursing Courses; Honors' Capstone Projects; Independent Study in Nursing; Portfolio Requirements; RN Articulation Plan; Student Complaint Process; Summer Internship Program; Student Fees; Student Safety

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that all students at NIU are **required to use their NIU z-ID e-mail account** for

correspondence as this is the method of official communication. I understand that I am responsible for communication sent to me via my NIU z-ID e-mail.

**I have read the Undergraduate Student Handbook. My signature below acknowledges that I have read, understand, and will adhere to the content in the most current version of the Undergraduate Nursing Student Handbook. I fully understand the consequences for failing to meet any of those expectations noted therein which may include dismissal from the nursing program. I also acknowledge my responsibility in fully understanding all expectations and corresponding policies, rules, laws, and regulations and for maintaining knowledge of the content in the most current edition of the handbook.**

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Printed Name and ZID#

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Student Signature

Date

Upload this page to your Castle Branch and/or Typhon Account. Reach out the Prelicensure or RN-BS Coordinator if you have any questions.