

SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING
STUDENT POLICIES GOVERNING ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS
(Traditional, ACE RN AND RN-BSN)
IN NURSING

1. The policies are consistent with and supplementary to policies in the current **SCSU STUDENT HANDBOOK** and **UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG**.

2. The provisions of this Manual are not to be regarded as an irrevocable contract between the Department of Nursing and the student. The Department reserves the right to change any provision of any requirement at any time. Students will be notified in writing of such changes within a reasonable time frame. Students are expected to adhere to the most recent updated policies.

Revised – October 26, 2018

BSN PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Incorporates theoretical concepts and foundational knowledge from liberal education to guide nursing practice.
2. Integrate current best evidence and professional standards into nursing practice with consideration of clinical expertise and patient preferences and values.
3. Apply leadership and management principles to achieve quality and safety outcomes.
4. Demonstrate responsiveness to the larger context of the healthcare system regarding regulatory, financial, and political factors that influence the quality and value of care.
5. Function effectively within nursing and interprofessional teams to foster open communication, collaboration, mutual respect, and shared decision-making.
6. Provide patient-centered care that recognizes individual and/or family preferences, values, and needs, respecting patients and families as full partners in care.
7. Promote individual and population health, wellness, and disease prevention at the global/local level.
8. Use information and technology to provide care, communicate, educate, manage knowledge, prevent error, and make critical decisions that optimize patient outcomes.
9. Demonstrate behaviors consistent with social justice, legal and ethical accountability, and professional codes and standards.
10. Minimize risk of harm to patients, providers, and the public through continuous improvement in both system effectiveness and individual performance.

(Revised and approved on 5/18/2017)

**Southern Connecticut State University
School of Health & Human Services**

Department of Nursing

Philosophy

Basis for Philosophy

Nursing is a practice discipline based on a specialized body of knowledge. The knowledge base continues to evolve through qualitative and quantitative research, which are both, valued as a foundation for practice. The essentials of baccalaureate and master's education as described by the AACN (2008) provide the organizing framework for the curriculum. Baccalaureate nursing education is enriched by integrating knowledge from the liberal arts and sciences, which prepares students for study in the major. Graduates of the baccalaureate program are prepared to assume beginning level professional nurse positions in a variety of health care settings. In their professional nursing practice, they will be able to address the need for outcome-oriented and patient-sensitive health care.

The graduate program enables students to acquire advanced knowledge and expertise in the specialized roles of nurse educator and clinical nursing leader. The Graduate Program builds on the competencies of baccalaureate graduates. The Graduate Program is committed to the development of the nursing body of knowledge through research and academic and clinical scholarship. Graduates of the master's program are prepared to assume leadership roles in nursing and health care, participate in health care design and public policy formation, provide leadership in the management of resources (human, physical and fiscal), and contribute to the advancement of the profession through research.

Nursing

Nursing is an art and a science that serves humanity. As a practice discipline, nursing is based on a defined knowledge base developed through the integration of theory and practice. The values embraced by professional nursing include: altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice. While providing care to a community of interest, professional nurses are accountable for safe practice based on current research, legal and ethical guidelines, and accepted nursing standards.

At the baccalaureate level, theories and concepts drawn from nursing, related sciences and liberal education are used to develop holistic approaches to care. Nursing interventions are implemented in a culture of caring and involve interactive partnerships. Within these partnerships, students are expected to utilize the professional and therapeutic self to diagnose human responses and to respond to human needs. Through the nursing process, professional nurses interact with persons in their care to foster the holistic integrity of their family, community, and global position. The experience of interacting with persons changes the nurse as well as the person. Professional nursing, which works within a multidisciplinary team, manifests itself in several roles. At the baccalaureate level these roles include, coordinator and designer of care, clinical provider, manager of services and resources, member of a professional discipline, and advocate for health care standards.

In addition to baccalaureate level competencies, the graduate student develops skills in critiquing, applying, and evaluating a range of nursing and related theories and concepts to develop holistic approaches to care. At the MSN level, outcomes of nursing interventions are analyzed to initiate, change, and improve practice. The roles of advocate for consumer and the nursing profession, change agent within the health care system, manager of systems, and consultant, are incorporated into advanced practice.

Additionally, family nurse practitioners provide care that includes accountability for health promotion, assessment, diagnosis, and management of client problems including prescription of pharmacologic agents.

Person

The Department of Nursing believes that all persons are multidimensional with diverse cultural, spiritual, and socioeconomic backgrounds and deserve recognition for their inherent dignity and worth. They are members of a family, however it may be defined and, as such, share the right to social justice in all settings. To that end, all persons are respected for their individual differences. Nurses are expected to define, design and implement culturally competent care.

All persons have the right to health care and the right to refuse care. Nurses also support the person's right to die with dignity.

Environment

Environments are diverse and reflect psychological, social, and physical components. Environments and persons experience an interactive and reciprocal relationship. Environmental factors such as poverty, pollution, violence, homelessness, abuse, and chronic illness make populations vulnerable. Individual responses to the environment are influenced by health care technologies, information systems and global economics. The focus of nursing is to optimize personal, community, health care and global environments.

At the BSN level, students are expected to understand environmental factors that influence health and health care and incorporate knowledge of these factors in the care they provide. At the graduate level, students use environmental data to draw inferences regarding clients' health problems. Socioeconomic and health policy issues are evaluated to promote and preserve healthy environments for clients.

Health

Health is multidimensional, dynamic, and is defined by more than the absence of disease. It is self-defined in terms of cultural norms, personal beliefs, optimum personal function and quality of life. The professional nurse uses the principles of health promotion/protection, disease prevention, health restoration and maintenance of function in working with clients across the health-illness continuum.

