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Utah State University
Prelicensure BSN STUDENT HANDBOOK
2023 -2024

Revised: May 2023



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.



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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

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	First Level (1st Semester)	Second Level (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:

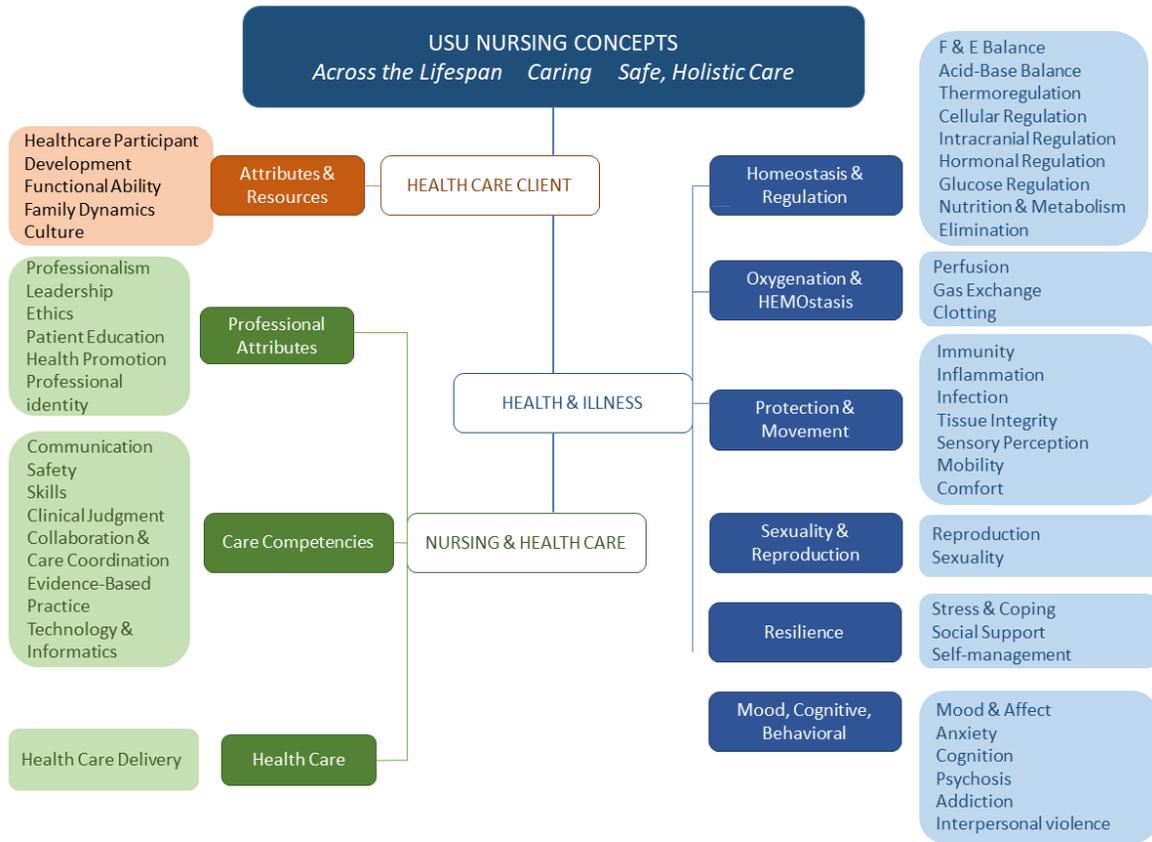


- ❖ Focus on the CONCEPT
 - ❖ Provide additional content and application through EXEMPLARS
 - ❖ Analyze relationship of EXEMPLARS and CONCEPT to interrelated concepts
 - ❖ Integrate new and previously encountered information, experiences, skills, and attitudes with the CONCEPT

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 are 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: STANDARDIZED 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](#) 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.

NURSING PROGRAM CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS

1. Refer to the Clinical Addendum for lab, simulation, and clinical requirements. Students must be responsible for all information in the handbook, sign an acknowledgement of understanding, and pass the required USU BSN Handbook quiz with 80% or higher score in order to attend clinicals.
2. Malpractice insurance is required by clinical facilities and is provided by Utah State University.
3. Students will receive instructions on how and where to provide documentation of current American Heart Association certification in basic life support for healthcare providers, immunizations, results of criminal background check, and urine drug screen.
4. Law requires students to carry personal health insurance. See the [USU option](#) for purchasing health insurance for those who do not have private insurance coverage. The university and clinical facilities are not responsible for personal injury or illness coverage.

