



## Department of Nursing

# Nursing Student Handbook

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## **Disclaimer Note to Student & College/School Offices of Academic and Student Affairs**

This Nursing Student Handbook is intended for information purposes only. The provisions of this Nursing Student Handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student, or faculty member and the Texas A&M System or Texas A&M University – Texarkana (TAMUT). Although every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of information in this publication, the Texas A&M System, TAMUT, and the Department of Nursing reserve the right to change course offerings, fees, tuition, academic calendars, curricula, degree requirements, graduation procedures, and any other requirement affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. The Department of Nursing, at all times, retains the right to dismiss a student who does not attain and maintain adequate academic or clinical performance or who does not exhibit the personal and professional qualifications required for the practice of nursing.

Updates and changes are made annually to the handbook. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to make changes to policies and procedures without notice as necessitated by governing authorities or administrative needs.

Detailed instructions on processes related to the Offices of the Registrar, Financial Aid, and Student Business Services can be obtained by contacting the respective office or visiting their websites. See the TAMUT website for contact information on each of these offices. [www.TAMUT.edu](http://www.TAMUT.edu)

## **Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy**

It is the policy of the TAMUT and the Department of Nursing to ensure equal opportunity. The Department of Nursing, in compliance with applicable federal laws, applicable federal and state laws and regulations, and national accreditation requirements does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, sex, age, religion, handicap, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices or procedures.

The Department of Nursing complies with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's handicap in its admission, accessibility, treatment, and employment of students in its programs and activities. The Department of Nursing provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to students with handicapping conditions, as defined under the law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution's academic requirements. For additional information, contact the TAMUT Office of Student Life as listed on the Website.

## **Texas A&M University – Texarkana**

### **History of Nursing Program**

Founded in 1971 as an upper division university, East Texas State University (ETSU-T), located on the existing campus of Texarkana College, became a member of The Texas A&M University System in September 1996, changing its name from East Texas State University – Texarkana to Texas A&M University – Texarkana (TAMUT). Texas A&M University - Texarkana continues to be the only upper division university in a nine-county area of Northeast Texas.

In 1996, as the University became a part of the Texas A&M University System, discussions among Texas A&M University – Texarkana, community members and local health care providers focused on consideration of new health care programs for the university. From this group, a request emerged for the university to provide opportunity for higher degrees in nursing.

The first degree to be offered was the RN to BSN degree in 2002. The RN to BSN program was initially accredited in 2004 by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and reaccredited with no recommendations in 2009. In 2012 the Department of Nursing became a part of the College of Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (C-STEM).

The traditional track leading to the BSN degree and eligibility to sit for the NCLEX-RN licensure exam was approved by the Texas Board of Nursing in 2016. Students will begin coursework in the summer semester, 2017.

The Master of Science in Nursing program (MSN) at Texas A&M University – Texarkana evolved from a needs assessment study conducted by the Northeast Texas Workforce in 2006 - 2007, indicating a need for nurse educators and nurse administrators in the region. By virtue of state funding, augmented by private, local foundations, the program was established. The MSN program with two specialty tracks – Nursing Administration and Nursing Education – was approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 2008. The first class was accepted in the fall, 2008. The MSN in Education track ceased course offerings in Spring, 2013 because of low enrollment with most students transferring and completing a degree in the administration track. The MSN in Administration degree continues to the present day.

The baccalaureate degree in nursing and the master’s degrees in nursing at TAMUT are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) (<https://www.aacnursing.org/ccne-accreditation/find-accredited-programs>). The BSN program received initial CCNE accreditation in October 2003. The MSN program received initial accreditation from the CCNE in 2008.

## **CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS**

Nursing education is a collaborative process among students, faculty, and the learning environment. It draws from the fields of physical and social science and liberal arts to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills essential for nurses to meet client, family, organization, and system needs. Course and clinical experiences throughout the curriculum are designed from simple to complex, beginning with foundational courses in liberal arts and sciences which are then built upon in nursing classes.

## **Department of Nursing Philosophy**

The philosophy of the Department of Nursing reflects the mission and goals of TAMUT. The University and the Department of Nursing strive to provide academic excellence and support students in achieving

academic success by providing challenging, engaging and rewarding educational experiences. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, students are afforded the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, abilities and skills to become leaders in their chosen profession and to prepare for the opportunities of serving in a global environment. The values identified by Texas A&M University – Texarkana are academic excellence, student success, integrity, and community engagement.

The faculty of the Department of Nursing contributes to the University vision by providing excellence in online nursing education. The curriculum is structured on current professional standards and the *Master's Essentials* (AACN, 2011) as a framework for practice at the master's level. In addition to the competencies inherent in graduate nursing practice, the program provides advanced knowledge in the area of nursing administration and leadership. Learning activities are planned to assist the student to acquire advanced knowledge and skills for critical thinking, communication, assessment and leadership. Clinical practicum experiences provide opportunities for development of leadership and management skills in practice settings.

The faculty of the Department of Nursing supports students in achieving academic success through emphasis on nursing as both an art and a science. Nursing practice is presented from a basis of theory and evidence, grounded in caring, ethics and integrity. The students are supported as they further their knowledge of science, theory, research and continue to develop skills in critical thinking. Students are encouraged to consider diverse cultural needs of patients and other professionals as they assume an advanced role in nursing administration. The faculty value engagement in the community of learning and the community of practice. To that end, an emphasis on community service activities, participation in the community of scholars, service to the University, and scholarship guide faculty activities.

Nursing is a balance of both art and science. The art of nursing involves the concepts of caring that fosters respectful relationships and individual dignity and worth. The science of nursing is supported through inquiry, research and other scholarly activities and is manifested by evidence-based practice. The professional nurse is a partner and an advocate for the health care consumer in an increasingly diverse and aging population. Professional nursing provides culturally competent care to individuals, families and groups within their environments. Care of the physical, psychosocial and spiritual needs is essential to the promotion, protection and maintenance of health.

The baccalaureate nurse functions in the roles of provider of care, coordinator of care, and contributor to the profession. Care is provided in and across all settings and health care systems and uses a number of treatment modalities. As a provider of care, the nurse contributes a unique blend of knowledge, skills, and caring. As a coordinator of care, the nurse has the knowledge and authority to delegate nursing tasks to other health care personnel and to supervise patient care outcomes. As a member of the profession, the nurse conforms to the laws and code of ethics governing professional standards of nursing practice. In all these roles, the professional nurse accepts personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

Master's level education prepares nurses for leadership in dynamic, complex health care systems. The graduate is prepared to lead change and promote health in diverse and global health challenges using skills in inter-professional collaboration. The contribution of the nurse prepared at the graduate level is to act as advocate for patients, families and populations in the roles of direct care provider, educator or administrator. The master's prepared nurse analyzes health policy, applies research evidence to practice,

and utilizes patient care and information technology to provide safe effective care and improve quality outcomes.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to educate safe, quality practitioners for a professional practice that is evidence based, compassionate, holistic, and affirms the intrinsic worth and value of each individual. Graduates will be prepared as accountable and knowledgeable leaders and practitioners in the rapidly changing healthcare system, contributing to and strengthening nursing as a profession. The Department of Nursing recruits, retains and graduates students reflective of the diversity of our region in consideration of the need for diverse practitioners in the global healthcare arena.

This mission is accomplished by providing the highest quality of education in nursing, guided by faculty who use a variety of innovative, high-impact educational approaches and who become role models in practice, research and service. The faculty share with students the responsibility to create an educational climate that values and promotes life-long learning.

## **Goals**

The goals of the Department of Nursing are to

- Provide an environment of respect and integrity, and that supports life-long learning
- Prepare nurses to respond to the growing complexity of health care
- Enhance the health care of the region through quality education of health care providers

## **Accreditation**

### **Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS)**

Texas A&M University – Texarkana is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate and master’s degrees.

### **Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)**

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education is an autonomous accrediting agency, contributing to the improvement of the public’s health. A specialized/professional accrediting agency, CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and nursing programs and of post-baccalaureate nurse residency programs. The baccalaureate degree in nursing and the master’s degree in nursing at TAMUT are accredited by the CCNE. For more information on accreditation, go to the following website <https://www.aacnnursing.org/ccne-accreditation>.

# Chapter 1: General Information

Each student enrolled at Texas A&M University – Texarkana is responsible for being fully acquainted with and complying with the Student Rules. Specific rules, information and procedures may be found in publications pertaining to each particular service or department. These rules and guidelines were in effect as of the printing of this catalog.

The Student Affairs office offers student services related to academic advising, career services, disability services, developmental education, and services related to complaint resolution.

## **Academic Calendar**

The Department of Nursing adheres to the TAMUT Academic calendar for class dates and holidays/vacation, available each semester from the University Registrar's Office and as listed on the Website.

## **Academic Integrity**

The faculty expects that each student conduct himself/herself as a person of integrity. Academic integrity is a fundamental value in education, as integrity is a value in professional nursing practice. Yet, we find that many students do not understand or value its importance, or knowing that, choose to ignore the rules and violate this standard that is at the essence of everything that we do.

We wish to stress to each student our philosophy of academic integrity and emphasize that violating the rules related to plagiarism, cheating or other standards will result in sanctions. These sanctions will include a zero on the assignment in question and may result in a failure for the course and/or dismissal from the program.

Academic honesty is expected of students enrolled in the nursing program. Cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration, falsification of research data, plagiarism, and undocumented use of materials from any source constitute academic dishonesty and may be grounds for a grade of "0" on the assignment, a grade of 'F' in the course and/or additional disciplinary actions including dismissal from the program. For additional information, see the university catalog and the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

## **Attendance, Absences and Makeups**

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study, including material presented in the classroom, either face-to-face or online. Class participation is expected of each student as outlined in each course syllabus. If a student should miss a class, he/she should email the faculty member and/or the Course Coordinator as soon as possible. If the absence is anticipated, such as due to illness or personal emergency, the student should notify the immediate faculty member and/or the Course Coordinator prior to the start of the class/lab to be missed.

The instructor reserves the right to request satisfactory evidence to substantiate the reason for absence for bereavement as death or major illness in a student's immediate family. Immediate family may include: mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, spouse, child, spouse's child, spouse's parents, spouse's grandparents, stepmother, step-father, step-sister, step-brother, step-grandparents, grandchild, step-grandchild, legal guardian, and others as deemed appropriate by faculty member or Program Director.

Non-attendance in an online program is defined as an unexcused lack of participation in class activities for a period of 4 weeks or more. This may result in an administrative drop by the faculty after a letter has been mailed to the address on file, notifying the student of the enrollment status. Additional attendance policies may be defined in the course syllabus.

### **Attendance Policy**

It is the policy of the Department of Nursing that every student is expected to participate in each of his/her courses through regular attendance at lecture/lab/simulation/clinical experiences. It is further expected that every student will be present on time and prepared to participate when scheduled course sessions begin.

Students who are under CDC recognized quarantine guidelines for illness, such as possible COVID-19 exposure, will be allowed to attend class via virtual means during their quarantine time period without incurring an absence penalty (guidelines for tardy policy will remain applicable). Students attending class virtually WILL HAVE A VISUAL PRESENCE REQUIRED throughout the entire class period. Students are required to notify the instructor AT LEAST 24 HOURS PRIOR TO THE CLASS that will be attended virtually. The student will be required to provide written notification from a healthcare provider for coverage under this provision.

### **Theory Hours (Lecture, Scheduled Classes, Seminars or Guest Lectures), Lab, Simulation and Clinical Hours (per CCNE Accreditation and TBON)**

- Students are expected to attend all theory, lab, simulation and clinical hours.
- A student who is absent from theory for any reason is expected to make up the work on her/his own and will be responsible for the material covered. Any pop quiz or classroom assignment will not be made-up. The student will receive a score of "0."
- Absence of more than 3 days in a 16 week course may result in course failure. Absence of more than 2 days in a 10 week course may result in course failure.
- Clinical absences
  - Clinical absences for a clinical experience is the equivalent to one (1) absence and will be recorded as such.
  - If a student is absent greater than 10% of clinical hours (i.e. 135 CL hrs. = 13.5 hours; 90 CL = 9 hours) may result in a failure of the course.
  - A student absence from clinical must complete an on campus make-up assignment. This assignment will equal the time missed in clinical 9 (i.e. 8 hours clinical day = 8 hours of make-up assignment). This make-up assignment is due one week from the day of absence (i.e., Saturday missed clinical, make-up assignment is due following Saturday by end of clinical day).
  - Students who are required to be absent in clinical due to a mandated quarantine will be required to make up the missed clinical attendance (during their quarantine) at the end of

the semester. A final course grade submission will occur once the make-up days are completed. Made up absences under these circumstances will not be counted against the student and will not result in dismissal from the program due to exceeding allowed absences. Proper healthcare provider documentation required for use of this attendance exception.

- Failure to meet Student Learning Outcomes (Course and/or Clinical) will result in a failing grade for that course.

### **Lateness (Theory, Lab, Simulation and/or Clinical Hours)**

- Lateness is defined as 0-15 minutes after the start time posted on the Course calendar/clinical schedule. Three (3) times a student is late will equal one (1) absence. A student missing more than 15 minutes of class, lab, simulation and/or clinical will receive an absence.

