



## Western Connecticut State University

### STUDENT POLICIES GOVERNING ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNDERGRADUATE BACCALAUREATE NURSING PROGRAM

1. These policies are consistent with and supplementary to policies in the current
  - **WCSU Student Handbook**
  - **Undergraduate University Catalog**
  - **Nursing Department Website**
  - **Nursing Page for Undergraduate Catalog.**
2. The provisions of this **Nursing Manual** are not to be regarded as an irrevocable contract between the Department of Nursing and the student. The Department reserves the right to change any provision of any requirement at any time. Students will be notified in writing of such changes within a reasonable time frame. Students are expected to adhere to the most recent updated policies.

*Reviewed by Student Committee September 2018.*  
Approved by Student Committee April 2019.  
Department of Nursing Reviewed & Approved May 2019.

## **Department of Nursing Vision and Mission**

The Department of Nursing aspires to become a model for excellence in teaching both the art and science of nursing.

The Department of Nursing's mission is to provide a nursing education that is aimed at preparing beginning and advanced practice nurses to meet the ever-changing health care needs of Connecticut and the surrounding region. This achieved through:

- A dynamic curriculum that is responsive to students and community needs;
- Clinical competence, scholarship and research;
- Service to the university, the public and the profession;
- Accommodation of diverse values and interests;
- A commitment to a caring culture

The Nursing Department faculty are experts in their fields, with advanced professional degrees from leading educational institutions, as well as specialty certification where appropriate.

**Western Connecticut State University**  
**School of Professional Studies**  
**Department of Nursing**  
**Philosophy**

The Department of Nursing functions within the context of the University mission: to provide an academic environment for learning, research, and service. The faculty of the Department of Nursing prepares students for beginning and advanced professional nursing practice in an environment characterized by constant change. Students gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable them to provide professional nursing care to all segments of the population and so contribute to the improved health care of society. The baccalaureate program in nursing is built upon a broad foundation in the arts, sciences, and humanities. This foundation of liberal arts and science studies helps students to develop human values and a sense of social responsibility.... In providing professional nursing education, the faculty strive to create learning environments that are conducive to optimum learning while remaining responsive to students' unique individual past experiences and present needs.

The faculty believe that basic and applied research in nursing and the broader health care field guides and supports advances and refinements in the practice of nursing. Therefore, the faculty support the research efforts of their colleagues, utilize extant research in their teaching, and foster students' development of skills as beginning researchers and as critical consumers of the research literature....

The faculty further believe, that nursing is a human service that is distinct from the institutional contexts in which it is provided. As a human service, nursing must be responsive to the society in which it is practiced, extending into the community to meet the nursing needs of individuals and families wherever they are found. Therefore, the faculty place strong emphasis on the family and community as recipients of nursing services, utilize an array of community resources to foster learning and promote students' awareness of the broader health care needs of society, and provide direct and indirect nursing services to the community in an effort to contribute to society and enhance professional skills.

### **The Nature of Nursing Practice**

The faculty believe that professional nursing practice comprises its content (health-illness as a continuum, adaptation as the response to shifts along that continuum), its subject (man, family, community, society), its processes (synthesis of knowledge; critical thinking in the use of the nursing process; therapeutic nursing interventions; communication; teaching-learning processes; research; management of information and resources; leadership, management, and collaboration; independent action, ethical judgment, and advocacy for clients; and accountability), and its context (health care delivery system). The purpose of nursing is to assist clients to restore, improve, or maintain the optimal health status of which they are capable.

Health is the individual's ability to meet basic human needs and to successfully adapt, physiologically and behaviorally, to a continuously changing internal and external environment. Health exists on a continuum with illness, which is defined as the individual's inability to use normal adaptive responses to meet human needs. Illness interferes with the ability to function as an individual and limits one's contribution to society. Death is the endpoint of the health-illness continuum, and is defined as the cessation of life processes.

Man is a holistic, biopsychosocial being who possesses intellect, will, decision-making capacities, integrity, dignity, and an inherent worth as an individual and who is in constant interaction with a changing environment. Through the processes of physical, psychological, and social growth and development, man learns to adapt to changes in the internal and external environments while maintaining a unique individuality. The family is an extension of the individual, sharing the capacity for health, illness, and adaptive response to change, and having an impact on the individual's basic needs and adaptive responses, whether traditional or non-traditional in its structure, the family is a constituent of society that is common to all individuals.

The community is composed of family groups that interact with each other and with the environment, forming segments of a complex, pluralistic society. Society is the totality of relationships among individuals, families, and communities that serve to guide human interactions.

Nursing is an essential human service in which its practitioners assist clients to meet basic needs by eliciting, supporting, and augmenting their adaptive responses. Nurses assist individuals and their families to achieve and maintain optimum health, to correct maladaptive behavior, and to cope with the experiences of illness and death. Nursing has as its scope the full range of the health-illness continuum as experienced by individuals at any stage along the entire life span.

