



# **Practical Nursing Student Handbook 2026**

The policies outlined in the Practical Nursing Program Policy Handbook are subject to change at any time. When students enter the nursing program, they are directed to the location of the electronic version of the Nursing Program Policy Handbook on the DSU website.

Enrolled students are notified of new and/or revised policies that are adopted.

Verification of receipt of a Handbook edition is documented on the “Informational Data” form and documentation of receipt of addendums is either noted on the “Informational Data” form or in each student’s file.

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## I. Introduction to PN Certificate Program at Dickinson State University

### a. Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action

Dickinson State University is fully committed to equal opportunity in employment decisions, educational programs, and activities in accordance with all applicable state and federal laws, including affirmative action efforts. In that regard, Dickinson State University does not discriminate on the basis of age, religion or creed, national origin, marital status, race or ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or veteran's status in its admissions, employment practices, education programs, housing, food service, or other related activities.

Inquiries regarding the educational opportunities or equal employment policies of this institution should be directed to the Affirmative Action Officer, Dickinson State University, 291 Campus Drive, Dickinson, ND 58601-4896 or to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 230 S. Dearborn Street, 37<sup>th</sup> Floor, Chicago, IL 60604 Phone: (312) 730-1560. Email [OCR.Chicago@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Chicago@ed.gov)

### b. North Dakota Board of Nursing

The PN program is approved by the North Dakota Board of Nursing. The Board's address is: 919 S 7<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 504, Bismarck, ND 58504-5881. The Board's phone number is: (701) 751-3000. Their website can be at: [www.ndbon.org](http://www.ndbon.org)

### c. Nurse Practice's Act

According to the North Dakota Nurse Practices Act (NPA) 43-12.1-07 (1) Powers and Duties of the Board, the Board of Nursing (Board) shall regulate the practice of nursing to assure qualified, competent licensees and high-quality standards. The Board's mission is to protect the public and assure ND citizens, quality nursing care through regulation of standards for nursing education, licensure, and practice.

The ND Nurse Practices Act is the state law that governs the practice of nursing. It can be found at: <https://www.ndbon.org/Law-Rules/NursePracticesAct.asp>

### d. Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

The PN program is accredited by ACEN. Their address is: 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400, Atlanta, GA 30326. Their phone number is: (404) 975-5000. Their website can be found at [www.acenursing.org](http://www.acenursing.org)

### e. Mission, Vision, Philosophy

#### i. **Mission**

In harmony with the university mission, "...to provide service relevant to the ...health, and quality of life for the citizens of the State of North Dakota" our primary role is to foster and facilitate the development of competent healthcare practitioners who are prepared to serve in a continually evolving health care environment.

#### ii. **Vision**

In light of the continually changing health care environment, the Nursing Program envisions programs that feature a unique gateway to nursing education and a differentiation of nursing practice. Values are the foundational principles that build character, serve as a guide for ethical conduct in the nursing profession and are interwoven throughout the curriculum.

**The faculty envision PN program graduate's practice reflects the values of:**

1. **Caring** is the transpersonal experience which protects, promotes and optimizes health through human nurturing, warmth and connectedness. Caring encompasses the essence of nursing.
2. **Accountability** is taking personal responsibility for one's actions and providing care within the scope and standards of nursing practice.
3. **Professionalism** is demonstrating professional behaviors according to the legal and ethical standards for a competent licensed practical nurse.

### iii. Philosophy

#### 1. Health

Health is a dynamic state of physiological, psychological, socio-cultural, developmental, and spiritual well-being leading to achievement of optimal personal potential. In health deficits, one observes levels of stability and complexity.

Every individual has the right to seek optimal health and the right to choose actions that may be detrimental to health. The freedom to make informed choices is accompanied by individual accountability to self, family, and society.

The concept of health is extended from individuals to families, groups, communities, and populations.

#### 2. Person

A person is a unique being, with inherent dignity and worth, who is in constant interaction with an ever-changing internal, external, and interpersonal environment.

People acquire social experiences in families and communities to function as caring, learning, and relating beings, thus forming society. The health needs of a society shape its health care system. As a component of the system, nursing provides a service valued by society, a society becoming increasingly aware of the health of its members and their right to seek health care.

#### 3. Environment

Environment is all conditions, circumstances, and influences within, surrounding and affecting the development and behavior of the person. The environment influences people and people influence the environment. Nursing participates in, coordinates, and leads the health care team in multiple structured and unstructured environments.

#### 4. **Nursing**

“Nursing integrates the art and science of caring and focuses on the protection, promotion and optimization of health and human functioning; prevention of illness and injury; facilitation of healing; and alleviation of suffering through compassionate presence. Nursing is the diagnosis and treatment of human responses, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, and in recognition of the connection of all humanity” (ANA, 2021).

As a science, nursing provides care based on evidence-based knowledge appropriate to specific levels of education. As an art, nursing studies and understands health-related experiences from a perspective of caring. LPN and BSN levels of nursing education prepare different nurses who practice under supervision or independently to provide, coordinate and evaluate care.

#### 5. **Teaching**

Teaching is the inspired formation and sustaining of an environment that co-constructs effective and engaged learning through bridge building between student and faculty. It is an extended creative process that evolves over time.

#### 6. **Learning**

Learning is a cognitive process of acquiring knowledge and skill while discovering personal meaning.

#### 7. **Nursing Education**

Nursing Education is an organized and dynamic process that facilitates learning to prepare future practitioners to assist individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations in achieving optimal health. Faculty employ creative visioning to incorporate knowledge from the humanities and sciences in the teaching of nursing theory, skills and behaviors that assist graduates to assume responsibility and accountability for their nursing practice in a global society.

#### 8. **Program Outcomes**

Program outcomes are the competencies achieved by the graduate at the end of the PN program. These outcomes drive educational opportunities in an atmosphere of mutual respect and a commitment to excellence within each program and include achievement of the program’s identified EPSLOs, respective National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN) pass rates for nurse licensure, and Program Completion and Job Placement Rates.

#### f. **Degree Completion Plan Guidelines**

Students enrolled in the PN program are required to take the DSU courses according to the respective Degree Completion Plan. Exceptions to the rule are transfer students who have completed courses prior to admission and have received official approval for course

substitution and credit from the DSU Registrar in collaboration with the Nursing Director. For transfer students, transcripts will be evaluated by the Student Admissions and Progression (SAP) committee within the department of nursing to determine if program pre-requisite courses have been met and/or which courses will be needed for degree completion.

**g. E-mail Address**

Students are required to use university email accounts for official university related correspondence. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure their email address is registered in Campus Connection to receive campus wide announcements and course information/updates (Blackboard) from faculty.

**h. Academic Advisement**

Academic advising is important to student success. It is the student's responsibility to make appointments and meet with the assigned advisor prior to registration each semester and as necessary for advising conferences. Advising conferences are documented on the ‘Student Advising Workbook’ and placed in the student’s electronic file.

**DICKINSON STATE UNIVERISTY – PN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM COMPLETION PLAN**

Spring Semester					
Course/#	Credits	Title	Semester Taken	Transferred	Grade
ENGL 110	3	College Composition I			
BIOL 111/111L	4	Concepts of Biology			
PSYC 111	3	Introduction to Psych			
NURS 121	4	Fundamentals of Nursing (3c) & Lab (1c)			
<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>		<b>14</b>	
Fall Semester					
BIOL 220/200L	4	Anatomy & Physiology I/Lab			
PSYC 250	3	Developmental Psych			
NURS 215	3	Introduction to Pharmacology/Lab			

NURS 241	3	Intermediate Nursing Concepts I			
NURS 298B	3	Intermediate Nursing Concepts Clinical I			
<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>16</b>		<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>30</b>	
Spring Semester					
BIOL 221/221L	4	Anatomy & Physiology II/Lab			
NURS 261	3	Nursing and Special Populations			
NURS 268	2	Nursing and Special Populations Clinical			
NURS 251	3	Intermediate Nursing Concepts II			
NURS 298C	2	Intermediate Nursing Concepts Clinical II			
<b>CREDITS</b>	<b>14</b>		<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>44</b>	

**i. Selection Criteria for Admission to the PN Program**

The application of each applicant who meets all admission requirements will be considered on an individual basis. Applications will be considered using the following selection criteria:

- i. Be at least 18 years of age
- ii. Admission to Dickinson State University
- iii. Completion of an application to the nursing program
- iv. Cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher with a high school diploma, GED Certification, or a GPA of 2.5 or higher across at least 12 college-level credits
- v. Completion of the TEAS (Test of Essential Academic Skills) administered by assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) Nursing Education
- vi. Must achieve a “proficient” level score in the overall score, science, English and language usage score
- vii. Completion of a Nursing Essay
- viii. Conditional acceptance will be granted pending completion of background check and drug screen
- ix. Continuation to meet additional program requirements

**j. Waiting List Procedure**

Once enrollment capacity is reached in the PN program, those applicants meeting all admission requirements will be placed on the Waiting List. When program space becomes available students on the Waiting List will be notified. Students have the right to accept or decline admission. If a student declines admission, the student relinquishes their position

on the Waiting List and must RESTART the nursing program application process (excluding the NDUS application).

