



NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK

Piedmont Virginia Community College
Concept-Based VCCS Common Nursing Curriculum
April 2022

PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
NURSING PROGRAM

Dear Nursing Student,

Welcome to the Associate Degree in Nursing (A D N) Program at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC). We are happy to have you with us and sincerely hope that we will be able to help you fulfill your desire of becoming a Registered Nurse. The Nursing and other college faculty and counselors are here to assist you in meeting this goal.

You were selected for the Nursing Program because we felt that you possessed the necessary qualities for successful completion of the program. To be successful in Nursing, you must be willing to assume responsibility for your learning. In addition to preparing prior to attending class, and asking questions about content you don't understand, you should also take advantage of the multiple resources at the college such as the Learning Center, Student Success Office, visiting faculty during posted office hours, routinely visiting your academic advisor and scheduling appointments with a counselor for personal issues.

In order for you to become familiar with our policies and procedures, we have prepared a Nursing Student Handbook for you. The college catalog and Student Handbook are also available to you while you are enrolled in the Nursing Program. Please read and become familiar with these resources so that you may remain in good standing with the program and college at all times.

It should be noted that this Nursing Program Handbook is a general guide. The Dean of Health and Life Sciences, Associate Dean of Nursing Programs, and Nursing faculty reserve the right to exercise discretionary measures on an individual basis in cases where a situation arises which is not specifically addressed in this Handbook, or in cases where extenuating circumstances may have an influence on situations which are addressed in this guide.

If at any time you need clarification concerning items discussed on the following pages, please feel free to seek assistance from us.

Sincerely,

PVCC Nursing Program Faculty

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Nursing Faculty and Staff

Dean, Health and Life Sciences Division
Associate Dean of Nursing
Academic and Operations Coordinator
Clinical Compliance Coordinator
Administrative Assistant
Nursing Full-Time Faculty

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Adjunct Faculty

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ADN Student Learning Outcomes & Competencies

Mission

The mission of the VCCS Nursing Programs is to provide affordable, community access to quality Nursing education. The VCCS Nursing Programs prepare qualified students to provide safe, competent, entry-level Nursing care in 21st century healthcare environments. Students are prepared to meet the ever-increasing complexity of healthcare needs of the citizens of Virginia.

Philosophy

VCCS Nursing faculty subscribe to the core competencies for Nursing and Nursing education. While firmly based in science and the arts, Nursing encompasses compassionate patient-centered care. Ethical standards, respect for individual dignity, and consideration of cultural context are implicit in the practice of patient-centered care. The Nurse advocates for patients and families in ways that promote self-determination, integrity, and ongoing growth as human beings. Nursing care is provided in collaboration with the patient, the family and members of the healthcare team. The Nurse displays a spirit of inquiry by examining evidence to improve quality of care, promote safety and improve patient outcomes. Nursing judgment is integral in competent decision-making related to the provision of safe and effective Nursing care. Confidential information management essential to Nursing care is communicated via a variety of technological and human means.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the Associate Degree of Applied Science with a major in Nursing will be expected to:

1. Provide patient-centered care promoting therapeutic relationships, supportive behaviors, and self-determination across the lifespan for diverse populations.
2. Practice safe Nursing care that minimizes risk of harm across systems and client populations.
3. Demonstrate Nursing judgment through the use of clinical reasoning, the Nursing process, and evidence-based practice in the provision of safe, quality care.
4. Practice professional behaviors that encompass the legal/ethical framework while incorporating self-reflection, leadership and a commitment to recognize the value of life-long learning.
5. Manage client care through quality improvement processes, information technology, and fiscal responsibility to meet client needs while supporting organizational outcomes.
6. Demonstrate principles of collaborative practice within Nursing and other interdisciplinary teams, fostering mutual respect and shared decision-making to achieve stated outcomes of care.

Notice of Potential Program Changes

PVCC works in close association with the healthcare agencies and practitioners within our surrounding communities. PVCC relies on its community partners to provide clinical education opportunities for its students, expert clinical preceptors, and course instructors for many courses. The ever-changing nature of the healthcare and changes in healthcare law, standards of practice, technology, clinical agency policies, and content of credentialing examinations increasingly necessitates changes in the program's policies, procedures and course scheduling.

As a result, PVCC cannot guarantee every student continuous and uninterrupted clinical and course instruction as outlined in the printed catalog curriculum for this program. Circumstances beyond the control of the college may necessitate the postponement of course offerings or changes in the sequencing and/or location of scheduled courses or clinical assignments. Additionally, the college may need to change the instructor for courses after instruction has started.

Essential Functions and Standards for Successful Performance

To successfully complete the classroom and clinical components of the program, the student in the Nursing Program must be able to perform all of the following essential standards and functions of a Registered Nurse with or without reasonable accommodations.

1. **Speech:** Establish interpersonal rapport and communicate verbally and in writing with clients, physicians, peers, family members, and the health-care team from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
2. **Hearing and Comprehension:** Auditory acuity sufficient to respond to verbal instruction, perceive and interpret various equipment signals, use the telephone, understand, and respond appropriately to verbal directions, and hear faint body sounds.
3. **Vision:** Visual acuity sufficient to identify and distinguish colors, read handwritten orders and any other handwritten or printed data such as medication records or scales, chart data, and provide for the safety of clients' condition by clearly viewing monitors and other equipment in order to correctly interpret data.
4. **Mobility:** Stand and/or walk eight hours daily in the clinical setting. Bend, squat, or kneel. Assist in lifting or moving clients of all age groups and weights. Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (move around client to manually compress chest and ventilate). Work with arms fully extended overhead. Lift 50 pounds independently and 125 pounds with assistance.
5. **Manual Dexterity:** Demonstrate eye/hand coordination sufficient to manipulate equipment.
6. **Fine Motor Ability:** Ability to use hands for grasping, pushing, pulling, and fine manipulation. Have tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and manipulation of equipment.
7. **Mentation:** Ability to remain focused on multiple details and tasks for at least an eight-hour period of time. Assimilate and apply knowledge acquired through lectures, discussions, and readings.
8. **Smell:** Olfactory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.
9. **Writing:** Ability to organize thoughts and present them clearly and logically in writing.
10. **Reading:** Ability to read and understand written directions, instructions, and comments in both classroom and clinical settings.

