



**RIVERLAND**  
Community College



**PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

2025-2026

## Contents

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FORWARD .....	4
ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL .....	4
MISSION & VISION STATEMENTS .....	5
NURSING (PN TRACK) PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY .....	6
PN CONCEPTS.....	6
PN CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES, & COMPETENCIES .....	7
PRACTICAL NURSING FRAMEWORK .....	9
PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM PLAN COURSE SEQUENCE PLAN (DAY & EVENING OPTIONS).....	10
LEGAL LIMITATIONS FOR LICENSURE .....	10
NURSING STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....	10
COMMUNICATION .....	12
CLASSROOM POLICY.....	13
ASSIGNMENT POLICY.....	14
LATENESS POLICY FOR ACADEMIC WORK.....	14
EXAM & TESTING GUIDANCE.....	14
GRADING SCALE FOR PROGRAM.....	19
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY.....	19
SOCIAL MEDIA.....	20
CLINICAL EXPECTATIONS.....	21
LAB & SIMULATION EXPECTATIONS .....	24
COVID-19 UPDATES .....	26
PROGRAM PROMOTION & PROGRESSION .....	27
INCOMPLETES.....	30
WITHDRAWALS .....	30
MOVING STUDENTS TO DIFFERENT CLINICAL OR LAB SECTIONS.....	30

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY .....	31
CLINICAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES.....	34
COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES, & GRADE APPEALS.....	35
PROGRAM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS .....	35
STUDENT TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS.....	38
MINNESOTA STATE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS...	39

## FORWARD

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The Riverland Community College PN Program Student Handbook provides essential information, policies, and standards for students enrolled in the Nursing (LPN Track) Program. For non-nursing-specific information, students should refer to the general Riverland Community College Student Handbook. This handbook can be located at:

[www.riverland.edu/studenthandbook/](http://www.riverland.edu/studenthandbook/)

Students are responsible for understanding all nursing policies, procedures, and regulations outlined in this handbook and the college student handbook. They are also accountable for any updates or new policies communicated through verbal announcements, D2L/Brightspace, or their Riverland student email.

## ACCREDITATION AND APPROVAL

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### HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools accredits Riverland Community College.



Higher Learning Commission  
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500  
Chicago, IL 60604  
Phone: 800.621.7440 / 312.263.0456  
[www.hlcommission.org](http://www.hlcommission.org)

### ACCREDITATION COMMISSION FOR EDUCATION IN NURSING

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. (ACEN) accredits the Nursing (PN Track) Program and is approved by the Minnesota State Board of Nursing (MBON).



Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, Inc. 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400  
Atlanta, GA 30326  
Phone: 404-975-5000  
Fax: 404-975-5020  
[www.acenursing.org](http://www.acenursing.org)

### **PN LICENSURE IN OTHER STATES**

The Practical Nursing curriculum meets educational requirements for professional licensure or certification in the state of Minnesota. Riverland's Nursing Program has not made a determination of whether the curriculum meets educational requirements for initial licensure in any other state.

<https://www.ncsbn.org/14730.htm>

## **MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS**

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### **MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES MISSION**

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU) system offers higher education that meets the personal and career goals of a wide range of individual learners, enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans, and sustains vibrant economies throughout the state.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities provide high quality programs comprising:

- Technical education programs delivered principally by technical colleges, which prepare students for skilled occupations that do not require a baccalaureate degree.
- Pre-baccalaureate programs, delivered principally by community colleges, which offer lower division instruction in academic programs, occupational programs in which all credits earned will be accepted for transfer to a baccalaureate degree in the same field of study, and remedial studies.
- Baccalaureate programs delivered by state universities, which offer undergraduate instruction and degrees; and
- Graduate programs, delivered by state universities, including instruction through the master's degree, specialist certificates and degrees, and applied doctoral degrees.

### **MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES VISION**

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enable the people of Minnesota to succeed by providing the most accessible, highest value education in the nation.



## RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND HEART

**Vision:** We will offer the best opportunity for every enrolled student to attain academic and career goals in an ever-changing world.

**Mission:** To transform lives through excellence in service, education, and career training.

**Values:** Cultivating student growth through service, collaboration, innovation, and respect.

**Heart:** We are dedicated to our employees, our students, and our region.



## NURSING (PN TRACK) PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

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### PN PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The Practical Nursing (PN) program will prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to provide safe, effective care within the scope of the nurse, within a supportive, empowering, intellectually challenging, and diverse environment.

### PN PROGRAM VISION

The PN Program will foster excellence in learning through innovation, responsiveness, resourcefulness and collaboration.

### PN PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The Practical Nursing (PN) Program is founded on the integration of biological, psychological, sociological, and spiritual sciences. Practical nurses are prepared to provide care under the supervision of a registered nurse or other qualified healthcare professional. Graduates are expected to be equipped to practice effectively in a dynamic and evolving clinical environment.

## PN CONCEPTS

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Professional concepts were developed followed by student learning outcomes using the resources listed below:

- Minnesota Practical Nursing Scope of Practice (2013)
- National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses (NFLPN), 2003

- National Association of Practical Nurses Education and Service (NAPNES), *Standards of practice and educational competencies of graduates of practical/vocational nursing programs, 2007.*
- National League of Nursing (NLN) Outcomes and Competencies Educational Framework (2010).

## PN CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES, & COMPETENCIES

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### STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Nursing education goals are encompassed in core student learning outcomes that reflect essential competencies. These outcomes emphasize the application of knowledge and skills to promote human flourishing, sound clinical judgment, professional identity, and a spirit of inquiry. Additionally, they highlight the importance of providing safe, culturally competent care and practicing within the legal and ethical scope of nursing. All course outcomes and core nursing competencies align with these overarching aims.

The student learning outcomes are:

- **Human Flourishing:** Advocate for patient and family self-determination, integrity, and personal growth through patient-centered care.
- **Nursing Judgment:** Use evidence-based reasoning to deliver safe, high-quality care within family and community contexts.
- **Professional Identity:** Demonstrate integrity, responsibility, and ethical practice while evolving as a nurse committed to evidence-based, compassionate, and inclusive care.
- **Spirit of Inquiry:** Critically examine evidence to challenge assumptions, improve care, and innovate practices.
- **Safe Care:** Deliver developmentally and culturally appropriate care that fosters positive, healthful relationships.
- **Scope of Practice:** Practice ethically and legally within established standards (NLN, 2010).

To support curriculum integration, the program has consolidated foundational concepts—core values, integrating concepts, and program outcomes—into behavior sets that are reflected throughout course design, content, and assessment strategies.

### QUALITY & SAFETY EDUCATION FOR NURSES (QSEN)

QSEN prepares future nurses with the Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes (KSAs) needed to enhance healthcare quality and safety. Based on Institute of Medicine competencies, QSEN defines key areas to be addressed in nursing programs:

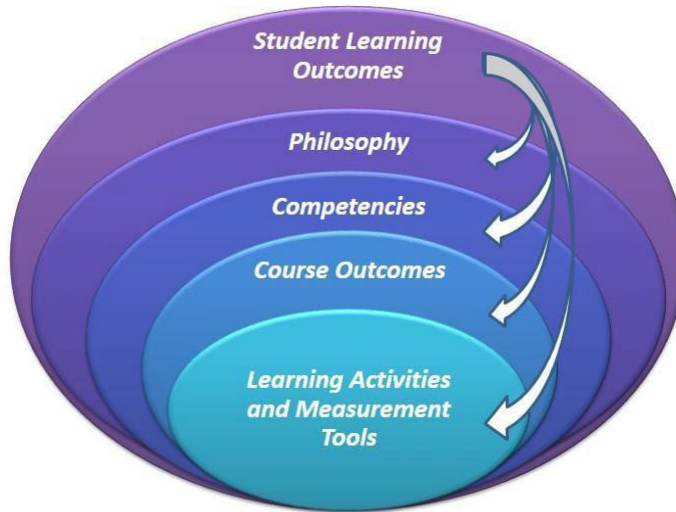
- Patient-Centered Care
- Teamwork and Collaboration
- Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)
- Quality Improvement (QI)
- Safety
- Informatics

These QSEN competencies are integrated into the student learning outcomes to ensure comprehensive, practice-ready nursing education.

(For more information: [QSEN Competencies](#))

<b>Student Learning Outcome</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Integrating Concept</b>	<b>Core Values</b>
<b>Human Flourishing</b>	Fostering human flourishing in their clients, team members and themselves	Patient/Relationship-Centered Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caring</li> <li>• Patient Centeredness</li> </ul>
<b>Nursing Judgment</b>	Showing increasing ability to make clinical nursing judgments	Context and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Holism</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Identity</b>	Developing a professional identity as a nurse	Personal and Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics</li> </ul>
<b>Spirit of Inquiry</b>	Developing and fostering a spirit of inquiry	Knowledge and science, Informatics, Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellence</li> </ul>
<b>Safe Care</b>	Safe care that is culturally and developmentally appropriate centered on building and sustaining positive, healthful, relationships with families and individuals.	Quality Improvement and Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrity</li> </ul>
<b>Scope of Practice</b>	Practicing within the legal, ethical and professional scope of the nurse	Teamwork and Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> </ul>

## PN Curricular Framework



*The PN Framework Model illustrates that the student learning outcomes direct the PN curriculum.*

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

- Form the basis for the philosophy statement.
- Are measured by competencies.
- Are used to guide the delivery of instruction through the course outcomes.
- Are used to direct learning activities and to evaluate student progress through measurement tools.

