

# NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY School of Nursing and Health Studies

## UNDERGRADUATE NURSING HANDBOOK

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## Preface

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

It is the responsibility of students to know and observe all regulations and procedures related to the program they are pursuing. In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because students plead ignorance of or contend that they were not informed of the regulations or procedures.

**Each student receives the Nursing Undergraduate Student Handbook at program overview sessions. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the handbook current.**

## Calendar

Be sure to check the NIU on-line Schedule of Classes for registration dates. For information about important deadlines such as course withdrawal and graduation see the official Undergraduate Calendar, which is available on-line through the NIU Web Page.

## Important Telephone Numbers

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Main NIU Operator                         | 753-1000  |
| School of Nursing and Health Studies Main | 753-1231  |
| Nursing Program Coordinator               | 753-6553  |
| Undergraduate Academic Advisor            | 753-6557  |
| College of Health and Human Sciences      | 753-1891  |
| Student Financial Aid Office              | 753-1395  |
| NIU Police Department                     | 753-1212  |
| Bursar's Office                           | 753-1885  |
| NIU Library Information                   | 753-1995  |
| Weather Closing Information               | 753-6736 (Local)<br>(888)464-8673 (Long Distance) |

## Important Information Resources

1. NIU Nursing Web Page at: <http://www.nursing.niu.edu/nuhs>

- o Announcements
- o Class Schedules
- o Blackboard
- o Clinical Requirements
- o Faculty
- o Course Descriptions

2. Webconnect at : <https://www.niu.edu/myniu>. To register for classes, check your schedule, and to view your grades.

## Welcome from the Chair

Dear Nursing Student:

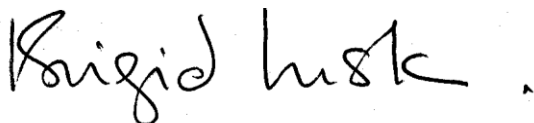
The faculty and I are delighted to welcome you to our nursing program.

NIU's nursing program is a great place for you to prepare for a career as a baccalaureate degree nurse. NIU is the suburban Chicago area's premier public university with more than 25,000 students. It is ranked by the Carnegie Foundation as a research university with high research activity. The School of Nursing and Health Studies is a school within the College of Health and Human Sciences. Dr. Shirley Richmond is Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences.

You will find an outstanding level of support and commitment to your undergraduate nursing education at NIU. Now you need to embrace the exciting yet demanding curriculum designed to prepare you for the challenges of twenty-first century nursing practice. Continuous, extensive study is essential to master this program and to prepare you for safe and effective practice in the years ahead. You are encouraged to make full use of the support nursing faculty want to provide—visit them during office hours, interact as a nursing committee member, ask questions in classes. Become a student we remember as engaged, studious, assertive, and professional. Additionally, every undergraduate nursing student has an assigned nursing faculty advisor. This is the person to go to should you have professional questions about your future career or the nursing profession in general. Ms. Uhlken, the Nursing Program Coordinator, and I want you to have the best educational experience possible and our doors are always open to you.

I look forward to interacting with you during your nursing program. I will share in your joy as you are awarded your NIU nursing degree and your nursing pin, and I hope that you will always remember NIU fondly as the starting point of your professional nursing career.

With warm wishes for personally fulfilling and richly satisfying years of undergraduate nursing studies at NIU,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brigid Lusk". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brigid Lusk, PhD, RN  
Professor and Chair  
School of Nursing and Health Studies

# SECTION I

## INTRODUCTION TO THE SCHOOL OF NURSING AND HEALTH STUDIES

### **A History of the School of Nursing and Health Studies**

The baccalaureate program in nursing at Northern Illinois University began in 1959 with 19 basic nursing majors and two faculty members. Dr. Annette S. Lefkowitz was appointed the Director of the program and Dr. Ann M. Hart the Assistant Director. The baccalaureate curriculum has been approved by the Committee of Nurse Examiners of the Illinois Department of Regulation since its inception. The School of Nursing has had continuous accreditation by the National League for Nursing for the baccalaureate program since 1965 and for the master's program since 1973. In 2001, the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education became the accrediting agency for both programs and the programs were accredited for 10 years without any recommendations.

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

Registered nurses (RNs) were first admitted to the baccalaureate program in 1964. In the late 1970s, the School of Nursing began offering nursing courses in a number of off-campus locations. By the mid-1980s, RNs could complete the nursing component of the baccalaureate degree in Rockford, in the Fox Valley area, or on-campus. In 1992, RN-BS degree completion courses were offered off-campus at Hoffman Estates Educational Center and in 1995 these courses were offered at the Rockford Regional Academic Center. Currently the school offers this program on-line as well as off-site at several hospital and community college locations.

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

In the fall of 1995, the School of Nursing began a post-master's family nurse practitioner course of study. In 1999, the Graduate School recognized the program for certificate status. Candidates in the certificate program must have a master's degree in nursing from a NLN- or CCNE-accredited program. Faculty configured the curriculum for part-time study and it takes a minimum of 4 semesters to complete.

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

The first on-line course was developed and offered in 1999 for students in the Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Certificate of Graduate Study program. By 2000, there were four on-line courses developed. In Fall 2002, the entire Post-Master's Family Nurse Practitioner Graduate Certificate program was offered on-line. As the School of Nursing continues to set the pace for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it currently offers the RN-BS Degree Completion program and the majority of its graduate program as on-line

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

In 2000, the School of Nursing was awarded a \$1,039,000 grant from the U.S. Public Health Service, Health Resources Services Administration, Division of Nursing. The grant was written to expand the Adult Health Practitioner program, develop a rural-health nursing course, and offer courses via distance technology in the northwestern sections of Illinois. In 2001 the School of Nursing was awarded a Helen Fuld Grant to enhance the integration of Community Health throughout the undergraduate curriculum. In 2006, a Nurse Educator Specialization was added to the graduate program. The Nurse Educator specialization prepares nurses to plan and develop nursing curricula for both classroom nursing programs and a variety of health care settings. In 2007 the School of Nursing was awarded a \$460,000 grant from the Illinois Board of Higher Education to expand the undergraduate program and to install a Human Patient Simulator Laboratory.

In July 2007, the Nursing, Public Health, and Health Education programs combined into one academic school and are now known as the School of Nursing and Health Studies (NUHS).

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

## **B. Nursing Philosophy**

The faculty pursues excellence in teaching, discovery, clinical practice, and service to meet the changing needs of society and the learner. This can best be accomplished by sharing knowledge and skills with colleagues, and creating a collegial environment that models collaboration with nursing students. The educative process provides the means for generating, imparting, and applying the knowledge necessary for addressing health care needs and the delivery of services to the local, national, and global community. The Northern Illinois University Nursing curriculum is based on the Systems Theory paradigm, which incorporates beliefs about person, environment, health, and nursing as integral to the process of education. The following is the philosophy of the Nursing faculty about the dynamic nature of persons, environment, health, nursing, and education. To ensure continuous quality assurance, the Nursing philosophy and mission are revised periodically as required by the Program Evaluation Plan to reflect the changing internal and external environment and evolving professional standards.

### Person

The faculty believes that each person, family, and community is a unique and dynamic system with physiological, psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual needs, including the potential for reaching and maintaining optimal levels of health. All human systems interact holistically with the environment in an effort to attain, maintain, and promote optimal health. Professional nursing seeks to provide care that enables individuals, families, and communities to reach optimum levels of health and well being throughout the life span. Therefore, nurses have a responsibility to provide health education and support to enable all persons to make informed decisions about health care.

### Environment

The environment includes biological, ecological, economic, psychosocial, cultural, and technological components. These environmental components influence and are influenced by human systems. Human systems use a variety of processes to obtain needed resources from local, regional, and global environments, and, in turn, contribute energy in various forms to these environments. Thus, the environment and person presents threats to and opportunities for each other.

## Health

Health is a multifaceted dynamic state that evolves from the interaction of persons, families, and communities with the environment. Because health comprises physiological, psychosocial, cultural, and spiritual well-being, elements of health can exist even in the presence of illness or disease. Within individual constraints, health is influenced by the behavior of persons. Thus, persons have some ability to regulate and manage their own health by the use of stabilizing and adaptive mechanisms. Persons use these mechanisms with varying degrees of interdependence with the health care team. Services to attain, maintain, and promote health should be available and acceptable to persons so that they may participate in self-care to the possible or desired extent.

## Nursing

Nursing is an art and a science that emphasizes health promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health. To this end, nursing assists persons to attain optimal physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual well-being. The interactive nature of theory, practice, and research provides the foundation for nursing practice. Nurses practice in diverse roles to support the dignity, individuality, and well being of persons. Inherent in these roles is the ability to function both independently and collaboratively as a member of interdisciplinary teams. Professional nursing includes a system of values and ethics that is expressed through responsible and accountable practice. The curriculum reflects the Standards of Care (American Nurses Association, 1991) which includes: collecting client health data, analyzing the data to formulate diagnoses, identifying expected outcomes, implementing interventions, and evaluating the client's progress toward attaining expected outcomes.