General Requirements

Progression through PVCC Nursing Program is specifically conditioned upon a satisfactory background check, drug screen, health, immunizations, CPR certification, and other documentation that is required by clinical agencies and/or by law throughout the curriculum. A student is further notified that requirements may change based upon law or clinical agency requirements.

Clinical agency providers reserve the right to refuse and/or reject for clinical practice any student whose background, drug screen, health/ immunization and/or other required information does not meet the applicable guidelines and agency contract with the college. A student who does not meet the deadlines and /or requirements will not be included on the clinical rosters for the clinical agency to approve for participation in direct patient care learning experiences.

Each student must follow published clinical agency policies and provide safe care. Clinical agencies notify PVCC Nursing Administration with any concerns of student or Faculty behavior. If a student is dismissed from a clinical agency, the student may be dismissed from the Nursing Program.

Each student must submit all required documents prior to each clinical rotation. A student who does not meet the published deadline forfeits his/her enrollment that semester. The deadline for providing all documentation is the first Monday in August for the Fall semester, and the first Monday in December for the Spring semester.

Clinical Guidelines for Caring for Patients With Communicable Illnesses

During the course of clinical experiences in the Nursing Program, students will be assigned to care for patients with communicable diseases, including HIV, Hepatitis, and tuberculosis. Students may be exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials. It is an expectation of the program that students adhere to the **American Nurses Association Code of Ethics**, which states in part:

- The Nurse provides service with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness
- of the client unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status,
- personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

Students will be taught current information about communicable diseases, transmission, and standard protective precautions to be used while caring for patients or handling potentially infectious materials prior to their first clinical experience. Students are responsible for using Standard precautions while caring for patients to minimize the risk of disease transmission.

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Hepatitis B

Because students may be at risk for acquiring Hepatitis B viral infection, it is strongly recommended that students are vaccinated with Hepatitis B vaccine prior to caring for patients. Students who do not wish to receive the Hepatitis B vaccine upon entry into the program must sign a declination form to this effect. See PVCC Safety Manual Section 4 for Maxient/incident reporting at <https://www.pvcc.edu/pvcc-safety-manual-section-4> and Section 6 for bloodborne pathogens exposure control plan at <https://www.pvcc.edu/pvcc-safety-manual-section-6>

Courses

Students must demonstrate competency and achieve a grade of "C" or better in each Nursing course and the required Biology and natural science courses in order to successfully complete program requirements.

For a description of Nursing Program courses, see the college catalog. For a description of content and expectations relating to specific nursing courses, see course syllabi.

General Education Prerequisites For Nursing Classes

Nursing students are responsible for ensuring that they meet the general education prerequisites for all nursing courses.

Academic Advising

The Admissions and Advising Center is available to all PVCC students for academic planning. **It is the responsibility of the student to meet with an academic advisor for curriculum planning and advising throughout the program.**

Nursing Classes

Each Nursing course has a lecture/discussion class during which theory content is reviewed, discussed and clarified. To achieve optimum benefit from classes, students are expected to complete required readings and other assignments prior to attending class. Class attendance policies are specified in each course syllabi.

Laboratory

The classroom laboratories for Nursing students are located in the Keats and Giuseppe Buildings. These labs are designed to enable the student to develop and practice the necessary skills to meet the objectives of the Nursing courses.

Specified times have been designated for students to use these classroom labs (see course syllabi).

The nature and value of the equipment in these rooms is such that care must be taken to see that they are properly handled, maintained and stored.

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Clinical Experiences

Clinical experiences are determined by faculty who select the facility best able to meet learning needs. The large number of students using facilities may make it necessary for students to obtain experience at times that are outside of a student's stated cohort preference (i.e., Day or Evening/Weekend). No particular schedule can be guaranteed for any student. Arrangements for transportation to the clinical facility and parking must be planned by each student.

Clinical assignments are outlined in each course syllabi. Depending on the clinical setting, assignments may be posted on the hospital or facility unit, or Canvas platform to which the student is assigned. The student will then be responsible for planning patient care prior to pre-conference on the clinical day.

Due to the differences in healthcare settings, refer to the course syllabi for the specific procedure for students to follow in the event of lateness or absence from any clinical experience. This may include:

- Call/text the instructor as directed in the course syllabus and give reason for necessary lateness or absence;
- Call the assigned clinical area and leave a message. **(Only if directed to do so in the specific course syllabus)**
- Communicate **as early as possible** so that appropriate changes can be made in assignments.

100% attendance is expected in all clinical areas. All absences must be made up by the student; failure to do so will result in an unsatisfactory clinical grade. Students are expected to arrive on time at all clinical sites.

- During the entire Nursing Program, students arriving on the clinical unit after pre-conference and/or report has begun will be considered late.
- Students who are late to clinical three times will receive an unsatisfactory day (U) day on the third late day.
- A fourth late day will result in a second unsatisfactory (U) day and so on.
- Two (U) Days in any one course will result in failure of clinical. For courses with multiple clinical rotations, a combined two (U) Days will result in failure of the clinical where the 2nd U day was given. If a student fails clinical, they automatically fail the course and will be administratively withdrawn from the class.
- Any student who is more than 30 minutes late to clinical will be counted as absent (except for extenuating circumstances as approved by your clinical instructor) and will need to make up that day.
- Lateness under 30 minutes is considered a tardy and falls under the tardy policy as stated above.
- Students are strongly advised **not** to work the shift immediately preceding the clinical experience (or any class). If the clinical instructor believes that patient, staff

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or student safety is endangered, the student will receive a grade of "unsatisfactory" for the clinical day and will not be permitted in the clinical area. The student must make up this clinical time.

