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Department of
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Utah State University
Prelicensure BSN Student Handbook
2024 -2025

WELCOME

Welcome to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at Utah State University! What a tremendous accomplishment to have gained acceptance to this program! You have good reason to feel proud of yourself. You are joining a community of learners committed to improving health care in the United States and globally. You may establish friendships with classmates and faculty that will continue through your life.

The information in this student handbook has been written to provide you with program guidelines and helpful information. Since this experience will probably be a very different learning experience than any you have encountered before, we encourage you to become familiar with courses, policies, standards, and expectations of the USU BSN program. Understanding your responsibilities and observing program policies will be an important component of your success in achieving your nursing educational goals.

The faculty members and staff pride themselves on being supportive and approachable. We want you to be successful in the program, and strive to help you in any way we can. May this experience, and your achievement, begin the continuation of a long and satisfying professional career.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME..... 2

TABLE OF CONTENTS 3

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY NURSING PROGRAM 5

USU NURSING PROGRAM MISSION AND VALUES 5

BSN CURRICULUM..... 5

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES 6

COMPARISON OF LEVEL AND END-OF-PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES..... 7

CONCEPT-BASED CURRICULUM 8

USU CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK 9

STUDENT ASSESSMENT: STANDARIZED TESTING10

USU NURSING WRITING EXPECTATIONS AND APA FORMATTING.....10

ACCREDITATION & APPROVAL.....10

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)11

TUITION, BOOKS & FEE PAYMENTS.....11

SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID.....11

LICENSURE11

STUDENT RECORDS11

STUDENT HEALTH11

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES13

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK & DRUG SCREEN REQUIREMENTS13

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA14

 Guidelines for use of Social Media during Clinical, Simulation and Lab Experiences15

CIVILITY15

NETIQUETTE16

ONLINE EXPECTATIONS17

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS17

STUDENT RESOURCES.....17

COMMENCEMENT.....18

NURSING PROGRAM POLICIES & RESOURCES.....18

 General18

 Policy #1: STUDENT CONDUCT18

Policy #2: ATTENDANCE.....19
Policy #3: TRANSFER STUDENTS20
Policy #4: WITHDRAWAL20
Policy #5: STUDENT GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE OR STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE20
Policy #6: DISMISSAL20
Policy #7: READMISSION OF STUDENTS.....20
Policy #8: STUDENT APPEARANCE21
Policy #9: CLINICAL PROGRAMS POLICIES AND RESOURCES23
Policy #10: STUDENT NURSING ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES27
Policy #11: SUSPECTED DRUG & ALCOHOL ABUSE28
Policy #12: SEXUAL HARASSMENT.....29
Policy #13: EMPLOYMENT.....29
Policy #14: GRADING30
Policy #15: USE OF TEST BANKS31

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY NURSING PROGRAM

Utah State University (USU) is committed to the highest standards of instruction and learning. The university community educates and assists students with their social, physical, intellectual, cultural, and emotional development, and is committed to respond to the educational needs of the communities it serves.

As an emerging part of USU, the nursing program embraces the university's mission and goals, and the mission and values of the Emma Eccles Jones College of Education and Human Services (CEHS). To achieve university, college, and department outcomes, USU's Department of Nursing seeks to provide a quality education for nursing students, thereby improving health services for individuals, families, and communities. Nursing joins other CEHS disciplines in a commitment to doing good work that benefits others.

The USU BSN program provides nursing students the opportunity to prepare for licensure as registered nurses. Nursing faculty respond to students and community needs through a variety of innovative teaching approaches. Student and community input is valued and incorporated into ongoing evaluation and improvement of the program.

USU NURSING PROGRAM MISSION AND VALUES

Mission:

The USU nursing programs enrich regional, national, and global communities through evidence-based nursing education. Our curriculum, which reflects the core values, prepares students to demonstrate professionalism while providing holistic care.

Core Values:

- Caring
- Nursing Judgement
- Holistic Care
- Professionalism
- Safety and Quality

BSN CURRICULUM

USU nursing faculty evaluate the BSN curriculum regularly. The following outlines and student learning outcomes are the result of extensive analyses of current literature, best educational practices, student needs, attention to the complex and changing healthcare environment, and the influence of technology in nursing education. Courses are designed to provide students rich opportunities to learn and apply important concepts and skills required for excellent nurses and leaders in the profession.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the BSN program, students are expected to:

1. Integrate reliable evidence from multiple perspectives to inform safe nursing practice and make reasonable clinical decisions. (*Outcome area: Critical Thinking*)
2. Synthesize knowledge from nursing and a liberal education in the planning and provision of holistic nursing care across the lifespan and continuum of health care environments. (*Outcome area: Holism*)
3. Employ the nursing process and patient care technologies and information systems to support safe nursing practice. (*Outcomes area: Nursing Process and Safety*)
4. Utilize interpersonal and inter-professional communication in collaboration for the promotion of optimal health for individuals, families, communities, and populations. (*Outcomes area: Communication*)
5. Apply ethical and legal standards of professional nursing including professional accountability and responsibility in the provision of professional nursing care. (*Outcomes area: Ethics*)
6. Integrate leadership and management skills, and knowledge of health care policy, regulatory processes, and cost-effectiveness for the improvement of quality care and patient safety. (*Outcomes area: Advocacy and Leadership*)
7. Incorporate principles of health education, promotion, and disease prevention in the professional nursing care of individuals, families, communities, and populations. (*Outcomes area: Education and Health Promotion*)
8. Value caring, respect, dignity, hope, and the human spirit in the provision of professional nursing care. (*Outcomes area: Respectful Care*)

COMPARISON OF LEVEL AND END-OF-PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Outcomes Areas	Level 1 (1st Semester)	Level 2 (3rd Semester)	End-of-Program
Critical Thinking	Demonstrate proficiency in performing nursing skills while using nursing judgement and evidence-based practice.	Demonstrate proficiency in performing advanced nursing skills while applying critical thinking and evidence-based practice when making complex nursing judgements.	Integrate reliable evidence from multiple perspectives to inform safe nursing practice and make reasonable clinical decisions.
Holism	Use holistic principles while caring for individuals, families and communities across the lifespan.	Evaluate and incorporate holistic principles while caring for individuals, families, communities and populations with complex health care needs across the lifespan.	Synthesize knowledge from nursing and a liberal education in the planning and provision of holistic nursing care across the lifespan and continuum of health care environments.
Nursing Process & Safety	Establish priorities and ensure safe, quality care while utilizing the nursing process and patient care technologies.	Establish priorities and ensure safe, quality care while utilizing the nursing process and nursing informatics in caring for individuals, families, communities and populations with complex health care needs across the lifespan.	Employ the nursing process and patient care technologies and information systems to support safe nursing practice.
Communication	Model effective communication techniques when collaborating within interdisciplinary teams.	Integrate effective communication processes and collaboration when caring for individuals, families, communities and populations.	Utilize interpersonal and inter-professional communication in collaboration for the promotion of optimal health for individuals, families, communities and populations.
Ethics	Model accountability in nursing practice while adhering to legal and ethical principles.	Model accountability and responsibility in nursing practice while caring for individuals, families, communities and populations with complex health care needs.	Apply ethical and legal standards of professional nursing including professional accountability and responsibility in the provision of professional nursing care.
Advocacy & Leadership	Advocate for professional and leadership role development in self and others.	Incorporate leadership, management and advocacy skills when caring for individuals, families, communities and populations.	Integrate leadership and management skills and knowledge of health care policy, regulatory processes and cost effectiveness for the improvement of quality care and patient safety.

CONCEPT-BASED CURRICULUM

As much as 50% of the information taught in a BSN program changes within two years after graduation. Nursing students must manage huge amounts of rapidly changing information during nursing school – as well as throughout their career. Nurses cannot possibly know all of the information necessary to care for all of their patients. They must learn how and where to efficiently locate accurate information.

Students often believe they cannot be expected to know course content unless it has been specifically taught in a course, and that faculty are responsible to “cover” all content. In a traditional educational setting, large amounts of textbook information are covered by faculty, rather than guiding students to use textbooks as a learning resource and reference. Within this perspective, classroom time becomes primarily an information delivery session.