Nursing has as its goal the promotion of health and the fostering of the independent functioning of individuals within society. Nurses utilize the nursing process as a systematic method of collecting, organizing, and interpreting information needed to identify and respond to health problems and evaluate the outcomes of planned interventions. Nurses utilize a variety of communication techniques, both oral and written, in providing comprehensive nursing care to individual clients, families, and groups within the community. Nurses also utilize the processes of teaching, scientific inquiry, and systems and resource management to support and augment nursing care delivery. Nurses collaborate with other health care providers in the delivery of health services. In the course of such collaboration nurses exercise independent functions, in which they remain autonomous and accountable for nursing judgments, decisions, and actions; interdependent functions, in which they share with others in planning and executing care for clients; and dependent functions, in which they perform activities delegated by other health professionals. Nurses assume leadership roles in the delivery of health services by seeking solutions to identified problems, initiating changes needed to improve health care delivery, directing and motivating personnel who perform delegated nursing functions, and fostering the continued growth and development of nursing professionals and the nursing profession.... Nurses are social activists who utilize their distinctive knowledge and skills and their position in society to improve the human condition. Nurses serve as advocates for consumers of health care to improve the quality of the services they receive and to influence the formulation and implementation of coherent and humane health care policies. Nurses promote the interests of the nursing profession to improve professional nursing practice, increase the public's access to alternative health care services, and ensure economic support for health care. Nurses develop a personal and social conscience that serves as guide to decision making in complex ethical situations, considering the legal and humane aspects of each encounter. Nurses are responsible citizens who exercise their right and obligation to participate in the process of democratic government.

The health care delivery system is the context within which nursing is practiced. That system is influenced by myriad social, political, legal, and economic forces and by the constancy

of change. Recent changes that have had a major impact on the health care delivery system, and therefore on nursing practice, include technological advances, alternative patterns of health care financing, and shifting sociodemographic characteristics of the nation's people. In responding to these and other forces, the health care delivery system is itself in constant flux and evolution....

### Professional Nursing Education

The faculty believe that professional nursing education also comprises its content (liberal arts, sciences, and humanities; foundational sciences; nursing theory and practice), its subject (nature of the student), its processes (theoretical, applied), and its context (university, community). The purpose of professional nursing education is to prepare beginning and advanced nursing practitioners who are broadly educated, well informed, contributing members of society who are able to provide competent and creative nursing care in the future, and to continue to learn throughout a lifetime of practice.

The content of basic education for professional nursing has three distinct components. Studies of man and his relationships with the physical, cultural, social, and humanistic environments in which he functions provide the student with an understanding of man as a biopsychosocial being with needs, beliefs, and desires that hold meaning for him and an awareness of man as an integral part of a family, a community, and society. Studies in definitive behavioral and physical sciences serve as a foundation to nursing content by providing the student with an understanding of the essential facts and theories and the prevailing modes of inquiry of nursing's supporting disciplines. Studies in the theory and practice of nursing introduce the student to the art and science of nursing, which inform the utilization of the nursing process with individuals, families, and community groups in a variety of settings. Further, studies in professional nursing provide the student with beginning skills in client teaching, nursing research, nursing care management, collaboration, leadership, change agency, and advocacy.

As is the client of nursing, the student of nursing is a holistic, biopsychosocial being, possessing intellect, will, decision-making capacities, integrity, dignity, and an inherent worth as an individual. The student of nursing shares with other learners a quest for knowledge that is broad and humanizing as well as specifically applicable to a selected career. While progressing through the baccalaureate program, student experiences a shift from observer of nursing care to implementer of care to initiator of care. With these shifts the student develops the ability to think critically, to make knowledgeable decisions, and to act with increasing independence in the design and delivery of nursing care. Competency-based testing of existing knowledge and skills brought to the learning situation provides a mechanism for recognizing past experiences without requiring their repetition....

As a human service, nursing has both theoretical and applied content that constitute the art and science of nursing. Therefore, the process of professional nursing education combines these aspects to provide opportunities for students to master the facts and principles underlying nursing practice, the technical skills through which nursing practice is implemented, and the artistic sensitivity and responsiveness to human needs that characterize professional nursing. No one component is valued more highly than the other, for there is no art that is not rooted in science and no application of science without the technical and artistic skills of practice.

The university and the community provide the contexts for professional nursing education. The university provides a climate of support for intellectual growth and development, the academic and social setting within which teaching and learning proceed, and the resources used to conduct educational, research, and service endeavors. Its faculties join together in

pursuit of a common ideal, the creation and communication of knowledge, supporting one another's efforts. The community houses those institutions and agencies in which the practice component of nursing education occurs. Here, nurses and other health care professionals join with the nursing faculty to provide opportunities for students to gain skill in the delivery of nursing care to actual clients in realistic settings. The presence of nursing students and faculty in these institutions and agencies stimulates the continued professional growth of the nurses who work in these settings, improving health care delivery in the community.

### **Teaching and Learning in Nursing Education**

The faculty believe that learning is the dynamic process of insight development and that teaching is the process by which students are helped to develop relevant insights. Although this view conceptualizes learning as a largely cognitive phenomenon, the faculty recognize that learning is also behavioral in nature as well as dependent on context for meaning. Thus, the faculty are sensitive to and respectful of the varied ways in which people learn, and utilize a variety of teaching methods based on content demands and learner characteristics.

Within the undergraduate nursing curriculum, three curricular frameworks organize and guide the progressive development of nursing knowledge and skills. The critical thinking continuum, which sequences thinking as involving, progressively, (1) transfer and application, (2) analysis, (3) synthesis, and (4) evaluation of knowledge and skills to new situations, guides the sequencing of content from concrete to abstract. A second framework involves the consideration of relatively simple health problem – existing as a single problem – to complex, multiple, and interacting health problems. The third framework concerns the contexts of practice, and progresses from highly structured environments, where support and guidance are available, to the relatively unstructured environments that occur in the community setting.