The curriculum supports the achievement of the identified student learning outcomes.

### **LPN to RN**

Graduates of the Practical Nursing (PN) program who pass the NCLEX-PN to become Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) may pursue an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN), making them eligible to take the NCLEX-RN for Registered Nurse licensure. Per Minnesota Administrative Rules 6301.2340 K, all ADN programs in the state must provide advanced standing and transition experiences for qualified LPNs. LPNs are encouraged to continue their education through ADN programs and may further advance to a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN), Master of Science in Nursing (MSN), or Doctorate in Nursing.

# **PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM PLAN COURSE SEQUENCE PLAN (DAY & EVENING OPTIONS)**

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Please visit [www.riverland.edu/academics/programs/nursing-lpn-track-dip/description/](http://www.riverland.edu/academics/programs/nursing-lpn-track-dip/description/) for our two program options.

## **How Long Is The Program? Day Option**

The duration of the program is 2 semesters plus pre-requisites.

## **How Long Is The Program? Evening Option**

The duration of the program is 3 semesters plus pre-requisites.

Upon completion of the Practical Nursing program, the nursing student may sit for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN).

## **LEGAL LIMITATIONS FOR LICENSURE**

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Applicants should be aware of legal limitations that may affect obtaining or retaining an LPN license. Licensure may be denied for individuals who have used fraud or deceit, been convicted of a felony or gross misdemeanor, are chemically dependent, have engaged in unethical nursing practices, or are deemed unfit or incompetent to practice. The Minnesota Board of Nursing reviews all applications to determine eligibility for licensure.

## **NURSING STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

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### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

The Department of Nursing holds meetings and committee sessions to manage program operations. Student participation in these committees provides a valuable opportunity to voice concerns and suggest improvements. Designated student representatives are expected to attend and contribute to these meetings.

### **STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE SELECTION**

Student representatives (limit of 2 students) are elected by each class at the beginning of the academic year (4<sup>th</sup> week of the semester). If the representative cannot, for whatever reasons, fulfill these duties they may resign, and a new representative will be elected.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

- Attend at least one Nursing Department Meeting per semester (or ask an alternate to attend).
- Attend at least 2 Team Teaching Meetings per semester (or ask an alternate to attend).
- Attend the fall and spring Advisory Committee meetings (or ask an alternate to attend).

- Share information and feedback between students and committee members to optimize communication.
  - Student representatives are expected to share concerns as reflected by feedback obtained from the class and not simply offer their own opinions.
- Work with faculty on the committee on various tasks.

## **STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN NURSING DEPARTMENT COMMITTEES**

*Students are encouraged to actively participate in various Nursing Department committees, offering an important opportunity to voice concerns and contribute to program development. Below is a brief overview of each committee where student involvement is welcomed:*

### **Department of Nursing Meetings**

*These meetings serve as the central forum for nursing faculty to manage and guide the Nursing Program. Student representatives are invited to attend at least one meeting per semester.*

#### **Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate, develop, implement, and evaluate the nursing curriculum in alignment with college governance.
- Establish and enforce program policies within the college framework.
- Review and act on recommendations from committees and revise bylaws as needed.

#### **Key Functions:**

- Review and revise the nursing program's philosophy, mission, outcomes, conceptual framework, and evaluation plan.
- Approve all program documents, including graduate competencies, definitions, and student policies.
- Approve policies related to admission, advanced placement, graduation, progression, and readmission.
- Serve as a forum to share information, discuss current trends in nursing education, coordinate curriculum, and build effective working relationships.
- Provide a platform for student representatives to present class concerns and suggestions.

### **Teaching Teams**

*Each team oversees specific nursing courses. Student representatives are expected to participate in at least two meetings per semester.*

#### **Primary Responsibilities:**

- Coordinate and evaluate course content, schedules, and faculty assignments.
- Uphold policies set by the full faculty.
- Evaluate student performance and recommend progression or graduation.
- Address student concerns promptly.

- Review and recommend curriculum changes as needed.
- Provide a space for student input regarding course-related issues.

### **Nursing Department Advisory Committee**

*This committee advises faculty on the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision of the Associate Degree, Practical Nursing, and Nursing Assistant (NA) programs.*

## **COMMUNICATION**

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### **PROGRAM COMMUNICATION**

- Students must establish and maintain a Riverland Community College email account, which is provided free of charge and remains active while enrolled.
- This college-assigned email is the official communication channel for all nursing program-related messages.
- Personal email accounts may not be used for official communication with nursing faculty, staff, or administration. This policy protects the privacy of all parties.
- Email received from non-Riverland accounts will not be addressed; students will be asked to resend messages from their official college email.
- Students are expected to check their Riverland email daily to stay informed about program updates, policy changes, and important dates.
- Due to attachment issues, email will not be forwarded to alternate addresses.
- In addition to email, students must check the D2L/Brightspace course site daily for announcements and faculty communication.

### **COURSE LEVEL COMMUNICATION**

#### **D2L/Brightspace Homepage**

The primary source for course news and updates is the D2L/Brightspace homepage for each course. Students are expected to check it **daily**. All posts are **time- and date-stamped**, and faculty can view which students have accessed each post.

#### **Discussion Board**

The Discussion Board is available for common questions and communication. It includes separate sections for:

- Student questions to faculty
- Faculty announcements
- Student-to-student communication

This is a preferred platform for asking questions that may benefit the entire class. Faculty may use it to address course-related topics.

#### **Campus Email**

Students must check their **Riverland email frequently**, as it is used for:

- Individual communication from faculty
- College-wide announcements

### Phone Communication

Faculty office phone numbers are listed in the course syllabus. Personal cell phone numbers may be shared at the discretion of the faculty and are to be used **respectfully and only during business hours**.

### Social Media

Faculty **will not use personal social media** for program communication.

- If you were connected with a faculty member on social media before entering the program, you may remain connected.
- New friend/follow requests from students during the program will not be accepted.

### Response Time

Faculty will make every effort to respond to messages (email, discussion board, phone, or in person) within:

- **24 hours on weekdays**
- **72 hours on weekends or holidays**

Please note that response times may vary during breaks or when faculty are at clinical sites. Patience is appreciated.

*\*\*Please be aware that all communication will be monitored for appropriate professional communication standards. Lack of appropriate etiquette toward others, faculty, or fellow students will not be tolerated. \*\**

## CLASSROOM POLICY

Professional courtesy is essential to maintaining a respectful and effective learning environment. To ensure fairness and minimize disruptions, the following expectations apply in all nursing theory classes. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in removal from the classroom.

- **Cell Phones & Smart Devices:** Phones and pagers must be turned off or set to silent/vibrate. If an urgent situation requires phone access, notify the instructor **before class**. Use of smartwatches for communication during class is prohibited unless approved in advance.
- **Respectful Communication:** Classroom discussion is encouraged, but **side conversations are disruptive** and disrespectful. Faculty may ask students to leave if private discussions interrupt the learning environment.
- **Punctuality & Attendance:** Arrive on time and stay for the full class. Faculty may lock the door at the start of class; it will be reopened during scheduled breaks.
- **Children:** Children are not permitted in the classroom during nursing classes.
- **Recording:** Audio or video recording is allowed **only with faculty permission**.
  - Recordings and class materials (notes, handouts, presentations) are for **personal use only** by students enrolled in the course.
  - Sharing, posting, or distributing any classroom content—including on D2L/Brightspace or online platforms—**without faculty's written consent** is prohibited and may violate copyright law and the College Student Code of Conduct. Disciplinary action may result.

## ASSIGNMENT POLICY

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To support responsibility, time management, and academic integrity, the following guidelines apply to all nursing student assignments:

- **Due Dates**  
All assignments must be submitted by the specified due date and time, as outlined in the course syllabus or assignment instructions.
- **Late Submissions**  
Late assignments will receive a **10% deduction per calendar day**.  
*Example: A 100-point assignment submitted one day late can earn a maximum of 90 points.*
- **Submission Deadline**  
Assignments submitted more than **five (5) days late** will not be accepted and will receive a grade of **zero**, unless prior arrangements are made, or extenuating circumstances exist.
- **Extension Requests**  
Students may request an extension **before the due date**. Approval is at the instructor's discretion and may require documentation (e.g., medical note, personal emergency).
- **Exceptional Circumstances**  
In cases of serious illness, family emergency, or other significant events, students should contact the instructor **as soon as possible**. Accommodations may be made with appropriate documentation, evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## LATENESS POLICY FOR ACADEMIC WORK

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*A student who requests more than one date extension for assignments, exams, quizzes, or other grade components in any one academic semester is in noncompliance with the nursing policies.*

## EXAM & TESTING GUIDANCE

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### Attendance and Timing

- Students must arrive **5 minutes early** for exams and take them at the scheduled time.
- Late arrivals may be seated at the proctor's discretion **without extended time**.
- Late students who are allowed to take the exam will incur a penalty of **1 point per minute late**.