Managing large amounts of essential nursing information is possible within a concept-based curriculum. A concept, or set of concepts, organizes information that is easier to understand and remember compared to memorizing long lists of facts. Concept-based instruction requires higher levels of thinking from both faculty and students through active student engagement. Students are placed in learning groups to solve problems, work through cases, situations, and questions rather than simply receiving lectures about concepts, thus bringing the students as close to the real experience as possible in the classroom. Students work collaboratively and teach one another as the teacher coaches and facilitates student learning. Concept-based learning is about taking responsibility, and consists of changing behavior to meet essential program outcomes that educate safe and effective BSN nurses.

To assist students in preparing for their nursing practice, USU faculty evaluated landmark publications related to safety, quality, error prevention, simulation effectiveness, technology to support learning, adult and non-traditional learning, content overload in nursing education, evidence-based practice, and managing the 21st century explosion of nursing information. The USU nursing curriculum reflects national nursing education trends and embraces a student-centered, Concept-Based Curriculum (CBC) designed to provide students the opportunity to focus on vital concepts, and to organize, transfer and retain essential nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Conceptual teaching supports students’ critical thinking while minimizing rote memorization and superficial learning.

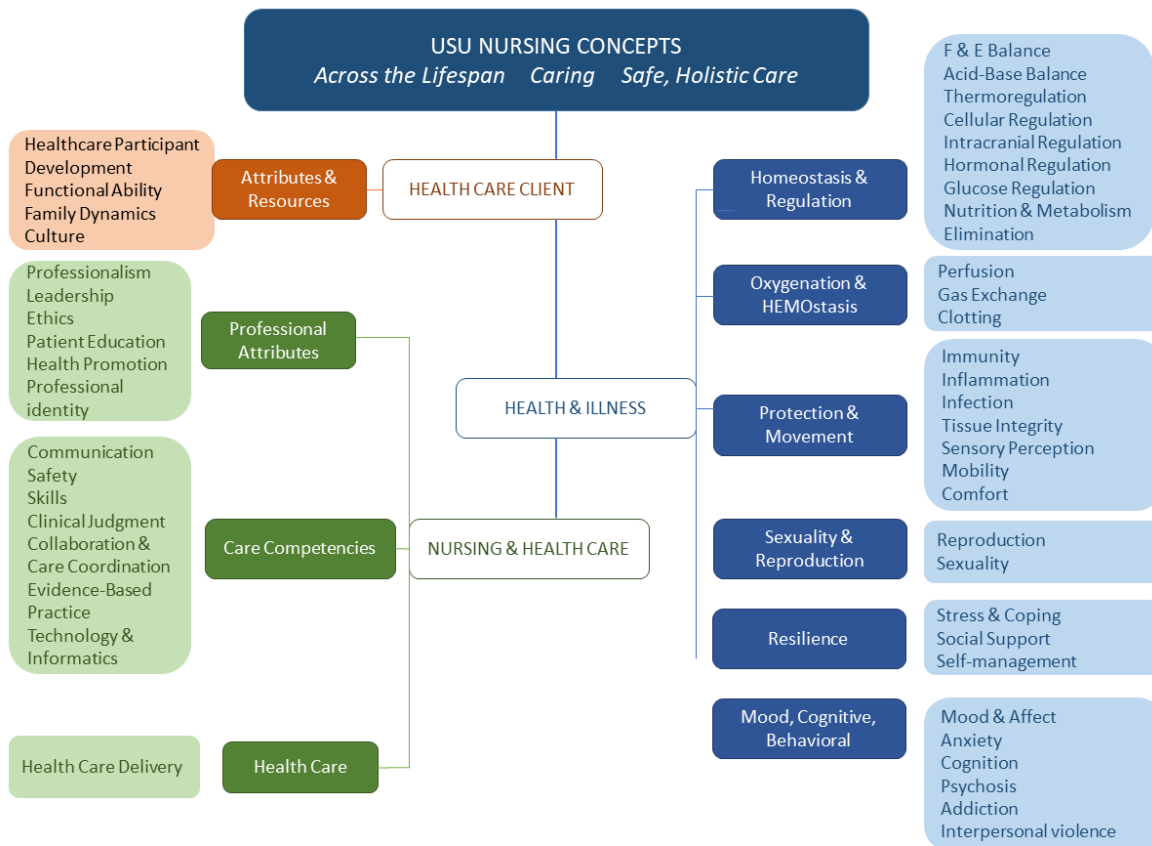
A concept-based curriculum consists of *concepts* and *exemplars* (examples). Concepts are essential nursing components clustered by common or defining characteristics. Students are introduced to concepts and learn to organize and analyze the concepts, then understand them more thoroughly through the study and application of diseases, clinical issues, or problems that exemplify the concept (*exemplars*). This table is a guide to teaching and learning conceptually at USU:

- ❖ Focus on the CONCEPT
 - ❖ Provide additional content and application through EXEMPLARS
 - ❖ Analyze relationship of EXEMPLARS and CONCEPT to interrelated concepts
 - ❖ Integrate new and previously encountered information, experiences, skills, and attitudes with the CONCEPT

USU CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

USU faculty adopted many of the concepts presented in Jean Giddens' 2016 work, *Concepts for Nursing Practice* (2nd ed.). Each concept has been defined and described for use in the USU nursing curriculum. Giddens' textbooks and resources were foundational for facilitating conceptual learning in the USU nursing programs.

The following USU model depicts the central "Overarching Concepts" to be addressed throughout the curriculum: *Across the Lifespan; Caring; and Safe, Holistic Care*. Additional concepts are clustered into themes beneath the overarching concepts: Health Care Client, Health & Illness, and Nursing & Healthcare. Concepts are introduced in the first nursing courses and are developed further with each course in the curriculum.



STUDENT ASSESSMENT: STANDARIZED TESTING

The purpose of nationally normed standardized testing and student remediation throughout the nursing program is to improve students' critical thinking, reasoning, and test taking skills in order to successfully pass the increasingly complex registered nurse licensure exam (NCLEX-RN) on the first attempt. The USU nursing department uses Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) resources and exams to prepare, evaluate, and predict student success for the NCLEX-RN exam. Nursing course exams reflect course-learning outcomes and prepare students to provide safe, high quality patient care. ATI exams and course-specific exams utilize test questions specific to common nursing knowledge areas such as fundamentals of nursing, medical-surgical, pediatrics, mental health, maternal-newborn, pharmacology, and community nursing.

ATI standardized exams assist students to assess their current level of knowledge in essential nursing topics. These exams also identify specific, individualized remediation content that focus on areas of reported weakness and increase students' potential to pass the NCLEX exam. The exams also aid in determining possible gaps in the curriculum. ATI assessments, including remediation activities, consist of 10% of the course grade. The capstone course utilizes a higher percent of assessments.

USU NURSING WRITING EXPECTATIONS AND APA FORMATTING

The ability to write clearly and persuasively is an important attribute of the Bachelor's-prepared nurse. Academic writing has its own standards and guidelines, and the American Psychological Association (APA) style is used by the USU BSN program to provide a standard format for students to effectively organize their writing, support ideas, and assist the reader to locate citations. APA formatting should be used for all writing assignments unless otherwise indicated by the instructor.

Owning a laptop is required. Nursing courses include online resources that are often accessed during class. Access to a computer is required for assignment completion.

Students are expected to purchase a copy of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2019), Seventh Edition (ISBN 978-1-4338-3215-4) and consult the [Purdue Owl website](http://www.purdue.edu/owl) for instructions and examples.

ACCREDITATION & APPROVAL

The USU BSN nursing program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN).

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400

Atlanta, GA 30326

(404) 975-5000

<http://www.acenursing.org>

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

The program follows and abides by the [FERPA Policy](#) at USU.

TUITION, BOOKS & FEE PAYMENTS

Each student is responsible to meet payment deadlines for tuition, books, and fees.

Nursing program personnel are not responsible if fees are not paid or books are not purchased at the specified times. Students being funded by an agency such as vocational rehabilitation, Workforce Services, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or Veterans Administration (VA) are responsible to obtain the necessary approvals and forms from the agency.