The climate for learning is one of respect for differences among learners and the ways in which they learn. Teaching-learning activities are designed to enable students to achieve the objectives of the program in ways that enhance their learning. The faculty believe that the opportunity to study nursing should be made available to qualified or qualifiable students regardless of any inherent difference among them. Thus, the program in nursing welcomes traditional and nontraditional students, minorities and males, nurses seeking to shift career direction and those seeking to advance within established nursing careers by securing a baccalaureate or master's degree in nursing. In keeping with this diversity of students, the faculty provides options for flexibility in the ways and time frames for meeting the objectives of professional nursing education.

The faculty believes that the graduate of the baccalaureate program in nursing is prepared to meet the needs and challenges of an ever-changing society and to grow as a health care provider and as a contributing member of the society.

## **BS PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

- 1). Synthesize knowledge** from the arts, sciences, and humanities with nursing theory as the basis for making nursing proactive decisions.
- 2). Exercise critical thinking** in using the nursing process to assess, diagnose, plan, implement, and evaluate the care provided to individuals, families and communities
- 3). Apply the nursing process** to design, implement, and evaluate therapeutic nursing interventions to provide preventive, curative, supportive, and restorative care for individuals, families, and communities in both structures and unstructured settings, using a variety of techniques.
- 4). Use a variety of communication techniques**, including written documentation, in the process of assessment, counseling, and therapeutic interventions with individual clients, families, groups and communities.
- 5). Develop and implement a variety of teaching-learning strategies** in the provision of health teaching for individuals, families, and groups in a variety of settings.
- 6). Use the process of scientific inquiry and research findings** to improve nursing care delivery.
- 7). Manage information, human resources, and material resources** to achieve optimum client outcomes in a cost-effective manner.
- 8). Use leadership, management, and collaborative skills** as a member of a multidisciplinary team within the health care delivery system to develop implement, and evaluate health care provided to clients.
- 9). Exercise independent judgment and ethical decision-making**, and act as an advocate for consumers of health care services.
- 10). Demonstrate accountability** in learning and in nursing actions, based on accepted standards of nursing care and in accordance of professional nursing practice.

**Reviewed and approved 5-18-17**

## I. ATTENDANCE/COMMUNICATION

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

Attendance and punctuality align with professional accountability. Students are expected to be prepared for all classroom, laboratory, simulation or clinical settings prior to scheduled sessions, and to be respectful of their peers and faculty. Students not prepared for class, laboratory, simulation and or clinical setting may be issued a Clinical Warning. No electronic communication devices (i.e. cell phones, pagers, iPods, laptops, recording devices, etc.) are allowed to be "on" in inpatient clinical settings or during class or laboratory except at the discretion of the clinical or classroom instructor. Students may be asked to put away electronic communication devices during class, clinical or laboratory experiences. Computers used in the class or laboratory experiences must be used for class work only. Students are expected to regularly check their WCSU email account for course related information and correspondence. Personal email accounts are not to be used for course communication.

### A. Class Attendance

Class attendance is expected in all courses in order to meet the learning objectives. The instructor will advise the students of the attendance policy during the first week of the semester in the course outline and clinical syllabus. The syllabus will provide information about the inclusion of attendance in grading criteria.

B. Laboratory/Clinical Attendance (Clinical site experiences: both on site and alternate experiences) is mandatory. Simulation experiences are considered clinical experiences and the following expectations for clinical and laboratory also apply to simulation. Clinical and/or laboratory experiences may be scheduled during the day, evening, on occasion at night. Clinical and or laboratory experiences may also be scheduled during weekends. Clinical placements are made by the WCSU Undergraduate Coordinator and Department Chair. Clinical placements are based on clinical site and faculty availability. Students are expected to attend all laboratory and clinical hours.

Students are responsible and accountable to the consumers and to the providers of healthcare. Students must also be able to show growth and progress towards meeting laboratory and clinical objectives in order to be successful. Students will not be able to meet the objectives if they do not attend scheduled laboratory, and clinical sessions. Therefore, laboratory/clinical attendance is required.

Students must arrive 15 minutes prior to the assigned hour and remain for the scheduled time unless excused by the laboratory/clinical lab faculty. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the clinical instructor in advance of any absence. The Undergraduate Coordinator and

Department Chair must be notified of excessive absences. (If a student will be out sick for an extended period of time-they may need to be cleared to come back to clinical-see below).

In the event of communicable illness or injury the student should notify the instructor as soon as possible. If ill or injured, students should not attend clinical. If there is a communicable illness, injury, and or disability occurrence students should be evaluated to return to clinical by a health care provider as this would be a change to the student's health status. A healthcare provider note and or health clearance form stating that the student is able to attend clinical without restrictions in the laboratory/clinical area will be required. This documentation should be made available to all parties, Department Chair, Undergraduate Coordinator, Clinical instructor and student. Students must be compliant with the technical standards in order to complete the nursing program.

- Department Chair and Undergraduate Coordinator must be aware when student is exposed to COVID and or tests positive for COVID concerning clinical and lab. The Department of Nursing must adhere to current agency and or school COVID policy.

C. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate with faculty using the school email system. Only the school email system should be used to communicate with faculty.

**Students are not expected to attend clinical and will inform their instructor if they have:**

- A fever (temperature above 100 F or 38 C). Students must be fever free for 24 hours before returning to the laboratory/clinical setting without the use of antipyretic medications prior to returning to the clinical area.
- An open wound, a draining wound, or undiagnosed skin rash to an exposed skin area
- Experienced vomiting and/or diarrhea within the last 24 hours
- Impaired judgement, drowsiness, inability to drive or perform safely in the clinical area due to the effects of prescription or nonprescription medications.
- Less than 24 hours of antibiotic therapy subsequent to a diagnosis of a communicable bacterial infection
- Exposed herpes lesions

**In the case of unavoidable illness or emergency:**

Students are responsible for notifying the clinical agency and clinical instructor when an absence or lateness is unavoidable. Clinical instructors will notify the Undergraduate Coordinator and the Department Chair of unexcused absences, illnesses and emergencies. Students are responsible for arranging laboratory or clinical make up with the laboratory/clinical faculty before the end of their clinical rotation. Any clinical absence jeopardizes the achievement of course and program objectives. Unexcused absences or failure to notify instructor, will result in clinical warning and/or clinical failure. Excessive absences may result in course failure.

