ACCREDITATION

The baccalaureate degree in nursing at the University of Houston-Victoria is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001; 202-887-6791. [Amended by NPFC 12/1/16 – accreditation statement update 5/30/2018]
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Welcome Students!

Congratulations on your decision and dedication to furthering your academic career at the University of Houston-Victoria (UHV)! The nursing faculty, staff, and administration are committed to your successful transition baccalaureate RN role within your community.

In order to assist you in the transition role as an RN to BSN online nursing student we have prepared this Nursing Student Handbook to use as a reference throughout the program. This handbook is a supplement specific to the Nursing Program policies and procedures.

The Nursing Program reserves the right to change, without notice, any statement in this handbook concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, fees, curricula, and courses. Such changes shall be effective whenever determined by the appropriate faculty and administrative bodies; they may govern both old and new students. In addition, nothing in this handbook constitutes, is intended to constitute, or should be construed as creating a contract between a student and the Nursing Program or the University of Houston-Victoria. The information in both the University and the Nursing Program Student Handbooks will enable you to successfully navigate your online learning experience.

The University of Houston-Victoria does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, age, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or veteran status. The University subscribes fully to all federal and state legislation and regulations regarding discrimination.

Dr. Cynthia Hudson  
DNSc, RN, CNE  
Associate Professor and Founding Director, Nursing Program
The information contained in this student handbook has been designed to assist students to successfully navigate the program. This handbook, the SoEHPHD Nursing Program RN to BSN Student Handbook, and the Academic Catalog to which it refers are not contracts. The content of this document, policies, and program guidelines, which are described in each, may be changed or eliminated at any time. This handbook makes references to state licensing in the discipline of nursing and state Board of Nursing’s requirements are subject to change. The Nursing Program expects nursing students to comply with any and all laws that qualify them for RN licensing in the state of Texas.

NOTE: The handbook will be updated as necessary. Students are notified of changes through announcements by messages sent via electronic mail and/or Blackboard.
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The Academic Calendar is where the student will find important dates such as advance and/or late registration, fee payment deadlines, the first and last day of classes, drop/add period, and holidays. The RN to BSN Online Nursing Program runs in 8-week blocks. Important deadlines for graduation applications, course withdrawal, and waivers are also found on the Academic Calendar.
STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The University of Houston-Victoria’s Mission

The University of Houston-Victoria (UHV), a dynamic destination institution serving Texas and the world, is dedicated to providing every student educational and leadership opportunities to become a successful professional and an engaged global citizen. Innovative educational activities challenge students to make meaningful connections between their learning and their lives in a complex world. UHV promotes economic development and advances quality of life through teaching, research, and service excellence.

School of Education, Health Professions and Human Development Mission Statement

The mission of the School of Education, Health Professions and Human Development (SoEHPHD) faculty and staff is to provide an excellent educational experience to learners enrolled in programs offered by the SoEHPHD at the University of Houston-Victoria. The faculty, through their teaching, research and service, are committed to preparing highly qualified professionals for their chosen careers in the teaching, coaching, counseling, administration, and health and wellness fields. The School of Education, Health Professions and Human Development strives to serve as a model organization, responsive to the challenges of a modern society. [Amended by SoEHPHD 1/13/17]

The Nursing Program Mission/Vision/Philosophy

The mission of the Nursing Program is to provide nurses innovative and responsive programs to advance their career as valued graduates and nurse leaders. The Nursing Program is committed to serving the educational needs and enhancing the quality of life while enriching the economic, cultural life, and health of the communities served.
Vision

It is the vision of the RN to BSN Nursing Program to be recognized as a model of excellence and become one of the leading RN to BSN online Baccalaureate nursing programs in the region. Additionally, through leadership and scholarship by faculty and graduates; the RN to BSN Nursing Program endeavors to contribute to the body of nursing knowledge.

Philosophy

The Nursing Program faculty believe nursing is a balance of both art and science. The art of nursing includes the concepts of caring and collaboration that foster respectful relationships and individual dignity and value. The science of nursing is supported through inquiry, research and other scholarly activities promoting evidence-based practice. Further, the nursing faculty view human beings as unique, holistic, and multidimensional; deserving of value and dignity. As such, patients have the right to autonomy as well as information in order to make informed decisions. The philosophy of the Nursing Program is guided by the five principles as outlined below.

Health is a dynamic state of interaction uniquely experienced by each individual and exists in continuums.

Nursing as a practice discipline is both an art and a science. The biological, cultural, physiological, physical, personal, political, and spiritual contexts of environment are integral to the human experience.

Nursing faculty understand caring to include compassion, awareness of self and others as biopsychosocial, spiritual beings, and relationship-centered care. As such, faculty seek to provide a safe, dynamic, working and learning environment, to promote the development of individuals, families, and community members’ health.

Effective communication among disciplines, clients/patients, and families is central to the guiding principle of collaboration. The Nursing Program seeks to promote a supportive and
cooperative culture to advance and achieve shared expectations and goals. Faculty believe collaboration should include a culture of support, authenticity, advocacy, cooperation, establishing and maintaining partnerships and co-participation. The Nursing Program encourages active engagement through collaboration with all members of the healthcare team and with recipients of health.

The faculty value innovation through inquisitiveness, creativity, adaptation, resilience, evidence-based approaches, and informatics technology. The faculty further believes the professional nurse is a partner and advocate for the health consumer in an increasingly diverse population. Professional nursing provides culturally congruent care to individuals, families, and groups (populations) within their communities. Care of the physical, psychosocial, and spiritual needs is essential to disease prevention, health promotion, and maintenance of health.

Program Goals

1. Provide student-centered innovative education programs.
2. Develop and maintain collaborative partnerships.
3. Advance the nursing profession through scholarship and professional involvement.
4. Serve as a foundation for graduate study.

Graduates of the RN to BSN Program Expected Student Outcomes (ESO) will:

1. Synthesize knowledge from the biological, social, and behavioral sciences, the humanities, and nursing to provide appropriate, culturally sensitive care to individuals, families, and communities.
2. Demonstrate inquiry and analysis in applying patient care technologies and information systems to support safe nursing practice and population risk reduction.
3. Lead safety and quality improvement activities as part of the interprofessional team and as an advocate and manager of nursing care.
4. Manage care transitions and promote population risk reduction with diverse communities in collaboration with members of the interprofessional health care team.
5. Participate in monitoring institutional, professional and public policy to maintain adherence to standards of practice within legal, ethical, and regulatory frameworks of the professional nurse.

6. Demonstrate leadership skills related to clinical and professional issues, financial, and human resource in providing and evaluating care.

7. Demonstrate leadership and advocacy that reflects the values and ethics of the nursing profession.

[Amended by NPFC 12/16; 07/31/17]
ONLINE RN TO BSN UPPER DIVISION NURSING CURRICULUM

PLAN OF STUDY

The plan of study to complete the baccalaureate degree in the RN to BSN program consists of the following 30 hours of upper division nursing coursework. Sequencing of coursework is dependent on the specific cohort the student is admitted to and whether the student is full-time or part-time. Students must complete all pre-requisites prior to enrollment. Students planning to matriculate part-time and/or have non-nursing coursework to complete, need to understand both University and Departmental degree requirements. See graduation and general degree requirements.

The following 10 courses comprise the RN to BSN plan of study. For general education and UHV core courses common pre-requisites refer to the University catalog or department website.

RN to BSN Plan of Study

NURS 3310 Transition to the BSN Role
NURS 3315 Foundations of Comprehensive Pathophysiology in Nursing
NURS 3411 Comprehensive Health Assessment
NURS 4110 Capstone Project
NURS 4310 Global Health System
NURS 4311 Healthcare Organization and Informatics
NURS 4313 Population Focused Community Health
NURS 4314 Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice
NURS 4322 Ethics in Healthcare
NURS 4410 Leadership Roles
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Course Descriptions –RN to BSN Program

NURS 3310: Transition to the BSN Role
Cr.3. (3-3-0). Prerequisite(s): Admission to the RN to BSN program. This course focuses on the baccalaureate-prepared nursing role and explores the standards that define professionalism.

NURS 3315: Foundations of Comprehensive Pathophysiology in Nursing
Cr.3. (3-3-0). This course examines basic pathological processes that underlie diseases commonly found in clinical practice. Modifiable factors that offer opportunities for nursing intervention are identified.

NURS 3411: Comprehensive Health Assessment
Cr.4. (4-3-1). Prerequisite(s): 3310, 3315. This course provides an in-depth coverage of a comprehensive health assessment and introduces health promotion and how this concept is applied within nursing practice.

NURS 4102: Independent Study
Cr. 1. Prerequisite(s): Instructor approval. Topic will vary.

NURS 4110: Capstone Project
Cr. 1. (1-0-2). Prerequisite(s): NURS 3310, 4314, 3315, 4410, 3411, 4322, 4313, 4311. This capstone course provides students with an experiential learning practicum experience to integrate clinical knowledge with concepts/theories into professional nursing practice.

NURS 4200: Selected Topics in Nursing
Cr. 2. (2-0). Prerequisite(s): Instructor approval. Topics in Nursing vary each semester.

NURS 4202: Independent Study
Cr.2. Prerequisite(s): Instructor approval. Topic will vary.

NURS 4300: Selected Topics in Nursing
Cr. 3. (3-3-0). Prerequisite(s): Instructor approval. Topics in Nursing vary each semester.
NURS 4302: Independent Study

Cr.3. Prerequisite(s): Instructor approval. Topic will vary.

NURS 4310: Global Health Nursing

Cr.3. (3-3-0). Prerequisite(s): Admission to the RN to BSN program. This course explores global health to include health promotion, population health, primary health care, and health policy from a nursing perspective throughout various geographic regions. Formerly Global Health Systems.

NURS 4311: Healthcare Organizations and Informatics

Cr. 3. (3-3-0). This course explores U.S. health care delivery organizations and payment systems. The role of information systems in the continuity of care is articulated.

NURS 4313: Population Focused Community Health

Cr.3. (3-3-0). Prerequisite(s): NURS 3310, 4314. This course introduces the concept of the population focused health, health policy, and the roles of the nurse in community services.

NURS 4314: Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice

Cr. 3. (3-3-0). Prerequisite(s): Admission to the RN to BSN Program. This course provides a foundation for the use of research in practice through a synthesis of introductory research knowledge with emphasis on writing, and scholarly exchange.

NURS 4322: Ethics in Healthcare

Cr. 3. (3-3-0). This course builds on the ethical and legal foundations for professional nursing practice and health care services.

NURS 4410: Leadership Roles

Cr. 4. (4-3-1). Prerequisite(s)/Co-Requisite(s): NURS 3310, 4314. This course emphasizes leadership and management theories and includes a practice learning experience focused on nursing management issues.

[Amended by NPFC 12/5/16]
UNIVERSITY Core, General Studies and Nursing Common Pre-Requisite Requirements

Students must satisfy all University requirements for a bachelor’s degree as found in the section title University Degree Requirements or have a Texas Public institution transcript marked core complete in addition to the program requirements below:

Transfer Credits

General Education transfer credits are evaluated and approved by the University’s Office of Admissions.

Lower Division

Students must satisfy all University requirements for a bachelor’s degree as found in the graduation section of this catalog under Deadlines and Procedures. Refer to the current University online catalog for University Degree Requirements - Common Core.