SCHOLARSHIPS & FINANCIAL AID

Financial aid is available and is awarded on need as well as the availability of resources. Application must be made to receive financial aid, a scholarship, or other financial resources. Students are responsible to contact and follow instructions provided by the [Financial Aid](#) and scholarship offices. Scholarships are available on a limited basis. Visit the [nursing website for scholarship](#) information.

LICENSURE

The National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX) for licensure as an RN is taken after completion of the BSN program. For application information, check with the [Utah State Board of Nursing](#) and the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing \(NCSBN\)](#). Completion and submission of the licensure application is ultimately the responsibility of the student.

STUDENT RECORDS

A cumulative record is securely kept on file electronically for each student who has entered the nursing program. This record contains the admission application, midterm evaluations, student contracts, and other pertinent information. Students must submit transcripts showing completion of all non-USU classes each semester. This information is confidential and may be released only through a student's written request and permission from college administration. Files of students are kept for five (5) years and then archived electronically.

STUDENT HEALTH

As a student, you should strive to maintain optimum health. Honesty about one's health problems is expected. Students are encouraged to report any pre-existing problems, i.e., severe emotional stresses, drug-related problems, back injuries, disabling diseases, even though inactive, at the time of entrance into the program. It is our concern for students that leads us to request this information. Should a health situation arise, it is essential for faculty to be aware of underlying conditions to ensure safety for students, faculty, patients, and communities.

Your grade may be affected if you are absent and miss learning experiences. If situations arise in which your health or a client's health may be impacted, your instructor will be responsible for determining whether or not you may stay in the clinical area. These situations may include but are not limited to back injuries, injuries requiring casting, infectious diseases, draining wounds, or mental health issues. In many cases, the clinical agency's policy may require that the student not attend clinical rotations until resolution of health-related situations.

Physical requirements: The following physical requirements are necessary to function in the hospital and community health settings, and are required for admission into the USU BSN program:

- **Strength:** Sufficient strength to assist with lifting (50 pounds independently), transferring a patient, and performing CPR.
- **Mobility:** Sufficient mobility to kneel, stoop, reach, balance, and bend down to the floor; ability to move around rapidly and to move in small, confined areas.
- **Hearing:** Sufficient hearing to hear through the stethoscope to discriminate sounds; to hear cries for help; to hear alarms on equipment, emergency signals, and various overhead pages.
- **Vision:** Sufficient vision to make physical assessments of patients and equipment, and the ability to identify and distinguish colors.
- **Communication:** The ability to communicate in both verbal and written formats, and interact with clients, staff, and faculty supervisors.
- **Emotional:** Sufficient emotional control to manage emotions and stressors, interact professionally with others, and care safely for patients.

Sources of Stress Identified by Nursing Students: While faculty will work with you to make reasonable accommodations in the campus labs and classroom, clinical practice conditions occur in care environments that are beyond faculty control. Many skills and abilities are required to perform patient care in the clinical settings in order to pass nursing course objectives and requirements. These skills and abilities can be developed and improved while in the nursing program. Following are realistic stressors that nursing students must be able to manage.

- Large amounts of information must be learned, retained, and articulated. Nursing students must demonstrate knowledge of these concepts in the classroom and clinical settings. Additionally, the student must be able to apply critical thinking and clinical reasoning in order to perform concepts and skills in a timely manner in clinical settings so there is no delay in patient care. Frequent practice to master skills is required in clinical skills labs, simulation, classroom, and at the clinical sites. Most students find they must attend voluntary lab practice on their own time, outside of class.
- In addition to developing an extensive knowledge base, and applying it in a timely manner, students must have sufficient emotional stability to perform under stress. Stress can be produced by both academic study and performing nursing care in real patient situations while being observed by the instructors, other health care professionals and patients.
- Students must be able to provide professional and technical services while experiencing the stresses of task-related uncertainty (e.g., ambiguous directions, ambivalent preceptor) emergent demands (e.g., stat test orders) and a distracting environment (e.g., high-noise levels, crowding, complex visual stimuli).
- Time requirements and the requirement of scheduling flexibility are stressors. Course and clinical times, days and locations will vary each semester. Clinical placement assignments may occur at short notice, and are subject to change based on availability of our partner facilities.
- Clinical experiences provide training and experience in health care settings. These may occur in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, hospice, community health, and public health facilities. Students must have personal and reliable transportation. Clinical assignments may occur at any time during a 24-hour

period, any day of the week. Clinical rotation assignments are made to ensure fair and equitable placement.

- Nursing students must constantly accumulate more knowledge, expertise, and experience as they attend clinical experiences, and demonstrate increasingly sound judgement and decision-making skills in a timely manner in response to signs of patient deterioration.
- Nursing students must be prepared to deal with individuals with a range of moods and behaviors in a tactful, congenial, and personal manner so as not to alienate or antagonize them.
- The ANA Code of Ethics, 2010, states that the nursing student “promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.” [HIPAA guidelines](#) include keeping information gathered in practice or clinical learning environments, including individual patient information, clinical facilities, and fellow-student information, undisclosed in personal and professional writings, social media, and general conversations.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, they should contact the USU Disability Resource Center (DRC) for information on how to proceed with approved accommodations. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, and/or chronic health disorders.

ADA accommodations do not alter the academic performance requirements or the requirement to demonstrate professional competence in required skills. Students are encouraged to contact the USU DRC if they are uncertain whether a medical condition and/or disability qualifies, or if they have questions about receiving accommodations.

Students with a disability requiring accommodations to fulfill the nursing program requirements should contact the DRC prior to beginning the nursing program if possible. Students may request accommodations at any point in the semester, however, accommodations are not retroactive. If accommodations are approved they are implemented from that point forward. ([USU Accommodations Policy](#))

[USU Disability Resource Center Website](#)
[Application](#) or call for further information: (435) 797-2444

CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK & DRUG SCREEN REQUIREMENTS

Various government and healthcare agencies require student compliance documents. USU nursing students are responsible to fulfill and maintain the requirements, obtain appropriate documentation, and submit to the department in a timely manner. Some clinical agencies may require additional compliance documentation.

Background checks and drug screens will be required of all students accepted to the program, and prior to entering any clinical facility. Participation in the nursing program is contingent upon satisfactory results of the background check and drug screens. Criminal background and drug screen results released to the department will be used to make decisions regarding continuation in the program. Failure to comply may result in denial of acceptance or dismissal from the program. Students may also be subject to random and scheduled periodic drug screens during their participation in the program.

Right to explain screening results: Nursing students must advise testing lab employees of all prescription drugs taken in the past month before the test and be prepared to show proof of such prescriptions to testing lab personnel. Nursing students and applicants have the right to meet with the drug screening laboratory personnel, and with the university, to explain their screening results.

If a student is concerned that the results are not accurate, he or she must address these issues with the Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI) for resolution of a state record, to the Criminal Justice Information Services Division (CJIS) for resolution of a federal record, or to the participating organization that administered the drug screen or background check. Reasonable efforts will be made to ensure results of criminal background checks and drug screens are kept confidential with only those personnel having a legitimate need to know being authorized to review results. USU may disclose the results of the criminal background check and/or drug screen to any clinical agency that requests them prior to students participating in clinical shift at that facility. The clinical placement agency makes the final determination about accepting students for placement in its facility.

Random, for-cause, and scheduled periodic drug screens for enrolled nursing students:

- Given the nature of a nursing student's clinical work, the university has a special need to ensure that these students are not using drugs. Therefore, the university may randomly test enrolled nursing students for compliance with its drug-free school policy.
- The university may also require that an individual nursing student submit to a drug screen if, in the university's sole discretion, there is reasonable evidence to suggest that the student may be impaired and therefore is a risk to self and others.
- The university reserves the right to conduct periodic testing on a regularly scheduled basis for nursing students in designated departments, classifications, or workgroups.
- The university will pay for the cost of random or periodically scheduled drug screens of enrolled students.

Refusal to undergo testing: Nursing students who refuse to submit to a drug screen are subject to immediate removal from the nursing program.

GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Students are personally responsible for the content they publish on any social media. Remember, information you publish may be public for anyone to see and may be traced back to you even after a long time, even if you believed that you had set appropriate privacy settings. Be aware that unwise or inappropriate use of social media can negatively affect educational and career opportunities. To avoid these negative impacts, consider the following:

- Post content that reflects positively on yourself, Utah State University, and the USU nursing programs. Be mindful of not only the content you post but also any content hosted on your page, such as comments from others.
- Remember that what you post may be seen by a larger audience than intended and could offend classmates or faculty members.
- Employers and others may use social media to assess job applicants, so posting distasteful or offensive content could jeopardize job opportunities.
- Once posted, content is out of your control and may be seen, shared, or saved by others, making retractions practically impossible.
- If posting about USU, clarify that your views do not represent the university's official stance.

- Ensure your posts align with the ethical codes of Nursing or your employer, as violations could lead to disciplinary action.
- Inappropriate posts by nurses have led to licensure and legal consequences, so adhere to [guidelines](#) developed by organizations like the National Council for State Boards of Nursing.
- Understand that the university may take action against disruptive behavior on social media, ranging from reprimands to dismissal from a program or the university.
- For further details, refer to the [USU social media guidelines](#).

Guidelines for use of Social Media during Clinical, Simulation and Lab Experiences

- Students must comply with HIPAA guidelines while in simulation, lab, and clinical facilities.
- Personal devices should never be used to take photos with patients. If a patient requests a student to join in a photo taken on the patient’s device, the student may choose whether to participate.
- Student photos or videos taken during clinical experiences should occur outside of patient care areas, but with permission may be taken in the breakroom, parking lot, classroom, etc. and must be free of any identifying information.
- Students are expected to comply with the Clinical Confidentiality Agreement that was signed prior to any simulation experiences. Taking photos or videos during a simulation and lab is prohibited.

CIVILITY

The Utah State University nursing programs adhere to the USU Students Code civility statement section II-1 [Responsibilities of Students](#), as nursing is a caring and compassionate profession that is deeply rooted in personal and professional accountability. Treating others with value, respect, dignity, justice, and equality is essential to our mission in creating a culture of civility. Civility matters and belongs in the realm of ethical behavior. Faculty, staff, and students are considered equal and active members of our learning community. The professionalism and civility guidelines of the USU nursing programs are consistent with the USU Student Code of Conduct, American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics, and Utah Nurse Practice Act Standards of Professional Accountability.

As Utah State University nursing students, you are held to the highest ethical standards both in and out of the clinical setting. Any form of incivility is unacceptable in the USU nursing programs. Incivility is defined as disruptive, ill-mannered, or offensive behavior contrary to the well-being of the learning community. This includes any, and all, forms of disrespect or disregard for instruction, the instructor, staff, clinical partners, or a fellow-student.

Professional behavior is an expectation of the nursing program. Failure to demonstrate professional behavior may result in up to 10% grade deduction from the final grade, failure in a course, and dismissal from the program, regardless of performance in other aspects of the course or program.

Professionalism in nursing and civility are closely linked. Examples of *unprofessionalism* include:

- Failure to respond to instructor communication.
- Consistent disregard for assignment expectations.
- Social network postings that include information and clinical site, patients, faculty, and/or preceptors.
- Unexcused absences in class, simulation, lab, or clinical.
- Disruptive behavior of any kind in class.

- Failure to prepare for class.
- Cellular phones and electronic devices not silenced, or used inappropriately during class, lab, simulation, or clinical.
- Arriving late or leaving early in a conspicuous manner.
- Failure to attend scheduled required examinations.
- Non-participative visiting with others, speaking when another has the floor, or other activities that disrupt class.

Examples of *incivility* include:

- Negative innuendo (e.g., raising eyebrows, face-making, body language, other forms of non-verbal communication).
- Covert or overt negative communication (e.g., snide remarks, withholding information, assumptions, abrupt responses, blaming, emails in all caps, uncontrolled emotion).
- Undermining activities (e.g., not available to help, turning away when asked for help).
- Sabotage (e.g., deliberately setting up a negative situation).
- Bickering among peers.
- Scapegoating (e.g., assigning blame to one person when things go wrong).
- Backstabbing (e.g., complaining to others about an individual).
- Failure to respect the privacy of others (e.g., gossip/talking about others without their permission).
- Broken commitments and/or broken confidences (e.g., repeating something that was meant to be, or should be kept confidential).

As faculty, students, and staff, we strive to incorporate the guidelines of the **RESPECT*** acronym into our interactions with others, regardless of medium.

R: Recognize that every opinion is valuable.

E: Express and receive feedback without making it personal.

S: Stop collusion, direct the issue back to the owner.

P: Practice authentic listening.

E: Encourage discussion of ideas and issues, not people.

C: Celebrate each other's successes.

T: Treat others as they wish to be treated.

*Adapted from the [University of Kansas RESPECT initiative](#)

In addition to RESPECT, other guidelines for our interactions with each other are:

- Manage emotions so that oral and written communication can be clear and neutral (or positive).
- Accept personal responsibility for choices such as insufficient study, poor test scores, and submission of late assignments.
- Offer a reasonable solution when registering a complaint or requesting a change.

As Dr. Cynthia Clark (2010) wrote,

- Civility is an authentic respect for others that requires time, presence, willingness to engage in genuine discourse and intention to seek common ground. Civility matters because treating one another with respect is requisite to communicating effectively, building community and creating high-functioning teams. Without civility, we miss opportunities to really listen and understand other points of view. [Why Civility Matters.](#)

NETIQUETTE

The online learning environment is no exception to proper and respectful etiquette also known as netiquette. The following guidelines have been established to provide a positive online experience for students and faculty. Additional guidelines can be found at: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

It can be difficult to express the tone of your message in an email or discussion board. Avoid typing in all caps and be certain to re-read your message and eliminate sarcasm or other expressions that may be interpreted incorrectly before sending or posting.

The majority of communication will be in written form. Please utilize spell check tools to maintain professional grammar.

ONLINE EXPECTATIONS

BSN courses are housed in a platform called Canvas. Canvas allows the instructor to present the course expectations, course material, assignments, projects, quizzes and exams to the student. The student should access those resources, interact with peers through discussion, and submit coursework for grading.

The instructors have added detailed instructions to assignments, syllabi and communications. While we encourage you to ask questions, and it may be your first impulse to email the instructor, **please utilize your resources before doing so**. These resources may include, but are not limited to, reviewing syllabi, rereading instructions, checking FAQs, reviewing course announcements, etc.

According to [USU Online](#), you should plan to spend 3 hours per week on coursework for every one (1) course credit. For example, in a full semester 3-credit course you should plan 3 hours per week reading content and participating in discussions plus an additional 6 hours outside of the course working on homework, reading textbooks and studying. Please refer to the [USU online student handbook](#) for more information on online programs.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

In order to have a successful online experience, you will need a personal computer and a minimum of the following technology requirements as outlined by [USU Online](#).

- A reliable internet connection (preferably high speed)
- The latest version of Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox or Safari
- A PDF reader
- A word processor (Google Docs, Microsoft Word, Open Office, etc.)
- Speakers or headphones
- Webcam and microphone (built in or as an accessory)

Technology issues are common and can be frustrating. It is the students' responsibility to ensure all assignments are saved in a reliable format and in an accessible electronic location. In the unfortunate event of a technological failure, the student remains responsible for meeting due dates for assignments, quizzes, exams and all other course requirements.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Our online students have access to the same resources available to students located on campus. Please visit [USU's Thrive website](#) to access resources that may be specific to your situation in addition to the items listed below. The [USU Online Resources website](#) has more information.

[Academic Success Center \(ASC\)](#)
[Disability Resource Center \(DRC\)](#)
[IT Service Desk](#)
[USU Online Library](#)
[Veterans Resource Office](#)
[Other online resources](#)

COMMENCEMENT

Although students can graduate during any semester, USU's commencement is held every May at the Utah State University Logan campus.