## Attendance due to weather related issues:

Clinical faculty will make decisions when clinical experiences will be cancelled for inclement weather. The student must create an account with opt in for safety through the university in order for the student to receive notifications about university closings due to inclement weather. If the university is closed, there is no clinical. If the university opening is delayed, the student must follow the directions of the clinical instructor. If the student is already in the clinical area during a delayed opening or early closure the student will follow the directions of the clinical instructor. Students should consider their own personal safety when driving to and from clinical settings and are responsible for notifying clinical faculty and agency of any absence due to inclement weather.

## II. CLINICAL PRACTICE

It is the responsibility of the student to obtain all necessary supplies, equipment, uniforms and mandatory computer programs for clinical. The expenses for these items are the responsibility of the student. This section will provide an overview of some of the expenses related to participation in clinical. All items must be purchased prior to the start of the clinical experience.

### A. Malpractice Insurance/Licensure

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

RN-BS students must maintain and provide documentation of current RN licensure in Connecticut

### B. Health Insurance

Students must carry their own health insurance.

### C. CPR: Cardio Pulmonary Certification/Recertification

Current Healthcare Provider Basic Life Support (adult/child/infant with defibrillator) CPR certification is required for students to attend any clinical experience. Evidence of CPR certification must be provided to CastleBranch by June 1<sup>st</sup> or students cannot begin clinical during the Spring semester of the sophomore year. CastleBranch requires a copy of the front & back of the card and the card must be signed. The renewal date will be set two years from the issuing date. This testing is available through the American Red Cross (CPR/AED for Professional Rescuer) or American Heart Association (CPR/AED for Health Care Providers). You must choose an onsite course with skill performance. Proof of CPR must be uploaded to Castlebranch, only then can students be cleared by the undergraduate coordinator to attend clinical at

participating agencies. Failure to be CPR re-certified as one moves through program, may result in a clinical warning and the student will **NOT** be able to attend clinical.

D. Students are required to read the CHA (Connecticut Hospital Association) Student Orientation Curriculum Guide and pass the post-test annually. Upload proof to CastleBranch and bring a copy to the clinical instructor for review. Faculty will review and grade completed quiz. Link to test: <https://www.chime.org/education/ct-health-and-safety-training-course/>

E. Technical Standards

In order to be successful in the WCSU Nursing program, students must be able to meet the following technical standards and these standards must be continuously assessed. Students in the nursing program must have the ability and skills in the following domains: observational/communication ability, motor ability, intellectual/conceptual ability, and behavioral, interpersonal, and emotional ability. Students must be able to independently, with or without accommodation in order to meet the following technical standards:

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

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

**Motor Ability – Nursing students must be able to:**

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

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

- Problem solve, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize data in order to make decisions, often in a time urgent environment

- Incorporate, apply and synthesize new information from teachers, peers, and the nursing literature
- Interpret and respond appropriately to data from electronic and other monitoring devices

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

- Tolerate physically taxing workloads and function effectively during stressful situations
- Display flexibility and adaptability in the work environment
- Function in cases of uncertainty that are inherent in clinical situations involving patients/clients
- Possess the skills required for full utilization of the student’s intellectual abilities
- Exercise stable and sound reasoning in the clinical setting
- Establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with others from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds
- Accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical setting

See Technical Standards form located on Nursing website. <https://www.wcsu.edu/nursing/forms/>

**F. Background Checks, Drug Testing, and Fingerprinting**

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

Most agencies providing clinical practice experiences require that students undergo a criminal background check before commencing the clinical practice experience. Background check will be administered through CastleBranch. Must be completed by June 1st. The results of the background check will be released to the agencies where clinical experiences are planned. In addition, some clinical agencies may require additional requirements that will be a financial cost to the student.

The results of a student's criminal background check may prevent a student from commencing or completing a clinical placement. Failure to complete all required clinical placements will prevent a student from graduating from the Nursing Program at WCSU.

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

Additional background and fingerprinting may be required for specific Health Care Agencies and at an additional cost to the student.

Certain agencies also may require urine or blood drug screening. Students will be notified of the process upon agency request via WCSU student email. This is also an additional cost to students. Students must pass the urine drug screening in order to attend clinical. There may be instances when drug testing needs to be repeated. This cost burden falls to the student and must be completed in a timely fashion otherwise attendance of clinical will be prohibited.

#### G. Health Requirements

The following is a list of items required by clinical placement agencies, which must be on file with CastleBranch for students to attend clinical. The student is responsible for the cost of obtaining the necessary health documentation. Health requirements must be submitted by June 1st. Students will be cleared to attend clinical by the coordinator only when this information is uploaded to with CastleBranch at <https://www.castlebranch.com/sign-in>. Students will be removed from nursing courses if they do not submit required health and or clinical requirements by June 1st. **Failure to comply with health documentation via the CastleBranch system will result in a clinical warning and will result in the student not being able to attend clinical.**

##### 1. Physical Examination:

A complete physical examination is required every 2 years. The physical must be performed by a licensed MD, DO, PA or APRN and must be documented on the form provided on the nursing website.

