



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
College of Nursing

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# Undergraduate Student Handbook

# Table of Contents

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Table of Contents .....	1
Introduction.....	7
Disclaimer Note to Student.....	7
Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy .....	7
Publication Accuracy .....	7
About the University .....	7
About the College.....	8
Vision .....	8
Mission .....	8
Goals.....	9
Philosophy.....	9
Professional Nursing Practice.....	9
Professional Nursing Education .....	9
Expected Student Outcomes .....	10
Provide Care.....	10
Manage Care.....	10
Participate as a Member of the Profession .....	10
Essential Competency Requirements of the Student Nurse .....	10
Motor Skills .....	11
Sensory/Observation.....	11
Communication .....	11
Cognitive .....	11
Behavioral/Emotional.....	11
Professional Conduct.....	12
Accreditation .....	12
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).....	12
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) .....	12
Texas Board of Nursing (TBON).....	12
Chapter 1: General Information .....	13
Academic Calendar.....	13
Academic Advising .....	13
Access to Student Records & FERPA.....	14
Attendance, Absences and Makeups .....	15
Awareness of and Respect for Diversity.....	15

Childcare Guidelines.....	15
Clinical Learning Resource Center (Simulation Lab).....	15
Communication Expectations.....	16
Exposure to Chemicals.....	16
Identification Badge .....	16
Legal Violations.....	17
Pregnancy .....	17
Religious Holy Days .....	17
Smoking Policy .....	17
Social Media Policy.....	17
Student Complaints .....	18
Student Name or Address Changes.....	19
Temporary Disabilities.....	20
Title IX and Sexual Violence/Harassment.....	20
Universal Identification Number (UIN) .....	20
Weapons Policy & Campus Carry.....	21
Weather & Other Campus Crisis Events.....	21
Chapter 2: Undergraduate Program .....	22
Tracks Leading to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree .....	22
Traditional BSN Track .....	22
Second Degree BSN Track.....	22
RN to BSN Track .....	23
ASCEND Program .....	23
Curriculum .....	25
Traditional and Second Degree Curriculum .....	25
RN to BSN Curriculum.....	26
Chapter 3: Admissions Procedures & New Student Requirements .....	27
English Proficiency.....	27
Other Requirements .....	27
Admissions Criteria .....	27
Additional Requirements for International Applicants .....	28
Notification of Admission Decisions .....	28
Campus Transfer Requests .....	28
Transfer Course Credit Policies .....	28
Residence Requirement for Baccalaureate Degree .....	29
Transfer from Another Nursing Program .....	29

Texas Success Initiative .....	30
Computer Requirements .....	30
Health History & Physical Exam Requirement .....	30
Health Insurance.....	31
International Student Insurance Requirements.....	31
Professional Liability Insurance.....	31
Immunization Information .....	31
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification .....	32
Criminal Background Checks Policy .....	33
Procedure for Background Check .....	33
Other Requirements .....	34
Chapter 4: Student Services .....	35
Disability Resources .....	35
Health Services .....	35
Library Resources .....	36
Office of Financial Aid .....	36
Scholarships .....	36
Scholarship Academic Progress Policy .....	36
Security .....	37
Academic Success Program .....	37
Academic Success Coach .....	37
Supplemental Instruction .....	38
University Writing Center .....	38
Chapter 5: Registrar Policies & Procedures .....	39
Howdy .....	39
Student Business Services .....	39
Registration Process .....	40
Cancellation of Registration .....	40
Late Registration .....	40
Request for Minor .....	40
Request for Double Degree .....	40
Student Name or Address Changes .....	41
Transcript Requests .....	41
Undergraduate Registration for Graduate Level Coursework.....	41
Verification of Enrollment.....	41
Excess Credit Hour Policy.....	41

Leave of Absence (LOA) .....	42
Military Leave.....	42
Q-Drops .....	42
Readmission.....	43
Withdrawal .....	43
Chapter 6: Academic Rules, Policies, and Procedures .....	44
Aggie Code of Honor .....	44
Student Rules.....	44
Academic Integrity .....	44
Definitions of Academic Misconduct .....	45
Other Types of Conduct Concerns .....	45
Grading Policy .....	46
Grade Rounding Policy .....	46
Progression .....	46
Good Academic Standing .....	47
Academic Progression Criteria .....	47
Academic Success Plan for Nursing Students .....	48
Q Drop Policy .....	48
Incomplete Grade Policy .....	48
Grade Disputes & Undergraduate Appeals Process .....	48
Academic Dismissal .....	49
Chapter 7: Classroom & Clinical Expectations .....	50
Civility Statement.....	50
Clinical Expectations.....	50
Patient Safety.....	51
Clinical Course Concerns.....	51
Attendance.....	52
Policy for Clinical Concerns.....	53
Reporting of Illness & Absence .....	53
Dress Code/Uniforms Rules .....	53
Traditional/Second Degree B.S.N. Student Dress Code: .....	54
RN-BSN Dress Code: .....	56
Evaluation of Faculty, Courses, and Program .....	56
Standardized Testing.....	56
Guidelines for Classroom Experiences .....	56
Electronic Devices.....	56

Intellectual Property .....	57
Course Recording .....	57
Exam Guidelines .....	57
HIPAA Policy .....	58
Needlestick Guidelines .....	58
First Aid for percutaneous and mucocutaneous exposures: .....	59
Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens Procedure .....	59
Substance Abuse Rules .....	60
Additional Testing Conditions .....	61
Description of the Drug Screen Panel .....	61
Appeal and Retesting Guidelines .....	61
Disciplinary/Actions .....	62
Refusal to Consent to Testing .....	62
Confidentiality .....	62
Transportation Expectations .....	62
Student Volunteer Observation .....	62
Chapter 8: Student Conduct Code Procedures .....	64
Professional Code of Ethics .....	64
Disciplinary Penalties for Violation of Professional Code of Conduct .....	65
Reporting Violations .....	66
Procedures for Handling Uncontested Case Investigations .....	66
Procedures for Handling Contested Case Investigations .....	66
Disciplinary Hearing .....	67
Right to Appeal .....	68
False Alarm/Reporting Penalties .....	68
Chapter 9: Student Life .....	70
Community Service Opportunities .....	70
Recreation Center .....	70
Sports Pass/Ticket Options .....	70
Student Participation in Committees .....	70
Student Organizations .....	70
New Student Organization Recognition and Approval Process .....	71
Honor Societies .....	71
Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society .....	71
Other Leadership Opportunities .....	72
College of Nursing Ambassadors .....	72

Interprofessional Organizations.....	72
Chapter 10: Graduation and RN Licensure Information .....	73
Graduation Requirements .....	73
Graduation Commencement .....	73
CON Recognition Ceremony .....	74
RN Licensure.....	74
Licensure Discloser .....	75
Declaratory Order of License Eligibility .....	76
Nursing Jurisprudence Exam (NJE).....	76
National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) .....	76
APPENDIX A.....	78
Academic Success Plan for Nursing Students.....	78
Exam 1: .....	78
Exam 2 and beyond: .....	78
End of semester: Exam 4/Final exam: .....	78

# Introduction

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## Disclaimer Note to Student

The provisions of this Student Handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student, or faculty member and the Texas A&M System. Although every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of information in this publication, the Texas A&M System, the Texas A&M Health Science Center, and the College of Nursing reserve the right to change course offerings, fees, tuition, academic calendars, curricula, degree requirements, graduation procedures, and any other requirement affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. The College, at all times, retains the right to dismiss a student who does not attain and maintain adequate academic or clinical performance or who does not exhibit the personal and professional qualifications required for the practice of nursing.

Detailed instructions on processes related to the Offices of the Registrar, Financial Aid and Student Business Services can be obtained by contacting the respective office or visiting [Aggie One Stop](#).

## Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

Texas A&M University (TAMU) provides equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment or admission and the public regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. TAMU will promptly investigate all complaints of illegal discrimination, sexual harassment, and related retaliation in accordance with applicable federal and state laws.

The College of Nursing (CON) complies with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act and does not discriminate on the basis of an individual's handicap in its admission, accessibility, treatment, and employment of students in its programs and activities. The CON provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to students with handicapping conditions, as defined under the law, who are otherwise qualified to meet the institution's academic requirements. For additional information, contact the CON Office of Student Affairs at (979) 436-0110.

## Publication Accuracy

Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of information in this publication. Nevertheless, the CON reserves the right to change without prior notice: admission and degree requirements, curriculum, courses, teaching personnel, rules, regulations, tuition, fees, and any other matter described in this handbook.

The handbook is published at the beginning of each academic year (prior to the fall term) and as warranted by policy changes approved by the CON. The Texas A&M University System administration and the CON reserve the right to make changes to policies and procedures without notice as necessitated by governing authorities or administrative needs. Changes are communicated to students through email.