## Education

Education is a dynamic process that supports the learner's development of critical thinking skills, creativity, and self-direction. The development of these skills enhances the learner's ability to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of nursing care, identify, and monitor quality indicators and integrate data to improve nursing practice. Learners change or reorganize their thinking and/or behavior as a result of acquiring new knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Using various resources such as practice laboratories, computer technology, distance education, and interaction between students, faculty, and interdisciplinary teams in a variety of health care settings fosters learning. Thus, learning takes place through applying knowledge and experience, which is the interaction between learner and what is learned. An integral part of learning is performance appraisal. The curriculum reflects performance appraisal on a regular basis. Learners in nursing education are increasingly diverse age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, cultural backgrounds, life experiences, and the ability to pursue education on a full-time basis. Baccalaureate education, as the basic educational preparation for professional nursing, provides for the synthesis of principles, concepts, and theories from the sciences, humanities, and nursing. The general education component of baccalaureate education provides the opportunity for the learner to develop core competencies in reading, writing, listening, speaking and mathematical skills. Distributive studies provide the student with an expanded awareness of thought processes conducive to the understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, as well as an appreciation of the scientific method of inquiry. The professional component of nursing education provides the opportunity to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for nursing practice. The nurse prepared at the baccalaureate level uses a variety of processes to assist persons to achieve optimal health. The baccalaureate graduate is prepared to practice in a beginning leadership position in a variety of settings, to function both independently and collaboratively in a variety of roles, to integrate research findings into the provision of nursing care, and to pursue life-long learning.

A graduate degree in nursing builds on the knowledge, skills, and attitudes acquired during baccalaureate nursing preparation and in nursing practice. Graduate education enhances the ability of the learner to: think critically; communicate effectively; develop professionally; and, pursue life long learning. It extends the conceptual, theoretical, experiential, and scientific bases

for role development. The graduate is prepared to assume advanced practice roles to include advocating for client systems and participating in the formulation and refinement of health care policy. The graduate is also prepared to collaboratively design, integrate, and facilitate research in practice. The master's degree provides the foundation for doctoral study.

### Commitment

As part of the commitment to service the needs of the regional community, the School of Nursing programs serve the health care needs of the residents of the City of DeKalb and the surrounding communities.

1/28/92 Revised 5/8/92, 4/5/93  
Revised 2/12/00, 5/8/00, 8/24/00, 9/5/00, 9/11/00  
Approved by General Faculty Council 10/16/00  
Revised 11/06

## **C. Nursing Mission and Core Values**

### **1. Mission Statement**

The Nursing Mission is to educate students to be ethical, effective, and contributing members of the nursing profession; and to promote health and well being in individuals, families and communities across the lifespan, through education, scholarship, service and clinical practice at local, national, and global levels. As part of the university community, the faculty of the School of Nursing recognizes its obligation to society for preparing professional nurses.

### **2. Core Values**

The Nursing core values are as follows:

- The learner is the beneficiary of our activities.
- We are responsive to the health care needs of society.
- We are responsive to the needs of learners, the needs of the health care system, faculty, and staff, respecting the dignity of each individual.
- We honor our commitments in an ethical and professional manner.

2/24/92  
Reviewed 2.6.95  
Revised 7/00  
Revised 5/01  
Revised 10/2006

## **D. Nursing Organizing Framework**

The organizing framework for the Nursing curriculum is derived from general systems theory, which defines the character, functions, and interactions of living systems. Integral to general systems theory is the recognition of the inter-relatedness of all phenomena. This framework provides a perspective for studying any system and its environment as interacting wholes having integrated sites of properties or relationships.

A living system comprises a set of components that interact to define the system as an identifiable whole. The whole is different from and greater than the sum of its components. Each component is a separate entity in itself, while serving as the context for subsystems of lesser complexity and as an integrated part of a larger whole.

The components of system have structure, carry out specialized function, and interact continuously to maintain the viability of the system. The structure tends to persist over time and provides unique identifying characteristics for components and boundaries of the system.

Nursing is concerned with the health of client systems as related to each other in a social system. The context for nursing practice is the environment within which persons receive nursing care. A systems approach offers a useful perspective for viewing nursing practice: Persons can be conceptualized as client systems that are viewed holistically rather than as fragmented parts. Each client system can be conceptualized as having structure, components, and boundaries; as carrying out specialized functions; and as interacting continuously to maintain its viability.

For purposes of analysis, the system of interest is referred to as the target system. Systems are arranged according to complexity: Each system is composed of smaller subsystems and is itself a component of a larger and more complex suprasystem. The suprasystem represents the environment of the target system. Any system can be described as a subsystem, a target system, or a suprasystem, depending on its location in the hierarchy at a given moment. Movement up the hierarchy enlarges the number and complexity of components that are encountered, as each level in the hierarchy presupposes the inclusion of preceding levels.

An understanding of how a system and its components operate provides the scientific basis for nursing. This approach permits the integration of the biologic, psychosocial, and cultural components of persons. Persons are individuals, families, groups, or communities having unique characteristics, boundaries, and functions. Depending on their location within the hierarchy, persons can be considered as subsystems, target systems, or suprasystems.

All living systems are open systems in that their boundaries permit the exchange of matter and energy with their environment. The boundary acts selectively to filter and regulate what enters and leaves the system, that is, the system itself has a choice in what crosses its boundary. The site of interaction between the boundary of a system and its environment is called the interface; the interface provides an opportunity for growth and change of a system.

The concept of interface is relevant to nursing because it emphasizes that the client system can take in information to effect change. The interface is where the nurse-client system interaction takes place and where nursing intervention to affect various function of the system is possible. In addition, recognition that the boundary of a system is a selective filter reminds the nurse that the system itself decides what changes can be made. The decision to change is determined by the values and goals of the system. Thus, the nurse must collaborate with the client system to enhance growth and change.

A living system is maintained by processes of integration, adaptation and decision-making that control interactions among its subsystems and with its suprasystems. These processes are critical and are directed towards the goal of survival of the system; they give the system the capacity for action and the power to effect change within the system and in the environment.

The process of integration enables the system to regulate the functions of its subsystems to ensure their harmonious interaction to maintain the viability of the system as a whole. Subsystems are linked by the exchange of matter, energy, and information and have the goal of maintaining an optimal range of stability for the system to carry out its functions. If the functions of subsystems are not well integrated, a threat exists to the function of the whole.

Through the process of integration, harmonious interactions among sub-systems of the client system promote health of the system as a whole. Recognition of the function of the processes enables the nurse, in collaboration with client systems, to identify and support selected processes that enable systems to function effectively to meet their goals related to health. The nurse, by understanding subsystems, function, and interactions, can assess alterations from optimal stability and provide interventions that support the integrating processes of the system.

The process of adaptation involves the exchange of matter, energy, and information between the target system and its environment. During the process of adaptation the system both influences and is influenced by its suprasystem, as matter and energy are selected from or disposed into the

environment, or are retained with the system. Both the system and its environment are changed during the process of adaptation.

The role of the nurse is to enhance the adaptation of the client system to its environment. The client system and the nurse collaboratively identify the changes needed in input and output and the potential resources available to the system to meet the goal of attaining and maintaining health. Thus, the nurse facilitates change in the direction of health.

A third process, decision making, enables a system to allocate available resources for the integration of function among its subsystems or for adaptation to its suprasystem. Decision making is based on the system's unique hierarchy of values, purposes, and goals.

The client system decides what changes can and will be made to achieve goals related to health. The client system decides the appropriateness of selected changes to the situation, and when the changes will be effected. The nurse provides communication, education, and referral to resources that will enable the client system to attain and maintain health, as defined by the client system itself. Nursing intervention involves the active participation of the client system in a jointly developed plan for change, which is based on determining the objectives for change that is relevant to the client system.

The processes of integration, adaptation, and decision making enable a system to achieve a dynamic harmonious balance in the exchange of matter and energy among its subsystems and with its suprasystem. While all systems constantly deal with internal and external change, a range of stability exists for each of the numerous components of a system. A deficiency or excess of some component beyond its range of stability produces a strain within the system and creates the need for adjustment of the component to regain dynamic stability. Eventually, all living systems are subject to change that can potentially overwhelm system processes and lead to varying degrees of dysfunction or death.

The nurse assists the client system to deal effectively with change to attain and maintain an optimal range of stability for that system. Through the use of the nursing process, the nurse shifts as needed among the levels of the sub-systems and the suprasystem to promote the integration, adaptation, and decision making of the client system. The goal of nursing intervention is the promotion, maintenance, or restoration of health. When system processes are unable to respond to intervention to restore dynamic stability, the goal of nursing intervention is the provision of appropriate support.

The degree of adjustment of a component within a system is regulated by feedback. Feedback is a mechanism of the system that regulates future exchanges or conduct according to past performance. That is, if a system has an excess or deficit, an appropriate exchange of matter or energy at the interface is instituted to return the component to a range of stability. Adjustment through a feedback mechanism maintains a continuum of balance and purpose for the system and accomplishes movement toward ever-increasing order and complexity. Feedback regulation means that a system has self-correcting tendencies.

Appropriate feedback promotes health because it increases the probability of optimal decision-making and a dynamic harmonious balance. Feedback that leads to an imbalance of input and output may impair health or, if overwhelming, may result in death of the client system.

Nursing intervention has as its goal the enhancement of feedback mechanisms leading to health.

The use of the nursing process enables the nurse to assess the structure and processes of client systems and to design appropriate interventions. If return to a range of dynamic stability is not possible, or is not the choice of the client system, the nurse provides appropriate support and comfort. The evaluative component of the nursing process functions as a feedback mechanism for rational decision-making related to the changes necessary to minimize deviations from optimal stability and to augment changes that facilitate learning, growth and health.

Nursing is both an art and a science. Nursing is based on an evolving body of scientific knowledge. The art of nursing lies in the nurse's use of self to help client systems re-establish harmonious interactions among sub-systems and suprasystems where possible.