##### 2. Tuberculosis Screening (Annual):

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

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

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

3. Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR):

- All students must provide documentation of a vaccinations or a positive MMR titer.
- For negative or equivocal results on MMR titer, students will refer to their CastleBranch account for instructions

4. Varicella:

- All students must provide medical documentation of evidence of disease (positive Varicella titer) or vaccine record of a positive Varicella titer.
- In the event of negative or equivocal results on Varicella titer, students will refer to their CastleBranch account for instructions

5. Hepatitis B (Hep B):

- All students must provide documentation of a positive Hepatitis B titer
- For negative or equivocal results on Hepatitis B titer, students will refer to their CastleBranch account for instructions
- Students who decline the Hepatitis B vaccine must provide a signed Declination Form
- Clinical agencies may prohibit a student from certain clinical activities if the student has declined Hepatitis B vaccinations

6. Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap):

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

7. Influenza:
  - All students must provide annual documentation of current influenza vaccination during the current flu season, which is identified by the Connecticut Department of Health as August 1st – March 31st. Students will upload documentation of the influenza vaccine by mid October. This requirement date may change if clinical agencies state they want to have the vaccine earlier than Oct.
8. COVID vaccine #1, #2, and Booster is required prior to going to Clinical. Follow the CDC and Department of Public Health recommendations for clinical setting.
9. Additional Clinical and Health Requirements per agency requirements:
  - Clinical and health requirements are subject to change at any time depending on CDC or the CT Department of Public health recommendations as well as any requirements established by our affiliating clinical agencies.
10. Costs:
  - The student is responsible for all costs associated with the clinical and health requirements.

## II A. STUDENT BEHAVIORS

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

### Students Clinical Expectations:

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

8. Demonstrates adequate preparation for clinical responsibilities
9. Works in collaboration with team members and agencies

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

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

Infractions related to the aforementioned behaviors may also result in civil, federal or state penalties.

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

1. Unsafe practice, in any form, results in Disciplinary Action.
2. A student will be suspended from the clinical experience immediately if, in the professional judgment of a faculty member, the student has demonstrated unsafe practice in a clinical/laboratory area or exhibited unprofessional behavior.
  - The faculty member, as the primary clinical instructor, who suspended the student will immediately notify the Undergraduate Coordinator and Chairperson of the DON.
  - It is understood that the primary clinical instructor is solely responsible for evaluating the student and assigning the student grade for the clinical experience. The Undergraduate

Coordinator and Chair of the DON, serves as a forum for record keeping and notice to the student and is not responsible for grading the student. The clinical faculty member is responsible for notifying the student of the grade for clinical.

- In the event a student demonstrates unsafe practice in the clinical setting the agency standards may take precedence over the Department of Nursing guidelines
- The students have the right to appeal the final course grade (see WCSU Student Handbook)

### III. Dress Code

All students are expected to be professionally attired in lab and clinical and will be guided by faculty and/or agency expectations. Students must order WCSU nursing department approved scrubs. These specific styles are associated with the WCSU nursing program.

1. White scrub top, White lab coat, and Navy-blue scrub pants. Students must order uniforms from the company designated by the Department of Nursing. Each lab coat and or scrub top must have the WCSU nursing program shield to the left arm (can be purchased at the bookstore). Each scrub top and or lab coat must be embroidered in navy with Western CT State University and Nursing Student. Details for embroidering is provided in NUR 205 Fundamentals of Nursing Class as a handout and can be requested from the Undergraduate Coordinator.
2. Clean plain white nursing shoes and or sneakers can be worn. No other colors or detailing. No sandals, open backed or open-weave clogs.
3. A white name pin with navy blue lettering can be ordered from the bookstore on campus. Details for the name pin are provided in the handout given in NUR 205 Fundamentals of Nursing Class. There are three lines on the name pin: Western CT State University, Your Name, and Student Nurse. This can be obtained at the bookstore.
4. Students are required to wear a picture ID when participating in clinical practice, as required by Connecticut regulations. If a picture ID is not provided by the clinical agency, the WCSU picture ID is required.
5. Community and psychiatric clinical experience dress code is individualized and determined by the agency's policies. Students must contact with Community and Psychiatric Nursing Faculty for information about specifics for these rotations.
6. A watch with a second hand, black or blue ink pen, and stethoscope are required. A Sphygmomanometer may be required for some clinical experiences.

7. Jewelry is limited to one pair of stud ear earrings and a wedding band. No other visible body piercing or jewelry is allowed. Facial piercings including visible tongue rings must be removed. Gauges must be removed.
8. Visible tattoos must be covered.
9. Hair is to be secured away from the face and off the shoulders. Hair needs to be secured by a hair clip, braiding, and or hair tie. Long hair must be up and off shoulders securely fastened. Hair must also be of natural color. Blond, brown, black, and red. Artificial rainbow hair coloring is not permitted.
10. Beards and mustaches must be neatly trimmed or students must be clean shaven (except for religious or cultural practices). Students must be neatly groomed.
11. Perfumes and colognes are not worn in the clinical settings. Strong or noxious odors can be traumatic for patients (vomiting, allergy sensitives, etc.).
12. Fingernails must be short/active length. Artificial nails (acrylic) and coloring are prohibited as these are infection control breeches. Long nails may injure a patient.
13. Make up must be neutral and not pose a distraction or health hazard.
14. No gum chewing allowed in clinical or laboratory.
15. Use of electronic devices for personal communication and activities are prohibited in the clinical and laboratory areas.  
Refer to Social Media Section.
16. When in the clinical area for reasons other than clinical experience (for example during orientation or for clinical preparation or participating in a workshop on or off campus), all students must wear a laboratory coat, name pin, and picture ID over appropriate attire. Appropriate attire is considered business casual (jeans, athletic wear, miniskirts, tank tops, mid-bearing shirts, leggings, thigh high boots, spiked heels, and sneakers are prohibited)  
Changes to dress code will be communicated by Chair, Undergraduate Coordinator, and or clinical faculty.