## About the University

TAMU opened its doors in 1876 as the state's first public institution of higher learning. Today, we stand as a research-intensive flagship university dedicated to sending Aggie leaders out into



the world prepared to take on the challenges of tomorrow. The University's purpose is to develop leaders of character dedicated to serving the greater good. Our purpose statement carries with it the responsibility, the traditions and the forward-thinking of Texas A&M exemplified by all who are associated with the university — our faculty and staff, and our current and former students. This purpose can be defined by our six core values.

1. Excellence
2. Integrity
3. Leadership
4. Loyalty
5. Respect
6. Selfless Service

Located in the heart of the Houston-Dallas-Austin triangle and within a two-hour drive of 26 million of the state's 30 million residents, Texas A&M's main campus in College Station is home to more than 72,000 students. Another 5,200 are at the branch campuses in Galveston and Qatar and at the School of Law, Higher Education Center at McAllen, and Health Science Center locations across Texas.

## About the College

Texas A&M University College of Nursing graduates are among the best-prepared baccalaureate and graduate nurses in the nation, and they are highly sought after by prospective employers. The first-time National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses® (NCLEX-RN) pass rates for BSN graduates have ranked 10 percentage points higher than both the Texas and national average since the inception of the college in 2008. We have grown from 40 undergraduate students admitted in 2008 to over 700 graduate and undergraduate students enrolled at two campuses: Bryan and Round Rock as well as having many students enrolled in distance education programs. The college also has a resident recruiting presence in Lufkin and McAllen serving residents in East and South Texas for both undergraduate and graduate nursing students.

## Vision

Our vision is to be a premier college of nursing, educating and empowering a diverse population of nurse leaders who will transform health and health systems through service, discovery and knowledge.

## Mission

The mission of the CON is to educate professional nurses of today and leaders of tomorrow through the provision of excellent educational programs in nursing. The CON will identify, attract and graduate students of high potential, especially those from groups who have been historically under-represented in Texas health care. Furthermore, this mission will facilitate individuals, families, and groups in achieving the maximum state of well-being through education of highly skilled nurses, research and service. The mission of the CON will be enhanced through faculty contributions to community service, leadership, practice and research.

## Goals

In support of the vision and mission, the CON is committed to the following educational goals:

- Educate professional and advanced-practice nurses who exemplify excellence in clinical practice, scholarship, service, leadership and personal growth.
- Advance knowledge, practice and pedagogy through the transformation of the College of Nursing into a national leader in innovative research and scholarship.
- Endorse and uphold the principles of cultural humility and sensitivity, and commit to working in partnership with the communities we serve to co-create mutually beneficial relationships and improve health outcomes.
- Foster a supportive environment, building upon our strengths and promoting a culture of excellence that is the driving force in the achievement of our strategic goals.
- Achieve recognition as the nursing school of choice both in Texas and nationally for students, faculty and employers.

## Philosophy

The philosophy of the Texas A&M University College of Nursing reflects our beliefs about the role and the education of the professional nurse. This philosophy represents a blend of nursing theories.

## Professional Nursing Practice

Nursing is a balance of both art and science. The art of nursing involves the concepts of caring that fosters respectful relationships and individual dignity and worth. The science of nursing is supported through inquiry, research and other scholarly activities and is manifested by evidence-based practice.

The professional nurse is a partner and an advocate for the health care consumer in an increasingly diverse and aging population. Professional nursing provides culturally competent care to individuals, families and groups within their environments. Care of the physical, psychosocial and spiritual needs is essential to the promotion, protection and maintenance of health.

The nurse functions in the roles of provider of care, coordinator of care, and contributor to the profession. Care is provided in and across all settings and health care systems, and uses a number of treatment modalities. As a provider of care, the nurse contributes a unique blend of knowledge, skills, and caring. As a coordinator of care, the nurse has the knowledge and authority to delegate nursing tasks to other health care personnel and to supervise patient care outcomes. As a member of the profession, the nurse conforms to the laws and code of ethics governing professional standards of nursing practice. In all these roles, the professional nurse accepts personal responsibility for lifelong learning.

## Professional Nursing Education

Nursing education is a collaborative process among students, faculty, and the learning environment. It draws from the fields of physical and social science and liberal arts to support the acquisition of knowledge and skills essential for nurses to meet client, family, organization, and

system needs. Course and clinical experiences throughout the curriculum are designed from simple to complex, beginning with foundational courses in liberal arts and sciences which are then built upon in nursing classes.

## Expected Student Outcomes

Baccalaureate graduates of the CON will:

### Provide Care

1. Integrate concepts, models, and theories of nursing, the humanities and the natural, psychological, and sociological sciences as the foundation for professional nursing practice.
2. Apply concepts and theories as a base for problem solving decision making and critical reasoning in evidenced based nursing practice.
3. Use effective and therapeutic communication in formal and informal interaction with clients, colleagues and other members of health care team.
4. Utilize the nursing process in the holistic care of diverse individuals, families, groups, communities and populations in various healthcare settings.
5. Apply current standards of professional nursing practice in providing care to individual, families, groups, communities and populations.

### Manage Care

6. Utilize leadership and management skills while implementing safety principles to create a safe, caring environment for care delivery.
7. Use information management and patient care technology in the delivery of health care.

### Participate as a Member of the Profession

8. Collaborate with other interprofessional health care team members to provide health promotion and disease and injury prevention across the lifespan for individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations.
9. Modify care and advocate for patients in reflecting current and changing healthcare systems, health policies and global health care factors.
10. Demonstrate ethical accountability and legal responsibility for professional practice.
11. Integrate professional nursing values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity and social justice in professional nursing practice.
12. Demonstrate accountability for lifelong learning and professional growth.

## Essential Competency Requirements of the Student Nurse

The curriculum leading to the BSN degree requires students to engage in diverse, complex, and

specific experiences essential to the acquisition and practice of critical nursing skills and functions. Unique combinations of cognitive, affective, psychomotor, physical and social abilities are required to satisfactorily perform these roles. The Core Performance Standards of the student nurse are required for successful admission and completion of the program.

All students accepted into the College of Nursing are expected to have the following competencies in order to effectively and safely perform the responsibilities of a nursing student. Each student is expected to read these essential requirements, return and sign the verification form provided upon acceptance indicating they have read, understood and agreed to these requirements.

## Motor Skills

Candidates should have sufficient motor function so that they are able to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings. [For example: For the safety and protection of the patients, the candidate must be able to perform basic life support, including CPR, and function in an emergency situation. The candidate must have the ability, within reasonable limits, to safely assist a patient in moving, for example, from a chair to a bed, or from wheelchair to commode.

## Sensory/Observation

A candidate must be able to acquire the information presented through demonstrations and experiences in the basic and nursing sciences. They must be able to observe a patient accurately, at a distance and close at hand, and observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing nursing assessment and intervention or administering medications. The candidate must be capable of perceiving the signs of disease and infection as manifested through physical examination. Such information is derived from visual images of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information (patient voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds).

## Communication

The candidate must communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, staff, patients, family, and other professionals. They must express their ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively in oral and written forms. The candidate must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the health care team.

## Cognitive

A candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize in the context of undergraduate nursing study. The candidate must be able to quickly read and comprehend extensive written material. They must also be able to evaluate and apply information and engage in critical thinking in the classroom and clinical setting.

## Behavioral/Emotional

A candidate must possess the emotional health required for the full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and families. In addition, they must be able to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals under all circumstances including highly stressful situations. The candidate must have the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that

may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways. The candidate must be able to experience empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and effectively communicate that empathy. The candidate must know that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others. The candidate must be able and willing to examine and change his or her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships. The candidate must possess skills and experience necessary for effective and harmonious relationships in diverse academic and working environments.

## Professional Conduct

Candidates must possess the ability to reason morally and practice nursing in an ethical manner. Candidates must be willing to learn and abide by professional standards of practice. They must possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance. Candidates must be able to engage in patient care delivery in all settings and be able to deliver care to all patient populations including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, developmentally disabled persons, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable adults.

## Accreditation

### Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC)

TAMU is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award baccalaureate, master's, doctoral, and professional degrees. While SACSCOC accredits the institution as a whole, many of the academic degree programs offered at the university also undergo accreditation by specialized accrediting bodies. More information on the accreditation report is available through the [Office of the Provost](#).

### Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education is an autonomous accrediting agency, contributing to the improvement of the public's health. A specialized/professional accrediting agency, CCNE ensures the quality and integrity of baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs and of post-baccalaureate nurse residency programs. The College of Nursing was granted a full accreditation through December 31, 2030 by the CCNE. For more information on accreditation, visit the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, [CCNE Accreditation](#) webpage.