Materials used in developing the organizing framework were adapted from:

Gillies, D. A. (1982). Nursing management: A system approach. Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders.

Whall, A. L., & Fawcett, J. (1991). Family theory development in nursing: State of the science and art. Philadelphia: Davis.

Hall, J. E., & Weaver, B. R. (1985). Distributive nursing practice: A systems approach to community health (2nd ed.). Philadelphia: Lippincott.

3/31/92  
Reviewed 2/6/95  
Reviewed 10/2006  
Reviewed 7/2007

**E. Objectives of the Undergraduate Nursing Program**

| Terminal   | Level 2  | Level 1  |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Use multiple systems processes of increasing complexity to enhance the health of culturally diverse individuals, families, groups, and communities. | 1. Apply systems processes in clinical practice to enhance the health of culturally diverse individuals, families, and groups. | 1. Recognize how basic systems processes are used to enhance health.   |
| 2. Manage nursing care of individuals, families, and groups in diverse community settings.   | 2. Provide nursing care addressing the needs of individuals, families, and groups in a structured clinical environment.        | 2. Demonstrate, in a laboratory environment, competency in skills required for the care of culturally diverse individuals. |
| 3. Integrate multiple aspects of the professional nurse role in managing care.   | 3. Perform progressively complex aspects of the professional role.   | 3. Examine components of the professional nursing role.  |
| 4. Function independently and collaboratively with clients, peers, and colleagues as a novice professional nurse.                                      | 4. Function, with guidance, in providing the nursing care to individuals, families, and groups.                                | 4. Perform selected activities of the professional nurse in a prescribed manner.   |

## SECTION II

### AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION CODE FOR NURSES

#### PREAMBLE

The Code for Nurses is based on belief about the nature of individuals, nursing, health, and society. Recipients and providers of nursing services are viewed as individuals and groups who possess basic rights and responsibilities, and whose values and circumstances command respect at all times. Nursing encompasses the promotion and restoration of health, the prevention of illness, and the alleviation of suffering. The statements of the Code and their interpretation provide guidance for conduct and relationships in carrying out nursing responsibilities consistent with the ethical obligations of the progression and quality in nursing care.

1. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse safeguards the client's right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature.
3. The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person.
4. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions.
5. The nurse maintains competence in nursing.
6. The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities, and delegating nursing activities.
7. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession's body of knowledge.
8. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.
9. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care.
10. The nurse participates in the profession's effort to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing.
11. The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.

*Source: Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. Permission of the American Nurses Association applied for.*

## SECTION III

### POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY

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

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

Students registered for NURS 420 and NURS 460 RN will read and sign a confidentiality statement, which will be maintained in each student's file. A copy of this signed confidentiality statement is available to the student to share with the clinical agency upon request.

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

Approved 3/5/90  
Reviewed 3/5/93; 2/14/94; 2/6/95  
Revised 5/19/03

## SECTION IV

### POLICY STATEMENT FOR ENROLLMENT IN NURSING COURSES

Enrollment in on-campus undergraduate nursing courses is restricted to admitted nursing majors, except for NURS 300. In off-campus undergraduate nursing courses, admitted nursing students are given enrollment priority.

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

Retracking of undergraduate students for nursing courses is done on a space available basis. In the event space is not available, students who need to be retracked will need to wait until space is available in the needed course(s).

Approved 1/8/79  
Revised and Approved 11/21/88, 3/8/94 10/23/95  
Reviewed 3/5/90, 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 2/6/95  
Approved 10/11/99  
Reviewed 7/2007

## SECTION V

### POLICY STATEMENT FOR CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE (LOA)

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

If it should become necessary for a student to withdraw from the University for other than academic reasons, the student may request a Leave of Absence from the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The request must be written and predate the student's official withdrawal from the University. The request must include the reason for the request and the length of leave being requested.

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

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

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

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

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

Students, who were not on an official Leave of Absence and were withdrawn from the nursing major, must file an application for readmission to the University and the Nursing major. Applications for readmission will be reviewed at the same time as all other applications to the nursing major using the current admission criteria.

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

#### READMISSION

It is expected that Nursing students will maintain continuous enrollment once the professional nursing course sequence is begun. Students with an approved leave of absence and students who are in good standing and readmitted after withdrawing from the nursing program may be required to retake appropriate courses to demonstrate current knowledge and skills. Repeated courses will not count toward the University's graduation requirement of 120 credits.

Approved 5/1/01

## SECTION VI

### NURSING PROGRAM OVERVIEW

All students must attend the Nursing Program Overview before beginning nursing classes. Information exchange and processing essential to function within the School occur at this mandatory orientation. Students will have an opportunity to sign up for program overview sessions, which are offered at various times throughout the year. The orientation sessions are coordinated by the Nursing Undergraduate Academic Advisor.

Undergraduate students who are admitted to Nursing but do not attend any mandatory program overview session will lose their admission status to Nursing and will need to reapply to the School of Nursing and Health Studies if future attendance is desired.

Approved 10/11/99  
Reviewed 7/2007

## SECTION VII

### POLICY STATEMENT FOR CLINICAL COURSES

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

A permit is required to enroll in each clinical nursing course (NURS 320, NURS 330, NURS 340, NURS 360, NURS 410, NURS 420, NURS 430, and NURS 460 RN). The School of Nursing and Health Studies directs the issuance of these permits. The final decision on a student's eligibility for a clinical permit will be made by the Nursing Program Coordinator.

Assignment to clinical sections is achieved by the use of a computer program that attempts to match a student's preferences with available spaces. Students **cannot be guaranteed their choice** of a clinical section.

#### A. Securing Clinical Permits

1. It is the responsibility of the student to obtain and complete a Request for a Clinical Permit form the semester preceding the clinical course(s). Separate forms for basic and RN students are available in the School of Nursing and Health Studies.
2. The schedule for obtaining and returning the completed Request for a Clinical Permit form is given below. All request forms must be returned to the Nursing Program Coordinator by 4:30 pm of the deadline date.
3. Students who do not submit a clinical request form or submit a clinical request form after the deadline are randomly assigned to a clinical section in which there is space available.
4. Requests for clinical permits will be reviewed for students' eligibility for enrollment in the clinical course(s). Eligibility for a permit requires that students meet all of the criteria given below. Students must:

- a. be tracked for the clinical course;
- b. have successfully completed all prerequisite course work with a grade of C or higher and,
- c. have current documentation of all clinical requirements on file in the college office.

Revised and Approved 3/5/90, 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 3/7/94, 5/19/03  
Reviewed 2-6-95  
Revised 5-18-07

## **B. General Policies Concerning Clinical Permits**

1. All prerequisites (i.e., courses, proficiency tests, and/or ACT-PEP or NLN Mobility tests for RN degree-completion students) must be completed successfully at least one week prior to the first day of the semester in which the clinical is to be taken. Students should consult the Undergraduate Catalog for specific course prerequisites.
2. For RN/BS degree-completion students, all proficiency tests, and/or Regents Examination Test results must be on file in the School of Nursing and Health Studies at least one week prior to the first day of the semester in which the clinical is to be taken.
3. A clinical permit will be automatically nullified by:
  - a. failure in a prerequisite course or the equivalent proficiency test;
  - b. a grade of incomplete in a prerequisite course;
  - c. lack of reported scores on Regents College examinations for RN degree-completion students who are required to meet this standard;
  - d. a deficiency in the total number of nursing hours required for the clinical course; and,
  - e. failure to have the current documentation of clinical requirements on file in the college office by June 1 for Fall semesters and December 1 for Spring semesters.
4. Students may not enroll in a clinical nursing course that is scheduled on a unit where they currently work as employees of the agency.
5. A student who has drawn a permit for a clinical nursing course and subsequently is unable to enroll in the clinical as planned, must notify the Nursing Program Coordinator in writing of this change of plan. This notification should be received as soon as possible but no later than 15 working days prior to the start of the semester.
6. Procedures for trading clinical permits:
  - a. When a trade has been arranged between 2 students, the request to trade permits should be submitted to the Nursing Program Coordinator. The request should be made in writing and include the name, Z-ID number, address and telephone number of both students; both students must sign the request and submit their permits to the Nursing Program Coordinator.
  - b. Upon receipt of the written and signed request to trade permits, the request is reviewed, and students notified of approved or disapproved changes.
  - c. All requests for trading clinical permits, as described above, must be received by the Nursing Program Coordinator by 4:30 pm of the designated and posted clinical switch deadline.

Revised 6/2007

## C. Clinical Prerequisite Requirements

This is a detailed list of clinical requirements that **ALL** nursing students are required to have on file at the College of Health and Human Sciences. *Please be aware, the requirements for nursing students are totally separate from the NIU immunization requirements. Please contact University Health Services 815-753-1311 or go to [www.uhs.niu.edu/uhs/immune.asp](http://www.uhs.niu.edu/uhs/immune.asp) for immunization requirements and deadlines.*

**It is mandatory that you have all your clinical requirements COMPLETED AND A COPY SUBMITTED to the Chief Clerk in the Dean's Office, College of Health and Human Sciences (Wirtz Hall) by June 1 for Fall semester admissions and December 1 for Spring semester admissions. For students admitted to NIU as Freshmen, these requirements are due at the completion of your freshmen year by June 1.**

All clinical requirements must be kept current. Non-compliance with clinical requirements will result in withdrawal from your courses and an encumbrance will be placed on your student records.