Students on the Waiting List who do NOT get the opportunity to enter the nursing program due to lack of space availability are eligible to reapply for the next cohort.

Students on the waiting list are encouraged to meet with their advisor regarding taking general education and support courses within the nursing major.

**k. Chain of Command**

Issues of student concern in clinical and didactic courses are to be discussed with the faculty member involved first. If there is a need for further discussion, the student is to UTILIZE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND: Faculty member, Director of Nursing, School of Education Dean, Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**II. ADMISSION/PROGRESSION/WITHDRAWAL/GRADUATION FROM PN CERTIFICATE PROGRAM**

**a. Withdrawal from the Nursing Program**

When a student finds it necessary to withdraw from the program, they must complete ALL of the following steps:

1. Meet with their Nursing faculty advisor when considering withdrawal; (a student withdrawing from the University must complete the online Cancellation/Withdrawal form and submit it electronically.
2. Ensure they have dropped any appropriate co-requisite courses (i.e., clinical), to avoid receiving a failing grade.
3. If considering readmission, refer to the readmission requirements below.

When a student withdraws from the nursing program after the University census date, that withdrawal will be counted toward the allotted number of admissions per student.

**b. Readmission to the Nursing Program Following Program Withdrawal or Non-Progression**

Readmission to a nursing education program is allowed only once. Should a student withdraw or not progress from the nursing program a second time, the student will be considered terminated and not eligible to reapply.

Students who want to re-enter are required to:

1. Complete a nursing application for readmission prior to the semester in which they seek admission
2. Correct any deficiencies
3. Meet the Admission and Progression program requirements that are in effect at the time classes start following official readmission into the nursing program

Readmission to the nursing program cannot be guaranteed.

**c. NURS course prefix grades**

Students must earn a grade of ‘C’ or higher in any required didactic course or an ‘S’ in clinical for continued progression in the PN program.

**d. Course Repetition**

- i. A student who is readmitted in an effort to raise their nursing GPA or pass a clinical course may repeat up to two nursing courses within the same semester.
- ii. Refer to current Dickinson State University Catalog for the institutional Course Repeat Policy. The highest grade achieved in the course will be utilized in calculating the student’s grade point average and degree requirements.
- iii. Students are not allowed to retake a course they have already completed and obtained a grade for while simultaneously progressing in the respective nursing education program.
- iv. If either a corequisite didactic or lab/clinical course need to be repeated, students must repeat both courses simultaneously.

**e. Student Termination from the Nursing Program**

Student termination from the nursing program(s) at DSU is a serious consequence as students who are terminated are not eligible to apply for readmission.

EXAMPLE A: A student may not repeat more than one required nursing course as a result from earning a "D", "F", or "U" grade. Should the student receive a grade of “D”, "F", or "U" in ANY required second nursing course, the student is terminated from the program. The following example depicts this policy:

COURSE	GRADE	RESULT
Nursing 121	F	Does not progress, may reapply to repeat Nursing 131
Nursing 121 (Repeat)	C or Higher	Continues in Program
Nursing 298B	U	Termination from Program

EXAMPLE B: Failing grades within two PN required nursing courses in co-requisites or in required nursing courses taken within the same semester results in termination from the program. The following example depicts this policy:

COURSE	GRADE	RESULT
Nursing 241 (co-requisite N298B)	D	Termination from Program
Nursing 298B (co-requisite N241)	U	

**III. EXPENSES AND NURSING PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

**a. Expenses**

In addition to the regular university tuition and fees, nursing students are required to pay nursing fees relative to the program in which the student is enrolled.

Students are responsible for any costs associated with maintaining program compliance (i.e., health insurance, required immunizations, laboratory tests and medical treatment). There are additional expenses such as scrubs, clinical supplies and equipment (pen lights, stethoscopes, etc.), and licensure application. Optional costs may include graduation-related expenses.

**b. Clinical Travel**

Students are responsible for all expenses related to clinical experiences in and outside of the Dickinson community, to include but not limited to transportation, use of a motor vehicle, meals, lodging, and any additional costs.

**c. Dress Code**

The following dress code for the PN program and the guidelines of each clinical agency must be followed to ensure infection control and the safety of faculty, staff, students, others, and patients/clients, and applies to all genders:

**i. Name Tag**

Students must wear a name tag. One clinical name tag will be furnished for each student. The cost to replace the nametag will be the student's responsibility.

**ii. Pre-Clinical and Community Attire**

1. Business-casual dress
2. Soft-soled shoes, with a closed heel and toe
3. Name tag

**iii. Unacceptable Pre-Clinical and Community Attire (refer to clinical guideline for specific details)**

1. Jeans (of any color)
2. Leggings and jeggings (unless a long shirt/tunic covers to mid-thigh)
3. Shorts
4. Skirts shorter than 2" above the knee
5. Low cut, off-the shoulder shirts
6. Pants or shirts that expose the midriff front or back
7. Baseball caps, bandanas and other non-approved head covers

Students who wear the previously listed items will be asked to leave clinical.

**iv. Required Clinical Attire**

1. Nursing program approved scrubs:
  - a. Scrubs must be the color royal blue, with a DSU Nursing patch.
  - b. Scrub jackets are optional and may be worn over the scrubs. Jackets must be royal blue in color, with a patch.
  - c. Scrubs must be neat, clean, unwrinkled and fit properly
  - d. Scrub pants must be hemmed to an appropriate length and not touch the floor

- e. Shirts worn under scrubs can be solid white, royal blue, grey, or black
  - f. Shirts with a thumbhole must be rolled to wrist (infection control)
  - g. Shirts and pants must be of appropriate length and size to maintain coverage of the midriff while performing clinical duties; underwear must not be visible
2. Specific agency requirement for uniforms will be delineated in respective clinical guidelines
  3. Soft-soled shoes, with a closed heel and toe
  4. Nursing patch is to be worn on the left sleeve of the scrub top

**d. Required Equipment for Clinical**

- i. Black pen
- ii. Penlight
- iii. Wristwatch with second hand/digital capability
- iv. Stethoscope

**e. Personal Hygiene and Appearance**

- i. Maintain adequate standards of personal hygiene regarding cleanliness and body odor
- ii. Hair must be neat and clean. Long hair (below collar-length) must be worn pulled back from the face.
- iii. Strong odors from perfume, lotions and oils, aftershave, and hairsprays are not permitted
- iv. Cigarette smoke odor will not be tolerated
- v. Students with beards and/or mustaches must keep them short and well-groomed
- vi. Visible jewelry cannot have profanity or nudity and must not be offensive to others
- vii. Necklaces should NOT be worn
- viii. Earrings should be kept to studs or small hoops.
- ix. Facial piercings should be limited to small studs without dangling bars, chains, or hoops
- x. One to two rings are permitted, and CANNOT HAVE HIGH PRONGS
- xi. Visible tattoos cannot have profanity or nudity and must not be offensive to others
- xii. Makeup should be worn in moderation
- xiii. Fingernails are to be clean, trimmed no longer than ¼ inch from the tip of the finger. Chipped nail polish, artificial nails, gel applications and nail jewelry are NOT allowed
- xiv. Gum is not permitted
- xv. Any additional requirements per the clinical site

**f. Criminal Background Checks**

All nursing students admitted or readmitted to the PN Program are required to complete criminal background checks (CBC). **Participation in the CBC process is MANDATORY for students' continuation in the nursing education program.** CBCs are provided via Asset Control, Incorporated, a Private Investigations Agency registered in the State of Texas. Searches include:

- i. Social Security Trace
- ii. County Criminal Searches (maiden and married names)
- iii. Diligence Plus National Criminal Database Research Tool
- iv. Sex Offender Search
- v. Government Exclusionary Lists (GSA/OIG)

Participation in the CBC is necessary to obtain clearance for students' participation in clinical learning opportunities at various healthcare facilities prior to students' clinical learning. Dickinson State University has a permissible purpose in completing the CBC for each student admitted to the nursing programs; in no way is discrimination a permissible purpose.

The process for completing the CBC is necessary to obtain clearance for students' participation in clinical Trade Commission Guidelines. A copy of the agreement between Dickinson State University and Asset Control, Incorporated is available for any interested party upon request. Steps of the CBC include but are not limited to:

- vi. The Director of Nursing will screen the background check results for student verification purposes. The action taken by the Director of Nursing may include:
  1. Clearing students for continued participation in their respective nursing clinical courses and nursing education program, when the students' criminal background check is clear of any criminal activity (other than minor traffic offenses).
  2. Terminating students with criminal backgrounds from participation in any nursing education course and program when criminal background information indicates a student has not been sufficiently rehabilitated or the nature of the offense or offenses has a direct bearing on a student's fitness or ability to serve the public in the profession.
- vii. When criminal offense(s) are evident in a student's CBC, they will be screened on a case-by-case basis. Consideration will be given to:
  1. The nature of each offense, including whether it was a violent or nonviolent offense and whether it has a direct bearing on a student's fitness or ability to serve the public in the profession.
  2. The number of offenses, including repeated offenses, and age of the student at the time.

3. Information concerning the degree to which the student has been rehabilitated.
  4. Time elapsed since the conviction. In general, completion of a period of five years release after final discharge or release from any term of probation, parole or sentence without subsequent conviction of another criminal offense shall be deemed prima facie evidence of sufficient rehabilitation; however, in such cases the nature of the offense or offenses and bearing on fitness or ability to serve the public in the profession may nevertheless warrant termination.
- viii. Students who refuse to complete the CBC will also be terminated from their nursing education program.
  - ix. Students who are terminated from nursing education courses and their respective nursing education program are notified in writing. A student may request review/reconsideration of the decision by making a request for reconsideration in writing to the Director of Nursing within three days of receipt of the notice of termination from the nursing program. The request shall include a statement of reasons why the student believes the decision should be reconsidered and may include supporting documentation. The SAP Committee shall, within five days of filing the request, consider the request and notify the student in writing of its decision, which shall be final.
  - x. Students who are terminated from the nursing education program as a result of their CBC are eligible to reapply for admission in the next academic year, or later. The student's application must include evidence of a current criminal background check obtained via the Nursing Program at the time of application (cost incurred by the student at the time of the search). The results of the current CBC will be used in the readmission decision.
  - xi. Students who question the decision made are referred to the 'Code of Student Conduct' policy in the Dickinson State University Student Handbook.
  - xii. Results of the criminal background checks are kept confidential by the Nursing staff and faculty and are ONLY released to those healthcare facilities which require the information and/or a copy of the background check to screen students with a record of criminal offense(s) in order to determine whether or not to allow students to participate in clinical learning at their facility. A signed release from the student (Authorization for the Release of Student Criminal History Record Information) is required prior to the Nursing faculty or staff releasing student information to any healthcare facility.
  - xiii. Clinical rotations will not be customized to accommodate a student who has been denied the right to participate in an assigned health care facility, and the student will be terminated from the nursing education program.

**g. Drug Screening Policy**

Each nursing student admitted or readmitted to the PN Program is required to complete a drug screening. The faculty will assist the students in completing the drug screening. Participation in drug screening is necessary to obtain clearance for students' participation in clinical learning opportunities at various healthcare facilities prior to students' clinical learning. Dickinson State University (DSU) has a permissible purpose in completing the drug screening for each student admitted to the nursing programs; in no way is discrimination a permissible purpose.

**Participation in the drug screening process is MANDATORY for student's continuation in the respective nursing education program.** The drug screening is provided via the DSU designated collection site and includes providing a urine sample. The collection site staff will monitor students during their collection of specimens. Students enrolled in the DSU Nursing Program are subject to random drug screening in accordance with program policies and clinical partner requirements.

**The process for completing the Drug Screen includes:**

- i. All drug screens will be reviewed by a Medical Review Officer. As needed, the Medical Review Officer will contact the subject of testing to discuss test results prior to releasing results to the Nursing Program Office Coordinator.
- ii. Drug testing will be conducted to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) standard cutoff concentrations. Unless other prohibited by law the drug test may include (list is not exhaustive):
  1. Amphetamines
  2. Barbiturates
  3. Benzodiazepines
  4. Cocaine
  5. Marijuana
  6. Methadone
  7. Methamphetamine
  8. Opiates/Morphine
  9. Oxycodone
  10. Phencyclidine
  11. Alcohol
- iii. Drug screen results will be reviewed by the Director of Nursing upon receipt.
- iv. The Nursing Program SAP Committee members will review the drug screen results for student verification purposes. The action taken by the Director of Nursing may include:
  1. Clearing students for continued participation in their respective nursing education program and clinical courses, when a student's drug screen is negative.
  2. Terminating students:
    - a. With a positive confirmatory drug screen test result(s).

- b. Who refuse to complete the drug screen or fails to complete the screen on the specified date(s).
3. Students who are terminated from the nursing education program and their respective nursing education courses are notified in writing. A student may request an appeal of the decision by completing the appeals process in writing to the Director of Nursing within three business days of receipt of the notice of termination from the nursing program. The request shall include a statement of reasons why the student believes the decision should be reconsidered and may include supporting documentation. Within five business days of receiving the student's written notice, the SAP Committee shall consider the request and notify the student in writing of its decision, which shall be final.
4. Students who are terminated from the nursing education program as a result of their positive drug screening are eligible to reapply for admission in the next academic year, or later. The student's application must include evidence of a current negative drug screen result at the time of application. The cost(s) for this drug screen will be incurred by the student and paid for prior to the drug screen being completed. The results of this current drug screen will be used in the SAP Committee's readmission decision.
5. Students who desire to appeal the SAP Committee decision are referred to the 'Student Code of Conduct' policy and procedure in the Dickinson State University Student Handbook.
6. Students are required to sign the Nursing Program's "Authorization for the Release of Drug Screening Record Information" prior to the Nursing faculty releasing student information to any healthcare facility (retained in the student's file).
7. Results of the drug screening are kept confidential by the Nursing staff and faculty and are ONLY released to those healthcare facilities which require the information and/or a copy of the drug screening result, in order to determine whether to allow students to participate in clinical learning at their facility.

**h. Random Drug Screening Policy**

As part of maintaining a safe and professional environment in the nursing program, students may be subject to random drug testing. This may occur at the discretion of the Director of Nursing or upon the request of clinical partners. Random drug tests are conducted to ensure compliance with both program standards and the requirements of healthcare facilities. Participation in these tests is mandatory for continued enrollment in the nursing program. Failure to comply with random drug testing may result in disciplinary actions, including termination from the program.

**i. Functional Abilities**

Dickinson State University nursing students must be able to fully perform the essential functional abilities, with or without reasonable accommodations in the following areas. The curriculum for the PN Program requires students to actively engage in diverse, complex and specific didactic and clinical experiences essential to the practice and acquisition of essential nursing skills and functions. Unique combinations of physical and motor, sensory, cognitive, behavioral and emotional, and communication abilities are required of students to satisfactorily perform these skills and functions. In addition to being essential for the successful completion of the curricular requirements, these functional abilities are also necessary to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the student, the faculty, fellow students, and the clients for whom the nursing student is assigned.

Completing the functional abilities screening is required of students for admission and progression in the PN Program. To ensure safe nursing practice, it is essential that students can perform the required functional abilities. It is the responsibility of the student to disclose any information that may require the need for accommodation.

The SAP Committee, in consultation with the student and the Dean of Students or Designee makes the final decision regarding reasonable accommodations and how they will be provided. The SAP committee will meet with the student to discuss possible accommodations prior to making a final determination. The final decision depends on whether accommodations can be made to support a student's abilities to perform within a zone of safe practice. The zone of safe practice minimizes the risk to the student, faculty, student's peers and the clients the student is assigned to care for in clinical rotations. The University is not required to make modifications that substantially alter the requirements of a nursing education program.

When it is determined that reasonable accommodations can be made, a collaborative approach will be used in supporting the student. The Dean of Students or Designee, the Director of Nursing, the student's nursing faculty advisor, respective team/level faculty and the student will jointly develop, implement and evaluate the established plan on an ongoing basis.

The implementation of an accommodation in the clinical setting is subject to prior approval from the respective clinical healthcare facilities. It is the responsibility of the Chair of the SAP Committee / Director of Nursing to ascertain permission from the healthcare facilities for the implementation of an accommodation prior to the start of the clinical rotations. Students who are denied from participating in any clinical facility will be terminated from the nursing education program.

The student is required to obtain and manage any established accommodations prior to beginning clinical courses. It is the student's responsibility to disclose the established accommodation to respective clinical faculty as they progress through the program. In addition, the student is responsible for and must maintain regular communication regarding the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the reasonable accommodations with their respective team/level nursing faculty. Failure on the part of the student to obtain &/or manage

established accommodations, or failure to maintain regular communication with respective faculty as the student progresses through the program will result in termination from the nursing program.

Even with reasonable accommodations, if it is determined that risks to the student, faculty, peers and/or clients the student is assigned to care for remain, the student cannot be admitted or continue in the nursing program. The nursing program reserves the right to remove students from a nursing education program when the student is unable to demonstrate functional ability and cannot perform within a zone of safe practice. Students have the right to appeal any decisions made by the nursing program to deny admission and/or remove a student from the nursing program (See ‘Appeals Process’ in the PN Policy Handbook). When it is determined reasonable accommodation cannot be made, the student will be referred to the Dean of Students personnel for advising relative to considering other major/career areas.

**The functional abilities and specific activities/attributes include, but are not limited to:**

<b>Physical &amp; Motor Functions</b>	
Gross Motor Skills & Mobility	Students must be able to: Walk, move within confined spaces, sit and maintain balance, stand and maintain balance, reach above shoulders, reach below waist, sit, stand, twist, move quickly, push/pull, bend/stoop, climb (ladders, stools, &/or stairs), squat/crouch, kneel while maintaining balance as required during clinical activities to provide care to clients of all ages in all health care settings and to function in emergency situations.
Fine Motor Skills	Students must be able to: Pick up objects with hands, grasp small objects with hands, write with a pen or pencil, key/type (use a computer), pinch/pick or otherwise work with fingers (syringe), twist (turn knobs with hands), squeeze with finger (eye dropper), manipulate supplies and equipment skillfully, demonstrate bilateral manual dexterity of all fingers to grasp, control and perform precise procedures to provide safe care.
Physical Endurance	Students must be able to: Stand (at client side during procedure), sustain repetitive movements, maintain physical tolerance (work an entire shift), for extended periods of time relative to each particular course &/or clinical rotations of 6, 8, 10 and/or 12 continuous hours.
Physical Strength	Students must be able to: Push and pull 25 pounds (position clients), support 25 pounds of weight (ambulate client), lift 25 pounds (transfer client), move light objects up to 10 pounds, move heavy objects weighing from 10 to 50 pounds, lift a minimum of 50 pounds from the floor to the waist, defend self against combative client, carry equipment/supplies, use upper body strength (restrain a client), squeeze with hands (fire extinguisher).

<b>Sensory Functions</b>	
Hearing	Students must be able to: Hear and correctly understand normal conversational speaking level sounds, hear faint voices, hear faint body sounds (BP, bowel & lung sounds), hear in situations when unable to visualize speaker's lips (due to wearing surgical mask), hear and distinguish auditory alarms, pager/intercom, and differentiate wide normal range of tones.
Visual	Students must be able to: See objects up to 20 inches away, see objects up to 20 feet away, see objects more than 20 feet away, use peripheral vision, correctly distinguish colors and distinguish range of intensity of colors, correctly read fine print, medical records, digital and computer screens, to differentiate fine markings (i.e. syringes).
Depth Perception	Students must be able to: Use appropriate depth perception to perform basic and advanced skills correctly (e.g. insert IVs, administer injections, insert catheters/nasogastric tubes).
Tactile	Students must be able to: Feel with sensitivity to distinguish vibrations/pulsations (pulses), detect temperature, feel differences in surface characteristics (skin turgor), texture, feel differences in sizes, shapes (palpate vein), and also detect environmental temperature.
Smell	Students must be able to: Safely detect and differentiate odors emanating from clients or the environment, detect smoke, fire, gases or noxious smells, indicating unsafe conditions or changing client status.
<b>Cognitive Functions</b>	
Reading	Students must be able to: Read and understand the English language in written and/or electronic documents.
Arithmetic Competence	Students must be able to: Complete, read and understand columns of writing (flow sheets), read digital displays, read graphs/graphic printouts (I&O), calibrate equipment, convert numbers to/from metric, read graphs (vital sign sheets), tell time (English & military), measure time (duration), count rates (pulse rate), use measuring devices (thermometer), read measurement scales, count, add, subtract, multiply, divide, convert to/from metric, compute fractions (medication dosages), use a calculator, write numbers in records.
<b>Behavioral &amp; Emotional Functions</b>	
Emotional Stability	Students must be able to: Establish mature, sensitive, therapeutic relationships with appropriate personal & therapeutic boundaries, provide clients with emotional/psycho-social support, adapt to changing environment/stress, deal with unexpected crises, focus attention on task, monitor own emotions, perform multiple responsibilities concurrently, empathize with the situations & circumstances of others and be aware how their values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and experiences affect perceptions and relationships with others, handle strong emotions appropriately (e.g. grief, anger).
Interpersonal Skills	Students must be able to: Negotiate interpersonal conflict, respect differences in clients/others, establish therapeutic rapport with clients, and

	establish rapport with faculty, peers and others.
Analytical Thinking	Students must be able to: Use short and long term memory, transfer knowledge from one situation to another, process information, assess, reason, analyze, integrate information, evaluate outcomes, problem solve, prioritize task to respond to client changing conditions, organize tasks to completion.
Critical Thinking Skills	Students must be able to: Identify cause-effect relationships, plan/control activities for others, synthesize knowledge and skills, sequence and prioritize information, skills and abilities, plan activities for others, complete tasks in a timely manner, identify missing elements when gathering data.
Professional Conduct	Students must be able to: Morally reason and practice in an ethical manner, learn & abide by professional standards of practice, engage in patient care of all patient populations including but not limited to newborns, children, adolescents, adults, geriatric, developmentally disabled, medically compromised and/or vulnerable persons in designated clinical settings, possess personal attributes of honesty, integrity, compassion, empathy, responsibility & tolerance, demonstrate personal accountability for own actions, and give and receive constructive criticism.
<b>Communication Skills</b>	
Convey Information	Students must be able to: Convey information in the English language via spoken/written/computer communication (progress notes) and document patient care in legal records.
Speech	Students must be able to: Speak the English language to effectively communicate with others, interact clearly with others, speak clearly on the telephone, explain procedures, influence others, direct activities of others, teach client/family/groups, give clear oral reports, advocate for others.
Written	Students must be able to: Use the English language to write legibly, spell correctly, use proper grammar, provide written reports, communicate clearly via written and/or electronic media, use a computer.
Use of Machines, Supplies, & Equipment	Students must have the ability to properly and safely use various machines, supplies, equipment, and tools in performing client care.

**j. Student Health Status Report**

Upon admission or readmission to a nursing program, students must provide proof of required health information on official agency letterhead, inclusive of identification of the agency, dates, and official signatures by the faculty-specified deadline.

Official documentation for the following requirements includes:

- i. Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccines (complete series) and/or respective titers
- ii. Diphtheria-Tetanus-Pertussis (DTaP)
- iii. Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis (TdaP) (must include Pertussis vaccination within last 10 years)

- iv. Varicella Zoster (chicken pox) vaccine (complete series) and/or a positive varicella titer
- v. Hepatitis B Vaccination series (complete series) and/or respective titers
- vi. Other vaccines as required (i.e., influenza, COVID, etc.)
- vii. Tuberculosis Testing:
  - a. *Initial testing prior to the first clinical experience and annually*
  - b. Complete one of the following for the initial TB test:
    - i. 2 step TB skin test
    - ii. QuantiFERON
  - c. For any positive TB test, the student must be evaluated by a medical provider and obtain the providers consent to participate in clinical.
  - d. *Previous positive TB test:*
  - e. Students who currently, or in the past have tested positive for TB, must submit official documentation of ongoing medical supervision of the condition (i.e., follow-up x-ray) and the health care provider's permission to participate in clinical.
- viii. Annual health insurance coverage (must be maintained throughout the program).
- ix. Current CPR certification

Students who do not submit evidence of official documentation by the faculty-designated date(s) are not allowed to participate in clinical and will receive an Unsatisfactory (U) grade for each clinical experience/day they are out of compliance and risk being placed on probation and/or failing the clinical course.

A comprehensive database of the student's health status information will be maintained on the Nursing shared drive throughout the program. Health status information will be released to clinical agencies when required. Per agency requirements, students may be requested to submit official health information.

Students who seek a medical exemption from required vaccinations must provide official evidence for the reason from a health care provider and will be excluded from clinical experiences until proof of immunization(s) or allowable substitutions from the health care agencies are put in place. **If a health care agency will not allow substitutions for the required immunizations, the student cannot participate in clinicals and will be terminated from the program.**

**k. Student File**

Individual **confidential** student files are secured electronically on the Nursing shared drive. Student financial aid records are maintained and secured by the Office of Financial Aid. Students have access to their file ONLY, via assistance from their nursing faculty and/or the Nursing Program Office Coordinator. Upon graduation, the nursing files continue to be secured electronically on the Nursing shared drive. The contents of the files may include, but are not limited to: SAP Committee correspondence, Functional Abilities self- reports, high school and/or college transcripts, GPA calculation worksheet, limited financial aid-

related documents, Clinical Performance Evaluations, criminal background checks, drug screening results, current CPR certification, advising worksheets, student-faculty advising and/or conference notes.

#### IV. CLASSROOM/CLINICAL/STUDENT EXPECTATIONS/MISCONDUCT PROCEDURES

##### a. Nursing Laboratories

The Nursing Skills Lab is located in Klinefelter Hall, 4th floor. Available lab hours for student practice are posted outside the lab; the lab is locked after hours for security purposes. However, students can access the lab with a key card. The OB Simulation Laboratory is located in Klinefelter Hall, 4th floor and is open as needed. The first-floor simulation lab is located on the first floor of Klinefelter Hall and is open as needed.

##### b. Grading System

###### i. Didactic Course Grading

1. The grade must be at least a "C" to pass the course and progress. Anyone receiving a grade below a 'C' must repeat the course in order to progress in the nursing program. (Refer to admission and progression criteria).

<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Letter</u>	<u>Grade Point</u>
93-100	A	4.0
84-92	B	3.0
75-83	C	2.0
66-74	D	1.0
≤ 65	F	0.0

2. Cumulative course grades are available to students on Blackboard and/or via respective faculty. Students may obtain their summative course grades on-line via Campus Connection.

###### ii. Clinical Course Grading

1. The DSU Nursing Program utilizes a satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) clinical grading system.

##### c. Clinical Grade: Probation & Course Failure

Student performance is evaluated during each clinical experience utilizing the Clinical Performance Evaluation, clinical judgement rubric and/or other clinical rubrics.

Any student who receives a "U" for one of the skill return demonstrations or a "U" as a SUMMATIVE clinical rotation grade in any competency will be placed on clinical probation. Clinical probation is a warning to the student that minimum clinical performance has not been attained.

Any student receiving a second "U" during a skill return demonstration or a second "U" as a summative rotation grade in any competency will receive a "U" for their summative clinical course grade and will be unable to progress in the nursing program. Progression in

the nursing program is dependent upon the receipt of a summative clinical course grade of "S".

Should a student receive a grade of "U" in multiple competencies within one summative clinical rotation and said unsatisfactory summative clinical rotation grade is the first unsatisfactory summative clinical grade the student has ever received within the respective nursing course, the student will receive a "U" for that clinical rotation and be placed on clinical probation. The student must demonstrate competency by receiving a summative clinical rotation grade of "S" in all remaining clinical competencies within that course. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory performance in all competencies will result in a "U" for a final clinical course grade and non-progression in the respective nursing program. Progression in the nursing program is dependent upon the receipt of a summative clinical course grade of "S".

If a student receives a "U" in the LAST rotation/skill return of ANY clinical course, the student is in jeopardy of failing the clinical course. The nursing faculty teaching the clinical course shall determine the summative clinical course grade which may be an 'S' or 'U'.

**d. Student Responsibility in Meeting Course Requirements**

The student enrolled in the nursing program will:

- i. Uphold the values of the Nursing Program: Caring, Integrity, Respect, Advocacy and Accountability.
- ii. Assume responsibility for all classroom and clinical preparation.
- iii. Complete all course work independently unless directed otherwise by faculty (i.e. group work)
- iv. Attend all scheduled class and clinical sessions, seminars, demonstrations, field trips, and workshops as designated. Clinicals may be scheduled on days, evenings, nights, weekdays, and/or weekends (refer to Class Attendance Policy, DSU Catalog).
- v. Arrive on time for class or clinical sessions; attendance will be taken.
- vi. Hand in assignments at the day and time designated by the faculty. Failure to do so may result in points being deducted in a didactic course, or an "Unsatisfactory" clinical rotation and/or course grade.
- vii. Practice honesty at all times. Academic misconduct or other misconduct designated by the university will NOT be tolerated. Refer to the Student Code of Conduct in the DSU Student Handbook.

**e. Testing Policy**

All exams will be administered in person via Blackboard or with an approved proctor for DSU Live Students. There are basic standards to each exam and some progression in rigor as students advance in the nursing program.

- i. Exams must be completed in one sitting (forced completion)
- ii. Exams may require the use of Respondus Lockdown Browser for exam security

- iii. All ATI assignments must be completed within each course assigned

The student should follow the following guidelines to maintain academic honesty during test taking:

- iv. All belongings must be placed out of reach (pencil, beverage, and your computer is all that will be allowed at your desk).
- v. Cell phones and smart watches must be turned off and placed with the student's belongings.
- vi. Calculators and scrap paper will be provided to students if necessary.
- vii. Absolutely no textbooks, notes, or other resources are allowed at each workspace unless specified by the course instructor.
- viii. No websites/resources located on a student's computer can be utilized during the exam (Respondus Lockdown Browser required), unless specified by the course instructor.
- ix. At least one desk should be between each student (if possible).
- x. Once the exam has begun, students are not allowed to leave the classroom unless approved by the instructor.
- xi. Students are not allowed to ask content-based questions during the exam.
- xii. If a student is going to be late for the exam, they should contact the faculty immediately. Based on circumstances of student tardiness to the exam, faculty have the discretion to give zero points or offer partial credit for that exam.
- xiii. Students receiving testing accommodations through the SOAR Center are expected to schedule the exam via email with the SOAR Proctoring Center and include the appropriate professor within that communication for each exam not taken in the classroom.

**f. DSULive**

DSULive is only offered for NURS prefix courses upon approval from the Nursing Director and associated faculty member on a very limited basis. Faculty believe the best experience for nursing students is to be in person with their peers. If a student registers for a nursing course in DSULive, they must complete the course in that modality and are expected to participate synchronously unless excused per the Dickinson State University Class Attendance Policy.

Students who attend and participate in the nursing course(s) via DSULive are expected to:

- i. Meet the PC and/or Laptop computer requirements of DSU (Chromebooks and cell phones are not compatible).
- ii. Be visible on camera with microphone available (or will be counted absent).
- iii. Actively participate and answer and ask questions by using their microphone (not chat features)
- iv. Be assigned group projects at the faculty's discretion.

As outlined in the syllabus, there are days all students will be required to attend class in person. Including but not limited to:

- i. Orientation to Didactic and Clinical Courses
- ii. Unit/course examinations
- iii. ATI Proctored Assessments (Exams)
- iv. All clinical and lab courses. There is no DSULive option for clinical or lab courses.

Students who must complete exams remotely will be proctored and will be responsible to pay the associated proctoring fees. Students should coordinate with faculty regarding the appropriate proctoring platform.

Special circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Nursing Department.

**g. Student Absence**

If the student is unable to attend any nursing class or clinical experience, it is their responsibility to:

- i. Notify the faculty involved BEFORE the classroom, exam/quiz, lab or agency based clinical begins. The student absence will be evaluated on an individual basis by respective faculty to determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused. For related information refer to the Class Attendance Policy in the DSU Catalog and the Student Responsibilities in Meeting Course Requirements (i.e. academically related and institutionally sponsored activities).

**ii. Classroom Absence**

The student must notify the faculty member involved prior to missing any class. In the event the student's absence is determined to be excused and coincides with an exam/quiz, the examination will be scheduled at a date and time established by the faculty. The examination format and content used will be at the faculty's discretion. If the decision is made that the student's absence is unexcused, the student will not be allowed to make up the examination/quiz and they will receive 0 points.

**iii. Clinical Absence – Agency, Nursing Learning or Simulation Laboratory**

1. The student must call and speak directly to the clinical instructor, preferably the evening prior to clinical. If the student cannot reach the instructor involved, an email should be sent. In addition, they should attempt to notify the staff at the clinical site prior to the start of the clinical shift. If the student's absence is determined to be excused, the student and faculty will collaborate to arrange an alternative clinical. If the absence is determined to be unexcused, the student will receive an unsatisfactory grade in the respective experience/rotation; repeated absence is sufficient cause for clinical course failure.

**DSU PN Certificate Program  
Professionalism Guidelines and Expectations Rubric**

Dickinson State University Nursing Program believes that professionalism is an essential component of nursing practice and strives for students to represent the program in a positive way. Professionalism is evaluated continually throughout the program to directly align with the PN Certificate’s End-of-Program Student Learning Outcome (EPSLO): “Exhibit professional behaviors of accountability and integrity in alignment with ethical, legal, and regulatory standards for practical nursing.” Students are expected to demonstrate professional conduct consistent with workplace expectations in all classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical settings.

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>2 – Satisfactory</b>	<b>1 – Needs Improvement</b>	<b>0 – Unsatisfactory</b>
<b>Attendance &amp; Punctuality</b>	Arrives on time and prepared. Follows absence notification policy appropriately per course syllabus. No pattern of tardiness.	Two instances of tardiness or improper notification of absence.	Five or more repeated instances of tardiness, unexcused absences, or failure to follow notification policy.
<b>Accountability</b>	Completes assigned clinical and course-related assignments on time. Seeks clarification when needed and demonstrates growth from feedback.	Two instances of late submission of assignments or incomplete responsibilities. Demonstrates limited responsiveness to feedback.	Five or more late or missing assignments, failure to complete required clinical paperwork, or refusal to respond appropriately to feedback.
<b>Respectful Communication</b>	Communicates professionally and respectfully with patients, peers, faculty, and healthcare team members. Student uses email as the primary method of communication with faculty.	Two instances in lack of professional tone or delay in communication. Inconsistent communication with faculty members using preferred communication methods.	Fails to communicate with instructor appropriately after notification and education from instructor. Uses inappropriate communication methods (e.g., informal messaging when email is required), demonstrates disrespectful or unprofessional tone, or breaches patient confidentiality.
<b>Responsibility &amp; Professional Conduct</b>	Adheres to dress code, safety standards, ethical guidelines, and facility policies in the classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical settings. Demonstrates	One instance in lack of professional conduct in the classroom, laboratory, simulation, or clinical settings.	Repeated policy violations, unsafe behavior, dishonesty, or conduct inconsistent with professional standards after notification and education from instructor.

**h. Professional Standing and Probation Policy**

Students who score at or below **6 out of 8 total points** at any point in the nursing program or during an evaluation period are not meeting the professional standard of the program. Professionalism concerns may impact a student's clinical standing regardless of academic or skill performance.

Failure to meet professionalism expectations will result in:

- Placement on **Professionalism Probation**
- Formal documentation of concerns
- Escalation of the concern from the course instructor to the **Program Director**

When concerns are escalated by the course instructor, the Program Director will meet with the student to develop a formal Professional Improvement Plan. This plan will outline specific behavioral expectations, measurable goals, and a defined timeline for improvement. Failure to demonstrate improvement may result in further disciplinary action by the SAP committee in accordance with program handbook and "Student Termination from the Nursing Program" policy.

**i. Academic Misconduct**

The Nursing faculty do not tolerate academic misconduct by students in nursing courses. When faculty has substantial evidence that academic misconduct has occurred, the faculty can determine the degree of penalty within the faculty's own jurisdiction (i.e. providing a failing course grade). Students may appeal this decision through the Academic Misconduct and Grade Appeals Process found in the DSU Student Handbook. If the evidence presented in the Appeals Process supports the accusation that academic misconduct has occurred, the student may be terminated from the nursing program.

**j. Classroom and/or Clinical Removal/Dismissal**

The Nursing faculty reserve the right to immediately remove any student from a class or clinical, whose behavior and/or practice (during or outside of the class or clinical) makes it inadvisable for the student to remain in the setting. Furthermore, based on the severity of the situation, the decision will be made to either place the student on probation or dismiss him/her from the nursing program. This policy will be enforced regardless of the student's progression in the nursing program.

**Classroom and/or clinical removal/dismissal is justified, but not limited to the following:**

A student who/is:

- i. Does not demonstrate the nursing program values of Caring, Integrity, Respect, Advocacy and/or Accountability
- ii. Endangers faculty, staff, self, others, and patients/clients
- iii. Unprofessional or unsafe and negatively affects the mental, emotional, or physical welfare of faculty, staff, self, others, and patients/clients

- iv. Inadequately prepared for class, or inadequate preparation and/or knowledge for assigned patient/client care, as determined by the faculty
- v. Unsafe nursing practice may or may not result in injury to the faculty, staff, self, others, and patient/client
- vi. Does not adhere to nursing program/university and/or clinical facility policies or standards
- vii. Breaches confidentiality including but not limited to verbal statements, written communications and/or social media postings
- viii. Insubordinate, uncooperative, and/or unprofessional
- ix. Physically, emotionally or verbally abusive to faculty, staff, self, others, and patients/clients
- x. Harasses faculty, staff, others, or patient/client
- xi. Fails to report significant data to appropriate sources
- xii. Sleep deprived or ill
- xiii. Suspected or found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (illegal, over the counter and/or prescription)
- xiv. Students are required to self-report any felony or misdemeanor to the Director of Nursing during their program enrollment.
- xv. Requested to be removed from the clinical agency by staff because performance is deemed unprofessional or unsafe to the mental, emotional, or physical welfare of staff, self, others, and patient/client

**The following procedure is to be adhered to when an incident occurs during the clinical course:**

1. The faculty member will direct the student to leave the clinical setting following the incident occurrence after all appropriate follow-up and paperwork is completed.
2. The faculty member will assign a grade of 'U' (unsatisfactory).
3. The incident will be documented by the faculty and signed by both the faculty member and the student and placed in the student's file. A copy will be given to the student. The student's signature indicates they have read the documentation. If the student refuses to sign the form, it is noted in writing by the faculty member.
4. The decision to remove the student from clinical will be reviewed by the respective clinical faculty member within one class day for subsequent action, which will be communicated to the student.
5. Faculty consultation with the student AND faculty approval to return to clinical is required prior to the student returning to the clinical setting.
6. The clinical faculty member will consult with the Nursing Program faculty or Director of Nursing when they consider this consultation is needed.

Consequences based upon the nature of the event:

\_\_\_\_\_ First situation of documented misconduct or critical incident will result in:

- Instructor to work with the student on a one-on-one basis to resolve the issue. Instructor discretion will be used to determine if incident automatically warrants advancement to second situation of documented misconduct or critical incident. Documentation of incident and instructor follow-up to occur within program advising document. Notification of Nursing Director.

\_\_\_\_\_ Second situation of documented misconduct or critical incident will result in:

- Implementation of probationary status with completion of Terms of Probationary Status Form below.
- Failure of exam or assignment, or failure of clinical evaluation (midterm/final) as appropriate
- Implementation of probationary status for the duration of program enrollment

\_\_\_\_\_ Third situation of documented misconduct or critical incident:

- Failure of the course
- Continued probation for duration of the program

\_\_\_\_\_ Fourth situation of documented misconduct or critical incident:

- Withdrawal of student from the program

The student may initiate the formal appeals process regarding any action taken, as described in the DSU Student Handbook.

## V. CLINICAL POLICIES

### a. Client Confidentiality

Given the sensitive, highly personal nature of health services and federal HIPAA regulations, students have an obligation to ensure that the legal, ethical, and moral standards of confidentiality are upheld. All client information is considered confidential and is not to be released except when required by law. Any breach of confidentiality is to be treated as a disciplinary matter; refer to 'Classroom and/or Clinical Removal/Dismissal' policy. Students are required to sign confidentiality statements at the request of respective clinical healthcare facilities.

### b. Patient Care Policy

Should the need arise, students are to utilize the agency protocol for summoning the agency's emergency response team. Students must follow agency protocols regarding participation in events such as CPR.

Students may be assigned to care for patients who are diagnosed with, or are being investigated, for having an infectious disease (i.e., COVID) that requires the nursing staff to wear an N95 respirator mask and proper Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). In order to maintain safety for students, faculty, healthcare staff and patients, all students must:

- i. Be properly fit tested for the clinical agency-specified N95 respirator mask, as arranged by the faculty

- ii. Return demonstration of how to properly don and doff (remove and/or store) the N95 mask as required by the clinical agency, and don and doff the required PPE
- iii. Ensure they have the proper agency-specified mask and PPE, and wear these at all times when caring for the assigned patient(s)
- iv. Expect some acute care clinical agencies (e.g., hospital and area clinics) may continue to require staff and students to wear N95 masks in these settings when caring for other patients

Students will not be assigned to care for, nor should they participate in the care of:

- v. Patients who refuse student care

**c. Expectations of Students for Clinical**

Clinical courses are conducted on-and off-campus and include a variety of learning experiences that are aligned with the specific course within the nursing education program. The on-campus clinical rotations/experiences are generally conducted within the Nursing Program; the off-campus rotations/experiences are conducted in a variety of settings with opportunities to meet the course learning outcomes. Clinical rotations are generally held Monday through Friday, however other time frames such as evenings, nights, Saturdays and Sundays are included. This allows the student to experience various shift routines that are common within the nursing profession.

Faculty collaborate with clinical personnel and department managers to create a clinical rotation schedule and guidelines/objectives. Faculty maintain an open line of communication with the clinical agency personnel to address any concerns related to student experiences and collaborate to evaluate the clinical site at the end of each semester.

During clinical experiences, the student is part of the nursing team as a learner, not as a service person or ‘employee’ of the clinical agency.

Students need to be aware that each off-campus clinical agency has its own policies and procedures that govern nursing practice in their facility. These policies and procedures will vary based on the clinical agency and/or setting (acute care, long-term care, community/public health, etc.) where care is provided. Students are not required to read all of an agency’s policies and procedures; however, students may need to read and understand designated policies and procedures for particular agencies and/or departments prior to beginning specified clinical course rotations. When this is deemed necessary, the faculty will provide the required information, the students will be required to read the information.

In addition, students may be required to review pertinent policies and/or procedures of the agency and/or setting prior to implementing specified nursing skills.

**d. Clinical Attendance**

- i. Students must arrive on time for clinical and attend pre and post conferences as scheduled. Students are to remain in the assigned clinical areas.

- ii. Students **MUST** stay at the clinical agency for all meals and/or breaks. When appropriate, students may be released for lunch at the discretion of their clinical instructor or preceptor.
- iii. Smoking breaks are not permitted.
- iv. When a student needs to leave their assigned clinical care area they must first report to the clinical faculty and the appropriate agency personnel

**e. Faculty Absence & Cancelling Clinical**

The faculty will:

- i. Notify the clinical agency and the Director of Nursing.
- ii. Attempt to notify students of absence prior to the clinical experience if possible.
- iii. Notify students at the clinical agency (if not previously notified).
- iv. Plan clinical make-up at their discretion

**f. Supervision of Care**

Students **MUST** notify nursing faculty of all non-/invasive skills and procedures to be performed **PRIOR** to implementation. All **INVASIVE** procedures **MUST** be supervised directly by nursing faculty or by the faculty's designee. When faculty deem student performance satisfactory and the student is told so by the faculty, patient care and invasive procedures may not require direct supervision.

**g. Health Status in Clinical Settings**

All students are expected to assume responsibility for self-protection and health maintenance in any clinical setting. The following policies are made in the interest of student safety:

- i. Should a student have change(s) in their health status (i.e., physical and/or mental illness, major surgery or childbirth) which may limit their ability in the clinical area, she/he must submit a written statement from their physician documenting these limitations prior to the first clinical experience or returning to clinical. The student may be required to follow any additional requirements deemed necessary by Accessibility Services. In addition, it is the student's responsibility to keep the Nursing faculty informed about any subsequent changes to their condition.
- ii. **Students MUST notify faculty of pregnancy status.** Students must assume their own responsibility to avoid direct contact with x-rays and/or diseases that could have adverse effects on the mother and/or fetus. These may include chicken pox, cytomegalovirus, enterovirus, Hepatitis B, HIV/AIDS, Herpes Simplex, Influenza, Measles, Mumps, Polio, Rubella, Syphilis, Toxoplasmosis, TB, etc.
- iii. All student injuries incurred during clinical must be reported immediately by the student to the clinical nursing faculty.

**h. Needlestick Injury/Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure**

Students incurring a needle stick injury or exposure to blood borne pathogens must receive immediate follow-up health care as appropriate.

Student responsibilities:

- i. Cleanse the injury site with soap and water.
- ii. Immediately notify clinical nursing faculty and/or appropriate agency personnel of the incident.
- iii. Complete agency protocol and incident reports as required.
- iv. Obtain medical attention from a healthcare provider of choice within 24 hours, regarding the need for post-exposure follow-up and treatment for possible exposure to blood borne pathogens, specifically for the Hepatitis B and C Virus, Tetanus and Human Immunodeficiency Virus.
- v. Accept all responsibility for any healthcare problems related to the injury.
- vi. Incur all costs of obtaining medical treatment.

Faculty responsibilities:

- vii. Assist students to complete agency's reporting requirements.
- viii. Complete the University's incident report form (Emergency Management Coordinator).
- ix. Encourage and assist the student to obtain medical attention.
- x. Document follow-up information in the student's file.

**i. Incident Reports**

Any incidents concerning students will be recorded on the appropriate form within the clinical setting. Faculty are to also complete a Dickinson State University Incident Report Form. The Incident Report is forwarded to the Director of Nursing and the Emergency Management Coordinator for State Risk Management notification.

**j. Inclement Weather Procedure**

- i. If conditions are such that it is anticipated clinical MAY be cancelled the following day, students are notified this MAY HAPPEN. Students should ensure faculty always have a current telephone number by which to reach them, should clinical be cancelled.
- ii. If the NDUS Campus Alert system announces the DSU campus will be closed due to inclement weather, clinical will also be cancelled.
- iii. After the latest available road conditions and weather reports are reviewed, involved faculty and the Director of Nursing will make the determination as to whether to cancel clinical by approximately 5:30 a.m. the morning of clinical.
- iv. Students and clinical agencies involved will be notified when clinical has been cancelled.
- v. Students are cautioned to "USE THEIR JUDGEMENT" and not take chances with driving during inclement weather conditions and consult with faculty as needed.

vi. If inclement weather preempts class, **STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR COURSE CONTENT AS DELINEATED ON THE SYLLABUS/COURSE CALENDAR.**

vii. Clinical will be rescheduled at the faculty's discretion.

**k. Cell Phones**

Cell phones are not to be used for personal reasons in the classrooms or in clinical settings. If smartwatches are used in the clinical setting, notifications must be turned off.

## DSU PN Certificate Program: Clinical Performance Evaluation (CPE)

The Clinical Performance Evaluation Form is designed to assess student progress and competency in the clinical setting at midterm and final evaluation periods. This tool provides structured feedback on professional behavior, communication, clinical judgment, safety, and skill performance to support ongoing growth and development. Evaluation criteria are aligned with the program’s End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes (EPSLOs), ensuring that clinical performance reflects the knowledge, skills, and professional standards expected of graduates. The pass, needs improvement, or fail designation communicates whether the student is meeting clinical expectations and progressing toward entry-level nursing practice competency.

Students must obtain a final grade of “S” to pass the clinical course. Students will review and sign evaluation form with clinical instructors at midterms. Students will be scored Satisfactory (S), Needs Improvement (NI), or Unsatisfactory (U) on each of the following EPSLOs. If the student receives an Unsatisfactory score in any category upon the final CPE, they will receive an Unsatisfactory score for the clinical course.

### Criteria Scoring:

Students who receive a rating of “S” are meeting all aspects of the EPSLOs appropriate for their level in the program. A rating of “NI” indicates that the student is partially meeting the EPSLOs but requires further development to consistently demonstrate expected competencies. A rating of “U” signifies that the student is not meeting the EPSLOs and will be placed on clinical probation to allow an opportunity for improvement. Students who receive an “NI” or “U” will be placed on academic probation and receive written and/or verbal feedback from the clinical instructor outlining the rationale for the rating and specific recommendations for improvement prior to the final evaluation.

	<p><b>A. Professionalism</b> Exhibit professional behaviors of accountability and integrity in alignment with ethical, legal, and regulatory standards for practical nursing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Accountability</b> – Willingness to assume responsibility for their learning and one’s own actions and behavior; is punctual; completes assignments in a timely manner; and uses legal and ethical principles of nursing</li> <li>• <b>Motivation</b> – positive enthusiasm for learning; actively participated in clinical</li> <li>• <b>Personal Appearance</b> – follows departmental and agency dress code</li> </ul>
	<p><b>B. Communication &amp; Collaboration</b> Use therapeutic and professional communication to build trust with clients and collaborate effectively with families and the healthcare team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Confidentiality</b> – Protects health information, HIPAA regulations</li> <li>• <b>Verbal</b> – Appropriately sends and receives messages using therapeutic communication skills</li> <li>• <b>Nonverbal</b> – Appropriately interprets and uses nonverbal communication in a therapeutic manner consistent with verbal messages.</li> <li>• <b>Collaboration with the Healthcare Team</b> – Collaborates with team members to facilitate effective care</li> <li>• <b>Delegation</b> – Direct aspects of client care to qualified UAPs</li> <li>• <b>Accountability</b> – Maintain accountability for outcomes of care directed to qualified UAPs</li> </ul>