#### IV. Transportation

A variety of clinical experiences are necessary to meet the educational needs of nursing students in practice areas. Clinical placement is based on course objectives and the availability of clinical sites. Students may be required to travel anywhere within the state of Connecticut and or neighboring states when attending clinical experiences. Clinical sites may change prior to beginning of semester and or during the semester. This information is communicated to students through WCSU email. Students are responsible

for checking emails during breaks and holidays. Students are responsible for their own transportation and any parking or gasoline costs.

## V. Assignments, Examinations, Grading and Reporting of Grades

### A. Assignments

1. Students will be provided a detailed course syllabus at the beginning of each course.
2. All course assignments must be submitted by the designated due date in order to meet course requirements.
3. Faculty reserve the right to retain papers and assignments. Students are encouraged to make copies of all papers prior to submission to the faculty. The copiers in the Department of Nursing are not available for student use. Printers are available in the Library and computer labs. There are scanners and other devices available in the library and computer room.
4. Student papers and other written assignments are due on the date specified by the faculty unless specific arrangements have been made by the student with the faculty member prior to the due date of the assignment. Refer to the course syllabi for specific consequences.

### B. Examinations

1. University policies concerning examination procedures (including laboratory practicum exams) will be strictly enforced. (See WCSU Student Handbook). For specifics about examinations please see course syllabi.
2. Students are neither allowed to keep examination or test papers or to copy test questions and answers. Students may review their own papers at the discretion of the faculty. Students are not allowed to record in any format digital or audio or picture/video lecture or exam reviews. Doing so will automatically be considered academic dishonesty.
3. Dictionaries of any kind that translate words into other languages are not permitted during exams.
4. Any activity related to recording or sharing of content or answers on written exams/quizzes, practicum or computer-generated exams will be considered a violation of academic honesty policy.
5. Before students receive course accommodations for a disability related need in a nursing class, the students must make an appointment with the Accessibilities Office. The Accessibility staff will provide documentation about the specific accommodation to

course faculty. While, students do not have to disclose the nature of their accommodations students are encouraged to speak to their instructor about specific accommodations, or other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, as soon as possible after the course begins. It is the discretion of the Department of Nursing concerning accommodations in clinical setting. The Undergraduate Coordinator and Department Chair must be made aware of Accommodations in this setting. Accommodation requests must be requested each semester.

6. All students must perform in the expected standard time allotment for Health Assessment Practicum Exams or for Evidence Based Nursing Interventions Practicum Exams. Students are encouraged to access laboratory resources prior to practicum exams to ensure optimal outcome. Failure in Practicum Examination will result in a clinical failure. Clinical failure will result in course failure and the student may not progress to the next course.

### C. Grading

#### **Grading Policy:**

The Department of Nursing has adopted the following grading policy to be implemented as of Fall 2004:

A = 100-92  
A- = 91- 89  
B+= 88-86  
B = 85-83  
B- = 82-80  
C+ = 79-77  
C = 76-74

-----  
C- = 73-71  
D+= 70-68  
D = 67-64  
D- = 63-61  
F = 60 or below.

Further, a summary grade of C or better (74 and above) is required in both written work (e.g. care plans, projects, logs etc.) and objective testing (e.g. tests, quizzes, essay exam, etc.) with each computed independently before the final grade is calculated. Therefore, achieving a summary grade of less than a C in either component will result in a failure in the course.

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

policy. Please refer to the Department of Nursing Website and see Undergraduate Catalog-Nursing Program Requirements concerning retention in nursing program. There may be instances where as a result of a Withdrawal and or Incomplete grade a student may not progress in the sequence of nursing classes and may need to reapply to the program.

#### D. Conferences/Counseling

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

## VI. CONTINUATION IN THE NURSING PROGRAM

### A. Medication Calculation Exam

As a requirement of the Department of Nursing, students in the traditional undergraduate program are required to pass the Med/Math Exam in the Fall exam period (December) prior to the second semester of the sophomore nursing year. Anyone entering NUR 235 in the spring semester must take the Med/Math Test to re-enter the program.

The exam will be given during the final exam period for the NUR 105 Med/Math Exam. All entering part-time and full-time students in the nursing program (regardless of entrance point) must take and pass the medication calculation exam prior to providing clinical care. Students must pass the Med/Math Exam with a grade of 85% or higher. Students who are not successful may have one more opportunity to take this exam. If upon the second time they do not pass, these students will not move on in the program. If a student does not pass after two attempts, the student must retake the exam when it is offered the next fall. They will again have two chances to pass this exam. If they fail to pass, these students will no longer qualify to continue in the nursing program.

### B. Academic Standards

- In order to graduate with a major in nursing, an overall achievement of 2.5 GPA must be maintained. A student can reapply once to the generic program. If readmitted and the GPA drops below 2.5 again they will be deemed ineligible to reapply.
- The student is responsible for monitoring his or her own academic and clinical performance/progress and must seek consultation with the instructor/academic advisor if unusual issues/situations exist which may affect academic or clinical performance. Students are expected to be an active participant in their academic and clinical progress and are responsible for following through with recommendations made by clinical or course faculty.