### Texas Board of Nursing (TBON)

Approval of nursing education programs is one of the primary functions that the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) performs in order to fulfill its mission to protect and promote the welfare of the people of Texas. TBON has the responsibility and legal authority to decide whether a nursing education program can meet the Board's established minimum standards for educational programs. The CON was granted full approval on April 22, 2010 upon graduation of the first class of students.

# Chapter 1: General Information

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## Academic Calendar

The CON adheres to the TAMU academic calendar for class dates and holidays/vacation, available each semester from the University Registrar's Office and at [Academic Calendar](#).

## Academic Advising

Academic advising is required each semester for all CON students. Students are assigned to an academic advisor who will work with the student to develop and maintain a plan for graduation. To make an appointment for academic advising, please use Navigate or contact the CON Office of Student Affairs.

The primary purpose of academic advising at TAMU is to assist students in the development of meaningful educational plans compatible with their personal abilities and goals. An academic advisor in the CON can assist a student with general information about the program, curriculum, policies, and procedures within the CON. In addition, they can help the student with class registration, academic learning resources, registrar processes, student services and counseling.

**Academic Advising Defined:** Academic advising engages students beyond their own world view recognizing the "art of possibility."

**Student Responsibilities:** The ultimate responsibility for making decisions about personal goals and educational plans rests with the individual student. Students are responsible for:

- Knowing their degree requirements, relevant rules, policies, and deadlines.
- Consulting with their academic advisor and the degree evaluation system.
- Keeping contact information current (local and permanent addresses, phone numbers, and emergency contact information).
- Reading all correspondence from the College and the University.
- Being open to developing and clarifying personal values and goals.
- Keeping records of academic goals and progress. Take notes during advising meetings.
- Utilizing campus resources to enhance your academic experience and
- Developing professional and personal goals.
- Respecting others: Be on time, be prepared, and treat your academic advisor and other students as you would wish to be treated.

**Academic Advisor Responsibilities:** Academic Advisors are responsible for upholding the integrity and value of your degree by maintaining the rules, standards, policies, and procedures of TAMU and the CON. Academic advisors assist by helping to identify and assess alternatives and the consequences of decisions. Academic advising is a continuous process of clarification and evaluation. Academic advisors should:

- Listen carefully and respect the student's questions, concerns, and problems.
- Collaborate with the student in development of academic and personal goals and interests.
- Assist students in making academic decisions consistent with goals, interests, and abilities.
- Provide referrals and resources when appropriate to student needs.
- Communicate degree requirements.

## Access to Student Records & FERPA

Students at Texas A&M University have the right of confidentiality under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974. Information in student records will be released only to faculty and professional staff for authorized legitimate educational interest. The student's consent is required to release information other than public information to any non-CON person unless required by law or upon subpoena duces tecum. Public information includes: a student's name, home address (including country), local address, telephone numbers, classification, enrollment status, major, dates of attendance, date and place of birth, photos and other types of media, degrees, certificates, and other awards received, the name of the institutions previously attended, and medical residence location and specialization. Directory information that holds student information may be made public unless the student desires to withhold any or all of this information.

If a student does not wish for this public information to be released, the student is responsible for notifying the Office of the Registrar during the first week of classes to ensure that information is not released. A request to withhold public information remains in effect until revoked in writing. This request does not apply when an emergency occurs that indicates that the student is a danger to others or themselves or in the case of an FBI request that complies with the Family and Compliance Office that administers Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA).

Within the institution, information from students' educational records is given without the consent of the student to administrative officials, faculty members and their staff, only for legitimate purposes in the students' educational interests.

FERPA affords students certain rights with respect to their education records. These rights include:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the university receives a request for access.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosures without consent, including published directory information. One additional exception permits disclosure without consent to administration, faculty or staff with legitimate educational interests.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the university to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

All the rights and protections given students under FERPA and this policy belong to the student. However, information in student records may be provided to parents without the written consent of the student if the eligible student is a financial dependent of his or her parents as defined under Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. For more information, go to [FERPA Notice to Students](#).

## Attendance, Absences and Makeups

Students are responsible for learning the content of any course of study, including material presented in the classroom. Class participation and attendance are expected of each student. If a student should miss a class, they should email the faculty member and/or the Course Leader as soon as possible. If the absence is anticipated such as due to illness or personal emergency, the student should notify the immediate faculty member and/or the Course Leader prior to the start of the class/lab to be missed. For an injury or illness of three or more days, the student should obtain a medical confirmation note from his or her medical provider. Reference individual course syllabi regarding clinical absences and makeups for clinical experiences. Should you request an extended absence, please speak to an advisor. See [Student Rule 7](#) for more information regarding excused, unexcused and extended absences.

The instructor reserves the right to request satisfactory evidence to substantiate the reason for absence for bereavement: death or major illness in a student's immediate family. Immediate family may include: mother, father, sister, brother, grandparents, spouse, child, spouse's child, spouse's parents, spouse's grandparents, stepmother, step-father, step-sister, step-brother, step-grandparents, grandchild, step-grandchild, legal guardian, and others as deemed appropriate by faculty member or student's academic Dean or designee.

## Awareness of and Respect for Diversity

TAMU and the CON fully support an environment wherein individuals (i.e., students, staff, faculty, guests) can work as partners in achieving goals. While engaged in didactic learning and experiential rotations, students are required to behave and act in a manner that is expected in nursing and all health professions. Such behavior and actions are guided by respect for other students, faculty, staff, patients, and health care professionals who may have differences that include (but are not limited to) the following: religious beliefs and practices, nontraditional medical beliefs and practices, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, physical and emotional disabilities, racial background, intellectual capabilities, age, and cultural background. Respect is demonstrated by being considerate, courteous, and professional, and by maintaining confidentiality of patient information.

## Childcare Guidelines

No childcare facilities are available in the CON. Each faculty member will set their own classroom policies regarding children in the classroom. Under no circumstances will children be allowed in the clinical settings or in the simulation lab.

## Clinical Learning Resource Center (Simulation Lab)

The Clinical Learning Resource Center (CLRC) on the Bryan and Round Rock sites offer a simulation laboratory available to students with a state-of-the-art emergency room, infant and adult patient simulators, and other training tools. Students utilize this facility for clinical experience and may schedule use as needed after hours to practice a variety of clinical skills. The patient simulators are always treated like real patients to foster the caring nature of healthcare professionals. These simulators are capable of mimicking signs and symptoms of almost any medical condition including a 'Code Blue'



situation (cardiac and/or respiratory arrest). Scenarios simulating real patient encounters with students and patient simulators can be recorded to permit a debriefing with their instructor after completion of a scenario.

## Communication Expectations

[Student Rule 61](#) establishes e-mail as an official means of communication (equivalent to the U.S. Postal Service) at TAMU. It also establishes student responsibilities for use of official TAMU e-mail accounts and official e-mail correspondence. All use of e-mail will be consistent with Student Rules, Computing Services: Rules for Responsible Computing. Upon a student's admission to TAMU, they will be assigned an active student e-mail account within five working days. It then becomes the responsibility of the student to access this e-mail account in a responsible and timely manner. Course documents are submitted through the Learning Management System assignment links. Do not submit assignments through email unless specifically directed to do so by faculty.

## Exposure to Chemicals

All students in laboratory courses will be required to complete a lab safety training course. Any pregnant student, or student planning to become pregnant, should consult their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs to the program coordinator or Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Nursing Education as soon as possible for risk-reduction to begin when it can be most effective, and to determine if additional modifications are necessary. While the university cannot mandate that the student notify it if pregnant or planning to become pregnant, the university strongly recommends that students do provide notification so appropriate steps can be taken to ensure the health of both parent and child. Students with latex allergies must notify their instructors each term.

## Identification Badge

Students are required to wear their college student identification badge with a picture during all clinical experiences. The badge must be worn in plain sight. Names on the badges must not be covered up with tape, pins, stickers, etc.

Students who are new to the College of Nursing but currently enrolled (or previously attended) at Texas A&M University are not required to get a new University ID card but may if they wish. For current TEXAS A&M students, they will be required to pay for the replacement card. However, if you would like a current photo to be used for nursing school, you may want to consider replacing your ID card. This requires you to go to the General Services Complex in person. See more information on replacement cards at [MyAggieCard](#).

Students who are new to Texas A&M University are required to get an official ID. Note: students are typically given access to order their Aggie Card as part of TEXAS A&M New Student Conference registration. As we do not require you attend the TEXAS A&M NSC. You may not be able to submit a photo. You will need to contact the AggieCard office for an alternative.

Clinical badge photos will be taken during your New Student Conference. This photo will be used to create a clinical identification badge. The clinical badge will reflect your name and denote that you are a BSN nursing student. It must be worn during all clinical experiences. This photo will also be used to create a building access badge as well as provide hospital identification.