- If a student arrives to clinical unprepared to provide safe patient care (including inadequate clinical prep paperwork) or calls out ill for the day because they are unprepared, the student will receive a grade of "unsatisfactory" for that day. The student will be required to make up this day, see Clinical Absence and Make Up Day for details on make up process.
- If there is discussion regarding a student concern at a facility, this will result in a meeting between the facility, Clinical Instructor, student and the Associate Dean of Nursing within 2 days.
- Students may receive an "Incomplete" grade in the clinical course until the student completes the final clinical evaluation with their clinical instructor and the completed clinical evaluation tool is signed and submitted the HLS division office.
- Each student is expected to demonstrate accountability by ensuring safe transfer of patient care to another health care individual, under the direction of course faculty, before leaving the assigned Nursing unit. **A student will not leave the clinical learning environment without notification to the faculty.**

Food, drinks, smoking, or chewing of gum are not permitted in client care areas.

Absolutely no photos or visual recordings may be taken in client care areas.

Cell phones are allowed on the clinical unit IF allowed by institution policy. NO cell phones are allowed at Western State. Cell phones can ONLY be used for accessing data for patient care, such as medication information or lab values, or for emergencies. Phones should always be set to silent or vibrate. Students may lose the privilege to have their cell phone on the clinical unit.

For college laboratory experiences, students will be required to wear uniforms unless otherwise directed by the instructor(s) involved. For all clinical experiences, students will appear in uniform unless specifically directed otherwise by the course instructor(s).

Cell Phone Communication with Instructors

Rapid and efficient communication between an instructor and his/her clinical students is essential to the clinical experience and has been greatly enhanced with cell phones and texting. This mode of communication allows instructors to quickly inform all students of cancellations or other changes related to the clinical schedule. It also allows students to directly reach their instructor if they are ill or have an emergent situation prior to clinical. As this method of communication provides a significant advantage, many instructors use cell phones with their clinical groups, which necessitates responsibility on the part of instructors and students alike.

Keep in mind that **cell phone use and texting with instructors should be utilized only for the purposes of urgent communication** about clinical attendance or other items outlined by the instructor. Other, non-urgent communication should be done via email, phone during business hours designated by the individual instructor, or in person. **Once the clinical rotation has been completed, texting and use of an instructor's personal cell phone for communication should be discontinued by students.** If in doubt about what is appropriate, please refer back to the class syllabus or your specific clinical instructor's directions about cell phone use.

Clinical Absence and Make-Up Days

1. At the beginning of each semester, the course coordinator will designate make-up days to be held during the final week(s) of the semester.
2. Clinical absences may be made up by:
 - a. Assigning students to another clinical group, providing
 - i. it is appropriate to learning needs
 - ii. instructor consents
 - iii. 1:10 faculty-student ratio not violated
 - b. Assigning student to scheduled make-up day(s)
 - c. Assigning student to planned alternative experiences with clearly stated objectives and guidelines for participation and evaluation. This option should only be offered to the self-directed student who has mastered course and prerequisite clinical competencies and is capable and responsible for an independent learning experience.
 - d. Assigning an approved Simulation experience
3. If make-up requirements cannot be accommodated by A, B, C, and/or D described above, **the student may fail the course.**
4. Exceptions to the above shall be considered only in the event that a student has suffered a catastrophic illness/accident that prevents the student from attending multiple clinical days in a row. The absence must be verified by a physician's letter to the Associate Dean of Nursing.

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- a. In such cases where the illness/accident occurs prior to the last day to withdraw without grade penalty, the student may withdraw him/herself in the Student Information System (SIS/PeopleSoft).
- b. The faculty may:
 - i. administratively withdraw the student (if the illness/accident occurs prior to the last day to withdraw without grade penalty;
 - ii. withdraw the student under mitigating circumstances (if the last date to withdraw has passed); or
 - iii. award an incomplete grade. Consult the course syllabus for specific course requirements. Many clinical Nursing courses are offered once each year. This may require (if the number of missed days is excessive) the student to "stop out" or withdraw from the program until the course is offered again.
- c. If clinical days are missed due to a faculty member's absence, the procedure outlined in #2 above is followed. If the faculty absence creates a situation that would have a student miss greater than 3 clinical days, the following procedure will be followed:
 - i. The first faculty absence day (i.e. 4th student missed clinical day) will not be required to be made up.
 - ii. Additional missed days due to faculty absences will be required to be made up. The faculty member will coordinate additional make-up days with the students involved.

Personal Appearance and Behavior

The appearance of all Nursing students obviously must conform to the highest standards of cleanliness, neatness, good taste, and safety. Adherence to these standards is essential. In cases where personal hygiene, grooming and dress do not meet these standards, the instructor will counsel the individual and, when necessary, will refer them to the Associate Dean of Nursing Programs. If this remains a problem, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

When disruptive or otherwise unacceptable behavior occurs in a classroom, clinical, or lab, the instructor may immediately require the student who is causing the disruption leave the instructional setting. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor as soon as possible, and at the latest before the next meeting of the class or lab and to attempt to reconcile the problem. If not solved and in the most serious cases, such as when a student has previously been removed from the class or when the behavior is a serious violation of the rights of others, for example, incidents involving the use or threat of violence or other acts of hostility (such as cursing, raising a hand as if to strike out, etc.), the faculty member will deny the student's return to the course. In these cases, the faculty member must make a written charge to the Dean of Student Services that proposes the removal of the student from the course.

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Each student is expected to attend all learning experiences unimpaired by potential side effects from over the counter and/or prescription medications. A student is to be aware that cold/cough medications can impact cognitive and psychomotor function which could impact self as well as patient safety. Any student demonstrating effects of over the counter and/or prescription medications may be directed to leave the clinical learning environment. Clinical faculty may identify additional student safety actions which will be implemented.