### **Leaving Early (Theory, Lab, Simulation and/or Clinical Hours)**

- Leaving early is defined as 0-15 minutes before the end time posted on the Course calendar/clinical schedule. Three (3) times a student leaves early will equal one (1) absence. A student missing more than 15 minutes of class, lab, simulation and/or clinical will receive an absence.

### **Student Absences on Religious Holidays**

In accordance with Texas Education Code 51.911, all institutions of higher education shall excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holiday, including travel for that purpose. An instructor may not penalize a student whose absence is excused under this subsection for that absence, and the instructor must allow the student to take an examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence.

Texas Education Code 51.911 defines a religious holiday as a holiday a religious group whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code. If a student and an instructor disagree about the nature of the absence as Texas Education Code 51.911 defines, or if the student and the instructor disagree about whether the instructor has given the student a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the Program Director.

### **Inclement Weather**

Officials will make inclement weather information available to the news media for broadcast on radio stations and television stations as well as by the campus-wide Eagle Alert, which notifies students and faculty through text messaging and non-campus email. The University expects students to exercise good judgment during inclement weather. It is the responsibility of the student to notify Faculty as soon as he/she is aware that he/she will not be able to attend class/clinical.

### **Awareness of and Respect for Diversity**

Texas A&M University – Texarkana and the Department of Nursing fully support an environment wherein individuals (i.e., students, staff, faculty, guests) can work as partners in achieving goals. While engaged in didactic learning and experiential rotations, students are required to behave and act in a manner that is

expected in nursing and all health professions. Such behavior and actions are guided by respect for other students, faculty, staff, patients, and health care professionals who may have differences that include (but are not limited to) the following: religious beliefs and practices, nontraditional medical beliefs and practices, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, physical and emotional disabilities, racial background, intellectual capabilities, age, and cultural background. Respect is demonstrated by being considerate, courteous, and professional, and by maintaining confidentiality of patient information.

## **Learning Environment**

TAMUT respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. The responsibility of faculty is to maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning whether that classroom is a face-to-face or a distance learning environment. Disruptive behaviors will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in disruptive behaviors may be subject to disciplinary action. Disruptive behaviors may include any of the following: physical actions, verbal utterance, on-line derogatory remarks, disrespectful or threatening e-mails, or other activities that interfere with either the faculty member's ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program.

## **Student Non-Cognitive Performance Standards**

Health profession practices are grounded in non-cognitive performance standards which include a set of principles that reflect the ethical foundation of health care. The nursing student must strive toward unquestionable integrity in all professional relations. To aid in achieving this goal, nursing students should demonstrate both a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities and an adherence to ethical principles. The non-cognitive performance standards listed below should be used as guidelines in attaining this goal.

Failure to comply with the requirements of any of these standards or other policies in the Department of Nursing at Texas A&M University – Texarkana may result in a conference with the department director, dean, or designee, to discuss the problem. Should it be necessary to take immediate action, the department director, dean, or designee, may recommend the student be placed on probation or dismissed from the nursing program in the Department of Nursing and/or Texas A&M University – Texarkana. The following described standards are the scholastic, non-cognitive performance responsibilities of the nursing student enrolled at Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing:

- **Attentiveness:** The nursing student must regularly attend class. Any and all extended absences must be for relevant and serious reasons and preapproved, where applicable, by the appropriate authority. The nursing student is required to be on time for class, labs, and clinical assignment and stay until the end of time period. The nursing student is required to be alert during classes and demonstrate attentiveness by taking notes and asking/answering appropriate questions.
- **Demeanor:** The nursing student will have a respectful, positive, open attitude toward peers, faculty, and others during the duration of studies with the Department of Nursing. The nursing student will maintain a professional demeanor in interpersonal relations. The nursing student will perform in both a supportive and constructive fashion in group situations and making good use of all feedback and evaluations.

- **Maturity:** The nursing student will function as a respectful, responsible, ethical, law-abiding adult.
- **Cooperative:** The nursing student will demonstrate his/her ability to work effectively in large and small groups and with peers, faculty, and other members of the Department of Nursing in both the giving and accepting in the exchange of information.
- **Inquisitiveness:** The nursing student develops an interest in his/her courses, simulation skills, and curricular content, and demonstrates personal pursuit of continued knowledge.
- **Responsibility:** The nursing student is accountable for his/her actions and commitment to the Department of Nursing and the nursing program. All academic interchanges will be carried out in a professional, reliable and trustworthy manner.
- **Authority:** The nursing student will show respect for those placed in authority over him/her within the Department of Nursing, Texas A&M University – Texarkana, and society.
- **Personal Appearance:** The nursing student will have a professional personal appearance which will be reflected in both personal hygiene and observance of dress code standards set forth in this Handbook.
- **Communication:** The nursing student demonstrates respect for privacy of all patients and/or patients' family members. The nursing student will at no time utilize social media (Twitter, Facebook, or any other social media site) to communicate information that could lead to exposure of patient identity. The nursing student acknowledges that certain patient data that is discussed within a specific timeframe may be sufficient information to identify a patient. The nursing student will follow all directives of TAMUT, Department of Nursing and HIPPA regulations in regard to patient privacy and information transfer.
- **Professional Role:** The nursing student will conduct self as a professional role model at all times and in compliance with rules and regulations regarding professional conduct of the Department of Nursing. As a healthcare provider, the nursing student will demonstrate the personal, intellectual, and motivational qualifications of a professional.
- **Judgment:** The nursing student demonstrates an ability to think critically regarding options, reflecting the ability to make intelligent decisions in both personal and academic life.
- **Civility:** The nursing student has a genuine understanding that civility is an authentic respect for others that requires time, attention, a willingness to engage in open communication, and the intention to seek agreement. The nursing student will exhibit respect for all. The nursing student will not harass any individual physically, verbally, psychologically, or sexually. The nursing student demonstrates a true respect for the Department of Nursing and TAMUT in their written, verbal, and electronic communication that is diplomatic, non-threatening, and reflects accountability. The nursing student will follow all rules and regulations with regard to social media policies.

- **Moral Standards:** The nursing student respects the rights and privacy of other individuals and does not violate the laws of our society.
- **Ethics:** The nursing student will conduct self in accordance to the guidelines of the nursing professional code of ethics.

### **Communication: TAMUT Student Email Account**

TAMUT communicates all official information to students through the student TAMUT Ace e-mail account. Please use this email account for all school related activities and check the account at a minimum of three times per week for updates.

Course documents are submitted through the Canvas or official university Learning Management System (LMS) assignment links. Do not submit assignments through email unless specifically directed to do so by faculty.

### **Computer Requirements**

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that his/her computer has the required software installed upon admission and updated throughout his/her time as a student. At all times, the student's computer should be capable of running the programs. Upon admission, students will be provided with detailed specifications for either a Mac or a Windows laptop. If you have questions regarding any of the hardware or software required, please contact the TAMUT Helpdesk.

### **Exposure to Chemicals**

Any pregnant student, or student planning to become pregnant, should consult their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation.

## **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students have rights that are to be respected. These rights include respect for personal feelings; freedom from indignity of any type, freedom from control by any person except as may be in accord with published rules and procedures of Texas A&M University – Texarkana or The Texas A&M University System, and conditions that allow the best use of time and talents toward educational objectives. No officer or student, regardless of position or rank, shall violate those rights; no custom, tradition or regulation in conflict will be allowed to prevail. At all times students are expected to recognize constituted authority, to conform to the ordinary rules of good conduct, to be truthful, to respect the rights of others, to protect private and public property, and to make the best use of time toward the completion of an education. The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (The Code) is designed neither to be exhaustive nor to encompass all possible relationships between students and the institution. The Code is not rigid or unchangeable. As the relationship between students and the University grows, it may be necessary to modify the Code.

It is incumbent upon students to be aware of University rules and procedures. Ignorance of these rules and procedures does not excuse students from adherence to them. Staff and University officials should endeavor to inform students of University rules, regulations, and policies, whenever the circumstance is applicable.

## Conduct Subject to Disciplinary Actions

Nursing students who engage in the following conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions, whether the conduct takes place on or off campus or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for the conduct:

- **Violation of laws, regulations, policies, and directives** – Violation of federal, state, and local laws, including laws and policies on HIPAA (Health Information Portability and Accountability Act); violation of Texas A&M University – Texarkana policies, rules, and regulations; violation of Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing policies, rules, and regulations; non-compliance with TAMUT or Department of Nursing rules and regulations; non-compliance with directives issued by administrative officials acting in the course of their authorized duties
- **Scholastic dishonesty** – Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, submission for credit any work or materials that are attributable in whole or part to another person, taking an examination or submitting work or materials for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student, or the attempt to commit such acts
- **Drugs and alcohol** – Illegal use, possession and/or sale of a drug or narcotic on campus or at educational or clinical facilities affiliated with Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing; use of alcohol in violation of TAMUT policy
- **Health or safety** – Conduct that endangers the health or safety of any person on campus, in any building or facility owned or controlled by TAMUT, or any education or clinical facility affiliated with TAMUT and/or the Department of Nursing
- **Disruptions** – Acting singly or in concert with others to obstruct, disrupt, or interfere with any activities related to the university’s responsibilities in teaching, education, healthcare, research, administration, service, or other activities authorized to be held or conducted on property owned by TAMUT and/or the Department of Nursing or affiliated with
- **Inciting lawless action** – Engaging in speech either orally or in writing, which is directed to inciting or producing imminent lawless action and is likely to incite or produce such action
- **Unauthorized use of property** – Engaging in unauthorized use of property, equipment, supplies, buildings, or facilities owned or controlled by Texas A&M University – Texarkana and/or the Department of Nursing or affiliated with
- **Hazing** – Hazing is prohibited, Texas Education Code Chapter 37, sub code F
- **Altering of official documents** – Altering official records; submitting false information, omitting requested information required for or related to application for admission or the award of a degree; falsifying clinical records
- **Vandalism** – Defacing, mutilating, destroying, or taking unauthorized possession of any property, equipment, supplies, or facilities owned or controlled by TAMUT and/or the Department of Nursing or clinical facilities affiliated with
- **Prohibited Conduct** – Engaging in prohibited conduct that occurs while participating in off-campus activities sponsored by TAMUT and/or the Department of Nursing, including field trips, internships, rotations, or clinical assignments
- **Use of explosives** – Unauthorized use or possession of any type of explosive, firearm, imitation firearm, ammunition, hazardous substance, or weapon as defined by federal, state or local laws while on campus or in facilities owned or controlled by TAMUT and/or the Department of Nursing or clinical facilities affiliated with

## **Disciplinary Process**

When nursing student conduct occurs that may be subject to disciplinary action, the faculty member will immediately notify the program director. After consultation with the program director, the student of the suspected violation should be notified through a face-to-face or telephone conversation. In some instances, the faculty member may take immediate action appropriate to the circumstances. For example, when a nursing student is observed cheating on an exam, the faculty member may stop the examination process for the student and retrieve the examination. Or when a nursing student engages in disruptive behavior, the faculty member may instruct the student to leave the instructional space so that order can be restored.

The faculty member will also notify the Dean and the Director of Student Life of the conduct. At that point, the disciplinary process will proceed in accordance with protocol and the Disciplinary Rules of TAMUT.

## **Sexual Assault**

All forms of sexual assault and all attempts to commit such acts are regarded as serious university offenses, which may result in suspension or expulsion. Prosecution for the criminal law violation may also take place independently of charges under university regulations.

Students who believe they are victim of sexual assault should consult the Sexual Assault Protocol in the [Emergency Management Plan](#).

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

Texas A&M University - Texarkana strives to maintain a work and educational environment free from discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation in accordance with applicable federal and State laws. Conduct constituting sexual harassment is specifically prohibited by federal law, state law, and Texas A&M University System Policy.

The Department of Nursing considers sexual harassment in all its forms to be a serious offense and one that is subject to a range of actions up to and including suspension or dismissal. The Office of Vice President of Student Affairs is available to serve as a resource to any student, non-faculty employee, or faculty member who has a sexual harassment inquiry or complaint. A person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment may pursue either the informal or the formal complaint resolution procedure. Any faculty member, staff member, or student may initiate a complaint by calling the Registrar's office.

## **General Student Complaints**

The Department of Nursing is committed to providing a learning environment for its students in which complaints are responded to in a prompt and fair manner. Formal complaints are those received by the Department of Nursing Director in writing within 7 business days of an incident. These will be directed to the appropriate office to be addressed as quickly as possible.

To report general student complaints other than those regarding academic or disciplinary matters, discrimination, sexual harassment, grading, or distance education, students may refer to rule [UP12.02.99H1.02](#) . For complaint processes related to Distance education, see the Distance Education Grievance Process . To report instances of suspected waste, fraud, or a suspected ethics violation, use the [Texas A&M University Systems Risk, Fraud, and Misconduct Hotline](#).

## **Student Name or Address Changes**

### **Address Change Procedures**

The student's current mailing address and permanent address must be correctly listed in the academic record. Any change in the student's address should be promptly reported to the Department of Nursing and the Registrar's Office. International students should contact International Student Services if their permanent address is incorrect or needs to be changed. A student will not be excused from penalties on grounds of not receiving communications mailed from the Department of Nursing if the student failed to report the new address. It is your responsibility to notify the Department of Nursing of an address change.