**You must submit COPIES (not originals) of the following:**

- 1. A Non-Reactive Two-Step Tuberculin Skin Test:**
  - a. This test requires that you receive two separate Mantoux skin tests at least one week apart and no longer than 3 weeks apart.
  - b. Must be **renewed yearly** with a single step TB skin test.
  - c. If previously positive, you must submit chest x-ray and/or TB symptom assessment.
  - d. May obtain from NIU Health Services or other healthcare provider.
  
- 2. Titers for Rubeola, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella, and Hepatitis B**
  - a. A **titer is mandatory** to document immunity. (Note: Vaccination or history of the disease is necessary to develop immunity.)
  - b. The **titer must contain the titer value as well as the reference norm**. The required titers are the following:
    - i. Rubeola IgG
    - ii. Mumps IgG
    - iii. Rubella IgG
    - iv. Varicella IgG
    - v. Hepatitis B surface antibody (**quantitative**).
  - c. May be obtained at NIU Health Services (at reduced cost) or other healthcare provider.
  - d. If a titer does not demonstrate immunity, further vaccination is necessary. Follow-up titer required for Rubeola, Mumps, Rubella, and Hepatitis B. No follow-up titer is required for Varicella.
  - e. Students must sign waiver if no immunity with follow-up titer.
  
- 3. Tetanus-Diphtheria Booster**
  - a. Must be within the last 10 years.
  
- 4. Standard Precautions/Universal Precautions Training.**
  - a. Programs are available at the School of Nursing and Health Studies.
  - b. Must be **renewed yearly**.
  
- 5. Current CPR Certification**
  - a. Exact month/day/year must be noted on card.
  - b. American Heart Association Healthcare Provider (BLS)-**renew every 2 years**.
  - c. American Red Cross CPR for the Professional Rescuer-**renew every year**.

## 6. Professional Liability Insurance

- a. Nursing students are automatically enrolled, through student fees, in a “blanket” professional liability insurance policy through American Casualty Company of Reading, PA. This policy protects against claims arising from real or alleged errors or omissions. The limits of coverage are \$1,000,000 per claim and \$5,000,000 aggregate.

## 7. Evidence of Health Insurance

- a. Nursing students must submit proof of insurance **yearly**. The health insurance photocopy of the membership card, or the paper it is written on, should show the dates of coverage or the date copy is turned in.

## 8. Criminal Background Check

- a. Nursing students must submit to a criminal background check by the Illinois State Police prior to their initial clinical experience. Effective January 1, 2008 the fee for fingerprinting will increase to \$ 68.00. Please complete the appropriate form and submit it with a check for **\$68.00**. See instruction sheet for fingerprinting timing after submitting form.
- b. Criminal background checks must be completed by the dates specified by the School of Nursing and Health Studies and will remain in effect unless: a) clinical agencies determine it necessary to require criminal background checks more frequently, and b) a nursing student interrupts his/her program for one semester or longer. In the above cases, it is mandatory for the student to have another criminal background check performed.
- c. **The school may not be able to place a student in a clinical setting if there are positive findings on the criminal background check. As a result, a student will not be able to complete the requirements of the program.**

## 9. Drug Screening

- a. Nursing students are required to have a five-panel drug screen.
- b. May be obtained at the following DeKalb locations: Kishwaukee Hospital Human Resource Drug Screening Department-(815)748-8332; AIM (Athletic and Industrial Medicine) -(815) 754-1122;  
Or from any health care agency, however, the drug test **MUST** follow a “chain of custody” procedure.
- c. Please sign a release to have the results sent to the Chief Clerk, NIU College of Health and Human Sciences, Dean’s Office, Wirtz Hall 227.
- d. **The school may not be able to place students in a clinical setting if there are positive findings on the drug screening. As a result, a student will not be able to complete the requirements of the program.**

**Documentation of Clinical Requirements MUST BE SUBMITTED to the College of Health and Human Sciences by June 1 (December 1 for spring semester admits). Submit only copies and keep your originals in a file for your own reference.**

Send Requirements to: Barbara Andree, Chief Clerk  
College of Health & Human Sciences  
Northern Illinois University  
Office of the Dean – Wirtz 227  
DeKalb, IL 60115

For your convenience, there are locked drop boxes available outside the Dean’s office in Wirtz 227 and outside Room 190 in the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

## Clinical Requirements – Additional Information

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella Titers

- Documentation of immunity must be in the form of titer lab results or a statement from your health care provider that documents the titer results. Titer results must contain the titer value as well as the reference norm.
- If the titer results you submit to the college office do not demonstrate immunity to either rubeola and/or rubella and/or mumps, you must have a booster series of two MMR immunizations.
- Submit to the college office a record showing that you received the immunizations and the dates.
- Return to your health care provider and have another titer drawn.
- If the second titer results do not demonstrate immunity, then you need to sign a waiver that states you understand the risk associated with continuing in the nursing program, that the school is not liable and that you want to continue in your studies knowing the risk.
- Once you have documented your immunity or signed a waiver you will not need to furnish any further documentation.
- **Varicella (Chickenpox)**
  - Documentation of immunity must be in the form of titer lab results or a statement from your health care provider that documents the titer results. Titer results must contain the titer value as well as the reference norm.
  - If the titer results you submit to the college office do not demonstrate immunity, you must have a varicella vaccination and submit documentation that you had the immunization.
  - Do not obtain another titer after you receive the immunization.
  - Once you have documented your immunity or signed a waiver you will not need to furnish any further documentation.
- **Hepatitis B**
  - Documentation of immunity must be in the form of titer lab results or a statement from your health care provider that documents the titer results. Titer results must contain the titer value as well as the reference norm.
  - If the titer results you submit to the college office do not demonstrate immunity, you must have the Hepatitis B series of vaccinations again and submit documentation that you had the immunizations.
  - One month after you complete the series of immunizations, have a titer drawn and submit the results to the college office.
  - If you continue to demonstrate a non-immune status, you must sign a waiver that states you understand the risk associated with continuing in the nursing program, that the school is not liable, and that you want to continue in your studies knowing the risks.
  - Once you have documented your immunity or signed a waiver you will not need to furnish any further documentation.
  - Once these vaccinations are documented, you will not need to document them again.
- **Tetanus Booster**
  - Documentation of a tetanus booster within the last 10 years. Documentation can be in the form of a signed immunization card or a statement from your health care provider or health department that documents the date the tetanus booster was administered.
- **Tuberculin (TB) Skin test**
  - A two-step tuberculin skin test is required of all on- and off-campus transfer nursing students. The tuberculin skin test will be offered by Northern Illinois University Student Health Service at no cost to you. You may obtain this two-step tuberculin test from your health care provider or from a public health department. Dates and results of the test are a mandatory part of the documentation to begin nursing courses.
  - The second TB skin test must be given one week following the first one. The second TB skin test must be read in 48 to 72 hours. This will require a total of 4 appointments.

- If you have had a TB skin test and reacted positively, you will need to provide documentation from your health care provider that you have a chest x-ray that is negative for active tuberculosis, or, if you have had a negative TB chest x-ray, you can provide a TB symptom assessment statement that verifies you are free of tuberculosis.
- **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification**
  - CPR certification can be obtained at your local hospital or Red Cross Office. If you take a CPR class, it must be for the Professional Rescuer and it must cover infant through adult ages.
  - CPR certification by the American Red Cross is only good for one year.
  - CPR certification offered by the American Heart Association is good for two years.
- **Bloodborne Pathogen (Standard Precautions)**
  - Bloodborne pathogen requirements will be met during your enrollment in NURS 310.
- **Criminal Background Checks \***
  - See Section E for specific information on the Criminal Background Check policy
- **Drug Screening \***
  - See Section F for specific information on the Drug Screening Policy
- **Health Insurance**
  - If you currently have health insurance, bring a copy of your insurance card or policy cover sheet that documents your health care coverage.
  - If you are purchasing student health insurance through NIU, you will not be able to obtain documentation of coverage until classes begin. After receipt of student health insurance documentation, you must submit a copy of your insurance card to the college office.
- **Professional Liability Insurance**
  - You will be automatically enrolled in this coverage through your student fees.

\* If you have a positive drug screen and/or criminal background check, the School of Nursing and Health Studies may not be able to place you in a clinical setting. This will result in your inability to complete the requirements of the nursing program.

If you are in need of a resource to obtain the required immunizations, titers, and TB test you can:

- contact your health care provider,
- a public health department,
- NIU Student Health Center, or
- AIM located at 1985 DeKalb Ave, Suite 300, Sycamore IL. If you use AIM, please call (815) 754-1122 to set up an appointment. At the time of your phone call please inform them you are an NIU nursing student as they provide a discount for our students. AIM is also the resource to have a five panel drug screen performed.

## **RN-BS Completion Students:**

- **Employer Verification**
  - If you are currently employed, many of the clinical requirements necessary for enrollment in the nursing program have also been required and documented by your employer. To expedite verification of these requirements, the School of Nursing and Health Studies developed a form that can be provided to your employer and completed by the employee or occupational health office at your place of employment. The form will be given to you at the Nursing Program Overview session.
  - Random verifications will be performed, and falsification of information will result in dismissal from the nursing program.
  - If your agency does not maintain records, you may obtain the required immunizations, titres, and TB test through your health care provider, a public health department, NIU Student Health Center, or AIM located at 1985 DeKalb Ave, Suite 300, Sycamore IL. Please call AIM at (815) 754-1122 to set up an appointment. At

the time of your phone call please inform them you are an NIU nursing student as they provide a discount for our students. AIM is also a resource to obtain a 5 panel drug screen.

approved by General Faculty 11/2/98  
Revised 5/1/01, 5/19/03, 2/20/04, 4/19/04, 7/2007

## **D. Renewal of Clinical Requirements**

ALL STUDENTS are required to keep CPR Certification, Tuberculin Skin Testing, and RN License (RN degree completion students) coverage active. Students **MUST** submit a photocopy of renewed coverage to the college office prior to the anniversary of the date that coverage expires. Failure to do so will result in the student not being allowed to continue in a clinical course.