Each student is expected to adhere to PVCC's Substance Abuse Policy for students. Every Nursing student is to demonstrate effective client care in every clinical learning environment unimpaired by the effects of drugs and alcohol. Any Nursing student whose performance is impaired by the effects of drugs or alcohol at the college or while representing PVCC at clinical or other sites will be asked to leave class or clinical and receive an unsatisfactory for that learning experience. Safety is addressed first.

Social Media Policy

Each student in a professional Nursing Program must be aware that his/her public visibility options on social media are changed and he/she is subject to scrutiny by a wider audience, including future employers. This policy serves as a guideline for appropriate use/conduct for social media sites. See National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) brochure.

- Do not post confidential or sensitive information PVCC or its community affiliates including patients, other students, faculty or staff.
- Do not post comments or use language that could reflect poorly on you, PVCC, or the Nursing Program.
- Understand that each student who participates in social networking represents himself/herself, and by extension, PVCC and the Nursing Program.
- A student must conduct himself/herself professionally at all times in all social settings, virtual or otherwise. Use privacy settings when appropriate.
- A student in the PVCC Nursing Program does not have college permission to use the PVCC name.
- A student in the Nursing Program does not have permission to discuss faculty members, clients or other students.
- A student in the Nursing Program does not have permission to use images of the program, the college or any faculty or staff.
- A student must understand, what the student writes/posts in any format print or online is his/her responsibility, and so are any repercussions.

The consequences of violating this policy may include disciplinary action up to and/or including dismissal from the Nursing Program. See HIPPA statements later in this handbook.

Dress Code Standards for Clinical Experience

Students must follow the PVCC Nursing Uniform Policy as detailed in their admission packet and this handbook.

A PVCC student uniform is required for clinical experiences. Our uniform consists of a solid royal blue scrub top and pants, with the school patch (available from the PVCC bookstore) sewn on **the left sleeve**. The material and construction of the uniform should be of sufficient quality to allow for two years' wear and laundering. Fit should be loose enough to accommodate ease of movement, but close enough (particularly in the neckline area) to maintain modesty and present a professional appearance. If needed for modesty or warmth, a solid white or black t-shirt (no graphics) may be worn underneath the scrub top. Pants with rib-knit cuffs at the ankles are not acceptable. A plain white, waist length scrub jacket, also with the school patch on the left sleeve, may be worn with the scrub top and pants, if desired. This jacket must be worn over street clothes for certain clinical experiences, as directed by your instructor and/or course syllabus.

Students must also adhere to any other policies set by the clinical facility.

In addition:

- Hair must be kept out of the face; tied up if long (past shoulder length).
- Shoes must be clean, leather or vinyl, and white or black in color with matching shoelaces (if applicable). **Boots are not acceptable. No cloth or nylon webbing shoes, high tops or sandals.** All shoes must have a fully enclosed toe box and at least a heel strap (shoes with fully enclosed heels are preferred). Socks are mandatory and must be of a solid, neutral color and cover the ankles.
- Male students faces should be clean shaven; or facial hair neatly groomed.
- The college and/or clinical sites will provide a photo ID badge which is required and must always be worn above the waist during clinical and is considered a part of the nursing uniform.
- For infection prevention and safety, no dangling jewelry, (earrings, necklaces, or bracelets). No costume rings.
- Only ONE set of post earrings allowed for pierced ears. Earrings cannot dangle below earlobe.
- No visible body piercings allowed in clinical setting. This includes nose and tongue piercing.
- No visible tattoos in clinical setting.
- No heavy cosmetics, after shave, perfume or gum chewing.
- Fingernails are to be clean, less than ¼ inch in length, no artificial, gel, or hybrid gel nails.
- Students should wear uniforms in all clinical areas unless instructed to wear street clothes. Street clothes worn in clinical area must be appropriate and in good taste.
No mini-skirts, jeans, shorts, shirts with low necklines or shirts that bare the midriff area. The expectation is to maintain a professional appearance.

Unsupervised Minors On College Property

Piedmont Virginia Community College cannot be responsible for the safety and welfare of unsupervised minors. Minors must, therefore, not be left unattended while parents are working or attending classes at the college. Minors are prohibited from any college classroom in which instructional activities are taking place. Parents of unsupervised minors shall be held responsible for any destruction of property, safety issue Associate Dean of Nursing, Dean of Health and Life Sciences, V.P. for Instruction and Student Services, or College President **in that order**.

Any individual student or group of students in the Nursing Program who wish to express their concerns or questions are encouraged to do so at any time. Valid suggestions for change are always welcome and will be shared with the entire Nursing Faculty. These suggestions should be provided through the students' class representatives to the Nursing Curriculum Committee.

Evaluation Forms

The Nursing Program follows college policies and procedures by providing course evaluation questionnaires to elicit information from students which will help to make improvements in specific courses. In addition, questionnaires related the Nursing Program are provided. Please use these questionnaires to improve your program through constructive evaluations of the program and its faculty.

Student Representation

Two (2) representatives to the Curriculum Committee will be selected from each class, both days and evenings, to serve a minimum appointment of 2 semesters. Attendance is expected at one meeting per month as scheduled by the Curriculum Committee Chairperson. These representatives shall attend scheduled meetings; provide input into discussion and decisions relating to matters of Nursing Program curriculum and instruction, and report regularly to the members of their class. Further details on the student representative selection process will be provided in class and on the Nursing program Canvas discussion site.

Bulletin Board

The bulletin boards outside the Nursing labs in the Keats & Giuseppe building are used by the Nursing Faculty to post announcements regarding course activities and requirements. All students are held responsible for noting these announcements. Notices posted by students should have the approval of a Nursing faculty member. **In addition, announcements are posted on “Canvas”, an electronic course management system for individual courses. Students should consult the Nursing Student Discussion Canvas Site** for general information. In addition, faculty will communicate with students via the college e-mail system. **Students will be held responsible for all posted materials. Checking these sources regularly is required.**

Division Administration

The division administrative assistants support the Division Dean and faculty with communication concerns of the division. In addition, they relay phone messages to faculty and assist faculty with written communications.

Under no circumstances should any student in this program request

- to provide copies of any materials which have been distributed in class; or
- to duplicate materials related to class or clinical assignments; or
- to use the phone unless it is for an EMERGENCY call.

A copy machine is available in the Library for student use.

Faculty Mailboxes

Written communication to a faculty member should be given to the division administrative assistants, who will then place it in the appropriate faculty mailbox. At faculty direction, students may leave non-sensitive written material in the plastic box outside of the faculty member's office.

Written Assignments

Written assignments are to be submitted by the designated time or they will automatically be considered late. The penalty for late assignments will be specified in each course syllabus. If the student has a valid reason for a late assignment, and approaches the instructor prior to the due date, consideration will be given. At that time, an alternative due date for the assignment will be established. The actual points assigned to written assignments will vary in relation to the specific course being taught and the nature of the assignment itself according to Course Syllabi.

Course Assignments

Each student assumes full responsibility for the content and integrity of the coursework they submit. Each student must do their own work and submit only his/her own work unless permitted by the instructor. American Psychological Association (APA) format and citation style is required for all written assignments as well as citation of references. Each student is responsible and must follow all written and/or oral instructions given by instructors or designated college representatives for taking exams, placement assessments, quizzes, and other evaluation instruments.

Testing

Students are expected to report promptly and comply with all testing sessions/schedule, including virtual testing or testing in virtual classes. If a student cannot attend a testing session, the student must notify the instructor and/or course coordinator **prior** to the scheduled test. Absence from a test without prior notification of the faculty will result in a deduction of 10 points from the grade achieved on the make-up test. To plan for a make-up test, the student must contact the faculty as soon as possible. **All make-up tests will be shortened by 20 questions and must be taken by the specified day.** Failure to meet this deadline will result in additional penalty. Again, refer to your course syllabus.

Note: Different specific instructions apply to the drug dosage calculation competency test given each semester and students must follow those instructions as outlined in individual course syllabi and by instructors.

Note: All tests given within the Nursing Program have a designated time limit. If a student goes over this time limit, there will be a 10-point deduction from the test grade. Students who have provided written documentation from Susan Hannifan (see below) will continue to receive the appropriate accommodations but will also get the point deduction for going over their individual designated time limit.

Many Nursing courses utilize Scantron bubble forms for testing. **In all courses, the answer marked on the Scantron sheet is the final answer.** Students should always take the time to double-check they have marked the correct answer on the Scantron sheet.

Also, the answer placed on the blank "answer line" in all drug dosage calculation competency tests is the only answer that will be graded.

Professional Behaviors In The Classroom

PVCC supports a learning environment that is collaborative and mutually respectful. Each student is expected to prepare for each class and actively engage in classroom activities.

- Professional communication is always expected in all course learning environments. Unprofessional language or actions while in the learning environment is unacceptable.
- Any student who identifies a class/course concern is expected to discuss the concern with the course faculty as an initial action.
- Audio and/or recording of any individual, without his/her permission is a violation of the law.
- Each student is expected to be honest and sensitive in reactions to class discussions.
- Each student is expected to always demonstrate classroom courtesy to include not disrupting class and refraining from talking to others or conducting non-classroom business while the lecture is in progress. This includes maintaining cell phones in silent mode.

Intellectual Honesty

(Refer to College Academic Dishonesty Policy)

Piedmont Virginia Community College sets high standards for academic integrity. Academic dishonesty is not tolerated. The following misconduct is considered an honor offense and is subject to disciplinary action: cheating, plagiarism, knowingly furnishing false information to the college or instructors, and the forgery, alteration or use of college documents or instruments of identification with the intent to defraud. Students are advised that a written summary of this violation and the resulting penalty will be placed in the student's official college record. After one year of no further occurrences, the student may request that the Dean of Student Services remove the statement from the official record.

For each course, if the instructor determines that a student's work has been intellectually dishonest, the instructor may award the student an F for the course and/or for the specific task/assignment determined to have been dishonestly accomplished. Such action will be preceded by a meeting with the student to provide an occasion for refutation, explanation, or mitigation. A student who is found guilty of intellectual dishonesty loses his/her right to voluntarily withdraw from the course. **Nursing students determined to have been intellectually dishonest will be dismissed from the nursing program.** For a full description of Intellectual Honesty policies and procedures, refer to the College Catalog.

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During any testing, exams, or exam reviews, each student is required to place all belongings to the side of the classroom. Cellular or recording devices must be turned **off** and cannot be physically on a student, desk or tabletop during any exam or exam review. Any student observed in violation of this policy will be considered in violation of the PVCC Honesty policy and subject to dismissal from the Nursing Program.

All Nursing exams are confidential and the property of the Nursing faculty and PVCC Nursing Program. No student may divulge any question on an exam to any individual. This includes unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of any exam materials, including the nature or content of exam questions, before, during, or after the exam, using any method is in violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.

Grading

Most Nursing Program tests are graded using the standard method of calculating the point value of each question by dividing the total number of questions into 100. On tests not using this method, the point value is clearly displayed with each question. Nursing Program tests are **not** graded on a curve. However, the Nursing faculty reserve the right to discard problematic test items. When this occurs those students who answered the problematic question incorrectly will have their test grades recomputed with the new total number of items. However, those students who answered the problematic question(s) correctly will have no change in their test grade.

To demonstrate competency in the clinical component, the student must successfully perform all required skills and earn a clinical grade of "satisfactory" which is a "**Minimum of Safety**" level of performance. Those students not maintaining "satisfactory" in the clinical area will **not** be retained as Nursing students. Criteria for obtaining a satisfactory clinical grade are contained in each course syllabus and/or clinical evaluation form.

Grading Scale

A = 92-100

B = 84-91

C = 80-83

D = 70-79

F = Below 70

I = incomplete

Each course syllabus will contain more detailed information concerning the system of grading.

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Note: Each student must achieve a satisfactory grade in clinical and a minimum score of 80% (79.5% rounds to 80%) on the theoretical component of each course and a course grade of "C" in order to pass that course and proceed to the next course in the nursing program sequence.

Students must also pass non-nursing major courses (i.e. BIO 141, BIO 142 and BIO 150, etc.) with a grade of "C" or better.

In accordance with the Virginia Community College System policy (VCCS Policy 5.6.3) a student may not normally enroll in the same course more than twice. Enrollment is defined as staying in the course beyond add/drop period. A student who receives a failing grade (D or F) in any two different nursing courses will not continue in the nursing program.

The clinical portion of designated nursing courses is evaluated as "Pass/Fail." A student must receive a "Pass" in the clinical portion of a course in order to pass the clinical course who does not meet the clinical learning outcomes will fail the course with a grade of F and will not continue in the Nursing Program.

Withdrawal From Program Or Course

Nursing students are expected to notify the course instructor and Associate Dean of Nursing in writing of their intention to withdraw from any nursing course or from the nursing program. The Associate Dean of Nursing will schedule an exit interview to discuss student concerns and clarify reasons for withdrawal.

Students who withdraw must apply for re-admission according to the procedure outlined in the PVCC Nursing information booklet and college catalog.

Criteria For Dismissal From The Nursing Program

The Nursing faculty members believe that the habits and work patterns which are established when an individual is a student may be transferred into the work setting as a graduate Nurse. Every effort should be exerted to establish positive patterns of professional behavior, which include arriving on time for each clinical assignment, notifying the instructor of lateness or absence, and when indicated, contacting the appropriate instructor concerning make-up of work missed during an absence.

A student who fails clinical, based on any aspect of Professional Behavior and/or Safety, will receive a grade of F for the course. PVCC requires clinical placements at clinical facilities throughout the community. Each facility has the right to express concerns about student behavior. If a student is unable to complete the clinical hours, then an Incomplete or a failing grade of F is assigned to the student.

Each student within the Nursing curriculum automatically assumes responsibility and accountability for his/her individual, as well as professional judgments and actions.

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The following may be used after discussions with all parties involved regarding potential dismissal of any Nursing Student from the Nursing Program include (but are not limited to) the following:

1. Unprofessional conduct which shall include but not be limited to:
 - a. Violating any portion of the ANA Code of Ethics, Federal, State, Local laws, or Virginia Board of Nursing regulations
 - b. Performing acts beyond the limits of legal practice
 - c. Assuming duties and responsibilities without adequate training or when competency has not been maintained
 - d. Exhibiting behavior in the clinical area that a faculty member deems potentially life threatening or that may lead to client injury. This includes observations reported by professionals within a healthcare agency.
 - e. Diverting supplies, equipment or drugs for personal or other unauthorized use
 - f. Falsifying or otherwise altering patient or agency records
 - g. Failure to maintain patient confidentiality
 - h. Abusing, neglecting, or abandoning patients/clients
 - i. Actual or threatened hostile acts, including verbal abuse, against patients, clinical agency staff members, or PVCC faculty
 - j. Intellectual dishonesty
 - k. Removal of student by the clinical institution due to a safety issue
 - l. Violating of PVCC Academic Honesty, Student Conduct, or any other PVCC student behavior policies as stated in the PVCC Student Handbook
 - m. Willful commission of any act which is a felony under the laws of the State
 - i. or of the United States or any act which is a misdemeanor under such laws
 - ii. and involves moral turpitude.
2. Student Nursing Practice in a manner contrary to standards of ethics or
 - a. in such a manner as to make his/her practice a danger to the health and welfare of patients or to the public.
3. Inability to practice student Nursing with reasonable skill and safety to patients by reason of
 - a. illness, or
 - b. excessive use of alcohol, drugs, narcotics, chemicals, or any other type of material or as a result of any mental or physical condition.
4. Any violation of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which protects the privacy of individually identifiable health information; including, but not limited to a breach in confidentiality is grounds for dismissal from the Nursing Program. In addition, additional charges may be filed against the student(s) by the health care agency.
5. Student receiving 2 Unsatisfactory Days in one course during the Nursing Program.
6. Student earning a final grade of D, F, or W in any course that is required to complete the program.

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The rationale for these criteria is based on *Virginia Administrative Code, Board of Nursing: Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing and Regulations for Nursing Education Programs*, 18 VAC 90 Chapter 19 and Chapter 27 et seq.

The student will be counseled and advised of his or her unacceptable behavior. Evidence of the conference will be documented and signed by the instructor and the student.

All incidents will be brought to the attention of the Division Dean and the Virginia Board of Nursing, if necessary.

Procedures for dismissal and appeal may be found in the Special Academic Policies section of the college catalog and the college student handbook.

Readmission To The Nursing Program

Students who withdraw or are dismissed from the program for academic or personal reasons may apply in writing to the Associate Dean of Nursing no later than **April 15** for the Fall semester and **November 15** for the Spring semester in which student is seeking readmission. In the letter, students should explain why they believe that they will be successful upon readmission and describe any actions they have taken to remedy weaknesses. Students seeking readmission to the program must follow the same admission procedure as new applicants. Readmissions will be made based on past performance in the theoretical and clinical components of Nursing courses, curricular GPA, science GPA, and fulfillment of any contingencies outlined at the time of withdrawal or dismissal. Students accepted for readmission will be ranked according to these criteria. Readmission is based on space available and is limited to **one opportunity** (regardless of the reason for their withdrawal/dismissal from the program).

All Nursing courses must be completed within a five-year time frame (from date of first nursing course to date of graduation).

If students are dismissed from the Nursing Program due to intellectual dishonesty or other issues as contained in the previous section (Criteria for Dismissal from the Nursing Program), they are NOT eligible for readmission to the PVCC Nursing Program.

A student is only eligible to apply for readmission if they have completed NSG 100, NSG 106, NSG 130, NSG 200, and BIO 142. If a student has not completed **all** of these courses but is otherwise eligible to apply for readmission, they must apply as a new student, meet current minimum program eligibility requirements defined in the admissions information book by the stated deadline, and be offered a seat in the program after being ranked in the competitive admission process. **This will still count as the student's one opportunity for readmission.**

Uniforms And Equipment

Each student is responsible for purchasing the following items: textbooks, student uniform, white or black shoes, white hose/socks, watch with seconds indicator, stethoscope, and penlight. All items except required apparel and watch are available in the college bookstore.

ATI Testing Services

Computerized standardized tests are required to be taken at selected times through the program. Students will pay for the access to this system directly through ATI or through PVCC's bookstore.

Estimated Student Expenses

(in addition to college tuition and fees)

- Upon admission
 - a. Physical exam, TB test and immunizations: consult your physician for costs
 - b. Criminal Background check and Drug Screening: \$150
 - c. Online Learning system: \$200/semester (see below)
 - d. Online accountability platform: \$100/year
- First semester
 - a. Books/supplies: \$900
 - b. Uniforms: \$100
 - c. Stethoscope: \$20
 - d. Penlight: \$5
 - e. Liability insurance: \$20/year (optional)
 - f. On-line learning system: \$175-200
- Second semester
 - a. Books/supplies: \$200
 - b. Online learning system: \$130 required
- Third semester
 - a. Books/supplies: \$100
 - b. On-line learning system: \$130 required
- Fourth semester
 - a. Books/supplies: \$155
 - b. Online learning system: \$130 required
 - c. NCLEX: \$200
 - d. VA license application: \$190
 - e. BON Background check: \$46

Books/supplies are estimated costs

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Students will purchase a PVCC Nursing pin for the pinning ceremony. The cost ranges from about \$35-\$100 depending on the pin chosen.

There may be additional fees for parking at clinical sites throughout the program.

These figures are estimates and are for Nursing courses only. Actual expenses may vary.

Student Liability Insurance

Nursing students have a personal responsibility for their own activities in contact with patients, even though they are not yet licensed. As an individual, a student is legally and financially responsible if another person is injured or suffers loss as a result of negligence.

Nursing students do not practice under the license of the clinical instructor or co-assigned staff nurse in the clinical setting.

PVCC Students are considered constituents of the state and therefore are covered by a certain amount of liability insurance. However, students are responsible for their own health insurance should they become injured during the course of the Nursing Program. Students who practice unsafely or outside the boundaries of their responsibilities are responsible for their own actions. Piedmont Virginia Community College cannot assume financial or legal responsibility for negligent activities performed by students. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that students purchase individual liability insurance.

Hospitalization Insurance

Nursing students are also responsible for hospitalization costs or other medical expenses should an accident/illness occur while enrolled in the Nursing Program. **The college and/or clinical agencies are not responsible for injuries or illness incurred in the clinical setting.** Students are to report any incidents as outlined in the PVCC Safety Manual Section-4. <https://www.pvcc.edu/pvcc-safety-manual-section-4>

Financial Assistance

It is the desire of Piedmont Virginia Community College that no qualified student be denied the opportunity of college attendance because of a financial need. The College has many sources of financial aid, including programs funded by the Federal Government and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Students wishing to apply for financial assistance should secure a brochure giving detailed information about the various programs and an application for financial aid from the Financial Aid Officer at the College.

Piedmont Virginia Community College Nursing Program Fund

The Piedmont Virginia Community College Nursing Program Fund is a special fund for use by students in the Nursing Program. Graduating students often make contributions to this fund.

Monies in the Nursing Program fund can be used when situations of unusual and/or unexpected need arise. If a student experiences an unanticipated financial need, a request may be made for assistance from the Nursing Program Fund. Send requests to PVCC'S Associate Dean of Nursing. Documentation of emergent circumstances that precipitated the need for assistance.

Counseling and Guidance Services

The Nursing faculty advise students in their Nursing Program course work. In addition, the instructors in each of the Nursing courses will periodically review student progress via individual conferences. If a student has a problem related to class work or clinical laboratory performance, the course instructors will discuss this during scheduled office hours. Problems of a personal nature may be discussed with either a Nursing faculty member or a professional counselor in the Counseling Office. Confidentiality procedures apply to any matter discussed with a college counselor or nursing faculty member.

Student Activities

At Piedmont Virginia Community College, student groups or clubs are organized through the coordinator of co-curricular activities, under the jurisdiction of the Dean of Student Services. A more detailed discussion of the regulations governing such student activities can be found in the current college catalog. We strongly suggest that all students familiarize themselves with this information.

Pinning Ceremony

Upon completion of the nursing program, a Piedmont Virginia Community College Nursing pin is purchased by each student. A pinning ceremony is conducted by the Nursing faculty. Families and friends of the graduates are invited as well as the entire college faculty and staff. During the spring semester, students will work with faculty advisors to plan the ceremony.

Requirements and Preparation for Graduation

1. Students must pass all nursing courses with a C (an 80% or higher), as well as successfully complete all other courses required for an Associate degree. All prerequisite/corequisite courses must also be passed with a grade of "C" or better.
2. Students should ensure all courses required for PVCC's Nursing Program are successfully complete, and credits required for graduation are documented on their PVCC transcript.
3. Students must complete the Application for Graduation at the beginning of the semester in which they intend to graduate. Students will receive multiple reminders regarding deadlines and instructions to apply to graduate however the student is ultimately responsible for applying to graduate at the appropriate time **Nursing students do not automatically graduate without first applying to graduate.**

Deadlines to apply to graduate are as follows:

- a. To graduate at the end of the Spring Semester: March 15th
- b. To graduate at the end of the Fall Semester: October 15th
- c. To graduate at the end of Summer Semester: June 15th

Graduation Exercises

Upon successful completion of all Nursing Program curriculum requirements, the student will become a candidate for the Associate Degree in Applied Science. This degree will be awarded at the formal graduation ceremony held by the college.

Application For State Board Of Nursing Licensing Examination

1. Guidelines for applying to take the NCLEX-RN examination are found at the National Council of State boards of Nursing website: www.ncsbn.org.
2. Candidates send by certified mail the examination applications and fees (money order or certified check) before the stated deadline (more information about the licensing exam is provided during the last semester of the program).
3. Students are advised **not** to request copies of transcripts to be sent to the BON after graduation. The testing process may be delayed.

Nursing Program Policy on The Release and Confidentiality of Student Records

The Nursing Program policy on release and confidentiality of student records is consistent with that of the College.

Every endeavor is made to maintain confidentiality. All members of the faculty, administration and clerical staff must respect confidential information regarding students. Please refer to *The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974*, Pub. L.90-247, as amended.

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Policy Statement

- A. Disclosure to the Student
 - a. With regard to a student's access to his or her own records, it is assumed
 - i. that a major purpose of student's record is to aid in the personal and
 - ii. academic growth of that student.
 - iii. The following generally lists the types of records maintained in the Nursing Program files:
 - 1. Nursing Program Application
 - 2. Medical Health Record
 - 3. Documentation of criminal background and drug screening clearance
 - 4. Documentation of Successful Completion of Hospital Competencies
 - 5. Clinical Evaluation Form(s)
 - 6. Progress Reports
 - 7. Correspondence
 - 8. Documentation of current CPR certification
 - 9. Documentation of Declination of Hepatitis B Vaccination (if appropriate)
 - b. Students wishing to review the contents of their Nursing Program file are required to schedule an appointment with the Division Dean and indicate the purpose of their appointment. The review must take place within thirty (30) days from the date of request.
- B. Request to Amend Educational Records (see college catalog for procedure.)
- C. Right to a Hearing (see college catalog for procedure.)
- D. Disclosure to School Officials (see college catalog for procedure)

Invasive Procedures by PVCC Nursing Students

Students enrolled in PVCC's Nursing Program may NOT perform invasive procedures on themselves or each other to improve their skills and comfort level with these procedures. This includes: venipuncture; injections (IM, SC, IV); and insertion of nasogastric tubes and/or other catheters.

Students may perform glucose checks on THEMSELVES with direct supervision from a Nursing Faculty member in the laboratory setting.

If students have any questions about whether a particular skill is invasive, they should consult a faculty member or the Associate Dean of Nursing.

By signing the student verification form, students acknowledge understanding of this policy and accepts personal responsibility to observe it.

Receipt and Acceptance of Responsibility

This Nursing Student Handbook is provided to you as a guide and to ensure that you understand the academic and conduct expectations while enrolled in PVCC's Nursing Program. There is no mutuality between you and the College concerning it, and thus your reliance upon the information contained within it when making academic decisions does not constitute, and should not be construed as, a contract with the College. Furthermore, the College reserves the right to make changes to this handbook at any time, unilaterally and without notice; however, students will not be held responsible for any associated conduct expectations contained in such changes until notified of them.

We expect students to become thoroughly familiar with this Handbook and reference it.

If students have difficulty understanding this Handbook, the Piedmont Virginia Community College Catalog, the Piedmont Virginia Community College Student Handbook or Nursing course syllabi, they are encouraged to consult a faculty member or the Nursing Program Associate Dean.

By signing the student verification form, students accept responsibility for the policies and procedures contained in this Handbook.

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PVCC Nursing Program Admission Student Verification Form

Name _____ Empl ID# _____

VCCS email address _____@email.vccs.edu

Reminder: all official school email messages are sent to vccs email accounts only.

I verify that I must have the following documentation on file in the Health and Life Sciences Division office by _____ **(date)**. If my file is not complete, I may not be able to begin clinicals and will receive an Unsatisfactory for one clinical day.

- Physical form completed and signed by physician with documentation of appropriate immunizations and/or titers
- Current Annual PPD with negative result or record of negative Chest x-ray
- Hepatitis B vaccine or titer verification of immunity, vaccines, or signed declination form
- Completion of mandatory hospital web-based competency modules
- Completion of mandatory Criminal Background check and Drug Screening verification

Also, I verify that I have carefully read and am responsible for all the following:

- I acknowledge that email.vccs.edu email and Canvas are the official modes of communication for the program, and I am responsible for correcting issues and reviewing email messages and Canvas throughout the semester beginning one week before each semester begins. I acknowledge that I am responsible for using my VCCS email account for all school-related communication.
- I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to regularly meet with an academic advisor for academic planning.
- I acknowledge I am responsible for knowing and following the requirements and policies of the Nursing Student Handbook, the Piedmont Virginia Community College Catalog, the Piedmont Virginia Community College Student Handbook and all nursing course syllabi.
- I acknowledge that clinical agencies may have policies including but not limited to drug testing, immunizations, criminal background checks and dress code or appearance and that I am responsible for knowing and following these policies.
- I understand that if I am arrested, I must report that arrest to the Associate Dean of Nursing or Dean of Health and Life Sciences prior to returning to any class.

My signature indicates that I am in compliance with all the conditions stated above.

Signature _____

Date _____

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Statement of Agreement HIPAA

I understand that any HIPAA infraction or violation may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program. I further understand that the clinical agency in which the infraction or violation occurs will be notified and that clinical agency may choose to take legal action against me.

Printed Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Student Signature: _____

Student ID Number: _____

This document will be placed in your program file for reference