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 you, Utah State University, and the nursing programs. Be aware not only of the content you post, but also of any content that you host (e.g., comments posted by others on your site). Be aware that your statements may be offensive to others, including classmates or faculty members who may read what you post. Others (students, faculty, staff, clients, other healthcare workers) have diverse customs, values, and points of view. Don't be afraid to be yourself, but respect others' points of view. This includes the obvious (personal insults, ethnic slurs, obscenities, etc.) and includes topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory (politics, religion, etc.).
- Though you may only intend a small group to see what you post, a much larger group may actually see your post. Once you have posted on social media, it is out of your control. Others may see it, repost it, save it, forward it to others, etc. Retracting content after you have posted is practically impossible.
- Employers and others may use social media to evaluate applicants. Choosing to post distasteful, immature, or offensive content may eliminate job or other opportunities.
- If you post content concerning USU, make it clear that you do not represent the university, and that the content you are posting does not represent the views of the university.
- Make sure the content you post is in harmony with USU and nursing codes. Do not disclose or use confidential information of any person or agency. Do not post any information about your clinical rotations or clients in any online forum or webpage. Do not post any information about testing or course assignment materials intended to be kept private or confidential. Violations may result in action against you. The university may take action against you for disclosures of confidential information.
- Inappropriate posts by nurses have resulted in licensure and legal repercussions. The National Council for State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has developed [guidelines](#) for nurses and nursing students for using social media responsibly.



- Realize that you may be subject to action by the university for posting or promoting content that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with university activities or that might lead university authorities to reasonably foresee substantial disruption or interference with university activities. This action may be taken based on behavioral misconduct, academic performance, academic misconduct, or professional misconduct, and may range from a reprimand or failing grade to dismissal from a program or the university.
- For additional information, please refer to the [USU social media guidelines](#).

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.](#)

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 improvement 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.

Policy #2: ATTENDANCE

2.1 Theory Class

Because of the critical relationship between time and learning, the nursing faculty believe that students cannot miss planned experiences and gain the knowledge needed to care for human lives. Regular attendance is required of all students. A student is responsible for work that may be missed if an absence is unavoidable due to a grave situation. Grave/emergency situations do not include work or vacations, non-emergent doctor or dental appointments, being too tired to attend class, getting married, or other special events. An instructor may request a physician's signed statement justifying the absence of the student. If health problems interfere with the quality and completion of course requirements, the student may be asked to withdraw. After one unexcused theory absence per semester student is required to meet with the course instructor to discuss consequences for further absences.

Disruptive behaviors are distracting for other students and inconsiderate to those presenting the information. For this reason, children are not to be brought to class, seminars, evaluations, or examinations. Students are expected to participate in presentations and give attention to those



speaking. It is considered unprofessional to read, talk, text, or do homework during a presentation. Beepers, cell phones, etc. are not appropriate in class or clinical, and must be turned off. Laptops are to be used for note taking and other in-class activities.

2.2 Laboratory and Clinical Experiences

Attendance is mandatory for each laboratory, simulation, and clinical experience. Students must attend all scheduled activities and complete all assigned coursework for successful completion of the practicum courses and receive a passing grade. Students must wear their nursing uniform to the lab. Students may lose assignment points or may be sent home if the student is not prepared and dressed appropriately. Each unexcused absence may result in an automatic ten percent (10%) grade reduction for the course grade. Make-up requirements are at the discretion of the instructor and/or coordinator/director. The clinical and theory instructors must authorize any exceptions. Persons not enrolled in the nursing program may not be allowed in the labs.

A student should check with the instructor for work that may be missed if an absence is unavoidable due to a grave situation. Grave/emergency situations do not include work or vacations, non-emergent doctor or dental appointments, being too tired to come to class, getting married, or other special events. BSN policy regarding excused absences is consistent with USU policy ([USU Attendance & Excused Absences](#)). If a student leaves the clinical area early without permission of the instructor, he/she may require a meeting with the director prior to returning to the next clinical shift, and/or the student may be dismissed from the program.

2.3 Tardiness

Tardiness in clinical or the classroom is a distraction to others and is viewed as unprofessional. Students are expected to consistently arrive on time. One minute after start time of class or clinical is considered tardy in the USU nursing programs.

A cumulative grade penalty may be made for each instance a student arrives tardy to class, lab, or simulation. A first occurrence will result in an overall course grade deduction of 1%. A second occurrence will add an additional overall grade deduction of 3%. A third occurrence will add an additional 5% overall grade deduction and will also require a meeting with the instructor and learning contract. Additional occurrences will result in additional 5% grade deductions for each instance. Students may not be permitted to make up points that occurred before the late arrival.

Tardiness to clinical is not acceptable and will result in the student being sent home from the clinical shift. Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to scheduled clinical shifts in order to receive instructions from the clinical teacher and be on the floor ready for report. For example, if the clinical shift begins at 0500, students should arrive no later than 0445. A student who is more than one minute late (i.e., 0501) to clinical will be dismissed from clinical and receive zero (0) points for that clinical shift. Students must meet with the clinical coordinator to schedule make-up for the clinical hours and are still required to complete all clinical assignments for the shift. Make-up points are not awarded for the make-up day or make-up work.