NURSING PROGRAM POLICIES & RESOURCES

General

1. USU library resources are available online for student and faculty research.
2. The nursing laboratory is available for practicing nursing skills. Specific times should be scheduled with nursing program personnel and open lab hours will be posted each semester.
3. Nursing program personnel will not accept or be responsible for conveying personal messages to students, except in the case of emergencies.
4. All course assignments must be completed in order to pass nursing courses. End of semester grades are submitted directly into Banner as recorded in Canvas, and are not rounded up or down.
5. Policy changes will be clearly and consistently communicated to students in a timely manner in written form; for example, email notification.
6. The University reserves all rights afforded to it under applicable law. Nothing in this policy or related policies, procedures, and practices of the University or the University's governing institutions shall be read to offer or constitute a legal agreement or be subject to legal jurisdiction of the law courts of any kind. The University's policies, procedures, and practices are subject to change at any time.

Policy #1: STUDENT CONDUCT

The USU nursing program complies with the [Utah State Nurse Practice Act](#) and the [Nurse Practice Act Rule](#), and its governing organization's policies and procedures regarding unlawful and unprofessional conduct. Students are strongly encouraged to read and be familiar with the Nurse Practice Act and the Nurse Practice Act Rules.

Student Learning Contracts are used in the USU BSN program to assist students in improving substandard performance in any area of responsibility. Faculty will meet with the student to discuss the necessary learning improvement, the expected outcome, timeframe in which the outcome is to be met, and consequences if the outcome is not met.

Learning Contracts may be implemented if student clinical performance requires improvement in clinical rotations, skills lab, or simulation experiences. When clinical improvement is indicated, the student will meet with the course faculty and BSN Program Director to discuss learning improvement actions, the expected outcome, timeframe for contract completion, and consequences if outcomes are not met.

If a student poses a threat to patient safety, the student should be removed from patient care and/or the clinical site at the discretion of the clinical teacher. As soon as possible, the clinical teacher will report the incident to the course faculty and Program Director. Serious safety events or threats to patient safety may result in dismissal from the program.

Policy #2: ATTENDANCE

BSN policy regarding excused absences is consistent with USU policy ([USU Attendance & Excused Absences](#)).

2.1 Attendance

Due to the critical relationship between time and learning, the BSN program requires student attendance at all planned experiences to gain essential knowledge to care for human lives. Regular attendance is mandatory, and in unavoidable, grave, or emergency situations, students are accountable for any missed work. Such situations do not include non-emergency appointments, vacations, fatigue, weddings, or other special events. Instructors may require a physician's signed statement to justify the absence. Health issues affecting course requirements may result in withdrawal from the course. Following one unexcused absence per semester, students must meet with the instructor to discuss consequences for further absences. If a student leaves class, sim, lab, or the clinical area early without instructor permission, a meeting with clinical/class faculty may be required before returning to the next clinical shift or class.

Disruptive behaviors and failure to follow classroom rules are distracting to other students and disrespectful to those presenting information. Children should never be brought to class, sim, lab, or clinicals. Students are expected to actively participate in sim, lab, clinical and class/guest presentations, and give full attention to those speaking. It is unprofessional to engage in activities such as reading, talking, texting, or doing homework during class time. Electronic devices, including watches and cell phones, should be silenced during class, sim, lab, and clinical. Laptops are to be used for note-taking and other in-class activities.

Wearing the nursing uniform to sim, lab, and clinical is required; failure to do so may result in the loss of assignment points or being sent home. Makeup requirements for sim, lab, and clinicals are subject to the discretion of course faculty and BSN Director.

2.2 Tardiness

Tardiness in clinical, lab, simulation, or the classroom is considered unprofessional and disruptive to others. Students are expected to consistently arrive on time, with one minute after the start time being considered tardy in USU nursing programs.

For each instance of tardiness to class, lab, or simulation, a cumulative grade penalty may be applied. The first occurrence results in a 1% deduction from the overall course grade, with subsequent occurrences adding 3% and 5% deductions respectively. A third occurrence also necessitates a meeting with the instructor and a learning contract. Further instances incur additional 5% grade deductions, and points missed due to tardiness cannot be made up.

Tardiness to clinical is not acceptable and will lead to dismissal from the clinical shift. Students must arrive 15 minutes prior to the scheduled clinical shift to receive instructions and be ready for shift report on the floor. For example, if the shift starts at 0500, students should be present by 0445. Being more than one minute late to clinical will result in dismissal and zero points for the shift. Students must then schedule make-up clinical hours with the clinical coordinator/BSN Director and complete all assigned clinical work, but no make-up points are awarded.

Policy #3: TRANSFER STUDENTS

A nursing course from another institution may be transferred to USU if approved by the nursing program director, and the course meets the following requirements:

- The institution is regionally accredited.
- Course content is comparable to the course offered at USU and can be documented by the course syllabus.
- Student complies with the [USU Transfer Student Admission and Transfer Credit policy](#).

Policy #4: WITHDRAWAL

The nursing program complies with [USU Withdrawal Policy](#) found in the [USU general catalog](#). Please visit with your BSN academic advisor with questions and support if you decide to withdraw.

Policy #5: STUDENT GRADE APPEAL PROCEDURE OR STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The nursing program complies with [USU Policy Section VII-2 Procedures for Grievances Not Relating to Discrimination or Harassment](#) found in the Code of Policies and Procedures for students at USU.

Policy #6: DISMISSAL

Students will be dismissed from the nursing program if:

- The student fails to maintain a **B-** grade in each required course for the nursing program. Courses must be successfully completed in sequence when enrolled in the nursing program.
- The student fails to maintain at least a 79.5% exam average in a nursing course. Students will receive the lesser of the exam average or overall course average as the course grade. Refer to Policy #7 for readmission after dismissal procedures.
- The student is in violation of [The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students](#) at Utah State University or for unprofessional and/or unlawful conduct ([Utah State Nurse Practice Act](#)).
- Deemed appropriate for violation of any other applicable USU or nursing policy.

If a student poses a threat to client safety, they may be suspended or dismissed from the program and removed from client care responsibilities.

Policy #7: READMISSION OF STUDENTS

USU nursing faculty and administration value the success of our students. We want to help all students become successful nurses. Sometimes the path to graduation has stops and starts rather than being one straight path. This policy is to help students who might need to take a longer route towards graduation.

7.1 Returning after Military Duty or Health Issue

Students who have left the program due to military duty, health, or extenuating issues must keep the nursing program advisor and/or director informed of their situation or desire to return. Students who are returning due to these issues do not need to complete the application forms. These students are required to send the advisor *and* the nursing program director a Letter of Intent at least three months prior to the planned return date, explaining the desire and timeline to return. For those wanting to continue their nursing education during the fall semester, the Letter of Intent is due by May 1st and by October 1st for spring semester admission.

7.2 Returning after Dismissal

Students who have been dismissed from the nursing program due to grades, conduct or other related circumstances and desire readmission must submit a Reapplication Form and meet admission application deadlines. Please contact the nursing department for readmission application forms. Readmission will be based on **space available**. Candidates will be notified by email of acceptance or non-acceptance at least one month prior to the start of the semester.

Students are limited to one readmission after dismissal for failure. If a student is readmitted after dismissal for failure and again fails a nursing course, he/she will be permanently dismissed from all USU nursing programs and is not eligible for readmission.

7.3 Readmission after dismissal from the nursing program:

- Students must show evidence of an increased level of function through further education, counseling, employment, or other criteria depending upon the reasons for withdrawal from the program. Students should write a letter explaining what they have done to prepare themselves for success. Nursing Admission Committee review and faculty consultation are required for readmission to the nursing program.
- Students must have completed each prerequisite and co-requisite course before reentering the nursing program with a minimum grade of **B-**.
- Students may be required to take all nursing courses for the semester they re-enter the program, or in certain cases, all nursing courses for the program. This decision is made in consultation with the faculty and/or clinical teachers. Students must complete each nursing course with a minimum grade of **B-**. If a student completes an entire semester of the nursing program, but drops for any reason (except a call to “active duty” military service) the student has one academic year to complete the rest of the program, otherwise the student will need to retake all nursing courses.

Policy #8: STUDENT APPEARANCE

Nursing students attending any event are expected to follow the guidelines listed below. Failure to comply with the policy may result in the student being asked to leave by faculty, a clinical teacher or the clinical facility, and can expect a loss of points. If the event is a facility orientation, non-compliance may lead to exclusion from the facility. Missed clinicals due to uniform non-compliance cannot be made up for and will result in course failure or program dismissal.

The USU ID badge must be visible and above the hip at all times while in the Sorenson Center for Clinical Excellence (SCCE) building policy, as the SCCE has public clinics.

8.1 USU Nursing Clinical dress code

1. **Uniform**

- a. The USU nursing uniform, a pewter gray tunic top and navy blue scrub pant are required for **all** simulation, lab, and clinical events.
 - b. The top is to be worn over the bottoms, not tucked in. A solid white, navy, or pewter gray long sleeve t-shirt is permitted underneath if the sleeves can be pushed up.
 - c. Uniforms should be clean, properly sized, in good repair, free of wrinkles, stains, tears, and fraying. If uniform are damaged, students are expected to repair or purchase a new uniform.
 - d. Neutral-colored, closed-toe, closed-back, non-slip shoes, in good condition, and coordinate with the uniform.
 - e. Analog or digital watch with a second hand or ability to count seconds with a simple band.
 - f. Stethoscope, pen, USU badges and facility-specific badge, if required
- 2. Jewelry**
- a. Minimal jewelry; no necklaces
 - b. Conservative earrings, single stud nose piercing are permitted, no loops, septum piercings, or gauges. Other visible facial piercings, including tongue rings, are not allowed.
- 3. Tattoos**
- a. Preferably not be visible when in uniform
 - b. Students may be asked to cover tattoos deemed unprofessional or distracting.
- 4. Fingernails**
- a. Follow [CDC guidelines for healthcare workers](#).
 - b. No artificial, gel, or polished nails measuring less than ¼" long.
- 5. Hair**
- a. Clean, neatly combed.
 - b. Long hair must be pulled back and does not fall forward when bending; does not need frequent pushing away from the face.
 - c. No hair ornaments, ribbons, or colored scarves; barrettes may be worn if the color is close to the student's hair color.
 - d. Mustaches and beards should be neatly trimmed.
 - e. No extreme hairstyles including Mohawks or unnatural colors (not normal human hair color).
- 6. Makeup** is conservative
- 7. Gum chewing** is not permitted in the clinical area.
- 8. Tobacco** may not be used by students during any clinical experience or while in a USU nursing uniform.
- 9. Body odors** should be absent because they can be unpleasant to patients, including mouth odors, cigarette odor, scented perfumes/colognes/aftershave, or lack of cleanliness

8.2 Simulation and Lab Dress

Students are expected to wear their clinical nursing uniforms to sim and lab during any scheduled activity, unless otherwise specified.

8.3 Specialized Areas

In some clinical environments such as public health and mental health, professional dress is expected. Faculty will inform students whether the uniform, business casual, or professional dress is required.

8.4 Business Casual Attire for Student Activities (conferences, university events, special guests)

Business casual: clothing that represent students as a professional; includes collared shirts, polo shirts, slacks, skirts, dresses, blazers, and/or sweaters, ties, socks/hose, and dress shoes.

8.5 Unacceptable dress:

- Large hats, caps, bandanas, and “doo-rags” that are distracting and interfere with those around you (except headgear considered a part of religious/cultural dress or medical needs, i.e., chemotherapy). While these items may be worn on campus, they are to be removed in the nursing classroom.
- Clothing that is soiled or torn. Pants of any style should not drag on the floor.
- Shirts advertising or representing “mock advertising” alcoholic beverages, sexual behavior or innuendo, tobacco products, profane language, or gestures.
- Pajamas, tank tops with less than a three-inch wide shoulder strap, camisoles, halter tops, tube tops, midriff tops, low-cut tops, shorts, or skorts shorter than mid-thigh length, miniskirts, or dresses exposing undergarments.
- Any open-toe shoe in sim, lab including flip-flops, Birkenstocks, or other sandals

Policy #9: CLINICAL PROGRAMS POLICIES AND RESOURCES

9.1 Nursing Program Clinical Requirements

1. See the Canvas BSN Orientation Course

- BSN Student Handbook: sign Acknowledgement of Understanding, pass the USU BSN Handbook quiz with 80% or higher score to attend Clinicals.
- Complio/ADB: Immunizations, criminal background check, and urine drug screen are uploaded and up to date.
- CPR (American Heart Association): Certification of Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers.

2. Program Clinical Immunization and Testing Requirements Checklist

- Urine Drug Screening: You must have a Chain of Custody (COC) form to submit your drug screen. The COC gives the lab completing your drug test permission to post results directly to your American Databank (ADB) account. For those students who do not have an e-screen drug screen option, ADB will mail you the Chain of Custody (COC) form and instructions on completing the drug screen. Logan and Tooele students: your COC form is electronic (e-screen). Drug screens must be completed within 30 days of activating your ADB Complio account. If not completed in 30 days, you will need to pay for the drug screen a second time.
- Background Check: Your background check is initiated at the time of payment of your account to American Databank.
- Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Provider: USU Nursing accepts only American Heart Association (AHA) BLS certification. Be cautious of sites that use wording such as, “using AHA guidelines” or similar, as these will not be accepted. If you have any questions, please contact the Nursing department.
- TB Testing: Two 2-step tuberculin skin tests (aka PPD tests) at least 1 week apart, within 12 months of entering a USU nursing program, or A negative Quantiferon Gold or T-Spot result, or A negative chest x-ray. If your x-ray test result is positive, we require documentation of normal chest x-ray provided by your physician or health department.
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR): Documentation of two vaccinations at CDC recommended intervals or laboratory evidence showing immunity (titer).
- Varicella (Chicken Pox): Documentation of two vaccinations given at CDC recommended intervals, or laboratory evidence showing immunity (titer).
- Hepatitis B reactive titer:

1. Accepted proof: documentation of three (3) vaccinations and a surface antibody titer proving immunity (result of “reactive”).
 2. Students who are currently in process of receiving their vaccinations are allowed to begin their rotation.
 3. If the titer administered after the three (3) vaccinations does not prove immunity (result of “not reactive”), student must redo the series. Students will be considered “non-responders” after documentation of completing the vaccination series twice (total of 6 vaccinations) followed by a “not reactive” titer result.
- TDaP: Documentation of TDaP vaccination given less than 8 years from the time of entrance to a USU Nursing program.
 - Flu Vaccination: By November 1, you must upload documentation of flu vaccination (either vaccination or nasal spray) for the current flu season. This requirement should be completed after fall semester entrance to the program, so that your vaccine matches viruses expected to be circulating during the current flu season.
 - COVID Vaccination: Proof of 2 vaccinations
 - Upload Required License: Please check with your program or ADB to determine what license are required.

3. **Clinical Site Requirements**

USU’s clinical partner facilities reserve the privilege to set the requirements for student participation at their respective sites. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with all requirements of the clinical sites to which they are assigned.

If a student is unable to fulfill the pre-clinical requirements (including vaccinations) set forth herein, then they must inform the Department immediately. Students must understand that the above pre-clinical requirements represent the current standard for health care providers and that any departure from these requirements may inhibit a student’s ability to participate in clinical education and, ultimately, in professional employment opportunities.

Under limited circumstances, some clinical sites may provide unvaccinated participating students with an opportunity to seek an accommodation for seasonal vaccinations (e.g., influenza and COVID-19), exempting them from the standard vaccination requirements of the clinical site. Any such exemptions are the responsibility of the participating student and must be arranged prior to the clinical experience. If requested by the unvaccinated participating student, then the Department will provide reasonable guidance. However, the Department makes no guarantee that an unvaccinated participating student will be afforded an accommodation or exemption to the clinical site requirements.

4. **Health Insurance**

USU and clinical facilities are not responsible for personal injury or illness coverage. See the [USU option](#) for purchasing health insurance for those who do not have private insurance coverage. Malpractice insurance is required by clinical facilities and is provided by Utah State University.

5. **Student Conduct**

Students are expected to conduct themselves as guests in clinical facilities. This includes treating all patients, families, and facility personnel with courtesy and respect. If a problem or conflict arises during clinical experiences, students should promptly notify their clinical instructors. Failure to maintain professional behavior may lead to consequences such as a grade deduction, failure in the course, or dismissal from the program, regardless of performance in other course components.

9.2 Student Clinicals

- Student contact hours for simulation, lab, and clinical requirements for each course are calculated based on the number of credit hours per course. Each practicum course requires a specific number of clinical hours. Attendance at simulation, lab, and clinical is mandatory.
- Attendance at clinical rotations is essential for the successful completion of the nursing program. Students are expected to attend all scheduled clinical rotations without exception. Missing even one clinical rotation will result in failure of the course, which may lead to program dismissal.
- Students are required to complete all clinical assignments in the practicum course. These experiences typically begin in Skilled Nursing Facilities, where students practice fundamental nursing skills. Subsequently, they progress to more complex skills as they transition to higher acuity settings. Facility unit assignments are designed for equitable placement when feasible. Clinicals may be scheduled at any time during a 24-hour period, any day of the week.
- Due to facility processing times, final assignments may not be complete until approximately the week prior to the start of the semester. Assignments will be communicated with the student in a timely manner whenever possible.
 - Clinical teachers may adjust unit assignments based on census or nurse availability, but will not adjust assignments based on student requests. Students are permitted to request a complete exchange of their entire clinical assignment with another student before the semester begins. This exchange must involve all assigned clinical experiences for the semester and cannot involve swapping individual dates or units. Both students must communicate their request to trade with the clinical coordinator via email for the change to be considered.
- Before starting clinical rotations, students must complete specific orientations required by certain facilities. These orientations may cover the unit, the facility itself, computer usage, or other topics specified by the individual facilities. It is the student's responsibility to arrange transportation to these facilities for the orientation sessions.
- An assigned USU clinical teacher supervises students during each clinical rotation. The teacher may be on-site during clinical hours, or may be available by phone to the student, depending on the site and course requirements. This information will be provided to the student prior to the beginning of each clinical shift. All clinical teacher contact information will be available via Canvas for each practicum course.

9.3 Body fluid exposure

- In the event of an exposure, “wounds and skin sites that have been in contact with blood or body fluids should be washed with soap and water; mucous membranes should be flushed with water.” ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#))
- Individuals involved may be required to complete follow-up blood testing to rule out the risk for blood-borne contaminants per CDC guidelines. The USU BSN program will not cover blood testing, and is not responsible for personal injury or illness coverage. The student’s personal health insurance should be notified.
- Follow up of exposure events will be coordinated between the clinical coordinator, faculty, and students involved.
- Written documentation of the event must be provided and should include the following
 - Date and time of the event.
 - Individuals involved.
 - Was the event in open lab or scheduled skills lab with an instructor?
 - Description of the event.
 - Description of any aid rendered (first aid administered, any emergency services called, etc.).
 - What could or should have been done to prevent the incident?

9.4 General Laboratory Use

- Students are required to complete all lab hours for each practicum course. Lab skills are learned progressively, and skills learned each semester are built upon prior practice in previous semesters. Lab hours include scheduled hours led by Nursing instructors.
- All bedside units, work areas, equipment, and supplies should be clean and tidy following use. Personal belongings and trash should be removed after lab sessions. Food and beverages should not be brought into simulation/lab spaces, except for personal water bottles.
- Students must successfully pass off skills by creating videos each semester. Students are provided rubrics for testable skills during the scheduled lab hours for the applicable course.
- Open labs are available for students to practice skills without direct instructor oversight. Supplies will be available to practice certain skills that can be safely practiced without an instructor present.
- Lab activities must be completed during regular office hours. Open lab hours are posted on the classroom doors and will be updated each semester.
- Students using the lab during open lab hours are responsible for cleaning up the lab space after use.
- Students will sign-in and following use of the lab, instructors present in the building and will sign students out when they leave.
- When applicable, manikins should be left in correct alignment, covered, and cleaned properly after use.
- If broken or nonfunctioning manikins or equipment are found following open lab hours and have not been reported, those students who were present during the most recent open lab hours in question may be held responsible. Broken or nonfunctioning manikins or equipment should be reported immediately to the clinical coordinator.

9.5 Simulation

- Students must complete all simulation hours required for each practicum course. Simulation scenarios are based on concepts taught in the accompanying didactic course and skills learned in lab each semester.
- Simulations will occur in small or large group settings in order to best meet the learning objectives of the simulation and practicum courses. Students will receive assignments as part of the simulation scenario.
- During the first semester of the BSN program, students are oriented to the simulation labs, manikins, and procedures prior to participating in simulations. Re-orientation is provided as needed.
- Throughout each simulation, faculty trained in simulation facilitation guide students through a three-step process: pre-briefing, the simulation scenario, and debriefing.

9.6 Capstone

- Each student completes the Capstone practicum experience during their final semester of the nursing program. The student will complete 144 clinical hours at the clinical site supervised by a facility-assigned professional nurse. The clinical teacher provides support and oversight of the student.
- Capstone placement requests
 - During their third semester, students are invited to submit the Capstone Interest form. Health care facilities ask that students should never contact the facility with personal requests for placement. Specific unit preferences cannot be guaranteed; however, this request serves as a starting point for determining clinical preferences.
 - Students interested in critical care placement must take the BSN Critical Care Qualifier Exam. While this tool is optional for students, those aiming for critical care preceptorships must attain a satisfactory score to be considered. BSN faculty will consider multiple factors in addition to the Qualifier Exam when assigning placements. Individual scores remain confidential and are not discussed with the students.

- Capstone assignments are made according to the following factors:
 - Facility/unit availability
 - Sim performance, Lab Skills pass-offs, and Clinical participation
 - In-class performance and exam scores
 - Student interests
 - Student interests are considered when making placements, but are secondary to student performance and facility/unit availability.
 - Students interested in placement in a critical care unit (e.g., Intensive Care, Neonatal Intensive Care, Emergency Department, etc.) must demonstrate excellence in both clinical and in-class performance to be eligible for consideration. They may be asked to provide proof of previous or current employment in a critical care environment, prior to confirmation of placement, depending on facility requirement.
- Capstone assignments
 - Besides the clinical practicum, capstone students are given course assignments described in the course syllabus and practicum handbook.
 - During the capstone practicum, students meet at least three times with their clinical teacher in person or via Zoom/FaceTime: prior to or during their first shift, at midpoint and as the preceptorship concludes.
 - Additional meetings may be scheduled with the clinical teacher and/or preceptor if needed.

Policy #10: STUDENT NURSING ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES

The purpose is to:

- Assist in the direction and promotion of school activities of the students.
- Stimulate a spirit of cooperation between the faculty and students in nursing.
- Promote the educational, professional, and social well-being of the students in nursing.
- Provide a means of collaborating officially and effectively with matters pertaining to the welfare of the students in nursing.

Elections are held during the first week of fall semester. Officers consist of President, Vice President, Secretary, Class Representative.

- **President** shall preside over student organization meetings, preside over student officer meetings, appoint special committees with the aid of class officers, call special meetings, and perform any duties delegated to him/her by the faculty advisor.
- **Vice President** shall preside at meetings when president is absent and perform duties delegated by the president or faculty advisor.
- **Secretary** shall keep full minutes of all meetings, read minutes of previous meetings at beginning of scheduled meetings, and be responsible for all correspondence and preservation of records and papers pertaining to the organization.
- **Class Representative** shall monitor and report payment of dues for representative class, coordinate the class photographer activities, keep representative class informed of meetings, actions, issues, etc. that impact the members, and perform duties delegated by the president.

An appointed faculty member serves as an advisor. All fundraising requests must be approved by the Department Head or Director.

Students are encouraged to participate in other campus organizations, nursing associations, and related activities including the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) and/or the Utah Student Nurses Association (USNA).

The USU Nursing Society is required to keep minutes of their meetings and provide copies to the advisor for accreditation purposes.

