



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**  
College of Nursing

## Bachelor of Science in Nursing 2018-2019 Student Handbook



Prepared by the Office of Student Services for the Columbia Campus.

## FOREWORD 2018-2019

We are pleased to provide you with the Student Handbook for the Undergraduate Program in Nursing. Its purpose is to furnish a useful reference on many aspects of academic and student life at the College of Nursing and the University.

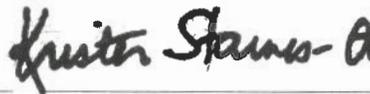
The Faculty of the College of Nursing are committed to guiding and assisting you in your academic career. You, in turn, have a responsibility to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of the College and University.

There are a number of resources available to assist you in meeting your academic and personal goals. This handbook provides information on many of those resources and policies specific to the College of Nursing. Comprehensive University policies and procedures are found in the 2018-2019 USC Undergraduate Studies Bulletin and in the USC Policies and Procedures Manual.

The College of Nursing reserves the right to make changes to this handbook as necessary. Please note that the electronic version of this handbook is the one that will be updated. The electronic version should be consulted as the primary resource.



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**COLLEGE OF NURSING  
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK  
2018-2019**

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# ***1. USC College of Nursing***

## ***1.1 Introduction***

The College of Nursing Undergraduate Student Handbook provides students with current information regarding curricula, policies, and other important information regarding the undergraduate programs in the College. The Handbook is updated annually. It is important that students become familiar with the current handbook.

## ***1.2 Mission Statement***

The University of South Carolina College of Nursing provides nationally recognized educational programs and advances science, practice, and policy to optimize health for all.

Learn more about the College of Nursing Mission

[https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/nursing/about/mission/index.php](https://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/about/mission/index.php)

## ***1.3 Vision and Values***

**Vision:** To be a preeminent College of Nursing of distinction that pioneers innovation, leadership, and excellence.

**Values:** Diversity, Inclusivity Commitment, Caring, Integrity, Respect, Professionalism

## ***1.4 Accreditation***

The baccalaureate program is approved by the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The program is guided by the ANA Standards of Practice and the ANA Code of Ethics.

## ***2. Academic Integrity***

### **2.1 *Ethics for Nursing***

Nursing is a profession, and as such, nursing students are expected to behave ethically. Ethical behavior applies to colleagues, peers, supervisors, subordinates, and clients. **(Appendix A)** contains the ***Code of Ethics for Nurses*** developed by the American Nurses Association.

### **2.2 *Civility and Professional Conduct***

As students progress through the curriculum, they are preparing for transition into professional life. Some behaviors expected in the classroom/clinical setting parallel many behaviors expected in the work place.

#### **CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR**

- Attends class on time
- Notifies professor when unable to attend class
- Completes reading assignments before class
- Engages in class discussion
- Maintains appropriate demeanor during class
- Remains in classroom until class is dismissed
- Returns from breaks on time
- Stays awake in class
- Refrains from having side conversations
- Attends to speaker during class time
- Allows others to hear and learn
- Refrains from reading newspapers, etc., other than class materials
- Refrains from nonacademic computer use

### **2.3 *Academic Responsibility***

It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina-Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates the Rule of Academic Responsibility or who knowingly assists another to violate this rule shall be subject to discipline. See <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf625.pdf>. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty may receive a zero for their course grade.

### **2.4 *Student Conduct***

Student conduct issues are referred to the university-wide process.

### ***3. Academic Programs***

There are differing levels of education in professional nursing including baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels. Each level of professional practice has unique knowledge with a shared core of knowledge that crosses all levels. Baccalaureate nursing education encourages the synthesis of knowledge and skills needed to begin professional nursing practice and to take on beginning leadership roles. The RN to BSN online degree program is designed for registered nurses who want to advance professionally and complete the BSN degree.

Masters nursing education builds on beginning professional practice and prepares graduates for leadership in specialized advanced practice roles. Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) education incorporates elements of masters nursing education and advanced practice and emphasizes research utilization, leadership, and health care policy development. PhD education prepares nurses to conduct independent research, generate theories, critically analyze existing theories relevant to the discipline of nursing, and facilitate the use of new knowledge in nursing practice. Nurses are prepared for myriad roles within the healthcare system because of the comprehensive knowledge they possess.

#### ***3.1 The Baccalaureate Programs***

The baccalaureate program, consisting of pre-nursing lower and upper division, provides students with essential knowledge and skills. Pre-nursing lower division courses provide a foundation in liberal arts, sciences, and nursing to develop basic skills in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In the upper division, nursing courses combine didactic material with clinical practice to continue the preparation for the practice of professional nursing.

##### ***3.1.1 Transfer Guidelines***

The Office of Undergraduate Admissions is responsible for admitting students into the College of Nursing's Pre-Nursing Lower Division. Students must have a minimum cumulative 3.000 grade point average on all attempted college-level work to be considered for admission. Students who have completed less than 30 college-level hours must meet freshman requirements. Please note the Office of Undergraduate Admissions may not be able to admit all students who meet the 3.000 GPA requirement for their intended term. Admission into the College of Nursing's Pre-Nursing Lower Division is based on resources, space availability, and a student's complete academic profile (including grades in relevant science courses). Acceptance into the Pre-Nursing Lower Division does not guarantee acceptance into the Upper Division Nursing major.

The College of Nursing does not accept nursing courses from other nursing programs for the Nurse – Generic BSN (050A). This includes lower division course work that may not be coded under nursing such as: Clinical Nutrition and Pathophysiology.

##### ***3.1.2 End-of-Program Outcomes***

Students in the baccalaureate programs:

1. Exhibit professional personal behavior in all activities.
2. Provide evidence-based clinically competent care across the continuum of care.

3. Demonstrate cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competency in providing nursing care to individuals, families, and groups within a diverse society.
4. Make clinical judgments using reflection, critical thinking, and problem solving skills.
5. Perform health promotion, risk reduction, and disease prevention activities for individuals, groups and populations.
6. Use information and health care technologies for effective health care delivery.
7. Perform the professional roles of care provider, coordinator of care, member of a profession, and life-long learner.
8. Work effectively as a member of the interdisciplinary health care team.
9. Assume leadership roles within the scope of professional practice.

### 3.1.3 Curriculum

The *Carolina Core* provides the common core of knowledge, skill, and academic experience required for all Carolina undergraduate students. A student's plan of study follows the bulletin under which they are admitted.

### 3.1.4 Change of Major Into Nursing

Any USC-Columbia student interested in changing their major to Pre-Nursing Lower Division within the College of Nursing must participate in the following change of major process and meet minimum academic requirements for consideration. Acceptance into Pre-Nursing Lower Division does not guarantee acceptance into Nursing Upper Division. A separate, departmental, application is required for consideration into Nursing Upper Division. Students accepted as a change of major will receive additional information regarding when and how to apply to Nursing Upper Division.

Students must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements to change their major to nursing:

1. A minimum Institutional of a 3.000
  - a. Grade Forgiveness will not be factored into the calculations of your GPAs
2. No more than one below C grade in a BSN required science course
3. Complete a minimum of 12 graded credit hours

**IMPORTANT:** Due to the capacity limits of the College of Nursing, meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee acceptance.

**TIMELINE:** For spring semester, all change of major applicants must submit a change of major application by October 1<sup>st</sup>. For summer/fall semesters, all change of major applicants must submit the change of major application by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Applications go live on the College of Nursing website each spring and fall semester on the first day of classes. Notifications for both acceptances and denials will be sent via email by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each of the above months.

**ACCEPTED STUDENTS:** All accepted change of major applicants are required to attend a College of Nursing New Major Information and Advising Session. This session will provide an overview of

the BSN program, the curriculum, application process to Nursing Upper Division and will include a one-on-one advising appointment with one of the College of Nursing academic advisors.

### 3.1.5 Minors

The College of Nursing does not require a minor. A minor is a series of courses that display a distinct curricular pattern in one discipline that is different from the major. Undergraduate minors normally require a minimum of 18 credit hours of prescribed courses. Undergraduate minors appear on the transcripts, but not on the diplomas.

If time permits or if time is reserved by the student in the planning of their curriculum, a minor is possible. The Academic Bulletin offers a List of Minors

<http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=56&navoid=1385>

### 3.1.6 Senior Privilege Enrollment in Graduate Courses

A special provision to earn graduate credit is available for USC undergraduate seniors who have at least 90 semester hours, 3.000 Institutional, and nursing GPAs, and need less than a normal course load to complete the baccalaureate requirements. Under Senior Privilege, enrollment in graduate level coursework (500 or above) is subject to the approval of the graduate program director for the specified course. Courses for graduate credit under senior privilege cannot be used toward undergraduate degree requirements. Completion of graduate courses under senior privilege does not guarantee admission to graduate school. Students need to consult with their advisor for appropriate enrollment forms.

### 3.1.7 Timeline

The traditional BSN program must be completed within five years of completing lower division progression coursework.

## **3.2 *Overview of RN-BSN***

There are three admission options for the RN-BSN program; August, January, and May. Courses are offered in a 7-week online/accelerated format. Students must apply directly to the RN-BSN program for admission to the university. Admission is competitive.

In order to be eligible for the RN-BSN program, students must meet all the admission requirements of the College of Nursing and University. Specific RN-BSN program admission requirements are as follows:

An Associate Degree in Nursing or Diploma in Nursing from an accredited ACEN (formerly NLNAC) program

Official Transcripts from all schools attended

Application

Application Fee

English Proficiency Requirement\*\*\*

Other Supporting Materials - Criminal Background check and drug screen

Current unrestricted Registered Nurse (RN) license to practice professional nursing in the United States

Nursing required and Science GPA to equate to a 3.0 or greater\*\*\*\*

\*\*\*International applicants must be proficient in the English language. A score of 550 or above on the paper version of the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required. (A score of 210 or higher on the computerized version is required, and a minimum score of 77 on the Internet version is required.) TOEFL scores are not required for international students from countries where the primary language of instruction is English nor from graduates of high schools in the United States. \*\*\*\* Students Nursing required plus science GPA between 2.8 – 2.99 may be conditionally admitted, provided they have not completed more than 120 hours of prior collegiate coursework [and have met all other admission requirements].

Unless stated otherwise, the policies stated in this handbook for undergraduate students are relevant for students in the [RN-BSN Program \(http://gradonline.sc.edu/Programs/1227/RN-BSN\)](http://gradonline.sc.edu/Programs/1227/RN-BSN).

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree (RN-BSN Completion) requires a minimum of 120 hours. These credits are distributed between general education requirements, electives, and professional nursing requirements. Lower Division pre-requisite course requirements can be completed in conjunction with upper division RN-BSN courses.

After admission to the RN-BSN program and completion of all BSN degree requirements: Students awarded an Associate Degree in Nursing from an accredited (ACEN, formerly NLNAC) program will be awarded up to 38 credits towards meeting educational competencies for their A.D.N. degree (RN Licensure). **OR** Students with a Diploma in Nursing from an accredited (ACEN, formerly NLNAC) program will be awarded up to 25 credits towards meeting educational competencies for their Diploma degree (RN Licensure). This credit is held and will be awarded upon successful completion of all BSN degree requirements.

#### **Loss of Nursing License:**

In the event that a student in a post-license program becomes no longer licensed as a registered professional nurse by any license granting authority, they no longer meet the admission criteria of the program and are therefore no longer eligible to progress.

- The student will need to notify the program director immediately of the change in their licensure status.
- An academic record hold will be placed on the student's records. The hold may be released upon becoming licensed.

The RN to BSN program must be completed in no more than seven years from enrollment, by whatever means, from the first program course.

#### **USC Residency requirements for BSN Graduation:**

The last 25% of a students' degree must be completed in residence (meaning through USC Columbia coursework or other USC campus), and at least half of the hours in the student's major and minor courses (if applicable) must be taken at the University, i.e. (122 credits=31 hours). Advanced placement exam credits or transfer credits do not meet this requirement. Students must meet these requirements to be eligible for BSN graduation.

## 4. Computer Policy

### COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

The College of Nursing requires that all students in the Nursing Program have a notebook/laptop computer that meets or exceeds the requirements below. This computer is essential for use in completing research, academic, and communications tasks. You can purchase a new computer or use a computer you already own, provided it meets the minimum specifications below. Writing tablets, iPads, and similar devices currently do not meet the requirements of the standard. The College supports both Mac and PC (Windows) computer platforms for student use. The College relies on a variety of web based applications in the learning environment, and [Google Chrome](#) is recommended to access most content.

	Macintosh Minimum Requirements	PC/Windows Minimum Requirements
Processor	2.0 GHz Intel Core 2 Duo Processor	2.0 GHz Intel Core i3 Processor
RAM	4 GB RAM	4 GB RAM
Operating System	OS X 10.11 (El Capitan), fully updated with firewall enabled	Windows 7 or later, fully updated with firewall enabled
Hard Drive (HDD)	128GB Hard Drive	128GB Hard Drive
Networking Hardware	802.11g Wireless Network Card	802.11g Wireless Network Card
Video Card	Integrated Graphics Card	Integrated Graphics Card

Learn more at:

[https://sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/nursing/internal/current\\_students/ugrad\\_computer.php](https://sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/ugrad_computer.php)

## 5. Academic Policies and Procedures

### 5.1 Core Performance Standards

The USC College of Nursing requires all applicants and continuing students in all nursing programs to meet certain standards based on the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN) Core Performance Standards. The standards describe requirements in six dimensions of ability/performance: critical thinking and related mental abilities, communication and interpersonal abilities, physical abilities, hearing, visual, and smell. An example would be if a student's condition requires that they use a crutch, walker, cane or arm cast, they will not be allowed to participate in clinical activity until the student submits a statement from their provider of care stating they may resume all activities without any assistive devices. See ([Appendix B](#)) *Core Performance Standards*.

### 5.2 Student Progression with Course of Study

#### PRE-NURSING LOWER DIVISION

Admission into the Pre-Nursing Lower Division does not guarantee admission into Nursing Upper Division. All students in the Pre-Nursing Lower Division are subject to the following regulations:

#### **Academic Standards and Probation:**

- Students must earn a "C" or better in **ALL** courses that are to be used towards BSN degree requirements
- Students must maintain an INSTITUTIONAL grade point average (GPA) of 3.000 (on a 4.000 scale)
  - A student is placed on academic probation with the College of Nursing if their INSTITUTIONAL GPA falls below 3.000
  - The probationary period lasts for one major semester (Fall/Spring) or 12 credit hours
  - If at the end of the probationary period the GPA is not a 3.000 or higher, the student must change their major
  - Not meeting the minimum GPA standards of the College of Nursing may have an effect on a student's academic standing at the university; see the Academic Bulletin for more information – <http://bulletin.sc.edu>
- No more than one failing grade (D+, D, or F) in a nursing or required science course
- A student is allowed only one below C grade in a nursing or required science course in Pre-Nursing Lower Division
  - After earning a below C in a required science course a student is required to retake the course the next time it is offered at USC- Columbia, Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Union or Sumter.
  - After earning a below C in a nursing course a student is required to retake the course the next time it is offered at USC- Columbia
- If a student earns a second below C grade in a nursing or required science course, they are no longer eligible for the nursing program. If staying at USC, they must change their major
- A student may have no more than two attempts at a NURS course. This includes W, WF, and A through F grading.

## PROGRESSION TO NURSING UPPER DIVISION

Progression is competitive, based on progression GPA, and limited to a set number of qualified students based on available clinical placements. Progression GPA includes grades on all attempts of courses (or Nursing approved competency equivalents).

Students must submit a completed College of Nursing progression application no later than November 1 of the semester of enrollment in 216. For students with English as a second language TOEFL evaluation and/or evaluation by the Department of International Student Services is required to accompany application for upper division.

The student will select the campus where he/she wishes to be considered for application and to complete their program of study. Once the student is accepted, all course work and clinical work will be completed with the campus where application was completed and admission was accepted. There will be no moving between campus cohorts.

All the following requirements must be met prior to selection to Nursing Upper Division:

- Designated (\*) courses from the first 3 semesters must be successfully completed with a minimum grade point average of 3.000
- No more than 1 below C grade in a nursing or required science course
- Students must have a C or better in all progression courses in order to have a completed application
- Every attempt at each course, no matter the institution, is included into the Progression GPA calculation
- **Minimum** 3.000 total INSTITUTIONAL GPA
- A completed Parallel Plan must be on file with your nursing advisor as part of the application
- Application opens September 15 and closes November 1 to begin clinical the next year (Summer or Fall)
- **Every student must be prepared for a Summer start**
- Once a student is placed in a cohort, Summer or Fall, the placement cannot be negotiated.

Progression Courses:

- BIOL 243/L\*
- BIOL 244/L\*
- BIOL 250/L\*
- CHEM 102\*
- ENGL 101\*ENGL 102\*
- NURS 212\*
- NURS 216\*
- PSYC 101 OR SOCY 101\*
- PSYC 420\*
- STAT 112\*

**Students who are not accepted to the upper division should talk with their advisor regarding the feasibility of reapplication. If the student chooses to reapply to the upper division, the student must submit a new application for the next admission cycle and must compete with a new applicant group.**

### 5.2.1 Academic Advisement

All undergraduate nursing students are advised by academic advisors in the Office of Academic Affairs. Students must be advised for courses each semester and will not be allowed to register until advisement has occurred. Students may seek advice from their advisor at any time during the semester, especially when wanting to drop a course or alter the planned program of study in any way.

### 5.2.2 Academic Probation and Academic Warning

Students who have less than a 3.000 Life Institutional GPA are on probation within the college for one major semester (fall/spring) or 12 credit hours but may continue to take all required courses. If at the end of the probationary semester their Institutional GPA is still less than 3.000, students must change their major before the next semester and will not be advised by the College of Nursing. Students must contact

[https://www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/advising/university\\_advising\\_center/index.php](https://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/advising/university_advising_center/index.php)

### 5.2.3 Attendance

The College of Nursing adheres to the University's attendance policy which states: absence from more than 10 percent of the scheduled class sessions, whether excused or unexcused, is excessive and the instructor may choose to extract a grade penalty for such absences.

Attendance standards may be higher for lab and clinical experiences with exceptions for true emergencies only. Students are required to attend all lab and clinical components of their coursework with absences permitted up to 10 percent only for certified unavoidable circumstances. Absences from the lab or clinical component of a course will not be excused except in the case of severe illness of the student with documentation from the provider stating the student should not be in clinical (fever, diarrhea, infections) or in the event of the death/critical illness of an immediate family member, including grandparents. In rare cases, exceptions will be made for absences for academic reasons and may be excused with the joint approval of the course coordinator and the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Make-up time for clinical nursing experiences will be determined by the clinical coordinator of the course. All clinical time must be made up. Faculty may require withdrawal of a student who exceeds the 10 percent clinical absence and is unable to meet the practice and clinical objectives of the course.

#### **Professional Meeting and Conference Attendance**

The professional registered nurse is encouraged to remain engaged in professional organizations throughout their career. With this in mind, the College of Nursing is in support of student attending professional meetings. However, students cannot sacrifice valuable learning experiences such as clinical experience, simulation activities and class meetings to attend them.

The College of Nursing makes every effort to allow for such events. However, it is not possible to allow for all of them. In the event of a schedule conflict, resolution must be negotiated with the course faculty and or Assistant Dean. Permissions must be obtained prior to making any travel or registration arrangements. In general, students must be in excellent clinical and academic standing to be permitted to participate in the professional event. Missed exams will be offered in an alternated

format and will need to be completed within a 48 hours period of return. No early examinations will be offered. Students will not be exempted from course requirements because they are attending a conference.

#### 5.2.4 Adding, Dropping, or Withdrawing from a Course

Students should check for last day to drop a course without a grade of 'W' being recorded and for the last day to drop a course or withdraw without a grade of 'WF' being recorded students should refer to the [Academic Calendar \(http://registrar.sc.edu/html/calendar/default.stm\)](http://registrar.sc.edu/html/calendar/default.stm). Failure to complete the official course withdrawal process has serious implications for calculation of the final course grade and calculation of grade point averages. **Students should discuss any potential schedule changes with their advisors prior to making the changes. A student may have no more than two attempts at a NURS course. This includes W, WF, and A through F grading. Students must see their advisor when considering dropping a course.**

#### 5.2.5 Requests for Approval of Semester Hours Overload

Students must complete a request for approval form (Appendix I) to take more than 18 hours in any semester and more than 7 hours in any summer session. The student **must schedule and meet** with the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies for approval.

#### 5.2.6 Transfer of Credits

- A maximum of 76 semester hours may be transferred from a two-year junior or technical college. Note: Nursing courses are not accepted.
- A maximum of 18 semester hours may be taken as a transient student once enrolled at USC. A student must have a minimum 2.000 GPA to take transient coursework.
- The last 25% of a student's degree must be completed in residence at the University, and at least half of the hours in the student's major courses and in the student's minor courses (if applicable) must be taken at the University.

Students enrolled at USC who wish to take general education courses at another institution must discuss their options with their advisor. Students taking transient work must complete a Special Enrollment Request Form with their advisor before enrolling in the course. Students must provide a detailed description of the course they wish to take in order to determine its equivalency. Transcripts must be sent from the transient institution to USC immediately after completion of the course. Probation requirements will apply to any transient course work.

#### 5.2.7 Grades

- Grades are determined by quality of work, performance on course assignments, examination grades, and class attendance.
- Nursing students must earn a grade of 'C' or higher in required science and NURS courses.
- The Academic Bulletin explains the University's Grading System ([http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Grading%22&returnto=search#Grading\\_Policies](http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Grading%22&returnto=search#Grading_Policies)).

- If a student takes a test booklet, a zero (0) will be received on the test and a performance evaluation will be completed and placed in the student's permanent record.
- Clinical performance is pass/fail.

**College of Nursing grading scale for undergraduate nursing courses**

A	92-100
B+	90-91
B	83-89
C+	81-82
C	75-80
D+	73-74
D	70-72
F	69 and below

Students' grades are kept confidential in accordance with federal law (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, as amended). Grades are available to students online at Self Service Carolina. A student identification number and secure password are required for access. Unofficial copies can be printed from Self Service Carolina. If you need an official copy of your grades, contact the Registrar's Office.

**Two Below 'C' Rule**

Students must earn a minimum grade of **C** in all required courses in the nursing program. Only one below C grade is allowed in a required science or nursing (NURS) course to remain eligible for the nursing major.

**Grade Forgiveness**

Grade forgiveness is not recognized by the College of Nursing. All grades on all course attempts will be utilized for admission, probation, and progression. Refer to the University's Grading Policies for details on Course Grade Forgiveness.

Maximum of two attempts for each course.

[http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Course+Grade+Forgiveness%22&returnto=search#Grading\\_Policies](http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Course+Grade+Forgiveness%22&returnto=search#Grading_Policies)).

**CON POLICY ON ROUNDING FOR UNDERGRADUATE COURSES**

- All grades will be recorded to the hundredth (two decimal points).
- Individual grades are not rounded.
- The final grade will be rounded according to the following rubric:
  - .01 to .50 rounds down to the nearest whole number, for example, 79.50 equals 79.
  - .51 to .99 rounds up to the nearest whole number, for example, 79.51 equals 80.

### 5.2.8 Academic Honors

Each semester academic achievement is recognized by the USC President's Honor List (GPA of 4.0) or the Dean's List (GPA of 3.5 or higher and 3.25 or higher for freshmen). Alpha Xi is the College's Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. Upper division nursing students who achieve academic excellence in the nursing program are considered for membership by invitation.

### 5.2.9 Standardized Assessment Tests

The College of Nursing uses standardized computer tests as one of several methods to evaluate student readiness to progress in certain courses, particularly the clinical courses in upper division. Methods of evaluation in all nursing courses are outlined in the specific course syllabus. Included in the testing package are additional study resources such as website practice tests, remediation lesson plans, and an end of program NCLEX Review Course. The student pays for standardized testing through fees each semester of upper division.

All standardized computer testing is conducted in the College of Nursing for traditional students and those with disabilities accommodation. Students with disabilities accommodation will be provided their full accommodation during these exams.

### 5.2.10 Examination Procedure

No examination materials (including scratch paper) are to leave the room under any circumstances during the actual examination period or during an examination review.

Book bags are to be placed at the front or side of the classroom away from all students for the duration of the exam.

Cell phones, PDA, IPODS, Computers iPad, watches or any time keeping devices, or similar electronic devices with or without internet connections are to be turned off and stored in book bag during examination or examination review and until exiting the room.

Calculators (when authorized) must not be capable of storing equations, graphs, charts, etc. Only non-programmable calculators are allowed-no cell phones, PDA, or similar devices are to be used as calculators during exams.

Hats are not to be worn during examinations.

Restroom breaks are discouraged. If restroom breaks are needed during examination, only one student at a time will be allowed to leave the exam and a same sex faculty member may accompany the student.

Students are expected to arrive on time for scheduled exams. Arriving late to an exam is considered unprofessional and is considered a violation of the professionalism policy. Grade sanctions for students arriving late to an exam are specified in each course syllabus.

Questions related to exam content are strictly prohibited during the examination. Questions regarding suspected typing error on the test (e.g. omissions, misnumber, defective, exam pages, etc.) are permitted.

### 5.2.11 Final Exams

The College of Nursing Final exam schedule is prepared by the Office of Academic Affairs and dates and times are communicated by Course Coordinators. No final examination may be held outside of the published final examination dates and times without authorization from the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies. In any course which meets once a week, no quiz, test or examination may be given during the last class meeting prior to the regular final examination period (see USC Undergraduate Bulletin under Academic Regulations and Examination Policies. ATI exams are considered part of the final assessments for the course and can be scheduled during the final exam period.

([http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Grading%22&returnto=search#Examination\\_Policies](http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813&hl=%22Grading%22&returnto=search#Examination_Policies))

Graduating seniors are exempt from this policy. Final exams for graduating seniors are given during the last week of class to facilitate the NCLEX review course.

## 5.3 *Questions / Concerns*

### 5.3.1 Chain of Command

Chain of Command is the hierarchy of authority that permits the coordination needed to accomplish goals. The chain of command in academia begins with the faculty of record for a specific course and/or the student's advisor. If the student feels they need to take their concerns further up the chain their next contact should be the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies or Program Director, the Associate Dean for Academics and finally the Dean of the college.

### 5.3.2 Petition Process

Students who have documented, extenuating circumstances and seek relief or deviation from the academic regulations of the University or the College of Nursing should contact the Director of Student Affairs for assistance with the petition process. Petitions are reviewed at specified times throughout the year.

### 5.3.3 Student Grievances

**For nonacademic issues, see the current [USC Policies and Procedures Manual](#). For academic issues refer to both the current [USC Policies and Procedures Manual](#) and College of Nursing policy.**

The undergraduate student academic grievance policy describes the channel used in the College of Nursing to resolve students' academic problems or complaints. The student should seek resolution with the faculty member first and, if not resolved, the student should initiate resolution through a defined set of procedures. ***Undergraduate Student Grievances (Appendix G)*** describes these procedures. For assistance with the USC Student Grievance Policy-Academic and/or the College of Nursing Student Grievance Policy-Academic or the USC Grievance Policy-Non-Academic, students are urged to contact the Director of Student Affairs.

## **5.4 Separation from the College of Nursing**

### **5.4.1 Leave of Absence**

Students accepted to and/or enrolled in Upper Division who wish to withdraw from the University and anticipate returning should contact the Director of Student Affairs. A space is not guaranteed if the student decides to return to complete the program of study.

An Upper Division student not enrolled for two consecutive semesters in clinical courses must demonstrate clinical competency before progressing. To begin the process, contact the Director of Student Affairs at the College of Nursing.

### **5.4.2 Withdrawal from the University**

Withdrawal from all courses constitutes withdrawal from the University. All full or part-time undergraduate students wishing to withdraw from the University or to discontinue enrollment from all courses for the semester should first consult with their academic advisor. When requesting to drop the last course and to withdraw from the University, the student should follow the instructions on [Self Service Carolina \(https://my.sc.edu/\)](https://my.sc.edu/). In addition, staff in the Student Ombudsman Office located in the Russell House can provide information, referral assistance or counseling. Students requesting withdrawal for extenuating circumstances after the penalty date (last day for W grade) should contact their academic advisor, the Director of Student Affairs and their course faculty.

Students should be aware of the academic and financial consequences incurred by withdrawing from all courses. Financial Aid and Scholarship recipients should contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. University Housing residents should call Housing before withdrawing.

### **5.4.3 Suspension**

Suspension from the College of Nursing and suspension from the University are two different academic regulations. (See Undergraduate Bulletin, Academic Standards Policies) ([http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813#Academic\\_Standards\\_Policies](http://bulletin.sc.edu/content.php?catoid=66&navoid=1813#Academic_Standards_Policies))

Students who are dismissed by a clinical agency as a result of actions or behavior during a clinical rotation will be suspended from the College of Nursing and not allowed to return.

## **5.5 Degree Completion and Graduation**

### **5.5.1 State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA)**

Title: State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) Important Information About Programs Leading to Licensure: Each state has its own licensing board with its own Registered Professional Nurse and Advanced Practice Registered Nurse licensure requirements. Consequently, although the baccalaureate and master's degree programs in the College of Nursing at the University of South Carolina are fully accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE, <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/accredited-programs>) thereby making BSN graduates eligible to sit for national licensure (NCLEX-RN) and MSN graduates eligible to sit for

national certification (ANCC and AANP), thus meeting requirements for RN and APRN professional licensure in the state of South Carolina, we cannot confirm that the program meets all the requirements for professional licensure in another state (e.g., some states have specific topical requirements). Certificate in Graduate Studies (Post MSN) programs are similar in content. For students not living in South Carolina, the following link provides information regarding state licensure specific to individual states throughout the U.S. where a non-resident student lives: <http://www.nursinglicensure.org/> for RN licensure and <http://www.nursinglicensure.org/articles/nurse-practitioner-license.html> for APRN licensure. Additional information may be found at the Academic Programs Professional Licensure website:

[www.sc.edu/about/offices\\_and\\_divisions/provost/planning/academicprograms/state-authorization/professional-licensure-info.php](http://www.sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/provost/planning/academicprograms/state-authorization/professional-licensure-info.php).

If a current student is considering relocating to another state after being admitted into the program, the student must contact the program director to discuss how the move may impact their ability to participate in academic courses (distributed learning) and clinical practice (experiential learning) opportunities in a different state.

#### 5.5.2 Graduation and NCLEX-RN Testing

Professional licensure is required to practice nursing as a Registered Nurse (RN). The RN licensure examination, called the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and known generally as the "State Board Exam," is administered via computer at many conveniently located test centers across the United States and its territories.

During their last semester, seniors receive information about applying for the NCLEX-RN. For more information, call 803-896-4550 [South Carolina State Board for Nursing](http://www.scbn.org).

<http://www.llr.state.sc.us/pol/nursing/>

The Dean of the College of Nursing will complete a certificate of endorsement for all graduating seniors and forward these to the South Carolina State Board of Nursing after graduation. Students who wish to obtain licensure outside South Carolina must contact the board responsible for licensure of RNs in that state. If a letter of endorsement is required for any state, other than South Carolina, a written request must be made to the Director of Student Affairs. Students are encouraged to seek out pertinent information early in their senior year in order to meet required deadlines.

When the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina determines eligibility of applicants (usually within 30 days of graduation), an Authorization to Test form will be sent to applicants. Applicants schedule an appointment for the test and must bring the Authorization to Test form and acceptable forms of identification to the NCLEX administration.

#### 5.5.3 Immigration/Legal Standards

Progression through the BSN curriculum does not guarantee eligibility to sit for the NCLEX-RN. If you have ever been convicted of a crime (excluding minor traffic violations) that involved paying a fine, forfeiting a bond, a suspended sentence, or receiving a pardon, you must notify the State Board of Nursing. Failure to report a past conviction is grounds for disciplinary action. NCLEX-RN applicants who have past criminal convictions must undergo Disciplinary Review by the State Board of Nursing

prior to taking the NCLEX-RN. Contact the State Board of Nursing in the state where licensure is being sought for current, specific policies and procedures applicable to your situation.

## **5.6 Graduate Recognition and Commencement**

### **5.6.1 Application for a Degree**

To be eligible for graduation a student must meet all University and College of Nursing standards for receiving a degree. Candidates for degrees must file **formal applications** during the last semester before graduation **prior** to the deadline set by the Registrar's Office. This deadline usually falls during the first two weeks of the semester and is reflected on signs indicating, "Planning to Graduate?" Applications filed after the deadline result in a penalty fee and delay receipt of diploma.

### **5.6.2 Graduation with Honors**

Graduation with honors will be based on a student's Total Institutional GPA. Honors designators are determined at the time of graduation and may not be applied retroactively.

To graduate with such honors, a student must have earned at least 60 credit hours applicable toward the degree in residence at the University, 30 credit hours for an associate degree.

#### **Levels of Honor**

The following designations indicate a consistently high level of academic achievement at USC.

#### ***Baccalaureate Degree Designations***

Summa Cum Laude: a cumulative GPA of 3.95-4.00

Magna Cum Laude: a cumulative GPA of 3.75-3.949

Cum Laude: a cumulative GPA of 3.50-3.749

#### **With Honors from South Carolina Honors College**

Any student who completes the requirements of the Honors College, regardless of the major or undergraduate degree, is awarded that degree "With Honors from South Carolina Honors College."

#### **With Distinction**

Any student who earns an undergraduate degree and completes the appropriate requirements will be awarded graduation "With Distinction in [that major]." For details, refer to the degree requirements of specific majors in the **Undergraduate Academic Bulletin**.

## 6. *Clinical Placement and Activities*

### 6.1 *Overview*

Students may be assigned to clinical placements within a 75-mile radius and on days, evenings, nights and weekends. However, Capstone Clinical placement may exceed a 75-mile radius.

Students will not be allowed to register for classes until all health requirements are on file. Documentation of flu shots will be required prior to spring registration. Students will not be allowed to register until uniforms, name badges, and nursing equipment are ordered.

The College of Nursing reserves the right to make administrative changes to clinical placements as necessary. Clinical placements are not subject to change related to work or school activities.

#### 6.1.1 Clinical Simulation Laboratory (CSL)

The Clinical Simulation Lab (CSL) is located on the first floor of the College of Nursing in the Williams-Brice building. This state-of-the-art facility is designed to replicate realistic practice environments where healthcare students develop clinical decision-making skills and enhance technical skill acquisition. Students function within their full scope of practice while receiving real time feedback and guidance from expert clinical educators. All simulation-based learning experiences adhere to the International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning's (INACSL) Standards of Best Practice: Simulation<sup>SM</sup>.

For more information about the CSL, please refer to the lab's website at:

[http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges\\_schools/nursing/clinics\\_labs/simulation\\_lab/index.php](http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/clinics_labs/simulation_lab/index.php)

#### 6.1.2 Clearance Requirements for Clinical Experiences

##### **CRIMINAL RECORDS CHECK AND/OR DRUG SCREENS**

Prior to the first clinical course, students are required to undergo a Criminal Records Check and a Drug Screen with approved College of Nursing (CON) vendor. All students must pass a Background Check and Drug Screen. Supplemental drug screens may be required per CON and/or agency policies.

##### **The Background Checks are:**

Criminal Background Check  
Sex Offender Registry Check  
Office of the Inspector General Check  
General Services Administration Check  
Any other registry or records required by law, accrediting agency, or specific agency

##### **Drug Screens include:**

Marijuana  
Cocaine  
Amphetamines  
Opiates

Phencyclidine (PCP)  
Barbiturates  
Benzodiazepines  
Propoxyphene  
Methadone  
Oxycodone  
Meperidine  
Ethanol

**This list may be amended at any time by the College of Nursing.  
Carefully read the *Background Checks and Drug Screen Policies* in (Appendix C & D)**

### **CHANGE OF STATUS**

If at any time after the initial background check has been completed there is a change in the student status, it is the student's responsibility to immediately report the circumstances to the assistant dean. Failure to report can result in immediate dismissal from the program.

### **INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

Nursing students are encouraged to carry their own health insurance. Students enrolled in clinical courses are required to purchase professional liability insurance. This fee is included on the students' semester fee statement. Worker's compensation is provided by the university when students are in clinical sites.

### **CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS**

- In addition to meeting the health requirements of the University, nursing students must meet certain health requirements as stated by the College of Nursing.
- Students are responsible for consulting this handbook for guidelines and following correct procedures to keep their health requirements up-to-date through the end of the semester. Failure to correctly submit all health requirements (bloodborne pathogens test, CPR documentation, TB screening, etc.) prior to the first day of class may result in STAR counseling and a clinical day failure.
- **All required clinical health information with appropriate documentation must be received via the approved College of Nursing vendor by the deadline date provided.** Documentation must be copies and **NOT** originals. Failure to provide documentation prohibits release for registration for the semester.
- Students must complete the **Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers through the American Heart Association and present documentation. CPR certification must remain current through the last day of each semester in which a student is enrolled in a clinical course. Other forms of certification are not accepted.**

## **KNOWLEDGE OF PROTECTION AGAINST BLOODBORNE DISEASE**

The College's policies concerning bloodborne disease is published in the *Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan (Appendix F)*. As specified in the plan, all students in the College must document their knowledge of protection against bloodborne disease annually through completion of the

[USC Bloodborne Pathogens Self Study Unit and Post-Test \(http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm\)](http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm).

Upon completion of the training program and a minimum score of 90 on the post-test, the certificate must be printed and manually uploaded into the student's record in Castlebranch before the student is allowed to register for clinical courses, attend class, or begin clinical.

### 6.1.3 Guidance for All Clinical Experiences

#### **CLINICAL SITES TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

Students are responsible for transportation to their clinical sites each semester. It is the obligation of students to provide their own vehicle collision and/or bodily injury liability insurance for their personal vehicles. The College of Nursing or the University of South Carolina is not responsible for any vehicular mishaps.

#### **PROMPTNESS EXPECTATION**

Students will be provided individual start times based on the culture of the unit. Students are expected to be on the unit and ready to work at this assigned start time.

1. Arrival at the clinical site no later than the appointed time is mandatory.
  - a. Students arriving late, but prior to the beginning of pre-clinical conference may complete clinical but will need to receive verbal and written counseling from their clinical instructor for the first offense, dismissal for the second.
  - b. Students arriving after the beginning of pre-clinical activities will not be permitted to complete the clinical day and must leave the clinical setting. This will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the day.
    - i. If eligible, the student must attend the clinical make-up day scheduled by the clinical coordinator.
    - ii. If not eligible for a make-up date, the absence will result in course failure.
  - c. No call/no show for a clinical day without notifying the clinical instructor or course coordinator is considered unprofessional behavior.
    - i. Any instance will result in a STAR counseling form, clinical day failure, and meeting with the assistant dean unless unforeseen health issues prevented communication.
    - ii. Subsequent instances will result in program dismissal.

#### **STUDENT MEDICATION ERROR POLICY**

Performance Outcome: Medications are accurately dispensed in a safe and timely manner. Students will receive the appropriate didactic and clinical instructions according to course objectives:

1. The nursing student will report all medication errors immediately to the clinical instructor and/or preceptor.

2. The patient's condition will be assessed and the error will be reported to the charge nurse and/or nurse manager.
3. The student making the error or the one discovering an error will complete required documentation, with faculty assistance, according to hospital protocol.
4. Errors in documentation of medications will be considered unsatisfactory student performance and will be reflected on the clinical evaluation form. Examples include (but are not limited to):
  - a. Failure to complete documentation of medication administration
  - b. Failure to have a co-signature on narcotic waste
  - c. Failure to document a reason for omitting a medication
  - d. Failure to acquire and communicate appropriate assessment data as indicated by the healthcare institution policy
5. Students will be counseled after each medication error. Two or more medication errors will result in clinical failure for the course. Examples of medication errors include (but are not limited to):
  - a. Not following all rights of medication administration
  - b. Inability to calculate correct dosage
  - c. Omission of an ordered medication
  - d. Duplication of medication that has already been given
  - e. Administration of a discontinued medication
  - f. Leaving medication at bedside without an order (unless per hospital policy)
  - g. Failure to check healthcare provider orders, take an apical pulse, B/P, check lab values or other appropriate assessment data prior to giving medication
6. Medication errors that endanger the patient's life or actually cause patient harm can be grounds for immediate termination from the course.

**Note: Students will still be held accountable for medication errors even if an instructor or staff nurse prevents the error from occurring.**

### CLINICAL BEHAVIORS

- Prepares adequately for nursing responsibilities
- Attends clinical/lab on time
- Stays awake during clinical hours
- A student will verbally notify their clinical instructor at least 1 hour prior to the absence and notify the course coordinator within 24 hours. Faculty may require withdrawal of any student who has missed sufficient practice to prevent completion of clinical objectives.
- Wears correct professional attire including name badge at all times
- Maintains appropriate demeanor during clinical
- Shows respect for patients and staff
- Keeps a positive attitude toward learning
- Upholds confidentiality
- Stays in clinical setting until clinical group is dismissed
- Informs faculty and/or nurse when leaving the unit for any reason
- Returns from breaks on time
- Identifies own learning goals
- Uses clinical time to maximize learning
- Participates verbally in clinical conferences
- Seeks instructor's help and supervision appropriately
- Seeks help appropriately to manage stress that may affect performance

- Identifies own strengths and limitations
- Completes all clinical work by specified date
- Electronic devices of any kind are not to be brought into the clinical area unless under the direction of your faculty member. This includes but is not limited to I-watches, phones, iPods, iPad, tablets, etc.)
- Misuse of Telephones and/or other Communication Technology: No student shall misuse or abuse, or assist in the misuse or abuse of communication equipment at the University. Such activity includes, but is not limited to, using any form of communication equipment to harass or threaten any person or persons, or using any form of communication equipment to disrupt the normal operations or activities of any person, organization, or the University. Communication equipment includes, but is not limited to, electronic mail, pagers, voice mail, computers, printer, etc. Cell phones and pagers must be turned off or to silent operation during class/clinical and may not be used during class/clinical except in extreme circumstances.

#### 6.1.4 Unsafe Clinical Practice

Nursing Department faculty members are academically committed to preparing baccalaureate graduates who are competent in the skills of nursing practice: technical, diagnostic and interpersonal. Faculty members have an ethical and legal responsibility and accountability for the protection of others within the health care and larger community from unsafe, unethical, or illegal nursing practice on the part of USC students and graduates. All students are expected to be familiar with the principles of safe, ethical, and legal practice and are expected to perform accordingly.

Therefore, students may be disciplined or dismissed from the nursing major for practice or behavior which threatens, or has the potential to threaten, the safety of a client, family member, authorized representative, student peer, faculty member, healthcare provider, and/or self, or is unethical or illegal. Unacceptable practice may be a one-time event or a series of events.

Clinical practice may be considered unsafe when a student fails to use the nursing process effectively by engaging in one or more of the following activities. **Please note that this list is not all-inclusive.**

**You understand that should it be determined that if you are considered unsafe and fail to use a nursing process effectively, you will receive an academic penalty (including but not limited to: a clinical failure, course failure, suspension, expulsion from the College, or other penalties) and be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity for additional disciplinary action.**

Unsafe clinical practice is at the discretion of each individual professor:

1. Unacceptable practice is defined as: A. An act(s) or behavior(s) of the type that violates the South Carolina Nurse Practice Act. An act(s) or behavior(s) that violates the American Nurse Association (ANA) Code [of Ethics] for Nurses or the ANA Standards of Clinical Practice or the College of Nursing Core Values.
2. An act(s) or behavior(s) that threatens, or has the potential to threaten, the physical, emotional, mental, or environmental safety of a client, family member or designate, student peer, a faculty member, health care provider, or self.

3. Attending clinical with active infectious disease process or when lab results are in critical range.
4. An act(s) or behavior(s) that is unethical, dishonest or illegal, e.g., lying or deliberately giving inaccurate information.
5. An act(s) or behavior(s) that constitutes nursing practice for which the student is not authorized to perform, or has not been taught, at the time of the incident.
6. Unauthorized entry(ies) into the computer or misuse of clinical records or misuse of computer technology to violate patient, faculty or staff rights.
7. A trend of behavior often characterized by being unprepared or inadequately prepared for clinicals, the classroom or in simulation.
8. Continued inability to perform safely, ethically, or legally without immediate/close instructor supervision (in this case, there may not be a single isolated incident of unacceptable practice, failure to progress).
9. A use of prescribed/non-prescribed or other substances that alter the ability to clinically reason in the classroom, simulation area or clinical environment.
10. Failure to recognize the need for assistance when unfamiliar with nursing action.
11. Failure to take nursing action when such action is essential to the health and safety of the client.
12. Failure to recognize the influence of own attitudes and behaviors on care of client.
13. Failure to assume responsibility for completing nursing action.
14. Violation of laws or rules relating to patient record confidentiality.
15. Classroom or College behavior that is threatening or potentially harmful towards peers, instructors, advisors or others.
16. Unsatisfactory attendance/tardiness in clinical, simulation, advisement or classroom.
17. Plagiarism of clinical worksheets, exams, written or other required course assignments.

Failure to meet mandatory requirements set forth by the College of Nursing in order to hold students accountable to the above standards, clinical instructors and faculty will give a formal documentation to students who exhibit unsafe practices. This formal documentation will be in the form of a "STAR Counselling Form" that references the student handbook and the exact standard the student failed to display in his/her clinical practice. The documentation of STAR Counselling Form will be delivered in a face-to-face meeting with the clinical course coordinator and a witness. Both student and course coordinator will sign the documentation and the student will receive a copy. This "STAR Counselling Form" will be maintained in the student's permanent file in the CON from semester to semester regardless of the student's status (out of sequence, etc.). Students will be dismissed from the nursing program upon issuance of a 3<sup>rd</sup> "STAR Counselling" during the duration of the program. Any grossly

unsafe or negligent clinical event or unethical practice (including but not limited to those covered above) may constitute an automatic course or program failure without the student receiving a counseling or warning. A single incident of unacceptable practice may be grounds for course failure and dismissal from the nursing major.

Students may receive unsatisfactory clinical performance at the discretion of each course coordinator. If a student is removed from the clinical setting for unacceptable practice, the student will not return to that clinical setting unless cleared by the Course Coordinator. Students awarded an F grade for unsafe practice in clinical will need to repeat all portions of the course.

The Course Coordinator and the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies will determine the consequences of the unacceptable action, in accordance with USC policy. Consequences include:

- Remedial work and/or instruction
- Physical and/or mental evaluation
- Substance screening
- Award of grade of "F" for the course
- Withdrawal from the course
- Immediate dismissal from the nursing major

In the event the student is enrolled in two clinical courses during the semester in which course failure due to unacceptable practice occurs, a determination of safety to practice will be made in the second clinical course by the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies and the student may not be allowed to continue in the second course.

#### 6.1.5 Alcohol / Drug Policy

Students enrolled in the College of Nursing are subject to the regulations found in the USC Policies and Procedures Manual. See <http://www.sc.edu/policies/ppm/staf626.pdf> and the ethical standards of the Nursing profession as described in the ANA Code of Ethics.

<https://anacalif.memberclicks.net/assets/Events/RNDay/2016%20code%20of%20ethics%20for%20nurses%20-%209%20provisions.pdf>

#### 6.1.6 Equipment Kit

Approved equipment kit must be purchased prior to NURS 311/312 classes. Students receive information regarding the required purchases as they progress into the upper division.

#### 6.1.7 Policy for Clinical Attire

### **UNIFORMS**

During clinical practice, undergraduate students are required to wear a **clean, pressed, and approved** uniform. Details of specific style numbers and brands and location of the uniform vendor are shared during upper division orientation. All articles must be ordered prior to entry into clinical nursing courses. **Uniforms may only be worn to clinical and/or lab or social events sanctioned by the College of Nursing. Failure to comply will result in a meeting with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and possible dismissal from the program.**

## **DRESS CODE FOR CLINICAL ROTATIONS**

**Purpose:** The dress code is designed to protect the personal safety of students while in the clinical area, project the professional image of nursing, and portray the proud heritage of USC nurses. Although this dress code is congruent with the majority of health care agencies, some agencies have more restrictive dress codes. Please check with the instructor prior to the first day of clinical in a particular agency. College of Nursing faculty reserves the right to ask students to leave the clinical area if their attire is deemed inappropriate or out of uniform.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

### **Student Name Badges**

Students are required to wear USC, College of Nursing name badges on their chests with their legal first and last name that are clearly visible at all times. In addition, students must wear any required institutional badges while in clinical.

### **Hair**

- Shoulder length or longer hair must be pulled back and secured.
- Ornate hair decorations are inappropriate.
- Hair must conform to natural hair colors and non-extreme styles.
- Moustaches and beards must be neatly groomed and relatively close to the face to avoid contaminating the work environment.

### **Body Piercing and Other Jewelry**

- Body piercing jewelry may not be worn in clinical. No more than one small, stud-style earring per ear may be worn.
- Religious jewelry may be worn inside the uniform. Ring bands may be worn but rings with large stones may not.

### **Tattoos**

- Tattoos must be covered during clinical experiences.
- If the tattoo is in an area that cannot be covered by clothing, it must be covered by a bandage.

### **Personal Hygiene**

- Students are required to maintain high standards of personal cleanliness.
- Non-scented makeup and hair products may be worn. No perfumes or colognes may be worn.
- Makeup must conform to general body tones avoiding extreme colors.
- Nails must be clean, well kept, without nail polish or designs, and no longer than the tip of the finger. Artificial nails may not be worn.

### **Professional Uniform Attire**

Anytime students are in a healthcare setting during scheduled clinical time, the following must apply:

- Approved uniforms are required.
- All uniforms must be neat, clean, opaque, wrinkle free, and properly fitting with appropriate undergarments.

- If desired, students may wear black, grey, or white unadorned t-shirts under their scrub tops. Hoodies are not acceptable.
- A white lab-coat with College of Nursing identification may be worn over the uniform.
- Opaque white stockings or socks must be worn, when in uniform, at all times.
- Black uniform or athletic shoes are required. All shoes must be enclosed, flat-heeled, non-canvas, non-mesh, and kept clean.

### Professional Casual Attire

Any time students are in a healthcare setting during scheduled clinical time, the following must apply:

- All clothing must be neat, clean, opaque, wrinkle free, and properly fitting with appropriate undergarments.
- Many community agencies require the student to wear professional casual attire covered by a lab-coat. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, shorts, denim jeans, see through blouses, halter dresses, athletic attire (sweatshirts/hoodies, sweatpants, and jogging suits), tight knit clothing, leggings, imprinted t-shirts and any type of attire which is low-cut or where the midriff is exposed may not be worn. Extreme styles should be avoided.
- Students are required to wear stockings or socks at all times.
- Black uniform or athletic shoes are required. All shoes must be enclosed, flat-heeled, non-canvas, non-mesh and kept clean.

#### 6.1.8 Attendance at Clinical Experiences

Students are expected to attend ALL clinical nursing activities with absences permitted up to 10 percent only if certified as unavoidable because of sickness or other cause determined acceptable by the course coordinator. Make-up time for missed clinical nursing experiences will be determined at the discretion of the faculty and availability of clinical facilities. Faculty may require withdrawal of a student who has missed sufficient practice to prevent completion of clinical objectives. Students must provide a note from their healthcare provider documenting the need to miss clinical or simulation lab experiences.

Students are required to attend all lab and clinical components of their coursework with absences permitted up to 10 percent only for certified unavoidable circumstances. Absences from the lab or clinical component of a course will not be excused except in the case of severe illness of the student with documentation from the provider stating the student should not be in clinical (fever, diarrhea, infections) or in the event of the death/critical illness of an immediate family member, including grandparents. In rare cases, exceptions will be made for absences for academic reasons and may be excused with the joint approval of the course coordinator and the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Make-up time for clinical nursing experiences will be determined by the clinical coordinator of the course. All clinical time must be made up. Faculty may require withdrawal of a student who exceeds the 10 percent clinical absence and is unable to meet the practice and clinical objections of the course.

## **7. *Non-Academic Policies and Procedures***

### **7.1 *Change of Name or Address***

A student must notify the Office of the Registrar, and the Office of Student Affairs of any changes in name. Change of name requires presentation of legal documentation. To change directory information, access [Self-Service Carolina \(https://my.sc.edu/\)](https://my.sc.edu/).

### **7.2 *Outside Employment***

Due to the rigor of upper division course work it is strongly recommended that employment be limited as much as possible so that students may devote ample time for course preparation. Undergraduate students should expect two full days of classes and two full days of clinical per week with additional labs and classes intermittently. Full-time employment is not recommended.

### **7.3 *Communication***

The official mode of communication between the College of Nursing and undergraduate students is through university email. Students are required to monitor their university email messages.

### **7.4 *Copyright Policy***

The Nursing Programs seek to aid enrolled students by offering electronic presentations and recordings of lectures to improve student engagement and to better meet individual learning needs. With the growing use of technology, students and faculty have the responsibility to understand and observe copyright law including educational fair use guidelines, obtaining written permission, and to follow the corresponding campus University policy. As supplemental tools, all material found in lectures is owned by the University of South Carolina College of Nursing or its faculty and is protected by United States Copyright laws.

Lecture material is only available to students enrolled in the course where the content is available, and use is not permitted outside the scope of the course. Recorded lectures will only be posted to Blackboard. Material found in the lectures may not be photocopied, screen-shot, duplicated or distributed by any student without the express, written permission from the faculty member who created the material. Video, audio, or photographic recordings of course material are strictly prohibited. Recordings, course material, quizzes, tests and lecture notes may not be reproduced verbatim nor uploaded to publicly accessible web environments. Recordings and course material may not be exchanged nor distributed to a third party for compensation. Recordings and course material may not be used for any purpose other than personal study and may not violate any policies herein. An individual may individually print copies of lecture material solely for personal use under the scope of the course. Duplication or dissemination of lecture materials without authorized use may violate federal or state law and USC University policies. Failure to adhere to these policies is a violation of the College of Nursing Professionalism Policy and may result in disciplinary action under University guidelines.

## **7.5 Social Media**

As professional nurses, students are responsible for protecting the privacy and confidentiality of patients and research participants. The following guidelines are intended to minimize the risks of using social media:

1. First and foremost, nurses must recognize that they have an ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times.
2. Nurses are strictly prohibited from transmitting by way of any electronic media any patient-related image. In addition, students/nurses are restricted from transmitting any information that may be reasonably anticipated to violate patient rights to confidentiality or privacy, or otherwise degrade or embarrass the patient.
3. Do not share post or otherwise disseminate any information, including images, about a patient or information gained in the nurse-patient relationship with anyone unless there is a patient care related need to disclose the information or other legal obligation to do so.
4. Do not identify patients by name or post or publish information that may lead to the identification of a patient. Limiting access to postings through privacy settings is not sufficient to ensure privacy.
5. Do not refer to patients in a disparaging manner, even if the patient is not identified.
6. Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones. Follow employer policies for taking photographs or video of patients for treatment or other legitimate purposes using employer-provided devices.
7. Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Like in-person relationships, the nurse has the obligation to establish, communicate and enforce professional boundaries with patients in the online environment. Use caution when having online social contact with patients or former patients. Online contact with patients or former patients blurs the distinction between a professional and personal relationship. The fact that a patient may initiate contact with the nurse does not permit the nurse to engage in a personal relationship with the patient.
8. Consult employer policies or an appropriate leader within the organization for guidance regarding work related postings.
9. Promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy.
10. Be aware of and comply with employer policies regarding use of employer-owned computers, cameras and other electronic devices and use of personal devices in the work place.
11. Do not make disparaging remarks about employers or co-workers. Do not make threatening, harassing, profane, obscene, sexually explicit, racially derogatory, homophobic or other offensive comments.
12. Do not post content or otherwise speak on behalf of the employer unless authorized to do so and follow all applicable policies of the employer.

\*All guidelines apply to students. Student should also not make disparaging remarks related to their clinical site, faculty or school. The College of Nursing has adopted the NCSBN position statement:

NCSBN (2011) White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media  
[https://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN\\_SocialMedia.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf)

## **7.6 Campus Transportation**

The University operates a campus shuttle service that operates during the fall and spring semesters, with limited operation during the summer, reading days, and holidays. The shuttle service is free to all USC students, faculty, and staff. Shuttle/Parking maps and schedules are available at Parking Services (Pendleton Street Parking Garage, ground floor), the information desk at the Russell House, and at Vehicle Management. Learn more about the [Carolina Shuttle \(http://www.sc.edu/vmps/shuttle.html\)](http://www.sc.edu/vmps/shuttle.html).

## **7.7 Statement of Responsibility/Waiver of Liability**

Students attending certain events sponsored by the College of Nursing must sign a **Statement of Responsibility/Waiver of Liability form (Appendix H)**.

## **7.8 Parking**

Commuting students are required to register automobiles and have parking decals in order to park in various parking zones on campus. Students may also purchase spaces in the parking garages. A student can purchase a parking decal or a garage space at the Office of Parking and Vehicle Registration in the Pendleton Street Garage. A limited number of metered spaces are also available. Information about cost and other parking regulations are available at [Parking Services \(http://www.sc.edu/vmps/park.html\)](http://www.sc.edu/vmps/park.html).

## **7.9 College of Nursing Fire Evacuation Procedures**

The Fire Evacuation Procedure must be used in the event of fires in the College. Although the fire alarms in the building are tested occasionally, any alarm lasting more than 20 seconds should be considered a signal that a real fire is occurring. In such an event, the Dean's Office will contact the two hall marshals on each floor to confirm that there is an actual fire. The hall marshals on each floor of the College will inspect their floors to make sure that all persons have left the building. Students shall leave the building immediately. Those that exit on the first floor onto Greene Street should walk around to the second floor entrance past the bubble to meet others evacuated so that all individuals may be accounted for. A representative will then walk around to Greene Street to report to the fire fighters that the building is clear.

## **8. Resources and Support Services**

### **8.1 Self-Service Carolina**

Self-Service Carolina enables students to register and access their personal information such as grades, financial aid, fees, and class schedule.

### **8.2 Technology Resource Center (TRC)**

The TRC (Room 306) is available to all nursing students, faculty, and staff. There are 50 computers equipped with a wide range of software packages including computer assisted instructional and testing programs. Additional resources include laptops that can be checked out on a limited basis by faculty and staff only, a coin-operated copier (.10 per copy), and laser printing (for .10 per black and white copy and .50 for color copy). We only accept Carolina Card to pay for printing. TRC hours are generally from 8 - 5 Monday through Friday, but changes to this schedule are posted outside the entrance to the lab. Occasionally, the TRC will be closed to general student usage due to computer testing sessions, primarily at the end of semesters. Efforts are made to notify students in advance when these testing sessions are needed. The TRC director and helpdesk staff are available to answer questions and assist student and faculty with the use of resources. The TRC also has an attached viewing room equipped with a projector and screen. This room is designed for student use but can be used for orientations and training.

### **8.3 Distributive Learning Support Services**

Undergraduate courses offered through distributive learning are listed in the Master Schedule with a prefix of N next to the section number. Undergraduate students enrolled in the BSN program may have courses delivered via DVDs, two-way video, Adobe Connect and Blackboard Course Management System. Most nursing courses, regardless of distance learning or on-campus only class options, use the Blackboard instructional system which allows USC faculty to create a secure course web site for class communications, posting assignments and/or readings, linking to complementary web sites, administering exams, and much more. In courses that use Blackboard, the course syllabus will provide basic information about accessing [Blackboard \(https://blackboard.sc.edu\)](https://blackboard.sc.edu). For more information about Blackboard, refer to [University Technology Services \(http://www.uts.sc.edu/academic/blackboard/\)](http://www.uts.sc.edu/academic/blackboard/).

### **8.4 Career Planning and Placement Office**

The Career Center, located on level five of the Thomas Cooper Library, helps students realize their career goals and locate employment upon graduation. Undergraduate students may take advantage of the excellent placement services in developing professional resumes and creating a placement file. For more information about this service, you may contact the center at telephone 777-7280.

### **8.5 Bookstores**

The University Bookstore is located on the first floor of the Russell House and maintains a list of required texts for all courses. Several other bookstores such as the South Carolina Bookstore and Adams University Bookstore, located near campus, also sell required texts and academic supplies.

## **8.6 The Libraries**

The Thomas Cooper Library (TCL), located on Greene Street (next to the Russell House), offers many services. At the beginning of each semester, the TCL holds orientation sessions. It is important to attend one of these orientations during the first semester of enrollment at USC. Access to library holdings at the TCL is available through the [USC Libraries \(http://library.sc.edu/\)](http://library.sc.edu/). Computerized literature searches, microfiche readers, and photocopiers are also available for use at the library. A fee may be involved for some of these services. Tours of the Thomas Cooper Library include an introduction to some of the electronic resources the library offers, are available at the beginning of each semester.

## **8.7 Counseling and Psychiatry Services**

Currently enrolled USC students who have paid the student health fee are eligible to receive most services at no additional charge. However, students who request more than the allotted number of individual counseling sessions per academic year may incur additional charges. The Center is located in the Close/Hipp Building (803-777-5223). USC Student Health Services <https://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/cp/>

## **8.8 Veterans Services**

This office, located in the University Technology Services Building at 1244 Blossom Street (803-777-5156), informs veteran students of the opportunities associated with their benefits.

## **8.9 Financial Assistance**

University financial aid programs are coordinated by the USC Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships (803-777-8134). Students interested in obtaining student aid are encouraged to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and make an appointment with a financial aid counselor. In addition, the College of Nursing Office of Academic Affairs staff is available to assist students with obtaining information about financial aid opportunities specifically targeted to nursing students. College of Nursing scholarships are coordinated through the Director of Student Affairs. Undergraduate students must be enrolled in at least 12 credits per semester to be eligible for [College of Nursing Scholarships \(http://www.sc.edu/nursing\)](http://www.sc.edu/nursing). Nursing scholarship applications for each academic year are available between December 1 and March 15 and are due annually on March 15; deadlines for other sources of funding vary.

## **8.10 Sigma Theta Tau**

Invitation to membership in Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society in Nursing is offered to second semester junior undergraduate students who demonstrate academic excellence in the nursing program, leadership in community service, and a potential for scholarly excellence. Events sponsored by the College of Nursing chapter, Alpha Xi, occur throughout the academic year.

### **8.11 Thomson Student Health Center**

The Thomson Student Health Center, located behind the Russell House, offers treatment for illness or injury to all students who have paid the University Fee or on a fee-for-service basis. For additional information, please visit the [Thomson Student Health Center \(http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/tshc/\)](http://www.sa.sc.edu/shs/tshc/)

### **8.12 Students with Disabilities**

The Student Disability Resource Center, located at LeConte College, provides individualized support and accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Call 803-777-6142 to contact [Student Disability Resource Center. \(http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/\)](http://www.sa.sc.edu/sds/)

Students with disabilities must contact the Student Disability Resource Center prior to or early in their program to determine if reasonable accommodations will be provided. It is the students' responsibility to follow up with their faculty regarding any approved accommodations. The USC College of Nursing is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Students with disabilities must be able to continuously meet the core performance standards and functional abilities established to ensure that the objectives of the nursing program are met. (**Appendix B**)

Students with registered disabilities will be required to take standardized nursing exams at the end of the semester in TRC at the College of Nursing. Full accommodations will be provided in this environment. This has been approved by the Office of Student Disabilities.

### **8.13 Undergraduate Student Professional Organizations**

Students are encouraged to actively participate in campus organizations.

- The Student Nurses Association (SNA) at USC is open for membership to any undergraduate nursing student.
- The American Assembly for Men in Nursing (AAMN) is open for membership to any undergraduate nursing student.
- Chi Eta Phi Sorority, Inc. is a service organization open to registered nurses and nursing students.

### **8.14 Alumni**

The College of Nursing Alumni Society is a major support system for the College and offers several scholarships annually. Alumni are sent copies of *USC Nurse* and invited to attend the annual Alumni Meeting and Viana McCown Lectureship, an important annual event in the life of the College. All graduates are encouraged to notify the Society or the University of South Carolina Alumni Association of address changes.

## 9. *Appendices*

### APPENDIX A

#### CODE OF ETHICS FOR NURSES WITH INTERPRETIVE STATEMENTS

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

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Source: American Nurses Association, August 2015

## APPENDIX B

### CORE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

The USC College of Nursing requires all applicants and continuing students in all nursing programs to meet the following standards based on the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN) Core Performance Standards.

**Standard 1. Critical Thinking and Related Mental Abilities:** Must have critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not an all-inclusive list): Has the ability to interpret, investigate, communicate, and comprehend complex situations; identify cause and effect relative to clinical situations under varying degrees of stress; must be able to read and comprehend detailed charts, reports, journal articles, books, etc.; and capable of performing all arithmetic functions (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, ratios, and simple algebraic equations).

**Standard 2. Communication and Interpersonal Abilities:** Must be able to read, write, speak, and comprehend English with sufficient skill to communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally. Must have interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Has the ability to establish rapport with clients and their families, peers, agency personnel, and faculty; explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching; and document and interpret nursing actions and client responses.

**Standard 3. Physical Activities:** Must have physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces with gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Able to move around a client's room, work spaces, treatment areas and administer CPR; calibrate and use equipment; position and transfer clients; capable of pushing up to 200 pounds independently; capable of reaching 18 inches above head without the use of mechanical devices to elevate themselves; capable of sitting, standing, walking for extended periods of time; experience no limitations when bending, stooping, sitting, standing, walking (i.e. uses no mechanical devices to assist themselves which would impede the safety of a client), ability to move to and respond to an emergency situation in a timely manner, and able to document in a clear, legible manner.

**Standard 4. Hearing:** Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Able to auscultate sounds, monitor alarms and emergency signals; able to tolerate loud noises for extended periods of time. Assistive devices must correct hearing to this degree and must be worn at all times during practicums.

**Standard 5. Visual:** Must have the visual ability sufficient for observation, assessment, and intervention necessary for nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Observe client response, accurately read equipment, gauges,

and monitors, vision correctable to 20/40, normal depth perception, and ability to distinguish colors and ability to tolerate offensive visual situations.

Standard 6. Smell: Smelling ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): Having ability to differentiate between various types of smells, and ability to tolerate offensive odors.

**(Approved by College of Nursing Faculty 3/26/04)**

## APPENDIX C

### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF NURSING

#### STUDENT BACKGROUND CHECK INTERNAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT

##### Background Check Policy

Healthcare providers are entrusted with the health, safety, and welfare of patients; have access to controlled substances and confidential information; and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior. Thus, an assessment of a student's suitability to function in such a setting is imperative to promote the highest level of integrity in healthcare services.

Clinical facilities are increasingly required by accrediting and federal guidelines, to conduct background checks for security purposes on individuals who provide services within the facility and especially those who supervise care and render treatment. To facilitate this requirement, educational institutions have agreed to conduct these background checks for students and faculty.

Clinical experiences are an essential element in the nursing curriculum. Students who cannot participate in clinical experiences due to criminal or other adverse activities that are revealed in a background check are unable to fulfill the requirements of the program. Additionally, many healthcare licensing agencies require individuals to pass a background check as a condition of licensure or employment. Therefore, it is in everyone's interest to resolve these issues prior to a commitment of resources by the student or the College of Nursing.

##### Background Check

The College of Nursing agrees to certain conditions for placement of students in clinical agencies/facilities through a formal contract between the University of South Carolina and the clinical agency/facility. One of these conditions is a background check. The following background checks are required:

- 1. Residence History Trace and Criminal Record Check for the past 7 years**
- 2. Check of the Nationwide Sex Offender Registry**
- 3. Social Security Number Verification**
- 4. Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Scan**
- 5. U.S. Patriot Act – OFAC**
- 6. Check of any other registry or records required by law, accrediting agency, or specific agency.**

Students may not participate in clinical experiences if they have convictions of, plea of guilty, plea of nolo contendere (no contest), or pending criminal charges involving the following:

- Crimes involving violence against a person including, but not limited to: murder, manslaughter, use of deadly force, assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature, assault and battery with intent to kill, sex crimes, abuse of children or the elderly, abduction and robbery.
- Crimes occurring within five years of application involving the distribution of drugs.
- Crimes occurring within five years of application involving illegal use or possession of weapons including but not limited to guns, knives, explosives or other dangerous objects.
- Crimes occurring within five years of application involving dishonesty or moral turpitude including but not limited to fraud, deception, embezzlement or financial exploitation (but not including shoplifting, petit larceny or bad check).
- Any other crime or pattern of criminal behavior, which, in the Facility's opinion, warrants exclusion or dismissal from the student rotation at the Facility.

## Student Responsibility

Prior to progressing to upper division or enrollment into graduate clinical courses, students will undergo a background check. The College of Nursing will provide the necessary information so that the student can have the background check performed by selected vendor.

### 1. Ordering Process

Selected vendor will provide background check services to students applying to the University of South Carolina College of Nursing. Selected vendor will issue a unique "Package Code" to the College of Nursing. This Package Code will be printed on the "Student Instruction Form," a 1-page document provided at no charge to the College of Nursing. These forms will be distributed to the students needing a background check. When the student enters the package code on the selected vendor secured web site, the code identifies their school of attendance, their screening requirements and the associated cost. The student then enters payment information and personal identifiers needed to process their order. Background checks will be conducted in an average of 2-3 business days. Once results are completed, students will receive an email notifying them that their background check is ready for review.

### 2. Sharing Results

Each student is given a unique password which they use, along with the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number, to access their results directly from the selected vendor home page. The results will be accessible in an unalterable PDF format which can be viewed or printed by the student. The student can provide their unique password to ANY person or group they wish to share their background check.

### 3. Online Management System

Selected vendor will provide access to its Online Student Record Management System to authorized administrators at the University of South Carolina College of Nursing. The College of Nursing will ensure confidentiality of the results by only providing results to the appropriate clinical agencies.

#### **4. Student Deadlines**

The undergraduate/graduate student must submit to a background check within 90 days of the first clinical course. If the first clinical course begins in the fall, background check must be done between June 1 and June 30. If the first clinical course begins in the spring, the background check must be done between November 1 and November 30. If the first clinical course begins in the summer, the background check must be done between April 1 and April 30. Students who do not follow this time frame will be dropped from courses. Students will be reinstated in courses when the background check has been completed. However, there is no guarantee that the student will be able to register for the preferred course sections or clinical groups.

#### **Background Check Findings**

If a "problem" background check is returned, the student will meet with the Assistant Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Studies to discuss the "problem." If the student believes that the background check is in error and can provide proof, the student will be given an opportunity to produce this proof. If the student is unable to refute the background check findings, the student will be ineligible for progression to the upper division or admission to the graduate clinical courses.

All students are required to report to the Assistant Dean for Graduate or Undergraduate Studies any criminal charges, other than minor traffic violations, that occur after the background check is completed. Failure to report such criminal charges will result in expulsion from the College of Nursing.

## APPENDIX D

### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF NURSING

#### STUDENT DRUG SCREENING INTERNAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE STATEMENT

##### Drug Screening Policy

The University of South Carolina is concerned with both the welfare of the University community and the academic and personal development of each student. The University strives to create a healthy environment where the illegal and/or improper use of drugs does not interfere with learning, performance or development. Abuse of drugs disrupts this environment and places at risk the lives and well-being of the members of the university community, as well as the potential for students to contribute to society. It is important for all members of the University community to take responsibility for preventing the illegal and/or improper use of drugs from negatively affecting the community's learning environment and the academic, physical and emotional well-being of its students (Carolina Community).

##### Drug Screening

As a condition of admission to the College of Nursing upper division or graduate clinical courses, each student will be required to submit to a drug screening, and submit, as requested, to additional screenings once enrolled in the College. Refusal by a student to submit to drug screening will result in dismissal from the College of Nursing. Admission will be withdrawn for a student screening positive. However, students taking prescription medications that would cause a positive drug screen will have an opportunity to submit proof of their prescription to a selected vendor staff physician. Any student who voluntarily reports a chemical dependency problem will be referred to USC's Office of Judicial Affairs. Conditions, if any, for continued participation in the College of Nursing Program will be within the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Graduate or Undergraduate Studies. For example, the student may be allowed to continue in didactic courses pending action by the Office of Judicial Affairs. The student will submit to drug screens as requested by the College of Nursing and/or the Office of Judicial Affairs, and will be dismissed from the College of Nursing if a positive drug screen is obtained. The University of South Carolina Statement of Policy regarding drug use is the foundation for this policy statement

<https://www.sa.sc.edu/sape/alcohol-and-drug-policies/>

However, the College of Nursing Drug Policy and Procedure Statement applies specifically to the College of Nursing.

Urine samples submitted by University of South Carolina College of Nursing students will be analyzed for the presence of the following substances:

- Amphetamines
- Barbiturates
- Benzodiazepines
- Cocaine
- Ethanol
- Marijuana
- Meperidine
- Methadone
- *Methaqualone*
- Opiates
- Oxycodone
- Phencyclidine (PCP)
- Propoxyphene

This list may be amended at any time by the College of Nursing

## Student Responsibility

Prior to progressing to upper division or enrollment into graduate clinical courses, students will undergo a drug screening. The College of Nursing will provide the necessary information so that the student can have the drug screening performed through selected vendor.

### 1. Ordering Process

Selected vendor will facilitate drug screening services to students applying to the University of South Carolina College of Nursing. Selected vendor will issue a unique "Package Code" to the College of Nursing. This Package Code will be printed on the "Student Instruction Form," a 1-page document provided at no charge to the College of Nursing. These forms will be distributed to the students needing a drug screening, along with a chain of custody form.

- a. When the student enters the package code on the selected vendor secure web site, the code identifies their school of attendance, their screening requirements and the associated cost. The student then enters payment information and personal identifiers needed to process their order.
- b. The College of Nursing student will take the chain of custody form to LabCorp or AccuDiagnostics for submission of urine sampling. Drug screenings will be conducted in an average of 2-3 business days. Once results are completed, students will receive an email notifying them that their drug screening is ready for review.

### 2. Sharing Results

Each student is given a unique password which they use, along with the last 4 digits of their Social Security Number, to access their results directly from the selected vendor home page. The results will be accessible in an unalterable PDF format which can be viewed or printed by the student. The

student can provide their unique password to ANY person or group they wish to share their drug screening.

### **3. Online Management System**

Selected vendor will provide access to its Online Student Record Management System to authorized administrators at the University of South Carolina College of Nursing. The College of Nursing will ensure confidentiality by only providing results to the appropriate clinical agencies.

### **4. Student Deadlines**

The undergraduate/graduate student must submit to a drug screen within 90 days of the first clinical course. If the first clinical course begins in the fall, drug screen must be done between June 1 and June 30. If the first clinical course begins in the spring, the drug screen must be done between November 1 and November 30. If the first clinical course begins in the summer, the drug screen must be done between March 1 and March 30. Students who do not follow this time frame will be dropped from courses. Students will be reinstated in courses when the drug screen has been completed. However, there is no guarantee that the student will be able to register for the preferred course sections or clinical groups.

### **Admission/Readmission after a Positive Drug Screening**

A student whose admission is withdrawn, or who is suspended from the College of Nursing as a result of a positive drug screen, will be considered for readmission if the following conditions are met:

- Meeting with USC Office of Judicial Affairs
- Completion of the Choices Group conducted by the Counseling and Human Development Center
- Completion of any sanctions from the Office of Judicial Affairs
- Submission to a drug screening prior to admission/readmission. This drug screening will be at the student's expense. A positive drug screening will result in permanent ineligibility for admission/readmission to the College of Nursing
- Submission to drug screening, as requested by the College of Nursing, after admission/readmission. This drug screening will be at the student's expense. A positive drug screening will result in permanent dismissal from the College of Nursing.

APPENDIX E  
CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS  
HANDOUT FOR TRADITIONAL BSN

**Castlebranch (CB)** 9-2017

*Instructions for account creation and information population*

- **When to create and populate CB account?**
  - **Summer clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **March 1 and March 31\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **April 1**.
  - **Fall clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **June 1 and June 30\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **July 1**.

\*\* If the account is created **too early**, screenings will need to be repeated at the student’s expense.

- **Required documents & procedures**
  - Positive Titers
  - Tuberculosis (TB) Screening
  - Influenza
  - Tetanus/Diphtheria
  - Current CPR Certification
  - Bloodborne Pathogens Self Study Unit & Post Test
  - Consent for Release of Health Information
  - Clear background check
  - Clear drug screen
  - Handbook Acknowledgment
  - Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement
  - Future Focus survey

- Go to [portal.castlebranch.com/UO26](https://portal.castlebranch.com/UO26)

- Select appropriate package code:

- **Helpful Tips**

- Required documents must be uploaded as “one” (PDF) file for each requirement.
- Castleranch will send e-mail notification of required renewals 60 days, then 30 days, then weekly leading up to renewal dates. **Renewals can be uploaded to Castlebranch within 21 days of the renewal date.** After the renewal date has passed, “overdue” alerts will be received.
- Renewal dates will be due April 1, December 1 or July 1 for any expiring requirements.
- Requirements must not expire during the semester of clinical enrollment.
- Based on clinical placements, additional requirements may be requested.



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH CAROLINA**

College of Nursing

<b>Upper Division Student Requirements:</b>	<b>How Often?</b> <i>Each item required must NOT expire during the semester of clinical enrollment</i>	<b>Description &amp; Additional Information</b>
Positive Rubeola Titer (Measles)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	A positive IgG (not IgM) antibody titer (lab report required) indicates immunity. If a titer is negative or equivocal, the negative or equivocal titer result must be accompanied by a booster injection. An additional titer is not required after a booster injection. MMR vaccine and its component vaccines should not be administered to women known to be pregnant. Because a risk to the fetus from administration of these live virus vaccines can occur, women should avoid becoming pregnant for 28 days after vaccination with MMR or other measles, mumps, or rubella-containing vaccines.
Positive Mumps Titer	Once - see Description & Additional Information	
Positive Rubella Titer (German Measles)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	
Positive Varicella Titer (Chicken Pox)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	A positive IgG (not IgM) antibody titer (lab report required) indicates immunity. If a titer is negative or equivocal, the negative or equivocal titer result must be accompanied by a booster injection.
Positive Hepatitis B Antibody Titer (Anti HBs)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	A positive antibody titer (lab report required) is required and must be accompanied by documentation of 3 vaccinations. A positive titer indicates immunity. If a titer is negative or equivocal, Hepatitis B vaccines and a 2nd titer are required. Full immunization consists of three Hepatitis B vaccinations administered over a 6 month period to be followed by a 2nd titer given 1-2 months after the 3rd vaccination. Students must begin the vaccination series prior to clinical course registration. Evidence of a positive titer must be provided prior to next semester's course registration. If the post-vaccination titer is negative or equivocal, then one will be considered as a non-responder, not expected to convert and documented as not immune to the Hepatitis B virus.

Negative Tuberculosis (TB) Screening	Annually	<p>One of the following is required:          Negative two-step PPD skin test (Mantoux) administered 1-3 weeks apart within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>          Negative two-step skin test administered 1-3 weeks apart and all subsequent 1 step skin tests with the most recent 1 step test being administered within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>          Negative QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test administered within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>          Negative T-Spot Blood Test administered within the past 12 months.          If result is positive, a clear chest x-ray report must be submitted following last positive test result, administered within the past 12 months along with a physician clearance documented on letterhead.</p> <p>The renewal date will be set for 1 year, requiring one of the following:          Negative one-step test <b>OR</b>          Negative QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test <b>OR</b>          Negative T-Spot Blood Test</p>
Influenza	Each Fall (administered September - December 1)	<p>One of the following is required:          Documentation of a flu shot administered during the current flu season <b>OR</b>          a declination waiver, which must be completed on a school form.</p>
Tetanus/Diphtheria	Every 10 years	Submit a Tetanus booster (Td or Tdap) administered within the past 10 years.
Current CPR Certification	Every 2 years, depending on expiration date - see Additional Information	Must be the American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Provider course <b>OR</b> American Heart Association ACLS course <b>OR</b> Military Training Network Healthcare Provider (in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association for the BLS for Healthcare Providers). Submit copy of front & back of signed card. The renewal date will be set based on the expiration of the card. A letter from provider will be accepted and temporarily approved for 30 days by which time the permanent CPR card must submitted.
Bloodborne Pathogens Self Study Unit & Post Test	Annually	Submit completed, printed certificate form with name & date visible on certificate. Go to <a href="http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm">http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm</a> to access test.
Consent for Release of Health Information	Once	Submit signed Consent for Release of Health Information.
Clear background check	Within 90 days prior to first clinical; after return to program following a leave of absence; if requested by College of Nursing or a clinical agency	The following will be searched: 7 year County Criminal Search, National Sex Offender Registry, Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Abuse Scan (FACIS level 3), U.S. Patriot Act Search, Residence History, and Social Security Alert.

Clear drug screen	Within 90 days prior to first clinical; after return to program following a leave of absence; if requested by College of Nursing or a clinical agency	12-panel urinalysis drug screen to be administered.
Handbook Acknowledgment	Annually	Submit signed and dated Handbook Acknowledgement form found in the undergraduate handbook at <a href="http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/index.php">http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/index.php</a> .
Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement	Annually	Submit signed Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement.

## CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS

### HANDOUT FOR RN-BSN

## Castlebranch (CB) <sup>9-2017</sup>

### *Instructions for account creation and information population*

- **When to create and populate CB account?**
  - **Fall 1A clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **June 1 and June 30\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **July 1**.
  - **Fall 2B clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **August 1 and August 31\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **September 1**.
  - **Spring 1A clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **November 1 and November 30\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **December 1**.
  - **Spring 2B clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **January 1 and January 31\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **February 1**.
  - **Summer clinical starters** will create CB accounts and upload documentation between **March 1 and March 31\*\***. You will receive “overdue” alerts if required documents and procedures are not uploaded and successfully compliant by **April 1**.

\*\* If the account is created *too early*, screenings will need to be repeated at the student’s expense

- **Required documents & procedures**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • Positive Titers                                  | • Clear background check                                   |
| • Tuberculosis (TB) Screening                      | • Clear drug screen  |
| • Influenza  | • Handbook Acknowledgment                                  |
| • Tetanus/Diphtheria                               | • Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement |
| • Current CPR Certification                        | • Future Focus survey                                      |
| • Bloodborne Pathogens Self Study Unit & Post Test | • Student Nametag  |
| • Consent for Release of Health Information        | • Current, unencumbered professional license               |

- **Helpful Tips**

- Required documents must be uploaded as “one” (PDF) file for each requirement.
- Castleranch will send e-mail notification of required renewals 60 days, then 30 days, then weekly leading up to renewal dates. **Renewals can be uploaded to Castlebranch within 21 days of the renewal date.** After the renewal date has passed, “overdue” alerts will be received.
- Renewal dates will be due April 1, December 1 or July 1 for any expiring requirements.
- Requirements must not expire during the semester of clinical enrollment.
- Based on clinical placements, additional requirements may be requested.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Go to [portal.castlebranch.com/UO26](https://portal.castlebranch.com/UO26)

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL <https://portal.castlebranch.com/UO26>. The page features the CastleBranch logo and a navigation menu with links for HOME, PACKAGE SELECTION, FAQ, and CONTACT US. The main content area is titled "University of South Carolina - Nursing - Columbia Portal" and contains a welcome message, instructions on how to use the portal, and a prominent red "PLACE ORDER" button. A photograph of a smiling nurse in blue scrubs is also visible on the right side of the page.

- Select appropriate package code:

The screenshot shows the "PACKAGE SELECTION" menu on the CastleBranch portal. The menu is expanded to show the following options:

- Please Select
- Columbia (Faculty)
- Graduate (MSN Post-Master's DNP)
- RN-BSN Program
  - UR88: Background Check - Drug Test - Future Focus - Compliance Tracker
  - UR88bg: Background Check only
  - UR88bgdt: Background Check - Drug Test
  - UR88dt: Drug Test Only
- Undergraduate (Traditional BSN)

A photograph of three healthcare professionals is visible on the right side of the page.

**UR88 –**  
for RN-BSN students



<b>RN-BSN Student Requirements:</b>	<b>How Often?</b> <i>Each item required must NOT expire during the semester of clinical enrollment</i>	<b>Description &amp; Additional Information</b>
Positive Rubeola Titer (Measles)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	A positive IgG (not IgM) antibody titer (lab report required) indicates immunity. If a titer is negative or equivocal, the negative or equivocal titer result must be accompanied by a booster injection. An additional titer is not required after a booster injection. MMR vaccine and its component vaccines should not be administered to women known to be pregnant. Because a risk to the fetus from administration of these live virus vaccines can occur, women should avoid becoming pregnant for 28 days after vaccination with MMR or other measles, mumps, or rubella-containing vaccines.
Positive Mumps Titer	Once - see Description & Additional Information	
Positive Rubella Titer (German Measles)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	

Positive Varicella Titer (Chicken Pox)	Once - see Description & Additional Information	A positive IgG (not IgM) antibody titer (lab report required) indicates immunity. If a titer is negative or equivocal, the negative or equivocal titer result must be accompanied by a booster injection.
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Negative Tuberculosis (TB) Screening	Annually	<p>One of the following is required:            Negative two-step PPD skin test (Mantoux) administered 1-3 weeks apart within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>            Negative two-step skin test administered 1-3 weeks apart and all subsequent 1 step skin tests with the most recent 1 step test being administered within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>            Negative QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test administered within the past 12 months <b>OR</b>            Negative T-Spot Blood Test administered within the past 12 months.            If result is positive, a clear chest x-ray report must be submitted following last positive test result, administered within the past 12 months along with a physician clearance documented on letterhead.</p> <p>The renewal date will be set for 1 year, requiring one of the following:            Negative one-step test <b>OR</b>            Negative QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test <b>OR</b>            Negative T-Spot Blood Test</p>
Influenza	Each Fall (administered September - December 1)	One of the following is required: Documentation of a flu shot administered during the current flu season <b>OR</b> a declination waiver, which must be completed on a school form.
Tetanus/Diphtheria	Every 10 years	Submit a Tetanus booster (Td or Tdap) administered within the past 10 years.
Current CPR Certification	Every 2 years, depending on expiration date - see Additional Information	Must be the American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Provider course <b>OR</b> American Heart Association ACLS course <b>OR</b> Military Training Network Healthcare Provider (in accordance with the curriculum of the American Heart Association for the BLS for Healthcare Providers). Submit copy of front & back of signed card. The renewal date will be set based on the expiration of the card. A letter from provider will be accepted and temporarily approved for 30 days by which time the permanent CPR card must be submitted.
Bloodborne Pathogens Self Study Unit & Post Test	Annually	Submit completed, printed certificate form with name & date visible on certificate. Go to <a href="http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm">http://www.sc.edu/ehs/modules/BBP/bbp.htm</a> to access test.
Consent for Release of Health Information	Once	Submit signed Consent for Release of Health Information.

Clear background check	Within 90 days prior to first clinical; after return to program following a leave of absence; if requested by College of Nursing or a clinical agency	The following will be searched: County Criminal Search, National Sex Offender Registry, Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Abuse Scan (FACIS level 3), U.S. Patriot Act Search, Residence History, and Social Security Alert.
Clear drug screen	Within 90 days prior to first clinical; after return to program following a leave of absence; if requested by College of Nursing or a clinical agency	12-panel urinalysis drug screen to be administered.
Handbook Acknowledgment	Annually	Submit signed and dated Handbook Acknowledgement form found in the undergraduate handbook at <a href="http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/index.php">http://www.sc.edu/study/colleges_schools/nursing/internal/current_students/index.php</a> .
Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement	Annually	Submit signed Academic Bulletin(s) and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement.
Copy of Student Nametag	Once	Upload photocopy of student nametag
Professional License	Once - see Description & Additional Information	Submit current unencumbered SC RN or NP licensure or compact RN licensure and/or current unencumbered license from state where clinicals are facilitated.

## APPENDIX F

### BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE CONTROL PLAN FOR NURSING STUDENTS

College of Nursing  
University of South Carolina  
Columbia, South Carolina

#### A. Introduction

The College of Nursing contracts with many agencies to provide clinical experience for students. Each clinical placement must have a policy for protection against bloodborne diseases in effect, and available for the students and must provide personal protective equipment required by the clinical placement site for students. The students are governed by the College of Nursing policies and procedures as well as the policies for teach clinical placement.

#### B. Purpose

The policies and procedures in this manual are intended to:

1. Eliminate or minimize student occupational exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials.
2. Decrease risk of disease from bloodborne pathogens through education and immunization.
3. Comply with the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard, 29 CFR 1910.1030

#### C. Exposure Determination

Hepatitis B is an inflammation of the liver. The virus is transmitted by exposure to infectious body fluids, usually blood or blood components. Bloodborne pathogens may be transmitted in the following ways during work activities:

- \* injuries from sharps
- \* skin or eye contact
- \* scratches or cuts
- \* bites or wounds

Occupational exposure means reasonably anticipated skin, eye, mucous membrane, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that may result during the performance of direct patient care.

Although universal precautions can provide some protection from exposure to Hepatitis B (HBV), Hepatitis C (HCV), and AIDS (HIV) pre-exposure risks are defined based on the probability of exposure to potentially infectious materials.

All students taking clinical courses in which they have direct patient contact or who practice in the clinical laboratory in the College of Nursing are considered to be at risk for exposure to blood and certain body fluids.

## D. Compliance Methods

1. **Universal precautions** will be observed at the College of Nursing and at each clinical placement in order to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials. All blood or other potentially infectious material will be considered infectious regardless of the perceived status of the source individual.
2. **Hand washing facilities** shall be made available to students who incur exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. OSHA requires that these facilities be readily accessible after incurring exposure. *(If hand washing facilities are not feasible, USC will provide either an antiseptic cleanser in conjunction with clean cloth/paper towels or antiseptic towelettes. If these alternatives are used then the hands are to be washed with soap and running water as soon as feasible.)*
3. **Work practice controls:**  
In work areas where there is a reasonable likelihood of exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials, students are not to eat, drink, apply cosmetics or lip balm, smoke, or handle contact lenses. This would include all areas in the labs. Food and beverages aren't to be kept in refrigerators, freezers, shelves, cabinets, or on counter tops or bench tops where blood or other potentially infectious materials are present.
4. **Engineering Controls**  
Contaminated needles and other contaminated sharps shall not be bent, recapped or removed unless it can be demonstrated that no alternative is feasible or that such action is required by a specific procedure. Such bending, recapping or needle removal must then be accomplished through the use of a mechanical device or a one-handed technique. Shearing or breaking of contaminated needles is prohibited. Immediately after use, contaminated reusable sharps shall be placed in appropriate containers until properly reprocessed. These containers shall be puncture resistant, labeled or color-coded, and leak proof on the sides and bottom.
5. **Implementation of safer medical devices**  
The Needle-stick Safety and Prevention Act, was signed into law on November 6, 2000, in response to the advances made in technological developments that increase employee/student protection. Safer medical devices replace sharps with non-needle devices or incorporate safety features designed to reduce the likelihood of injury.  
  
Safer medical devices that are appropriate, commercially available, and effective must be implemented. An effective safer medical device is one that, based on reasonable judgment, will decrease the risk of an exposure incident involving a contaminated sharp.  
  
Engineering controls shall be examined and maintained or replaced on a regular schedule to ensure their effectiveness.
6. **Safety Procedures**  
Mouth pipetting/suctioning of blood or other potentially infectious materials is prohibited.

All procedures will be conducted in a manner that will minimize splashing, spraying, splattering, and generation of droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials.

Specimens of blood or other potentially infectious materials will be placed in a container that prevents leakage during the collection, handling, processing, storage, and transport of the specimens. The container used for this purpose will be labeled or color-coded.

Any specimens that could puncture a primary container will be placed within a secondary container that is puncture resistant. If outside contamination of the primary container occurs, the primary container shall be placed within a secondary container that prevents leakage during the handling, processing, storage, transport, or shipping of the specimen.

## **7. Personal Protective Equipment**

CSL, such as goggles and person CPR masks. Personal protective equipment will be chosen based on the anticipated exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. The protective equipment will be considered appropriate only if it does not permit blood or other potentially infectious materials to pass through or reach the students clothing, skin, eyes, mouth, or other mucous membranes under normal conditions of use and for the duration of time the protective equipment will be used. , such as goggles and person CPR masks. Personal protective equipment will be chosen based on the anticipated exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials. The protective equipment will be considered appropriate only if it does not permit blood or other potentially infectious materials to pass through or reach the students clothing, skin, eyes, mouth, or other mucous membranes under normal conditions of use and for the duration of time the protective equipment will be used.

### **a. PPE Use**

The laboratory or clinical supervisor or the safety officer in each clinical placement is responsible for ensuring that the following policies are met. Each department shall ensure that the students uses appropriate PPE unless the supervisor shows that student temporarily and briefly declined to use PPE when under rare and extraordinary circumstances, it was the supervisor's professional judgment that in the specific instance its use would have prevented the delivery of healthcare or posed an increased hazard to the safety of the student or co-worker. When the supervisor makes this judgment, the circumstances shall be investigated and documented in order to determine whether changes can be instituted to prevent such occurrences in the future.

### **b. PPE Accessibility**

Personal protective equipment used in the clinical facilities will be provided without cost to the students. Each clinical site shall ensure that appropriate PPE in the appropriate sizes is readily accessible at the worksite. Hypoallergenic gloves, glove liners, powder less gloves, or other similar alternatives shall be readily accessible to those students who are allergic to the gloves normally provided.

### **c. PPE Cleaning, Laundering and Disposal**

All garments which are penetrated by blood or other potentially infectious materials shall be removed immediately or as soon as feasible. All PPE will be removed prior to leaving the work

area. When PPE is removed, it shall be placed in an appropriately designated area or container for storage, washing, decontamination or disposal.

**d. Gloves**

Gloves shall be worn where it is reasonably anticipated that student will have hand contact with blood, other potentially infectious materials, non-intact skin, and mucous membranes; when performing vascular access procedures and when handling or touching contaminated items or surfaces.

Disposable gloves used at clinical placement sites are not to be washed or decontaminated for re-use and are to be replaced as soon as practical when they become contaminated or as soon as feasible if they are torn, punctured, or when their ability to function as a barrier is compromised.

**e. Eye and Face Protection**

Masks in combination with eye protection devices, such as goggles or glasses with solid side shield, or chin length face shields, are required to be worn whenever splashes, spray, splatter, or droplets of blood or other potentially infectious materials may be generated and eye, nose, or mouth contamination can reasonably be anticipated. Situations at each clinical placement which would require such protection would be listed in each agency's policies.

**8. Housekeeping Procedures**

Each clinical site shall ensure the worksite is maintained in a clean and sanitary condition and meets the following. An appropriate written schedule for cleaning and method of decontamination is based upon the location within the facility, type or surface to be cleaned, type of soil present, and tasks or procedures being performed in the area.

All contaminated work surfaces will be decontaminated after completion of procedures and immediately or as soon as feasible after any spill of blood or other potentially infectious materials, as well as at the end of the work shift if the surface may have become contaminated since the last cleaning.

All bins, pails, cans, and similar receptacles shall be inspected and decontaminated on a regularly scheduled basis.

Any broken contaminated glassware will not be picked up directly with the hands. Dustpans and hand brooms or forceps/ tongs are available for use.

Reusable sharps that are contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials shall not be stored or processed in a manner that requires students to reach by hand into the containers where these sharps have been placed.

**9. Regulated Waste Disposal**

The second container shall be labeled or color coded to identify its contents. Reusable containers shall not be opened, emptied, or cleaned manually or in any other manner that would expose students to the risk of percutaneous injury. Disposal of all regulated waste shall be in accordance

with applicable federal, state and local regulations, and follow the USC Infectious Waste Management Plan.

#### **10. Disposable Sharps**

Contaminated sharps shall be discarded immediately or as soon as feasible in containers that are capable of being sealed, puncture resistant, leak proof on sides and bottom and labeled or color coded.

During use, containers for contaminated sharps shall be easily accessible to students and located as close as is feasible to the immediate area where sharps are used or can be reasonably anticipated to be found (e.g., laundries).

The containers shall be maintained upright throughout use and replaced routinely and not be allowed to overfill.

When moving containers of contaminated sharps from the area of use, the containers shall be closed immediately prior to removal or replacement to prevent spillage or protrusion of contents during handling, storage, transport, or shipping.

The container shall be placed in a secondary container if leakage of the primary container is possible. The second container shall be capable of being sealed, constructed to contain all contents and prevent leakage during handling, storage and transport, or shipping.

#### **11. Other Regulated Waste**

Other regulated waste shall be placed in containers that are closeable, constructed to contain all contents and prevent leakage of fluids during handling, storage, transportation or shipping. The waste must be labeled or color-coded and closed prior to removal to prevent spillage or protrusion of contents during handling, storage, transport, or shipping.

#### **12. Laundry Procedures**

Laundry contaminated with blood or other potentially infectious materials will be handled as little as possible and will not be sorted or rinsed in the area of use. Such laundry will be placed in appropriately marked (biohazard labeled, or color-coded red bag) bags at the location where it was used. Students should refer to each clinical site's policies on the handling of contaminated linen.

#### **13. Labels and Signs**

Each clinical site or lab shall ensure biohazard labels are affixed to containers of regulated wastes, refrigerators and freezers containing blood or other potentially infectious materials, and other containers used to store, transport, or ship blood, or other potentially infectious materials.

The universal biohazard symbol shall be fluorescent orange or orange-red. Red bags or containers may substitute for labels; however, regulated wastes must be handled in accordance with the rules and regulations of the organization having jurisdiction. (DHEC)

#### **14. Hepatitis B vaccines, Evaluation and Follow Up**

All Students, before beginning their clinical rotations, must complete the Hepatitis B vaccination series, show medical documentation of immunity status, or have a physicians' letter showing inability to take the vaccine. The vaccination series is available through private physicians, the

health department, or Thomson Student Health Center. No student will be allowed to continue clinical courses unless documentation of training and vaccination is proved to the Office of Academic Affairs.

It is recommended that a Hepatitis B antibody titer be drawn no sooner than 1 to 3 months after the last dose of vaccination series. If titer is negative, it is recommended that the series be repeated once.

#### **15. Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Protocol (Reviewed August 2017)**

This protocol applies to all USC Columbia campus employees, student employees and all other USC students who have an exposure to a potentially infectious biological material. A potentially infectious material or biological hazard may include an incident involving a microorganism (e.g. bacterial agent, viral agent, and fungal agent), human-derived material, biological toxin, or an incident involving recombinant DNA research. Exposures through sexual contact are not included in this protocol.

##### **Procedures for needle sticks or other exposure to a potentially infectious material:**

- Report the incident immediately to the supervisor and clinical faculty to authorize medical evaluation. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring students are offered immediate medical care, appropriate diagnostics and treatment.
  - Percutaneous Exposure (e.g., needle stick, cut, animal bite) – Immediately wash or flush the exposed area with soap and water for 10 minutes.
  - Mucous Membrane Exposure (i.e., eyes, nose or mouth) – Flush the exposed area with water. If exposure is to the eyes, flush eyes (holding open) using the eyewash station for 10 minutes.
  
- The student or supervisor should immediately notify the appropriate entity within the health care institution where the exposure occurs, in order to initiate testing of the “**source patient**” for HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C infection. It is **important for rapid HIV testing to be completed with results available within a few hours**. Each institution has its own procedures for obtaining “source patient” testing, and supervising faculty should know these procedures. If there is uncertainty about whom to contact within the host institution, instructions should be obtained from one or more of the following:
  - Employee health office
  - Charge nurse for the floor or unit where the exposure occurred
  - Infection control nurse
  - Administrative officer of the day
  - Clinic director (for outpatient sites)
  
- Once the necessary “source patient” testing has been ordered, seek medical treatment as soon as possible after the incident (see below for specific instructions)
  
- Notify Director of Student Affairs of incident at 803-608-7770 between the hours of 9am-9pm. Leave a message with return phone number if no answer. If no response within one hour, call the Office of Academic Affairs at 803-777-7412.

**During normal working hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm (excluding holidays):**

USC Columbia faculty, staff and students:

- Report immediately to USC’s Student Health Services for a confidential post-exposure evaluation and for assistance with any necessary referrals and appropriate follow-up care. Student Health Services is only equipped to provide medical evaluations for low risk and minor exposure incidents. Higher risk and more significant exposure incidents will be referred to the Palmetto Health ER.

**Lab exposures occurring outside normal working hours and on weekends or holidays:**

- In such a case, the student should seek guidance from the rotation supervisor and follow the policies of the institution or practice where he/she is rotating to ensure that “source patient” testing is performed and that appropriate post-exposure treatment is obtained, if needed. If HIV prophylaxis is needed, it is important that this be started as soon as possible, rather than delaying until the next day.
- Report to the Emergency Department at Palmetto Health Richland Hospital: USC main campus faculty/staff/students should then verify that USC’s Student Health Services is provided an incident report and any medical evaluation records. This report must include the date of the incident, person involved and their supervisor, nature and consequences of the incident, root cause, and a description of the material/hazard involved.

**Procedures for faculty/staff/student exposures occurring in facilities outside Columbia, SC:**

**(Note: This guidance applies to personnel participating in academic training at an area hospital or facility.)**

- Go to a designed medical facility in your area and complete an **Employee Injury Report [pdf]**. Turn your Employee Injury Report form into your clinical instructor.
- Notify your supervisor, clinical instructor and Director of Student Affairs.
- Clinical instructors will need to submit the signed Employee Injury report along with a **Supervisors Report [pdf]** to the Director of Student Affairs within 7 days for submission to the Benefits Office.
- The Benefits Office must report this injury to the S.C. Workers' Compensation Commission within 10 days. Failure to submit within 7 days may result in student responsibility for services granted.

**Authorized Treatment Facilities**

You must receive medical treatment for work related injuries at the medical facility designated for your campus:

**USC Columbia**

Student Health Center\*  
1409 Devine Street  
Columbia, S.C. 29208

803-777-3957

\*located in the Thomson Building behind the Russell House, Greene Street

### **Other USC Campuses**

Contact [workers' compensation designated medical facilities \[pdf\]](#) for an approved facility near you.

All exposure incidents in the clinical agencies and the client-simulated laboratory (CSL) shall be reported, investigated, and documented. If an exposure occurs and there is no faculty present, the student must notify faculty and/or the Office of Academic Affairs as soon as possible.

Workers' Compensation covers the following populations who experience a bloodborne pathogen exposure while working or at clinical if, appropriate reports are filed:

- All university employees and apprenticeship students in the Colleges of Education, Exercise Science, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physical Therapy, and Social Work.
- Work study students and graduate assistants who are exposed while on the job.

Students who suffer a **Non-Job Related/Non clinical related Blood borne Pathogen Exposure** during an enrolled academic session:

- Should report to the Student Health Services for initial evaluation and referral. If the SHC is closed, students may seek care at the Palmetto Richland Hospital Emergency Department. If away from Columbia area, the student should report to the nearest hospital emergency department.

### **16. Information and Training**

The College of Nursing will require training for Bloodborne pathogens for all nursing Students to include:

- a. An explanation of the methods of transmission of bloodborne pathogens;
- b. An explanation of the modes of transmission of bloodborne pathogens;
- c. The recognition of tasks what would involve potential exposure;
- d. An explanation to the use and limitations of methods to reduce exposure, for example engineering controls, work practices and PPE;
- e. Information of the types, uses, locations, removal, handling, decontamination, and disposal of PPE;
- f. Information on the Hepatitis B Vaccine, including efficacy, safety, method of administration, benefits, and where it may be obtained;
- g. Information on the appropriate actions to take and persons to contact in an emergency involving blood and other potentially infectious materials;
- h. An explanation of the procedures to follow if an exposure incident occurs including the method of reporting and medical follow up;
- i. Information of the evaluation and follow-up suggested after an exposure incident;
- j. An explanation of the signs, labels, and color-coding system.
- k. College of Nursing Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Protocol.

## **17. Evaluation and Review**

The Safety Committee is responsible for annually reviewing this policy and procedures and its effectiveness and for updating the program as needed.

### **Safe Practice Guidelines**

All students of the College of Nursing shall follow all of the rules, regulations and guidelines on the institution in which they are providing patient care. All students will practice “Universal Precautions” when dealing with patients. Universal Precautions consist of the following:

- a. All students should routinely use appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids of any patient is anticipated. Gloves should be worn when any potential exists for contact with blood and body fluids, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin of all patients, for handling items or surfaced soiled with blood or body fluids, and for performing venipuncture and other vascular access procedures. Glove should be changed after contact with each patient and hands are to be washed. Masks and protective eye wear or face shields should be worn during procedures that are likely to involve droplets of blood or other body fluids. Gowns should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate splashes of blood or other body fluids.
- b. Hands and other skins surfaced should be washed immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed and before contact with patients.
- c. All students should take precautions to prevent injuries cause by needles scalpels, and other sharp instruments of devices during procedures, when cleaning used instruments, during disposal of used needles, and when handling sharp instruments after procedures. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringes, or otherwise manipulated by hand. When possible, needle-less alternatives should be utilized. After use sharps should be placed in puncture-resistant container for disposal.
- d. Mouth-to-mouth resuscitation devices should be available in areas in which the need for resuscitation is possible.
- e. Students who have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis should refrain from all direct patient care and from handling patient-care equipment until the condition resolves.
- f. Students with pink sclera and/or drainage from eyes should seek medical care and diagnosis prior to any contact with patients or patient-care equipment.
- g. Students with a fever greater than 100 F should seek medical care and diagnosis prior to any patient contact.
- h. Students with active vomiting or diarrhea should refrain from all direct patient care.

## APPENDIX G

### UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA COLLEGE OF NURSING

#### Undergraduate Student Grievance Policy-Academic

The purpose of this policy is to inform students of their rights and responsibilities regarding the academic issues cited below.

1. **Protection of freedom of expression.** Students should be free to take reasoned exceptions to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. They are responsible, however, for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.
2. **Protection against improper academic evaluation.** Students should have protection, through orderly procedures, against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.
3. **Protection against improper disclosure.** Information about student views, beliefs, and political associations which professors acquire in the course of their work as instructors, advisors, and counselors should be considered as confidential. Protection against improper disclosure is a serious professional obligation. Judgments about a student's ability and character may be disclosed under appropriate circumstances, normally with the knowledge and consent of the student.

#### Student Grievance Process

If a student perceives that any of the protections described above have been violated, the student should initiate resolution through the following channels and in the sequence indicated.

1. Discuss the issue with the faculty member involved in the alleged violation. The discussion must take place within 30 calendar days after the end of the semester during which the alleged incident occurred. If the complaint is not resolved with the faculty involved:
2. Notify the Director of Student Affairs (Director), who will explain the grievance policy and the student's rights and responsibilities. The Director will assist the student in completing a written narrative describing the alleged violation of the protections described above. The narrative must contain the nature of the problem or complaint, reasonable evidence to support the case, background material, and a description of what has been done to resolve the problem.
3. Meet with the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies (Assistant Dean) and submit the written narrative describing the alleged violation. The Assistant Dean will send to the student a written response within 10 regular working days following the meeting. If, after receiving the Assistant Dean's response, the complaint is not resolved to the aggrieved student's satisfaction, the student must notify the Assistant Dean within 10 working days of receiving the letter and request a grievance

hearing. The Assistant Dean will appoint an Ad Hoc Grievance Committee of four faculty members, one of whom will serve as chair, and three students to conduct the grievance hearing. The grievance hearing will be held within 10 regular working days of the student's request. The Assistant Dean will distribute the written narrative of the student's grievance to the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee and the faculty alleged to have caused the violation at the time of appointment to the Ad Hoc Committee.

4. Attend the grievance hearing and present the alleged violation(s) to the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee and answer questions. The faculty member(s) who is alleged to have caused the grievance has the right to be present during all presentations of evidence to the Committee. The student and the faculty member may call witnesses. However, the Chair of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee must be notified in writing at least 24 hours before the hearing of the names of all witnesses and the reason each witness has been called.

It is the responsibility of the student and the faculty member, respectively, to arrange for the appearance of witnesses. The Assistant Dean may not attend the grievance hearing.

The Ad Hoc Grievance Committee must schedule a hearing; inform the faculty involved in writing and schedule his/her appearances at the hearing; maintain accurate, confidential records of the case; conduct the hearing in a fair and impartial manner; and inform the student and the faculty member(s) of the decision within two regular working days of the hearing.

## Appeal

1. Undergraduate students may file an appeal of the decision of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee within ten working days of receipt of the finding of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee to the Dean of the College of Nursing. The appeal must be based upon procedural error that resulted in a biased decision; newly discovered evidence; or upon the fact that the penalty imposed is not appropriate to the violation.

2. If the Dean finds merit in any of the above claims, the Dean will appoint a new Ad Hoc Grievance Committee, which will conduct a new grievance hearing. If the Dean does not find merit to the student's claims, the finding(s) of the Ad Hoc Grievance Committee will be upheld. The decision of the Dean is final.

3. A faculty member who feels aggrieved as a result of student grievance proceedings have the right to appear before the University Faculty Grievance Committee and present his/her case to the Committee. The process is described in the Faculty Manual.

Approved by Student Affairs Committee 9-01-06

APPENDIX H

University of South Carolina  
College of Nursing

STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY/WAIVER OF LIABILITY (APPROVED 2/22/05)

In consideration of my (self, son, daughter) being permitted to participate as a student in the \_\_\_\_\_ activity/program administered by the University of South Carolina College of Nursing, I hereby certify that I understand and agree with the following terms of my participation in the program and I do hereby release the College of Nursing and University of South Carolina from liability and assume the risk and financial responsibilities as follows:

1. I understand that I am subject to all laws of the state I am traveling in/to. I agree to conduct myself in a manner that will comply with the regulations of the College of Nursing and University of South Carolina including but not limited to the Student Code of Conduct.
2. I understand that I am financially responsible for any personal health and or hospitalization needs during my participation in the stated activity/program.
3. I agree to carry vehicle collision and/or bodily injury liability insurance on my personal vehicle if utilized in this activity/program. I understand that the College of Nursing and University of South Carolina is not responsibility for any damages or injuries related to travel to or from the stated activity/program.
4. I expressly understand and agree to hold harmless the College of Nursing and the University of South Carolina, their agents, affiliates, officers and employees from any and all claims and causes of action for damage to or loss of property, personal illness or injury or death arising out of my participation in this program.

*I have read and understand the above provisions and agree to be bound thereby.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

If the above-signed is not 18 years of age at the date of the signing, this form must also be signed by the participant's parent or legal guardian below.

***As the parent or legal guardian of the participant whose signature appears above, I have read and understand the conditions outlined above, have given my child or ward permission to participate in the program, and agree to be bound by the conditions outline above as if I myself had signed above.***

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

APPENDIX I

COLLEGE OF NURSING  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
COLUMBIA CAMPUS

REQUEST FOR APPROVAL OF SEMESTER HOURS OVERLOAD

PRINT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SSN: \_\_\_\_\_

The College of Nursing rules provide that a student may not take more than **18 hours** in any semester or more than **6 hours** in any summer session without the advance approval of the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies.

SEMESTER: Year \_\_\_\_\_ Fall \_\_\_\_\_ Spring \_\_\_\_\_ Summer \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE(S) REQUESTED FOR OVERLOAD	CREDIT HOURS

Please list the courses in which you are currently enrolled (your schedule without the course(s) from above):

COURSES	CREDIT HOURS

Total hours (all courses including overload request) \_\_\_\_\_ Current GPA \_\_\_\_\_

**Note: taking an overload each semester is not a means for accelerated graduation and is not without academic risk.**

Student's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Please return completed form to the College of Nursing, WMBB Room 208, or fax to (803)777-0616.

APPENDIX J

COLLEGE OF NURSING  
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form

I acknowledge that I have read the entire College of Nursing

Undergraduate Student Handbook: \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial here

Graduate Student Handbook: \_\_\_\_\_  
Initial here

I understand that I am responsible for the policies and procedures stipulated in this handbook.

If I have questions, I will contact the appropriate College of Nursing representative.

Student Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

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