- A temporary grade of Incomplete (I) is recorded when a student has a documented reason for not meeting a partial requirement in a course prior to the termination of the semester. The student should discuss the reason for the incomplete status with the course instructor. If the incomplete is granted the student has until 30 days after the next semester begins to complete course requirements. The course grade will automatically be converted to a failure in the course (F) if the student does not complete the work within thirty days after the next semester begins (see WCSU Student Handbook). Any student who is granted an incomplete will not be allowed to progress in the program until the incomplete is resolved and the next progression course is offered.

### C. Academic/Clinical Warning Course Failure

#### 1. The following occurrences result in Academic/Clinical Warning status:

- A clinical warning may be issued at any time during the course when students are not meeting clinical objectives or professional nursing behaviors identified on the clinical evaluation tool and in the undergraduate catalog. Students will be notified in writing and a plan for remediation will be outlined by the clinical faculty. The clinical faculty member will notify the Program Coordinator, the Department Chair, and the student's advisor of the student's probation status. If a student withdraws from a clinical course due to a failure or pending failure on a clinical evaluation tool (CET) it will be considered a nursing course failure. Clinical warning will resolve once the student passes the clinical objectives and the remediation plan has been resolved.
- Failure in a nursing class is when cumulative exam grades are below a "C" or 74. This includes failure in meeting clinical objectives. In fact, students failing a course clinically receive a grade of "C-" despite other grades achieved in the course/class. If a student is unsuccessful in one nursing course, the student may have the opportunity to reapply to the program. Readmission to the nursing program after a course failure is not guaranteed. If a student fails two nursing courses then the student is ineligible to reapply to the nursing program. Similarly, if a student withdraws from one nursing course, they must reapply to the program. If they withdraw from two nursing courses, they will be ineligible to reapply. The appropriate program coordinator or department chair will notify, in writing, any student who received a warning due to clinical or course failure at the end of the semester.
- A failure in the clinical component of a course requires students to repeat both the theory and clinical portion of the course
- Students admitted to the traditional nursing program must follow the course
  - sequencing outlined in their program of study.

#### D. Academic Dismissal & Retention

1. Conditions under which students are subject to academic suspension & probation are found in the WCSU UNDERGRADUATE CATALOG (<https://catalogs.wcsu.edu/ugrad/>)
2. The following occurrences will result in academic dismissal from the Department of Nursing:
  - Grade (below ‘C’) of any two nursing courses in the nursing program.
  - Grade (below ‘C’) of the same nursing course more than once.
  - Original grades will be used to determine students’ academic status for purposes of probation, progression, and dismissal in the Nursing Program. Replacement grades will not be considered for the above purposes.
  - Students receiving academic dismissal from the Department of Nursing are ineligible to continue or apply for readmission.
  - The Chair will notify, in writing, any student who is being dismissed from the nursing program.

#### Retention (Undergraduate Catalog-Nursing Page)

1. In order to remain in the Nursing program, students must earn at least a “C” grade in all courses with a nursing designation, BIO 215, and HPX 205.  
\*\* Sophomore nursing students who are transitioning between the fall and spring semester are required to complete a Medication Math Test and must pass with > 85\*\*. This is administered during the Fall exam for NUR 105.
2. In order to remain in the Nursing program, nursing students must fulfill academic requirements and must also show evidence of meeting the behavioral objectives (cognitive, psychomotor and affective) of preparation for professional nursing as described and distributed in each nursing course with a NUR 200 and NUR 300 designation.
3. A student who receives a grade of “C-” or lower in a nursing course, whose cumulative grade point average has dropped below 2.50, who has withdrawn from a NUR 200 or NUR 300 level nursing course, who has taken a leave of absence from the Nursing program (whether medical or otherwise), or who has withdrawn from the Nursing program must apply for readmission to the Nursing program. The student may be readmitted to the program provided that, in the judgment of the nursing faculty, the student meets the criteria for readmission.

4. Any student who receives more than one course grade below “C” in any of the Nursing courses will not be readmitted to the Nursing program. In addition, any student who has for any reason reapplied and been readmitted and then subsequently withdrawn or fails, will not be allowed to reapply a second time.
5. Students who demonstrate an unsafe level of patient care will not be permitted to continue in the clinical area.
6. Under provisions of Public Act 86-365, students whose ability to function is impaired or who have engaged in unethical or illegal acts, or whose behavior does not conform to accepted standards of the Nursing profession may jeopardize their eligibility for obtaining or retaining professional nurse licensure in the State of Connecticut. (A copy of the act with explanatory material is available for review in the department office.) Such conduct or behavior may also be grounds for disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal from the program, by the Nursing faculty or departmental administrator.

#### E. Withdrawal

1. Any student in the Department of Nursing has the right to withdraw from the nursing program. A terminal interview with the student’s faculty advisor and the Coordinator/Chairperson must be arranged by the withdrawing student. There is no guarantee, however, that a student who has withdrawn will be readmitted to the nursing program.
2. Students who withdraw from any of the undergraduate programs (Traditional or RN-BSN) or take a semester or longer leave of absence and wish to return to the nursing program, must request readmission within one academic year of withdrawal. Students should submit a letter to the appropriate program coordinator explaining the reasons for withdrawal (the letter should be submitted the semester before admission is being requested; following the unsuccessful in nursing sequence letter from the Department of Nursing). Readmission is not guaranteed and is dependent upon the students’ potential for success, current availability of learning opportunities and department resources. Students must follow the designated plan for readmission, including demonstration of clinical competency. If more than two academic years have passed since withdrawal from the Nursing program, students will be required to reapply to the Nursing program, and repeat all nursing courses.
3. Refer to the WCSU Undergraduate Catalog and Student Handbook for the policy on course withdrawal and late course withdrawal. A late course withdrawal is viewed as an exception to the general policy. Late course withdrawal may be granted only for extenuating circumstances, such as prolonged illness. Poor grades are not to be interpreted by the student or the instructor as extenuating circumstances. A potential or pending course failure is not to be considered as a justification for a late course withdrawal.

## F. Academic Honesty/Dishonesty/BOR/WCSU Code of Conduct

The academic honesty policy is located at

<https://www.wcsu.edu/facultystaff/handbook/.../honesty-policy.pdf>

The BOR/WCSU Code of Conduct is located at

<https://www.wcsu.edu/judicial-affairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/173/2020/08/2.1-StudentCodeofConduct.pdf>

Below is a list of definitions for Academic Honesty and or Student Code of Conduct, however, we follow the University's policies concerning these topics.

- Academic honesty is the cornerstone of higher education. An honest approach to one's work is the only approach in the laboratory, research, or in examinations. Cheating of any kind is, and must be, condemned by all members of a college community
- Behavior that falls under the heading of academic dishonesty includes the following:
  1. The use of prohibited aids during examination periods
  2. The giving and receiving of aid on any examinations
  3. Copying from another student's examination, term paper, laboratory report, etc.
  4. The theft of course material
- Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another writer and presenting them as your own. It is a kind of academic theft, and is therefore dishonest. Your name appears on an essay or term paper, you are stating that the ideas and language in the paper that are not attributed to another are entirely your own, and the reader assumes that this is your work. An obvious form of plagiarism is copying the exact words from your source without providing quotation marks and without giving credit to the source, usually in a citation. A less obvious, but equally dishonest form of plagiarism is the changing of a few words (paraphrasing) or use of an author's original idea without properly introducing and documenting that change or usage. The ideas, interpretations, and words of an author belong to that author. They are the author's property. They are protected by law and that must be acknowledged whenever you borrow them.
- Students are also not permitted to purchase (from paper mills or other sources) or share papers (or parts of a paper) and submit them for course/program written requirements in the nursing program. Students are also not allowed to submit a paper for one course that has been used in another course. Any work that is assigned as individual work (such as a written paper or take-home test) must be completed only as the student's own work. Assistance from others or group work is not permitted and is considered an act of academic dishonesty.

G. Social media is defined as a method of communicating electronically through use of chat rooms, blogs, share sites, social networking sites, video or web broadcasting sites and other online forums of any kind.

Electronic communications are not considered a secure method for transmitting confidential or private information. Examples of social media include but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs, Flickr, YouTube, Wikipedia, Podcasts, Myspace, Allnurses.com, Instagram, or RSS feeds, snap chat, what's app, etc. Please review NCSBN Social Media Brochure. [www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN\\_SocialMedia.pdf](http://www.ncsbn.org/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf)  
Improper use of social media by nursing students may violate state and federal laws established to protect confidentiality and can result in both civil and criminal penalties, including fines and possible jail time.

- i. No texting, talking or cell phone use in clinical areas or classroom/lab without permission of faculty. Cell phones/smartphones are only allowed for information gathering related to clinical situation (if permitted by faculty or agency) during clinical, laboratory, or classroom time. Otherwise, cell phones need to be turned off.
- ii. No videotaping or still pictures of patients/clients/clinical sites are prohibited without written permission of patient, faculty and institution, or clinical site.
- iii. No videotaping or still pictures of professors or fellow students for personal or social media use without written permission of those you are taking pictures of or videotaping
- iv. Clinical agencies/sites may have further restrictions that must be adhered to

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

#### Consequences

- a. Violation of the social media policies will result in departmental, University or other disciplinary action.

## VII. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

The STUDENT HANDBOOK outlines procedural information for student grievances.

## VIII. PROGRAM EVALUATION Program Outcomes

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

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATION /LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- National Student Nurses' Association
- Western Connecticut State University Student Nurses' Association  
This organization's membership is open to pre-nursing & nursing students attending Western Connecticut State University who are interested in nursing as a major or are currently enrolled in the nursing program. Membership requires payment of dues to the National Student Nurses' Association which automatically makes one a member of the Connecticut Student Nurses' Association. Western Connecticut State University Student Nurses' Association functions under a Constitution and Bylaws in concert with the National Student Nurses' Association and is associated with the Student Activity Program at Western.

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

## SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL

### Kappa Alpha Chapter

Sigma Theta Tau is an International Nursing Honor Society. Students completing their junior year as traditional nursing students or RNs, and Graduate students who have completed one-half of the nursing components are invited to join the organization if they have met the following criteria: a 3.5 G.P.A., (rank not lower than the highest 35 percent in their class in scholarship) and meet the professional standards of the Nursing Program. Membership includes graduate and undergraduate nursing students, alumni, faculty, and community nursing leaders.

## STUDENT REPRESENTATION ON COMMITTEES

Students can bring their concerns to the Student Nurses Association meetings. There is faculty representation at this meeting. Concerns can be brought back to the faculty and Department Chair.

## Other Awards and Scholarships

- Students will be asked to nominate a peer who exhibits clinical excellence for the CLN Peer Recognition Award every year. The award is presented at the CLN Annual Student Day in the fall.
- Other student awards and scholarships may become available for students in the nursing program. Students are encouraged to review <https://www.wcsu.edu/finaid/grants/> and <https://www.wcsu.edu/sps/awards/> periodically for scholarship announcements.

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

Revised and Approved May 2019

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