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](#).

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.

Removal of any student from the client care responsibility due to a threat related to client safety may be a reason for suspension or dismissal from the program.

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.

Returning after Military Duty or Health Issue

Students who have left the program due to military duty or health issues must keep the nursing program director and/or department head informed of their situation and/or desire to return. These students are required to send the nursing program director a letter of intent explaining the desire and timeline to return at least three months prior to the planned return date. For those wanting to continue their



nursing education during the fall semester, the nursing program director should receive letters by May 1st of that year. Those who would like to return in the spring semester should submit their letter of intent by October 1st. Students who are returning due to these issues do not need to complete the application forms.

Returning after Dismissal

Students who have been dismissed from the nursing program due to grades, misconduct, or other circumstances, and desire readmission, must submit a reapplication form and meet admission application deadlines. Please contact your campus nursing office 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.

In order to be readmitted 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

When attending any function as a student of a USU nursing program, you are expected to follow the guidelines listed below. If a student arrives and is not in complete compliance with the policy, the student may be asked to return home upon discretion of the faculty member and/or clinical institution. The student may receive a zero (0) for the entire day. If the day happens to occur on the day of orientation to any given facility, the student may be excluded from working in that facility. The days missed due to uniform non-compliance cannot be made up, which could result in a failing grade in the course and/or dismissal from the program.



Clinical Area

1. Uniform

- a. USU nursing uniform is required for **all** clinical, lab, and simulation practices.
 - b. Should be clean and in good repair, free of wrinkles, stains, tears, and frays. If the uniform becomes faded, ill-fitting, or in need of repair, students will be expected to purchase a new uniform.
 - c. Approved uniform per nursing program and clinical site policy is a pewter gray tunic top and navy blue uniform pants. The top is to be worn over the bottoms, not tucked in. A solid-color white, navy, or pewter gray long sleeve t-shirt may be worn under the uniform if the sleeves can be pushed up.
 - d. White or neutral closed-toe, closed-back, non-slip shoes, in good condition, that coordinate with the uniform.
 - e. Analog or digital watch with a second hand or ability to count seconds. The watchband should be as simple as possible.
 - f. Stethoscope and/or any other equipment required for clinical duties.
2. **Name badge** USU approved name badge must be worn at all times in all clinical settings. BSN students in the Sorenson Center for Clinical Excellence building, simulation rooms, and classroom settings must wear an ID badge visible at all times, worn above the waist. Students may also be required to wear an additional facility-specific badge while in clinical sites.

3. Jewelry

- a. Minimal jewelry.
 - b. Conservative earrings may be worn in each pierced ear lobe with loops, gauges, or dangling. A single stud nose piercing is permitted, no loops, septum piercings, or gauges. Other visible facial piercings, including tongue rings, are not allowed.
 - c. No necklaces.
4. **Makeup** should be conservative, including no scented lotions or perfumes.

5. Fingernails

- a. Follow [CDC guidelines for Healthcare workers](#).
- b. Guidelines established by USU nursing faculty and the clinical sites.
- c. No artificial, gel, or polished nails.
- d. Measure less than ¼" long.

6. Hair

- a. Clean, neatly combed, and controlled so that hair does not fall forward when bending, and is not constantly being pushed away from the face.
 - b. Long hair must be pulled back or worn off the collar.
 - c. Barrettes may be worn if the color is close to the student's hair color.
 - d. No hair ornaments, ribbons, or colored scarves.
 - e. Mustaches and beards should be neatly trimmed.
 - f. No extreme hairstyles including Mohawks or unnatural colors (not normal human hair color).
7. **Tattoos** are preferably not be visible when in uniform. Students may be asked to cover tattoos deemed unprofessional or distracting.
8. **Gum chewing** is not permitted when in the clinical area.
9. **Odors** include body odors, mouth odors, cigarette odor, colognes/aftershave, untidiness, or lack of cleanliness are not acceptable because they can be offensive to patients.



10. **Tobacco** may not be used by students during any clinical experience or while in a USU nursing uniform.

Classroom Dress

The way you dress sends a message to those around you. As a nurse, you need to send the message that you are professional. Being well-groomed and well-dressed influences the way others accept you and develop confidence in your skills. Even in the classroom, professional dress and grooming may affect how others view your abilities. In the lab, appropriate dress and grooming will assist students to concentrate on the skills being learned.

Laboratory Dress

Students are expected to wear their clinical nursing uniforms to the lab during any scheduled lab activity, unless otherwise specified. Please refer to the Clinical Addendum for additional details regarding dress for open lab time.