At the BSN level, theories and research from nursing and related disciplines are applied to develop intervention strategies, including teaching and counseling, to promote, preserve and restore health. Independence and effective interdependent relationships are essential to achieve and maintain personal optimal health.

In addition to the BSN competencies, graduate level students acquire skills and knowledge to develop and evaluate comprehensive and holistic approaches to care and provide leadership to effect changes that improve health care practices.

Philosophy of Education

Education is an interactive process that guides and facilitates the acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes. The goal of nursing education is to foster changes in behavior which may be observed through the development of professional attitudes, values, and beliefs, creative thinking abilities, the application of knowledge from the sciences, liberal arts, and humanities, and the performance of professional skills. At the graduate level the goal of nursing education encompasses the acquisition of advanced knowledge and expertise in the specialized areas of nursing education, nursing administration, and advance practice.

The academic environment provides a framework for academic and clinical work while promoting life-long learning. Learning is best achieved in an environment where faculty and students engage in partnership relationships and demonstrate mutual respect for their unique contributions to the learning process. Learning is further promoted in an atmosphere where ideas can be freely expressed and challenged, and the development of creative solutions is enhanced through the use of the critical thinking process. Assisting learners to reach their optimal intellectual growth and development is central to the learning process.

The role of the teacher is to foster learning through the use of a variety of teaching and evaluation methods that recognize and are inclusive of students' diverse talents and ways of learning, stage of intellectual development, sociocultural backgrounds, and previous educational, practice, and life experiences. In addition, faculty provide students with increasingly complex learning experiences that facilitate the acquisition of essential core knowledge and competencies and the development of professional roles and values.

As a partner in the education process, the learner demonstrates accountability for classroom and clinical learning and responsibility for embracing professional attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. The learner is responsible for engaging in self-evaluation and integrating constructive feedback in order to maximize the educational experience.

(Revised and approved February 2000)

Department of Nursing Vision and Mission (revised/approved May 2017)

The vision of the Department of Nursing is to be a center of excellence and innovation in nursing education.

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to prepare nursing graduates to practice, educate, and lead within an evolving, complex world. This is accomplished by:

- Discovering and applying the science of nursing and related disciplines in the pursuit of excellence and innovation, through scholarship and lifelong learning;
- Preparing graduates to incorporate professional standards to provide safe, evidence-based and compassionate care of the highest quality to diverse populations; and
- Providing the foundation for students to develop professionally in order to optimize their contributions within the context of interprofessional practice.

Department of Nursing's Study Abroad Mission and Vision:

It is the vision of SCSU Nursing Department that undergraduate and graduate nursing students will have the opportunity to participate in experiential learning in areas such as global health, providing care to underserved populations, and learning about differing healthcare systems within the United States and abroad.

Southern, as a university, strives to empower every undergraduate and graduate student with the knowledge, skills and perspectives essential for active participation and impassioned, ethical leadership in our rapidly changing, global society. These global opportunities will advance the mission of the department and university by enhancing student learning with opportunities to examine various healthcare environments and develop leadership skills in providing culturally congruent care.

The experiential learning outside of the traditional clinical and classroom environments will encompass work, such as providing care in clinics with underserved populations in impoverished areas both within the U.S. and in countries through the world; visiting and examining varying healthcare systems, engaging in exchange learning with foreign nursing education systems; expanding their perspectives of a global society, and developing cultural congruent care that can be applied to practice in the U.S. and abroad.

I. ATTENDANCE/COMMUNICATION

The nursing major prepares students to assume professional accountability and professional/clinical competence. The student's future practice must be licensed, and carries with it adherence to professional standards set forth by the American Nurses Association and other professional organizations. Therefore, attendance and professional behavior is expected in all classroom, laboratory or clinical settings.

Attendance and prompt arrival correspond to professional accountability. Students are expected to be prepared for all classroom, laboratory or clinical settings prior to scheduled sessions, and to be respectful of their peers and faculty in these settings. No electronic communication devices (i.e. cell phones, pagers, iPods, etc.) are allowed to be "on" in inpatient clinical settings or during class or laboratory except at the discretion of the clinical or classroom instructor. Students may be asked to put away electronic communication devices during class, clinical or laboratory experiences. Computers used in the class or laboratory experiences must be utilized for class work only. Students are expected to regularly check their Owls Email account for course related information and correspondence. Personal Email accounts are not to be used for course communication.

A. Class

Class attendance is expected in all courses in order to meet objectives. The instructor will advise the students of the attendance policy during the first week of the semester in the course syllabus. The policy will include the degree to which lack of attendance will affect grades as well as the rationale. (Refer also to the SCSU Student Handbook).

B. Laboratory (On campus and off campus clinical experiences.)

Students are responsible and accountable to the consumers and providers of health care. Therefore, laboratory/clinical attendance in any setting is required. Students must come at the assigned hour and remain for the scheduled time unless excused by the faculty involved. Students must also understand that they should not come to clinical if they are truly ill or injured in such a way that they cannot participate at clinical. Students should not attend clinical if they:

- Have a fever (temperature above 100 F or 38 C)
Students should be free of fever for a full 24 hours--without medications that lower temperature like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Advil)--before returning to clinical
- Have an open wound
- Have vomiting &/or diarrhea
- Have an undiagnosed rash on exposed skin
- Are on medications that cause significant drowsiness or make them unsafe to drive
- Have been on antibiotics for less than 24 hours for a communicable bacterial infection
- Have herpes infections (including cold sores) that are exposed

Students are required to attend clinical experiences during day/evening and/or weekend hours. Clinical placements are made by SCSU faculty and are based on clinical site and faculty availability. Students are responsible for notifying the clinical agency and/or instructor when absence or lateness is unavoidable. Students must assume responsibility for arranging clinical or laboratory make up with the clinical/laboratory faculty before the end of their clinical rotation. Any clinical absence jeopardizes achievement of course and program objectives. Unexcused absence will result in clinical probation or clinical failure.