## **E. Criminal Background Checks**

Clinical agencies require criminal background checks. There are two types of criminal background checks:

- 1) for clinical agencies;
- 2) for the NCLEX-RN

### ***Clinical Agency Criminal Background Checks:***

All nursing students are required to submit to a criminal background check by the Illinois State Police prior to their initial clinical experience.

- **The School of Nursing and Health Studies may not be able to place students in a clinical setting if there are positive findings on the criminal background check. As a result, a student would not be able to complete the requirements of the program.**

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

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

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

## **F. Drug Use and Testing**

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

Nursing students are required to have a five-panel drug screen based on clinical affiliate's requirements. Release forms must be signed to have the results sent to the Chief Clerk in the college office.

If a student's drug test is positive, secondary or confirmatory testing will be performed and the student will be expected to cooperate with interviews and follow-up procedures to ascertain and endeavor to confirm whether there was an explanation for the positive test result that did not involve illegal conduct, e.g., ingestion of lawful drugs, food, or beverages that could cause positive test results.

If the positive test is confirmed and no sufficiently credible explanation of relevant lawful conduct is forthcoming, clinical placement in an undergraduate clinical course and successful completion of the program will be jeopardized due to failure to qualify for placement and/or successful completion of the program. Students with confirmed positive tests and/or no sufficiently

credible explanation of relevant lawful conduct will be advised that the School of Nursing and Health Studies cannot place them in a clinical setting. As a result, a student would not be able to complete the requirements of the program.

Revised 11/13/01, 4/19/04/ 6 -1-05, 7/2007

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

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

- a) Any recent exposure to a communicable disease, (i.e. chicken pox);
- b) Any elevated temperature in the 24 hours prior to going into the clinical practice setting;
- c) Any physical condition that might put themselves or others at risk.\*  
(\* See Policy on disclosure of HIV status)

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

Approved 3/7/94  
Reviewed 2/6/95; 2/12/96  
Reviewed 2/12/96  
Reviewed 7/2007

## **H. Policy on the Disclosure of HIV Status**

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

HIV testing cannot be required of students without written consent (IL AIDS Confidentiality Act, Section 4). An exception to HIV testing and disclosure occurs if a patient is involved in accidental direct skin or mucous membrane contact with the blood or bodily fluids of a health care worker which could transmit HIV. If the health care worker's test is positive, the patient must be notified. (Sec. 7(b)), IL Aids Confidentiality Act). Both ANA and AMA policy require testing of a healthcare provider in the above situation.

Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96  
Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96

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

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

Students refusing to care for a patient will state their objections in writing to their clinical faculty member. If the faculty member deems it necessary, a student may be referred to the Standards Committee.

Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96  
Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96

## J. Uniform Policy

### Professional Appearance

- Visible tattoos must be concealed, if possible.
- Jewelry must be limited to one ring and one pair of stud earrings worn in the earlobes. Eyelid, nose, lip and tongue rings/studs may NOT be worn during clinical.
- No acrylic nails. Nails must be short, well manicured, and polish should be clear or light colored.
- Hair should be neat, clean, and secured and pulled away from the face.
- Students must also follow clinical agency dress code policy.

Students are required to be in clean, well-pressed uniforms or other attire as specified by the clinical experience. The white shoes and shoelaces must be clean.

On any day that students appear for a clinical course in unkempt, unclean or inappropriate attire (e.g. miniskirts, denim clothes, jeans, cords, or sneakers, etc.), they will be denied the opportunity to participate in the activities of the day. Faculty will automatically record an "F" for each day students are denied access to the clinical course.

Approved by General Faculty 11/2/98  
Revised 2/19/04

#### 1. Uniform Policy for Clinical Courses in Hospital Settings:

- a. A white jacket (optional), a red uniform top, and black uniform pants are required. An NIU insignia must be affixed to the left upper sleeve of the uniform blouse.
- b. An NIU insignia must be placed on the left front upper chest region of the jacket.
- c. White non-canvas shoes and white socks/hose.
- d. NIU photo I.D. badge:  
The photo I.D. badge is provided to you by the School of Nursing and Health Studies. The photo I.D. badge will list your first name and NIU undergraduate student. Photo I.D. are available in the Nursing Main Office, room 190. Call 815-753-6557 to schedule an appointment to have your picture taken for your photo I.D. badge.  
The Nursing Main Office is open between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday – Friday.  
The NIU nursing student photo I.D. will be distributed to students during NURS 310. Students who lose their photo I.D. badge or are retracked will be assessed a replacement fee.
- e. Stethoscope, watch with second hand, and a black ball point pen.

#### 2. Uniform Policy for Clinical Courses in Community Settings:

- a. The NIU nursing program uniform or the attire specified by the community health agency.
- b. Clean, quiet oxford-type shoes.
- c. Students must wear the photo ID badge received in NURS 310 during community health clinical.
- d. Students must follow the professional appearance policies and standards.

Revised 12/1/86  
Revised and Approved 11/21/88  
Reviewed 3/5/90  
Revised and Approved 3/6/92, 3/7/94  
Reviewed 2/6/95  
Revised and Approved 11/29/99  
Revised 5/19/03, 5/18/07  
Revised 5/8/08

## SECTION VIII

### ACADEMIC POLICIES

#### A. Core Performance Standards for Nursing Students

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

##### **MANUAL DEXTERITY** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Use sterile techniques; insert catheters (Foley, NG, IV)
- Perform venipunctures
- Prepare medications and administer (PO, IM, IV)
- Manipulate small objects (lancet, stopcock)
- Open and close medication containers

##### **MOBILITY** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Remain at patient's side for a prolonged period of time for purposes of monitoring and frequent assessments
- Perform CPR
- Assist in lifting and moving patients and patient care materials (bed, chair)
- Move independently to and from patient care areas

##### **PROCESSING PATIENT INFORMATION** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Respond to communication from patients with or without direct view of patient's face
- Respond to monitor alarms, emergency signals, call bells from patients, and orders in a rapid and effective manner
- Accurately assess blood pressures, heart, lung, vascular, and abdominal sounds
- Accurately read a thermometer; identify cyanosis, absence of respirations, and movements of patients rapidly and accurately
- Accurately process printed and computerized information on medication containers, physicians' orders, and monitor and equipment calibrations, printed documents, flow sheets, graphic sheets, medication administration records, and other medical records

##### **MATH COMPETENCY** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Tell time
- Use measuring tools (tape measure, scale)
- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide
- Record numbers
- Calculate medication dosages (PO, Sub-q, IM, IV) and intravenous solution rates

##### **EMOTIONAL STABILITY** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Provide emotional support to patients
- Adapt rapidly to environmental changes and multiple task demands (new admission, patient going to therapy or surgery)

- Maintain adequate concentration and attention in patient care settings
- Maintain behavioral decorum in stressful situations (avoid inappropriate laughter, jokes, comments)

#### **COGNITIVE PROCESSING** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Transfer knowledge from one situation to another (classroom to patient care)
- Assess patient needs based on understanding and synthesis of patient information (know co-morbidities, complex problems)
- Develop effective care plans based on assessments; prioritize tasks to ensure patient safety and standards of care (administer medications & treatments on time)
- Organize and retain information in basic knowledge and skills areas (frequently administers medications & treatments)

#### **CRITICAL THINKING** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Identify cause and effect relationships (religious, ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic)
- Sequence information in a manner that is logical and understood by others
- Make sound clinical judgments and decisions based on standards of nursing care; seek assistance when clinical situation requires a higher level of expertise/experience

#### **INTERPERSONAL/COMMUNICATION SKILLS** – (Activities/Attributes)

- Respect differences in patients; establish and maintain effective working relations with patients, co-workers, faculty, and student colleagues
- Teach and provide information in an accurate and effective manner
- Report critical patient information to other caregivers
- Convey information to others through graphic, print, and/or electronic media in an accurate, timely, and comprehensible manner

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

## **B. Policy Regarding Students with Disabilities or Chronic Health Problems**

Resources and services to assist students with disabilities or chronic health problems are available at NIU. Students who would benefit from such services are encouraged to contact the Center for Access-Ability Resources (CAAR) at the University Health Service as soon as they arrive on the campus or when a need for such services arises.

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

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

## **C. Policy on Fluency in English Language**

International students must complete the computer-based **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** and submit the score to the University. Because nursing education requires a student to communicate effectively with clients, the School of Nursing and Health Studies requires further demonstration of proficiency in English for nursing students.

1. As a prerequisite to NURS 310A, any student who was required to take the TOEFL for entrance to NIU must also take the **Test of Spoken English (TSE)**. The TOEFL and TSE are administered by the NIU English Department as a Second Language Skills Lab.

2. Students for whom English is a second language and who demonstrate deficiency in written and verbal communication, will be directed to nursing's Undergraduate Academic Advisor. The admission records of these students will be examined for a score on the TSE test. If the student has not achieved the required score the student will be required to attend the English as a Second Language Clinic and to demonstrate achievement of a minimum score on the TSE in order to advance in the Nursing Curriculum.