Student Activities Dress

Students must dress according to the approved standards for the USU nursing programs, including all conferences. Students found to be in violation of this may be sent home which may result in a zero (0) grade for the experience.

Business Casual Attire

Business casual includes wearing clothes that represent the student as a professional. Acceptable clothing includes collared shirts, polo shirts, slacks, blazers, and/or sweaters. When appropriate, more formal attire may include suits/jackets, tailored clothing, tie, socks/hose, and dress shoes.

Dress that is not acceptable includes:

- 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 in cases of medical need such as 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, shorts, or skorts shorter than mid-thigh length, miniskirts, midriff tops, low-cut tops, or any dress exposing undergarments. Scrubs may be worn provided the attire is associated with a professional activity for that day (e.g., proper work attire).
- Any open-toe shoe in laboratories including, but not limited to flip-flops, Birkenstocks, or other sandals are not acceptable.

Identification Badge

An approved identification badge must be worn on the student’s person and be visible at all times according to institutional policy where the student is practicing. All students, faculty, and staff are expected to conform to this standard at all times.



USU's Sorenson Center for Clinical Excellence policy requires that the nursing student badge be worn above the hip and visible at all times while in the building or on the grounds.

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.

Policy #9: STUDENT NURSING ORGANIZATIONS & ACTIVITIES (when organized)

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.

The nursing coordinator or 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 \$30 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 #10: 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 #11: SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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

Policy #12: 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 #13: LABORATORY GUIDELINES

It is expected that students will be on time to class, simulation, and lab. A late entrant disrupts the entire class. A student who is late may be sent home at the discretion of the instructor. Students are expected to come prepared for each assigned lab or simulation activity. Instructors may assign pre-work, which may include instructional videos for viewing, pre-lab/simulation quizzes, or other activities. These must be completed prior to attending the assigned activity. A cumulative grade penalty may be made for each instance a student does not complete the assigned pre-work. A first occurrence will result in an overall course grade deduction of 1%. A second occurrence will add an additional overall grade deduction of 3%. A third occurrence will add an additional 5% overall grade deduction and will also require a learning contract. Additional occurrences may result in additional grade reductions or course failure.

The laboratory is a simulated clinical situation. Refer to the Clinical Addendum for open lab dress code.

All bedside units, work areas, equipment, and supplies are to be left clean and tidy. Personal belongings and trash should be properly handled or disposed of at the end of the lab session. Food and beverages should not be brought into the laboratory.

Manikins should be left in correct alignment, cleaned properly, and be covered after use. Assigned students will be responsible for cleaning or making sure identified areas are cleaned. Refer to the Clinical Addendum for the laboratory and manikin/manikin takedown checklists.

The laboratory is restricted to assigned students. Students may not disrupt lab sessions to obtain necessary equipment. Prior planning is the responsibility of the student. If a conflict in use arises, notify the clinical coordinator, nursing program assistant, or a faculty member.

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 are required to sign in and out when using the lab during open lab hours and will be expected to leave the lab clean and tidy following any use outside of class hours. Open lab hours are self-directed unless accommodations are made with the clinical coordinator or nursing faculty. See the Clinical Addendum for additional information.

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 by the course faculty or by clinical teachers. Instructors will make every effort to return submitted assignments to students as soon as possible. Course faculty will not adjust any grades assigned by clinical teachers. If a student wishes to dispute a grade given on a clinical assignment, they may speak directly with the clinical teacher to address their concerns.

Students receive electronic evaluations regarding clinical performance following clinical rotations, which may be completed by the clinical teacher and/or assigned nurse. Students will receive mid-term and final evaluations each semester by clinical teachers, faculty, or the clinical coordinator. Students are expected to complete mid-term and final evaluations as a required portion of each practicum course. Evaluation/advisement sessions may be held with the student as many times as necessary for any course, as determined by the instructor.

During semesters where the students are completing more than one practicum course at a time, the course faculty may choose to combine mid-term and final evaluations of clinical performance for each course.

Written work

Homework assignments, term papers, clinical written assignments, workbook assignments, and reports must be submitted electronically through Canvas. Assignments submitted by email, in person, or in a format not recognized by Canvas may not be accepted. Grading typically includes neatness, spelling, sentence structure, and content. Points may be deducted for poor grammar, spelling, appearance, lack of proper APA format, or failing to include student name on the paper. Course syllabi will include point values assigned to these requirements.

Assignments must be completed before being submitted. A five percent (5%) grade reduction on the assignment is implemented for each day late, including weekends. A score of zero (0) is given after seven (7) days.