Dues for the USU Nursing Society are \$15 per semester and must be paid by the first day of the second month of the semester. Dues pay for activities or items such as school memorabilia. Each group of students gives input on how the money is spent. Dues can be paid online at <https://nursing.usu.edu/payments/na-payment>.

Policy #11: SUSPECTED DRUG & ALCOHOL ABUSE

Student suspected of substance use

To maintain the integrity of the nursing program and ensure safe client care, and in accordance with USU policy ([Section V-3 University Standards of Student Conduct](#)) students must abstain from the use of alcohol or drugs/medications which effect safe and appropriate functioning in the following situations:

- Before and during nursing class and lab/clinical.
- While in student uniform.
- Before and during assigned time in the clinical facility, including the time of client selection.

Students have a responsibility to notify their nursing coordinator/director if they are taking any medications that may have an adverse effect on their clinical performance. The coordinator/director will then determine if the student's clinical performance is safe.

Students have a legal and ethical responsibility to report peers who they suspect are substance users.

As stated in the [USU catalog](#), "Anyone under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances may be removed, dismissed, or suspended from university premises, functions, classes, activities, and/or responsibilities. Utah State University will impose disciplinary sanctions on students up to and including expulsion." Referrals to alcohol and drug treatment agencies are available through [USU student services](#).

While other medical conditions may cause some of the following; behaviors and signs suggestive of substance use include, but are not limited to:

- Slowed thinking processes or very impulsive thinking.
- Immobilization or panic.
- Unpredictable behavior.
- Inappropriate or bizarre response/laughter.
- Irritable, restless manner.
- Blurred vision, dilated or constricted pupils, bloodshot eyes.
- Slurred or unusual speech patterns.
- Possessing, using, or transferring any narcotics, hallucinogen, stimulant, sedative, or similar drug other than in accordance with licensed health care provider's order.

Any nursing instructor or immediate supervisor who believes that a student is in a clinical setting while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, or is *for any reason* a threat to client safety, may remove the student immediately from the client care responsibilities.

In the event of suspected use in the clinical setting, the instructor has the right to confiscate, in the presence of a witness, the substance(s) for identification.

The behaviors and signs observed by the instructor will be documented by the instructor and validated by another nurse, another USU nursing instructor, nursing supervisor on duty, or nurse manager. The instructor may require the student to submit to body fluid collection and testing performed by a laboratory collecting agency designated by the nursing program, i.e., reasonable suspicion testing. The collection and testing may be performed in a manner that preserves the integrity of the specimen. The student may be escorted to the laboratory collecting agency representative by a nursing instructor or other nursing department/facility representative soon after the student has been removed from client care responsibilities.

The student will bear the expense of the program mandated testing unless otherwise specified.

Following completion of the specimen collection, the nursing instructor/nursing department representative will make arrangements for the student's safe transportation home.

Failure to give written consent, without qualification, to such alcohol or drug testing and/or release of test results to the coordinator/director of the nursing program, or failure to provide bona fide samples for such testing, may be considered implied admission of illegal substance use and grounds for appropriate disciplinary action, including the possibility of immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

The student involved in the alleged infraction may be temporarily excluded from the nursing program until test results have been received and reviewed by the coordinator/director of the nursing program.

Immediately, or as soon as reasonably possible after the test has been performed, the coordinator/director of the nursing program, or in their absence, the lead instructor, will be informed of the drug test results.

If the results are negative, the student may return to the program activities. Opportunity for make-up may be provided and the student may be expected to make up missed time and assignments.

If the test results are positive, the coordinator/director of the program may implement appropriate disciplinary action including possible dismissal from the nursing program on the grounds of substance use. Students who disagree with the program's decision may use the [USU student grievance procedure](#) outlined in the USU catalog. Positive findings will be reported to the Utah State Board of Nursing.

Policy #12: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Students and faculty in the nursing program will comply with the [USU Sexual Harassment Policy #339](#).

Policy #13: EMPLOYMENT

Students must assess their own ability to handle employment and the course of study in nursing.

It is strongly recommended that students do not work a night shift prior to theory. Patient care is a top priority. Students have an obligation to patients, families, and clinical agencies to ensure they are well prepared to care for patients. Students are to be alert and prepared with adequate knowledge and skills necessary to care for patients. Such preparation may require curtailing employment and other responsibilities.

Students are expected to have adequate rest prior to their clinical shift. Students are prohibited from working the night prior to a day clinical, or a night shift before daytime labs, or other clinical assignments.

If the faculty member finds the student unprepared, or in a mental or physical state unfit to care for patients, the student will be sent home. Being sent home may result in an unexcused absence, lowered grade, failure of a course, and/or dismissal from the program, regardless of performance in other aspects of the course.

Policy #14: GRADING

Grading

A minimum grade of **B-** is mandatory in all required courses. A student cannot receive a **C+** grade or lower in prerequisite/support courses and remain in the program. Courses must be completed in sequence when enrolled in the nursing program.

Passing Grades:		Grades resulting in dismissal from a USU nursing program	
Letter Grade	Percentage	Letter Grade	Percentage
A	93-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-92	C	73-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-72
B	83-86	D	60-69
B-	80-82	F	Below 60

Evaluations

Clinical assignments are graded either by course faculty or clinical teachers. Instructors strive to return submitted assignments promptly. Course faculty do not alter grades assigned by clinical teachers. Students wishing to contest a grade may discuss concerns directly with the clinical teacher.

Following clinical rotations, students receive electronic evaluations of their performance, completed by clinical teachers and/or assigned nurses. Mid-term and final evaluations are provided each semester by clinical teachers in collaboration with course faculty. Students are expected to complete these evaluations as part of each practicum course. Evaluation/advisement sessions may be arranged with students as needed, as determined by instructors.

Written Work

Various assignments, including homework, term papers, clinical written assignments, workbook tasks, and reports, must be submitted electronically through Canvas. Assignments not meeting this requirement, such as those submitted via email or in person, may not be accepted. Grading criteria typically include neatness, spelling, sentence structure, and content. Points may be deducted for errors in grammar, spelling, appearance, lack of proper APA format, or missing student names. Late submissions incur a five percent (5%) grade reduction per day, including weekends, with a score of zero (0) after seven (7) days.

Tests

In case of emergencies (see Section 2.1), students must arrange in advance for tests to be taken outside scheduled times. Failure to do so may result in a ten percent (10%) grade reduction. Timely completion of missed work is the student's responsibility.

Instructions for final exams, including date, time, and location, will be provided during each semester. Each nursing course typically includes four (4) unit exams and one (1) comprehensive final exam, constituting 55% of the course grade, with the final exam weighted as 25%. A minimum average of 79.5% (B-) in course exams is required to pass. Failure to maintain this average will result in course failure, and students will receive the lesser of the exam or overall course average as their final grade.

Policy #15: USE OF TEST BANKS

Students must complete testing and remediation with academic integrity. Use of illegally obtained test content, sharing of information and working with other students is considered academic dishonesty and may lead to student dismissal from the USU nursing program. Any copy of test banks from ATI or program course textbooks available online or elsewhere has been illegally obtained. Purchasing test banks from someone who has obtained it is also illegal. The USU nursing program uses forensic data and reserves the right to nullify scores and re-administer an ATI exam, at student expense, based on the results of an investigation indicating that the student(s) may have had prior knowledge of the exam/question content. Possible consequences of obtaining and using a course textbook test bank include, but are not limited to, a reduction in an exam score, zero (0) for an exam score, reduction in a course grade, failing grade in a course, and/or dismissal from the nursing program.

Utah State University Department of Nursing

BSN Student Handbook Acknowledgement and Agreement Form

I, (please print) _____, have read, understand, and agree to comply with the standards, requirements, and policies in the BSN Nursing Student Handbook (“Handbook”). I understand that the BSN Director, Nursing Department Head, and faculty are available to provide clarifications and answers to any questions I may have regarding the Handbook. I understand and agree that my failure to comply with the standards, requirements, and policies in the Handbook may result in my dismissal from the BSN Program.

Signature

Print Name

Date