### **Name Change Procedures**

The Registrar's Office is responsible for maintaining a student's official legal name for TAMUT and for the State of Texas. Legal documentation (a copy of one of the following: marriage license, divorce decree, court order changing name, or Social Security card with new name) must be presented with the completed [Student Update Request form](#) in order to alter your name as it appears on your original application for admission to TAMUT. You must present a copy of the legal document, which will be copied in the Records section for your file.

Name changes for degree candidates must be completed within one week after the deadline to apply for graduation. Students submitting a name change request after this date must pay an additional diploma fee to receive a diploma with their new name. Also, diplomas ordered after this deadline may not be received in time for distribution after the commencement ceremony.

### **Student Records**

Information in student records will be released only to faculty and professional staff for authorized legitimate educational interest. The student's consent is required to release information other than public information to any non-Department of Nursing person unless required by law or upon subpoena.

### **Student Participation in Committees**

Students have the opportunity to serve on various committees within the College by election from the student body or through appointment.

At the beginning of each academic year or semester, the Program Director will provide details about the committee opportunities and ask for student volunteers to represent each program. A list of committees with student representation includes the following:

- Curriculum Committee
- Program Evaluation Committee

### **Transcript Requests**

An official transcript is a comprehensive record of a student's academic progress at TAMUT. The Transcript section of the Office of the Registrar produces only official transcripts. For information regarding transcripts, please consult the [Registrar](#) webpage.

### **Universal Identification Number (UIN)**

A student's "Universal Identification Number" or "UIN" is assigned by the TAMUT Office of the Registrar and remains constant for the duration of the student's degree program. The Office of the Registrar mails all students their individually assigned UIN after their admission has been confirmed. A student who previously attended TAMUT will use the same UIN number as was assigned to them at that institution. Students should contact the registrar for any questions and/or concerns about their UIN.

### **Web for Students**

Web for Students is a web - based interface to Texas A&M University – Texarkana student information system. A student can access Web for Students to view admission status, degree & academic status, account summary, register for classes, inquire about financial aid and grades and to obtain transcripts. Students are responsible for accessing Web for Students to determine courses required, to verify receipt of transcripts, and to update information. Students should check their DegreeWorks, located in Web For Students (under Student, then Student Records, then DegreeWorks) twice a semester to determine credit for course taken or transferred, outstanding courses, etc. Instructions for use of Web for Students are available in the current [University Catalog](#).

# Chapter 2: Nursing Program

## Bachelor of Science in Nursing

### About the BSN Program

The bachelor's degree in nursing prepares the graduate for beginning professional practice as a generalist in the discipline of nursing. Graduates of this program will assume the roles of provider of care, designer/manager/coordinator of care, patient advocate and member of the profession (AACN, 2008).

The graduate will be prepared to deliver safe, competent, direct and indirect nursing care to individuals, families, communities and populations of all ages in a variety of settings including hospitals, clinics, home health agencies, public schools and other practice areas. This program also provides the foundation for advanced nursing education through graduate study.

The Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing provides two tracks leading to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree:

- the Associate Degree in Nursing to Bachelors of Science in Nursing track (RN to BSN)
- Traditional BSN track.

The program learning outcomes for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree for both tracks are listed below.

**BSN Program Learning Outcomes:** At the completion of the program, the graduate will

1. Integrate knowledge from biological and physical sciences and humanities as a basis for practice.
2. Demonstrate basic organizational and systems leadership skills to achieve safe, quality care.
3. Integrate professional practice based on best available evidence.
4. Use information management and technology effectively to deliver quality patient care.
5. Demonstrate basic knowledge of healthcare policy, finance, and regulatory environments.
6. Communicate and collaborate with other health care professionals to deliver safe, quality patient care
7. Emphasize health promotion and disease prevention for individuals and populations
8. Demonstrate the professional values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, social justice, and commitment to life-long learning.
9. Provide safe, holistic, evidence-based patient care to diverse populations across the health care continuum

## Traditional BSN Track

This program is designed for the beginning student first entering the field of nursing. Upon completion of a four-year program of study, graduates are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX). **Students cannot take general education courses while enrolled in nursing courses.**

### BSN TRADITIONAL TRACK

		Course	Total SCH/ Semester	
FRESH (30 credits)	SEMESTER 1-- FALL	Introduction to Microbiology (BIOL 2405)		4
		U.S. History I (HIST 1301)		3
		College Algebra (MATH 1314)		3
		Composition I (ENGL 1301)		3
		University Foundations (IS 1100)	<b>14/30</b>	1
	SEMESTER 2-- SPRING	Introductory Chem (CHEM 1305)		3
		U.S. History II (HIST 1302)		3
		U.S. Government and Politics (PSCI 2305)		3
		Composition II (ENGL 1302)		3
		General Psychology (PSYC 2301)	<b>15/30</b>	3
SOPH (36 credits)	SEMESTER 3--FALL	Human Anatomy & Physiology I (BIOL 2401)		4
		Lifespan Growth & Development (PSYC 2314)		3
		State and Local Government (PSCI 2306)		3
		Elective		2
		Language, Philosophy, and Culture	<b>15/36</b>	3
	SEMESTER 4-- SPRING	Human Anatomy & Physiology II (BIOL 2402)		4
		Intro to Public Speaking (SPCH 1315)		3
		Elementary Statistical Methods (MATH 1342)		3
		Creative Arts		3
		Nutrition (HSCI 1323)	<b>16/36</b>	3
Sum			3	
JUNIOR (26 credits)	SEMESTER 6-- FALL	Health Assessment across the Lifespan (NURS 334)		3
		Fundamentals of Nursing Practice (NURS 365)		6
		Pharmacology in Nursing (NURS 333)	<b>12/26</b>	3
	SEMESTER 7-- SPRING	Adult Health Nursing (NURS 368)		6
		Mental Health Nursing (NURS 357)		5
		Evidence Based Practice (NURS 336)	<b>14/26</b>	3

SENIOR (28 credits)	SEMESTER 8 - FALL	Adult Health Nursing II (NURS 462)		6
		Maternal Child Health (NURS 463)		6
		Nursing Care of the Older Adult (NURS 431)	<b>15/28</b>	3
	SEMESTER 9 - SPRING	Leadership and Management in Nursing (NURS 464)		6
		Community Health Nursing (NURS 455)		5
		Issues in Professional Nursing (NURS 426)	<b>13/28</b>	2
		<b>Total Semester Credit Hours</b>	<b>120</b>	

## RN to BSN Track

Designed for the Registered Nurse, the ADN to BSN program is designed to build on that foundation to prepare the student for a baccalaureate level of practice that emphasizes basic leadership skills, scholarship, evidence-based practice and health prevention and promotion in a constantly changing healthcare environment. The graduate is prepared as a generalist with the clinical reasoning skills to care for individuals, families, populations and communities across the lifespan. The program is taught by faculty devoted to the success of the individual student and who mentors students in the development of a professional practice. Taught online, faculty provides an interactive learning experience to achieve individualized learning outcomes.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing – RN to BSN Track (1 Year Plan)			
General education & nursing prerequisite courses must be completed prior to enrolling in nursing courses			
	SEMESTER 1	NURS 301 – Professional Nursing Practice (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	3
		NURS 302 – Health Assessment Across the Life Span for the RN (2nd 8 weeks)	3
		NURS 304 – Evidence Based Practice in Nursing for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	3
		NURS 305 – Professional Nursing Practice with Individuals & Families for the RN (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	4
			<b>13/30</b>
	SEMESTER 2	NURS 403 – Leadership and Management in Nursing Practice for the RN (2nd 8 weeks)	4
		NURS 406 – Community Health Nursing Practice for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	5
		NURS 407 – Quality Care and Patient Safety in Professional Nursing Practice for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	2
		NURS 417 – Pathophysiology for the Registered Nurse (2nd 8 weeks)	3
			<b>14/30</b>
		Upper Level Elective*	3
			<b>Total SCH 30</b>

\*The elective course may be taken in any semester. An elective must be an upper division course that contributes to an individual's growth as a professional. The student must obtain approval from his/her nursing faculty advisor prior to enrolling in a course chosen as an elective.

Professional, nationally recognized, current certification can substitute for the upper division elective, if approved by the nursing advisor. The student will be required to submit proof of current certification and may be required to submit information regarding the specific certification. Examples of approved certifications include CCRN (Critical Care Registered Nurse), CEN (Certified Emergency Nurse), Certified Medical-Surgical Nurse or Certified Obstetric Nurse.

Examples of *unapproved* certifications include PALS, ACLS, TNCC.

## Bachelor of Science in Nursing – RN to BSN Track (2 Year Plan)

General education & nursing prerequisite courses must be completed prior to enrolling in nursing courses.

	SEMESTER 1	NURS 301 – Professional Nursing Practice (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	3
		NURS 302 – Health Assessment Across the Life Span for the RN	3
			<b>6/30</b>
	SEMESTER 2	NURS 407 – Quality Care and Patient Safety in Professional Nursing Practice for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	2
		NURS 417 – Pathophysiology for the Registered Nurse	3
			<b>6/30</b>
Summer		Upper level Elective	3
	SEMESTER	NURS 304 – Evidence Based Practice in Nursing for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	3
		NURS 305 – Professional Nursing Practice with Individuals & Families for the RN (2 <sup>nd</sup> 8 weeks)	4
			<b>10/30</b>
	SEMESTER 5	NURS 403 – Leadership and Management in Nursing Practice for the RN	4
		NURS 406 – Community Health Nursing Practice for the RN (1 <sup>st</sup> 8 weeks)	5
			<b>9/30</b>
		<b>Total SCH</b>	<b>30</b>

# Chapter 3: Admissions, Progression, Student Support, and Graduation

## ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BSN PROGRAM

Admission to both the ADN to BSN and the Traditional tracks of the BSN Program require

- Application for admission to the university
- Official transcripts from all previous colleges and universities
- Application for the appropriate track within the BSN program

## ADMISSION TO THE RN TO BSN AND TRADITIONAL BSN TRACK REQUIRES

### Conditional and Full Admission

Conditional admission status will be given to the nursing program applicant who has met program requirements while in the process of completing required prerequisite courses during the application term. If and when the required courses have been successfully completed with a grade of 75% or higher and all other requirements have been met, full admission status will be given to the nursing program applicant.

See the Traditional BSN and RN to BSN admission requirements below.

**NOTE:** Students cannot take any general education while enrolled in nursing courses.

## TRADITIONAL BSN ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- 1.** Must be accepted to Texas A&M University-Texarkana as a student before applying to the nursing program. All required university admission documentation must be submitted to the university's Admissions department for them to make an admissions decision. Required documentation must be submitted to their office prior to applying to the nursing program.
- 2.** Cumulative GPA of 2.8. GPA at time of application to nursing program is used for nursing admission decisions. If the student has lower than a 2.8 GPA at time of application, the TAMUT nursing admissions and progressions committee may disregard academic course credits earned 5 years prior to the starting date of the semester in which the applicant applies for the nursing program. All college level course work that is 5 years or older will be eliminated in calculating the grade point average and none of the credit will apply toward the calculated GPA for admission into the traditional BSN program. An applicant may still be required to repeat some course work in order to meet and/or comply with pre-requisite requirements for certain classes at A&M – Texarkana.
- 3.** Students cannot be missing more than 3 semester credit hours of general education courses prior to being accepted into the nursing program.
- 4.** Grade of C or higher (with no more than 2 attempts for each course in the last 5 years) required in the following **completed** courses:
  - Composition I

- Composition II
- Anatomy and Physiology I
- Anatomy and Physiology I Lab
- Anatomy and Physiology II
- Anatomy and Physiology II Lab
- Nutrition
- Microbiology
- Microbiology Lab
- Chemistry
- Pathophysiology (NURS 331): must be junior level (course number begins with a 3) and must be 3 semester credit hours; prerequisite of BIOL 2402 must be complete prior to enrolling in NURS 331 **(It is recommended to complete NURS 331 at TAMUT)**
- Professional Concepts (NURS 332): must be junior level (course number begins with a 3) and must be 3 semester credit hours **(It is recommended to complete NURS 332 at TAMUT)**

5. Applicants will be required to interview with selected nursing faculty members.

6. Submit two letters of reference. These can be from current or former faculty, advisors, or employers who know you in a scholarly or work-related role by the specified deadlines above (March 15th for fall admission, October 15th for spring admission). The letters should describe the relationship with you and your personal characteristics (punctuality, teamwork, integrity, perseverance). The letter must be physically signed by the person referring you (computer generated font signatures **will not** be accepted), must include their contact information should any questions arise.

7. Submit a letter of intent explaining your interest in nursing as your profession and why you chose this program of nursing by the specified deadlines above (March 15th for fall admission, October 15th for spring admission).

## **RN TO BSN ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

Application Process:

1. [Apply](#) to A&M-Texarkana (Apply Texas or CollegeNet)
2. Select BS in Nursing (ADN to BSN) as major
3. Submit nursing program specific application ([click here](#) for application). Application must be submitted before 10:59 p.m. on the deadline day (January 5th for spring program, May 15th for summer program and August 1st for fall program)
4. Acceptance decisions from nursing will be sent from Kristie Avery, Admissions Coordinator; [kavery@tamut.edu](mailto:kavery@tamut.edu)
5. Meet with our nursing transfer advisor, Jodi Pompa; [jpompa@tamut.edu](mailto:jpompa@tamut.edu) or 903-223-1365.

Admission Requirements:

- Valid, current unencumbered registered nurse (RN) license
- Graduation from a nationally accredited (CCNE, ACEN, CNEA) nursing program or state board of nursing approved professional nursing program. Applicants cannot attend TAMUT's RN to BSN program if previous nursing program was not nationally or state accredited.
- Meet TAMUT transfer student admission requirements:
  - Must submit all official transcripts from any/all colleges or universities attended since high school

- Must submit any/all proof of credit from Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP) International Baccalaureate Diploma (IBD) or others
- Must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 to be accepted to both TAMUT and the RN to BSN program
- If applicable, must submit any/all military transcripts as some courses taken while serving in the military may be applicable to certain degree plans
- Reference letter. The letter must be physically signed by the person referring you (computer generated font signatures **will not** be accepted), must include their contact information should any questions arise.
- Complete the FBI background check- <https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/identity-history-summary-checks>

## **ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS**

International applicants with foreign transcripts must follow the policies and procedures for international students as outlined by the University at <http://tamut.edu/Student-Life/International-Student-Service/index.html> . Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit proof of English proficiency, which is satisfied by:

- a minimum TOEFL score taken within the previous two years of:
  - 550 for paper-based testing (p-BT), or
  - 213 computer-based testing (c-BT), or
  - 79 internet-based testing (i-BT)

These scores must be sent directly from ETS to the University, and the test must have been taken within the two-year period prior to enrollment.

## **ADMISSIONS DECISIONS**

The number of students admitted to the program will be based on available faculty and clinical facilities. From the group of qualified applicants, an admission decision will be made using an approved rubric.

Admission decisions for all programs will be communicated to potential students via email and by letter. To secure a position, the potential student must notify the Department of Nursing of their intent to accept the offer within the designated time frame. If the student fails to accept the offer, the position may be awarded to another applicant. If not admitted, the student may be given the option to be placed on a waiting list, to be admitted based on space available.

## **LICENSURE ELIGIBILITY (Traditional BSN Students only)**

### **Criminal Background Checks (CBC)**

Any student accepted for admission to a pre-licensure nursing program in the state of Texas must have a Criminal Background Check through the Department of Public Safety and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. A favorable (clear) Criminal Background Check result is required in order for the student to be awarded full admission to the nursing program. In the event of a positive (unfavorable) background check, the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) will request that the student submit a petition for a declaratory order for review by the TBON. Failure to achieve an acceptable Criminal Background Check will result in not being allowed to register for classes and the offer of acceptance to the program will be rescinded.

The Department of Nursing will provide detailed information about how to fulfill this requirement with the acceptance letter to the program.

The steps to the Student Criminal Background Check Process, as currently on the Texas Board of Nursing Website are reproduced below (see [https://www.bon.texas.gov/students\\_new\\_accept\\_student.asp.html](https://www.bon.texas.gov/students_new_accept_student.asp.html))

- **Step One:**  
The Texas based nursing program submits the New/Accepted Student Roster to the BON.
- **Step Two:**  
BON staff enters the data into our internal fingerprint database. This step is what adds them to the list with MorphoTrust.
- **Step Three:**  
BON staff sends an email to the designated contact at the school advising that the roster has been entered into our system.
- **Step Four:**  
The school provides the Service Code Form (formerly known as a Fast Pass) to the students listed on the roster and advises them to schedule their fingerprinting.
- **Step Five:**  
The BON receives information from The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) regarding the criminal background check (CBC) results and staff inputs this data within ten business days.
- **Step Six:**
  - a) Individuals whose CBC came back completely clear are mailed a blue card within ten (10) business days of the BON receiving the DPS and FBI results.
  - b) Individuals whose CBC did not come back completely clear are sent a letter requesting a [Petition for Declaratory Order](#) (D.O.), personal statement of events, and copies of court documentation related to what incidences need to be reviewed.

**Important!** The Blue Card issued by the TBON is important as it indicates that the student has received a clear background check. The student must scan the card and submit the scanned copy to the secretary of the Department of Nursing, keeping the original card for their own records. Students will not be admitted to class or allowed to continue in the program without a Blue Card on file.

**The Texas Board of Nursing (TBON)** conducts computerized background checks on all applicants for licensure, and may refuse to admit persons to the licensure examination if they have

1. Been convicted of a misdemeanor
2. Been convicted of a felony
3. Pled nolo contendere, no contest, or guilty
4. Received deferred adjudication
5. Been placed on community supervision or court-ordered probation, whether or not adjudicated guilty
6. Been sentenced to serve jail or prison time or court-ordered confinement
7. Been granted pre-trial diversion
8. Been arrested or have any pending criminal charges

9. Been cited or charged with any violation of the law
10. Been subject of a court-martial; Article 15 violation; or received any form of military judgment, punishment, or action

**NOTE:** You may only exclude Class C misdemeanor traffic violations

### **Right to Petition for Declaratory Order of Eligibility**

All **traditional BSN students** are required by the Texas Board of Nursing to review eligibility for licensure and submit a declaratory order of eligibility if there is any question of eligibility.

- If there is a question of eligibility for licensure, you must submit a Declaratory Order. To do this, click on Forms, then scroll to find the Declaratory Order Form. Each student must read the guidelines on the Texas Board of Nursing website to determine if a form must be submitted. Visit <https://www.bon.texas.gov/> , Click on Licensure, then click on Eligibility.
- It is the student's responsibility to read and respond to the Order, if needed. The Board of Nursing holds all information confidential.
- Failure to file the Order with the BON in a timely manner could prevent eligibility to take the NCLEX-RN. This form, if it applies, must be submitted by **October 1 of the first year of the program**. If unsure if an Order should be filed, please contact the Director of Nursing, Texas A&M University – Texarkana.

## **TRANSFER POLICIES**

### **Transfer from Another Nursing Program**

A student who has been enrolled in another nursing program may request admission as a transfer applicant. Criteria used in the decision will be based on the following criteria:

- Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) on all nursing coursework completed (master's program) or a 2.8 GPA for the Baccalaureate program.
- Admission will be dependent on space available. Spaces in clinical courses are tightly controlled by both accreditation and clinical agency policies.
- Courses accepted for transfer must be similar in content and credit to the TAMUT Department of Nursing course. Applicants must present a course description and course syllabus for review before credit will be granted.
- An interview must be scheduled with selected nursing faculty and staff.
- No grade below a "B" in any nursing course will be accepted for transfer for the MSN program. No grade below a "C" in any nursing course will be accepted for transfer for the BSN programs.
- Applicants must submit a letter of eligibility from the Dean/Director of the previous program.
- Other documentation subject to the discretion of the Program Director.
- A maximum of twelve (12) credit hours may be transferred for the MSN program. Credits taken prior to admission do not automatically count toward the degree.

- For all undergraduate programs, a minimum of 54 upper division hours are required for the degree. Resident credit totaling 25% of the hours is required for the degree. Thirty semester credit hours are given by validation/articulation in the RN to BSN program.
- All coursework, resident and transfer, must meet the 5 calendar year time limitation for completion of the degree.

**Students who enroll in courses with another college/university during the semester they expect to graduate will be responsible for submitting official transcript(s) to the Registrar’s Office before their degree can be awarded. The university must record final grades from all courses the student takes at another university on a student’s Texas A&M University-Texarkana transcript. This requirement includes cross registered courses, CLEP exams and courses completed through the course-exchange program. Failure to submit official transcript(s) by the deadline stated by the Registrar’s Office will prevent the degree from being awarded for the intended graduation term. Students whose degree is not awarded for the intended graduation term will be required to apply for a future term.**

## **REQUIREMENTS AFTER ADMISSION TO THE NURSING PROGRAM**

### **Immunizations Policy**

The Department of Nursing has established immunization guidelines consistent with the immunization requirements of Texas Administrative Code, Title 25, Health Services, Part 1, Chapter 97, Subchapter B<sup>1</sup> and recommendations for adult immunizations from the Centers for Disease Control. Prior to registration for the designated academic semester, students must give evidence of the following immunizations:

VACCINE	REQUIREMENTS
Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis	One dose of vaccine within the past 10 years
Measles/ Mumps/Rubella	Immunization OR positive titer
Influenza	Required in the fall term for all students.
Bacterial Meningitis	As required by the University. Exceptions based on age.
Hepatitis B*	A completed series or serological confirmation of immunity
Tuberculosis (TB) skin test	Negative skin test required prior to starting first semester of nursing courses. Texas Department of State Health Services After Hire TB Assessment for Health Care Personnel form to be completed annually thereafter, unless known exposure to TB or high risk for TB, then must have a negative TB skin test.

While the university and TAMUT Nursing Program does not require proof of COVID vaccination, the clinical sites the TAMUT Nursing Program has affiliation agreements may require proof of vaccination. Students are encouraged to send proof to the Admissions Coordinator for the Department of Nursing. It is the responsibility of the student to request an exemption. Approval or denial of exemption is based according to the clinical site and not TAMUT Nursing Program.

## **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification**

Each student must complete the CPR Health Care Provider Courses through the American Heart Association only and maintain the certificate throughout enrollment in the program. Students who have not submitted appropriate documentation by the designated deadline or upon request will be dropped from all classes for the subsequent semester.

## **Drug Screen**

We require a minimum 10 drug panel screening which can be done through urinalysis. This can be completed at your primary care provider or an express care provider and can be done in-house or send out. If the panel has less than 10 drugs screened, the student must repeat the screen and submit the newest results. If a student has any positive readings, it is the student's responsibility to submit to the Nursing Department a physically signed letter or copy of the prescription from the prescribing doctor.

## **Personal Health Insurance**

In the off-chance something should happen during classes or on- or off-campus clinicals, we require students to have personal health insurance. A front and back copy of your personal health insurance card is required to be on file in the Nursing Department. Students who do not have personal health insurance can enroll in A&M-Texarkana's health insurance option - <https://tamut.myahpcare.com>.

## **PROGRESSION IN THE PROGRAM**

### **Good Academic Standing: BSN**

Good academic standing is defined as having a minimum overall grade point average of a 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale), and not being on probation, number of course failures not exceed requirements. Students must be in good academic standing in order to progress in the program. Students cannot take general education courses while enrolled in nursing courses.

## **Grading Policy**

### **BSN Traditional Track**

The grading scale for the Traditional BSN program is

A = 92 - 100

B = 83 – 91.9

C = 75 – 82.9

D = 66 – 74.9

F = 65.9 or below

### **ADN to BSN Track**

The grading scale for these programs is

A = 90 – 100

B = 80 – 89

C = 70 – 79

F = 60 or below

### **Exam Pass Policy for the Traditional BSN Program**

1. Performance in most courses in the nursing program is evaluated in a variety of ways, including exams, written papers, projects, clinical performance etc. The NCLEX however, is an objective exam consisting of a variety of question types; no papers, projects or clinical evaluation are required.
2. Each student will be afforded the opportunity to review exams immediately after completion. For fifty (50) question exams, students will be allotted fifteen (15) minutes total to review incorrect answers only. If a student needs to seek clarification on test items, they must discuss this with the course coordinator of that particular exam by scheduled appointment.
3. The faculty seeks to prepare each student for success on the NCLEX by emphasizing performance on objective examinations throughout the program. In each course in the nursing program in which examinations are administered,
  - a. The *weighted average of exam grades* must be 75% for success in the course. Each exam grade will be recorded to the first decimal (example, 82.6). A weighted average of the grades will be determined.
  - b. The weighted average of the exam grades must be 75 or higher *without rounding*. For example, a weighted exam average of 74.9 will not be rounded to a 75.
  - c. If the weighted exam average meets the standard of 75, then other means of evaluation in the course will be considered in determining the final course grade.
  - d. If the weighted exam average does not meet the standard of 75 then no other grades will be considered in determining the grade for the course. The weighted exam average will be submitted as the final course grade.
  - e. The weighted exam average will be calculated as follows: 2/3 of unit exams or equivalent and 1/3 of final exam or equivalent. This will begin Spring 2020.
4. In alignment with preparation for student success, each student scoring less than 75% on a course exam will be referred to academic coaching.
  - a. The student must email the course coordinator to schedule a time to complete an exam counseling form.
  - b. The student will be referred to the academic coaches immediately after completing the form.
  - c. It is the responsibility of the student to make an appointment with an academic coach within five (5) school days of a failed exam.
  - d. Failure to comply with the exam counseling and academic coaching requirements will result in the student being placed on a behavioral contract.
5. In the event a student is unable to attend an exam day, the student must notify the course instructor(s) at least one (1) hour prior to the exam start time via email; text messages and other communication applications will not be accepted as correspondence.
  - a. Students who do not meet these conditions will be subject to receiving a zero (0) for the missed exam.

- b. If all conditions are met, the student must arrange to make up the missed exam within seven (7) calendar days with the instructor. The exam will be equitable to the original exam but may contain a different number of questions or format at the instructor's discretion.

Students taking exams virtually will have a **visual presence required** for faculty proctoring throughout the entire exam. Any student who does not take the exam with a **visual presence** for proctoring will have earned a failing grade of "0".

## Online Testing with Remote Proctoring Policy

### Testing Preparation

- Students are responsible for verifying the functionality of their computer system a minimum of one week prior to all remote proctored examinations so that any required trouble shooting and resolution can be accomplished. System requirements and assistance can be found at <https://www.tamut.edu/information-technology/index.html> or through the service desk at 903-334-6603 or email at ISITE@tamut.edu
- Students must power off **and restart** computers before logging into the proctored test environment. All other programs and/or windows on the testing computer **MUST** be closed prior to logging into the proctored test environment and must remain closed until the exam is completed.
- Students **MUST** establish visual identity using their student ID or official driver's license with their assigned proctor.
- For scheduled exams, additional testing time will not be provided in the event of tardiness. If the student is over 15 minutes late for the exam, the student will not be permitted to take the exam and will receive a grade of 0.

### Testing Area

- Sit at a clean desk or table that has been cleared of all other materials. This means the removal of all books, paper, notebooks, electronic devices, food, drinks, etc. (Sitting on the bed or floor is considered unprofessional and is unacceptable.) Do not talk to anyone else—no communicating with others by any means.
- If paper is needed for dosage calculations, allow the proctor to view the front and back of the paper.
- Maintain room lighting bright enough to be considered "daylight" quality. Overhead lighting is preferred; however, if overhead is not possible, the source of light should not be behind the student.
- No other computers, televisions, radios, iPods, telephones, or other electronic devices should be on during the exam.
- No watches (any type) are allowed to be worn during the testing period.
- Students must maintain a visible presence at all times during the exam. Under no circumstances should students exit remote proctoring during the exam or review process. No test items should be copied or shared during or following the exam. Screenshots of test information is prohibited. Any violation of this may result in failure of the exam and dismissal from the program.

- Do not talk to anyone during the testing except for the proctor —no communicating with others by any means. No other persons or pets should be permitted to enter the room during testing.
- Log into the testing area 10-15 minutes before exam is scheduled to begin. This will ensure that your environment can be scanned prior to the exam.
- For the 360-degree exam environment – the testing environment behind, in front of, above, below, and on the desktop surface is to be shown prior to beginning the exam. Students must pick up their testing device for the proctor to view underneath and behind the screen. This may be repeated at the proctor’s discretion.

## **Student Behavior**

- Dress as if in a public setting. No hats, hoodies, or sunglasses may be worn during the exam period.
- Do not leave the room during the testing period at any time. Do not relocate to another room during the testing period.
- Headsets, ear plugs, earbuds, or similar audio devices are not permitted.
- Avoid reading exam questions out loud.
- Use of a phone during the testing period except for proctoring assistance is strictly forbidden.
- Divulging the contents of an examination is considered cheating and academic dishonesty. Any behavior of this nature is subject to disciplinary action. This includes discussing exam questions with other students, discussing questions on the internet, or posting questions on social media websites.
- Students may not copy or reconstruct exam items during or following the exam for any reason.

## **Policy Violations**

- Students are required to adhere to the Online Testing with Remote Proctoring Policy. Any violation of the policy may result in an exam failure and possible dismissal from the nursing program for academic dishonesty.
- If a student deviates from this policy for any reason, the student must email the instructor immediately upon completion of the exam to explain the nature of the policy violation. The violation will be reviewed by the faculty for a determination of consequences.
- If a student is suspected of a violation of the academic dishonesty policy or a violation of the nursing code of conduct, the student will be contacted directly by course faculty. If faculty determines that a violation did occur, the student may receive an exam failure and dismissal from the program.

## **Traditional BSN Program**

### **Nursing Jurisprudence Examination**

Following graduation, the Nursing Jurisprudence Examination must be taken. Attaining a passing score on the Nursing Jurisprudence Examination is a requirement of initial licensure in Texas. More information can be found on the Board of Nursing website <http://www.bon.state.tx.us>

### **Full-time and Part-Time Student**

Full time status for an undergraduate is defined as enrollment in a minimum of 12 SCH; a full-time graduate student is defined as at least 9 SCH.

### **Progression, Withdrawal and Reinstatement Policies**

The following criteria have been established by the Department of Nursing for progression, withdrawal and reinstatement. Students are required to consult with the course faculty, academic coach, and undergraduate coordinator prior to withdrawing. Students cannot take general education courses while enrolled in nursing courses.

#### **1. Minimum Grades**

RN - BSN: Must maintain a 2.0 (C) in every nursing course

Traditional BSN: Must maintain a 2.0 (C) in each nursing course

#### **2. Retaking Courses : All Programs**

- If the student fails to maintain the required average in each course, the student may retake up to 2 courses. An individual course may be repeated only one time.
- If a student withdraws from a single course, this will be counted towards retake of up to 2 courses.

#### **3. Courses With a Clinical Component: All Programs**

For those nursing courses that have a clinical component in each program, the student must pass both the clinical and didactic/theory component to successfully complete the course and progress in the program.

#### **4. Withdrawal: All Programs**

If a student must withdraw from all courses within a semester, the student will be required to write a letter of petition to request readmission and submit to the Department of Nursing for review and consideration by the Admissions and Progression Committee. Approval of reinstatement will depend on space and faculty availability.

#### **5. Completion of Program**

The traditional BSN program must be completed within 3 years of taking Fundamentals NURS 365.

The RN to BSN program must be completed within 3 years of taking first nursing course.

## WITHDRAWAL OR DISMISSAL

### Withdrawing from the University

To withdraw voluntarily from all courses at the University, students must complete the proper withdrawal forms in the Registrar's Office. Courses abandoned without official withdrawal will result in a grade of "F," regardless of the time when the student ceases to attend class. For an Administrative Withdrawal the student may be withdrawn from the University involuntarily for non-payment of fees, failure to attend or participate in classes, for misrepresenting facts on the application for admission, failure to secure the required transcript(s) from colleges and universities attended, failure to document required TSI status, or as a result of disciplinary suspension (See Admissions--Transcripts). If the student is withdrawn involuntarily, he is not entitled to a refund of tuition and fees (See Tuition and Fees, Refunds of Fees).

### Dismissal

Acts which may result in student dismissal from the clinical area, course or program may include the following, as outlined in Rule 215.8 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice

- Any unsafe act that leads to, or could lead to, injury of a patient may result in immediate removal from the clinical setting. Consequences may range from additional written paperwork up to dismissal from the nursing program.
- Positive drug test or refusal to submit to drug testing will result in removal from clinical practice area and may result in dismissal from the program.
- Failure to comply with professional standards of practice may result in the student being removed from clinical coursework.
- Failure to comply with standards of academic integrity (cheating or plagiarism) may result in failure of an assignment, failure of a course or dismissal from the program as outlined in the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
- Intemperate use, abuse of drugs or alcohol, or diagnosis of or treatment for chemical dependence, mental illness or diminished mental capacity will result in dismissal from the program (Rule 215.8 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice)
- Criminal behavior whether violent or non-violent, directed against person, property, or public order and decency (Rule 215.8 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice)
- Lack of *good professional character* as evidenced by a single incident or an integrated pattern of personal, academic, and/or occupational behaviors which indicates that an individual is unable to consistently conform his or her conduct to the requirements on the Nursing Practice Act, the Board of Nursing's rules and regulations, and generally accepted standards of nursing practice including, but not limited to: behaviors indicating honesty, accountability, trustworthiness, reliability, and integrity (Rule 215.8 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice)

## **Good Professional Character**

Factors to be used in evaluating good, professional character

- Able to distinguish right from wrong
- Able to think and act rationally
- Able to keep promises and honor obligations
- Accountable for his or her own behavior
- Able to practice nursing in an autonomous role with patients/clients, their families, significant others and members of the public who are or who may become physically, emotionally, or financially vulnerable
- Able to recognize and honor the interpersonal boundaries appropriate to any therapeutic relationship or health care setting
- Able to promptly and fully self-disclose facts, circumstances, events, errors and omissions when such disclosure could enhance the health status of patients/clients or the public or could protect patients/clients or the public from unnecessary risk of harm

Article 213.27.b.2 of the Texas Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations relating to Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice.

## **Reinstatement**

Students failing a required nursing course must submit a letter of petition for continuation in the nursing program and submit it to the Department of Nursing. The petition should include a reflection on the semester, with a plan for success in the subsequent semester. The petition will be reviewed by the faculty prior to the beginning of the subsequent semester. Approval of reinstatement will depend on space and faculty availability. The student will be informed within 10 working days of the readmission decision.

Failure of more than two (2) required nursing courses will result in dismissal from the program. The failures can be two different courses, or 2 failures of the same course. A failure is defined as an overall course grade less than

Traditional BSN 75%  
ADN to BSN 70%

## **Concurrent Enrollment**

Students may enroll concurrently with Texas A&M University – Texarkana and with another college or university (including correspondence course work). No written permission for concurrent enrollment is necessary. However, a transcript will be required once the courses are completed. This transcript may be mailed directly to TAMUT campus from the issuing college/university. Official transcripts that are hand delivered or mailed by the student will be accepted if they are in an envelope clearly sealed by the issuing university. Students may not be enrolled in concurrent enrollment during their final semester at TAMUT.

## **Enrollment Changes**

Students should make changes or adjustments in enrollment schedules during the designated registration period. Any subsequent changes must be finalized by the deadlines posted in the Schedule of Classes published each semester. After the last day to drop without receiving a grade, students are required to obtain the signature of the instructor or dean prior to dropping or withdrawing from courses. (See "Dropping a Course" or "Withdrawing from the University").

## **Cancelling Enrollment**

Once enrolled for classes, students must complete one of the following: (1) pay all amounts due by the specified due date, or (2) officially withdraw from all classes prior to the first class day.

## **Dropping a Course**

A student who wishes to drop a course(s) but remain enrolled in at least one course is required to contact the [Registrar's](#) Office to complete the official drop/withdrawal form. The procedure must be completed in its entirety, complete with required signatures, within the designated time frame per the [Academic Calendar](#). Check the Academic calendar last days to drop with a W/no grade assignment.

## **STUDENT SUPPORT & SERVICES**

The University and the Department of Nursing provide support services for students, including academic advising, counseling, financial aid, housing and residential life, library, recreation and disability services. To access services, visit the [Student Resources](#) or the [Student Life](#) webpages.

### **[Financial Aid](#)**

Texas A&M University – Texarkana offers many financial aid options to help pay for college expenses, recognizing that financial assistance is an important key to educational goals and success. We are committed to helping you secure your dreams at Texas A&M University – Texarkana by maximizing sources of governmental, state and institutional funding.

To better assist students, the Financial Aid office offers one on one counseling to answer any questions or concerns you might have. We also offer a financial literacy program to better educate our students on making the right financial choices. Click the link for further information

### **[Counseling](#)**

Texas A&M University – Texarkana's counseling goal is to help students achieve academic and personal growth during life's transitions as well as promote a healthy campus learning environment. To that end, the University provides confidential counseling for students who are experiencing academic or personal difficulties.

### **Academic Advising**

Academic advising for graduate students is provided by the faculty of the Department of Nursing. An academic advisor is assigned to each student upon acceptance for admission. An advising session is required initially to develop a degree plan, and before registering for each semester. To make an appointment email [nursing@tamut.edu](mailto:nursing@tamut.edu).

### [Housing and Residential Life](#)

The Bringle Lake Village Residence Hall provides on-campus opportunities for housing.

### [Disability Services](#)

Information related to rights and responsibility services are located at this link.

### [Library – Graduate Services](#)

The John F. Moss/Palmer Memorial Library provides expanded services for graduate students and distance students. Visit the library link for a list and description of services.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

In order to qualify for a nursing degree, each student must fulfill the following:

- Complete the coursework with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 (Baccalaureate degree) or higher
- File an application for degree per instructions on the [Registrar Apply for Graduation](#) website by the deadline designated on the [Academic Calendar](#)
- Pay any associated graduation fees
- Clear all financial and other obligations to Texas A&M University - Texarkana.
- Be enrolled only in Texas A&M University – Texarkana in the final semester of study prior to graduation. See the Concurrent Enrollment policy above.

**Students who enroll in courses with another college/university during the semester they expect to graduate will be responsible for submitting official transcript(s) to the Registrar's Office before their degree can be awarded. The university must record final grades from all courses the student takes at another university on a student's Texas A&M University-Texarkana transcript. This requirement includes cross registered courses, CLEP exams and courses completed through the course-exchange program. Failure to submit official transcript(s) by the deadline stated by the Registrar's Office will prevent the degree from being awarded for the intended graduation term. Students whose degree is not awarded for the intended graduation term will be required to apply for a future term.**

# Chapter 4: Academic Rules, Policies and Procedures

## CLASSROOM & CLINICAL SETTING

No electronic devices such as laptops, cellphones, smart watches or tablets will be allowed in the classroom and/or clinical setting unless specifically instructed by the nursing faculty or staff.

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Late Assignments

We know that "life happens" so if you have a problem submitting an assignment on time, you must notify faculty of your difficulty *the day before the assignment is due*. Translated, this means that a notification on Sunday is too late if assignments are due on Sunday at midnight.

In the case of an emergency, we will waive this rule, but leniency will be the exception rather than the rule. When you request a late assignment option, you must

- provide the reason the assignment is to be late
- state the projected date for submission, which must be within 1 week
- request only one late assignment per course, except in event of death or major illness in immediate family

Late assignments that do not fall under this special allowance will have 5 points per calendar day deducted. Assignments graded as complete or incomplete must also be submitted by the assigned deadline. Submitting two or more late assignments may result in dismissal from the program.

We will not accept a late final assignment in any course - it must be submitted on time.

### Formatting of Assignments

In our program as in nursing as a whole, we use the APA Style of writing and citing of references. Using a single style provides the uniformity and accuracy needed to retrieve resources and sets a standard across the profession. This is the style required by most nursing publications.

References used within all the nursing programs must be dated within the past 5 years. The exception would be seminal references, such as the original publication of an important work. Students are to use peer-reviewed references and avoid lay literature, internet articles that are not peer reviewed, Wikipedia and other such sources.

We expect that you will be proficient in the use of this style. All assignments must be submitted as a WORD document (not WORKS), unless otherwise designated by course faculty.

Assignments not submitted in APA format will NOT be accepted. If a paper is returned for this reason, the student may resubmit one time, but will lose 5 points per calendar day for each day the assignment is late, beginning with the original due date.

### **A caution about direct quotations: None or One Rule**

The tendency in writing is often to cite sources with direct quotations, but this approach does not demonstrate your ability to synthesize the material, to think critically or to apply the information. So, we usually limit discussion board direct quotations to "none or one" per discussion board post and per assignment. It is *rare* that a direct quotation is needed in a discussion board post.

In a formal paper, *use a direct quote only when the essence of the statement would be lost* if paraphrased. The "none or one" rule also applies to formal papers.

### **Secondary Sources**

Another common error is in the overuse of secondary sources. Please read the material in the APA Manual regarding secondary sources carefully. It is best to *avoid all secondary sources*, accessing the original source if at all possible. You should interpret the material yourself instead of depending on someone else's interpretation.

## **Time Limitations for Completion of Degrees**

### **ADN to BSN**

Candidates for the ADN to BSN are expected to complete all requirements for completion of the respective degree within 3 calendar years. If all requirements are not fulfilled within that time, a one-year extension may be requested by the student.

### **Traditional BSN**

Candidates for the Traditional BSN degree are expected to complete all requirements for completion of the respective degree within 6 regular semesters or 3 years, measured from the date of the first nursing course. If all requirements are not fulfilled within that time, the student must submit a formal request for an extension.

## **Course and Faculty Evaluation**

It is the student's right and responsibility to provide constructive feedback to faculty and administrators of the nursing program by participating in mid-term, course, faculty and clinical evaluation process. The feedback is used by administration and faculty to effect continuous quality improvement. The student will also be expected to provide a self-evaluation periodically, using standardized approaches or self-reflection, as designated in specific courses and as a part of the Student Professional Portfolio.

### **Academic Probation**

If a student receives a grade of "D" or "F" (Baccalaureate program) in any course in any given semester, the student will automatically be placed on probation and notified in writing of probation status. The student will remain on probation until the course is repeated with a "C" (Baccalaureate program) or better. The course can only be retaken one time. Students are allowed to repeat *only two courses* during their enrollment in the program.

If a student repeats a course which the student has failed in the nursing program, the official grade is the last one earned.

### **Readmission**

A returning or readmit application is required if student has previously attended TAMUT but has been on break for a year or longer. Readmission to the program will depend on space available basis.

### **Incomplete "I" Grade Policy**

An incomplete grade ("I") may be assigned when there is unfinished work and the student meets criteria established by university policy. A student who requests an incomplete must initiate contact with the faculty member. This discussion will be converted to a written Incomplete Contract and signed before the last class meeting of the semester in which the "I" will be recorded.

The student and the faculty member should discuss a plan, including a schedule, for completing the remaining work prior to the conferral of an "I". **All requirements of the contract must be satisfied in order for the student to progress in the program.**

### **Grade Grievance and Appeal Process**

Nursing or professional students who believe that disciplinary actions stemming from suspension or blocks for scholastic deficiency, and disputes over final course grades or evaluation of performance on examinations required by the department, intercollegiate faculty or the Nursing advisory committee were made on an arbitrary, capricious or prejudiced basis may appeal such decisions through the appeals process specified in the Texas A&M University – Texarkana Student Rules (59. Nursing Appeals Panel). In such appeals the burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate that the evaluations in question were arbitrary, capricious or prejudiced.

### **Evaluation of Faculty, Courses, and Program**

Student participation in faculty, course, and program evaluations is both the student's right and responsibility. The process of evaluation is viewed as the student's opportunity for input into curriculum development and the assessment of faculty effectiveness and student learning needs. Students are therefore encouraged to participate in all evaluations which will be done during the course of each semester. Evaluations are anonymous.

## **Student Transportation**

Students are responsible for arranging their own reliable transportation, including to and from campus, clinical rotations, and other community activities. Students are responsible for covering all gas and parking fees incurred by their mode of transportation.

## **Exam Guidelines**

Exams, quizzes and other assignments in online courses are administered/monitored electronically or face-to-face. Policies and procedures related to specific exams are available in the syllabus of each course. Exams/quizzes are available at times specified by the policies of each course. Information regarding exam software and specific student support related to exams will be posted in each individual course.

# Chapter 5: Clinical Policies

No electronic devices such as laptops, cellphones, smart watches and tablets will be allowed in patient care areas during clinical hours.

## Clinical Experiences

Clinical experiences enable the nursing student to “experiment and acquire competence with new knowledge and skills” by “integrate[ing] didactic learning, promote[ing] innovative thinking, and test[ing] new potential solutions to clinical/practice or system issues” (AACN, 2011, p. 30). Clinical experiences will occur in a variety of settings and offer exposure to a variety of populations.

## Clinical Preceptors

Clinical experiences may involve direct faculty supervision or indirect faculty supervision with the guidance of a preceptor. If involving a preceptor, the faculty and student together may select a preceptor and clinical site.

Clinical preceptors will be chosen according to the learning needs of the student, course content, the experience/expertise of the preceptor and the opportunity within the clinical agency for student access to clinical services. The criteria for selection of clinical preceptors are (adapted from the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 219.10, Texas Board of Nursing)

1. Currently licensed health care professionals who can provide supervision and teaching in clinical settings appropriate for student learning.
2. Practicing in a clinical agency that meets course-specific clinical learning needs.
3. Written course objectives shared with clinical preceptors.

Course faculty will communicate regularly with the clinical preceptor and student for the purpose of monitoring and evaluating learning experiences. This communication may consist of physical site visits, conference calls, online conferences, and written communication. The faculty will solicit preceptor input prior to performing formative and summative evaluations of the student’s clinical performance. The ultimate responsibility for the assignment of grades belongs to the faculty. Details regarding the choice of preceptors and the roles of faculty, students and preceptors are available in the Preceptor Handbook.

## ADN to BSN Students

When providing clinical care, students are held to professional standards for registered nurses (i.e., what would the reasonably prudent nurse with like education and experience do). This includes but is not limited to adherence to the Texas Nurse Practice Act (NPA), University and facility/agency policies and procedures.

Clinical paperwork and assignments are due as indicated by faculty in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for adhering to any additional clinical expectations and guidelines outlined in course syllabi.

## Clinical Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled clinical experiences, arriving on time and prepared in appropriate attire. Failure to appear for scheduled clinical experiences, coming unprepared, and tardiness are viewed as unprofessional behavior and may result in failure of the course. The course syllabus will provide information regarding the attendance policy for each course. As professional courtesy, students should provide a minimum of 24-hour notice to preceptors of any expected absences. Students are responsible for completing required clinical hours within the semester timeframe.

## Clinical Absences

All clinical absences will be made up. The course coordinator will plan for clinical make up and communicate to faculty and students.

## Clinical Evaluation

Clinical experiences are constructed to allow the student to apply classroom learning in the clinical area and are vital to the educational process. Clinical learning and evaluation is guided by the course objectives. To determine if learning has taken place, the faculty must evaluate the student's learning and performance and all spheres of learning, cognitive, psychomotor and affective. Additionally, the student provides an evaluation of the clinical preceptor, clinical faculty and clinical agencies.

Required clinical paperwork is considered part of the clinical day and should be submitted on time and in a satisfactory manner. Incomplete, late, or non-satisfactory clinical paperwork will result in an incomplete clinical day and may result in course dismissal.

Students must pass theory and clinical to be successful in the course and progress. The total weighted exam average and final clinical grade must be 75% or greater to progress to the next level. Clinical grades are calculated each off campus clinical day utilizing 1-4 scale: one (1) dependent and four (4) being minimally supervised. These grades are communicated by the clinical instructor after reviewing required clinical paperwork through LMS or through one-on-one meetings.

Students will have a midterm and final self-evaluation due through the LMS.

GRADING SCALE			
SCALE LABEL	STANDARD PROCEDURE	QUALITY OF PERFORMANCE	ASSISTANCE
<b>Supervised Score = 4</b>	Safe, Accurate, Effect, and Affect EACH TIME.	Efficient, coordinated, confident. Some expenditure of excess energy within reasonable time period.	Occasional supportive
<b>Assisted Score = 3</b>	Safe, Accurate, Effect, and Affect EACH TIME, MOST OF THE TIME.	Skillful in parts of behavior inefficient and incoordination. Expend excess energy within a delayed time period.	Frequent verbal and occasional physical directive in addition to supportive

<b>Marginal Score = 2</b>	Safe, but NOT ALONE. Performs at risk. Accurate, NOT ALWAYS. Effect and Affect OCCASIONALLY	Unskilled, inefficient considerable expenditure of excess energy prolonged time period.	Continuous verbal and frequent physical
<b>Dependent Score = 1</b>	Unsafe; unable to demonstrate behavior.	Unable to demonstrate procedure/behavior lacks confidence, coordination, efficiency.	Continuous verbal and physical
<b>X</b>	Not Observed		

## **DRESS CODE/UNIFORMS POLICY**

### **ADN to BSN Students**

The Department of Nursing expects students to reflect professionalism and maintain high standards of appearance and grooming in the clinical setting as well as in the classroom. Clinical faculty will have final judgment on the appropriateness of student attire and corrective action for dress code violations. In general, when nursing students' clinical experiences are in primary, acute or long-term care facilities the student should

- Wear business casual clothes (no jeans) with clean and pressed white lab coats. The lab coat must not have any other identifiers on it. Covering identifiers with tape is not acceptable.
- Wear the TAMUT Department of Nursing name tags at all times in practicum experiences.
- Wear only close-toed shoes in the acute care setting.
- In the community setting, nursing students are expected to wear business casual with the Department of Nursing name badge.

### **Traditional BSN Students**

Please refer to the Dress Code in Appendix A.

### **Unsatisfactory Performance/Safety**

Faculty and/or preceptors may request that a student be removed from the clinical setting if the level of performance does not meet an acceptable level of competence. If a student is removed from a clinical setting due to concerns about safety or competence, he/she will not be allowed to continue in other course clinical courses until the situation has been resolved. Legal and ethical grounds exist for dismissal of a student who is clinically deficient. Any unsafe act that leads to, or could lead to, injury of a patient may result in immediate removal from the clinical setting. Consequences may range from additional written paperwork up to dismissal from the nursing program. Errors related to patient care are to be reported to preceptors and clinical faculty.

### **Unsafe Clinical Performance**

Any act, omission or commission that may result in harm to the patient is considered unsafe clinical practice. Unsafe clinical practice includes but may not be limited to the following:

- Harm or threats to harm the physical, psychological, microbiological, chemical, or thermal safety of a patient
- Lack of incorporation of previously mastered principles, learning or objectives in carrying out nursing actions
- Inappropriate independence in action or decisions or failure to recognize one's own limitations
- Lack of adherence to guidelines for infection control
- Failure to accept moral or legal responsibility for one's own actions
- Impaired practice\* as determined by the clinical faculty or facility personnel.

\*Impaired practice is arriving at the clinical site in a condition that reflects inability to administer nursing care safely or effectively due to impaired cognitive functioning.

Unsafe clinical performance will result in immediate dismissal from the practicum experience with a failing grade. A failure in the clinical portion of the course results in failure of the course, regardless of student's grade in the theory portion of the course.

**Traditional BSN Program.** Competency in dosage calculation will be tested in every clinical course.

1. The content of the test will differ by course, reflecting the population and/or content of the course.
2. A review will be provided prior to the test that includes an introduction of new content to be tested.
3. The student is allowed two (2) attempts on the test. Remediation activities will be required prior to taking the second time. Failure to achieve the required score after 2 attempts will require that the student withdraw from the course. A grade of "W" will be recorded on the student transcript but will be considered as a failure in the Department of Nursing.
4. A grade of 90% or higher is required to demonstrate competency.
5. The grade on this test will not be included in the calculation of the grade for the course.

### **Confidentiality**

Students will maintain confidentiality of personal health information (PHI) adhering to University and institutional/agency policies. Violation of confidentiality, including photocopying PHI documents, taking photographs, removing documents or postings on internet social networking sites will be subject to disciplinary action (Refer to HIPAA policy), including strict patient and peer confidentiality about the scenario, actions of participants and debriefing sessions of simulation experiences.

### **Student Identification**

University ID badges must be worn at all times in the clinical setting. Any student who forgets their ID badge may be dismissed from clinical until they present with proper identification.