When taking material or ideas directly from other sources, direct quotations and references must be appropriately provided. Work that has not been properly referenced constitutes plagiarism and will be



penalized. "The penalties for plagiarism are severe and include warning or reprimand, grade adjustment... expulsion." [Student Code of Conduct, Article 6.](#)

The student may be asked to submit a copy of any referenced articles, as long as such copying does not violate any copyright laws, or is prohibited by the author and the publisher of the article.

Research papers and annotated bibliographies must be completed in APA format. It is the student's responsibility to find APA guidelines and use them correctly.

The student is responsible for composing their own original work. The BSN program utilizes Turnitin, a software program for plagiarism detection that has the capability to also identify Artificial Intelligence-generated submissions, for example, ChatGPT and similar tools. Turnitin scans documents submitted to Canvas, and provides an originality report that assists students in maintaining academic integrity. By submitting an assignment, students agree to the anti-plagiarism clause included with every Canvas submission. Submissions that contain greater than 25% plagiarized or Artificial Intelligence-generated work will receive a zero grade on the assignment. On a case-by-case basis, faculty may allow a resubmission with a reduced percentage of the possible grade.

ChatGPT and similar Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, though useful in many contexts, are inappropriate for some assignments in this course. An important outcome of this course, particularly as a future nurse, is to strengthen your own abilities as a thinker and communicator, and this is best done with your own work.

Unless otherwise instructed, you are permitted to use ChatGPT and other AI tools to assist you in gathering information, writing drafts, and revising your writing. However, you are expected to include a disclosure statement at the end of your assignment describing which AI tool you used and how you used it. For example, "*ChatGPT was used to draft about 25 percent of this paper and to provide revision assistance. AI-produced content was edited for accuracy and style.*"

When you are instructed not to use ChatGPT and other AI tools, assignment submissions can be checked for possible AI use using AI detectors. Unauthorized use may result in a failing grade or a request to resubmit.

Students may not use, possess, share, or distribute previous assignments, exams, or quizzes from the USU nursing program, nor use any other student's written work. This is considered cheating. [Student Code of Conduct, Article 6.](#)

Tests

Should an emergency arise, the student must make prior (or timely) arrangement for tests to be taken at other than scheduled times. When notifying the instructor about the emergency the test should be taken the next day or a ten percent (10%) grade reduction may be given for the test. Timely make-up of missed work is solely the responsibility of the student. Emergencies do not include work or vacations, non-emergent doctor or dental appointments, being too tired to come to class, getting married, or other special events. At the instructor's discretion, tests may be taken early. Students cannot miss a theory class to take a test.



Faculty will provide instructions for the final exams of their respective classes with date, time, and location announced during each semester.

Each nursing course will typically include four (4) unit exams and one (1) comprehensive final exam. The unit and final exams make up 55% of the course grade, with the final exam weighted as 25% of the course grade (included in the 55% total).

Students must maintain at least a 79.5% (**B-**) average in course exams. Failure to maintain at least a 79.5% average in course exams will result in failure of the course independent of scores on other course assignments (papers, presentations, concept maps, etc.). Students will be dismissed from the program for course failure. 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.

Grading papers

Students are expected to submit college level work. Therefore, faculty may grade papers for both content and structure such as grammar and spelling.

Papers will be graded according to grading criteria for each assignment.

Students must complete and submit all course assignments/requirements in order to pass the course.

- All assignments must be completed and submitted on or before the due date. Requests for late submission must be made before 9 PM the previous day. A five percent (5%) grade reduction on the assignment is implemented for each day late, including weekends. A score of zero (0) is given after seven (7) days.
- Students must submit assignments electronically in Canvas. Assignments are to be computer generated, unless a legible, handwritten assignment using ink or other media has been specified. Lack of computer access, disc incompatibility, and other such problems may not excuse late assignments, presentations, or clinical papers.
- Although an ill student has notified the instructor, the assignment may still be due at the required deadline.

Grading quizzes

The USU nursing program has determined that classroom learning should focus on the application of concepts. This can be done only if the student comes to class prepared.

- Quizzes may constitute a portion of the student's grade in any course. At the end of the semester, quiz percentages are averaged to determine the overall quiz grade.
- Quizzes may be unannounced.
- If the student is absent or late for class for any reason and missed the quiz, he/she may receive a zero (0) for the quiz.
- Students who are absent when a take-home quiz is assigned may receive a zero (0) for the quiz.

Grading group presentations



In order to receive full credit for a group presentation, the student should be present and participate in the presentation. If absent, the maximum the student may receive is 50% of the group grade, unless arrangements were made prior to the presentation.

Practicum grading

Practicum grading includes all assignments given in clinical rotations, skills, and simulation labs.