### Missed Exams

- **Excused Absences:** Allowed for documented emergencies, serious illness, or college-approved activities. Documentation must be submitted within **48 hours**. Make-up exams are scheduled within one week and may differ in format or content.
- **Unexcused Absences:** Result in a **zero grade** with no make-up opportunity.

## Extensions

- More than one extension request per semester for assignments or exams violates nursing policies.

## Exam Timing

- **First Semester:** 1.5x extended time (e.g., 50 minutes → 75 minutes).
- **Second Semester:** 1.25x extended time (e.g., 50 minutes → 63 minutes).
- **Third & Fourth Semesters:** 1 minute per question (e.g., 50 questions → 50 minutes).

## Seating

- Students will be assigned seats, which may be randomized each exam to prevent academic dishonesty.
- Unauthorized seat changes may lead to disciplinary action.
- At least one seat of space will be maintained when possible.

## Special Accommodations

- Students requiring accommodations must notify faculty and submit documentation via Disability Support Services **in advance**.

## Exam Room Conduct

- Silence is required.
- Cheating suspicions will be reported to the Academic Integrity Committee and may result in disciplinary action.
- Use the restroom before the exam; during the exam, breaks are only allowed for emergencies.
- Bags, books, and unauthorized materials must be left outside or at the front.
- All electronic devices must be off and stored away; use is strictly prohibited unless authorized.
- Scratch paper will be provided and must be returned before leaving.
- Do not ask proctors content questions or dispute exam rationale during the test.

## Exam Review

- Students may review missed questions via lockdown browser but may **not** take notes or screenshots.
- Students scoring below 80% may request a review of incorrect questions within two weeks of the exam date. A full exam review is not offered.

## Request for Reconsideration

To challenge exam questions after review, students must:

- Submit a formal request via email within **24 hours** of exam review.
- Limit challenges to **3 questions per exam**.

## Email must include:

- Question number/identifier.
- Student rationale explaining their original answer choice with course-based reasoning.
- Supporting documentation (class notes, ATI materials, textbooks) with clear citations.

## Faculty will:

- Review the question, correct answer, rationale, and documentation.
- Communicate the decision to the student after evaluation.

## ATI TESTING EXPECTATIONS

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### Practice Assessments

- Complete **Practice Test A** by the posted due date to earn **5 points**
- Complete **Practice Test B** by the posted due date to earn **5 points**
- Both practice tests must be completed **on time and before the proctored exam** to be eligible to test

### Proctored ATI Initial Exam – Scoring

- **Level 2 or 3:** 10 points
- **Level 1:** 5 points
- **Below Level 1:** 0 points

### Remediation Requirements (After Initial Attempt – All Students)

- After the initial proctored exam attempt, **all students** must complete **handwritten remediation**, even if they earned a Level 2 or 3. Use the “**Topics to Review**” provided by ATI:
- Individual Performance Profile with topics to review should be printed and staples to the front of remediation submission.
- Write out the **topic heading** for each area listed on the student feedback report.
- List **three bullet points** about what you learned for each topic.
- Bullet points should come from the ATI textbook or review materials.
- **Example:**
  - **Accident/Error/Injury Prevention: Client Safety Priority Action**
    - Falls risk increases after surgery
    - Assess for orthostatic hypotension
    - Keep call light and essentials within reach

### Remediation Deadlines & Points

- Students will earn **5 points** for submitting well-done, handwritten remediation by the due date
- Students who are retaking the exam must submit remediation **before** the retake. If remediation is not submitted, the student will **not be allowed to test** and will receive a **zero**
- Students who earned Level 2 or 3 must submit remediation by the same deadline to receive the 5 points in the gradebook.

### Proctored Exam Retake

- Students who do **not** achieve a Level 2 must remediate and take the **scheduled retake**
- The retake is offered **once only** on a scheduled date—**no alternate date** will be provided
- Missing the retake will result in a **zero** on the proctored assessment.

### Retake Scoring:

- **Level 2 or 3:** 10 points
- **Level 1:** 5 points
- **Below Level 1:** 0 points

### Students Who Miss the Initial Proctored Exam

- Students who miss the initial exam will **not** be offered a make-up
- These students will take the **scheduled retake** as their **first and only attempt**
- Regardless of score, they must submit **handwritten remediation within 48 hours** for their score to be recorded in the gradebook

### Optional Retake (For Mastery Only)

- Any student may retake an ATI exam for additional practice
- This optional retake **does not affect the grade** but is encouraged for continued learning

### Comprehensive Predictor Exam (Final Semester Only)

The Comprehensive Predictor follows the **same expectations** for practice tests, scoring, remediation, and retake procedures outlined above.

#### Total Possible Points: 50

- **Practice Test A:** 12 points
- **Practice Test B:** 13 points
- **Proctored Exam Scoring:**
  - **70% or higher:** 25 points
  - **62.7%–69.9%:** 13 points
  - **Below 62.7%:** 0 points
- Students scoring **below 70%** must complete handwritten remediation and take the **scheduled retake**
- Students scoring **70% or higher** may retake the exam for mastery, but their original score will remain unchanged

## DOSAGE CALCULATION EXPECTATIONS

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Students must demonstrate competency in medication dosage calculations to ensure safe administration. A minimum score of **90%** is required to pass the dosage calculation exam.

- Students have up to **three (3) attempts** to pass.
- Failure to pass within three attempts results in **course failure**.
- Remediation is required between attempts and is the student's responsibility.
- Faculty may offer guidance or resources, but students must take initiative to complete remediation before retesting.

### Dosage calculation attempt outcomes will be as follows:

- **First Attempt**
  - Student passes → **Score earned is recorded in the grade book.**
  - Student fails → **Score earned is recorded in the grade book and remains regardless of subsequent attempts**
  - Remediation is required before the second attempt
  - Failure to remediate → Student forfeits second attempt and proceeds directly to the third attempt
- **Second Attempt**
  - Student passes → **Grade book score does not change**
  - Student fails → No additional score recorded

- Remediation is required before the third attempt
- Failure to remediate → Student forfeits third attempt, resulting in course failure
- **Third Attempt**
  - Student passes → **Grade book score does not change**
  - Student fails → **0%** entered in the grade book and results in **course failure**

*Passing the dosage calculation requirement is mandatory for successful course completion.*

## **SKILLS CHECK OFF EXPECTATIONS**

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Students must demonstrate competency in nursing skills throughout the semester. To pass a skill check-off, students must:

- Complete **at least 80%** of required steps correctly.
- Successfully perform **all critical steps**, which are clearly marked on the checklist. Missing any critical step results in automatic failure of that attempt, regardless of overall score.

Students have a maximum of **three attempts** per skill. After a failed attempt, remediation is required **before the next try**. It is the student's responsibility to arrange remediation with faculty. Failure to complete remediation forfeits the next attempt.

**Skill attempt outcomes will be as follows:**

- **First Attempt**
  - Student passes → **100%** entered in the grade book
  - Student fails → **No score recorded**
  - Remediation is required before the second attempt
  - Failure to remediate → student forfeits second attempt and proceeds directly to the third attempt
- **Second Attempt**
  - Student passes → **75%** entered in the grade book
  - Student fails → **No score recorded**
  - Remediation is required before the third attempt
  - Failure to remediate → student forfeits third attempt, resulting in course failure
- **Third Attempt**
  - Student passes → **50%** entered in the grade book
  - Student fails → **0%** entered in the grade book and results in **course failure**

*Passing all skill check offs is required to successfully complete the course.*

## GRADING SCALE FOR PROGRAM

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The Riverland Nursing Program grading scale is as follows:

95-100%= A

92-94%= A-

90-91%= B+

87-89%= B

85-86%= B-

83-84%= C+

78% (minimum)- 82= C

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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As future nurses, students are held to the highest standards of honesty, professionalism, and ethics. Academic integrity directly impacts clinical competence and patient safety. Students are responsible not only for their own conduct but also for fostering an ethical, accountable learning environment. Upholding honesty in all aspects of learning is essential to nursing competence and patient care (as expressed in the ANA Code for Nurses at <http://www.nursingworld.org/mainmenucategories/ethicsstandards/codeofethicsfornurses/code-of-ethics.pdf>), is a moral and legal responsibility of the student regarding his/her own actions and the actions of other members of the group.

Students are expected to be honest in completing all class assignments. Definitions of, and penalties for, dishonesty are the prerogative of each faculty (Riverland Community College Student Conduct Policy). Examples of violations of this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Cheating on exams.
- Copying in part or whole another student's material.
- Falsifying information and attendance relating to independent assignments.
- Failure to report known clinical errors.
- Falsifying information in the clinical setting.
- Discussing test contents with student(s) that have not yet taken an exam.