Clinical faculty will make decisions when clinical will be cancelled for inclement weather. Students should take into account their own personal safety when driving to and from clinical settings and are responsible for notifying clinical faculty and agency of any absence due to inclement weather.

II. CLINICAL PRACTICE

A. Malpractice Insurance/Licensure

Coverage is provided by the university only when students are participating in university or department clinical activities. Students must adhere to all standards set by the Connecticut Nurse Practice Act and the ANA Code of Ethics as well as institutional policies while participating in clinical experiences.

RN-BSN students must maintain and provide documentation of current RN licensure in the state where students' practice while enrolled in the program

B. Health Insurance

Students must carry their own health insurance.

C. CPR certification/recertification (Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers)

Current Healthcare Provider level (adult/child/infant) Basic Life Support (BLS) certification is required for students to attend any clinical experience. Evidence of BLS for Healthcare Providers certification must be provided to Castle Branch by July 1 or students cannot begin clinical during the fall semester of the junior year. CPR must be updated every 2 years (or as required by the certifying agency) and submitted to Castle Branch (by July 1) ACE students must submit this material (by June 1). Castle Branch requires a copy of the **front & back** of the card and the card **must be signed**. Renewal date will be set two years from the issue date. Students will be cleared to attend clinical when this information is on file. BLS for Healthcare Providers instruction must be an onsite course with skill performance demonstration. This is available through the American Red Cross (BLS for Healthcare Providers) or American Heart Association (BLS for Healthcare Providers).

D. Health Requirements

The following is a list of items required by clinical placement agencies, which must be on file with Castle Branch for students to attend clinical. Health requirements must be submitted by July 1st. ACE students must submit this material by June 1st. Students will be cleared to attend clinical when this information is on file with Castle Branch. Please note that students will be removed from clinical rotations if they do not submit required health and clinical requirements by August 1.

1. Physical Examination:

A complete physical examination is required every year. The physical must be performed by a licensed MD, DO, PA or APRN and must be documented on the health form provided by the SCSU Department of Nursing.

2. Tuberculosis Screening(Annual):

All students must provide documentation of annual tuberculosis screening, also known as a “TB Test”. Screening results must be demonstrated by either of the following methods:

- 2 step PPD initially prior to starting the program, followed by an annual single PPD every year thereafter
- Quantiferon Gold blood test yearly

Please note that if a student has a positive skin or blood test, he/she must submit results of a current chest x-ray, demonstrating no active pulmonary disease. Additionally, if a student has a history of active or latent tuberculosis infection that was treated with medication, he/she must submit evidence of appropriate and complete treatment in the form of a confirmatory letter from his/her primary care physician or pulmonary specialist.

3. Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR):

- All students must provide documentation of immunization or a positive MMR titer.
- For negative or equivocal results on MMR titer, students need to refer to their Castle Branch account for instructions

4. Varicella:

All students must provide documentation of immunizations or a positive Varicella titer.

- For negative or equivocal results on Varicella titer, students need to refer to their
- Castle Branch account for instructions

5. Hepatitis B (HepB):

All students must provide documentation of Immunizations and a positive Hepatitis B titer

- For negative or equivocal results on Hepatitis B titer, students need to refer

to their Castle Branch account for instructions

- **Students who decline the Hepatitis B vaccine must provide a signed Declination Form**

6. Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap):

All students must provide documentation of one dose of Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap) within the past 10 years. Those individuals who are unsure if they have previously received a dose of Tdap should receive a one-time dose of Tdap as soon as feasible, without regard to the interval since the previous dose of Td immunization (Tetanus & diphtheria, also known as a “tetanus shot”).

7. Influenza:

All students must provide documentation of vaccination with the current year influenza vaccine, administered during the current flu season, which is identified by the Connecticut Department of Health as August 1st-March 31st.

8. Additional Clinical and Health Requirements per agency requirements:

Clinical and health requirements are subject to change at any time depending on CDC or the CT Department of Public health recommendations as well as any requirements established by our affiliating clinical agencies.

9. Costs:

The student is responsible for the costs associated with the clinical and health requirements.

E. Dress Code

All students are expected to be professionally attired in lab and clinical and will be guided by faculty and/or agency expectations

1. Navy blue scrubs. Students must order uniforms from the company designated by the Department of Nursing
2. Clean, plain white, black or navy shoes/sneakers. No sandals, open backed or open-weave clogs.
3. A white name pin with navy blue lettering with SCSU Student Nurse below the student’s full name.

3. Students are required to wear a picture ID when participating in clinical practice, as required by Connecticut regulations. If a picture ID is not provided by the clinical agency, the SCSU picture ID is required.

1. Community and psychiatric clinical experience dress code is individualized and determined by the agency’s policies. Clinical faculty will notify students of this

dress code policy before clinical begins

2. Laboratory coat may be required in the laboratory setting (as directed by faculty)
3. A watch with a second hand, black ink pen, and stethoscope are required. Sphygmomanometer may be required for some clinical experiences
4. Jewelry is limited to one pair of stud ear earrings and a wedding band. No other visible body piercing or jewelry is allowed.
5. Some agencies may require that visible tattoos be covered.
6. Hair is to be secured away from the face and off the shoulders
7. Beards and mustaches must be neatly trimmed or male students must be clean shaven (except for religious or cultural practices)
8. Fingernails must be short. Nail polish and artificial nails are not allowed.
9. No gum chewing is allowed in clinical or laboratory.
10. Students are not allowed to use electronic devices (including cellphones) for **personal reasons** while in the clinical setting. **Refer to *Social Media Section*.**
11. When in the clinical area for reasons other than clinical experience (for example during orientation or for clinical preparation), all students must wear a laboratory coat, name pin, and picture ID over appropriate attire. (jeans and sneakers are not acceptable).