1. Clinical Assignments
 - a. All assignments for clinical rotations will be submitted in Canvas and follow the submission guidelines listed in Policy #14: Written Work. Clinical assignments often include concept maps, reflective journaling, and medication assignments, and may include additional assignments at the discretion of the course faculty. Course faculty or clinical teachers give grades for clinical rotations. Instructors will make every effort to return submitted assignments to students as soon as possible. Course faculty will not adjust any grades assigned by clinical teachers. If a student wishes to dispute a grade given on a clinical assignment, they may speak directly with the clinical teacher to address their concerns.
 - b. Students are required to pass a medication competency quiz with a 79.5% or higher score each semester prior to beginning clinical practicums. If the first attempt does not result in a passing score, remediation is assigned and must be completed before the student will be permitted to attend a clinical shift. If the second attempt is also less than 79.5%, the course instructor and clinical coordinator will assist the student to develop a learning improvement contract. Clinical rotations do not begin until a passing score is achieved.
 - c. Tardiness in clinical is not acceptable. Students who are tardy, per Policy #2, will be sent home from the clinical rotation and will schedule make-up hours with the clinical coordinator. The student will receive no points for the make-up clinical and assignments. All assignments must be submitted for completion of the course. See Policy #2 for more information on clinical absences.
 - d. Refer to the Capstone Practicum section for details regarding nursing capstone practicum assignments.
2. Skills Lab Assignments
 - a. Assignments: All assignments from clinical, lab, and simulation **must** be turned in to receive credit for course completion. If all assignments are not completed and submitted, this could result in course failure.
 - b. Scheduled lab hours: Students are expected to attend all scheduled labs for each course. Students should plan on being present the entire time they are scheduled for labs. Students will not be released early from scheduled labs. Students should be on time, as a late entrant disrupts the entire class. A late student may be sent home at the discretion of the instructor.
 - c. Skills Pass-Off Videos: Following the scheduled lab hours for each course, students must complete and submit skills pass-offs in video format on specific critical skills assigned per course. Students are required to wear their nursing uniform in their Skills Pass-Off Videos. Skills Pass-Off rubrics for each assigned skill are provided and reviewed during scheduled lab hours and are available in each Canvas course. Students who do not pass their first attempt will be required to complete remediation of their skill, which may



include scheduled time with the course faculty and or lab staff prior to resubmission of their skills-pass off video(s).

Students will be awarded up to 65% of assignment points for remediation submissions. If the student does not pass their remediation attempt, the student will be required to meet with the course faculty, clinical coordinator, and department head to develop a practicum learning contract.

Students may be held from continuing clinical rotations until adequate learning improvement progress is documented. Failure to successfully remediate skills after assigned remediation attempts may result in an overall deduction of 10% of course grade, course failure, and/or dismissal from the nursing program.

- d. Open lab hours: Students may use open lab hours to practice skills learned in the lab or clinical setting. Skills pass-off videos are to be completed during open lab hours. Students are required to sign in and out during open lab hours. See the Clinical Program Policies and Guidelines for more information on scheduling and expectations.
3. Simulation Assignments
 - a. Students must attend all scheduled simulations for each course. Tardiness in simulation will result in a loss of course points (see Policy #2). Students may request an excused absence, make up the missed simulation, and be awarded make-up points per instructor discretion. An unexcused absence must also be made up in order to complete the course, however, make-up points are not awarded. Students may not trade individual simulation dates with other students. All swaps must occur in the designated period of time prior to the start of the semester and follow the guidelines listed in the Clinical Programs Policies and Resources: C2.
 - b. Students may be given additional simulation pre-work or post-simulation assignments and will follow submission guidelines listed in Policy #14.
 4. Practicum Evaluations
 - a. Midterm Evaluation
 - i. Students will submit a self-evaluation
 - ii. The practicum course lead will submit a student evaluation that includes feedback from clinical, lab, and simulation instructors
 - iii. The student reviews the evaluation and submits goals
 - b. Final Evaluation
 - i. Students will submit a final self-evaluation
 - ii. The practicum course lead will submit a student final evaluation that includes feedback from clinical, and simulation instructors
 - iii. The student reviews the evaluation and writes a reflection on their progress for the semester and includes ideas for improvement

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.

CLINICAL PROGRAMS POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Students should remember they are guests in the clinical facilities. They should treat physicians, nurses, other staff, patients, and families with courtesy and respect. Should a problem or conflict occur during clinical experiences, the supervising faculty member should be contacted immediately. Failure to demonstrate professional behavior may result in a lowered grade, failure of the course, and/or dismissal from the program, regardless of performance in other aspects of the course.

C1: Clinical Curriculum

The USU clinical curriculum includes clinical rotations, skills labs, and simulation experiences. The BSN clinical curriculum is consistent with the program course curricula. Clinical course design is the result of extensive analyses of current literature, best educational practices, student needs, a complex and changing healthcare environment, and the influence of technology in nursing education. Clinical experiences are designed to provide students rich opportunities to integrate and apply important concepts and skills to become excellent nurses and leaders while providing safe environments for learning.