Violations of this policy may result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program. Any student dismissed for violation of this academic misconduct policy will not be eligible for readmission consideration.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) & SMART TECHNOLOGY

To protect academic integrity, patient privacy, and ethical standards in healthcare education, the following rules apply:

### Use of AI in Coursework

- Use of AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Grammarly, AI-based tutoring platforms) is prohibited on graded assignments, reflections, or clinical documentation unless explicitly authorized by the instructor.
- If permitted, students must disclose AI use and follow any citation or formatting requirements provided.
- Undisclosed or unauthorized use of AI tools is considered academic misconduct and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

### Smart Devices in Clinical & Simulation Settings

- Smart stethoscopes, smart glasses, or AI-enhanced devices may only be used in lab or clinical with prior faculty approval.
- Devices may not record, store, or transmit patient information without explicit written consent from the facility and the patient. Unauthorized recording is a HIPAA violation and grounds for immediate dismissal.
- All use must uphold confidentiality, professionalism, and patient safety standards.

### AI & Smart Devices During Exams

- All AI-enabled devices, including smart watches, phones, and glasses, are strictly prohibited in testing environments.
- Possession or use of such devices during an exam may result in a zero and/or further disciplinary action.

### Faculty Rights

- Faculty reserve the right to inspect or restrict the use of smart devices at any time during class, lab, clinical, or simulation if their use appears inappropriate or violates policy.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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Riverland is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of patients, students, healthcare organizations, and employees. The Nursing Program aligns with the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) stance on social media use in healthcare. Compliance with these behavioral expectations is mandatory.

The NCSBN's *White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media* should be reviewed prior to signing the "Student Accountability Verification Form." It is available at:

[https://www.ncsbn.org/Social\\_Media.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Social_Media.pdf)

**Social Media** includes internet-based platforms designed for user-generated content and interaction, such as LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, ChatGPT, Reddit, and others.

While recognizing social media's value as a communication tool, Riverland prioritizes protecting sensitive and confidential information. Program communication will occur only through official college channels:

- Myriverland.edu email
- Desire2Learn (D2L/BRIGHTSPACE)

### **Guidelines for Students:**

- Be mindful of your online presence; represent yourself professionally and clearly state personal opinions as your own, not as those of Riverland unless authorized in writing.
- Do not share any patient identifiers or personal health information, consistent with HIPAA.
- Maintain confidentiality of the nursing program, college, employees, and students.
- Avoid posting content that violates academic policies or laws.
- Do not record or share images/videos of faculty, students, or patients without explicit written permission.

Riverland strictly prohibits defamatory, harassing, libelous, or disruptive content. Social media activity may be monitored or investigated to uphold community standards.

## **CLINICAL EXPECTATIONS**

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### **STUDENTS RESPONSIBILITIES FOR CLINICAL**

- Attend all scheduled clinical sessions, whether on or off campus.
- Cell phones are not permitted during clinical sessions. Students who require a cell phone for emergency reasons must notify their faculty **before** clinical begins. Violating this policy may result in program dismissal. If a student is found with a cell phone during clinical, they will be sent home and must schedule a follow-up meeting with faculty and the nursing administrator before returning. Missed clinical time must be made up according to faculty availability.
- A doctor's note is required to return after any illness-related absence.
- Arrive promptly and on time for clinical sessions.
- Follow the clinical attire guidelines as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Notify faculty or the clinical facility **prior** to the start of the clinical experience if ill, late, or unable to attend. A no-call/no-show may result in program dismissal.
- Late arrivals may incur a deduction of 1 point per minute, at the faculty's discretion.
- For approved absences, students must arrange with faculty to make up missed clinical hours within the timeframe specified in the syllabus or Student Handbook.
- It is the student's responsibility to independently learn any content missed during absences.

**NOTE:** Students are expected to practice within the guidelines and boundaries of the profession as stated in the Minnesota Statute and Minnesota Board of Nursing Rules. The only title that may be used when acting in the capacity of a student in the Nursing Program, and the format for the signature on clinical documents is:

*Your Name, NS, Riverland Community College.*

Students who have other titles (e.g., LPN, RT, MD, PhD, JD) may not use these titles in the capacity of a Riverland Nursing Program student and/or under the auspices of the Riverland Nursing Program.

## **DRESS CODE FOR CLINICAL/LAB EXPERIENCE**

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As health professionals, nurses have specific responsibilities regarding their uniforms. The uniform serves important purposes including maintaining cleanliness, ensuring freedom of movement and safety, identifying personnel, and presenting a professional appearance.

Students are required to wear the complete student nurse uniform whenever instructed, typically for clinicals, labs, and simulations. Failure to comply with the uniform policy may result in the student being asked to leave the clinical facility by the faculty or the nurse in charge, which will be recorded as an unexcused clinical absence.

If a clinical facility enforces a different dress code, students must comply with that facility's requirements. Students must never present themselves as nursing students at a healthcare facility unless officially assigned there and must always adhere to the nursing program's uniform standards while on that assignment.

### **The Uniform Policy:**

- Clean, wrinkle-free scrub top with bottoms (uniforms to be purchased through an approved scrub store). Orientation to uniforms will be provided at nursing program orientation. Pants must be full length and skirts knee length or longer. No material may touch the ground.
- No smoking of any kind in clinical uniforms.
- An approved color long-sleeved shirt is allowed under the scrub top. Sleeves must be able to stay up on arms for hand hygiene and when required for infection control purposes. An approved sweater or cover-up may be worn; it must have the Riverland insignia and be worn only in the clinical area.
- LAB ONLY- No hoodies or coats are allowed in the lab. If students want to dress for warmth, we encourage wearing a long sleeve shirt under the uniform. Students can also wear professional zip-up jackets.
- No stocking hats/hats allowed.
- All students must wear socks. If students wear a skirt uniform, the stockings must be full length. No anklets or bare legs are permitted. The hose and socks must be white.
- White, black, gray athletic style shoes with a non-skid surface and flat heels that are only to be worn for clinical only. Shoes must be clean and in good repair. No open back shoes permitted.
- Head coverings, if worn, will be a solid color, free of fringe or other adornments and tucked under scrub top.
- Riverland Nursing Photo ID will be worn on the front of the uniform above the waist in both the clinical and laboratory settings.

- Clothing should be loose enough to permit freedom of movement and of sufficient length to maintain modesty.
- Undergarments must not be visible.
- Hair must be a “natural hair color,” clean and styled in a professional, well-groomed manner which does not obstruct the visual field or allow contamination of clean or sterile areas. Hair must be short, tied back with an appropriate clip or band or in a bun. Male students must shave or have neatly groomed facial hair. Hair accessories must be approved by clinical faculty.
- Fingernails should be short in length (less than ¼ inch). If polish is worn, it should be clear or light colored. If nail polish is used, it must be intact and free of any chipping or cracking. No artificial nails are permitted.
- Maintain personal hygiene which eliminates body odor including foul breath. Refrain from using fragrances, perfume, or cologne, etc.
- The only jewelry allowed during the clinical experience is a wedding ring and conservative post or loop earrings, one per ear and of ½” diameter or less. If you have a piercing for a medical reason, please get that approved by faculty prior to starting clinical experiences.
- Items which endorse a particular belief system or political candidate are inappropriate while in uniform.
- Visible **alternate** body piercing is not permitted (i.e., nose, eyebrow, lip, eyelid, tongue).
- Visible tattoos or body art are not permitted in the clinical area and must be covered if deemed offensive or vulgar in nature. All tattoos and body art may need to be covered based on clinical partner policies.
- Make-up in moderation is allowed.
- Nursing uniforms can only be worn on campus or in clinical.
- All Nursing students will adhere to any dress code requirements in effect in a particular clinical agency.
- Jeans are not allowed in any clinical setting.
- Students must have a black pen, sweep-second hand watch, and stethoscope with them at clinical.

## UNSAFE CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

Unsafe clinical performance, failure to meet clinical, simulation, lab objectives, or inadequate preparation for clinical, simulation, or lab experiences could lead to dismissal from the program or could result in course failure irrespective of accumulated theory and lab points.

- Any skill requiring sterile technique and/or preparation and administration of medications or solutions via the IV, IM, SubQ, or gastric tube route without faculty supervision is considered unsafe clinical behavior.
- Other examples of unsafe clinical behaviors include, inaccurate or inadequate monitoring and reporting client status changes, unsafe psychosocial behavior, and any behaviors that jeopardize client physical and/or psychological safety.
- Failure from a nursing course for unsafe clinical performance may be grounds for not receiving faculty recommendation for readmission to the nursing program.

## CLINICAL OVERVIEW AND EXPECTATIONS

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Riverland collaborates with a variety of hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics, public health agencies, school health services, and other community-based organizations to provide optimal clinical experiences. The College establishes clinical-use contracts with each facility, outlining mutual expectations regarding services and regulations. It is expected that all nursing students present themselves professionally in both attire and conduct while at affiliated clinical sites.

To meet course objectives, faculty may incorporate diverse learning experiences, including group or independent projects and alternative scheduling. Students will provide nursing care to clients of all genders and with a wide range of medical and psychosocial conditions. Students should be prepared to accommodate alternative assignments and evening clinical experiences, when necessary, with appropriate advance notice.

Students are permitted in healthcare settings only during scheduled clinical hours and designated preparation times. Friends, family members, and children are not allowed during pre-clinical preparation or any clinical activities.

## CLINICAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Legal contracts are arranged with clinical and practicum sites. These contracts specify information that the college must collect from students. Students must submit the required documentation prior to the deadline. Failure to submit this information prior to the deadline will result in the students' inability to attend clinical courses. All requirements must remain valid for the duration of all clinical and practicum experiences. It is the student's responsibility to maintain the records.

## LAB & SIMULATION EXPECTATIONS

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### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR LAB AND SIMULATION

The Allied Health Simulation Lab provides an environment for students to actively learn critical thinking and clinical skill development. Faculty, manikins, and other equipment are available to learn in a supportive, hands-on environment.

To enhance active learning, Riverland has established the following policies for all to follow:

- No eating or drinking in the lab.
- If there are videos, equipment, and/or manikins broken or damaged, report this immediately to the Lab staff.
- No children or visitors are allowed in the lab. Only students registered for a nursing class can participate in the Lab.
- No lab items leave the lab unless checked out.
- Before leaving the lab/simulation class and lab, all students must return the environment to its original state. All students must:
  - Return chairs under tables or stack near walls.
  - Pick up area and discard all waste material in trash container.
  - All used items returned to their container.

- Wipe up all spills on the floor.
- Straighten all bed linen.
- Return all lab supplies in correct containers. All needles and sharps are placed in red sharp container boxes.
- Turn off all lights in simulated “patient rooms.”
- Replace manikins neatly where they were found.
- Confidentiality must be maintained after leaving the lab/simulation area. Sensitive information may **not** be shared during this experience.
- All rules for handling bio-hazardous waste must be followed according to our policies. When in doubt, consult faculty or lab supervisor.
- According to **MN Statues SECTION 151.37**, students cannot have in possession any solutions or medication. Therefore, any of these products will directly be monitored by a faculty or Nurse Administrator and will be kept secure in the lab. They will be distributed only when using them under direct supervision in a course or in training in the lab. Riverland will also distribute any needles and syringes purchased by students only when under direct supervision in the lab.
- Safety is always first in the lab.
- Standard precautions are to be utilized in all nursing simulation and lab procedures.
- All individuals utilizing sharps in the laboratories are responsible for disposal in the designated sharps containers provided in the labs.
- All unused needles and syringes must be returned to their designated locked location and may not be left unattended in the laboratory.
- Faculty and students may not remove syringes, needles, and medications from the laboratory for practice at any time.
- Any sharps, such as needles of any kind, breakable bottles or any solutions cannot leave the lab at any time. Any item that must remain sterile and is meant to be used only on manikins in the lab cannot leave the lab.
- Any of these specified, unused supplies at the end of a course or the program will become property of the Allied Health Simulation Lab.
  - Needles/syringes of any kind
  - Solution bags or vials
  - Foley/Catheter
- If a student wants to practice in the lab using any of the items mentioned above, please contact the lab supervisor to set up a time.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR SIMULATION**

Students may be required to attend simulation events outside of their regular lecture, lab, or clinical day.

- The uniform must follow the clinical/lab requirements as posted above.
- A Riverland picture ID badge will be worn on the front of the uniform above the waist in the laboratory setting.
- Hands must be washed before and after working with simulation mannequins and equipment.
- Students must maintain confidentiality in simulation experiences.

- Student jackets, bags, etc., can be brought into the Allied Health Simulation Lab with faculty approval.

## ATTENDANCE FOR LAB, CLINICAL, AND SIMULATION

- Attendance at all laboratories, simulations, and clinical experiences is mandatory and is essential to ensure course outcomes are met.
- Students are not allowed to move from one section of lab to another without prior permission from faculty. Students are required to stay in the section that they registered for during the entire semester.
- Students must be present for the entire scheduled laboratory, simulation, or clinical time. If a student is unable to attend or is going to be late, the faculty (or clinical area) must be notified before the scheduled laboratory, simulation, or clinical start time.
  - If the student is late, per faculty discretion, the student will be deducted 1 point per 1 minute that the student is late.
- In the event of an approved absence, as outlined above, arrangements to make up the experience must be initiated by the student prior to the next scheduled experience.
- All missed time in the laboratory, simulation, or clinical, needs to be made up as arranged with the clinical faculty. It is the student responsibility to learn content that was missed.
- Unexcused absence from **one or more** of the following per semester: laboratory, simulation, and clinical could result in possible failure of the course and/or termination from the program.
- Lateness to clinical, lack of preparation or non-adherence to school or institutional policies could result in possible failure of the course and/or termination from the program.
  - Faculty reserves the right to request proof of illness or family emergency for any reported absence.

## COVID-19 UPDATES

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Riverland Community College will follow the recommendations and guidance of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19. Clinical agencies may implement additional requirements. Students are expected to comply with all guidelines established by both Riverland and the clinical sites. As these guidelines are subject to change, students should regularly check their Riverland email and maintain communication with nursing faculty.

Prior to each semester, whether a student is enrolled in a clinical course or not, the nursing programs will require proof of COVID-19 vaccination in Clinician Nexus. A medical and/or religious exemption may be a suitable substitute and the documentation will need to be uploaded into Clinician Nexus. If exemptions are allowed by the clinical site, those exemption documents will need to be on file for each student with the nursing program.

## CLINICAL PLACEMENT:

Some clinical agencies require students to get vaccinated against COVID-19. If a student refuses the COVID-19 vaccination, there is no guarantee that an alternative clinical site will be available that does not require the COVID-19 vaccination. If a clinical site allows for COVID-19 vaccination exemptions, it will be up to the clinical site to make the determination for exemptions from the vaccination. In addition:

- Some clinical agencies will not allow students to care for COVID-19 patients or potential COVID -19 patients.
- There may be restrictions in other areas/units as to whether students will be allowed.
- Students may be required to provide COVID-19 test results.

The nursing programs continue to follow the requirements of the Minnesota Board of Nursing (MBON), which allows for a percentage of the clinical time to be spent in simulation.

Furthermore, the MBON requires that:

- Curriculum needs to be consistent across the program to provide equal learning opportunities for all students.
- When a nursing student declines a required clinical vaccination, there is not a basis for that student to request an accommodation for a disability.
- If the clinical agency allows, plans need to be in place to provide *reasonable accommodations* for those who cannot be vaccinated based on protected status (i.e. medical or religious grounds).
- As noted in the **Board of Nursing Laws & Rules 6301.2340, Subp. 3.A. (4)(a)**: Nursing education program ensures students of practical and professional programs have learning opportunities with faculty oversight to acquire and demonstrate competence in clinical settings with patients across the life span and with patients throughout the whole wellness, acute, and chronic illness continuum- simulation in this case is not an equivalent experience.

## CLINICAL PLACEMENT DETERMINATION:

Multiple factors will be used to determine who can and will be placed at a site. These include:

- Completeness of the student's core required documents for clinical placement.
- The student's willingness to accept clinical placement. Students have the right to decline clinical placement while understanding that alternate sites may not be available during any given semester.
- Requirements of the various sites.

# PROGRAM PROMOTION & PROGRESSION

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## PREREQUISITES

Nursing students must successfully complete prerequisite courses for each required nursing course in order to progress in the nursing sequence. (See program plan for prerequisites).

## SUCCESSFUL ACADEMIC PROGRESS

- Students must enroll in and successfully complete (with a minimum letter grade of C) all nursing and general education courses in the sequence identified in the Curriculum Plan to progress in the program.

- The nursing program requires a grade of C or better in all required courses in the PN curriculum plan, maintaining a minimum GPA of 2.0.
- A C- is considered a non-passing grade.
- Nursing courses that combine theory, clinical and/or lab require that all portions must be passed at a minimum of 78% to pass the course. In the event a student does not pass theory or the clinical or lab portion of a course, the final letter grade for the course entered will be reflective of the theory or clinical or lab portion not passed.
- There will be no rounding of grades during the semester.
- The Nursing Program reserves the right to deny admission/readmission based on academic failure and/or code of conduct violations.
- The medication dosage exam must be passed at a level of 90% within a maximum of 3 attempts in any given course.

### UNSUCCESSFUL COURSE COMPLETION

- If a student fails to obtain a minimum of a C grade in one or more nursing courses in a semester, the student will be allowed one opportunity to repeat the course(s) on a space available basis per college/university nursing program policy.
  - If a theory course(s) is not passed in any semester, then the corresponding clinical must be repeated upon return. See below.
    - PN Day Program-
      - Fall Semester: if any theory course(s) are not successfully completed, students would have to repeat not only the theory course(s) failed, but also would have to repeat PNUR 1140.
      - Spring Semester: if any theory course(s) are not successfully completed, students would have to repeat not only the theory course(s) failed, but also would have to repeat PNUR 1190.
    - PN Evening Program-
      - Spring Semester: as outlined in our policy, any course(s) not successfully completed in spring- students would be ineligible to progress to the subsequent semester.
      - Fall Semester: if any theory course(s) are not successfully completed, students would have to repeat not only the theory course(s) failed, but also would have to repeat PNUR 1190.
- A withdrawal constitutes an attempt for a course and will count as one failure to complete the course.
- The student must repeat the course(s) within one year (2 semesters, not including summer) of the last day of the semester not successfully completed.
- Failure to successfully obtain a minimum of a C grade in a nursing course on the second attempt will result in exit from the nursing program.
- Failure to obtain a minimum of a C grade in a nursing course in a subsequent semester will result in exit from the nursing program.

## EXIT FROM THE PROGRAM

- A student may be removed from the nursing program for academic or code of conduct related issues.
- Removed students will not be eligible to progress in the nursing program.
- Academic Removal
  - Failure to successfully obtain a minimum of a C grade in a nursing course on the second attempt will result in removal from the nursing program.
- Code of Conduct Exit: Ethical Misconduct and/or Unsafe Behavior
- A student may be removed for ethical misconduct and/or unsafe behavior at any time in the program.
- A student who is removed due to ethical misconduct and/or unsafe behavior must follow college/university policies related to conduct and due process.

## REAPPLICATION TO THE PROGRAM

A student who is removed from the program for academic failure and/or failure to meet conduct expectations may reapply to the program and must meet the current published admission criteria and the following criteria:

- A student may be readmitted only once.
  - Reapplication to the program is required.
  - If a student reapplies and is subsequently removed a second time for either academic failure and/or failure to meet conduct expectations, the student is permanently removed from the program.
  - This program reserves the right to deny admission based on ethical misconduct and/or unsafe behavior.
- All current program admission requirements must be met prior to re-application or re-admittance.
  - All current program admission requirements must be met prior to readmission. This includes all prerequisite courses, CPR, health, health insurance, liability insurance, and background study requirements.
  - Students applying for readmission after program removal must retake all nursing courses even if previously successful in these courses.

## PROGRAM READMISSION GUIDANCE

Students who wish to be considered for re-admission into the nursing program after withdrawal in good academic standing from a nursing course or departure from the nursing program for reasons other than academic or code of conduct must follow these steps:

- Students may be required to supply documentation addressing why they departed, the individual extenuating circumstances that contributed to the program exit, and an individual learning plan for promoting success. This documentation will be placed in the student's permanent folder.
- Re-entry is allowed on a space available basis as determined by the nurse administrator.

- Students progressing in the program plan without interruption will be placed in their courses prior to seating being made available for re-entry students. Priority for readmission will be based on the student cumulative GPA of courses required for a degree completed to date.
- Students must re-enter within one year (2 semesters, not including summer) of the last day of the semester not completed or the semester of departure from the program.

### **POLICY FOR SWITCHING PROGRAM OPTIONS (PN Daytime/PN Evening)**

If a student fails or withdraws from the program and wishes to transfer between the daytime and evening Practical Nursing (PN) programs, a seat is not guaranteed. Transfers between program options are only considered based on a recommendation from faculty in the student's current program. This recommendation will be submitted to the Dean of Nursing, who will make the final decision. If the request is denied, the student must reapply for admission to the alternate program option.

## **INCOMPLETES**

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An Incomplete ("I") grade may be granted only at the student's request and with the approval of nursing faculty, allowing additional time to complete course requirements. Because nursing courses are sequential, all incomplete work must be finished within the time frame established by the faculty. If the coursework is not completed as agreed, the "I" grade will automatically convert to an "F," which will prevent the student from continuing in the nursing program sequence. For detailed procedures on requesting an Incomplete, refer to the policies on the Riverland Community College website.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

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Students may initiate requests for withdrawals from nursing courses according to college protocol.

- Students should be aware of the college/university policy for automatic withdrawal for non-attendance/participation.
  - <https://www.riverland.edu/student-services/registrars-office/total-withdraw-tuition-refund-policy/>
- Students should be aware of the last day in the semester in which a withdrawal can be initiated. This date is posted in the academic calendar on the Riverland campus website.
- Students who withdraw from a nursing course(s) and wish to be considered for re- entry on a space available basis in a subsequent semester must refer to the program re-entry process.
- Grades at the time of withdrawal may be taken into consideration for any request for re- entry.

## **MOVING STUDENTS TO DIFFERENT CLINICAL OR LAB SECTIONS**

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This type of action is based on the practical needs of an individual, the class, or to maintain program integrity. It is unrelated to student performance. The following serve as examples to clarify this procedure:

- If a nursing lab section becomes too large, one or more students will be asked to relocate to another section.

- The student may be relocated to another clinical agency to better facilitate his/her learning experience.

## APPEALS PROCESS

If there is a dispute between the student and faculty member concerning the outcome outlined above, the following steps will occur:

- The student will meet with the faculty member within 3 business days to explain why the action in question is unreasonable and propose alternatives for resolving the issue. If there is no resolution at step one, the student may proceed to step two.
- Within 3 business days of the meeting with the faculty, the student may request to appear before the nursing faculty and re-state his/her objection(s) and offer proposed solutions. If there is no resolution at step two the student may proceed to step three.
- Within 3 business days of the appearance before the nursing faculty, the student may speak with the Nursing Director and re-state his/her objection(s) and offer proposed solutions. The Director may ask for more information from the students and faculty before deciding.
- If no resolution is secured in the preceding three steps, the student may begin the complaint process found at: [https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20(002).pdf)

## STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

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### ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

Please see the Riverland Community College Student Handbook for an explanation of the types of misconduct, penalties for misconduct, procedures and appeals. <https://www.riverland.edu/about-riverland/policies-and-procedures/student-code-of-conduct-policy-procedure/>.

In the professional judgment of the faculty, any behavior deemed inconsistent with professional responsibilities and/or unsafe are addressed as an “academic issue” **and may be subject to a failure grade (F) for the course and/or a possible dismissal from the program.** Any dispute between students and faculty regarding an assigned grade will be handled according to the process for Grade Appeals as defined in the Riverland Community College’ grade appeal process.

Examples of behaviors that are considered “academic” and therefore may result in academic consequences may include:

- A pattern of neglect of clinical responsibilities, risk to patient safety, or failure to practice in the best interest of clients and the public in any practice setting (lack of evidence of preparedness to take care of clients for any scheduled clinical experience).
- Violation of confidentiality, privacy, or security standards as discussed in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). This includes all social media such as sharing confidential information through phone, e-mail, or any social media.
- Engaging in academic dishonesty, cheating, or fraud, including but not limited to:
  - a) plagiarism from the work of others, including work by other students or from published materials without appropriate citation

- b) the buying and selling of course assignment and research papers
- c) performing academic assignments (including examinations) for other persons
- d) unauthorized disclosure and receipt of academic information
- e) allowing other students to copy answers from exams or assignments
- f) using disallowed materials or methods for examinations or assignments.
- Knowingly producing false evidence or false statements, making charges in bad faith against any other person, or making false statements about one’s own behavior related to academic or clinical matters.
- Failing to report incidents involving clients/patients.
- Failing to report observed unethical or proscribed behavior.
- Taking food, medications, client belongings or materials from clinical settings without approval or authorization.
- Failure to question a medical order when in doubt.
- Transgression of professional boundaries
- Violation of clinical affiliate policy
- No call no show to clinical, lab, or simulation

### **DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE**

The use of mood-altering substances—including prescription or over-the-counter medications, alcohol, illicit drugs (such as narcotics, depressants, stimulants, hallucinogens, or marijuana), or any substance that impairs behavior or appearance in a way that negatively impacts academic performance or client safety—may result in dismissal or academic termination from the nursing program.

Such use may also lead to disciplinary sanctions in accordance with local, state, and federal laws, including possible expulsion and referral for prosecution.

Chemical use within the academic setting may be addressed as a violation of the Student Conduct Policy and/or as an academic issue. Academic concerns will involve academic decision-making processes and, in cases of dispute, will follow the Student Code of Conduct process as outlined in the Riverland Community College Student Handbook. Conduct-related violations will be handled in accordance with the procedures described under the Student Conduct section.

Adverse effects of performance shall be determined to be present, but not limited to:

- If the student is perceptibly impaired
- Has impaired alertness, coordination, reactions, responses, or effort.
- If the student's condition threatens the safety of himself, herself, or others.
- If the student's condition or behavior presents the appearance of unprofessional or irresponsible conduct detrimental to the public's perception of Riverland nursing program.

In addition, engaging in academic dishonesty, cheating, or fraud as defined above under “academic expectations”, may be treated as both a conduct and academic issue and subject to the same processes as described for chemical use.

## STUDENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW

Our goal is for each student to be successful every step of the way through the nursing program. To help ensure student success, faculty have created a process to help guide students.

- If faculty identify concern(s) about the student's performance faculty, following Riverland Community College's Student Code of Conduct Policy, will notify the student of concerns which may result in a face-to-face meeting and/or a performance improvement plan which could include:
  - Early Alert (EARS) may be submitted on behalf of the student.
  - Communication to student about what the concern(s) are and no further action to be taken.
  - Placement of the student in probationary status and developing a contract with him/her outlining:
    - Unacceptable behaviors.
    - Required corrective action goals.
    - Time frame for evaluation of corrective action outcomes.
    - Date probationary status will end provided the corrective action(s) is/are attained.
    - Consequences of failure to meet terms of the contract.
  - Determination that the student has become ineligible to progress in the program.
    - Depending on the identified concern(s), the student may or may not be allowed to return to the clinical, classroom, or lab area until the concerns have been addressed. The student will be responsible for making up any time lost during that time.
- If the faculty requests a face-to-face meeting, the student is expected to show up as scheduled.
  - Failure of the student to appear at this meeting or failure to provide a 24-hour notice of need for rescheduling could result in an automatic dismissal from the program.
  - Faculty also reserve the right to make decisions about the concern(s) of the student in the program without the student present if the student fails to appear at the meeting.
- If a student is dismissed from the program or wants to appeal a grade and the student wants to appeal that decision, the student must follow the Grade Appeal Procedure in preparation for an appeal. This procedure can be found on the Riverland's website at:  
<https://www.riverland.edu/about-riverland/policies-and-procedures/course-final-grade-appeal-procedure/>

<https://www.riverland.edu/about-riverland/policies-and-procedures/course-final-grade-appeal-form/>

If a student wants to file a Complaint or Grievance, the student must follow the Student Complaint and Grievance Policy. This policy can be found on the Riverland's website at:

[https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20(002).pdf)

# CLINICAL DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

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## MISCONDUCT NOTED IN THE CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

Nursing students should be aware that the nursing program identifies certain behaviors as misconduct that may not apply to the general college student population. Any behavior observed during clinical experiences that poses actual or potential harm to clients may initiate the Performance Review for Student Success process. Depending on the severity of the incident, such behavior may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Examples of those behaviors might include but are not limited to the following:

- Seeking to mislead staff members and/or faculty members about the extent or quality of care given.
- Submitting false documentation to attain entrance and/or maintain enrollment in the nursing program.
- Seeking to mislead staff/faculty about level of skill.
- Seeking to mislead staff about specific assignment.
- Seeking to chart false or inaccurate data.
- Consciously failing to follow explicit directions from the faculty or supervising staff member that produces or could produce foreseeable harm to persons in the clinical agency.
- Knowingly failing to follow agency policy or procedures, which produces or could produce foreseeable harm to persons in the clinical agency.
- Violation of client confidentiality.

## NONACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

(List is not intended to be exhaustive) inappropriate or unethical behavior including but not limited to:

- Threatening or intimidating any persons in the clinical agency
- Use of inappropriate touch or unwelcome touch with persons in the clinical agency.
- Use of harassing language with people in the clinical agency.
- Stealing objects from persons in the clinical area.
- Use of demeaning language (stereotypical, prejudicial)

## INFRACTIONS IN THE CLINICAL AGENCY

*POLICIES INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO:*

- Misappropriation of medications
- Violation of the controlled substance policy
- Unauthorized use of computers and/or computer passwords. Accessing restricted databases, files, or tampering with computer equipment, sending threatening e-mails
- Reporting to the clinical site under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance

- Nursing faculty are mandated reporters of professional misconduct and will act in accordance with the current reporting procedures.
- Any faculty involved in the incident(s) may also file a complaint against the student. For example, when a student threatens a faculty member, or attempts to carry out such a threat.

## COMPLAINTS, GRIEVANCES, & GRADE APPEALS

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If a student has a complaint, grievance, or grade appeal, the nursing department strongly encourages students to bring their concern(s) forward. In order to promote a positive learning environment, the nursing program expects the student to attempt to first resolve concern(s) with the staff/faculty member to whom the concern(s) is directed.

- If a student is dismissed from the program or wants to file a grade appeal and the student wants to appeal that decision, the student must follow the Grade Appeal Procedure in preparation for an appeal. This procedure can be found on the Riverland's website at:

<https://www.riverland.edu/about-riverland/policies-and-procedures/course-final-grade-appeal-procedure/>

<https://www.riverland.edu/about-riverland/policies-and-procedures/course-final-grade-appeal-form/>

- If a student wants to file a Complaint or Grievance, the student must follow the Student Complaint and Grievance Policy. This policy can be found on the Riverland's website at:

[https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20\(002\).pdf](https://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20-%20Student%20Complaint%20and%20Grievance%20Policy%20(002).pdf)

## PROGRAM ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

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### HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the core performance standards, the following requirements need to be met in order to enter and progress within the program.

- Students must submit a completed health information form (Health Science Division Physical Examination, Immunizations/Required Clinical Verification Form) before specified deadlines. The required immunizations listed on this form must be maintained to participate in the clinical portion of the nursing courses.
  - Proof of immunity (titer) to measles (rubeola), German measles (Rubella), chicken pox (Varicella), and mumps.
  - Hepatitis B vaccination (series of three) or a signed waiver on file. If a student has had a pediatric vaccination for Hepatitis B, a titer will be required to prove immunity.
  - Tetanus/Diphtheria booster OR Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis booster done within the last ten years.
  - Yearly influenza

- COVID-19 vaccination if not approved for an exemption.
- Students must present evidence of freedom from active TB per a negative Mantoux, or a negative QuantiFERON (TB gold test) QFT-G annually (negative chest x-rays are no longer acceptable). If you have not had a Mantoux test done within a 12-month period, you must complete a two-step testing process, one to three weeks apart. Two Mantoux tests must be on file or have proof of the QuantiFERON (TB gold test).
- Students must maintain good health throughout the program to meet expected course outcomes. The Minnesota State Performance Standards must be met throughout the program to continue to progress. If a core standard cannot be met, the student will fail the course.
- A student who is temporarily unable to meet clinical requirements due to health issues must consult a health professional for appropriate evaluation and/or treatment. Students will be required to submit a copy of the most recent health professional's order.
- Students must meet the policy requirements of the health agencies to which they are assigned. Students who refuse to comply with the policy requirements of the health agencies to which they are assigned will fail the course.

### **CPR REQUIREMENT**

Nursing students are required to obtain and remain current with CPR certification for Health Professionals. CPR must include Adult, Child, Infant, AED. Students are not permitted to participate in the clinical experiences of the program if they have not met this requirement.

**Proof of certification must cover and remain valid throughout the entire program.**

Fall Semester Admission CPR certification dates August through the following December. Spring Semester Admission CPR certification dates January through the following May.

### **BACKGROUND STUDIES**

Minnesota law requires background studies for individuals who provide direct contact services to patients and residents in facilities and programs licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) or the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH). These studies are conducted annually by the DHS or an approved agency.

As of 2014, state law mandates that background study subjects be fingerprinted and photographed. Individuals who are disqualified as a result of the study and whose disqualification is not set aside by the Commissioner of Health are not permitted to participate in clinical activities at any Minnesota-licensed healthcare facility.

Students who fail to comply with background study deadlines will forfeit their place in the program. Furthermore, students who are disqualified or who do not complete the background study process will be ineligible to progress in the nursing program.

## **HEALTH INSURANCE REQUIREMENT**

Nursing students are required to carry health insurance to fulfill the requirement of the nursing program. Students are not permitted to participate in the clinical experiences of the program if they have not met this requirement.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY REQUIREMENT**

Patient confidentiality is essential and legally protected. Patients have the right to privacy in all aspects of their care, and nursing students have both a legal and ethical obligation to safeguard that privacy. This responsibility extends to all forms of communication, including electronic media such as email and social media platforms.

Students are strictly prohibited from sharing patient information or discussing clinical experiences with anyone who is not employed by the clinical facility. Clinical experiences may only be discussed during course-related activities and in designated educational settings.

Conversations about patients are permitted only within the clinical setting, clinical conferences, or secure classrooms. Discussions must never occur in public areas such as cafeterias, lounges, or at home. Any information used for assignments must be thoroughly reviewed to ensure the removal of all identifying details, such as patient names or hospital identification numbers, before it is removed from the clinical site.

Taking photos at the clinical site is not allowed. Student photos may only be taken in public areas such as the lobby or outside the clinical agency.

Students are allowed to record lectures for personal study purposes only. These recordings must not be shared or posted electronically under any circumstances.

Failure to maintain patient confidentiality may result in removal from the clinical site, course failure, or dismissal from the program. All student interactions—whether in the classroom, skills lab, simulation lab, or clinical setting—must remain confidential and discussed only within those environments.

Students are expected to uphold the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses, which outlines standards of professional behavior, including confidentiality.

If you are uncertain about any aspect of patient confidentiality, it is your responsibility to consult with nursing faculty or clinical staff before accessing or sharing any patient information.

## **MANDATORY HIPAA TRAINING**

Prior to beginning any clinical nursing course, students must complete the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training. Every year the student must sign the Nursing Program Confidentiality Form.

## **LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Liability insurance in the amount of one million dollars must be carried by each student, as part of a group coverage plan available through the College. The fee is assessed in the fall semester of the nursing program to cover the student for the entire academic year. A private policy with one million dollars coverage is also acceptable.

# **STUDENT TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

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## **E-MAIL**

The college official communication method is through the Riverland student e-mail accounts. All students need to check their e-mail account frequently. This is the only account that faculty will use for e-mailing students.

## **COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS**

All students need to have access to a personal computer/laptop with a high-speed internet connection. Basic computer and word processing skills are required. Common software requirements include (but are not limited to) a word processing program (i.e., Microsoft Word), Power Point/Power Point Viewer, Acrobat Reader, Flash Player, Quick Time Player, Real Time Player. All written assignments (i.e., papers) that are electronically submitted must be in a doc, docx, or rtf format.

## **RIVERLAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

[www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf](http://www.riverland.edu/riverland/assets/File/policy/2000/2000%20Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf)

# MINNESOTA STATE PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The system of Minnesota State Colleges provides the following example of performance standards that practical nursing students are required to meet and maintain to provide safe and effective care, to be successful and progress in nursing programs. The standards are based on The Minnesota Nurse Practice Act. The examples listed are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to be a complete list of all tasks in a nursing program.

Students with documented disabilities, or who believe they may have a protected disability, can request accommodation, which may assist with meeting the standards for nursing programs. Please contact the Support Services Office at 507-433-0600, to schedule an appointment with a Support Services Counselor.

Requirements	Standards	Examples include but are not limited to...
Critical-thinking Skills	Critical thinking ability for effective clinical reasoning and clinical judgment consistent with level of educational preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to understand context of situations, make logical decisions and request assistance as needed.</li> <li>• Organize workload to manage time effectively and prioritize the delivery of client care.</li> <li>• Ability to recognize and report changes in client's condition to registered nurse or instructor.</li> <li>• Assimilate information from class, lab and clinical to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.</li> <li>• Ongoing demonstration of skills mastery while integrating new information.</li> </ul>
Interpersonal Skills	Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interactions with a diverse population of individuals, families, and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain and protect client confidentiality and privacy.</li> <li>• Establish professional relationships.</li> <li>• Accept feedback and integrate new understanding into behavior.</li> <li>• Display personal accountability, integrity, understanding that student behavior affects others.</li> <li>• Practice the ability to assign tasks to other LPN's and unlicensed personnel.</li> <li>• Promote a team-building environment.</li> <li>• Provide safe effective care in a variety of cultural settings.</li> <li>• Convey empathy, compassion and sensitivity in interactions and relationships.</li> </ul>

Communication Skills	Communication skills sufficient for verbal and written professional interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assimilate verbal and non-verbal information, process and exchange information with clients, families, instructors and members of the healthcare team.</li> <li>• Accurately document nursing actions and client responses.</li> <li>• Display the capacity to participate in successful conflict resolution and advocate for client rights and needs.</li> <li>• Effectively communicate in English in verbal, written, and electronic resources with colleagues, school staff, and members of the interdisciplinary team.</li> <li>• Use therapeutic communication techniques to provide support to peers, clients and families.</li> <li>• Process relevant information; accurately and timely communicate to the healthcare team.</li> <li>• Ability to perform client education and adjust information to client understanding.</li> </ul>
Psychomotor Skills	Psychomotor skills sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move about client's room and/or workspaces to complete client assessment.</li> <li>• Ability to administer rescue procedures - cardiopulmonary resuscitation.</li> <li>• Demonstrate the ability to work for long periods.</li> <li>• Safely use and calibrate equipment in a variety of settings.</li> <li>• Perform procedures necessary to safely admit, transfer, or discharge a client.</li> <li>• Prepare and administer medications and treatments.</li> <li>• Perform basic nursing skills safely and efficiently.</li> </ul>
Assessment Skills	Assessment skills sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct focused assessment; compare data with normal findings, report changes to registered nurse or other licensed healthcare provider.</li> <li>• Observe client's condition, utilizing all senses, and data from equipment, report changes.</li> <li>• Ability to respond to client distress calls.</li> <li>• Implement interventions delegated or ordered by healthcare providers.</li> <li>• Participate with other members of the healthcare team to develop and modify care plans.</li> </ul>

Emotional-Behavioral Skills	Demonstrates appropriate behavior to function effectively under stress and assume accountability for one's actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate emotional stability while encountering a wide variety of emotions in self and others.</li> <li>• Communicate empathy, recognize own values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect perceptions and relationships with others.</li> <li>• Personal flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing environments.</li> <li>• Ability to apply sound judgement in pressured situations.</li> <li>• Recognize limits of knowledge and abilities and seek assistance.</li> </ul>
Professional Conduct Skills	Process attributes that include compassion, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide safe and effective care to patients along the age continuum without regard to disability, ethnic origin, gender status or social standing.</li> <li>• Recognize and preserve individual human dignity.</li> <li>• Advocate for the client's best interest.</li> <li>• Demonstrate professional accountability and ability to work in hierarchical environment.</li> <li>• Demonstrate intent to follow the ANA Code of Ethics.</li> </ul>
Environmental Stressors	Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to work with infectious agents and blood-borne pathogens.</li> <li>• Ability to work in areas with potential chemical and radiation hazards.</li> <li>• Ability to work with potential allergens such as latex.</li> <li>• Ability to work in areas of potential violence.</li> <li>• Ability to work near others.</li> </ul>

Other	Sensory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visual and auditory ability to perform assessments, safe nursing care, and meet program outcomes.</li></ul>
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### References

H.C. Gonzalez, E-L. Hsiao / Teaching and Learning in Nursing 15 (2020) 53e56

Minnesota Board of Nursing Nurse Practice Act – Minnesota Statute Section 148.171

Presented and revised by AD and PN Nursing Directors Spring 2020.

Updated 4/2016 with new program plan LLB

Updated 5/2016 with new logo/faculty reviewed 5-12-16 LLB

Updated 7/28/16 with cell phone language/faculty reviewed 7-28-16 LLB

Updated 5/26/17 with changes to the testing policy, clinical uniform policy, cell phone pictures at clinical. LLB

Updated 9-25-17 Learning Lab/Simulation Polices. Added use of solutions, sharps, syringes, and Foley Catheter. Current students notified 9/25/17. LLB

Updated 10-16-17 Attendance Policy: Clinical, Lab, Simulation Day: Missing more than **one** day per semester could result in faculty progression review. LLB

Updated 10-16-17 Exam Policy: Students who are unable to take an exam at the scheduled time must obtain the instructor's permission for a different date *prior to* the scheduled exam time. **Failure to do so could result in a zero for that exam.** LLB

Updated 11-20-17 Program Plan Sequence listing PSYC1240 Developmental Psychology a Pre-requisite.

### **Update Fall 2020**

- Uniform policy updated to include no hoodies
- Student Progression Committee **renamed** to Performance Review for Student Success committee.
  - Under this committee, the steps in the process changed to include a purpose statement and easier to understand language and clearer steps for faculty and students.
  - Forms for this committee were updated to make them more user friendly for faculty and students
- Exam rules: Lateness to exam language has been included.
- COVID-19 Clinical Updates

### **Update spring 2021**

- Policy for Switching Program Options (PN Daytime/PN Evening)- Requires faculty recommendation

**Covid-19 Policy** – Updated 8-16-21. Students were notified via email.

### **Update Fall 2021**

- Removal of lengthy progression review process.

- Program progression- students must repeat clinical if they fail a theory course in any semester. This policy will take effect at the beginning of fall 2021.
- Allowance for rounding of grades at the end of the course.
- Verbiage to be added to grades: The only time rounding will occur, using standard rounding rules, is to determine the final course grade. At the end of the semester the final course grade will be rounded to the nearest whole number. There will be no rounding of grades during the semester.
- Students notified via email

### **Update Summer 2023**

- Validate document for currency. Spellcheck cleanup. Grammar cleanup.
- Updated Clinical Expectations section: “Is not under the influence of illegal or recreational drugs, drug products, or alcohol.”
- Updated Uniform Policy: “No smoking of any kind in clinical uniforms.”

### **Update Summer 2024**

- Aligned mission and vision statements.
- Removed Nursing Education Definition.
- Removed MCOs.
- Aligned Communication, Classroom, Written Assignment, Lateness, Exam, ATI Testing policies with AD program student handbook.
- Aligned Professional Integrity section with AD program student handbook.
- Aligned Clinical Expectations section with AD program student handbook.
- Updated Covid section:
  1. Some clinical agencies will not allow students to care for COVID-19 patients or potential COVID - 19 patients.
  2. There may be restrictions in other areas/units as to whether students will be allowed.
  3. Students may be required to provide COVID-19 test results.
- Updated covid vaccination from TCCP to Clinician Nexus.
- Aligned program readmission policy with AD program student handbook.

### **Update Summer 2025**

- Aligned PN CONCEPTS, DEFINITIONS, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES, AND COMPETENCIES section to better match AD program.
- Updated the Philosophy Statement.
- Aligned ASSIGNMENT POLICY section to better match AD program.
- Aligned EXAM POLICY section to better match AD program.
- Aligned ATI TESTING EXPECTATIONS section to better match AD program.
- Aligned DOSAGE CALCULATION POLICY section to better match AD program.
- Aligned SKILLS CHECK OFF POLICY section to better match AD program.
- Changed PROFESSIONAL INTEGRITY section to ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. Incorporated section to address artificial intelligence and smart technology.
- Updated the visible tattoos statement.
- Updated the guidance about length of fingernails with specific measurements.
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