### **HIPAA Policy**

All educational experiences in the Department of Nursing abide by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) regulations. In addition, the Department of Nursing adheres to the new

national privacy standards issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that went into effect on February 17, 2010. For further information on each of these laws, please consult <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html>

### **Needlestick Guidelines**

The Department of Nursing endorses standard precautions as the single best strategy to reduce the risk of bloodborne pathogen (BBP) exposure. Healthcare personnel are at risk for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, including hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Exposures occur through needlesticks or cuts from other sharp instruments contaminated with an infected patient's blood or through contact of the eye, nose, mouth, or skin with a patient's blood. Adequate barrier protection (e.g., gloves, safety glasses, mask) when performing any activities is needed where the potential exists for BBP exposure. Familiarity with and use of safety devices on needles, syringes, and intravenous equipment can also reduce the risk of accidental BBP exposure.

Students who have been exposed to needlesticks or to potentially infectious blood or blood products or body fluids should follow current [Center for Disease Control](#) guidelines for exposure. Any expenses incurred by treatment are the sole responsibility of the student.

First Aid for percutaneous and mucocutaneous exposures:

1. Needlesticks or puncture wounds: express blood from wound, scrub area vigorously with soap and water for 5 minutes.
2. Oral mucous membranes: rinse area several times with oxygenating agent such as 50% strength Hydrogen Peroxide. Do not swallow.
3. Ocular (remove contacts if applicable): irrigate immediately with water or NS solution.
4. Human bite: cleanse with povidone-iodine and sterile water.

### **Blood or Body Fluids Exposure**

For blood or body fluids exposure, please refer to TAMUT's Environmental Health and Safety website: <https://www.tamut.edu/administration/ehs/resources.html>

### **Substance Abuse Rules**

The Texas A&M University System is committed to maintaining an environment free from substance abuse and complying with state and federal laws. The Texas A&M System policy governing this may be found in the following regulation: 34.02 Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Rehabilitation Programs.

As health care professionals, the department of nursing faculty members support a policy wherein, each individual providing patient care in a clinical setting or preparing educationally to become a care provider adheres to high personal health standards. This includes, but is not limited to, the avoidance of substances that impair thinking and behavior.

The department requires all Traditional BSN, ADN to BSN, MSN, and NP students to participate in a drug screen before admission into the program through a company determined by the University. Pre-licensure students are required to repeat screening annually at a minimum. Traditional BSN, ADN to BSN, MSN, and NP students must be drug screened before admission and as required by their employers and clinical agencies for practicum experiences. The student is responsible for obtaining the drug screens at their

expense. The Office of Student Affairs will provide information on drug screens during new student orientation.

If a positive drug screen is reported, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program. The student will be required to withdraw from all courses. To be considered for re-entry into the program, the student must have a negative urine drug and alcohol screen and provide satisfactory documentation to the University of successful drug counseling and treatment, all at the student's expense. If accepted back into the program, they will be subjected to unannounced random drug screening at the student's expense.

For the protection of patients, faculty, staff, and students, the Department of Nursing retains the right to require a student to submit to testing for substance abuse at the student's expense when the nursing program has reasonable cause to believe that a student is abusing controlled substances. For cause reasons may include:

- Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol, such as but not limited to slurred speech, noticeable change in grooming habits, impaired physical coordination, inappropriate comments or behaviors, or pupillary changes
- Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior, absenteeism, tardiness or deterioration in performance
- Report of drug use provided by credible sources
- Evidence that a student has tampered with a previous drug or alcohol test
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

### **Additional Testing Conditions**

During the clinical experience, students may be required to undergo substance abuse testing if the following situations arise at the facility:

- An injury occurs while participating in a clinical experience
- If a medication or handling discrepancy is discovered
- If medication may have been stolen or improperly used
- Other conditions wherein all employees of the facility are required to undergo testing

If a faculty member observes such behavior, and if such behavior is observed or validated by another faculty member or clinical agency staff member, the faculty member must excuse or remove the student from the educational or patient setting immediately.

If questionable behavior is observed by a preceptor or other agency personnel overseeing a student's clinical experience performed in conjunction with, or as a component of, meeting the requirements of a course of study in the Department of Nursing, such as preceptor or other agency personnel and a member of the nursing staff, in the interest of patient safety, shall have the authority to take action in the same manner as an assigned faculty member.

**The cost of the testing and transportation will be the student's responsibility. Reports will be sent to the nursing department director.**

### **Transportation for Testing**

Students are required to list an emergency contact for the purpose of transportation. Students suspected of being under the influence are not allowed to transport themselves to the testing site. The student must immediately arrange transportation to the designated site for a drug/alcohol screening. Students are expected to reach the designated testing center within an hour of being removed from the clinical setting. Faculty must escort the student to the designated driver or transportation service and provide the student with a testing form available in nursing shared drive under forms.

### **Description of the Drug Screen Panel**

The Department of Nursing requires each student to submit to a ten (10) panel urine screening. The panel includes the following classes of drugs: Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Cocaine Metabolites, Ethanol, Extended Opiates, Marijuana Metabolite, Meperidine, Methadone, Methaqualone, Phencyclidine, Propoxyphene, Tramadol. Students will be directed where to complete the screening.

### **Appeal and Retesting Guidelines**

Positive tests may be appealed by submitting a written request to the Department of Nursing Director within three (3) business days after being informed of positive test results. The appellant has the right to have a second test performed at a certified laboratory of their choice. All expenses of such retest will be the responsibility of the appellant. The specimen transfer between laboratories will follow standard protocol.

### **Disciplinary/Actions**

The Texas Board of Nursing requires formal disclosure of an outstanding eligibility issue that may prevent an applicant from taking the licensure examination. A Declaratory Order petition must be filed if there has been any history of substance abuse. For more information, go to: Online Examination Application - Eligibility Information. See further details below regarding the responsibility of the College as it relates to reporting substance abuse.

### **Refusal to Consent to Testing**

Any student who refuses to consent to an alcohol or drug test or fails to provide an adequate specimen will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

### **Confidentiality**

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) has a policy that any substance-related condition(s) may affect the ability of a nurse to safely perform nursing duties, thus creating a threat to public safety. The policy applies to all nurses or those individuals seeking to obtain licensure. A nursing education program shall report a student to the BON if they have reasonable cause to suspect that the ability of the nursing student to perform the services of the nursing profession would be, or would reasonably be expected to be, impaired

by chemical dependency (as noted in the Nursing Practice Act Sections §301.404. Duty of Nursing Educational Program to Report). Students should be aware that test results may be used for administrative hearings and court cases and may be sent to state and /or federal agencies as required by applicable law. Beyond the scope of these regulations, every effort will be made to keep the results of alcohol and drug testing confidential.

## **High Alert Medication Administration**

According to Institute for Safe Medication Practices, high-alert medications are “drugs that bear a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm when they are used in error, and therefore should only be administered by a licensed nurse. Although mistakes may or may not be more common with these drugs, the consequences of an error are clearly more devastating to patients.”

Undergraduate students **will not** be allowed to administer high-alert medications.

High-alert Medications include but are not limited to the following classes.

- Anesthetic agents
- Antithrombic agents
- IV cardiac medications
- Chemotherapeutic agents
- Dialysis solutions
- Hypertonic Saline or Dextrose
- Insulin
- Neuromuscular Blocking Agents
- Magnesium Sulfate Injection
- Opioids
- Oral Hypoglycemics
- Oxytocin
- Parenteral nutrition
- Potassium injection
- Promethazine injection
- Sedation

More details pertaining to high alert medications identified by the ISMP are available through provided [link](#).

## **Clinical Skills and Simulation Center (CSC)**

### **Skills Check-Off and Remediation Policy**

Nursing skills are an extension of the clinical and didactic nursing program. Therefore, the same requirements for maintaining professional behaviors in both clinical and academic settings apply. It is essential that students successfully demonstrate the designated skill(s) with regard for all critical elements of safe nursing practice.

During the semester, students are assigned clinical skills check-offs to be completed on campus. Skills will be taught in line with the course syllabi, and all mandatory skills must be completed with an “S” satisfactory competency to receive a passing grade for the course. Remediation and re-testing of the skill will be required if the skill level performance is deemed “U” unsatisfactory. If the skills are determined to not meet

the objectives outlined for the skill, the student will be allowed two (2) additional opportunities to demonstrate competency in performing the skill.

All students, including those who have successfully progressed from one semester to the next, returning students due to a course failure or withdrawal, students that may not have been enrolled for an extended amount of time, and students who are unable to demonstrate current semester competencies either in the clinical setting or in simulation, may be required per faculty discretion to remediate on a particular skill/skills or to demonstrate skill competency on any and/or all previously checked-off skills from previous semesters. This is to ensure that students continue to practice skills and carry forward the knowledge and skill base they have learned from semester to semester.

Remediation and re-testing will be required if skill level performance is unsatisfactory.

1. Remediation must be done by appointment with faculty.
2. The faculty member will document reason for the unsuccessful skill check-off with specific remediation needs of the student on a skills remediation form.
3. The student will be referred to the skills lab for a minimum of one (1) hour remediation.
4. The student is responsible for completing skills remediation within 5 academic days of the unsuccessful skill check-off attempt. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange time for remediation with faculty.
5. Documentation of remediation will be completed on the remediation form.
6. If the student is able to demonstrate competency during remediation, faculty may deem the skill check-off to be satisfactory "S" at that time.
7. If additional practice is needed, an appointment must be made with faculty for the second attempt.
8. If the student is still unsuccessful on the second attempt, the student again must remediate for a minimum of one (1) hour in the skills lab with faculty. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange the time for remediation. Specific needs for remediation will be documented on the skills remediation form.
9. The student must successfully complete the skill check-off within 2 weeks of the original check-off date.
10. Failure of the student to arrange remediation time with faculty will result in an "unsatisfactory" skill performance, and the student will receive a failing grade for the course.
11. If the student is not successful on the 3<sup>rd</sup> attempt, the student will be considered to have had an unsafe clinical performance. This will result in immediate dismissal from the practicum experience and course with a failing grade. A failure in the clinical portion of the course results in failure of the course, regardless of student's grade in the theory portion of the course.

## **Clinical Simulation Center (CSC) Policies and Procedures & Student Expectations**

### **Introduction**

The Clinical Simulation Center (CSC), Texas A&M University – Texarkana provides a safe, quality learning environment devoted to the student development of clinical skills, critical thinking, clinical reasoning and clinical judgment. The CSC provides an opportunity for the application of didactic learning to clinical practice by replication of the clinical environment in a realistic practice context.

The CSC contributes to the mission of the Department of Nursing by the emphasis on

- the creation of a learning environment that values and respects the intrinsic worth of each individual
- providing the highest quality educational experiences

- a compassionate, holistic approach to patient care
- an evidence-based approach to nursing practice
- the accountability of each practitioner for safety and quality

## **Expectations of Students**

### **Orientation**

Students are to attend an orientation prior to participation in any activities in the CSC, followed by signing a confidentiality statement and an authorization release for video/photography.

### **Use of Facilities**

All simulation and skills facilities are to be used exclusively for events that involve simulation learning, and are not to be used for meetings, lectures or conferences unless given permission by the Director of Nursing.

Student Practice/Remediation can be scheduled by the student by submitting a request at least 24 hours prior to the session.

### **Equipment**

Clinical skills and simulation equipment, electronic equipment and other resources within the CSCC are property of the university and subject to the policies of the university. Personal use of equipment, electronics and other resources is prohibited.

All simulated patients in the lab are to be treated as if they are real persons. This includes addressing by name, affording privacy and confidentiality, respect in action and communications, and the compassion afforded all patients.

The skills & simulation labs are not latex free or betadine free facilities. If you have a latex or iodine allergy it is important to notify staff and faculty prior to learning experiences or practice.

The CSC does not use any real medications; none of the simulated medications are pharmacologically active.

Report any incidents or malfunction of equipment to the CSC staff. If no one is immediately available, leave a detailed note on the desk regarding particular equipment and problems encountered.

Do not use any pens or markers in the area of simulators or trainers.

Return all supplies and equipment that you have used to their designated storage location, if instructed by faculty

Return the patient care unit to its original condition: manikins have gowns, beds are made, in low position, side rails down, over bed table placed across the foot of the bed.

Dispose of all sharps in sharps containers. Do not recap sharps.

*Do not* dispose of any equipment that contains fluid in trash containers without draining fluids – ask for instructions of faculty or CSC personnel.

The student is responsible for the safety and security of all personal belongings.

## **Dress**

Usual student dress within the CSC is student uniform as outlined in the Student Dress Code Policy for Clinical Dress.

Faculty may designate a different dress policy for specific learning experiences. Individually scheduled skills *practice* sessions require business casual clothes with clean and pressed white lab coats and student name pin/name tag.

All students must wear student ID at all times within the skills/simulation environment.

## **Confidentiality**

Students will maintain confidentiality of personal health information (PHI) adhering to University and institutional/agency policies. Violation of confidentiality will be subject to disciplinary action, as the HIPPA policy is enforced regarding health information in simulation as in clinical practice. Because simulation experiences replicate clinical practice and is an important aspect of clinical learning, strict patient and peer confidentiality about the scenario, actions of participants and debriefing sessions of simulation experiences is included in this policy.

Students will not discuss any aspect of the simulation experience with any person other than in the learning experience in the simulation lab.

## **Conduct**

The CSC is a learning environment. Conduct that is inappropriate to any classroom or clinical learning experience is prohibited in the labs.

Environmental factors such as excessive noise and interruptions of learning activities are prohibited. Students are not to wander or loiter in the CSC areas. Students should participate in scheduled activities and then leave the area for breaks and conversation. Individuals failing to comply will be required to leave the simulation area.

## **Communication**

All communication should be professional and demonstrate respect for others. No profanity or obscene language will be tolerated.

## **Integrity**

In addition to confidentiality, integrity includes:

- respect for others in all interactions, including students, faculty and staff
- respectful treatment of skills and simulation manikins as if the manikins are real patients. Manikins should be approached with the name assigned in the simulation/skills scenario with the same rights and privileges due a patient in a clinical setting
- academic integrity as outlined in the Nursing Student Handbook

### **Food and Drink**

Food and drinks are allowed only in the large tables, break areas, and in the debriefing areas (closed containers are required) with instructor permission. No food/drink is allowed in the skills or simulation labs in the area of manikins or electronic equipment.

# Chapter 6: Professional Conduct and Integrity

Each student enrolled in the TAMUT Department of Nursing is expected to uphold the professional code of ethics established for and by the nursing profession. Any conduct or performance considered unsafe or detrimental to the health and safety of a patient, harmful to the hospital or school environment, or lacking in professionalism will result in disciplinary action.

Any situation that threatens patient safety, exhibits a lack of moral character, demonstrates a lack of professionalism or good judgment, and/or is a violation of Department of Nursing or clinical agency policy may result in immediate termination from the program.

Verbal or written derogatory statements about patients, clinical placements, the TAMUT Department of Nursing, nursing students, faculty or staff will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes postings on internet social networking sites (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.).

## Professional Code of Ethics

The Department of Nursing has primary jurisdiction over reports of behaviors that implicate the Professional Standards of the academic program. The nursing profession expresses its moral obligations and professional values through the Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2008). Each student should read the [American Nurses Association Code of Ethics](#) and be accountable for its contents. The Code of Ethics for a profession makes explicit the primary goals, values, and obligations of the profession. Students are expected to function within the framework of the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses.

Nursing students are expected not only to adhere to the morals and norms of the profession, but also to embrace them as part of what it means to be a nurse. The nurse recognizes that his/her first obligation is to the patient's welfare.

Students are expected to demonstrate and embrace the following principles:

- Be responsible for his/her own learning and clinical practice and honor other students' right to learn and be successful in academic and clinical environments.
- Demonstrate respect in verbal and non-verbal behaviors to all others in clinical and academic settings. The use of abusive language or disruptive behavior directed toward faculty, staff, or other students will not be tolerated.
- Provide safe, competent care, seeking assistance when personal knowledge and/or skill are not adequate. Avoid use of any substances that would impair clinical ability or judgment.
- Provide the same standard of care to all patients and families regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sexual preference, disability, religion, economic status, employment status, or the nature of their health problem. Accept that others have the right to their own cultural beliefs and values and respect their choices.
- Act in a manner that contributes to the development and maintenance of an ethical educational and practice environment. Recognize that the primary commitment in clinical practice is to the patient and that respectful interactions are expected.

- Refrain from unauthorized use or possession of school or clinical setting's equipment, patient's belongings, or items dispersed or intended for patient use.

Students may purchase the Code for Nurses by contacting the American Nurses Association Publishing Company or it can be downloaded at:

<https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

### **Expectations of Academic Integrity**

The TAMUT Department of Nursing philosophy is that academic dishonesty is inconsistent with appropriate professional behavior for the nursing student. Dishonesty will not be tolerated and appropriate punitive actions will be enforced. Accordingly, the penalties for academic dishonesty are severe and may include permanent dismissal from the program. See Chapter 1 of this Handbook.

Both faculty and students are charged with the responsibility for reporting all offenses to the Program Director. An instructor may take immediate action during an examination or other point-generating activity in order to maintain the integrity of the academic process. The policy for offenses related to academic integrity are included in the syllabus for each course.

Penalties are imposed only after a careful investigation of all the facts. It is important for each student to understand the philosophy and current practices within the Department of Nursing and the University to deal with academic dishonesty in a positive, clear, and comprehensive manner. The underlying goal of this philosophy and the current practice is to encourage the very best learning and professional growth among each student.

## **Appendix A**

### **Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing Student Dress Code Policy (Traditional BSN only)**

Each student serves as a representative of the University. Nursing students are easily identified in the community, and it is important that each student's appearance and behavior enhance the image of the Department of Nursing and Texas A&M University – Texarkana. If a student's appearance does not conform to the dress code policy, the student will be sent home with a grade of "Unsatisfactory" for the clinical day.

Your Texas A&M University – Texarkana name tag shall be worn only for Texas A&M University – Texarkana assigned clinical activities and/or professional meetings. When not required to wear a uniform, professional dress is required. Violations of this policy are grounds for dismissal from the clinical setting.

#### **EQUIPMENT**

1. Non-ornamental wristwatch with sweeping second hand
2. Stethoscope
3. Bandage scissors
4. Black ink pen
5. Pencil with eraser
6. Penlight
7. Official name badge

#### **CLINICAL DRESS**

(For Use in Hospital, Lab, and Simulation Center Settings)

1. The Department of Nursing approved uniform should be washed after each wearing and should be wrinkle free and in good repair.
2. The official name badge should be placed on the left front of the uniform, or at the height of the top of the pocket. The name badge should be visible in all clinical settings.
3. Undergarments should not be visible through clothing.
4. Scrub attire that belongs to an agency must be left at that agency. Students who damage or alter the scrub attire will be held responsible and required to replace damaged or altered items at their own expense.
5. Chewing gum and tobacco products are not allowed in the clinical setting.
6. Official name badge may be purchased at the Texas A&M University – Texarkana bookstore.
7. Shoes may be professional black closed toe uniform shoes. The following are not allowed: Shoes with holes or perforations, cloth tennis shoes, slides, sandal-types, Mary-Jane type, open toes/heels, or clogs. Shoes must remain clean and polished.
8. Plain hosiery or above ankle black socks with no logos must be worn.
9. Undershirts are allowed provided that they are white in color and do not have logos or wording on the shirt. The undershirts may be short or long sleeve and must be crew neck style. Students are advised to check with their respective clinical instructor prior to wearing a long sleeve undershirt as they may be prohibited in select clinical areas.
10. Any visible tattoos must be covered.
11. Stethoscope covers are not allowed.
12. Fleece jackets, sweatshirts, sweaters, or other outer garments are not permitted in patient areas; only lab coats or matching jackets provided by the uniform company are allowed over

- the scrubs/uniform. Fleece sweaters sold by the TAMUT Nursing Club or bookstore are not acceptable in any clinical setting.
13. Patterned or colored undergarments should not be visible; white or nude color is recommended.

**Community Health Uniform (Must also be worn when obtaining patient assignments)**

1. TAMUT maroon polo shirt with optional white lab coat
2. Black slacks; no leggings, jeggings, or black denim
3. Dark closed-toe walking shoes with 2 inch or less heel
4. Black socks or hose
5. Name badge

**Hygiene**

1. Physical appearance must appear neat and clean.
2. Makeup is to be subdued.
3. Students are expected to be clean, with a pleasant body odor. Due to close contact with others, deodorant/antiperspirant is to be worn.
4. No perfumes, colognes, or aftershave lotions should be applied. No perfumed hand sanitizers can be used.

**Hair**

1. Hair must be clean and well-groomed at all times; and if shoulder length, tied back so that it does not interfere with the performance of clinical duties. No ornate hair ornaments or bows will be worn. Headbands must not exceed ½ inch in width and must be navy, maroon, white, black, or brown.
2. Hair color must be a naturally occurring color.
3. A clean, neatly trimmed mustache may be worn if it does not hang over the upper lip, extend below the corner of the lips, or can be twisted or curved at the ends toward the upper cheekbone. No beards or sideburns below the earlobes will be allowed.

**Nails**

1. Nails are to be clean, groomed, manicured, and cut to the tip of the finger
2. Artificial nails are prohibited
3. No nail polish may be worn
4. No fingernail jewelry may be worn; no stenciling or glitter is permitted on nails

**Jewelry**

1. No jewelry can be worn with the uniform except a watch. Students may wear a solid wedding band without stones and only one pair of small plain stud earrings, one earring per lobe (No hoops or dangling earrings). No other visible body jewelry is allowed. This applies to both the clinical and community settings.
2. Medals or necklaces must not be visible. NOTE: Necklaces or chains are not allowed in Psych/Mental Health areas.
3. No visible body or facial piercings will be allowed.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing Student Statement of Receipt

**All students** are required to read and agree to abide by the policies in the Department of Nursing, Nursing Student Handbook, Code of Ethics for Nurses and the rules and regulations of the Texas Board of Nursing as applicable.

I, \_\_\_\_\_(printed name), have been informed that I am bound by the current rules, regulations, or policies of the Texas A&M University System, the Texas A&M University – Texarkana rules and regulations in the University catalog and the *Nursing Student Handbook*.

\_\_\_\_\_I agree to safeguard client (patient) confidentiality and will only reveal client information to authorized individuals. If I violate client confidentiality, I will be subject to dismissal from the program.

\_\_\_\_\_I agree to abide by the rules and regulations of any affiliated clinical agencies, such as additional immunizations or pulmonary screenings, dress codes, criminal background checks, drug analyses, etc. Should a situation render me ineligible to be placed at any approved clinical site, I realize I may be dismissed from the nursing program.

\_\_\_\_\_I consent to the videotaping/photographing/audio recording of myself in simulation and clinical laboratory situations. I understand that recordings may be used by Texas A&M University – Texarkana for educational or promotional purposes.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have been provided access information to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing *A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media* (2011) and agree to follow the guidelines entitled *How to Avoid Disclosing Confidential Patient Information* contained in this document.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am able to effectively and safely perform the duties and responsibilities of a nursing student.

\_\_\_\_\_I have reviewed the Substance Abuse Rules. I understand that refusal to submit to substance testing will result in discipline that may include dismissal from the nursing program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have received information regarding access to the Texas Board of Nursing Licensure Eligibility rules and information related to access to the Petition for Declaratory Order form. I understand that failure to meet the TBON requirements may make me ineligible for licensure and/or continuation in the nursing program.

\_\_\_\_\_I have been informed about the above policies and have initialed each item to signify my understanding of these policies, acknowledging that any questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

My signature below verifies receipt of this information and agreement to comply. I understand that this verification of receipt will be maintained in my permanent file.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Appendix C

### TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY – TEXARKANA DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

#### Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing Clinical Skills and Simulation Laboratory Simulation Confidentiality and Recording Agreement

In consideration of the educational opportunity to obtain practical experience in a simulated patient environment, I understand the significance of confidentiality with respect to information concerning the simulation scenarios, the simulated patients, and fellow students. I understand that active participation in the simulation scenarios is part of the course requirements. In addition, I understand that the simulation scenarios are videotaped and used for debriefing purposes and shared only with appropriate faculty.

**I agree to adhere to the following conditions and guidelines throughout my educational experience at Texas A&M University – Texarkana:**

- The simulation mannequins are to be treated with respect and handled with care as if they were living patients in every sense, morally, ethically and legally.
- I will uphold the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and any other federal or state laws regarding confidentiality. As the simulation mannequins are to be treated as live patients, all patient information is to be privileged and confidential. Any viewing, discussion, or disclosure of patient information to another individual, including other students, whether intentional or unintentional, is a violation of HIPAA and will lead to disciplinary action.
- I understand that patient information may be viewed, used, disclosed, and discussed only with other students, faculty or coordinators participating in the simulation. Any viewing, discussion, or disclosure of this information outside of the simulation environment is a violation of HIPAA and other state and federal laws.
- I agree to demonstrate respect and confidentiality for all communications, actions or performance of fellow students and faculty in the simulation experience or during the debriefing session.
- I agree to report any violations of confidentiality or other violations of this agreement that I become aware of to my facilitator or faculty.
- I understand that simulation and debriefing sessions may be audio or videotaped or otherwise recorded to be used for formative and summative evaluation of learning.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing Substance Abuse Testing Policy

The Department of Nursing retains the right to require a student to submit to testing for substance abuse at the student's expense when the nursing program has reasonable cause to believe that a student is abusing controlled substances. Behaviors may include

- Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol, such as, but not limited to, slurred speech, noticeable change in grooming habits, impaired physical coordination, inappropriate comments or behaviors, or pupillary changes
- Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior, absenteeism, tardiness or deterioration in performance
- Report of drug use provided by credible sources
- Evidence that a student has tampered with a previous drug or alcohol test
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

If a faculty member observes such behavior, the faculty member must excuse or remove the student from the educational or patient setting immediately. The student reports immediately to the designated site for a drug screen. The cost of the testing will be the responsibility of the student. The student will designate the results of the test be sent directly to the program director of the Department of Nursing. Failure to do so may automatically result in dismissal from the program.

Any student who refuses to consent to an alcohol or drug test or fails to provide an adequate specimen will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

Further explanation of the procedure for testing, sanctions to be imposed if substances (alcohol or drugs) are detected and the duty of the Department of Nursing to report substance-related conditions to the Texas Board of Nursing are outlined in the student handbook.

I acknowledge receipt of this policy and agree to abide by its terms.

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Student Printed Name

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Date

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Student Signature

## Appendix E

### Texas A&M University – Texarkana Department of Nursing ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

My signature & date below indicates that I have read and understand the policy of the Department of Nursing on academic integrity and am committed to act honestly and ethically throughout the nursing program, in pursuit of my academic goals.

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Printed Name

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Signature

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Date