C2: Nursing Program Clinical Requirements for Skills Lab, Simulation, and Clinical Experiences

Student contact hours for skills lab, simulation, and clinical requirements for each course are calculated based on the number of credit hours per course.

Skills Lab

- 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.
- Students must successfully pass and Skills Pass-Off Videos following their required lab hours each semester. Students are provided rubrics for testable skills during the scheduled lab hours for the applicable course. See Policy #14 for information regarding Skills Pass-Off Videos grading.

Simulation

- Students are required to complete all simulation hours for each practicum course. Simulation scenarios are based on concepts and exemplars taught in the accompanying didactic course, as well as skills learned in lab each semester. Simulation activities may take place in small or large group settings in order to best meet the learning objectives of the simulation and practicum courses.



- 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.
- During each simulation experience, students are guided by faculty trained in simulation facilitation in a three-step process: pre-briefing, the simulation scenario, and debriefing. Students may be given assignments as part of the required simulation hours.

Clinical

- Students are required to complete pre-assigned clinical rotations in each practicum course. These experiences and training in healthcare settings may occur in hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, hospice, community health, public health, and others. Clinical rotations may be scheduled for any time during a 24-hour period, any day of the week. Student clinical rotations assignments are made by the clinical coordinator and designed to ensure fair and equitable placement.
 - Assignments will be communicated with the student in a timely manner whenever possible. Due to facility processing times, final assignments may not be complete until the week prior to the start of the semester. The clinical coordinator communicates wait times and general expectations to the students when information is made available.
 - Unit assignments will be made by the clinical coordinator and published in the applicable Canvas assignments. Students may not trade unit assignments, as they are designed to ensure fair and equitable placement throughout the program. Clinical teachers may adjust the unit assignments based on census or nurse availability, but will not adjust assignments based on student requests.
 - Students are allowed a designated period of time prior to the beginning of each semester to make changes to the clinical assignment. Students are given one opportunity to trade their entire clinical assignment with another student. Every assigned clinical for the semester must be traded with the other student. Trading individual dates for assigned practicum experiences is not allowed. Both students must communicate their request to trade with the clinical coordinator via email in order for the change to be considered.
- Some healthcare facilities require students to complete a facility-specific orientation prior to the beginning of clinical rotations for the semester. Such hours apply to the required number of clinical hours for the practicum. Orientations may include orientation to the unit and/or the facility, computer orientation, or other orientations determined by the individual facilities. Travel to these facilities for orientation is the responsibility of the student.
- 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.

Capstone

- Each student completes a final capstone practicum and a capstone course 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. USU faculty provides support and oversight of the student.

- Capstone placement requests
 - During the student's third semester, students are invited to submit the Capstone Interest form. While student requests for their specific interest categories cannot be guaranteed, the request is a starting point for determining clinical preferences. Placement requests are not taken prior to the third semester in order to meet partner facility requirements.
 - Any student who is interested in critical care placement will be required to take the critical care qualifier exam. The qualifier exam is an optional exam for students, but those interested in critical care placement for preceptorship must achieve a satisfactory score for consideration. Scores will be reviewed by the clinical coordinator and course faculty when determining placement assignments. Consideration will be given to overall cohort performance and rankings. Individual student scores will not be published but students may schedule time to review their individual performance with the course faculty or clinical coordinator.
- Capstone assignments are made according to the following criteria:
 - Facility/unit availability
 - Clinical performance
 - In-class performance
 - In-class performance includes performance observed in the lab and simulation settings, as well as in video skill pass-offs.
 - 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: prior to or during their first shift, at midpoint and as the preceptorship concludes. Student capstone meetings should be held in person, unless exceptions are approved by the Nursing program and clinical facility.
 - Additional meetings may be scheduled with the clinical teacher and/or preceptor if needed.

C3: Guidelines for use of Social Media during Clinical Experiences

In addition to the guidelines published in the BSN student handbook, the following guidelines apply to social media during clinical experiences:



- Students are expected to comply with HIPAA guidelines while in the clinical facilities. Simulation labs are also considered clinical facilities during active simulations.
- Personal devices are never to be used to take pictures with patients. If a patient requests a student to join in a photo taken on the patient's device, the student may choose whether or not to participate.
- Pictures or videos taken during clinical experiences can be taken outside of clinical environments (e.g., in the breakroom, cafeteria, parking lot, classroom, etc.) and should be free of any identifying information.
- Students are expected to uphold the Clinical Confidentiality Agreement that will be signed prior to any simulation experiences. Taking personal pictures or videos during a simulation is prohibited. See **Simulation Policies and Procedures** for detailed information regarding the clinical confidentiality agreement.

C4: Civility

Students may be sent home from clinical experiences for incivility and are subject to the requirements listed in Policy #2 for unexcused clinical absences.

C5: Student Conduct

- Student learning improvement contracts may be implemented if faculty determine student clinical performance needs improvement in clinical rotations, skills lab, or simulation experiences. When clinical improvement is indicated, the student will meet with the course faculty and clinical coordinator to discuss the necessary learning improvement, the expected outcome, timeframe of the contract, and consequences if outcomes are not met. See Policy #1.
- If, for any reason, a student poses a threat to patient safety, the student may be immediately removed from patient care duties, and/or the clinical site, at the discretion of the clinical teacher. Follow-up will be scheduled with course faculty, the clinical coordinator, or others to determine the next steps. Serious safety events, or threats to patient safety, may result in dismissal from the program.

C6: Attendance

Students are held to USU BSN handbook policies #2 & #3 regarding attendance for all clinical experiences.

C7: Student Appearance

Students attending clinical experiences are held to Policy #8, Student Appearance, in this handbook. A student may be sent home at the discretion of the faculty member and/or clinical institution. A zero (0) grade may be given for the entire day. If the infraction occurs at a given facility, the student may be excluded from USU nursing experiences in that facility at any time, including facility orientation.



Students are expected to comply with Policy #8 regarding wearing of the uniform and ID badge during all clinical experiences, including clinical rotations, skills lab, and simulation experiences.

Students are not required to be in uniform while in practice lab during open lab hours. Classroom dress, described in Policy #8, should be followed with the name/ID badge visible and above the hip at all times while in the nursing lab as required by the Sorenson Center for Clinical Excellence (SCCE) building policy.

C8: Laboratory Guidelines

C8.1 General Laboratory Use

- All bedside units, work areas, equipment, and supplies are to be left clean and tidy following use. Personal belongings and trash should be properly handled or disposed of at the end of all lab sessions. Food and beverages should not be brought into simulation spaces.
- Manikins should be left in correct alignment, covered, and cleaned properly after use. Assigned students will be responsible for cleaning or making sure identified areas are cleaned. Students using the lab during open lab hours are responsible for cleaning up the lab space after use.
- If skills lab is not left clean and tidy following student use, any student documented on the Lab Sign-In sheet for the date noted may receive a deduction of practicum course points, per course faculty/lab coordinator discretion.

C8.2 Laboratory & Manikin Use

- Broken or nonfunctioning manikins or equipment should be reported immediately to the clinical coordinator. 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.
- Lab use is offered only to students who are signed in. Students will not be allowed to disrupt lab sessions or class time to obtain necessary equipment. Prior planning is the responsibility of the student. If a conflict in use arises, notify the clinical coordinator, nursing program assistant, or a faculty member.
- 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 are required to sign in and out when using the lab for open lab hours. Students will be expected to leave the lab clean and tidy following any use outside of class hours. Open lab hours are self-directed unless accommodations are made ahead of time with the clinical coordinator or other nursing faculty.
- Refer to the *Lab & Manikin Take-Down Checklist* posted in the skills lab for specific steps when taking down manikins and lab space.

C8.3 Events During Lab Hours

- Students will participate in a variety of lab hours. Lab hours include scheduled hours that are led by an instructor, and/or open lab hours that are student-led without direct instructor oversight. Instructors are present in the department during open lab time, but not present in the lab. Additional lab staff may also be present in the department during open lab time, but may not be physically present in the lab. Supplies available will be limited to those applicable to skills that can be safely practiced without an instructor present.



- Events that occur during any lab hours such as bodily fluid exposure, needle stick, or injury should be reported immediately to the clinical coordinator. 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?
 - **Bodily 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, 2001)¹
 - 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. Law requires that the student acquire personal health insurance. USU students who do not have private health insurance can purchase [student health insurance](#). USU is not responsible for personal injury or illness coverage.
 - Follow up of exposure events will be coordinated between the clinical coordinator, faculty, and students involved.
1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2001). Updated U.S. public health services guidelines for the management of occupational exposures to HBV, HCV and HIV and recommendations for post-exposure prophylaxis. Retrieved from <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5011a1.htm>



Utah State University Department of Nursing

BSN Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I, (please print) _____, have read the policies in the BSN Nursing Student Handbook and understand that I am responsible for the policies and procedures stipulated in this handbook.

I understand that I will be given the opportunity to have questions concerning said policies answered by the BSN faculty, BSN Director, and/or Nursing Department Head at orientation.

I understand that, as a student in this program, if I need further clarification of the policies, I am free to ask the BSN Director, Nursing Department Head, and/or faculty throughout the year.

I understand that any deviation from the standards in the handbook is cause for counseling procedures and/or dismissal procedures.

I shall abide by the policies as a student in the program.

Signature

Print Name

Date