Approved 5/93  
Reviewed 2/6/95, 7/07

## **D. Medication Calculation Test**

A medication calculation test will be administered in NURS 310T. This test must be passed in order for students to participate in the care of patients. The passing standard is 90%. Students may take this test a total of three times. After the third failure, students will receive a grade of "F" in NURS 310T. Students are encouraged to study a medication calculation text and review their specific learning needs with their NURS 310 instructor prior to testing. Calculators may be used.

Proficiency tests for dosage calculations in medication administration are administered in each clinical course.

## **E. Portfolios**

Nursing students are required to maintain a portfolio of their nursing coursework. Students are advised to save all their written papers, including care plans, concept maps, research literature reviews, case study analyses, etc.

At the completion of NURS 424, the student must submit three different written assignments that reflect examples of their best work. While portfolio samples are required, they are not graded. A student who does not submit his or her portfolio will not pass NURS 424.

When written assignments are selected for the portfolio:

- Provide a copy that does not include your name, written comments or any grade or numerical score assigned to the work by course instructors.
- Mark each paper with your ZID number or a code word so these materials may be returned to you.
- Include a cover page that explains why each of the documents was selected and how these documents demonstrate your ability in Critical Thinking, Communication, and Therapeutic Nursing Interventions.

The primary purpose of the portfolio assessment is to evaluate the effectiveness of the nursing education program in guiding students to achieve the program's level objectives. In addition, students whose work is used for this assessment process will be provided feedback on the assessment results.

Portfolio samples will be collected at the start of the 4th semester and evaluated by participating faculty members. After faculty complete their assessment of each student's portfolio, the portfolio will be returned to the student.

Revised 5/19/03, 2/20/04

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **G. HESI Examinations**

The purpose of the HESI exit examination is to prepare students to take the NCLEX-RN examination for registered nurse licensure as well as determine a student's readiness to graduate and successfully pass the NCLEX-RN examination.

1. Students will have three opportunities to take the HESI Exit Examination during their final semester in the nursing program.
2. All students are required to take all three HESI Exit Examinations. Each HESI Exit Exam is administered OUTSIDE of regularly scheduled class hours.
3. The HESI Exit Examination score is included in the final course grade. Other assignments are required that may also affect the final course grade.
4. Students who receive a grade of "D" or "F" for NURS 429 will need to retake the course in the following semester.
5. Students repeating NURS 429 must actively participate in the course until it is completed the second time. Graduation will be at the end of the semester in which the student is repeating NURS 429 providing all other course and university requirements have been met.

Revised 5/19/03, 2/20/0, 7/2007, 5/2008

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

Criteria:

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

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

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

Revised 1/24/00, Revised 11/13/01  
Revised and approved 10/9/06

## **I. Policy for Standardized Grading Scale**

100 – 93 = A  
92 – 85 = B  
84 – 77 = C  
76 – 68 = D  
67 – 0 = F

## **J. Policy Regarding D Grades in Nursing Courses**

Students must repeat, at NIU, any nursing course in which they receive a grade of D or F and receive a grade of C or higher to progress in the nursing curriculum. Refer to the NIU Undergraduate Catalogue for policies and procedures for repeating courses.

Revised 5/19/03

## **K. Policy for Prerequisite Course Grades**

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

Approved 2/1/99

## **L. Policy Regarding Clinical Hours**

Missing over eight hours of clinical time in a clinical course may result in a lower grade.

Approved 1/24/2000, Revised 6.2007

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

Falsification of clinical hours is considered academic misconduct.

Approved 1/24/2000

## **N. Policy for Dismissal from the Nursing Major**

Admission into the professional nursing curriculum does not guarantee continuation in the nursing program. Evaluation of undergraduate students' performance is an ongoing process.

### 1. Criteria for Dismissal

- a. Undergraduate students who fail to meet the standard of a continuous cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better, based upon the completion of at least three courses (9 semester hours) of course work taken at Northern Illinois University are subject to dismissal from the SON. Exceptions to this policy are students who are admitted to NIU as freshmen nursing majors who will have the opportunity to achieve a GPA of 2.5 during the first two semesters of their freshman year. If freshman students do not achieve a 2.5 or better by the end of the second semester of their freshman year, they will be dismissed from the School of Nursing. (Approved Spring, 2005).
- b. A student who receives two grades of "D" or "F" in any combination of required nursing courses.
- c. A student's classroom or clinical performance fails to meet professional standards or constitutes unsafe practice.
- d. A student with confirmed positive drug tests who fails to provide appropriate documentation from a healthcare provider.

### 2. Procedure for Dismissal Review for Unprofessional Conduct or Unsafe Practice.

#### Step 1:

The instructor will notify the student of unprofessional conduct or unsafe practice. If a problem occurs in the clinical area, the student will not be allowed to continue in clinical practice until the review process is completed.

#### Step 2:

The instructor will refer the concern to the Standards Committee for review after conferring with the Chair of the School of Nursing (SON).

#### Step 3:

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

#### Step 4:

Documentation from SON administration, the instructor and the student shall be distributed to Standard Committee members prior to the dismissal review using methods to ensure confidentiality of information. The Standards Committee has a right and responsibility.

Step 5:

The student and instructor shall be invited to address the Committee and present their accounts of situations leading to the dismissal charge.

Step 6:

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

Step 7:

The Standards Committee will make recommendations to the Chair of the SON based on the vote.

Step 8:

The Chair of the SON will make a decision on the dismissal charge, taking into account the recommendations of the Standards Committee. The Chair may accept or reject the recommendations of the Standards Committee.

Step 9:

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

Revised and approved 1/12/07

## **O. Academic Integrity**

The School of Nursing and Health Studies adheres to NIU's policies on academic integrity. The Northern Illinois University policy, as stated in the Undergraduate Catalog, is as follows:

Good academic work must be based on honesty. The attempt of any student to present as his or her own work that which he or she has not produced is regarded by the faculty and administration as a serious offense. Students are considered to have cheated if they copy the work of another during an examination or turning a paper or an assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else. Students are guilty of plagiarism, intentional or not, if they copy material from books, magazines, or other sources without identifying and acknowledging the sources or if they paraphrase ideas from such sources without acknowledging them. Students guilty of, or assisting others in, either cheating or plagiarism on an assignment, quiz, or examination may receive a grade of F for the course involved and may be suspended or dismissed from the university.

A faculty member has original jurisdiction over any instances of academic misconduct that occur in a course which the faculty member is teaching. The student shall be given the opportunity to resolve the matter in meetings with the faculty member and the department chair. If the facts of the incident are not disputed by the student, the faculty member may elect to resolve the matter at that level by levying a sanction no greater than an F for that course. The faculty member shall notify the student in writing whenever such action is taken, and the University Judicial Office shall receive a copy of the Academic Misconduct Incident Report indicating final disposition of the case, which will be placed in the student's judicial file. In all matters where the charge of academic misconduct is disputed by the student or if the faculty member feels a sanction greater than an F in the course is appropriate (such as repeated offenses or flagrant violations), the faculty member shall refer the matter to the University Judicial Office making use of the Academic Misconduct Incident report. Additional sanctions greater than an F in a course can be leveled only through the University Judicial System.

5/19/03

# SECTION IX

## POLICY STATEMENT REGARDING STANDARD PRECAUTIONS AND EXPOSURES

### A. Policy for Standard Precautions

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

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

For students who are not registered nurses (RNs) and who are entering Level I of the Nursing Program, the Nursing educational computerized program must be completed during the first two weeks of the semester and documentation must be received by 4:30 PM on the Friday of the second week of classes. This educational program is available in the computer laboratory in the SON building during the posted hours.

For students who are RNs, standard precautions training may be completed in the following ways (documentation must be received by 4:30 PM on the Friday of the second week of classes):

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

Approved 11/7/94  
Reviewed 2/6/95

### STANDARD PRECAUTIONS (SELF-PROTECTION) PROCEDURES

The following information will aid you in self-protection in the clinical area. These guidelines follow the recommendations set by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and are adapted for application for nursing students from requirements set by federal law (OSHA 1910:1030). For the most recent CDC guidelines, please see the CDC website at [http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/bp\\_universal\\_precautions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/bp_universal_precautions.html).

#### Introduction

Standard Precautions, applies to blood, semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial, pleural, pericardial, peritoneal and amniotic fluids, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid visible contaminated with blood and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids. It does not include feces, sweat, secretions, sputum, tears,

urine, saliva, and vomitus, unless blood is present. Although there is a risk of transmission to the infant from breast milk, breast milk is not a risk to others.

Infection needs four simultaneous conditions to exist. If any one condition is removed, the danger from infection will be reduced or eliminated. The conditions which must exist simultaneously are:

- \* Exposure to blood and/or potentially infectious material
- \* A sufficient virulence to be dangerous
- \* A portal of entry into a host
- \* A susceptible resistance level of the host

Standard Precautions and engineering controls act to reduce or eliminate one or more of these conditions.

## **HANDWASHING**

Hands should be washed with soap and water:

- before gloving
- after each patient contact. If hand washing facilities are not conveniently accessible, hands should be cleansed with an antiseptic hand cleaner.
- immediately after the removal of any personal protective equipment (i.e. gloves).
- after touching any potentially contaminated article.
- before leaving the clinical area.
- before eating.

## **PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT**

1. Gloves should be worn:
  - when it can be reasonably anticipated that hand contact with blood and potentially infectious body fluids, mucous membranes or non-intact skin (i.e. scratch, scrape, cut, sore, scab, rash, ulcer, blister, sunburn, chafe, chapped, irritated) will occur.
  - when performing venipuncture/phlebotomy.
  - when handling items or cleaning surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids.
  - if the skin of the healthcare worker is cut, abraded or chapped.
2. Bandage any cuts before being gloved.
3. Gloves must be changed after each patient contact; disposable gloves shall not be washed/reused.
4. Gloves should be replaced as soon as possible if they are contaminated, torn, punctured or fail to serve as a barrier.
5. Gowns, masks, and/or goggles are to be worn when the potential for occupational exposure exists (splashes, spray, spatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious material and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can be reasonably anticipated).
6. Personnel protective wear is to be removed prior to leaving the work area and placed in the designated container.
7. When performing CPR, an ambu-bag or specially designated (i.e. one-way valve) CPR mask should be used.

## **WORK PRACTICES**

1. Needles are not to be bent or recapped. Dispose of intact needle and syringe in a puncture proof disposal container.
2. Clean surfaces contaminated with blood or other infectious body fluids by removing excess fluid/debris and then cleansing the surface with a 10% bleach solution made fresh daily or other commercial disinfectant. Follow the clinical agency's protocol for soiled linen.
3. In the NIU Nursing lab, soiled linen shall be placed in the Soiled Linen Bag in the Learning Laboratory (NS 115). It will be removed by the commercial laundry personnel.
4. Eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling of contact lenses are prohibited in areas where there is reasonable likelihood of occupational exposure.

5. Food and drink shall not be kept in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets or on counter tops where blood or other potentially hazardous materials are present.
6. Mouth pipetting/suctioning of blood or other potentially infectious material is prohibited. Mechanical pipetting devices are to be used.
7. Specimens of blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be placed in a container which prevents leakage during collection, handling, processing, storage, transport, or shipping.
8. If outside contamination of a primary specimen container containing blood or other potentially infectious materials occurs, the primary container must be placed within a second container which prevents leakage during handling, processing, storage, transport, or shipping.
9. In the event of an exposure incident (i.e. needle stick), follow the Policy for Follow-up for Significant Exposure to Blood/Body Fluids.

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

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

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

1. The student will immediately report the significant exposure to the instructor and will follow the clinical agency's protocol for exposure/injury.
2. It is recommended that the student immediately receive a screening test for HBV, HCV, and HIV at the agency where the exposure occurred, if possible, or within 24 hours at the NIU Health Service or a county health department.
3. It is recommended that the student receive physician evaluation and counseling which provides the student information on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations.
4. If the student refuses any part of the diagnostic testing and/or treatment, the student will be required to sign the "Informed Refusal for Post Exposure Medical Evaluation".
5. The student will complete the School of Nursing and Health Studies "Significant Exposure Report". This report will be placed in a separate confidential file maintained by the Office Supervisor of the School of Nursing and Health Studies. A copy of the report will be forwarded to the NIU University Health Service.
6. As with all healthcare expenses, payment for treatment is the responsibility of the student.

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

## **C. Recommended Procedures Following Significant Exposure**

1. DO NOT DESTROY THE SPECIMEN.
2. Wash the skin with soap and water to rid the skin of all blood and other materials. Apply a disinfectant such as iodine, cover with bandage if necessary. In the case of a needle stick or piercing wound, to flush out infected material, squeeze the area at the base of the wound to make it bleed. For splashes to mucous membranes, wash the mucous membranes with copious amount of water.
3. Report a significant exposure to the NIU instructor and follow the directions of the instructor.
4. Complete the "Significant Exposure Report."
5. Obtain physician evaluation.
6. As with all healthcare expenses, payment for treatment is the responsibility of the student.

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

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

1. The student will immediately report the significant exposure to the instructor and will follow the clinical agency's protocol for exposure/injury.
2. It is recommended that the student receive PPD testing 3 months following exposure. If the student has a positive skin test, the TB clearance policy for screening for tuberculosis included in this handbook should be followed.
3. Students who have TB at sites other than the lung or larynx usually do not need to be excluded from clinical settings.
4. Students receiving treatment for latent TB should not be restricted from clinical settings.
5. It is recommended that the student receive a healthcare professional's evaluation and counseling that provides the student with information on the Center for Disease Control recommendations.
6. If the student refuses any part of the diagnostic testing and/or treatment, the student will be required to sign the "Informed Refusal for Post-Exposure Medical Evaluation form."
7. The student will complete the School of Nursing and Health Studies "Significant Exposure Report." This report will be placed in a separate confidential file in the School of Nursing and Health Studies and a copy will be forwarded to the NIU University Student Health Service.
8. As with all healthcare expenses, payment for treatment is the responsibility of the student.

Source: CDC 1994 Guidelines for preventing the transmission of M. tuberculosis in health care facilities  
Approved by Standards Committee 2/12/96  
Approved by General Faculty 3/18/96  
Revised 7/2007

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
School of Nursing and Health Studies**

**Significant Exposure Report**

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

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SS#:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Local Address and Telephone:**

**Permanent Address and Telephone:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

( ) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

**Description of Exposure:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Nursing and Health Studies**

**STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT**

Northern Illinois University School of Nursing and Health Studies provides an academic program of study for students. Such study includes on-campus laboratory experiences with models and simulators. Technical skills are demonstrated, practiced, and evaluated. Upon the development of beginning competency, these skills are applied in other settings, such as hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and community health centers. All study in these settings is conducted under the supervision of university nursing faculty and/or licensed health care professionals at the facilities. Please review and sign this Statement of Informed Consent to indicate your acceptance of the learning opportunities, risks, and safeguards provided by Northern Illinois University School of Nursing and Health Studies.

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I understand that the School of Nursing and Health Studies will give instruction in Standard Precautions according to recommendations from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). I hereby agree to follow Standard Precautions while I am a student in the School of Nursing and Health Studies. I understand that these Standard Precautions protect myself, my patients, my family members, and other health care workers from infections and/or communicable diseases.

I understand that nursing involves the study and care of people throughout the life span and that these people may be well or ill. By participating in care giving activities, I may be exposed to infectious diseases, such as Hepatitis B, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), and other infectious and/or communicable diseases. It is understood that payment for testing, diagnosis, and treatment of any infectious and/or communicable disease, including those contracted while acting as a caregiver in my clinical experiences with the university, will be my responsibility. **Furthermore, I understand that I am responsible for all personal health care expenses including expenses resulting from accident, injury, or illness while I am engaged in a clinical experience.** Neither the University, the College of Nursing, nor the clinical agencies are responsible for these expenses. I realize that as a student I am required to maintain health care insurance that is satisfactory to the University.

The School of Nursing and Health Studies requires that I get a Hepatitis B series of vaccinations prior to beginning my clinical experience as a nursing student. I understand that the Hepatitis B vaccine is available to me at cost from University Health Services. I understand it is my responsibility while I am a student in the School of Nursing and Health Studies to keep immunizations and other required testing current. I agree to inform clinical instructor(s) or the department head of any health problem that could possibly affect my performance or the welfare of my patients in the clinical area.

**I understand that the clinical agency may request copies of the tests I am required to have before commencement of clinical experiences (Tuberculosis; Titers for Rubeola, Mumps, Varicella, and Hepatitis B; tetanus booster, standard precautions, CPR, drug screening, and criminal background check). If an agency specifically requests copies of my tests, I authorize NIU to release those copies to that agency. I may revoke this authorization at any time (except to the extent that action has already been taken) by submitting a written revocation to ?. This authorization will be considered valid from the date of signature until such time that I provide written revocation of my authorization, or I graduate from the School of Nursing and Health Studies at Northern Illinois University. I absolve and agree to hold harmless the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, and the School of Nursing and Health Studies, together with their officers and employees, from any legal liability, claims or damages which may arise from disclosure of this information.**

In the event that I should be involved with a needle stick or other significant exposure, I have been informed of the most current protocol recommended by OSHA and I understand that the School of Nursing and Health Studies recommends following this protocol.

I have been informed that pregnancy or contraction of a communicable and/or infectious disease may increase my health risk in relation to care giving activities for patients with bacterial and viral diseases. I have also been informed that some vaccinations are contraindicated or have decreased effectiveness in immunosuppressed conditions.

I agree to follow the policies, standards, and practices of clinical agencies while I am at the clinical agency, including HIPAA. I agree that I will not, without the express prior written consent of the agency, divulge confidential information for any purpose other than the performance of the duties of my clinical experience.

I have read the above information and have full understanding of the learning opportunities, risks, and safeguards provided by Northern Illinois University School of Nursing and Health Studies. I have been given an opportunity to ask questions. I acknowledge that I have read this document in its entirety. To enter/continue in the nursing program, I consent to following policies and procedures as explained herein.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

## SECTION X

### STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

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

## SECTION XI

### POLICY STATEMENT FOR THE RN ARTICULATION PLAN

Nurses (RNs) who begin NIU nursing classes within five years of graduating from a two-to-three-year, state-approved program will be granted the appropriate number of escrow credits.

Nurses (RNs) who graduated over five years ago from a nursing program will be automatically granted the appropriate number of escrow credits provided they have practiced as a registered nurse within the last two years. Registered nurses who graduated more than five years ago who have not practiced as a registered nurse within the last two years, will need to demonstrate competency through successful completion of the Regents Examinations for Medical-Surgical Nursing, Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing, Pediatric and Obstetrical Nursing.

Credits will be held in escrow until the Registered Nurse student successfully completes a minimum of 12 nursing credits at Northern Illinois University.

- The Regents College telephone number is: **888/ 723-9267**. FAX: (518) 464-8777
- Regents College can also be contacted at: **[www.regents.edu](http://www.regents.edu)**.

Posting of Proficiency Credit on Transcript:

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

It takes approximately six weeks for the Regents Examination scores to be reported to the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

Note:

1. Successful passing of the Regents Examinations Code 554, 503, and 457 is a co-requisite for enrollment in NURS 424.
2. Regents Examinations scores should be sent to NIU before the clinical permit application deadline, to ensure priority for clinical placement.

#### Extra-departmental Requirements:

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

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

## SECTION XII

### POLICY STATEMENT FOR STUDENT FEES

There are extra fees charged to students taking nursing courses. These Course-Related Fees are charged the semester that the student is enrolled in a course. These fees help to cover extra costs involved in producing certain courses (i.e. professional liability insurance, lab materials, supplies, models and technology). Students will find course-related fees listed by class in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

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

3/5/90  
Revised 3/6/92, 3/5/93, 2/6/95  
Revised 5/19/03  
Revised 6/2007

## SECTION XIII

### ORGANIZATIONS

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

#### A. Student Nurses' Organization

All students who have been admitted to the nursing major are encouraged to participate in the Student Nurses Organization (SNO). The SNO office is located off the student lounge in the School of Nursing and Health Studies. Meeting dates are posted in the School of Nursing and Health Studies. Further information is available from the Student Nurses Organization at 753-0811 or its website at: <http://www.nursing.niu.edu/nuhs/studentorgs/sno.shtml>.

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

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

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

The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau International include:

- Recognition of superior achievement
- Recognition of the development of leadership qualities
- Fostering of high professional standards
- Encouragement of creative work
- Strengthening of commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.

## **C. Nursing Committees**

### **STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

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

#### **Functions of the committee:**

1. Advise nursing administration and faculty on matters of direct concern to students.
2. Advise the School of Nursing and Health Studies student representatives to the College of Health and Human Sciences Student Advisory Committee.
3. Appoint student members to the nursing committees of the School of Nursing and Health Studies (e.g., Standards, Curriculum, General Faculty).
4. Conduct an election in the Spring Semester for nursing representative(s) to the College of Health and Human Sciences Student Advisory Committee.
5. Conduct an election in the Spring Semester for representative(s) to the Nursing Student Advisory Committee.
6. Conduct elections and prepare forms for the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award and the Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction award.
7. Appoint four members for Grade Review Panel.

Revised 6/2007

#### **Membership:**

The Committee will be composed of seven student members selected by secret ballot by the total nursing student body (one student representative from each track of the undergraduate nursing program, one nursing graduate student and one member of the Student Nurse Organization Executive Board).

- a. The Nursing Program Coordinator is an *ex-officio* member.

- b. Chair and Secretary of the Committee will be elected from among the student members of the Committee.

**Voting:**

1. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of members.
2. Meetings may be called with at least 24 hours notice.
3. Minutes of the meetings will be posted on all appropriate bulletin boards in the School of Nursing and Health Studies.
4. Official copies of the minutes will be placed on file in the office of the School of Nursing and Health Studies.

## **NURSING FACULTY COMMITTEES WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATION**

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

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

**STANDARDS COMMITTEE:** This committee includes three student members - one in junior courses, one in senior courses, and one graduate student. The committee develops and evaluates policies and criteria for admission to nursing and for retention in the program. This committee also oversees scholarship awards and develops the standards-related sections of the student handbook. Meetings typically occur on Mondays approximately once each month.

**RESEARCH COMMITTEE:** This committee includes two to four students - one to two undergraduates and one to two graduates. The committee promotes nursing research activities of the faculty and students. This committee meets as needed.

## **SECTION XIV**

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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

#### **Bookstore**

Two bookstores serve the NIU community. The University Bookstore is located in the lower level of the Holmes Student Center. The Village Commons Bookstore is located on Lucinda Avenue at Annie Glidden Road. Required and recommended course materials are available at these locations each semester. These stores have extended operating hours during the first week of classes to facilitate students' purchases. Additionally, students may call the bookstore and request that the required books and course materials be mailed to them. There is a fee for this service.

## **Bulletin Boards**

A variety of information concerning upcoming events, job postings, and announcements can be found on the bulletin boards at various locations in the School of Nursing and Health Studies. Items are also posted on the School of Nursing Student Web Page under Announcements.

## **Computers**

Each semester all nursing students are charged a computer fee that cannot be waived. All students are expected to have at least a beginning level of skill working with computers. Many courses use web based media, group discussions as a means of enhancing teaching-learning strategies. Electronic literature searches and down-loading of available abstracts and full-text articles are available through the NIU Founders Memorial Library. Students are held responsible for learning how to access and use Blackboard. Blackboard is the on-line software program used by at NIU in web-based course enhancements or total on-line courses. All students at NIU are required to use their NIU z e-mail account for correspondence. This e-mail account can be set up to forward to the student's home e-mail when the student is on campus. It is their responsibility to update this account if their home e-mail changes. Networked personal computers are available in the School of Nursing and Health Studies computer lab. File servers provide the lab computers with access to Microsoft office, electronic mail, and web browser software.

### Software in Student Computer Lab:

Microsoft Office XP- Word, PowerPoint, Excel

Microsoft

Internet Explorer

Standard Precautions CAI

Patient Simulation Programs (See School of Nursing Web Page for a listing of simulation programs)

Windows XP

Revised 6/2003, 12/2006, 7/2007

## **Copy Machines**

There is a copy machine in the School of Nursing and Health Studies for student use. Copy cards can be purchased to operate all student accessible machines on campus. Copy cards can be purchased at the Founders Memorial Library and Holmes Student Center.

## **Health Care**

The University Health Service (UHS) provides primary health care to all registered students, full or part time, who have paid on-campus tuition and fees. Students are required to show their current valid NIU photo ID before service is provided. Students may use the Health Service whether or not they are enrolled in the Student Health Insurance program.

The UHS offers hours to meet the scheduling needs of most students. During fall and spring semesters, some weekday early evening, and Saturday hours are available.

Students may utilize the UHS to fulfill clinical requirements for TB screening and required immunizations and titers.

## **ID Cards**

All students must obtain an NIU student Photo ID card. Photo ID cards (also called One-Cards) are required to check books out of the library and to access a variety of NIU services. ID cards are to be obtained from the Holmes Student Center lower level across from the bookstore.

## **Library**

Founders Memorial Library is the main NIU library. The University Libraries collections contain nearly 1.5 million volumes as well as periodicals, government publications, microforms, maps, recordings, and audiovisual materials, and online digitalized resources. NIU Libraries are participants in the Illinet Online System, a network involving 40 academic institutions throughout Illinois. NIU Libraries provide self-help user's guides available at the information desk and online.

## Lounge

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

## Parking at NIU

Nursing students are required to have a university permit to park in the School of Nursing and Health Studies parking lots. The University parking sticker may be purchased at the Parking Division of the University Security Department located at the corner of Normal Road and Lincoln Terrace, across from the Psych-Math Building. These permits are color-coded to correspond to the lots in which they may be used. Maps outlining the color-coded lots are available at the parking office. **If you do not have a parking permit that is appropriate for the School of Nursing and Health Studies parking lots, you will need to park on the street or risk receiving a ticket. The School of Nursing and Health Studies parking lot is not open to vehicles without a parking permit until after 7 p.m. in the evening and on weekends**

## Smoking Policy

NIU is a smoke-free facility and smoking is not permitted near entrance doors.

## Writing Center

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

## Web Page

The School of Nursing and Health Studies web page can be accessed at <http://www.nursing.niu.edu/nuhs>. The website is a valuable tool for you to access recent changes and information regarding the nursing program, scholarship/grant opportunities, special events and speakers, updated job opportunities, etc.

## Additional Services

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

### Service

Child Care  
Student's Legal Assistance Office  
Office of Ombudsman  
Center for Access-Ability Resources  
Office of University Resources for Women  
Center for Black Studies  
Center for Latino Studies  
Office of Testing Services  
NIU Writing Center

### Location

Campus Child Care Center  
Holmes Student Center, 6<sup>th</sup> floor  
Holmes Student Center, Rm 601  
University Health Service, 4<sup>th</sup> floor  
Women's Resource Center, 105 Normal Road  
Center for Black Studies  
Latino Center, 515 Garden Road  
Adams Hall, Rm 128  
SS LL Tower B 753-6636

## SECTION XV

### HELPFUL HINTS FOR NURSING STUDENTS FROM NURSING STUDENTS AND FACULTY

- ◆ Join the Student Nurses' Organization.
- ◆ Save your books, they are needed in other classes.
- ◆ Work as a nurse's aide in the summer, be a summer-study extern, or participate in a summer internship program.
- ◆ Learn to use the library during your first semester at Northern.
- ◆ Learn to use the nursing computer lab during your first semester of nursing classes.
- ◆ Check all courses for pre-requisites and/or co-requisites.
- ◆ Keep your program of study current; for changes contact the Undergraduate Advisor.
- ◆ Check to ensure that you have been given credit for all transfer courses.
- ◆ Keep the documentation of your clinical requirements up-to-date.
- ◆ Become an active member of the School by serving on committees.
- ◆ Check bulletin boards for current notices each semester regularly.
- ◆ Take advantage of the opportunities to practice in the school's laboratories throughout your enrollment in the nursing program.
- ◆ Learn how to use all of the University Resources to your greatest advantage.
- ◆ Initiate your professional portfolio immediately and keep it up to date.

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3/29/95, Revised 4/30/96  
revised 3/7/97 revised 6/4/98  
revised 5/1/00 revised 5/1/01