	<p><b>C. Clinical Judgement</b> Apply nursing knowledge, evidence-based practice, and the clinical judgment process to recognize, prioritize, and respond to client needs across the lifespan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Recognizing Cues-</b> Determining what client findings are significant, most important, and of immediate concern to the nurse.</li> <li>• <b>Analyze Cues</b> - Organizing and linking the relevant cues with client conditions/problems.</li> <li>• <b>Prioritize Hypotheses</b> - Ranking client conditions/problems according to urgency, complexity, and time.</li> <li>• <b>Generate Solutions</b> - Identifying interventions that meet desired outcomes for the client; can include collecting additional assessment data</li> <li>• <b>Take Action</b> - Implementing the solution(s) that are most appropriate and address the client's priority conditions/problems</li> <li>• <b>Evaluate Outcomes</b> - Comparing actual client outcomes with desired client outcomes to determine effectiveness of care</li> </ul>
	<p><b>D. Caring Interventions</b> Deliver safe, compassionate, and culturally sensitive care that promotes health, dignity, comfort, and optimal client outcomes individualized for each person.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Basic Care and Comfort</b> – Provides activities of daily living, comforts clients as necessary</li> <li>• <b>Skills</b> – competently carries out nursing interventions following established standards as appropriate for skill level</li> <li>• <b>Dignity</b> – Provides privacy, promotes dignity</li> <li>• <b>Cultural Sensitivity</b> – Respects the client's emotional, cultural, religious, and spiritual influences</li> </ul>
	<p><b>E. Safe &amp; Effective Care</b> Contribute to the planning, organization, prioritization, and delegation of care within the LPN scope of practice to ensure safety and continuity of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Safety</b> – Minimizes potential psychosocial and/or physical risks; provides safe care</li> <li>• <b>Infection Control</b> – Maintains asepsis; utilizes proper principles of infection control</li> <li>• <b>Organization</b> – Provides client care in a timely and efficient manner, organizes self and resources</li> <li>• <b>Medication Administration</b> – Administers medications adhering to the six rights of administration, monitors clients receiving pharmacologic therapy</li> <li>• <b>Assessing Learning Needs</b> – Identifies client learning needs, readiness and preference; implements teaching plan</li> </ul>
	<p><b>F. Informatics</b> Utilize appropriate technology in healthcare to organize, delegate, and manage the delivery of client care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Written</b> – Appropriately documents patient care; clinical assignments are accurate, complete, concise and legible</li> <li>• <b>Information Technology</b> – Utilizes IT to support, communicate, plan and provide client care</li> </ul>

## VI. PN CERTIFICATE PROCESSES

### a. Appeals Processes

The concept of following the chain of command is a vital component to the nursing profession. It is a nurse's responsibility to be familiar with the chain of command throughout their nursing career.

#### i. Academic Appeals

Students may appeal decisions of non-progression in the nursing program through the University's Grievance Procedure adapted from the Student Code of Conduct (Policy and Grade Appeal Form available on the DSU website).

#### ii. Non-Academic Appeals

The Nursing Program provides a mechanism of due process to appeal non-academic matters where there are questions regarding nursing program policy-related decisions.

A complaint is a report of an issue, concern, or problem on an academic or administrative issue that affects a student's experience both in and out of the classroom. Documentation of the issue or concern may be requested so that a statement outlining the details of the complaint (who, what, where, when, etc.) is available for review for those involved in the resolution process. In the event of a student complaint, the steps outlined above should be completed as appropriate. It is considered unprofessional behavior to discuss problems with other faculty/staff not directly involved in this process.

### b. Steps of Non-Academic Appeal

1. Discuss the grievance with appropriate course faculty.
  - A Student will be allowed to appeal based only on: 1) the evidence presented did not support the decision; 2) there is new information that wasn't considered in the case; or 3) the sanctions were not justified by the nature of the offense(s).
2. A formal written letter from the student is required to be addressed to the program's Student Admissions & Progression (SAP) Committee and Chair and/or Dean of the Division of Nursing.

The request will include:

  - Description of the request in 500 words or less
  - Justification for the request
  - Any documentation necessary to support the justification (catalog description, course content, resource manual/handbook, School of nursing website, etc.)
3. The Student Grievance/Appeal Form must be submitted within 10 business days after receiving notification of the incident, allowing up to 4 weeks for a SAP Committee response.
  - a. Appeals filed during summer session will be reviewed by the SAP Committee as determined necessary by the Director of Nursing.

4. A review of the appeals will occur at next scheduled SAP Committee meeting after the appeal has been formally filed. Students will be emailed the date and time of the meeting. Students will have 48 hours to either state they will accept or decline attendance at the meeting. In the event a student chooses to attend the meeting, they will have five minutes during the meeting to present their appeal.
5. The student will receive a formal letter describing the decision of the SAP Committee. The course faculty and student advisor, involved with the appeal, will receive a copy of the SAP Committee decision.
6. After the SAP Committee has made their appeal decision and the student still has concerns regarding their appeal, it is then the student's responsibility to present their appeal/concern to the Nursing Director within 10 business days of the SAP Committee's appeal reply. The Nursing Director may uphold or deny the appeal and will respond to the student in writing within 72 hours of the usual work week.
7. If there is continued student concern regarding their appeal, they may request further review by the Dean or Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost.

## Nursing Program Student Grievance/Appeal Form

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STUDENT ID #** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Street Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City/State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to the following. Attach additional sheets if necessary. Describe your concern.

What steps have you taken to resolve the concern?

What action are you seeking to resolve this concern?

*Office Use Only*

Concern Received By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

What steps were taken to resolve this concern? (Attach notes from other staff if applicable.)

How was the concern resolved? Include dates of actions taken.

**Date of follow-up contact with Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN THIS FORM TO THE DIRECTOR OF NURSING**

**b. Program Complaints**

Program complaints are defined as 'an expression of dissatisfaction about something or someone that is the cause or subject of protest.' Program complaints must be received in writing and signed and dated by the complainant and forwarded to the Director of Nursing.

Complaints may be received from applicants, students enrolled, or any persons who have concerns related to the PN program.

Records reflect that program complaints and grievances receive due process and include evidence of resolution. All complaints about the program are addressed and investigated in a timely, fair and equitable manner following the Nursing Program Policy Handbook, Non-Academic Appeals Processes, Informal and Formal Resolution Phases.

Records of program complaints are maintained in a separate "Program Complaints" file on the Nursing shared drive. The record will include the written complaint, all documents filed in connection with the complaint, and the concluding disposition of the complaint.

**c. PN End of Program Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of the program, the graduate will achieve the End of Program Student Learning Outcomes (EPSLOs).

1. **Professionalism:** Exhibit professional behaviors of accountability and integrity in alignment with ethical, legal, and regulatory standards for practical nursing.
2. **Communication & Collaboration:** Use therapeutic and professional communication to build trust with clients and collaborate effectively with families and the healthcare team.
3. **Clinical Judgment:** Apply nursing knowledge, evidence-based practice, and the clinical judgment process to recognize, prioritize, and respond to client needs across the lifespan.
4. **Caring Interventions:** Deliver safe, compassionate, and culturally sensitive care that promotes health, dignity, comfort, and optimal client outcomes individualized for each person.
5. **Safe & Effective Care:** Contribute to the planning, organization, prioritization, and delegation of care within the LPN scope of practice to ensure safety and continuity of care.
6. **Informatics:** Utilize appropriate technology in healthcare to organize, delegate, and manage the delivery of client care.

**d. Program Research Basis**

Current nursing science is used as a basis for guiding application of nursing knowledge and implementation of nursing interventions with an emphasis on evidence-based practice. National, state, and local standards of practice are interwoven throughout the curriculum. The Standards of Practice for Licensed Practical Nurses, as delineated by the North Dakota

Board of Nursing, the National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Services (NAPNES), and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) guides the provision of nursing education in the PN Program.

e. **English as a Second Language (ESL) Applicants**

An applicant whose native language is not English\* (as identified in the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) Fact Book at [www.cia.gov](http://www.cia.gov)) is required to demonstrate proficiency in the English Language. The TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the Duolingo English Test exams are considered the official DSU English Language Proficiency exams. The applicant's results of the specified test determine a student's eligibility for PN Program admission consideration.

Students who have completed ENGL 110, or who transfer to DSU from a regionally accredited college/university and have previously completed ENGL 110 (or equivalent course) and obtained a grade > 'C' will be considered for admission. These transfer students will not be required to take the TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo exams. International students applying for admission to the nursing program must complete the TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo exam if they have not already done so.

Minimum TOEFL scores of 22 are required for all students in the respective content areas of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing. Minimum IELTS scores of 6 in the respective content areas of Listening, Reading, Speaking and Writing, with an overall score of 6.5 are required for eligibility. Minimum Duolingo scores of 90 in respective content areas of Literacy (Reading), Comprehension (Listening), Conversation (Speaking), and Production (Writing), with an overall score of 115 are required for eligibility. These scores are required due to the higher degree of rigor within the nursing education majors, as well as the need for English language proficiency required of students to function effectively as a member of the healthcare team within multiple clinical settings.

Students who are unable to achieve the minimum required TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores MUST meet the following for admission consideration:

- a. Attain a WritePlacer minimum score of 5
- b. Complete ASC 088 (if WritePlacer score is below 5) with ENGL 110 Composition I
- c. And receive course grades of  $\geq$  'C'

Students who meet the required TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores or attain a minimum grade of a "C" in ASC 088 and ENGL110 or have previously completed ENGL110 (or an equivalent course) with a "C" or better will continue to be screened by the SAP Committee with all other applicants and must also meet the other established admission criteria.

Once the TOEFL, IELTS, and Duolingo exam scores are submitted, students will not be allowed to re-take the exam for Nursing Program admission consideration. All international students must:

- a. Be admitted to DSU
- b. And complete PN Program application

f. **Social Security Number**

Prior to graduation, all permanent residents and international students must obtain a U. S. Social Security number to be eligible to take the respective nurse licensure exam.