Other requirements or deviations from the outlined code may be necessary in specific situations. Faculty will inform students of these as necessary.

F. Transportation

1. A variety of clinical experiences are necessary to meet the educational needs of nursing students in practice areas. Clinical placement is based on course objectives and the availability of clinical sites. Students may be required to travel anywhere within the state of Connecticut when attending clinical experiences, and the base site is considered SCSU and not where the student resides. Students are responsible for their own transportation and any parking or gasoline costs.

G. Occupational Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens Policies and Incident Reporting

1. Students are required to read the CHA (Connecticut Hospital Association) Student Orientation Curriculum Guide and pass the post-test annually.

2. Students must follow the clinical agency's policies regarding occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens. A copy of the Agency Incident Report must be placed in the student's SCSU file if an incident takes place.
3. The SCSU Department of Nursing Incident Report for Accidental Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids must be completed and placed in the student's SCSU file if an incident takes place.

G. Background Checks

Clinical practice experiences in healthcare and other agencies are a required component of program completion and graduation with a pre-licensure credential or baccalaureate nursing degree. Students must meet all standards and requirements necessary to complete required clinical placements. Failure to do so will result in an inability to complete the program.

Many agencies providing clinical practice experiences are requiring that students undergo a criminal background check before commencing the clinical practice experience. The Connecticut League for Nursing (CLN) has engaged an outside contractor to perform criminal background checks on students pursuing clinical practice experiences. The results of the background check will be released to the agencies where clinical experiences are planned. Students must apply directly to CLN and pay all costs associated with the background check. CLN CORE background check must be completed by July 1st, before beginning the program.

It is important to understand that the results of a student's criminal background check may prevent a student from commencing or completing a clinical placement. Failure to complete all required clinical placements will prevent a student from graduating from the Department of Nursing.

The following is a *partial* list of crimes and offenses that may negatively impact a student's ability to complete required clinical placements: any sexual crime, any crime of violence, any drug crime, any weapons crime, property crimes, theft, robbery, burglary, embezzlement or fraud, public intoxication or substance abuse, and other felonies and serious offenses which would not be appropriate in a healthcare/patient care environment.

Additional background and fingerprinting may be required for specific Health Care Agencies at a cost to the students.

H. Drug Screening

Students may be required to participate in a urine toxicology drug screening if this is mandated by the clinical agency where they are assigned for clinical.

- i. Pre-Clinical Drug Screening: Drug screening will occur prior to nursing students' participation in clinical. Drug screening may be repeated thereafter, if required by the clinical

agency that the student is assigned to. An outside vendor (e.g. Castlebranch) will oversee drug screening using certified laboratories. Any records on such tests shall be treated as confidential pursuant to Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Refusal to complete the drug screening as required may result in the student being removed from the clinical rotation, which would lead to course failure.

- ii. If a student tests positive for a prescribed drug, other than marijuana, he/she must provide written documentation to the testing laboratory's Medical Review Officer (MRO).
- iii. Medical marijuana can be certified for specific approved conditions in Connecticut. However, in accordance with federal law, a positive toxicology screen for legally certified marijuana may prohibit a student from being placed in a clinical setting that accepts federal funding. If a student tests positive for marijuana, he/she must provide a copy of a current, valid state of Connecticut certification card for medical marijuana and a written statement from a qualified provider stating that the drug level is within prescribed limits, that the level does not indicate abuse, and that the drug will not interfere with safe practice in the clinical area. The student must provide this written documentation to the Department of Nursing Chair. If a student tests positive for medical marijuana, his/her progress in the BSN program may be delayed or may cease depending on the availability of clinical sites that do not prohibit this substance.

I. Technical Standards

In order to be successful in the Nursing program, students should be aware that the ability to meet the following technical standards is continuously assessed. Students are required to have the physical and mental capabilities to perform in the role of a student nurse.

Students in the nursing program need ability and skills in the following domains: observational/communication ability, motor ability, intellectual/conceptual ability, and behavioral, interpersonal, and emotional ability. Students must be able to independently, with or without accommodation, meet the following technical standards:

Observation/Communication Ability – Nursing students must be able to:

- effectively communicate both verbally and non-verbally with patients, peers, faculty, and other healthcare professionals
- use senses of vision, touch, hearing, and smell in order to interpret data
- demonstrate abilities with speech, hearing, reading, writing, English language, and computer literacy

Motor Ability – Nursing students must be able to:

- display gross and fine motor skills, physical endurance, strength, and mobility to carry out nursing procedures
- possess physical and mental stamina to meet demands associated with excessive periods of standing, moving, physical exertion, and sitting
- perform and/or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medications, operate medical equipment, and assist with patient care activities such as lifting, wheelchair guidance, and mobility

Intellectual/Conceptual Ability – Nursing students must be able to:

- problem solve, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data in order to make decisions, often in a time urgent environment
- incorporate new information from teachers, peers, and the nursing literature
- interpret data from electronic and other monitoring devices

Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Emotional Ability – Nursing students must be able to:

- tolerate physically taxing work loads and function effectively during stressful situations
- display flexibility and adaptability in the work environment
- function in cases of uncertainty that are inherent in clinical situations involving patients/clients
- possess the skills required for full utilization of the student’s intellectual abilities
- exercise stable, sound judgment
- establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with others from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds
- accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical setting

Note: Students may be asked to provide documentation from their healthcare provider that they are safely able to return to clinical or class after an injury, extended illness, or disability (see SCSU Student Handbook).

II. Assignments, Examinations, Grading and Reporting of Grades

A. Assignments

1. Students will be provided a detailed course syllabus at the beginning of each course.
2. All assignments within courses must be submitted in order to meet course requirements.
3. Faculty reserve the right to retain papers and assignments. Students are encouraged to make copies of all papers prior to submission to the faculty. The copiers in the Department of Nursing are not available for student use. Printers are available in the Nursing Library and the New Nursing Building Computer station for use with a Hoot Loot card.
4. Student papers and other written assignments are due on the date specified by the faculty unless specific arrangements have been made by the student with the faculty member prior to the due date of the assignment. Refer to the course syllabi or the SCSU Student Handbook for specific consequences.

B. Examinations

1. University policies concerning examination procedures (including laboratory practicum exams) will be strictly enforced. (See SCSU Handbook)

2. All examinations must be taken on the day scheduled. If there is an excused absence for an examination, agreed upon by the faculty member for an extenuating circumstance, students must assume responsibility for making arrangements with the appropriate faculty member within one week for a make-up exam; otherwise, the grade automatically becomes a zero. Documentation from the student's health care provider is required in the extenuating case of illness. Make up exams may be in a different format than the original exam.
3. When a student is late for an examination, the student will be permitted to take the exam but will not be given additional time. Faculty may deny students access to an exam. Students will then be required to make up the exam, otherwise the grade automatically becomes a zero.
4. Students are neither allowed to keep examination or test papers nor to copy test questions and answers. Students may review their own papers at the discretion of the faculty. Students are not allowed to tape record or photocopy exam reviews. Doing so will automatically be considered academic dishonesty.
5. Dictionaries of any kind that translate words into other languages are not permitted during exams. This is consistent with the expectations of the NCLEX exam.
6. Any activity related to recording or sharing of content or answers on written, practicum or computer generated exams will be considered academic dishonesty.
7. Before students receive course accommodations for a disability related need in a nursing class, the students must make an appointment with the Disabilities Resource Center and provide documentation to course faculty. Students should speak to their instructor about accommodations, or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, as soon as possible after the course begins.
8. All students must perform in the expected standard time allotment for Health Assessment Practicum Exams or for Evidence Based Nursing Interventions Practicum Exams. Students are encouraged to access laboratory resources prior to practicum exams to ensure optimal outcomes

C. Grading

The grading system of the Department of Nursing will be in accordance with those policies set by the governance of the Connecticut State University as indicated in the Student Handbook. The numerical ranges that are used in the Department of Nursing are as follows:

A+	97-100	C+	77-79
A	94-96	C	74-76
A-	90-93	C-	70-73
B+	87-89	D+	67-69

B 84-86
B- 80-83

D 64-66
D- 60-63

Students in the Department of Nursing must attain at least a “C+” in all nursing prerequisite course and in all nursing courses. A GPA of 2.3 in the nursing program must be maintained to remain in the nursing program.

Students receiving an “Incomplete” are referred to the Student Handbook, University policy governing incomplete grades. Course withdrawal policies are in accordance with the university policy.

D. Conferences

All conferences between students and faculty regarding student difficulties with academic progress will be documented, dated, and retained by faculty in the student’s academic folder.

IV. CONTINUATION IN THE NURSING PROGRAM

- A. Direct Admit Progression Policy (refer to Appendix A)
- B. Medication Calculation Exam

As a requirement of the Department of Nursing, students in the traditional undergraduate program and the ACE RN program are required to pass the Medication Calculation Test during the summer prior to their admittance into the fall or summer semester.

The exam will be given on three (3) scheduled dates during the summer. All entering part-time and full-time students in the nursing program must take and pass the medication calculation exam before providing clinical care. Students must pass the Medication Calculation Test with a grade of 100%. Traditional nursing students who are unable to pass this exam after three attempts will be required to withdraw from clinical or laboratory courses in the fall and must continue the program on a part-time basis. Students may take the medication calculation test three more times the following summer. Traditional nursing students who are unable to pass the exam with a grade of 100% after six attempts will be dismissed from the BSN program and are ineligible to reapply. Information regarding this mandatory test will be presented to students in the admission information packet during advisement and on the Department of Nursing website. Transfer students are also required to take the SCSU Medication- Calculation Exam.

ACE students will be offered the medication exam six (6) times prior to the beginning of their enrollment in any nursing courses, since only full-time study is available in the ACE

program. ACE students who are unable to pass the exam with a grade of 100% after six attempts will be dismissed from the program and are ineligible to reapply.

C. Academic Standards

- In order to graduate with a major in nursing, an overall achievement of 2.0 GPA must be maintained. Otherwise, the student will be terminated from the nursing program and will be ineligible to reapply to the generic or ACE nursing program.
- The student is responsible for monitoring his or her own academic and clinical performance/progress and must seek consultation with the instructor/academic advisor if unusual issues/situations exist which may affect academic or clinical performance. Students are expected to be an active participant in their academic and clinical progress and are responsible for following through with recommendations made by clinical or theory faculty.
- A temporary grade of Incomplete (I) is recorded when a student has a valid reason for not meeting a partial requirement in a course prior to the termination of the semester. The student should discuss the reason for the incomplete status with the course instructor. If the incomplete is granted the student has until 30 days after the next semester begins to complete course requirements. The course grade will automatically be converted to a failure in the course (F) if the student does not complete the work within thirty days after the next semester begins (see SCSU Student Handbook).
- Prior to completion of NUR 443 (Nursing Capstone), students are required to take all three HESI RN Exit NCLEX predictor exams. Students must earn a score of 900 or above on at least one of the HESI RN Exit exams or provide evidence of registration for a comprehensive NCLEX-RN review course in order to receive a grade in the NUR 443 course. The HESI RN Exit exam will be administered three (3) times during the course. The highest score of the three will be counted as 25% of the final course grade. Note: For ACE Students, HESI RN Exit v1 is typically administered prior to the start of NUR 443 (Nursing Capstone)

Please note that successful completion of Nursing 443 is required for program completion. Once the student has provided evidence of registration to the student's Nur 443 course faculty, the grade earned in Nursing 443 will be posted in Banner as the final grade for the course.

However, if the student does not achieve a minimum score of 900 on at least one HESI RN Exit exam AND does not provide evidence that he/she has registered for *any comprehensive NCLEX review course*, the student will receive a grade of "F" for Nursing 443 and be required to repeat the course the next time it is offered for students in that program.

D. Academic/Clinical Probation/Course Failure

1. The following occurrences result in Academic/Clinical Probation Status:

- a. A grade at midpoint in course (fourth week in a seven-week course or seventh week in a 15-week course) is below “C+”. Academic probation status is discontinued when the student passes the theory portion of the course at semester end.
- b. Clinical probation may occur at any time during the course when students are not meeting clinical objectives or professional behaviors identified on the clinical evaluation tool. Students will be notified in writing and a plan for remediation will be outlined by the clinical faculty. The clinical faculty member will notify the program coordinator and the student’s advisor of the student’s probation status. If a student withdraws from a clinical course due to a failure or pending failure on a clinical evaluation tool (CET) it will be considered a nursing course failure. Clinical probation status is discontinued when the student passes the clinical objectives.
- c. Failure in any nursing course at the end of the course (Below “C+”). This includes failure to meet clinical objectives. In fact, students failing a course clinically receive a grade of “F” despite other grades achieved in the course. Failure in any nursing course will result in the student being placed on academic probation. The appropriate program coordinator will notify, in writing, any student who is on academic probation due to clinical or course failure at the end of the semester.
- d. A failure in the clinical component of a course requires students to repeat both the theory and clinical portion of the course.
- e. Students who are on academic probation for course failure may continue in the nursing program provided they meet course prerequisites for subsequent courses. Students will be allowed to repeat a course the next time it is offered in the student’s program if space is available in the course. Departmental Permission is required prior to registering.
- f. Students admitted to the traditional nursing program must follow the course sequencing outlined in their program of study. ACE students must continue with an ACE cohort, regardless of prerequisites. ACE students are not allowed to make up courses (after course failure or withdrawal) in the traditional nursing program. Traditional nursing students are not allowed to make up courses (after course failure or withdrawal) in the ACE program.
- g. The appropriate program coordinator will notify, in writing, any student who is placed on academic probation.
- h. Rounding up of grades will only be done when final grades are calculated (0.5 or above will be rounded up)

E. Academic Dismissal

1. Conditions under which students are subject to academic dismissal are found in the SCSU UNDERGRADUATE CATALOGUE and STUDENT HANDBOOK.

2. The following occurrences result in academic dismissal from the Department of Nursing:
 - a. Failure (below C+) of any two nursing courses in the nursing program.
 - b. Failure (below C+) of the same nursing course more than once.
3. Original grades will be used to determine students' academic status for purposes of probation, progression, and dismissal in the Nursing Program. Replacement grades will not be considered for the above purposes.
4. Students receiving academic dismissal from the Department of Nursing are ineligible to continue or apply for readmission to the generic or ACE program.
5. The appropriate program coordinator will notify, in writing, any student who is being dismissed from the nursing program.

F. Withdrawal

1. Any student in the Department of Nursing has the right to withdraw from the nursing program. A terminal interview with the student's faculty advisor and the Chairperson must be arranged by the withdrawing student. There is no guarantee, however, that a student who has withdrawn will be readmitted to the nursing program. (Refer to the SCSU Student Handbook.)
2. Students who withdraw from any of the undergraduate programs (Traditional, ACE, or RN-BSN) (or take a semester or longer leave of absence) and wish to return to the nursing program, must request readmission within two academic years of withdrawal. Students should submit a letter to the appropriate program coordinator explaining the reasons for withdrawal (the semester before admission is being requested). Readmission is not guaranteed and is dependent upon the students' potential for success, current availability of learning opportunities and department resources. Students must follow the designated plan for readmission, including demonstration of clinical competency. If more than two academic years have passed since withdrawal from the Nursing program, students will be required to reapply to the Nursing program, and repeat all nursing courses.
3. ACE or generic students who are not enrolled in clinical courses for more than one semester will be required to make an appointment with the lab coordinator to review and demonstrate competency in performing selected nursing interventions/assessments necessary for continuation in clinical courses. This must be completed prior to the first week of the semester.
4. Refer to the SCSU Undergraduate Catalog and Student Handbook for the policy on course withdrawal and late course withdrawal. A late course withdrawal is viewed as an exception to the general policy. Late course withdrawal may be granted only for extenuating circumstances,

such as prolonged illness. Poor grades are not to be interpreted by the student or the instructor as extenuating circumstances. A potential or pending course failure is not to be considered as a justification for a late course withdrawal.

- G. Academic honesty/dishonesty (refer to current SCSU Undergraduate Catalog, SCSU Student Handbook, and BOR/CSCU Code of Conduct).

The following excerpt on academic honesty is directly quoted from the [SCSU Undergraduate Catalog 2018-2019](#).

A. The integrity of scholarship is the cornerstone of the academic and social structure of the university. It is the expressed policy of the university that every aspect of undergraduate academic life, related in whatever fashion to the university, shall be conducted in an absolutely and uncompromisingly honest manner. Violations of academic honesty are grounds for a failing grade and may result in dismissal from the university. For more information, see the SCSU Student Handbook or BOR/CSCU code of conduct.

B. Behavior that falls under the heading of academic misconduct, includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism and all forms of cheating. Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- a. The use of unauthorized assistance in taking examinations. The giving and receiving of aid on examinations.
- b. Use of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments
- c. The acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the University faculty or staff. The theft of course material
- d. Engaging in any other behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus

C. Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another writer and presenting them as your own. It is a kind of academic theft, and is therefore dishonest. Once your name appears on an essay or term paper, you are stating that the ideas and language in the paper that are not attributed to another are entirely your own, and the reader assumes that this is your work. An obvious form of plagiarism is copying the exact words from your source without providing quotation marks and without giving credit to the source, usually in a citation. A less obvious, but equally dishonest form of plagiarism is the changing of a few words (paraphrasing) or using of an author's original idea without properly introducing and documenting that change or usage. The ideas, interpretations, and words of an author belong to the author. They are the author's property. They are protected by law and they must be acknowledged whenever you borrow them.

- D. An incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in the following ways:
- a. The instructor may take direct action, including personal reprimand, or re-examination, additional assignments, lowering of the grade for the paper or course, failure in the exam or the course itself. In all cases, the instructor shall inform his/her department chairperson and the appropriate dean in writing.

The Judicial Officer may also be notified. Students shall have the right to appeal the decision of the instructor or the sanction imposed by utilizing the Grade Change Policy found in the Academic Information of the current SCSU Student Handbook. Students will be referred to the Judicial Officer.

- b. If an instance of academic misconduct is reported by a member of the university community other than the relevant instructor, the Vice President or Dean of Student Affairs or his/her designees will inform the Academic Vice President or his/her designee. The Academic Vice President or his/her designee will inform the relevant instructor. If disciplinary action seems warranted, “the case will be presented to the appropriate Judicial Officer or Board or panel by the Vice President of Student and University Affairs.” (SCSU Student Handbook), also see current SCSU Student Code of Conduct Policy on Academic Misconduct.
- c. Students are also not permitted to purchase (from paper mills or other sources) or share papers (or parts of a paper) and submit them for course/program written requirements in the nursing program. Students are also not allowed to submit a paper for one course that has been used in another course. Any work that is assigned as individual work (such as a written paper or take home test) must be completed only as the student’s own work- assistance from others or group work is not permitted and is considered an act of academic dishonesty.
- d. **Social media** is defined as a method of communicating electronically through use of chat rooms, blogs, share sites, social networking sites, video or web broadcasting sites and other online forums of any kind.
 - a. Electronic communications are not considered a secure method for transmitting confidential or private information. Examples of social media include but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, Podcasts, MySpace, Allnurses.com, Instagram, RSS feeds. Improper use of social media by nursing students may violate state and federal laws established to protect confidentiality and can result in both civil and criminal penalties, including fines and possible jail time.
 - i. No texting, talking or cell phone use in clinical areas or classroom/lab without permission of faculty. Cell phones/smartphones are only allowed for information gathering related to clinical situation (if permitted by faculty or agency) during clinical, laboratory, or classroom time. Otherwise, cell phones need to be turned off.
 - ii. No videotaping or still pictures of patients/clients/clinical sites without written permission of patient, faculty and institution, or clinical site.
 - iii. No videotaping or still pictures of professors or fellow students for personal or social media use without written permission of those you are taking pictures of or videotaping
 - iv. Clinical agencies/sites may require further restrictions that must be adhered to

- b. Online comments by nursing students regarding faculty, peers, coworkers, and clinical sites, even if posted after clinical or didactic hours may constitute lateral violence or misuse of social media. Lateral violence includes disruptive behaviors of intimidation and bullying which is detrimental to the Department of Nursing faculty and students, and may result in legal action against the nursing student. As nursing students you will want to represent the School in a fair and positive manner, and need to keep in mind social media sites are public and information accessed can be traced back to the sender even after they have been deleted. Nothing posted or transmitted by social media is private.

Consequences

- a. Violation of the social media policies will result in departmental, University or other disciplinary action. (SCSU Student Handbook)
- F. BOR/CSCU-SCSU Student Code of Conduct – Students are expected to adhere to all provisions of the current Student Code of Conduct as posted on the SCSU website.

G. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The STUDENT HANDBOOK outlines procedural information for student grievances.

V. STUDENT BEHAVIORS

The following behaviors and actions are recognized as fundamental to nursing practice. The ANA Guide to the Code of Ethics for Nurses (2008) provides the framework for these student expectations.

- A. Students Clinical Expectations:
 - 1. Demonstrates responsibility and accountability for practice by adhering to course expectations
 - 2. Demonstrates responsibility and accountability by completing written assignments on time
 - 3. Demonstrates respect for patients and the profession of nursing by adhering to the SCSU Department of Nursing and agency dress code policies/behavioral expectations
 - 4. Maintains privacy and confidentiality of health related information
 - 5. Delivers care in a non-judgmental and non-discriminatory manner sensitive to client diversity
 - 6. Realistically assesses own strengths and limitations, seeks help appropriately and is responsive to constructive criticism regarding performance

7. Seeks out new opportunities for learning and professional development
8. Demonstrates adequate preparation for clinical responsibilities
9. Works in collaboration with team members and agencies

B. Examples of student nurse behaviors which may result in clinical probation, dismissal, and/or failure include:

1. Falsifying a client's record
2. Violation of HIPPA regulations (i.e. breach of clients' confidentiality)
3. Failure to adhere to principles of safe nursing practice (i.e. safe medication administration)
4. Inadequate preparation for clinical responsibilities
5. Inability to recognize limitations and failure to seek appropriate help in time-sensitive situations
6. Dishonest communication with clients, families, faculty, agency staff
7. Denying responsibility for one's actions
8. Participation in actions that may threaten the safety of clients, peers, faculty, others in the clinical setting (i.e. being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, verbal/sexual/physical abuse)

C. Unsafe practice is a violation of any part whatsoever of the above identified areas of safe practice. (Refer to the SCSU Student Handbook grievance policy.)

1. Unsafe practice, in any form, results in Disciplinary Action.
 2. A student will be suspended from the clinical experience immediately if, in the professional judgment of a faculty member, the student has demonstrated unsafe practice in a clinical/laboratory area or exhibited unprofessional behavior.
 3. The faculty member, as the primary clinical instructor, who suspended the student will immediately notify the Course Coordinator and Chairperson of the BSN Program Committee.
 4. It is understood that the primary clinical instructor is solely responsible for evaluating the student and assigning the student grade for the clinical experience. The BSN Program Committee, ACE Program Committee, or the RN-BSN Program Committee serves as a forum for record keeping and notice to the student and is not responsible for grading the student. (SCSU Student Handbook.) The clinical faculty is responsible for notifying the student of the grade for clinical.
5. In the event a student demonstrates unsafe practice in the clinical setting the agency standards may take precedence **over the Department of Nursing guidelines**

6. The students have the right to appeal the final course grade (see SCSU Student Handbook)

VI. PROGRAM EVALUATION Program Outcomes

Students will be expected to participate in methods of assessment/evaluation of program outcomes.

VII. PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION/LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

National Student Nurses' Association

Southern Connecticut State University Student Nurses' Association

This organization's membership is open to all students attending Southern Connecticut State University who are interested in nursing as a major or are currently enrolled in the nursing program. Becoming a member requires payment of dues to the National Student Nurses' Association which automatically makes one a member of the Connecticut Student Nurses' Association.

Southern Connecticut State University Student Nurses' Association functions under a Constitution and Bylaws in concert with the National Student Nurses' Association and is associated with the Student Activity Program at Southern.

Students are encouraged to join and maintain membership in SCSU NSNA as a beginning professional activity.

SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL

Mu Beta Chapter

Sigma Theta Tau is an International Nursing Honor Society. Students completing their junior year or RNs who have completed one-half of the nursing components are invited to join the organization if they have met the following criteria: a 3.0 G.P.A., (rank not lower than the highest 35 percent in their class in scholarship) and meet the professional standards of the Nursing Program. Membership includes graduate and undergraduate nursing students, alumni, faculty, and community nursing leaders.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

Students may volunteer to represent the junior or senior level class at BSN Committee and ACE Committee meetings during the year. Students are responsible for bringing student suggestions and/or concerns to the BSN Committee and also to share information from the BSN and ACE Committee meetings with students in their class.

VIII. AWARDS

"Immaculata M. Alba Excellence in Nursing" Award

The Department of Nursing will present an “Immaculata M. Alba Excellence in Nursing” Award to the graduating senior(s) in recognition of excellence in academic theory and clinical practice. The Award will be made to a graduating senior(s) who, in the opinion of the faculty, has/have demonstrated a high degree of excellence in nursing and has/have attained a GPA, including grades of “B” or better in all nursing courses.

The award will be presented at the Honors Convocation by the Department Chairperson and at the Pinning Ceremony.

“Service” Award

The Department of Nursing may present a “Service” Award to a graduating senior(s) in recognition of outstanding performance and commitment to pre-professional, community activities and/or unique learning experiences, which enhance the educational process.

The Award will be made to a graduating senior(s) who has/have attained at least a 2.7 or greater total GPA. Students eligible for the Award will be notified by the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing and asked to submit substantiating evidence for their involvement in pre-professional, community and/or other activities. Students may nomination (or self- nominate) a peer for this award.

At the Department Faculty Meeting, the faculty will have the opportunity to submit additional data and determine the recipient(s) of the Award.

The Award will be presented at the Honors Convocation by the Department Chairperson and at the Pinning ceremony.

“CLN Peer Recognition Award”

Students will be asked to nominate a peer who exhibits clinical excellence for the CLN Peer Recognition Award every year. The award is presented at the CLN Annual Student Day in the fall.

Other Awards and Scholarships

Other student awards and scholarships may become available for students in the nursing program. Students are encouraged to review the bulletin board outside the nursing lab periodically for scholarship announcements.

These policies are reviewed yearly by the Department of Nursing Faculty. Students will be notified of the policies at the beginning of the fall semester of their junior year and then yearly if any substantive revisions are made.

Revised and Approved

July 18, 2018

Appendix A
Direct Admit Progression Policy

- A. Students, who were admitted to the Nursing Program through the Direct Admission application pathway, must achieve the following by end of Fall semester of sophomore year in order to progress into the BSN upper division major courses in the Undergraduate Traditional Baccalaureate Program in Nursing:
- 1) Maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0. [and]
 - 2) Completion of at least 7 of the 11 required pre-requisite courses with a C+ or greater [and]
 - 3) No more than 2 earned grades lower than a C+ for any of the required nursing prerequisite courses

Students, who do not meet the above criteria*, will need to re-apply for admission as outlined in Step 2 of the Dual Admission pathway application process. This includes the following:

- 1) Complete BSN Nursing Application, which is accessible on the Nursing Department's home page, and submit by February 1st. All information pertaining to the application will be provided on the application itself.
- 2) TEAS exam completed through ATI testing with score submitted by February 1st

Note: Admission to the nursing program is competitive. Although the minimum CUM GPA required for the application is a 3.0, the average CUM GPA is much higher for those admitted to the program. Qualified applicants may not be accepted because of a limit in the number of clinical placements. CUM GPA, GPA in just the prerequisite courses, and the TEAS exam score will be used as a way of evaluating students for acceptance into the nursing program. The number of repeated prerequisite courses are also taken into consideration.

*Note: Students who have more than 2 earned grades lower than C+ for any of the required nursing prerequisite courses are not eligible to re-apply for admission.