In addition, students must satisfy the RN to BSN Nursing Program requirements lower division courses listed below:

1. 3 semester hours of Statistics (may take psychology statistics or math statistics.)
2. 8 semester hours of Human Anatomy and Physiology.
3. 4 semester hours of Microbiology
4. 3 semester hours of Chemistry or Physical Science
5. 6 semester hours of Psychology (PSYC 2301 Introduction to Psychology, and PSYC 2314 Human Growth and Development).
6. RN to BSN students will be given up to 36 semester hours of advanced placement credit for successful completion of associate degree courses (ADN) diploma program and subsequent RN licensure.
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Graduation Application

Students are to apply online for graduation at the beginning of their final semester of coursework. To be considered as a candidate for a degree, you must submit an application for graduation through the Student Self-Service system. You can file an application either during the term prior to or during the semester in which you plan to graduate. However, participation in the commencement ceremony is limited to the term in which degree requirements will be completed. See UHV Graduation Information.

Commencement

There are typically two commencement ceremonies per year, one for spring typically held in Victoria, and one for fall typically held in Katy. Summer term graduates participate during the fall graduation ceremony.

UHV does not hold a summer commencement. Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) students who plan to graduate in the summer should apply for summer graduation. However, prospective summer graduates have the option to participate in the following fall ceremony. Students should refer to Graduation Deadlines for additional and up to date information on graduation. Both summer and fall graduates, may participate in the UHV Nursing Program Pinning Ceremony.

BSN Degree Graduation Requirements

In addition to general University requirements, students seeking the BSN degree must meet the following:

Completion of 120 credits, including:

- 30 final semester hours residency requirement; 30 junior/senior level nursing credits;
• A grade of “C” or better in each nursing course and in the common nursing prerequisites;
• Adherence to the standards of acceptable conduct as outlined in the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, the Texas Nurse Practice Act, as well as in the University of Houston-Victoria Student Handbook, the Undergraduate Catalog, and the Nursing Program Student Handbook.

UHV RN to BSN Five Core Performance Standards for Admission and Progression

1. ISSUE – CRITICAL THINKING
   Standard – Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgement, sufficient powers of intellect to acquire, assimilate, apply and evaluate information and solve problems. Examples of Necessary Activities (not inclusive) – Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations; develop and implement nursing care plans according to the nursing process; respond without delay to emergency situations. Applicant will provide a Self-Evaluation regarding any limitations and explain those limitations.

2. COMMUNICATION
   Standard – Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form. Utilizes effective communication skills to interact with patient/client, peers, and other health care personnel of various ages, cultural, economic and intellectual backgrounds in a variety of settings. Examples of Necessary Activities (not inclusive) – Read, write and speak English effectively so as to be understood. Explain treatment and procedures; provide health teaching to individual clients and groups of clients based on assessed needs, available resources, age, lifestyle and cultural considerations; documents and interprets nursing action and patient/client responses. Communicate information accurately and effectively with other schools, colleges, clients and client families. Evaluate written orders, care plans, and treatment requests. Applicant will provide a Self-Evaluation regarding any limitations and explain those limitations.
3. **MOBILITY**

Standard: Gross and find motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care. Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room, lift and position, maneuver in small places, and physical health and stamina needed to carry out nursing procedures. Ability to transport self to and from practice learning experiences (clinical).

Examples of Necessary Activities (not inclusive): Calibrate and use equipment (i.e. syringes, vials, ampules, donning of gloves, etc.). Able to grasp small objects (i.e. manipulate a syringe, eye dropper, etc.). Perform electronic keyboarding documentation. Move around in patients’/client’s rooms, workspaces, treatment areas, and administer cardiopulmonary procedures. Lift, move, position, and transport patients without causing harm, undue pain and discomfort to the patient or ones’ self. Transport mobile equipment in a timely and cautious manner. Self-Evaluation: Applicant will provide a Self-Evaluation regarding any limitations and explain those limitations.

4. **SENSORY (AUDITORY, VISUAL/TACTILE)**

Standard: Sufficient use of the senses of vision, hearing, touch and smell to observe, assess, and evaluate effectively (both close and at a distance) in the classroom/online, laboratory and practice learning (clinical) settings. Examples of Necessary Activities (not inclusive): Hear monitor alarms, emergency signals, auscultation sounds and cries for help. Observe patient/client responses. Perform tactile/palpation functions of physical exam or those functions related to therapeutic intervention, e.g., insertion of catheters and IVs for therapy. Self-Evaluation: Applicant will provide a Self-Evaluation regarding any limitations and explain those limitations.
5. **BEHAVIORAL**

Standard: Sufficient motivation, responsibility, and flexibility to function in new, ever-changing, and stressful environments. Adapts appropriately to ever-changing needs of clients and client families. Examples of Necessary Activities (not inclusive): Adapts to assignment change of patient, clinical, or laboratory area in a manner that allows the student to meet objectives while providing safe, adequate patient care. Accountable for clinical preparation and independent study. Performs nursing functions in a safe, responsible manner. Ability to recognize the need for further research and respond accordingly based on changes in patient/client status since assignment was made. Self-Evaluation: Applicant will provide a Self-Evaluation regarding any limitations and explain those limitations.

The performance standards are used to assist students in determining whether accommodations or modifications are necessary and provide an objective measure upon which informed decisions can be based about whether students can meet requirements.

**Disability Services**

These core performances are based on guidelines proposed by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) and National Council of State Boards of Nursing. The Nursing Program and UHV complies with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Therefore, the University will endeavor to make reasonable accommodations for participants with disabilities who are otherwise qualified. Click here for a detailed explanation of services and procedures.

Note. Adapted from the Core Performance Standards for Admission and Progression of Southern Council of Collegiate Education for Nursing Prerequisites for Admission by [Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing](https://www.srebfaculty.org/). Retrieved on June 28, 2016. Adapted with permission.
Minimum Criteria for Consideration for Admission to the RN to BSN Program

- Evidence of a current, unencumbered Texas or designated State Registered Nurse license and current CPR license and graduated from an accredited ADN program/diploma.
- Applicants must have a minimum Science GPA of a 2.5 and a minimum ADN program of study GPA of a 2.0, no D or F grades and an overall GPA of 2.0 on all college hours attempted. Students with less than 2.5 and greater than 2.0 in the sciences may receive a conditional admission. All prerequisites must be completed prior to admission.

Academic Advisement

All students must be advised prior to registering for any courses in any given semester. Upon initial acceptance to a nursing program, the student should contact the Nursing Program Advisor to set up an advising appointment.

Currently enrolled students will be assigned an advisor prior to the advising period for pre-registration for the summer-fall semesters and spring semester. A student may contact the advisor at any time regarding questions about the curriculum requirements, etc. It is ultimately the responsibility of the student to be sure requirements for the degree are met.

[Amended by NPFC 12/1/16]
ACADEMIC POLICIES

Progression Policy

Grades in all nursing courses are calculated per the course syllabus and are reported as a letter grade. Students are required to earn a grade of "C" or higher in all nursing courses. The minimum numeric score required to earn a grade of "C" in any nursing course is a 75% (no rounding). All nursing courses required for the program will be evaluated based on satisfactory completion of class, lab, and PLE competencies. In a course, which includes both theory and PLE components, the student must pass both components separately in order to pass the course.

PLE performance is evaluated per the course syllabus and posted rubric. Scoring an “unsatisfactory” rating or grades below 75% on final PLE score constitutes a course failure. Students must successfully complete the PLE component of the course to successfully complete the course. Scoring an unsatisfactory rating on the PLE component of the course results in a grade of "F" for the course and PLE. A grade of “pass” in the PLE component of the course is required to successfully complete, or pass, the co-requisite theory portion of the course.

Students are placed on academic probation in the Nursing Program if they withdraw and/or drop from one nursing course and/or receive a grade of "D" or "F" in any nursing course. Students on academic probation must submit a letter to the Nursing Program Academic Affairs Committee at Nursing@uhv.edu within two weeks of receiving the letter of probation. Application for readmission is not automatic.

The letter must contain the following information:

- Date
- Student First and Last Name
- UHV ID number
- Must include a clear and detailed explanation of what may have contributed to the unsuccessful attempts in the nursing program
- Must include a clear and viable explanation documenting the student’s effort to improve the likelihood of future success
- Must present a viable degree plan that demonstrates the student will graduate within the time limit for the program
- The letter must be type written and signed by the student.

Students on academic probation are subject to dismissal from the Nursing Program if they withdraw and/or drop for a second time from any nursing course and/or receive a second "D" or "F" while on academic probation even if the student has passed a repeated course with a "C" or above.

Students are permitted only one unsuccessful attempt to complete a nursing course throughout the program and withdrawals, dropped courses, and failures count as an attempt.

Students who withdraw from the University, drop a nursing course, or have a failure in a nursing course must submit a letter to the Nursing Program as to their intent prior to reenrollment. An individual interview with the committee may be required. If a student is selected for readmission to the UHV Nursing Program, the student’s re-enrollment is contingent on available space. The decision of this committee is confidential and final.

Students who withdraw and/or drop from a nursing course with a co-requisite requirement must withdraw and/or drop from the other co-requisite courses as well. For progression purposes, withdrawal and/or dropping from one course and its co-requisite will be considered as one withdrawal within the Nursing Program.

Dismissal from the program due to academic reasons will occur under the following circumstances:

- A course grade of less than "C" in the same nursing course twice.
- A course grade of less than "C" in any nursing course with subsequent withdrawal or drop from the same course on the second attempt.
- A course grade less than a "C" in any two nursing courses.
A withdrawal or drop from a nursing course, followed by a subsequent withdrawal or drop for any other nursing course will result in dismissal from the Nursing Program.

Students who are in the process of appealing a course grade through the UHV Academic Appeals Committee may not enroll in any subsequent nursing courses for which the course under appeal is a prerequisite. If students have registered early, they will be administratively withdrawn from those courses. RN to BSN students must maintain enrollment in at least two (2) courses per semester. Students who do not maintain enrollment for one (1) semester will be placed on inactive status and will need to submit a letter to the Nursing Program Progression Committee via the Nursing Program E-Mail Nursing@uhv.edu in order to continue. Students must complete the program within five years.

In addition, RN to BSN students must maintain a valid unencumbered RN Texas license while a student in the program and must report any changes in status in writing to the Program Director. Further, students must report any practice issue reported to or investigated by the Texas Board of Nursing (TxBON) even if this occurs at place of employment. Students must report any arrests or criminal investigations as they may affect the student’s criminal background check and or status as a UHV RN to BSN student.

**Academic Honesty Policy**

The UHV Student Honor Code: As a UHV Jaguar, I pledge to be honest, respectful, and responsible, always remembering to respect my university well.

Since the University is an academic community, every member of the community, including students, are expected to “contribute to an atmosphere of high ethical standards in every way possible, especially by observing all accepted principles of academic honesty. Students are responsible for knowing standards of academic conduct, whether stated or routinely assumed.”

The **Nursing Program Honor Code** incorporates UHV’s Student Honor Code, in addition, students pledge to maintain academic integrity and professional behavior at all times.
“Academic dishonesty” in any of its forms is unacceptable in the University of Houston-Victoria Nursing Program where all are held to high, ethical, moral, and professional standards of the nursing profession and the ANA Code of Ethics.