The Health Science Center campus is locked after certain hours; however, students may access the

building 24/7 with their building access badge.

The clinical badge will reflect only your first name (example: Susan, BSN Student Nurse) and must be worn during all clinical experiences.

## Legal Violations

Any student charged with a crime, with or without conviction, must notify the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs (ADSA) within 72 hours. Failure to disclose could result in disciplinary action. Some convictions such as fraud, abuse, or assault may result in being unable to be licensed as a nurse. Each situation must be assessed for further action. Note: future employment as a registered nurse may be limited in some states based on legal convictions.

## Pregnancy

Any pregnant student should contact their health care provider to determine what, if any, additional precautions are needed based on their individual situation. It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their needs each semester to their instructors.

## Religious Holy Days

As defined in the [Texas State Law](#), a “religious holy day” means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation. The CON will excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student who is absent from classes for the observation of a religious holy day will be allowed to take an exam or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence. The language of House Bill 256 was adopted into Texas A&M Student Rules, [Appendix IV: Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days](#).

Students are asked, but not required, to request absence from the class in writing (email acceptable). It would be most helpful if the student would submit the request to each course leader within the first 5 days of the semester for which the absence is requested. A student who is excused for holy day observance may not be penalized for the absence, but the instructor may appropriately respond if the student fails to satisfactorily complete the assignment or examination within a timely manner. For a list of holy days and their description, view [The Interfaith Calendar](#) and the [PBS Multifaith Calendar](#).

## Smoking Policy

All buildings and vehicles, regardless of location, that are owned or leased under the administrative purview of the president of Texas A&M University will be entirely smoke-free. This smoke-free rules will apply to all indoor air space, including foyers, entryways and classrooms, individual faculty and administrative offices. Many clinical settings have their own smoking policies. Students are expected to abide by the rules of each institution. A violation of this policy is considered unprofessional conduct and can result in disciplinary action leading to professional probation. Violators will be subject to disciplinary action. For more details on this policy, see [Student Rule: Appendix IX](#).

## Social Media Policy

The University presence or participation on social media sites is guided by university policy.

This policy applies to CON students who engage in internet conversations for college-related purposes or college-related activities such as interactions in or about clinical and didactic course activities. Distribution of sensitive and confidential information is protected under HIPAA and FERPA whether discussed through traditional communication channels or through social media.

The American Nurses Association (ANA) provides [Social Networking Principles](#) to guide nurses in the use of social media to safeguard themselves, the profession, and their patients. Examples of social media include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and YouTube, to name a few. The following is the position of the ANA which is the organization that represents the interests of all registered nurses: “Nurses have a responsibility first and foremost to their patients. As a nurse, you must always ensure that anything you post or publish could never undermine your patient’s treatment or privacy.” (ANA, 2019, <https://www.nursingworld.org/social/>). The [NCSBN](#) (National Council of State Boards of Nursing) also speaks specifically to the use of social media for nurses. For more information, view the [guide](#) available on their website.

CON students are responsible and accountable for any and all content (in any format whatsoever) posted, transmitted, or communicated on, by or through any social media account associated with a CON student. The use of social media sites is not approved for classroom communication. The CON utilizes learning management system for course information and communication as well as TAMU email. Any information shared on social media sites in conjunction with the course regarding clinical sites, patient information, pictures, or sharing of course content such as exam questions, may lead to disciplinary action. These actions may range from an unsafe/unprofessional write up to permanent dismissal from the program, depending on the level and severity of the violation. All course material developed by faculty is the property of the CON and the individual faculty member. This property cannot be used without prior consent from the faculty (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule22>).

CON students should strictly follow guidelines as noted below:

- No multimedia content of any kind can be gathered in a health care environment, including the CLRC. Examples include but are not limited to photos, videos, snaps, etc.
- Do not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information, that can identify a patient, or in any way violate a patient’s rights or privacy. This includes activities in the CLRC/simulation setting. Limiting access through privacy setting is not sufficient to ensure privacy of patients.
- Never post photographs or any information gained in a nurse-patient relationship.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs these boundaries.
- Do not post inflammatory or unflattering information about peers, patients, clinical sites and/or their employees on any social media site. Make every effort to present yourself as mature, responsible, and professional.
- Promptly report any breach of confidentiality or privacy to your faculty member.
- Do not share any protected health information. (HIPAA)
- At all times, behave in a manner consistent with the standards set forth in the Nursing Code of Ethics. Uphold ethical/legal obligations and guidelines regarding patient privacy and confidentiality.

## Student Complaints

The CON is committed to providing a learning environment for its students in which complaints are responded to in a prompt and fair manner. The CON recognizes that disputes may sometimes arise and requires the parties involved to resolve the conflict informally whenever possible. If resolution cannot be reached a formal complaint process is available with the Dean who will make the final decision regarding the incident. This process may not be invoked for matters that have independent appeal processes as outlined in [the Texas A&M Student Rules](#) or matters which are not grievable to include federal and state laws.

For concerns regarding a class, students are expected to follow the appropriate chain of command:

1. Course instructor
2. Program Coordinator
3. Assistant Dean for Distant Site Round Rock (ADRR) (2<sup>nd</sup> Degree students only)
4. Associate Dean for Undergraduate Nursing Education (ADUNE)
5. Executive Associate Dean (EAD)
6. Dean

Grade disputes are addressed in [Student Rule 48](#).

For general concerns, students should contact their academic advisor who will direct the student appropriately.

Student rule violations outside of the academic classroom environment are reported through [Student Conflict Resolution Services](#).

To report a behavioral concern on the part of a member of the student body, faculty, or staff, refer to the [Tell Somebody](#) Reporting process.

To report instances of suspected waste, fraud, or a suspected ethics violation, use the [Texas A&M University Systems Risk, Fraud, and Misconduct Hotline](#).

Current, former, and prospective students may [email Student Complaints](#) or mail a completed [THECB student complaint form](#) to THECB's Office of General Counsel. A non-exhaustive list of exceptions to the types of complaints handled by THECB is provided in the student complaint rules.

## Student Name or Address Changes

The [Office of the Registrar](#) is responsible for maintaining a student's official legal name for TAMU and for the State of Texas. For official name change procedures, go to the [Student Name Change](#) webpage. Name changes for degree candidates must be completed by the date designated on the Registrar's website. Students submitting a name change request after this date must pay an additional diploma fee to receive a diploma with their new name. Also, diplomas ordered after this deadline may not be received in time for distribution at the commencement ceremony.

The student's current mailing address and permanent address must be correctly listed in the academic record. Any change in the student's address should be promptly reported to the CON and changed through the Howdy portal. Because of SEVIS reporting requirements, international students are not permitted to make changes to their permanent address in Howdy. These students should contact

[International Student and Scholar Services](#) if their permanent address is incorrect or needs to be changed. A student will not be excused from penalties on grounds of not receiving communications mailed from the CON if the student failed to report the new address.

## Temporary Disabilities

The CON partners with the [Department of Disability Resources](#) to provide appropriate accommodation and support. Students should work through Disability Resources for temporary or permanent sensory, physical or psychological disabilities in order to obtain reasonable accommodations.

Students who encounter an injury or any other physical limitation of a temporary nature must notify the clinical instructor and course coordinator. In addition, students must provide documentation from a health care provider that the student is able to safely carry out the duties of a student in the clinical setting. Any restrictions or limitations must be clearly outlined. Documentation must be provided prior to attending clinical experiences.

## Title IX and Sexual Violence/Harassment

Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs and activities at institutions that receive federal financial assistance. Sexual violence, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking can happen to anyone. Texas A&M wants to make sure you have resources available to help you or someone you know who has been impacted by sexual violence, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking. There are many services available to support students, faculty and staff in crisis. Call the Office of Student Affairs at 979-436-0110 for assistance or contact the Sexual Assault Resource Center in the Bryan/College Station area directly by calling 979-731-1000. The Sexual Assault Resource Center's goal is to stop sexual violence through advocacy, empowerment, and education. SARC offers a 24-hour crisis hotline, 24-hour accompaniment to medical facilities, accompaniment to meet with law enforcement or court appearances, provides free counseling to survivors and family members or survivors of sexual assault, and makes professional and educational presentations to schools, businesses, and other agencies. At the Round Rock site, you may contact the Hope Alliance Center at 512-255-1212. This center is dedicated to empowering victims of family violence, sexual assault, and other violent crimes through support and advocacy, while promoting community awareness, compassion, and responsibility for creating a safer community. The staff assists victims in finding counseling, housing and employment, and works closely with law enforcement agencies, hospitals, and others involved in crisis intervention.

[Student Assistance Services](#) can help to identify or provide assistance. Other resources are available on the [Step In/Stand Up website](#).

The Office of the Dean of Student Life, the Human Resources Department employee relations office, and the Office of the Dean of Faculties are available to serve as resources to any student, non-faculty employee, or faculty member who has a sexual harassment inquiry or complaint. A person who believes he or she has been the victim of sexual harassment may pursue either the informal or the formal complaint resolution procedure. Any faculty member, staff member, or student may initiate a complaint. For more information, see [Student Rule 47](#).

## Universal Identification Number (UIN)

The Office of the Registrar provides applicants with their individually assigned UIN during the application period. A student who previously attended TAMU will use the same UIN number as was assigned to them at that institution. Students should contact the Admissions Processing office for any questions and/or concerns about their UIN at (979) 845-1060.

## Weapons Policy & Campus Carry

The [Texas A&M University Student Rule 24.4.14](#) addresses weapons. The University is committed to complying with state and federal laws.

The 84th Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 11 in 2015, which expands the areas on public university campuses where those with appropriate licenses may carry concealed handguns. Universities have been given discretion to implement the law based on our unique campus cultures, with a focus on safety and the gathering and careful consideration of input from the broad campus community. For more information, go to the [campus carry](#) website.

## Weather & Other Campus Crisis Events

Should there be a weather related or other event that would cause the campus to be closed, information will be made available to the local television and radio stations. Please check the [university website](#) for the latest details. In the event of an emergency in progress, you may call 9-911 for immediate assistance from any campus phone.

[Code Maroon](#) and [HSC Alert](#) Emergency notification services provides notice of campus emergencies. Students are encouraged to sign up for text and/or email notices. CON Faculty may communicate via the learning management system with regard to unexpected schedule changes due to weather and other situations. Students should check the announcements or scheduling section of learning management system on a regular basis.

## Chapter 2: Undergraduate Program

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Guided by requirements of the Texas Core Curriculum, the University Core Curriculum at TAMU assures that all undergraduate students are afforded a breadth of understanding. The Core Curriculum emphasizes competence in the process of learning, the capacity to engage in rigorous and analytical inquiry, and the ability to communicate clearly and effectively. It supports the development of knowledge about and appreciation for our cultural heritage, our social and personal responsibilities, and our interactions with the economies and cultures of the international community.

The University Core Curriculum acts to enrich and broaden the University's tradition of providing thorough preparation in each student's academic major. Requirements are described in the Undergraduate Catalog and must be met by every student pursuing a baccalaureate degree program at Texas A&M University.

### Tracks Leading to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Degree

#### Traditional BSN Track

The Traditional BSN Track consists of 120 semester credit hours. Students must complete pre-nursing course work in general education and in the basic physical and biological sciences. Students may complete the pre-nursing curriculum at any accredited college, university, or community college. After acceptance into the program, students will complete 61 semester credit hours of nursing curriculum and obtain their degree in two years. The Traditional BSN track is offered at the Bryan-College Station site.

#### Second Degree BSN Track

To be admitted to the Second Degree BSN Track, applicants must hold a bachelor's degree in another discipline. The Second Degree BSN Program requires completion of prerequisite nursing courses plus any Core Curriculum coursework that has not been met through another degree program. After acceptance into the program, students will complete 61 semester credit hours of nursing curriculum and obtain their degree in 15 months of instruction. NOTE: A student with a bachelor's degree may apply to the Traditional BSN Track should they wish to follow a slower-paced curriculum plan. The Second Degree BSN track is offered at the Round Rock site.

Acceptance into the Traditional and/or Second Degree track is competitive and decisions by various criteria. Specifically, the Undergraduate Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee is guided by the following:

Admission to the CON is competitive. It is strongly recommended that applicants present a GPA above 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale). Preference is given to students completing the majority of their coursework in Brazos County in the state of Texas.

Applicants will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Prerequisite Coursework GPA
- Nursing Science GPA from nutrition, anatomy & physiology, microbiology, chemistry, lifespan development psychology and elementary statistics
- HESI Admissions Assessment exam score



- Timed verbal responses and written assessments
- Community service
- Leadership/involvement in extracurricular and/or professional activities
- TOEFL score, required of international applicants only
- History of withdraws, repeats or failures will place applicant at a disadvantage

Students may repeat prerequisite courses, however, grades earned from both the first and a second attempt will be used to determine the final GPA. Any additional attempts will not be considered. If a grade of "C" is not earned within 2 attempts, the student will not be eligible for admission.

## RN to BSN Track

To be considered for admission to the RN to BSN Track, an applicant must be a graduate of an accredited institution of higher education. Admission is limited and competitive for all students. Applicants must provide a copy of their valid RN license along with their application documents. Candidates must have successfully completed (grade of "C" or better) all of the required nursing prerequisite courses prior to the first class day. Your acceptance as an RN to BSN student in the College of Nursing is influenced by many factors. It is strongly recommended that applicants have a GPA of 2.75 or higher (on a 4.0 scale).

Applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

- Prerequisite Coursework GPA
- Nursing Science GPA: nutrition, anatomy & physiology, microbiology, chemistry, lifespan development psychology and elementary statistics
- GPA on associate degree in nursing coursework
- Professional or academic reference
- Timed verbal responses and written assessments
- Other information presented in the application
- History of withdraws, repeats or failures will place applicant at a disadvantage

Students may repeat prerequisite courses, however, grades earned from both the first and a second attempt will be used to determine the final GPA. Any additional attempts will not be considered. If a grade of "C" is not earned within 2 attempts, the student will not be eligible for admission.

## ASCEND Program

Aggie Student-Centered Express Nursing Degree (ASCEND) is an RN-to-BSN program exclusively for Blinn College nursing students.

Students complete an Associate of Applied Science in Nursing degree from Blinn and Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree from Texas A&M University while co-enrolled in both institutions. ADN courses are



completed in person at Blinn, while BSN courses are finished completely online through Texas A&M.

Students may apply to ASCEND during their first, second or third semester of the Blinn ADN Program. Depending on their Blinn College ADN entry term, students can earn their BSN from Texas A&M in as few as one semester after completing their ADN at Blinn College.

Candidates must have successfully completed (grade of "C" or better) all of the required nursing prerequisite courses prior to the first class day. Your acceptance as an ASCEND student in the College of Nursing is influenced by many factors. Applicants must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale). Applications are evaluated on the following criteria:

- 3.0 prerequisite coursework GPA
- 3.0 Nursing Science GPA: nutrition, anatomy & physiology, microbiology, chemistry, lifespan development psychology and elementary statistics
- 3.0 GPA on associate degree in nursing coursework
- Verification letter of admission/good standing from the Blinn College ADN program by the application deadline
- History of withdraws, repeats or failures will place applicant at a disadvantage

Students may repeat prerequisite courses, however, grades earned from both the first and a second attempt will be used to determine the final GPA. Any additional attempts will not be considered. If a grade of "C" is not earned within 2 attempts, the student will not be eligible for admission.

The following is a description of the prerequisites required for the Traditional BSN, Second Degree BSN, and RN-BSN tracks:

Subject	Course Name	TAMU Course	Texas Common Course Number	Semester Credit Hours
Communication	Composition, Technical Writing, Public Speaking	Any 2 courses from TAMU Core	Any 2 courses from core list	6
History	US or TX History	Any 2 courses from TAMU Core	Any 2 courses from core list	6
Federal Government	Federal Government	POLS 206	GOVT 2305	3
Texas Government	TX Government	POLS 207	GOVT 2306	3
Social & Behavioral Science	Introduction to Psychology	PBSI 107	PSYC 2301	3
Creative Arts	Art, Dance, Music, Drama, Theatre	Any course from TAMU Core	Any course from core list	3
Language, Philosophy, & Culture	Introduction to Ethics or Introduction to Philosophy	PHIL 111 or PHIL 251	PHIL 2306 or PHIL 1301	3
Science	Introductory Biology	BIOL 107 or	BIOL 1406 or	4

		BIOL 111	BIOL 1413	
Math	Math	Any course from TAMU Core	Any course from core list	3
Statistics	Statistics	STAT 201	MATH 1342	3
Psychology	Lifespan Development	PBSI 225	PSYC 2314	3
Anatomy & Physiology	Anatomy & Physiology I & II	BIOL 319 or VIBS 305, and BIOL 320 or VTPP 423	BIOL 2401 and BIOL 2402	8
Science	General/Introductory Chemistry	CHEM 101/111 or CHEM 119	CHEM 1405/1105 or CHEM 1411	4
Science	Microbiology	BIOL 206, BIOL 351, or VTPB 405	BIOL 2420 or BIOL 2421	4
Science	Nutrition	NFSC 202, NFSC 203, or NFSC 222	BIOL 1322	3

RN to BSN students that apply under an articulation agreement with Angelina College, Blinn College or South Texas College may be exempt from some of the above coursework if they are core complete at the institutions.

## Curriculum

### Traditional and Second Degree Curriculum

Prefix and Number	Required Courses	SCHs
NURS 305	Nursing Dimensions & Informatics	3
NURS 306	Foundations of Nursing Practice Theory	5
NURS 307	Foundations of Nursing Practice Clinical	3
NURS 312	Introduction to Pathophysiology	3
NURS 315	Nursing and the Aged	3
NURS 316	Pharmacology Principles	3
NURS 320	Adult Nursing I	6
NURS 323	Nursing Care of Women, Families and Newborns	4
NURS 411	Evidence-Based Practice for Nurses	3
NURS 412	Care of Mental Health Clients	4
NURS 413	Nursing Care of Children/Families	4

NURS 420	Adult Nursing II	6
NURS 421	Care of Community Health Clients	5
NURS 424	Professional Issues	2
NURS 430	Transition into Professional Nursing Practice	5
NURS 434	Case Studies in Patient Safety & Quality	2
TOTAL 61 credit hours		

## RN to BSN Curriculum

Course	Title-Description	SCH
NURS 460	Nursing Dimensions & Informatics for the RN	3
NURS 461	Application of Evidence-Based Practice for the RN	3
NURS 462	Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for the RN	4
NURS 463	Health Assessment for the RN	3
NURS 464	Health Promotion Across the Lifespan for the RN	3
NURS 465	Care of the Older Adult for the RN	2
NURS 466	Community Health for the RN	5
NURS 467	Leadership and Management for the RN	5
NURS 468	Professional Practice Issues for the RN	2
TOTAL 30 Credit Hours		

## Chapter 3: Admissions Procedures & New Student Requirements

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Applicants are encouraged to review the [CON website](#) for specific admission procedures and requirements. Deadlines will vary depending on the track to which the student is applying. Students applying to any of the three BSN tracks must provide the following as a minimum:

- A completed application, payment of any associated fee, submission of official college transcripts and timed verbal responses and written assessments. Depending on the track, students may be required to submit both a NursingCAS and an Apply Texas application.
- Completion of prerequisite courses by the time of enrollment with a grade of “C” or better; Prerequisite courses may be in progress during the application period. Students will be required to list courses in progress on the application. Acceptance offers will be contingent on successful completion of prerequisite coursework prior to the first class day.
- Admissions Assessment (HESI A2) entrance exam (not required for RN to BSN applicants). More information on registering for the exam and submitting scores to the CON is available on the website.

Admitted students must have a clear background check and negative drug screen report or the admission offer will be rescinded. All applicants will undergo an extensive background check and complete a drug screen through the compliance management portal upon admission.

TBON requires all unlicensed applicants to have their eligibility for licensure determined before entering a nursing degree program. Applicants will undergo fingerprinting whereby the TBON will then provide an outcome of [eligibility for licensure](#) prior to enrollment.

RN to BSN students must present a current, active RN license to practice in the state of Texas with no stipulations. RN to BSN applicants who earned an Associates Degree through an LVN to RN or EMT to RN program should speak with an academic advisor before submitting an application to assure a minimum number of transferable credit hours.

### English Proficiency

Applicants whose native language is not English are required to submit proof of English proficiency to be eligible for review. English proficiency can be demonstrated through various criteria. See more on this requirement on the [International Admissions](#) website.

### Other Requirements

International applicants will be expected to present declaration of finances, F-1 travel documents and additional documentation upon acceptance to the CON. All deadlines required by the [Office of International Student Services](#) must be met.

### Admissions Criteria

Students applying to the CON must complete selected coursework as a condition of acceptance. If the student completed a core curriculum from another Texas public institution in a previous degree program, they are not required to complete the Texas A&M Core Curriculum.

Students, however, must meet the [program prerequisite course requirements](#). Students transferring from out of state, from a private institution, those with an international degree or anyone with concerns about this requirement, please contact an academic advisor for more clarification. Students will not be considered for admission unless all required coursework will be completed by the time of enrollment. Admission to all programs is competitive.

## Additional Requirements for International Applicants

In addition to each program's stated application requirements, applicants with foreign transcripts must also include a transcript evaluation from an evaluation service which is a member of the [National Association of Credential Evaluation Services](#). We require a course-by-course evaluation for college/university transcripts from non-U.S. institutions. The report should reflect course by course U.S. grade point equivalencies and semester credits received. These reports must be sent directly from the evaluation agency in the original sealed envelope to NursingCAS. Send to: NursingCAS, P.O. Box 9201, Watertown, MA 02471. If being sent via UPS or FEDEX, send to NursingCAS Transcript Department, 311 Arsenal Street, Suite #15, Watertown, MA 02472.

If admitted to the CON, applicants with foreign transcripts must submit the native language transcript along with an official English translation. These documents must include all original seals and/or signatures and be approved by the Texas A&M Office of Admissions prior to enrollment in the program.

## Notification of Admission Decisions

Official notification is provided via the Texas A&M Applicant Information Portal (AIS) portal or through the Nursing CAS application portal. All applicants will receive a communication as to their status; whether admitted, denied, incomplete, or given the option of placement on a waiting list.

A select number of applicants who are not admitted in the initial round may be offered the opportunity to be placed on a waiting list. If space becomes available, additional offers may be extended. It is the policy of the CON that information regarding placement on the waiting list will only be provided by appointment.

## Campus Transfer Requests

Pre-licensure (Trad BSN and SD-BSN) are admitted to a specific campus location and must attend all classes, exams, simulations labs, and clinical experiences at that location throughout the duration of the program. Due to strict regulations from TBON which govern clinical rotations, the CON does not allow students to transfer from one campus to another.

## Transfer Course Credit Policies

A student may submit undergraduate course credits earned at other universities for application toward the Texas A&M University College of Nursing BSN degree. Transfer credit will be determined by the CON Office of Student Affairs on a course-by-course basis.

Course content will be determined by catalog course description or course syllabus. Credit submitted for transfer must be on an official transcript received from the registrar of the institution where the credit was earned.

The transfer of credit decision will be based on the following criteria:

- Courses given by regionally accredited institutions are considered for transfer if:
  - They are acceptable as credit for a bachelor's degree at a regionally accredited institution
  - Course content is at or above the level of courses specified in the CON requirements for admission.
- Courses intended for use in a vocational, technical or occupational program do not transfer.
- Credit on the transcript must appear in semester hours or credits that may be converted to semester hours.
- Credit by examination courses may be transferred if accepted by another college and followed by sequenced coursework.
- Equivalency of coursework is determined by content found in catalog course descriptions or syllabi of courses.
- Two or more courses may be combined to form one or more equivalent courses.
- Credit will not be given for courses which were completed at non-accredited institutions.
- In any case where a decision cannot be made using the above criteria, the Office of Student Affairs will determine the transfer of credit based on university policy, previous actions of the university, and prior experience.

This policy is reviewed every two years.

## Residence Requirement for Baccalaureate Degree

A minimum of 36 semester hours of 300 and 400 level course work must be successfully completed in residence at the CON to qualify for a baccalaureate degree in the pre-

licensure degrees. The RN-BSN program meets the requirement by completion of 30 semester hours.

## Transfer from Another Nursing Program

A student who has been enrolled in another Nursing program may request admission as a new or transfer applicant. Criteria used in the decision will be based on the following criteria:

- Applicants must have a minimum 3.0 GPA (on a 4.0 scale) on all nursing coursework completed.
- Admission will be dependent on space available. Spaces in clinical courses are tightly controlled by both accreditation and clinical agency policies.
- Courses accepted for transfer must be similar in content and credit to the CON course. Applicants must present a course description and course syllabus for review to the Office of Student Affairs before credit will be granted.
- No grade below a "C" in any nursing course will be accepted for transfer.
- Applicants must submit a letter from the Dean of the previous program stating they would be

eligible to return to the previous nursing program as a student in good standing.

- Applicants must meet the residence hour requirement for the bachelor's degree.
- Students will need to complete an assessment prior to beginning classes to determine clinical skills/experience, knowledge base, use of equipment, software and technology, etc. If deficiencies are noted, student may be required to complete an independent study course to assist them in successfully transitioning into the new program.
- Students must demonstrate competence in both nursing content and clinical proficiencies in courses completed more than six (6) months prior to the time of application through an examination and/or clinical demonstration.
- Other documentation subject to the discretion of the ADUNE.

## Texas Success Initiative

The [Texas Success Initiative](#) (TSI) was instituted to ensure that students enrolled in Texas public colleges and universities possess the necessary academic skills to perform effectively in college.

The Texas Success Initiative

- Is required by the Texas State Legislature for identifying and preparing academically those students whose basic skills in reading, writing and/or mathematics are less than what is required to succeed college level courses.
- Requires continuous student participation in developmental education classes if that student is deficient in the academic areas of reading, writing, and/or mathematics.
- Requires all non-exempt ([TSI Exemptions](#)) incoming students to complete the mandatory TSI Pre-Assessment Activity (PAA) and then to take the TSI Assessment test before registering for classes.

## Computer Requirements

A laptop computer is required of all pre-licensure (Traditional or Second Degree BSN) students. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that their computer has the required software installed upon admission and updated throughout their time as a student in order to access course information through the learning management system and other required systems/websites. At all times, the student's computer should be capable of running the programs. Upon admission, students will be provided with detailed specifications for either a Mac or a Windows laptop. Students will be granted access to an online orientation course with specific instructions and assignments in the Learning Management System to ensure their computers meet all technical requirements. Completion of the orientation course is required prior to being given access to the learning management system courses. If you have questions regarding any of the hardware or software required, please contact the Helpdesk at 1-979-845-8300 and identify yourself as a nursing student.

*NOTE: RN to BSN students are not required to have a laptop computer, but must have the required software on a computer as required by the designated program.*

## Health History & Physical Exam Requirement

A health examination is required for pre-licensure BSN students entering the CON. Students

must present the CON Certificate of Health to their health care provider who must sign and date the document indicating that the student is medically cleared and able to meet the demands and expectations of nursing school. This form must be uploaded in the compliance management portal.

## Health Insurance

All nursing students are required to carry and maintain health insurance. Students who presume that they are still covered on their parents' policies are advised to confirm this with their insurance carriers. Some policies delete coverage for family members who: reach a certain age, get married, no longer reside with parents, etc. Knowing these conditions in advance will permit time to obtain coverage if needed. Under optimal conditions for a healthy individual this could take a month or more.

Any enrolled Texas A&M University System student taking at least six (6) credit hours of classes is eligible to enroll in the Blue Cross Blue Shield [Academic Blue Student Health Plans](#). Students are encouraged to compare various plans before purchasing a plan.

Students must submit proof of insurance coverage by the end of the first month of enrollment. The following benefits are strongly recommended to provide minimum coverage: in-patient hospital, medical/surgical, and physical medicine expenses as well as preventive and emergency care. Students are strongly encouraged to consider health and mental health insurance coverage in excess of the required minimum for several reasons, not the least of which is that you may become ill or injured and have bills that could present an unexpected burden.

Should students require medical treatment due to situations that may arise while in clinical rotations, i.e. needle stick or other incidences, neither the hospitals, clinical agencies or CON are responsible to cover any treatment that might be needed. Any medical charges incurred are the responsibility of the student.

## International Student Insurance Requirements

As an enrollment requirement with TAMU, students who are not citizens or permanent residents of the United States will be required to have insurance to include medical evacuation and repatriation.

## Professional Liability Insurance

All nursing students in clinical settings must be covered by malpractice insurance. The cost for liability insurance will be the responsibility of the student (approximate cost each year is \$20) and will be included in the student's tuition and fee statement. The student policy covers only the work done as students during clinical courses and expires on the date of graduation. The policy does not cover students while employed in clinical agencies.

Students employed in a health care setting must obtain a separate policy for liability coverage if required by that institution.

## Immunization Information

Students must complete coursework in health care settings with the College of Nursing's clinical partners. The College of Nursing recommends, but does not require, certain immunizations to help mitigate the risk of exposure to viruses and bacteria. Clinical partners require proof of certain



immunizations to participate in clinical experiences. Students wishing to seek immunization exemptions should contact the Associate Director of Academic Nursing Clinical Placement to discuss the process, which varies among clinical partners. Failure to complete required clinical coursework may prevent progression in the program.

Immunization	Information
Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis	one dose of vaccine, after age 18 and within the past 10 years (valid through projected graduation date Td, Tdap, DPT)
Measles (Rubeola)	two doses (at least 4 weeks apart) if born after 1957 or positive titer
Mumps	one dose or positive titer
Rubella (German Measles)	one dose or positive titer
Influenza	one dose annually
Bacterial Meningitis	<a href="https://uhs.tamu.edu/medical/immunizations.html">https://uhs.tamu.edu/medical/immunizations.html</a>
Varicella (chickenpox)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 2 dose series OR positive antibody titer lab report from last 5 years required (lab reports required).</li> <li>– If titer is negative/low/equivocal, must repeat the 2-dose series OR booster dose as recommended by HCP.</li> <li>– History of disease must provide positive titer from last 5 years.</li> </ul>
Hepatitis B*	positive antibody titer within last 5 years
Tuberculosis (TB) skin test or approved blood assay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Skin or blood assay test required annually.</li> <li>– If PPD or Quantiferon Gold blood test is positive, provide a radiology report or a letter from HCP indicating a negative Chest X-Ray and a completed TB Questionnaire annually is required.</li> <li>– Chest X-ray is valid for 2 years but must include annual TB questionnaire.</li> </ul>

\*The Hepatitis B series must be initiated prior to enrollment in order to have all doses completed shortly after entry into clinical experiences. For Hepatitis B, a surface antibody serologic marker (blood titer) is required 4 weeks after receiving the last dose to ensure immunity or the series will have to be repeated. If vaccinations received in prior years, blood titer within last 5 years is required to ensure immunity.

Students with immune-compromised conditions or chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease or diabetes mellitus are encouraged to consider obtaining pneumococcal vaccinations. All costs associated with obtaining immunizations are the sole responsibility of the student. Female students are advised that pregnancy is a contraindication to administration of certain vaccinations and should consult their healthcare provider for specific and additional information regarding vaccine administration.

The CON uses a third party vendor to manage compliance requirements. Students must complete all items requested through their portal. The CON may be asked to provide immunization documentation to authorized parties as a pre-requisite to participation in advanced clinical experiences at a particular site. In that event, students are requested to sign release of student information request forms and are bound by their stipulations.

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

Each student must obtain certification in Basic Life Support through the American Heart Association by the designated deadline prior to the first class day. This certification must be maintained throughout enrollment. If your initial training will expire during the course of your enrollment, you will be required to certification renewal to the compliance management portal. This applies to all students, including those in the RN to BSN track.

## Criminal Background Checks Policy

Because health care providers are entrusted with the health, safety and welfare of patients, have access to controlled substances and confidential information, and operate in settings that require the exercise of good judgment and ethical behavior, criminal background checks are required. All nursing students must submit to and satisfactorily complete a criminal background review as a condition of admission. This requires that applicants be fingerprinted through a select agency.

TBON has initiated a process for nursing school applicants to complete a background check. Upon being fingerprinted, applicants will undergo both a Department of Public Safety and a Federal Bureau of Investigation check which will meet the requirements by the Board when the student prepares to apply for licensure in their final semester of nursing school. The applicant is responsible for the cost.

Regardless of what background checks you may have had in the past, you are still required to submit to this particular check.

A [declaratory order](#) is required by TBON if there is any history related to criminal activity, alcohol/substance abuse or mental illness. More information may be obtained on the [TBON](#) website.

## Procedure for Background Check

- The Office of Student Affairs sends a roster of applicants to TBON.
- Applicants are then sent an email from the vendor to schedule fingerprinting.
- The fingerprinting company electronically submits the fingerprint scan to Department of Public Safety to initiate the background check and transmits results directly to TBON.
- When received, TBON will do one of the following:
  - Mail a blue postcard directly to those students who have a clear check; or
  - Correspond with students who have a rejected fingerprint scan and request another scan; or
  - Correspond with students who have a positive background check and request they submit a petition for declaratory order (DO); or
  - Correspond with students that the Operations Team at TBON cannot approve their DO petition, they must pay a review fee and their file will be transferred to the TBON Enforcement Team.

Students must obtain TBON clearance prior to enrollment in their first semester. Students must upload either the blue postcard or their letter of clearance from a DO process in the compliance management portal. Students may be required by TBON to repeat a background check if any offenses occur while in

the program.

All students are expected to obey federal, state, and local laws. Criminal activity that occurs while a student is enrolled in the program must be self-disclosed to the ADSA within 72 hours of the offense. Depending on the circumstances of the charge, student access to clinical experiences may be impacted. Failure to disclose information may result in dismissal from the program.

All students must also have a background check completed through the compliance management portal which provides a comprehensive check beyond the TBON process. The student is responsible for the cost of this screening. An offer of admission will not be final until the completion of the background check with results that are deemed favorable.

Admission may be denied or rescinded based on the review. Students who refuse to submit to a background check may be dismissed from the program.

A student who has a break in their enrollment is required to complete a new background check. A break in enrollment is defined as non-enrollment of at least one semester.

## Other Requirements

Each student receives a “New Student Guide” that provides additional compliance requirements to include urine drug screening, clinical training modules, etc. It is the student’s responsibility to review the guide carefully and meet all compliance by the deadline noted in the compliance management portal. Failure to maintain full compliance will result in both: 1) blocked access to the Learning Management System, and 2) exclusion from all clinical experiences until the situation has been resolved.

## Chapter 4: Student Services

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### Disability Resources

It is the policy of the CON to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other applicable federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Students who wish to obtain individual accommodations must provide documentation from a licensed professional. The Department of Disability Resources on the campus of TAMU coordinates efforts for the benefit of the individuals covered under the statute. Students must present each course coordinator a copy of the accommodations letter a minimum of 3 business days before the first exam.

Students who wish to request reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the Department of Disability Resources to start the process for documenting their disability and determining eligibility for services prior to the start of the program. If you have not heard from Disability Resources within 3 weeks of submitting information you should contact the office. Students with disabilities are expected to perform all the [Core Performance Standards](#) of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. We will work with the student to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations. While the CON will make every effort to work with our students with disabilities to accommodate their disability-related needs, it is important to note we are not required to provide requested accommodations that would fundamentally alter the essential functions or technical standards of the program.

Department of Disability Resources Contact Information:

Department of Disability Resources  
471 Houston Street  
Student Services Building, Suite 122  
1224 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-1224  
P: (979) 845-1637  
F: (979) 458-1214  
[disability@tamu.edu](mailto:disability@tamu.edu)

For additional information or assistance, contact your academic advisor.

### Health Services

Bryan campus students are eligible to receive services at the Texas A&M University Health Services building located on the TAMU campus. [University Health Services](#) (UHS) is an accredited ambulatory health care provider serving students by providing primary health care services and promoting health through prevention and education. Visits to medical care providers, ambulance transport service on campus, and consultation with contracted medical specialists or health educators are available at a reduced cost.

Students located in Round Rock and RN to BSN students will not be assessed the University Health Services fee thus are not eligible to utilize these services. They are encouraged to access needed services through local healthcare providers.

Programs for academic success as well as mental health services and crisis intervention are available through the UHS. They provide short-term counseling and crisis intervention services. They also provide individual, group, and couples counseling for personal concerns that are common among undergraduate

and graduate students.

Common concerns that students face include relationship difficulties (e.g., romantic partner, roommate, family), depression, anxiety, stress, dealing with change, fear of failure, career uncertainty, and coping with feelings such as loneliness, sadness, shame, anger, guilt, etc. For more information, contact your academic advisor.

TAMU University Health Services has partnered with [TELUS Health Student Support](#) app to offer 24/7 access to free, confidential professional counseling by phone or chat.

TELUS Health Student Support services include:

- Confidential, real-time virtual counseling
- 24/7 availability via chat and phone
- Scheduled, short-term counseling appointments
- Extensive on-demand content library
- Support in your language

## Library Resources

An extraordinary array of resources and services are available to students through the [TAMU University Libraries](#). Students and faculty have access to reference services in person, over the phone, through email and online via a live chat format. Library staff can assist students in using online resources, web pages and resource guides at any geographical location. Educational services include traditional in-person instructional sessions, online subject guides and tutorials, and customized programs. [Medical Sciences](#) librarians also provide informatics instruction within the nursing curriculum.

## Office of Financial Aid

All financial aid is processed through the Texas A&M Financial Aid Office. For assistance, contact financial aid advisor by email at [hscfinancialaid@tamu.edu](mailto:hscfinancialaid@tamu.edu).

Most types of aid are based upon financial need and satisfactory academic progress. Students who meet the eligibility requirements may renew most awards annually by submitting a Financial Aid Form before the designated priority date by demonstrating financial need. Students should visit the [TAMU Scholarships and Financial Aid](#) website for complete information. To be considered for Federal aid, students should complete the [Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) (FAFSA).

## Scholarships

The CON is committed to helping students fund their education. The CON has a growing number of internal scholarships available. To view Texas A&M University and CON available scholarships, go to the [Scholarships](#) webpage. Deadline to apply is February 1. Civic groups, foundations and other organizations have additional scholarships available for nursing students.

## Scholarship Academic Progress Policy

CON scholarships have minimum GPR requirements in order to be awarded as well as GPR requirements to maintain a scholarship. If recipients cumulative GPR falls below that scholarship standard, all future terms for the scholarship will be terminated. Scholarship recipients are required to provide an official transcript to the Office of Student Affairs in the CON at the end of each term.

If the recipient withdraws after funds have been applied to the bill, then the funds will remain applied. That semester will count against the student's multi-year scholarship allotment. If the recipient is in good academic standing upon withdrawal, he/she will be reconsidered for the scholarship upon reenrollment, contingent on availability of funds.

If the recipient is on probation at the time of the withdrawal, the remaining scholarship eligibility will be terminated. Students are advised to contact Scholarships & Financial Aid to speak with a scholarship advisor if they plan to withdraw and later return to the University. Scholarship recipients must also be in good standing with the University. If the recipient is placed on disciplinary probation, they lose all remaining scholarship eligibility.

Students who do not meet the Scholarship Academic Progress Policy requirements have the right to appeal and provide information about extenuating circumstances that may have hindered their progress. Appeals are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## Security

The Texas A&M University Police Department (UPD) provides law enforcement and security services to all components of the main academic campus and a variety of satellite facilities throughout Brazos County. The Texas A&M Health Science Center Bryan Campus has security officers on site 24 hours a day. They are available to escort students to the parking lot after hours. You may stop by the security desk on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the HPEB building or call 979-436-9000 to get assistance. The Round Rock Campus provides security officers between the hours of 7 am and 6 pm Monday through Friday. Any criminal offense, suspected criminal activity, or other emergency on campus should be reported directly to Security at: Bryan Campus 979-436-9000, Round Rock Campus 512-341-4900, McAllen Campus 956-668-6300, in person, or by dialing 9-911 from any campus phone or by using one of the emergency blue light telephones located throughout some campuses.

## Academic Success Program

Programs for academic success are available through the [Academic Success Center](#). Services include individual and group counseling, assessment of study behaviors, screening for learning disabilities, an extensive collection of self-help resources, and weekly workshops on a variety of study skills topics.

Transforming individuals into nurses requires acquisition of scientific knowledge, critical reasoning, skill development, and values to shape professionals characterized by caring, empathy, social justice and ethical comportment. CON faculty understand the challenges of the transition and are committed to success of all students in our community. To achieve that goal, the CON offers two evidence-based resources, the Academic Success Coach and Supplemental Instruction (SI), to facilitate student success and successful progression toward degree completion for nursing students at all levels. Students may individually select to access the support of either the Academic Coach or SI. In addition, faculty may also refer students to one or both resources.

## Academic Success Coach

The Academic Success Coach provides individualized guidance in skill development and identifying interventions to assist students to successfully navigate the nursing program. The Academic Success

Coach meets with students seeking this service and assesses student need. Students and their coach co-design an action plan with specific steps and monitor individual student progress. Intervention strategies address a number of areas including study skills, test-taking skills, and time management skills. A coach is available on both the Bryan and Round Rock campuses.

## Supplemental Instruction

In addition, SI is offered in the first semester of the pre-license program. SI is a peer-led, academic assistance program that can significantly improve performance for students who attend regularly. In the CON SI leaders are students who have been successful in pharmacology and in pathophysiology. Weekly tutoring sessions free to any student wishing to participate.

SI is sponsored by the Association of Former Students. Both TAMU and the CON invest in this program because evidence indicates that students who attend 10 or more sessions throughout the semester earn half to a full letter grade higher than those students who do not attend.

## University Writing Center

The [University Writing Center](#), a unit of Undergraduate Studies, supports writing and public speaking for every Texas A&M student, with particular emphasis on supporting Writing and Communication courses. Their priorities are as follows:

- To help graduate and undergraduate students practice the habits of mature composers of written and oral communication.
- To provide resources for faculty and Graduate Assistant Teachers for integrating best writing and oral communication pedagogy into courses.

# Chapter 5: Registrar Policies & Procedures

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## Howdy

Howdy is a web portal that provides applicants, students, faculty, and staff convenient access to Texas A&M University web services. Howdy is available by going to <https://howdy.tamu.edu/> and logging in using the assigned NetID.

Howdy allows students to view and update TAMU information, access TAMU Email, and a variety of other web links. Access includes, but is not limited to, the following resources.

*My Record* tab includes the following channels:

### Graduation

### Registration

- Registration Time Assignment
- Search Class Schedule
- Add or Drop Classes
- Registration Status (includes View Holds; Registration History)
- View My Schedule
- Final Exam Schedules
- Change Class/KINE options

### Grades and Transcripts

- Grades
- Credit by Examination
- Official Transcript (Order Official Transcript)
- View Unofficial Transcript
- View Holds

### My Information

- Withhold Directory Information
- View/Update Contact Information (includes Addresses/Phones; Emergency)

### Degree Evaluation

- Application for Graduation
- View Degree Evaluation
- Excess Credit Hours Rule

### