

Associate Degree Nursing Program Policies

Student Code of Conduct

As a student of the Dallas County Community College District, you are subject to the Student Code of Conduct as published in the Dallas County Community College District catalog.

Nursing Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior in all settings. Violations of this Code of Conduct are subject to disciplinary action.

Approved by:
Faculty, Associate Degree Nursing
January 8, 1998
Effective Spring 1998 Semester
Reviewed 2001
Reviewed 2007

Attendance/Tardiness Policy

Withdrawal Policy

If you are unable to complete the course or courses for which you have registered, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally from the course. You need to speak with and obtain the signature of the course instructor to withdraw from the course. If the instructor is not available, a counselor, advisor, or dean may sign the withdrawal form. Failure to withdraw will result in a performance grade, usually a grade of "F".

Lecture

Students are expected to attend all classes in order to meet course objectives. If a student misses over 20% of lecture classes they will need to conference with their instructor. Attendance will be taken several times during the class session. If a student is unable to complete the course, it is the student's responsibility to withdraw from the course by the date published in the academic calendar. If the student fails to withdraw before the final drop date, a performance grade (usually an "F") will be assigned for the course. Any appeal will be handled by the Director of Nursing.

Skills Lab

Students are expected to attend all scheduled skills lab experiences. Since completion of the skills covered in the lab is part of the requirement to successfully pass, make-up for the missed skill and/or activity must be done within two weeks of the absence. (An extenuating circumstance should be handled by the student and his/her skills lab instructor.) Failure to

complete this make-up within those two weeks will result in a written contract outlining specific dates of completion, or the result will be a course failure.

Clinical

Students are expected to attend all scheduled days of clinical experience. It is the student's responsibility to notify his/her instructor in the event of absence. See course syllabus for the designated maximum number of clinical hours of absence.

If the absences occur prior to the final drop date, the student may withdraw from the course. If the absences occur after the final drop date, a performance grade of "U" will typically be assigned for clinical. Any appeal will be handled by the Associate Dean of Nursing. Precepted clinicals must complete all required hours in clinical.

Tardiness to Clinical or Skills Lab

When a student exhibits unprofessional behavior, e.g., tardiness to clinical or Skills Lab, the instructor of the student will handle the situation with his/her discretion. In most situations, the student will be counseled verbally the first time. The second time, an occurrence record will be completed, signed by the student, and placed in the student's file. The third time, the student will be given a formal contract.

*See form for student signature in Section VIII.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of severe inclement weather, the procedure for the Health and Legal Studies Division will be as follows:

1. Listen for radio/TV announcement for school closing and follow instructions given. Inclement weather hotline is (214) 860-2701.
2. If school is *open* and the student cannot safely journey, he/she will notify the instructor.
3. Students who arrive at the hospital/clinic setting without an instructor (if an instructor is to be present) may return home.

- 4 If school officially closes midday, all classes will cease, and students will be instructed to return home. In the clinical setting, the instructor will make a reasonable decision as to when to release the students (i.e., immediately, after completion of patient care, post-conferences, etc.).
- 5 No student will be penalized for absence due to inclement weather. Students are encouraged to use reasonable judgment. No class session is so important that a student should risk an accident.

Professional Liability Insurance

All Associate Degree Nursing students are required to carry professional liability insurance. The college enrolls in a student blanket professional liability policy with a major insurance carrier. This policy provides \$1,000,000 limits of liability for each medical incident and \$3,000,000 aggregate. The cost of the student is less than enrolling in an individual professional liability policy with comparable coverage. Students have the option of enrolling in the blanket policy or providing proof of their own individual coverage for comparable liability amounts. Premiums are due annually.

The student blanket professional liability policy covers students while they are participating in clinical activities which are a part of, and a requirement of, the student's curriculum.

The student professional liability insurance *does not* cover students when employed in the hospital in a patient care and/or extern technician capacity, nor does it cover a Licensed Vocational Nurse when he/she is employed as an LVN while enrolled in the Associate Degree Nursing Program.

The student liability insurance policy expires upon date of graduation. Graduates who work prior to are not covered by the student liability policy.

Employment of Undergraduate Nursing Students in Hospitals/Agencies

The El Centro College Associate Degree Nursing Division supports the Nurse Practice Act of the State of Texas and is committed to excellence in nursing by nurses appropriately prepared for the services they are rendering. Therefore, the position of the Associate

Degree Nursing Division regarding undergraduate nursing students (who are unlicensed in the State of Texas either as Registered Professional Nurses or as Licensed Vocational Nurses) accepting employment in hospitals or health agencies is as follows:

1. El Centro College undergraduate nursing students who accept positions in which they receive compensation for patient care do so as unlicensed individuals and will not wear the school uniform, laboratory coat with insignia, or other indications of their student status, inasmuch as they are not functioning as nursing students but as paid employees.
2. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with the State of Texas Nurse Practice Act so that they will recognize the full scope and responsibility of nursing as being more than just a collection of skills. El Centro College undergraduate nursing students who accept positions for pay as patient care and/or extern must recognize that they may be held legally liable for their actions, and, therefore, should not accept responsibilities nor perform nursing actions beyond their knowledge and skills nor those within the responsibilities of the professional nurse as defined in the Nurse Practice Act (see attachment).
3. The student is responsible for maintaining the required grade point average and should consider the demands of part-time employment upon the student's time and energies.

Ethical and Legal Behavior

The nursing faculty at El Centro College strongly believe that the graduate of the nursing program should: "responsibly practice within the ethical and legal framework of professional nursing." (Program Objective #6). Further, it is the responsibility of the nursing faculty and administration to recommend only those students who meet these program objectives to the State Board of Nurse Examiners to write the examination for Registered Nurse. Since there is a transfer of behavior from the classroom, skills lab, and clinical lab to the graduate nurse in the work setting, any student who is involved in cheating is in direct violation of the stated program objective. This places the student in great jeopardy regarding the successful completion of the nursing program and subsequent recommendation to the State Board of Nurse Examiners.

Biology/Health Occupations Computer Lab Policies for Testing

- The computer lab staff/assistance function as an instructor. Failure to abide by the directions of the computer staff/assistance will be grounds for termination of the testing activity. A grade of zero will be recorded and averaged into the final grade.
- During the testing or review activities information may not be written or recorded by the student.
- The Honesty policy includes sharing verbal or nonverbal & electronic communication between students regarding a testing situation outside the testing area.
- No electronic devices allowed at the computer site.

Honesty Policy

To ensure quality education and equality to all students in the Health Occupations programs, the following special conditions will apply during testing situations:

1. The instructor(s) (lab staff/assistance) controls the options of seating arrangement, movement, leaving the room, and stopping the exam for violation of the honesty policy.
2. All books, papers, notebooks, and personal belongings will be placed at the front of the classroom or other designated area before entering a testing situation.
3. Any information found on or in the immediate vicinity of the individual during a testing situation will be grounds for termination of the testing. A grade of zero will be recorded and averaged into the final grade.
4. Any verbal or nonverbal & electronic communication between students during a testing situation will be grounds for the termination of the testing. A grade of zero will be recorded and averaged into the final grade.
5. Should a student need to communicate with the instructor (lab staff/assistance), he/she would remain seated and raise his/her hand.
6. Infractions of the honesty policy will result in failure of the course and may result in referral to

the Dean of Students and Enrollment Services as indicated by the DCCCD Student Code of Conduct.

Adopted by Health Occupations Faculty
Approved by Vice-President of Student Services
08/24/78 Reviewed 8/97 Reviewed 8/00 Revised
10/2001 Revised 2003
Revised 2007

*See forms for student signature in Supplements.

Grade Information Policy

In compliance with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974*, the following procedure will be implemented by all Health Occupations faculty.

1. No grade will be given over the telephone or verbally to a student or any other person under any circumstances.
2. No indication of grade status such as pass-fail will be given over the telephone to a student or any other person under any circumstances.
3. Students should be encouraged to submit a stamped, self-addressed envelope/postcard if they wish to have a course grade sent prior to receiving the official grade report.
4. Grades are posted on eCampus

Approved by:
Health Occupations Administration
Vice President of Student Services
08/29/79
Revised 1991
Reviewed 2001
Reviewed 2007

Test Review Policy

Concerns regarding test questions and/or test grades must be addressed to the lecture faculty PRIOR to the next test. The final exam is not subject to formal review.

Approved by:
Associate Degree Nursing Faculty
August 22, 1994

Reviewed 11/2/98
Revised 10/2001
Revised 2004
Revised 2007

Appealing a Grade

A student who feels that his/her grade does not accurately reflect class performance should first discuss the problem with the instructor. Refer to the Associate Degree Nursing Grievance Procedure.

Grievance Procedure

The procedure applies to any Health and Legal Studies student.

Instructional grievances (lecture, lab, or clinical issues) are handled within the instructional chain of command. Other grievance procedures (non instructional) are addressed in the college catalog.

A grievance is any complaint, injustice, or unresolved issue that a person has encountered as a student.

These problems or issues can be related to the clinical experience, theory classes, exams (in case of individual test questions, those issues are referred to the instructor and/or teaching team for resolution), school policy, or faculty-student relationships.

The grievance procedure provides a formal avenue for the student to resolve his/her problem or issues. The grievance procedure begins at the departmental level and proceeds as follows:

1. ***The student will first discuss the problem with his/her instructor.*** Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve problems or issues as soon as possible after the occurrence and are advised not to let problems mount until the end of the semester.
2. If a satisfactory decision or compromise cannot be reached between the student and the instructor, the student will then meet with the appropriate coordinator in an attempt to resolve the issue.
3. If the issue cannot be resolved at the coordinator level, the student can appeal to the Director of Nursing. This appeal request should be made **in writing** within ten (10) working days of meeting with the Nursing/Allied Health coordinator.
4. Step 2 may be waived if the nursing coordinators are not available during semester breaks. The Director of Nursing will investigate the issue(s) to determine if established policies and procedures have been followed and will consult with the Executive Dean in order to reach a decision. The investigation may include a meeting of all parties.
5. If there is no resolution of an instructional grievance at the Dean of Nursing level, the student can proceed with his/her grievance to the college Vice President of Health & Economic Development.
6. For grievances which do not involve instruction, the student is referred to the Dean of Student Services of El Centro College for administrative disposition of the complaint.

Each written grievance will be kept on file in the office of the Director of Nursing and will not become a part of the student's departmental file unless legal action is involved. However, grievances related to clinical failure will, of necessity, contain summary statements of the disposition of the complaint in the student's departmental file.

Criminal Background and Drug Screening Policy

Testing must be completed before the first class/clinical day. Tests need to be done within 30 days of clinical attendance. Information regarding the testing will be provided each semester. Readmit students need to repeat the Criminal Background and Drug Screening Tests if they have been out of the program one full semester before attendance at clinical. For retesting information contact the Health Occupations department at the following number 30 days before class/clinical begins (214-860-2269).

Distance sites will provide a letter stating students are in good standing (letter kept on file) at El Centro College.

Revised 2007

Supervision of Medication Administration Policy

The level of supervision of medication administration in the clinical area varies according to the course level of the student. The goal is to ensure the highest quality of patient care while providing maximum learning experience and the best utilization of faculty's time.

Nursing 1423/1460/1119

1. Students will be supervised during the preparation, administration, and recording of all oral and topical medications (See Special Exceptions).
2. Students may not administer any parenteral or intravenous medications.

Nursing 2504/1461/1129

1. Students will be supervised during the preparation, administration, and recording of all oral, topicals and injectable medications until the instructor determines that direct supervision is no longer required (See Special Exceptions). Unit staff will be notified if and when a student no longer requires supervision.
2. Students may monitor selected intravenous infusions as determined by the instructor.
3. Students may hang intravenous infusions to an existing site with direct supervision.
4. Students may monitor solutions administered by pump infusion devices as determined by the instructor (see Special Exceptions).
5. Students may not administer I.V. piggyback or “push” medications.

Nursing 2514/2460

1. Students may prepare and administer oral and injectable medications without continuous supervision after the clinical instructor has:
 - a. oriented the student to the medication system used at the facility, and
 - b. evaluated the student's competency in performing the skills involved. The staff will be notified when the student may administer these medications without supervision. This will vary according to the facility.
2. Students may prepare I.V. primary, secondary infusions without direct supervision after being evaluated in Skills Lab and clinical. Before the student prepares and administers these infusions, the instructor/primary nurse must check the medication.
3. Students may “start” intravenous infusions

under the direct supervision of the clinical instructor or staff R.N. in designated clinical facilities according to hospital policy.

4. Students may administer I.V. piggyback medications through a PRN Infusion Device (“saline /heparin lock ”) with direct supervision according to hospital procedures.
5. No intravenous push medications, including patient-controlled analgesic pumps, may be given with the exception of I.V. saline flush or heparin flush.
6. Students are not allowed to administer intravenous chemotherapy agents.
7. Students may utilize multiple lumen catheters to administer I.V. infusions and medications under the supervision of the staff R.N. or clinical instructor.

Nursing 2535/2562

1. Students may prepare and administer oral, topical and injectable medications without continuous supervision after the clinical instructor has:
 - a. oriented the student to the medication system used at the facility, and
 - b. evaluated the student's competency in performing the skills involved.

The staff will be notified when the student may administer these medications without supervision.
2. Students may not add medications to intravenous infusions without supervision.
3. Students may prepare I.V. piggyback infusions without direct supervision after being evaluated in clinical. Before the student prepares and administers these infusions, the instructor/primary nurse must check the medication.
4. Students may “start” intravenous infusions without supervision after demonstrating competency.
5. Students are allowed to hang total parental nutrition solutions with supervision in accordance with hospital policy.

6. Students may administer I.V. piggyback medications through a “saline lock” after demonstrating competency.
7. No intravenous push medications may be given with exception of heparin flush used for maintenance of vascular accesses.
8. Students are not allowed to administer intravenous chemotherapy agents.
9. Students will not be responsible for irritating I.V. medications.
10. Insulin injections must be verified with the instructor or other licensed nurse prior to administration.
11. All narcotics and controlled substances must be verified according to hospital policy.
12. Students may only observe the checking and hanging of blood and blood components. Students may “start” the infusion of saline and then observe the remainder of the blood administration procedure. They will be held responsible for maintaining and following through with appropriate nursing care.
13. In specialty areas, the instructor will supervise any medication administration.
14. In specific clinical facilities, special policies regarding medication administration over- ride the El Centro College policy.

Program Special Exceptions:

1. In specific clinical facilities, special policies regarding medication administration override the El Centro College Policy.
2. In administering narcotics or controlled substances, the instructor and student will follow the guidelines of the clinical facility.
3. In specialty areas (ICU, CCU), the student will not be responsible for titrating I.V. medications to regulate blood pressure or cardiac arrhythmias.
4. In maternity areas (L & D), students will not be responsible for monitoring Pitocin

and MgSO₄ I.V. administration.

5. The student will be supervised with any medication administration in the nursery area.
6. Insulin injections must be verified with the instructor or another R.N. prior to administration.
7. All computed dosages must be checked by the instructor/primary nurse

Revised Summer 2000
 Revised 2004
 Revised 2007

Illness, Accidents, and/or Injury in the Clinical Setting

Students must use good judgment when illness occurs. In order to protect patients, staff, and peers, students with fever and/or symptoms of infectious disease must not report to the clinical setting. If in doubt, the student should consult with the clinical instructor prior to the start of the clinical day. The clinical instructor may dismiss a student from the clinical setting if in his/her judgment the student poses a risk of infecting others. Clinical absence hours will be recorded for students dismissed from clinical because of illness.

When a student experiences a serious illness, injury, or a pregnancy which may hinder his/her ability to perform in the clinical setting, the Health Occupations programs reserve the right to require a physician's statement authorizing that the student can safely continue to give patient care to required competency levels. Each case will be considered on an individual basis. Specific release guidelines may be required in the physician's statement for situations involving back injury , surgery , communicable diseases, etc.

1. A student who is injured in the clinical setting should immediately notify his/her instructor.
2. A written summary of the occurrence and care rendered will be submitted by the instructor to the Associate Dean of Health and Legal Studies at El Centro.
3. All clinical facilities by contractual agreement must provide **access** to acute emergency care in the event of accident or injury to a student.
4. A student is responsible for **all expenses** charged by the clinical facility in rendering medical care.

5. The college and the clinical facility are not responsible for any claims for expenses that result from an action of a student in the clinical setting.
6. Students in Health Occupations programs need to carry a personal health insurance policy. Contact Health Care Center for Insurance Information.

Effective August 2, 1982
 Reviewed Spring 1996
 Reviewed 2004
 Revised 2007

Occurrence Report Guidelines

Occurrence reports are utilized in the clinical setting when an error or accident has occurred (e. g., medication error; injury involving student, patient, staff, visitor, etc.).

In the event that an accident or error occurs, the student will first notify the instructor. The head nurse/charge nurse and physician will then be notified according to hospital protocol.

The student is responsible for writing the incident report on the institution's forms and placing it on the chart in accordance with hospital policy. The instructor will forward a Xerox copy to the level coordinator. If the occurrence is a medication error, the student will also complete the El Centro Incident Report for Medications form and schedule a conference with the level coordinator and the clinical instructor within one week after the error. The purpose of the conference is problem solving to prevent further medication error occurrences.

Reviewed 11/2/98
 Revised 2007

Annual CPR Certification

All students must be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) at the Level "C" or "Health Care Provider" level. A copy of a current "C" CPR card must be submitted to the student's instructor on the first day of class. Students are required to be recertified annually regardless of whether their initial certification was effective for one or two years. CPR classes are available through the El Centro College Continuing Education Division, the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, various hospitals, etc.
 Revised 11/2/98

Mid Curriculum HESI

At the end of the first year, students will take a mid-curriculum HESI. Students scoring below 900 on the exam must complete required HESI case studies with a grade of 90% on each case study before admission to the third semester.

Program Final Examination Policy

The norm-referenced test (capstone) will be the final exam grade for RNSG 2535 and will comprise 20% of the course grade.

In preparation for the norm-referenced test the HESI case studies will be available for purchase at the beginning of the semester.

Revised Fall 2007

Three Skills Lab Attempt Policy

Students will be given three (3) attempts to successfully check off in the lab on each of the required skills. After failure of a skill for the first attempt, the instructor will provide the student feedback and recommend remediation activities. After failure of a skill the second time, the student will be placed on a contract. Two (2) faculty members or faculty/skills lab staff will observe the third check off. Failure a third time will result in a grade of "W".

Performance Competency Policy

There is a performance competency at each level of the nursing program.

During the semesters I and II, students must demonstrate competency in selected skills based upon established criteria during the assigned nursing skills lab at the end of each semester. Students will have one (1) opportunity to complete the competency and the grade received will be utilized in the calculation of the course grade.

During semesters III and IV, students must demonstrate competency in performing a head-to-toe physical assessment including documentation, a sterile procedure, and administration of an IVPB medication in a patient(s) in the clinical setting. Students will only have (1) opportunity to complete each component of the competency and the grade received will be utilized in the calculation of the course grade. Faculty will conduct the performance competency during regularly scheduled clinical time. Students assigned to a precepted clinical will complete the competency by appointment with faculty.