- Plagiarism is a violation of academic honesty and it misrepresents the work of another as your own.
- Common, but no means exhaustive, examples of Academic Dishonesty are:
  - The use of another individual's work or ideas without paraphrasing, citing, and referencing their work.
  - Submitting your own work from another course or previously submitted in the same course without faculty approval
  - Giving false information
  - Cheating on quizzes/exams
  - Altering documents, such as grade on an assignment, test, evaluation, PLE records, or transcript
  - When preparing course assignments, students must be careful to differentiate between their ideas and those derived from other sources.
  - Whenever ideas or facts are obtained from a student's reading, research, other student’s or faculty sources, they must be properly cited according to standards set by the nursing program and the current edition of Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA Manual).
  - Resources are provided to students to aid in the understanding of preventing plagiarism and are provided in course assignment instructions, within the learning management system, and/or course syllabi.

**Disciplinary Actions**

**Sanctions** for a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy will be applied no matter how minor, intentional, or unintentional the infraction. Consequences will be recommended by the faculty and will range from a significant grade reduction for a minor offense, to a "0" on the
assignment or a failure in the course for a moderate offense, to being dismissed from the Nursing Program and University for a major infraction or a repeat offense.

A student involved in academic dishonesty will be notified by the course faculty in writing. The student has a 4-tiered option.

1. Admit the alleged academic honesty violation, waive the Program Director Review, and accept the associated sanction. The instructor and the student must agree to the waiver of Program Director’s resolution. A student is eligible for a waiver only if there is no prior waiver and no previous findings of violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

2. Proceed to the Program Director who will review the allegation of academic dishonesty and the findings and either accept the sanctions or determine an alternative resolution.

3. Proceed to the Dean of the School of Education, Health Professions, and Human Development. The Dean or his/her designee will review the allegations of academic dishonesty and the findings and either accept the sanctions or determine an alternative resolution.

4. Proceed to the Provost. Students may petition the Provost to review the matter for possible referral to the Academic Council.

A student who is found to have violated the Academic Honesty Policy at the program level before the end of an academic term may remain enrolled in the course at issue while any appeal provided for under this policy is pending. Sanctions do not become final and may not be applied while any appeal provided for under this policy is pending. Any second offense will be reported by the Dean to the University Academic Council, according to UHV policy. Refer to the UHV policy on Academic Dishonesty in the Student Handbook Grading System Policy

The grading system for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN to BSN) program is based on a letter grade system using A, B, C, D and F. The specific criteria for determining grades and achievement of course requirements are described in each course syllabus.
Grading Scale

90-100 = A  
80-89 = B  
75-79 = C  
70-74 = D  
69-0 = F  
Incomplete = I  
Withdrawal from the course (passing) = W

Criteria for Program Good Standing

The undergraduate student is expected to maintain at least a 2.0 "C" grade point average for hours attempted at this institution, the minimum permitted for graduation, as outlined in the UHV Policy for Academic Probation or Suspension – Undergraduate Students. Failure to maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 "C" may result in academic probation or withdrawal from the BSN program.

A minimum course grade of 75 "C" is required for passing in all BSN nursing courses. Any grade below a "C" is considered a failing grade. If a grade below "C" is attained in any course, the student will be placed on academic probation and will be required to retake the course the next time that it is offered. The academic probation will be removed after successful completion of the course. The student may not be allowed to progress in the program until the course is retaken and a satisfactory grade of "C" or higher is earned. Instructors file course grades with the registrar at the end of each semester.

A student who receives two (2) grades below a "C" in any two courses, or two (2) grades below "C" in the same course will no longer be eligible to continue in the nursing program and will be required to withdraw from the program. The Program Director will notify students of their academic withdrawal from the nursing program.
Grade Calculation Practices

Each graded assignment will be recorded in the grade book as a raw score carried out to the second decimal place. No grade rounding is used. An 89.9 is still recorded as an 89 and a 74.9 is still a 74.

Midterm Grades

Students who have a course average below 75 at midterm will be notified. Students will meet for academic advising with faculty.

Posting of Grades

Assignment and exam grades are posted in Blackboard (Bb) as a convenience for students. The official, final course grade is submitted to the registrar’s office at the end of the semester.

Policy Regarding Incomplete Grades “I”

An "Incomplete" or "I" grade will be used only in cases of true hardship when unanticipated extenuating circumstances have resulted in the student's being unable to complete course requirements by the end of the semester. An "incomplete" may be granted at the discretion of the faculty in consultation with the Program Director. In rare instances, in which this occurs, the following policies are in effect:

- All University policies regarding an incomplete are applicable to nursing courses. Refer to the UHV Catalog.
- Incomplete will not be used to allow for remedial work; student work must be passing. Students will receive a date by which the incomplete must be removed.
- Students are required to remove the incomplete before enrolling in the next nursing course.
Withdrawal Policy

The grade of "W" is assigned when a course is dropped after the date indicated in the Academic Calendar as the last day to drop a course without receiving a grade, but before the last day to drop a course or withdraw from the University.

If a grade of "W" is received prior to a guilty finding of academic dishonesty, the student will become liable for the Academic Honesty penalty, including "F" grades. Refer to the UHV Student Handbook regarding the University Student Withdrawal Policy.

Withdrawals for Active Duty Military Service

In accordance with the Texas Education Code 54.006 (f): If a student withdraws from the University of Houston-Victoria because the student is called to active military service, the following options apply:

1. Upon the student’s request, the University will refund the tuition and fees paid by the student for the semester in which the student withdraws;
2. Upon the student’s request and as determined by the instructor, the University will grant a student who, at the time of military deployment, is passing a course or courses and has completed all but a relatively small part of the course requirements:
   a. An incomplete grade in any or all courses
   b. An appropriate final grade or credit in any or all courses.

Students or their representatives may request withdrawal and refund by presenting evidence of the call to active military duty to the Registrar’s Office. Students receiving Title IV federal funds should contact the Financial Aid Office.

Academic Jeopardy Policy

The University and Nursing Program maintain high academic standards. Students are expected to meet these standards in all courses attempted. The Academic Jeopardy letter is a method to
alert students at midterm that they are at-risk for being unsuccessful. Academic Jeopardy letters are a courtesy to students.

Students are responsible to know:

1. Grades earned on all assignments, discussion, quizzes, and examinations;
2. Each grade that is below 75% in the Nursing Program is considered unsatisfactory;
3. Each unsatisfactory grade calls for remedial action;
4. Academic Jeopardy notification may be issued from the Nursing Program and/or the University;
5. Failure of the Nursing Program to issue a jeopardy letter or the failure of a student to receive a jeopardy letter does not affect the validity of the grade assigned or the need for corrective action;
6. A final course grade below 75% in the program constitutes failure of the course, and;
7. Any course, lab, simulation, or practice learning experience absence or failure to meet required hours may result in academic failure.
8. Students earning a midterm grade less than 75% in the undergraduate program and/or absence may receive a jeopardy letter from the Nursing Program and/or the University. The written notice will include the action the student should take as a result of the grade or non-attendance. It is the responsibility of the student to follow through with the suggested action(s). A copy of the Academic Jeopardy letter will be placed in the student’s academic file.

Cancellation of Registration

Refer to the UHV Student Handbook for specifics of the University’s Registration Information policy.

Online Course Policy

The University expects students to participate in all instructional activities. Online courses are no different from classroom courses in this regard; however, participation must be defined in a
Different manner. The grade a student earns in a course should be a measure of comprehension and achievement. Regular class attendance, whether in a traditional classroom or online, promotes both of these goals.

Each course is set up by week, which begins on **12:01 AM** Monday and ends the following Sunday at **11:59 PM**. All due date times are **Central Standard Time (CST)**. Please note based on the University calendar, Week-8 ends on a Friday at **11:59 PM**. Student “attendance” in online courses will be defined as active participation in the course as described in the individual course syllabus and assignment instructions. Each course is eight weeks and students must be actively participating from week one. At a minimum, students are expected to log on to a course at least three times a week. Online courses may, at a minimum have weekly mechanisms for student participation, which can be documented by any or all of the following methods within the prescribed time.

1. Submission/completion of assignments
2. Submission of initial and peer response within discussion board
3. Communication with the faculty
4. Communication with team members for any team assignment

Students who do not log on to the course within the drop/add period for the course will be dropped from the course. Drop/add and withdrawal dates are determined by the Registrar, and posted on the Registrar web page. Faculty have the prerogative of assigning a failing grade to those students who fail to maintain active participation in an online course as defined in the course syllabus. Students are required to check course announcements and UHV email several times a week. In the event of an unexpected “absence,” such as a serious illness, the faculty member should be notified by email or phone so that a decision can be reached regarding continued enrollment in the course. Non-participation (absence) may place a student in academic jeopardy.
Course Assumptions

Students are expected to follow specific directions given for graded activities. Faculty will consider crises on a case-by-case basis. If an illness or emergency is experienced, that prevents the student from accessing the online course and completing assignments in a timely manner, the student should notify the faculty member as soon as possible (24 hours minimum of the due date in non-emergent cases) so that options can be discussed. Technology issues must be addressed by the student, with the School’s Blackboard Support Team. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that coursework has been uploaded to Blackboard. The timeframe for course work and associated deadlines are provided on the course schedule.

Assignment Policy

1. Please refer to the course schedule for assignments. Specific grading criteria will be provided on Blackboard for each assignment. Faculty will assign the specific score based on the criteria listed.

2. All assignments are due on Sunday 11:59 PM CST unless otherwise indicated by faculty.
   a. When submitting an assignment in Blackboard, please use the following format to name and save the Word document: NURS XXXX_first name_last name_assignment name.
   b. Ten (10) points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late (after Sunday 11:59 PM CST), up to 5 days. Assignments submitted 5 days past due date will receive a grade of “0” unless otherwise determined by the course faculty.

Discussion Board Policy

1. All initial discussion postings are due by Thursday at 11:59 PM CST and response posting to peers by Sunday 11:59 PM CST. Any discussion posted after Sunday earns a zero.

2. Due to the nature of discussion postings, late response discussion postings (posted after Tuesday midnight CST) will not be graded.
3. Discussion board grade will be reduced by 10 points for each day late (Friday through Sunday the last day of Discussion Board). Due to the nature of discussion board postings, any late response postings after Sunday 11:59 pm CST will not be graded.

4. Refer to course syllabus and rubric for specific guidelines and grading criteria.

5. For peer response postings, students will read a sampling of your colleagues’ postings and respond to number of postings required for the discussion during the week in one or more ways:
   a. Suggest why you might see things differently (cite/reference in APA).
   b. Ask a probing or clarifying question.
   c. Share an insight form having read the colleague’s posting.
   d. Offer and support with evidence from the literature an informed opinion (cite/reference in APA).
   e. Validate an idea with your own experience.
   f. Make a suggestion supported with evidence from the literature. (Cite/reference in APA format)
   g. Expand on the colleague’s posting.
   h. Ask for evidence that supports the posting.

6. Please refer to the Discussion Board Grading Criteria. Review the discussion rubric before and after you write your initial and response postings. Faculty will assign the specific score based on the criteria listed.

**Online Netiquette Policy**

Students are expected to interact in a professional and courteous manner; be prepared for the weekly lesson(s) and assignment(s); and read attentively, your peers and/or faculty postings. During a presentation or webcam, students must provide a professional/academic environment. Students will not sit or lay on beds. Consider the environment used for the webcam/video and ensure there is proper lighting, no pets or non-participants in the room. Private conversations should be avoided, pets should be placed outside of hearing range and view, and cell phones/landlines must be silenced during webinar synchronous activities.
Students who are participating in a webinar and using a webcam must be dressed in business casual attire for presentations, including shoes. If students are videoing a health assessment, they must be dressed in plain scrubs or business casual attire and lab coat with UHV Nursing Program patch only. [Amended by NPFC 1/12/16]

**Netiquette Guidelines**

1. No yelling (USE OF CAPS)
2. Do not post sarcastic comments, write your responses in Word and read before posting into a discussion or email.
3. Attempt to find your own answer. Use the proper forum for personal assignment/course questions (Online Course Email) to the faculty and “Ask the Professor” for general course questions located in Discussion Board.
4. Do not get cute with text colors, use black for postings your discussions.
5. Brevity rules. Keep your email message short and to the point. Focus on the essential information to ensure that your question and or message does not get lost.
6. Read first. Take some time to read through each of the previous discussion post responses before writing your response.
7. Do not over share personal information.
8. Respect your student peers and faculty.

**Quiz/Exam Policy**

The UHV Nursing Program quizzes/exams are faculty directed and administered under the purview and discretion of the faculty. Students are expected to follow the University and Nursing Program Academic Honesty Policy. Courses contain online quizzes, unless otherwise stated. Quizzes are timed and completed without any assistance either from individuals or any form of technology, such as opening another computer to view course content, searching the internet or use of other mobile devices. Students will view the online test tutorial prior to taking their first quiz. See [Online Test Taking](#) and [Blackboard Help](#).
All faculty will comply with any requirements set by the [University Office of Disability Services](#) for reasonable accommodation. Students are responsible to submit the appropriate documentation to each course faculty. Faculty may not provide accommodations without the Student Accommodation Form. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Student Success Center to schedule all quizzes/exams if taken on campus.

**Online Quizzes/Exams**

1. You will have one attempt per each quiz/exam with a designated time limit per quiz/exam.
2. Please read and prepare for *quizzes. Do not share, reproduce, copy quiz questions or any portion of the quizzes. The quizzes will be located in Blackboard. You may use your book and any notes you have taken or were provided in class. Quizzes must be completed independently of other persons.
3. Quizzes must be completed within the time period for the module assigned and are due by date and time specified in the course syllabus. Sunday 11:59 PM CST.
4. Quizzes will be automatically graded in Blackboard immediately after completion and feedback will be available after the due date and time for the designated module.
5. Late quizzes are not accepted.
6. The timeframe associated for each quiz is provided on the course schedule.
7. Specific instructions for the Summative Quiz will be provided in the last module.

*Quiz (includes any online testing) throughout this section. [Amended by NPFC 12/1/16]*

**Verification of Student Identity in Online Education**

Federal requirement has been put into place by the U.S. Department of Education requiring schools to verify the identity of online students. In response to this requirement, the UHV Nursing Program has adopted the following policy:

- The student who registers in an online education course or program is the same student who participates in and completes the course or program and receives the credit by verifying the identity of a student who participates in class or coursework.
• The student who registers for an online course may elect either of the following.

Student verification options that are offered by UHV Nursing Program:
  o Face to Face testing (exams)
  o Proctored Examinations (Proctor U)
  o Students taking exams off campus should be aware of the University’s Help Desk hours prior to scheduling the exam.

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Online Student Regarding Proctored Exams

  • Course syllabi will denote if a course has an end of course proctored exam. Student is responsible for contacting the faculty to schedule the on-site exam. Students requiring off-campus proctored exams will use (Proctor U). Student is responsible for making arrangements with the faculty member to make the exam available through Proctor U.
  • Student is responsible for any fees charged by Proctor U and for reimbursement of any mailing costs incurred.
  • Student will use or have available any books, bags, electronic devices or any other item at the exam except materials identified by the course faculty member as not being allowed or needed for the exam.
  • Student will provide proper identification to the proctor before the exam can be administered. An example of appropriate identification includes both a UHV ID and a Photo ID (driver’s license).
  • Student will not communicate with anyone regarding the exam other than the course faculty before, during, or after the exam to discuss content, questions, answers. Students may not photograph, screenshot, or reproduce the exam or any question in any format, this includes sending any part of the exam to the faculty.
  • If the student does not show up at the appointed time or is unduly late, the student may not be able to test and will need to contact the course faculty member within 24 hours.

Proctor U will:

  • Connect with the test taker via web cam
- Follow the faculty specific test taking criteria
- Monitor the test taker’s computer screen in real time
- Authenticate the test taker’s identity using a multi-factor process

The Roles and Responsibilities of the Faculty Member Regarding Proctored Exams

An online student cannot be required to come to campus. Faculty members who teach online courses and who require proctored exams, must accept a request from a student for the use of Proctor U. The faculty member must send the exam instructions to the Proctor U in a timely fashion.

All students should take online quizzes/exams using a desktop or laptop computer and not mobile devices. Direct internet connection should be used instead of wireless, as well as use of electronic cords instead of battery. Should the connection be disconnected, the student will not be able to return to the exam until they contact the faculty.

Make-up Quizzes

Quizzes not taken within the 7-day window are not available for make-up and the student will earn a zero, except for emergencies and appropriate faculty notification and documentation.

Make-up for Missed Exams

Make-ups for missed exams may be given, only at the discretion of the course faculty member.

Orientation to Courseware Policy

Students are expected to complete an orientation for the course delivery system, Blackboard (Bb), Turnitin, courseware products prior to beginning online or hybrid courses.

A link to Blackboard and online learning orientation is available on the UHV website Student Orientation to Online Courses; ELearning Tutorials.
Turnitin

Turnitin Student User Manual

Email Account Policy

The University provides email accounts to all current students. Students are required to use their UHV Blackboard email address when communicating with the Nursing faculty regarding course concerns. When communicating by email with Nursing Administration, faculty, and staff, students are required to use their UHV email address.

Audio/Video Recording, Screen Shot, Reproducing, and Photographing Policy

Students must receive prior permission of the person(s)/vendor presenting class information before photographing, taking screen shots, sharing, or in any way audio and/or recording or videoing formal presentations or informal discussions. Taping, video recording, or photographing in PLE settings is not permitted under any circumstance with the exception of Health Assessment for final evaluation and only as outlined in the course syllabi/guidelines with written consent of the client and/or guardian.

Photographing, videotaping, filming, digitally recording, or by any other means, secretly viewing with or without a device, another person without that person’s consent in any location where the person has a reasonable expectation of privacy, or in a manner that violates a reasonable expectation of privacy will be considered a breach in professional conduct.
STUDENT POLICIES

Student Handbook Policy

Students are responsible for knowing and complying with all policies and information contained in the UHV Student Handbook and the UHV Nursing Program RN to BSN Student Handbook. Students will download and print the acknowledgement page and submit via the designated document tracking site the first week of class of student’s first and fourth semesters.

UHV Nursing Program Academic Appeals Procedure Policy

This policy provides due process and resolution of student unprofessional behaviors such as tardiness/attendance, student boundary issues, incivility; malpractice issues; academic dishonesty resulting in loss of progression in the Nursing Program. The Academic Appeal Process affords students a 4 tiered procedure for due process that aligns with University policy.

Goals

1. Provide due process and written resolution to student progression.
2. Develop a 4-tiered process for managing student grievance issues within the Nursing Program.
3. Apply current University and Nursing Program policies to resolve student progression issues.
4. Provide ongoing evaluation of current grievance related policies and procedures.
5. Collect data regarding progression issues that are unresolved at the program level.

Procedure

1. Student petition the course faculty at Tier 1 for all course related issues:
   Students with a progression issue will first discuss the issue with the course faculty. All students will be encouraged to resolve issues at the faculty/course level. If a student is
not satisfied at Tier 1 and a resolution cannot be made, students will be directed to the Tier 2 process. Each Tier can only be accessed in order.

2. Student petition the Program Director at Tier 2:
   a. The student will complete the Nursing Program Progression Appeal Form (Appendix E) and email with subject title “student appeal” to the Program Director at Nursing@uhv.edu.
   b. The Program Director will apply current policy, procedures, and evidence to develop a new resolution.
   c. The Program Director will communicate the resolution with the student.
   d. The Program Director will place a copy of the form in the student’s permanent Nursing Program file.

3. Student petition the Dean of the School of Education, Health Professions, and Human Development (SoEHPHD) at Tier 3:
   a. The student will send the SoEHPHD Appeal Form* to the Dean of the SoEHPHD via email.
   b. Upon receipt of a student petition the Dean or his/her designee will review the resolutions of the faculty, and Program Director.
   c. The Dean will uphold the Program Director’s resolution or make an alternative resolution.
   d. The Dean will communicate the outcome with the student.
   e. The Dean will send a completed SoEHPHD Appeal Form to the student’s permanent Nursing Program file.

4. Student petition the Provost at Tier 4 * * :
   a. The appeal must involve a terminal grade for a course or program.
   b. The appeal must be for reasons other than a simple disagreement about the relative merits of the student’s performance: i.e., cases to be heard by a university-wide committee should relate ordinarily to charges of arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory treatment rather than issues of academic judgment.
c. The appeal must, in the Provost’s opinion, involve a palpable issue and evidence capable of sustaining rational argument.
d. The appeal must be initiated by the end of the next long semester after the grade in question has been assigned.
* Refer to the SoEHPHD Appeal form (Tier 3)
* * Refer to the UHV Student Handbook for academic appeal guidelines (Tier 4)

**Grade Appeal Policy**

This policy provides the due process and resolution to student terminal grade appeal.

**Goals**

1. Provide due process and written resolution to student terminal grade appeal.
2. Develop a 4 tiered process for managing student grade appeals within the Nursing Program.
3. Apply current University and Nursing Program policies to successfully resolve student progression issues.
4. Provide ongoing evaluation of terminal course grade related course syllabus, policies, and procedures.

**Procedure**

1. Student petition the course faculty at Tier 1:
   Students with grade appeal will first discuss the issue with the course faculty. All students will be encouraged to resolve issues at the faculty/course level. If a student is not satisfied at Tier 1 and a resolution cannot be made, students will be directed to the Tier 2 process. Each Tier can only be accessed in order.

2. Student petition the Program Director at Tier 2:
   a. The student will complete the Nursing Program Grade Appeal Form (Appendix F) and email it to the Program Director.
b. The Program Director will apply current policy, procedures, and evidence to develop a new resolution.

c. The Program Director will communicate the resolution with the student.

d. The Program Director will place a copy of the form in the student’s permanent Nursing Program file.

3. Student petition the Dean of the School of Education, Health Professions, and Human Development (SoEHPHD) at Tier 3 *

a. The student will send the SoEHPHD Appeal Form* to the Dean of the SoEHPHD via email.

b. Upon receipt of a student petition the Dean or his/her designee will review the resolutions of faculty and Program Director.

c. The Dean will uphold the Program Director’s resolution or make an alternative resolution.

d. The Dean will communicate the outcome to the student.

e. The Dean will send a completed SoEHPHD Appeal Form to the student’s permanent Nursing Program file.

4. Student petition the Provost at Tier 4 **:

a. The appeal must involve a terminal grade for a course or program.

b. The appeal must be for reasons other than a simple disagreement about the relative merits of the student’s performance: i.e., cases to be heard by a university-wide committee should relate ordinarily to charges of arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory treatment rather than issues of academic judgment.

c. The appeal must, in the Provost’s opinion, involve a palpable issue and evidence capable of sustaining rational argument.

d. The appeal must be initiated by the end of the next long semester after the grade in question has been assigned.

* Refer to the SoEHPHD Appeal form (Tier 3) ** Refer to the UHV Student Handbook for academic appeal guidelines (Tier 4)
Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

The University of Houston-Victoria and the Nursing Program comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, pertaining to the provision of reasonable academic adjustments/auxiliary aids for students with a disability. It is the responsibility of the student to register and provide medical verification and academic schedules to UHV Office of Disability Services.

University of Houston-Victoria, Office of Disability Services, Office phone: 361-570-4287; 1-877-970-4287; Fax- 361-580-5504.

Financial Aid and Scholarship Information Policy

There are a wide variety of financial resources available through UHV. Some are need-based and others are not. To assist students in meeting their educational goals, the Nursing Program provides students a link to access the UHV Financial Aid Office as well as a link to apply to specific Nursing Program financial aid. You may be eligible for both merit and need-based financial aid. In addition, there are Nursing Program scholarships that are awarded each semester to qualified, newly admitted and continuing undergraduate students. The most current description of various scholarships, eligibility, and the application process are available at the Nursing Program website.

Tuition and Fee Refund Policy

Students may access the UHV tuition and fee schedule. The Nursing Program course fee is $24.00 per course. New students who are enrolling for the first time in courses at UHV will be mailed a welcome packet from Higher One, UHV’s refund processor. This packet will contain information that explains the refund delivery options offered by UHV and will include instructions on how to select a refund preference. Selecting a refund preference is a vital step in getting refunds to you as quickly as possible.
Students have a choice of three refund delivery options: direct deposit to the Jaguar Card, direct deposit to a bank of choice, or have a paper check mailed to them. If the student fails to select a refund preference, a paper check will be mailed to the student within 21 days from the time the refund is processed. Refund of tuition and fees originally paid by a debit or credit card will be refunded back to the card. For more information about student refunds, please contact the Student Billing Office, 877.970.4848. [Amended by NPFC 12/1/16]
STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/RESPONSIBILITIES

The Nursing Program adheres to the same policies affecting all students within the University in regard to student rights and regulations. These rights and regulations are summarized in the UHV Student Handbook. The handbook is available to all students at registration and to other interested persons upon request from the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Affairs.

The Student Grievance Procedure in the UHV Student Handbook clearly defines the channel for receipt and consideration of students' views and grievances. Nursing Program students adhere to the same policy.

All students have the right to seek knowledge, exchange and debate ideas, form opinions, and express their views. However, it is understood that this knowledge of rights should be balanced with a concomitant knowledge of responsibilities.

Once students have been admitted to the Nursing Program, student files are kept in a central location within the Nursing Program Office. Files containing student records are under supervision or locked at all times. Only faculty and other appropriate institutional officials have access to these records.

Name/Address Change

Students are required to provide the Nursing Program with their current address and any name change via Nursing@uhv.edu, subject line: Student name/address change.

Electronic Records

MyUHV Online Services gives currently enrolled UHV students access to their electronic records. Students can view:
• Admissions Status
• Monitor TO DO List
• Manage Financial Aid
• Register for Courses
• Make a Payment/Payment Plans
• Request transcripts
• Update your address on file
• Change your preferred name and more

Students can view current course grades in Blackboard.

Social Media Guide

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Social Media Guidelines for Nurses has a 5:44 video resource to guide nurses and students in the responsible use of social media.

UHV RN to BSN program shares the views and values of the American Nurses Association (ANA) Principles and expects all UHV RN to BSN students to be knowledgeable and comply with these guidelines. Failure to do so will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Use of Social Media

Social media and other electronic communication use is growing with the numbers of social media outlets, platforms and applications, (including blogs, social networking sites, video sites, chat-rooms) and forums. Nurses often use electronic media both personally and professionally. Instances of inappropriate use of electronic media by nurses have been reported to State Boards of Nursing. Federal law reinforces and further defines privacy through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA regulations are intended to protect patient privacy by defining individual, identifiable information, and establishing how this information may be used, by whom, and under what circumstances.
Potential consequences for inappropriate use of social and electronic media by a nurse are varied. The potential consequences will depend, in part, on the particular nature of the nurse’s conduct.


**APA Guidelines**

American Psychological Association (APA) is the formal writing style adopted by the Nursing Program. All written assignments are to demonstrate a professional level of scholarship by adhering to the current American Psychological Association (APA) format. The APA manual contains specifications for research, writing, documenting and formatting type-written work. Guidelines for writing in APA style may be found in the current publication manual.

**Written Assignment Format**

Students will follow the instructions for written assignments and discussion boards as well as the grading rubrics provided. Papers are to be computer generated, grammatically correct, and referenced appropriately. Students are expected to follow current APA format as designated in the APA Publication Manual, which serves as the guide for written work. Points may be deducted for work that does not follow proper format. The exact amount of points deducted will be designated in each course syllabi.

**Writing Assistance**

The Student Success Center is available to assist online students. The Center provides writing assistance regarding paper reading/critiquing and tutoring in grammar and usage, mechanics, and sentence structure. Nursing faculty encourage BSN students to seek assistance with any writing issues early in their academic studies.
TurnItIn

UHV maintains a university license agreement for an online text matching service called TurnItIn. The instructor may use the TurnItIn service to determine the originality of student papers. In addition, this tool assists students in ensuring they properly cite and reference their work.
STUDENT GOVERNANCE

Student Representative

The nursing student representative has the opportunity to participate in the following Nursing Program Faculty Council Committee functions: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. One student representative will be selected. Student representative (s) will not participate in discussion such as individual student admission, progression, graduation, faculty, or other sensitive issues. The student representative will be invited monthly to attend the meeting and the representative may attend virtually or via teleconference. The representative provides student perspective and student concerns, but does not have voting privileges. The student representative may request attending a faculty meeting if there are student affairs issues they wish to place on the agenda. [Amended by NPFC 12/1/16]
TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

University of Houston-Victoria and the RN to BSN Nursing Program recommend students have the following (Minimum) Technology Requirements: PC or Mac not older than 3 years old is highly recommended. Client Operating Systems:

- Microsoft® Windows® 7, 8.1 or 10 (32 or 64 bit)
- Apple Mac OS X 10.10 or higher

Hardware Requirements

- Intel or Intel-compatible Pentium 4 class 2 GHz processor or higher
- Webcam 720p or higher
- USB Headset microphone
- USB Flash drive for data storage/transfer; 1 GB or higher recommended

Memory Requirements

- At least 4GB of RAM

Hard Drive Space Requirements:

- Minimum 10.0 GB of available disk space

Internet Connection:

- A high speed broadband Internet connection with 6Mbps or higher (DSL, cable, or better) wireless not recommended when taking test.

Display

- 1024 × 768 or higher-resolution monitor
- Web Browser/ Software:
  - Firefox (Latest Stable Release) (preferred browser 6/22/2016)
  - Chrome (Latest Stable Release)
  - Internet Explorer 11 or higher (MS Windows only)
  - Safari 7 or higher (Apple OS X)
• Latest version of Sun Java
• Adobe Flash Player (Latest Stable Release)
• VLC media player. Download link for VLC
• Up-to-date anti-virus software (free or paid)
• Up-to-date anti-spyware software (free or paid)
• Compression (zip) utility software (free or paid)
• Microsoft Office Suite 2013 or higher (Office 360 version acceptable with Word, Excel, PowerPoint)

Optional mobile devices for some features

• iOS 9.0 Android 4.4 (Kitkat), 5.0 (Lollipop)
• Word Native Client OS and Word Versions
  o Windows 10
  o Word 2016
  o Windows 7
  o Word 2013

  NOTE: The Add-In is currently only supported on desktops (not mobile)

All students must have access to a computer, and be proficient in word processing, email, file transfer and literary searches. Registration is done by computer, all of the nursing courses in the RN to BSN program are on-line and departmental communications are all sent via the UHV and or the course e-mail server as appropriate. Specifically, the student must be able to:

• Access course and program material through MyUHV Online Services, Blackboard, and selected publishers sites.
• Use email and post assignments to course discussion forums and Dropbox.
• Complete, send, and receive assignments to faculty or other students using email and attachments/files.
• Read/print email and attachments/files from students, staff, and faculty.
• Use the VC/UHV Library online services for research and completion of course assignments.
• Create and upload PowerPoint presentations.
• Use appropriate software for the course/department (standard Microsoft products include MS Word, MS Excel, MS PowerPoint).
• Submit word documents in the following file formats ONLY: .doc, .docx, .pdf.
• Use an appropriate anti-virus application to ensure the files transmitted and received are virus-free.
• Navigate and evaluate web sites.
• Purchase of broadband internet connection and home computer is recommended.
• While many students prefer the convenience of doing their course work on their own personal computer, computer access is available in other ways for students who do not own a computer. Victoria area residents may utilize the UHV Campus Computer Lab.

Blackboard Support

Students are required to regularly access, navigate, and utilize e-mail communication and the online course site. Failure to access messages, announcements, or assignments sent or posted via these modalities may jeopardize the student's progress in the course and does not constitute a viable excuse for failing to meet course requirements and expectations. Contact [Blackboard assistance](#) as well as [Blackboard Support](#), Monday-Friday. Issues with UHV email, login, password, mobile devices, and other non-Blackboard technology issues contact [Information Technology](#) (IT), available by phone, 361-570-4399, by email at [helpdesk@uhv.ed](mailto:helpdesk@uhv.ed), or through the support portal at [support portal](#), if you need more help. Hours are posted at the link above.

[Amended by NPFC 12/1/16]
STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Student Professional Behavior

Students may have access to confidential medical/personal client and family information, and to sensitive agency information as part of the course learning experiences. It is of utmost importance that client/agency confidentiality is observed. Information concerning a client/family or agency is not to be discussed outside of the didactic setting. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the UHV Nursing Program.

The purpose of this policy is to understand and convey to the nursing students they are representatives of the University and the Nursing Program, and should recognize their behavior may influence the opinions of the community regarding the UHV Nursing Program.

The UHV Nursing Program expects its students to represent the organization in a manner that reflects high standards of personal integrity, education, and service to patients. It is the expectation of all students within the Nursing Program to conduct themselves in accordance to the ethical standards as published in the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics. Please refer also to the Texas Nurse Practice Act and the American Nurses’ Association Scope and Standards for more details on the legal requirements for all nurses. The underlying principles of these standards are based on common courtesy and ethical/moral behavior. These standards are essential for students to grow professionally and to receive the desired trust and respect of all members of the health care professions.

Discussions and or assignments in the online course format will not include names of patients or other identifying information. While it is not the policy of the Nursing Program faculty to routinely monitor students’ web sites, if inappropriate postings are brought to their attention, faculty will investigate the report.
Students’ behavior in any setting to include practice learning sites, cyberspace, course learning management system (Blackboard), use of photos, regular interactions and all forms of communication as representatives of the UHV Nursing Program is guided by the following:

- Students will not transmit or place online individually identifiable client/patient information.
- Students will observe ethically prescribed professional patient-nurse boundaries.
- Students must understand that patient, faculty, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.
- Students will utilize privacy settings and seek to separate personal and professional information online.
- Students should bring content that could harm a patient’s privacy, rights, or welfare to the attention of appropriate authorities.

(ANA, 2011)

Along with failure to exhibit behaviors that reflect the professional standards for legal/ethical conduct, major infractions of conduct and/or behavior as set forth in the University handbook will be grounds for dismissal from the Nursing Program. These include, but are not limited to, consumption of alcoholic beverages in a course related activity; illegal drug usage; impaired behavior; language, and/or disruptive behavior with peers, faculty or community.

To avoid problems:

- Do not discuss patients/personnel/institutions or any identifying data in public settings such as cafeterias, elevators, hallways, over the phone, with family or friends, where anyone may overhear you.
- Discussion of your patient/personnel/institution should only occur in approved settings such as course discussion forum and assignments and without identifying individuals.
- Use patient/institution initials in all discussions and on written documents submitted to the Nursing department.
• Destroy all notes and computer generated papers after completion of assignment at the institution.
• Protect the integrity of the medical record and do not photocopy or otherwise transmit material from the medical record.
• If you have concerns about confidentiality, check with your instructor to obtain guidance.
• Never post any patient/personnel/faculty/other students/institutional information or pictures on social media sites.

Consequences

Infringements of Professional Behavior Policy may result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the Nursing Program, notification to the Board of Nursing, as well as, federal prosecution, fines, and imprisonment.

Dismissal

The Nursing Program reserves the right to require the withdrawal of any student whose behavior is determined to endanger the safety or well-being of any individual or whose behavior is deemed unsafe.

UHV Nursing Program Grievance Procedure

In accordance with the Student Grievance Procedures at the UHV, it is the policy of the Nursing Program to receive, process, and resolve student grievances in a fair and prompt manner. The UHV Student Handbook distinguishes between nonacademic grievances.

Any student with a concern or grievance should follow the applicable procedure in the UHV Student Handbook.
**Definition of a Formal Complaint**

The UHV Nursing Program defines a formal complaint as a report from a student or other constituent that expresses a serious concern about the quality of any of our nursing programs or the conduct of a faculty member, staff member or student. A formal complaint should be initiated when all other appropriate departmental, college and/or university channels have failed to produce a satisfactory resolution from the point of view of the complainant.

**Board of Nursing Implications**

Inappropriate use of social and electronic media may be reported to the Board of Nursing. The laws outlining the basis for disciplinary action by a Board of Nursing vary between jurisdictions. Depending on the laws of your jurisdiction, a Board of Nursing may investigate reports of inappropriate disclosures on social media by a nurse on the grounds of:

- Unprofessional conduct; unethical conduct; moral turpitude;
- mismanagement of patient records;
- revealing a privileged communication; and
- breach of confidentiality

**Professional Liability Insurance for RN to BSN Students**

Nursing is a profession in which its members are accountable. The University provides liability insurance coverage for the RN to BSN student. Coverage obtained in your work setting does not cover you as a student.

General University policies and procedures are published online. University policies, as well as Nursing Program policies and procedures, extend to all sites where students are engaged in the role of nursing student.
STUDENT PRACTICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

REQUIREMENTS POLICY

The Nursing Program is required to confirm all nursing students entering PLE agencies for educational opportunities are compliant with Joint Commission and Center for Disease Control guidelines for personnel providing nursing care. This policy provides processes for implementation of verification of PLE requirements in order for students to have the opportunity to participate in certain practice learning experience education. These requirements are mandated by most the PLE agencies and set forth in their affiliation agreements.

1. All PLE eligibility requirements will be obtained by nursing applicants prior to admission and submitted to a secure outside entity that has been contracted to provide collection, compilation, and tracking services for the Nursing Program.

2. Students will be held accountable for complying with the PLE eligibility requirements prior to admission, prior to each semester of enrollment, and throughout their program of study. Failure to achieve and maintain compliance may result in delayed admission, course registration holds, academic penalty, course failure, and/or inability to progress.

3. Each PLE agency will be provided with a report of all PLE requirement data for students who are scheduled to rotate in their facilities upon the request of the course faculty.

Requirements

1. Screening of immunization is required by the Texas Department of Health Texas Administration Code, Title 25 Part 1 Chapter 97 Subchapter B Rules 97.61.97.72.

2. Failure to adhere to the guideline is a violation to the Texas Administrative Code Title 25 Part 1 Chapter 97 Subchapter B Rules 97.61-.97.72.

3. Prior to participating in any PLE, students must submit the Student Declaration for Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screens on the form enclosed as Appendix C to the designated Compliance Tracker. The UHV Nursing Program must report positive
drug screens and background checks to the State Board of Nursing where the RN Student is licensed.

4. Prior to participating in any PLE, students must submit the Student Authorization for Release of PLE documentation through designated background check, drug screen and document collection agency. This authorization permits the Nursing Program to grant access to any PLE agency with affiliation agreements in place, which require direct access to background and drug screen reports and all other required PLE documentation. Students not providing authorization are subject to PLE agencies denying students access to their facilities. (Appendix D)

5. If additional vaccines during vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks such as the flu vaccine are instituted by the individual practicum sites or by the State of Texas, students will be required to comply.

6. Many PLE agencies require PLE readiness compliance to be current at the beginning of the PLE experience and to extend through the entire semester. Students can be held to this additional standard at any time during the Nursing Program. The outside collection agency will send frequent reminders regarding this requirement to all students via email. Students cannot request PLE agency placements that have not met these additional requirements.

7. Before receiving clearance to register, all students admitted to the Nursing Program are required to submit evidence of compliance under each of the Nursing PLE Requirements. The Nursing Program will not receive original documents. In addition, all students will be responsible for maintaining compliance with the Nursing Program PLE Requirements at the beginning of each semester of enrollment. In the event a student does not meet the requirements at any time during the program, delayed admission, course registration holds, academic penalty, course failure, and/or inability to progress may occur. Failure to remain compliant during the program is considered a breach of professional behavior.

8. Students will receive instructions regarding accessing designated company who will supple a secure document tracking system selected by the Nursing Program.
9. RN to BSN students must have an unencumbered Texas RN license upon admission to participate in any PLE rotation.

**Nursing Program PLE Requirements**

**A. Immunizations Required Prior to Admission to the Program**

The following immunizations are required for the Nursing Program:

- **Varicella (Chickenpox).** Any one of the following:
  - Series of 2 vaccinations at least 30 days apart
  - Laboratory report of positive varicella titer

- **MMR**
  - 2 MMRs OR some combination of 2 Measles, 1 Mumps and 1 Rubella vaccination (e.g. 1 MMR and 1 Measles shot fulfill the requirement)
    - Students born before 1956 may only require 1 MMR.
  - Laboratory report of proof of serological immunity to Rubella

- **Mumps.** Any one of the following:
  - 1 dose on or after 12 months of age
  - Laboratory report of proof of serological immunity to mumps

- **Measles (Rubeola).** Any one of the following:
  - Students born on or after January 1, 1957 must have 2 doses on or after 12 months of age, with each dose at least 30 days apart
  - Laboratory report of positive titer test

- **Rubella**
  - 1 dose on or after 12 months of age
  - Laboratory report of proof of serological immunity to Rubella

- **T-dap**
  - 1 dose within the last 10 years (Td does not meet this requirement)

- **Hepatitis B**
  - 3 dose regimen (first dose must be received prior to program admission)
    - Dose 2 and Dose 3 must be received at 30 days and 6 months respectively.
- Positive Hepatitis B antibody titer

- **Tuberculosis Skin Test (PPD)**
  
  One of the following:
  
  - Every 12 months evidence of a negative PPD skin test
  - Students with documentation of a previous positive skin test, positive IGRA result, evidence of BCG vaccine, or documentation of completing treatment for TB infection or disease, should not be re-tested with a skin or blood test. They must submit provider statement the student does not have active TB.
    - After a baseline assessment by their provider, a follow-up chest x-ray to exclude the diagnosis of active TB is based on provider’s recommendation.
  - All students will need to adhere to any additional PLE agency’s requirements.

- **Meningococcal, Bacterial**
  
  - All entering students less than or equal to 22 years old

- **Influenza**
  
  - Annual 1 October through 31 March

**B. Background Check**

1. Upon acceptance to the Nursing Program, and at student’s own expense, all students will be required to undergo a criminal background check through a company designated by the Nursing Program. The results will be shared with the Program Director and other designated staff. Any student convicted of or who receives adjudication for any criminal offense prior to program admission or while in the program, will be required to obtain a Declaratory Order from the Texas Board of Nursing that states the student is eligible for initial licensure or licensure renewal prior to program entry or progression.

2. The company will provide the criminal history results directly to the student, the Nursing Program and the PLE agency (upon the agencies request). The Nursing Program may provide PLE agencies access to the students background check through the Tracking System or provide confirmation of the Background Check and its results as per any affiliation agreement. Students must provide his/her criminal history results to the PLE agency prior to participating in any PLE rotation if required by the agency.
3. Any student convicted of or who receives adjudication for any criminal offense prior to
program admission or while in the program, will be required to submit a Declaratory
Order to the Texas Board of Nursing. The student must receive a Board Order from the
TxBON indicating the student is eligible for licensure renewal prior to program entry or
progression. Additionally, a positive criminal history may result in not being eligible to
participate in PLE rotations, which could result in failing to complete the Nursing
Program.

4. Students are required to inform the Nursing Program of any changes to their criminal
background status.

C. CPR

1. All students must submit a non-expired copy of American Heart Association CPR for
Health Care Providers (BLS) certification prior to the program application deadline.

2. Online certification will not be accepted. Students will be responsible for maintaining bi-
yearly compliance with CPR requirements throughout the program at student’s own
expense. In the event a student does not meet the requirements at any time during the
program, a course registration hold will be implemented until the requirement is met.

D. Health Insurance

1. All students enrolled in the Nursing Program must carry health insurance at their own
expense, and provide a copy of the policy or insurance card prior to program admission.

2. Students will be responsible for maintaining compliance with the health insurance
requirements throughout their program. In the event a student does not meet the
requirements at any time during the program, a course registration hold will be
implemented until the requirement is met.

E. Malpractice Insurance

All students are provided with malpractice insurance through the University for PLE education
while enrolled in a PLE course.
F. **Drug and Alcohol Screen**

1. Upon application, and at their own expense, all students will be required to undergo a urine drug screen test through a company designated by the Nursing Program and the company will provide the drug screen results to the student, the Nursing Program and the PLE agency (upon the agencies request). All students must provide his/her drug screen test results to the PLE agency prior to participating in any PLE rotation.

2. At the discretion of any Nursing Program faculty member or PLE agency employee, based upon suspected drug use of a student, a student may be required to submit to a subsequent drug screen test through a company designated by the Nursing Program at the student’s expense. The company will provide the drug screen results directly to the student, the Nursing Program and the PLE agency (upon the agency’s request). The student who is required to submit to a subsequent drug screen test must provide his/her drug screen test results to the PLE agency prior to being allowed to continued participation in the PLE rotation.

3. Positive drug screen results will result in not being eligible to participate in PLE rotations, which could result in failing to complete the Nursing Program.

G. **Registered Nurse (RN) Licensure**

RN to BSN students are required to maintain an unencumbered RN Texas License throughout the program which is required for any PLE activity. Students may not participate in PLE at any location without an active unencumbered Texas RN license. A change of RN license status (loss, probation, etc.) must be reported to the Program Director in writing and may result in the student’s dismissal from the program.

**Student Confidentiality Policy**

The UHV Nursing Program has distinct expectations of students regarding the confidentiality of client/agency related information, including classroom content, practice learning experiences (PLE) and student's individual acquisition of information.
Students receive information about patients/clients/agencies in written form and verbal discussions with faculty and agency staff. All UHV RN to BSN Nursing Program students must agree to abide by Federal HIPPA guidelines and individual agency policies related to the sharing of client/agency information. It is understood students are to hold all information in strict confidence and will consult a Nursing Program faculty member before sharing any part of PLE or course content related to patients. Students will not send or receive patient information via electronic means unless instructed to do so by a Nursing faculty member. RN to BSN Nursing Program students understand they will not share any patient related information from class or PLE with individuals who are not a part of that class or PLE, including family and friends. Violation of confidentiality laws/policies may result in immediate dismissal from the Nursing Program.

Annual PLE Passport Policy

The Nursing Program is committed to ensuring all nursing students have demonstrated an annual minimal standard of competency prior to PLE attendance in accordance with Joint Commission and PLE agency requirements. This policy establishes processes to insure all nursing student’s minimal standards of competency are established and updated annually. The minimal standard of PLE competency includes but is not limited to:

- Back injury;
- Bloodborne pathogens, PPE, needlesticks;
- Cultural diversity;
- Disinfection and sterilization;
- Ethics;
- Fire safety: RACE, PASS;
- Glove removal and hand washing;
- Handling medical waste;
- HIPAA;
- Medication safety, including “near miss” identification;
- MSDA;
- National Patient Safety Goals;
- Slips, trips, and falls

1. All accepted students will be required to successfully complete the APLEP initially prior to registration of a PLE course.
2. All currently enrolled students will be required to successfully complete the APLEP annually.
3. A UHV email notification to complete the APLEP will be sent each year to all currently enrolled students by the Student Advisor.
4. The Student Advisor, administered via a designated online tutorial and quiz, will be accessed from the UHV Nursing Program webpage.
5. The APLEP will be administered and maintained by the Student Advisor who will be a member of the UHV Nursing Program administrative staff.
6. The Student Advisor will submit the status report on each program's new cohort to the UHV Nursing Program Academic Affairs Committee prior to the initial registration date for that semester.
7. The APLEP Coordinator will submit the status report of all currently enrolled students to the UHV Nursing Program Academic Affairs Committee before registration opens for each new semester.
8. A registration hold for any PLE courses will be placed by the UHV Student Advisor for noncompliance.
9. Successful completion of the APLEP is required prior to removal of a registration hold.
10. Students receiving registration holds will be responsible for obtaining clearance through the following process:
   a. Student will complete and submit the APLEP to the designated Compliance Tracker.
   b. Student will notify the Student Advisor of completion via UHV email.
   c. Student Advisor will check for student's APLEP completion within the designated Compliance Tracker located within the Nursing Program website.
   d. If the APLEP is not complete, the Student Advisor will notify the student and the Nursing Program Director via UHV email.
e. When the APLEP is complete, the Student Advisor will notify the Program Director and remove the registration hold.

Blood, Body Fluid, and Hazardous Exposure Policy and Protocol

It is the policy of UHV, any student engaging in a university sponsored program sustaining a skin injury from needle stick/sharps or mucous membrane splash from potentially contaminated person's blood or bodily fluids, receive prompt medical attention, counseling, advisement and follow-up testing, if indicated.

Exposure to another person's blood or body fluids by needle stick, splash or other exposure may place the student at risk for exposure to HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or other infectious agents. Students are expected to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for Standard Precautions to reduce the risk of exposure.

**STEP 1 - Immediate Treatment Protocol**

**Percutaneous and Non-Intact Skin Injuries** - Injuries from needles or other sharp objects where the integrity of the skin has been broken or where there is the suggestion the integrity of the skin has been broken by a potentially contaminated item:

1. Wash the skin exposure site well with sudsy soap and running water. (Soap directly reduces the virus's ability to infect.)
   a. Betadine soap is acceptable for this step.
   b. If water is not available, use alcohol.
   c. Avoid using damaging substances such as bleach.
2. Remove any foreign materials embedded in the wound, if possible.
3. Do not bleed tissue (There is no evidence indicating squeezing the wound reduces the risk of viral transmission).
4. Rinse well.
5. Proceed to Step 2 below.
Mucous Membrane Exposures - Exposure of eyes, nose or mouth to blood, bodily fluids or other potentially contaminated items:

1. Treat a splash to the eye or mouth immediately with a water/bath rinse to the area with tap water, sterile saline or sterile water.
2. Proceed to Step 2 below.

Intact Skin Exposure - Where there is no suggestion the integrity of the skin has been compromised by contaminated fluids:

1. Thoroughly clean and wash exposed intact skin.
2. Exposure of intact skin to potentially contaminated materials is not considered an exposure of any significant risk. Nor is the person considered to be exposed or in need of evaluation.
3. Proceed to Step 2 below.

STEP 2 - Exposure Reporting Protocol

1. Notify the course faculty member immediately.
2. Notify the Supervisor of the PLE agency immediately.
3. After notifying the Supervisor of the PLE agency, leave the agency (PLE) area immediately to obtain additional medical care and advice from your own primary health care provider.
   a. Remind others (while you seek immediate medical attention) to obtain consent and test source individual’s blood/fluids (requesting a rapid HIV antibody test) immediately or as soon as possible if the individual is not on the premises.
   b. If the source individual is known to be infected with either HIV or HBV, testing need not be repeated to determine the known infectivity.
   c. Identify and document the source individual, unless identification is infeasible or prohibited by law.
4. Depending on the nature of the exposure, it may be necessary to begin drug treatment within hours of the exposure. For this reason, it is recommended students seek medical advice immediately after informing the faculty member and the PLE agency supervisor.
5. Within 24 hours of the incident, not later than the next business day if possible, complete the UHV Safety and Risk Incident Report form. The Safety Report is available on UHV web site.

6. Proceed to Step 3 below.

**STEP 3 - Medical Treatment Follow-Up**

1. When seen by a health care provider for a blood or body fluid exposure, a follow-up appointment should be given.
2. Upon follow up, lab results for yourself and the individual source of exposure should be given.
3. Further follow up and testing depends on the above results.

**Student Financial Responsibility**

Neither the PLE agency nor the University is responsible for the cost of the care involved in the treatment, management or surveillance of exposure to blood or body fluids. UHV students are financially responsible for all medical visits, lab tests and prescriptions ordered for treatment of an exposure. Students should go here for health insurance.

**Practice Learning Experience (PLE) Agency Policy and Procedure**

As a guest of the PLE agency, student is responsible for following policies and procedures in all matters pertaining to client contact and other learning activities. Individual agencies may have unique PLE requirements such as completion of learning modules or course related to restraints, blood glucose monitoring, etc. Select agencies have a mandatory random drug testing policy, which includes nursing students. The course faculty will inform students of these miscellaneous requirements.
PLE Agency Access

No student shall enter a public or private facility where healthcare is being delivered and represent themselves as a UHV nursing student fulfilling PLE requirements without the express permission of a Nursing Program faculty member.

Failure to comply may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program.

Attendance

Practice learning experience (PLE) is defined by the AACN as experiential learning in any setting where health care is provided or influenced that allows for and require the student integrate new practice related knowledge and skills. It may be augmented by simulation and or laboratory experiences (AACN, 2012). The faculty is responsible for oversight and evaluation of the student’s PLE.

For successful course completion, all course objectives must be met, and absences may prohibit a student from meeting the objectives. It is the student's responsibility to contact course faculty and the PLE agency regarding an absence prior to the scheduled time. All PLE hours must be made up. Depending upon the nature and extent of the absence(s), a course faculty member may require an alternative make up assignment. If family difficulties, financial concerns, work obligations, or life stressors are barriers to PLE attendance, the student should seek assistance from UHV Counseling, Health and Wellness. When repeated absences or failure to make up absences occur and prohibit achievement of course objectives, refer to the UHV class attendance policy: "A student whose absences are determined by the instructor to be excessive shall be dropped prior to the last day to drop a course or withdraw from UHV with a grade of "W" or "F." It is the student’s responsibility to communicate concerns regarding PLE hours with their course faculty as soon as possible. The student may request a course incomplete due to extreme circumstances prior to receiving a grade of "W", "F", or "D", which may be granted on a case by case basis if the student is passing the course in both theory and PLE.
An excused absence is an absence from the scheduled PLE, which is the result of illness of the student or an immediate family member, a religious holiday, or the result of an unforeseen catastrophic event. The student must be excused directly by the faculty and must submit a plan to complete the PLE hours. If so directed by the instructor, the student must bring a written excuse from the health care provider.

Extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from attending a PLE assignment. It is the responsibility of the student, with aid from the faculty, to meet the PLE course objectives. All assigned PLE hours with a course shall be met.

1. An unexcused absence will be considered unprofessional PLE performance.
2. All absences must be made up so that the total PLE hours are met.

In the event of an impending PLE absence, the student will:

1. Call the specific assigned area in the PLE agency or follow the policy set by the agency for notification of absence.
2. Notify the PLE agency at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled PLE experience.
3. Notify the course faculty according to written instructions in course syllabi.
4. Leave a telephone number where the student can be reached during the absence.
5. Contact the course faculty immediately upon returning to the PLE agency for clearance and further directions.

Practice Learning Experience Attendance and Fitness Policy

It is the policy of the UHV Nursing Program to require all students to report for PLE able/fit to perform their expected roles and free from the influence of drugs or alcohol throughout all hours assigned to PLE activity or agencies. Students may not work 12 hours before attending PLE. Students may not use their work hours, receive any financial compensation or employee assignment for PLE hours.

Also, the Nursing Program recognizes a student can be unfit for reasons of emotional or mental impairment due to sleep deprivation, chemical use, abuse/dependency, or because of a medical
condition due to illness or injury. The Nursing Program recognizes such forms of illness have effective treatment and rehabilitation. Assistance is available thru UHV Counseling, Health and Wellness.

For purposes of this policy, emotional or mental impairment is defined as conduct or behavior in which consumption of alcohol or use of a chemical substance impairs the student nurse’s judgment or causes a deterioration of a student nurse’s performance or behavior. This may also include lack of sleep. Chemical dependency is defined as the continued consumption of alcohol or use of a chemical substance which may impair judgment and lead to a deterioration of a student nurses’ attendance, performance or behavior, physical health, and/or social and family well-being.

The following circumstances give rise to a reasonable suspicion that a student’s performance may be influenced by inappropriate use of alcohol or drugs:

- Student discloses current chemical dependency or substance abuse.
- Student exhibits behavior that is unusual, uncharacteristic, or inappropriate.
- Student displays symptoms of intoxication or drug use (odor of alcohol, slurred speech, dilated pupils, and/or lack of normal coordination).
- Student appears to be unable to perform assigned duties or safely and effectively provide patient care.
- Student is in possession of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol.

A student suspected of being under the influence will be required to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing at the student’s expense using a designated facility.

Faculty has the authority to remove a student from a PLE setting for suspicion of lack of fitness for duty. The removed student will not be allowed to operate a motor vehicle and must have alternate transportation when leaving the PLE setting.

PLE Conduct - Rules of Unprofessional Conduct

The Rules of Unprofessional Conduct are to protect clients and the public from incompetent, unethical, and illegal conduct by identifying unprofessional or dishonorable behaviors of the student nurse. These behaviors include but are not limited to:

1. Failing to assess and evaluate a client's status or failing to institute nursing intervention which might be required to stabilize a client's condition or prevent complications;
2. Failing to administer medications or treatments or both in a responsible manner;
3. Failing to accurately or completely report and/or document a client's status including signs, symptoms, or responses and nursing care delivered;
4. Failing to make entries, destroying entries, and/or making false entries in records pertaining to care of clients;
5. Adhering to Nursing Program Dress Code Policy;
6. Causing or permitting physical, emotional or verbal abuse or injury to the client or the public or failing to report the same to the appropriate licensed practitioner;
7. Disclosing confidential information or knowledge concerning the client except where required or allowed by law;
8. Accepting an assignment when one's physical or emotional condition prevents the safe and effective delivery of care or accepting an assignment that does not take into consideration patient safety or for which one lacks the educational preparation, experience, knowledge or ability;
9. Failing to obtain instruction or supervision when implementing nursing procedures when one lacks educational preparation, ability, knowledge and/or experience;
10. Leaving a nursing assignment without notifying one's appropriate unit nursing supervisor [and faculty];
11. Failing to follow the policy and procedure for the wastage of medication in the agency where the student is functioning at the time of the incident;
12. Misappropriating, in connection with the practice of nursing, medications, supplies, equipment, or personal items of the client, employer, or any other person or entity or failing to take precautions to prevent such misappropriation;

13. Offering, giving, soliciting, or receiving or agreeing to receive, directly or indirectly, any fee or other consideration to or from a third party for the referral of a client in connection with the performance of professional student nursing duties;

14. Providing information that was false, deceptive, or misleading in connection with one's practice as a professional student nurse.

Adapted from Statutes Regulating the Practice of Professional Nursing, Texas Board of Nursing (Rule 217.11). "Standards of Professional Nursing Practice"; Rule 217.12 "Unprofessional Conduct."

Grades

Program PLE hours are integrated into two courses NURS 3411 and 4410 (45 hours each). Specific PLE grading criteria and weights will be described in the syllabus of each course that includes PLE hours.

DO NOT tape, video record or photograph in PLE settings or content within Shadow Health™ unless authorized to do so. See exception for NURS 3411 within course syllabus regarding final health assessment evaluation.

Withdrawal

Students who cannot participate in PLE for NURS 3411 and NURS 4410 for any reason, are considered unable to fulfill the requirements of the program and must withdraw from the course and/or program dependent upon the circumstances.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

UHV is committed to providing a professional working and learning environment free from sexual discrimination of any kind. Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated in any form by the University. Complaints and allegations of sexual misconduct will
be taken seriously. The University will take appropriate action in an effort to eliminate sexual misconduct from happening, prevent its recurrence and address its effects.

All incoming students will complete a mandatory training prevention and education program regarding sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking, which must be completed before registering for courses. Mandatory training will be scheduled during program orientation. All University members are expected to adhere to the University’s Sexual Misconduct policy.

Dress Code Policy

All RN to BSN students will wear a white lab coat with business casual attire or scrubs with the UHV Nursing Program patch, a UHV photo ID, and a name pin that denotes the student is a UHV RN to BSN student in all PLE settings unless otherwise specified by the faculty. Students may not wear the name tag, lab coat, or ID for their place of employment when in the student role. PLE agency dress code policy must be followed as well as the Nursing Program policy. Failure to comply will result in the student being dismissed for the day and credited with an absence, which may result in the inability to meet the course objectives.

1. Lab coats with scrubs or business casual attire will be worn only in the PLE area and simulation laboratory settings as directed by course faculty.
2. Attire will be clean, wrinkle free and well fitted.
3. The UHV Nursing student photo ID will be visible on the left chest of the scrubs or lab coat at all times, as directed by faculty.
4. Shoes must be all leather with closed toes and closed or strapped backs. No bold colors are permitted. Socks must be worn and the color should match the shoe.
5. Hair must be a natural color. Shoulder length hair must be pulled back and secured. Long bangs are to be secured out of the eyes.
6. Beards and other facial hair should be clean and neatly trimmed.
7. General cleanliness and good grooming are expected at all times. Heavy makeup, perfumed scents or strong body odor are prohibited.
8. Jewelry is limited to one wedding set, a watch, and one set of stud earrings.
9. Body piercings and tattoos must be covered in a manner as to not draw attention to these adornments.
10. Nail polish/artificial nails are not permitted.
11. Gum chewing is not permitted in the PLE areas.
12. Business casual attire must be neat and professional. Jeans are not permitted.
13. Students must adhere to any specific PLE agency dress code.

Evaluation of Faculty and Course Policy

Evaluations are most helpful when honest, fair, constructive and pertinent to the online course and PLE. Each faculty seriously considers student evaluations in making modifications in the course, specific weekly modules, and PLE. Evaluation of course and PLE teaching effectiveness are used by individual faculty in identifying areas of strength and needed improvement. The faculty value student evaluation of teaching effectiveness as a means of improving teaching skills. Students are encouraged to evaluate online course and PLE instruction using the forms and methods provided. In addition, verbal and email input is welcome. The course faculty will also provide a tool for students to evaluate the PLE experience. Links to online course evaluations will be sent via UHV email accounts to each enrolled student.

Grievance Procedure Policy

In accordance with the Student Grievance Procedures at UHV, it is the policy of the Nursing Program to receive, process, and resolve student grievances in a fair and prompt manner. The UHV Student Handbook distinguishes between non-academic grievances.

Any student with a concern or grievance should follow the applicable procedure in the UHV Student Handbook. [Amended by the NPFC 04/11/17]
HIPAA Statement

All those in health care must now comply with the Federal regulations of The Administration Simplification Subtitle of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). This Act requires individual identifiable patient information be disclosed on a need to know basis only. Care must be taken to minimize incidental disclosures and must disclose only minimal amounts of information necessary to accomplish the task. The minimum disclosure standard, however, does not apply to requests for information by a healthcare provider for treatment purposes. For example, if one must administer a medication, student will have full access to the medical record. This is covered by the patient’s consent for treatment.

In order to protect patient/client privacy, all personally identifying information must be removed from student papers, such as care plans and case studies. Information to be removed includes, the individual's name, initials, address, phone number, fax number and social security number. Student papers may not be copied for careless circulation and handling. These written documents containing private health information must be carefully stored or shredded to prevent the circulation of confidential patient information. Confidentiality and privacy also extends to oral communications which extend beyond the need to know for treatment and/or educational purposes.

*HIPAA is a Federal law. Penalties for wrongful disclosure range from fine and/or imprisonment.*
APPENDICES

Note: A print friendly version of the appendices is available.
APPENDIX A – Student Policies Acknowledgement Signature Page

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA NURSING PROGRAM

[Download, print, sign, and submit to Document Tracker]

TO VERIFY THAT YOU HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND
THIS RN to BSN STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGN AND DATE

My signature indicates I have received a copy of the Student Handbook for the RN to BSN Nursing Program. I understand and assume responsibility for reading and abiding by the contents and policies herein and seeking clarification, if needed.

Print Name:

Signature:

UHV Student ID:

Date:
APPENDIX B – UHV Nursing Program Student Signature Page

I have completed the required reading of the selected UHV Nursing Program policies and procedures, which are found in the RN to BSN Student Handbook. I understand if I have questions, I should ask my course faculty for clarification or information. My initials and signature indicate I am aware of and agree to adhere to and consistently implement the nursing policies and procedures.

(Please initial each item and then sign and date the Signature Form)

1. Student Professional Behavior and PLE Unprofessional Conduct
   Initial here:

2. Policies and Procedures Related to HIPPA
   Initial here:

3. Annual PLE Passport Policy
   Initial here:

4. Student Confidentiality Agreement –
   As a student, I will receive information about clients/agencies in written form and verbal discussion with faculty and agency staff. I agree to abide by Federal HIPPA guidelines and individual agency policies related to the sharing of client/agency information. I understand I am to hold all information in strict confidence and will consult a Nursing Program Faculty member before sharing any part of PLE activity or classroom content related to clients. I agree not to send or receive client information via electronic means unless instructed to do so by Nursing Faculty member. I also understand I am not to share any client related information from class or PLE with individuals not a part of the class or PLE, including family and friends. I understand violation of confidentiality laws/policies may result in immediate dismissal from the Nursing Program.
   Initial here:
5. Nursing Program Honor Code – I have carefully read the Nursing Program Honor Code as listed in the RN to BSN Student Handbook. I understand that failure to adhere to all sections to the Nursing Program Honor Code may cause me to fail a course or be dismissed from the Nursing Program. *Initial here:*

6. Maintain current immunizations, TB test, and CPR and Texas RN license. Students must download, print, sign and submit this form to the secure document tracker site within one week of the first semester and annually thereafter. Failure to sign this form may result in PLE agencies denying student PLE privileges and may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program. *Initial here:*

Signature:
Print Name:
Student ID#:
Date:

[Amended by the NPFC 04/11/17]
APPENDIX C – Student Declaration for Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screens

University of Houston-Victoria Nursing Program Student Declaration for Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screens

[Download, print, sign, and submit to Document Tracker]

I recognize and understand prior to participating in any PLE activity through the University of Houston-Victoria Nursing Program, I must undergo certain training and testing, including submitting to a drug screen and criminal background check at my own expense.

I further understand PLE agencies and/or the Nursing Program may not allow me to participate in any PLE activities if I have a positive criminal background or a positive drug screen which could result in failure to complete the RN to BSN Nursing Program. The Nursing Program may be required through its affiliation agreements with PLE agencies to certify students have submitted to a criminal background check and drug screen test. As a result, by signing below, I declare and attest I have completed the required criminal background check and drug screen.

I further declare and attest that PLE agency may require the criminal background check and drug screen results be submitted directly from the third parties who conducted the criminal background check and drug screen. I recognize and understand failure to complete the criminal background check and drug screen results to the PLE agency prior to participation may result in withdrawal from the PLE course, which ultimately could result in failure to complete the RN to BSN Nursing Program.

The UHV Nursing Program must report positive drug screens and background checks to the State Board of Nursing where the RN Student is licensed.

Printed Name:
Signature:
Date:

[Amended by NPFC 04/11/2017]
APPENDIX D – Authorization to Release PLE Requirement Information

I authorize the University of Houston-Victoria to provide direct access to a PLE agency with whom there is an affiliation agreement, to my drug screen and criminal background check reports, and all PLE requirement documentation located in the designated document tracker site.

I acknowledge the information obtained from my PLE requirement documentation will determine my acceptance for PLE privileges.

Printed Name:
Signature:
Date:

[Amended by NPFC 04/16/2017]
APPENDIX E – Tier 2 Student Nursing Program Progression Appeal Form

The Program Director will provide written (typed) documentation of the resolution of a student’s appeal petition.

Directions: Complete all items of the Student Nursing Program Progression Appeal Form. Forward completed form with related attachments to the Nursing Program Director who will place a copy in the student’s file and send a copy to the student via UHV email.

Student Name:

Semester/Year:

Course:

Faculty:

The student will explain the UHV Nursing Program Progression Policy issue:

The student will explain the policy/procedure and the supporting evidence if applicable that supports the appeal:

Program Director’s resolution and supporting evidence:

Date of Petition Resolution:

Program Director’s Signature:
APPENDIX F – Tier 2 Student Nursing Program Grade Appeal Form

The Program Director will provide written (typed) documentation of the resolution of a student’s appeal petition.

**Directions:** Complete all items of the Student Nursing Program Grade Appeal Form. Forward completed form with related attachments to the Nursing Program Director who will place a copy in the student’s file and send a copy to the student via UHV email.

Student Name:

Semester/Year:

Course: Faculty:

The student will explain the UHV Nursing Program terminal grade issue:

The student will explain the course syllabus/policy/procedure and the supporting evidence if applicable that supports the appeal:

Program Director’s resolution and supporting evidence:

Date of Petition Resolution: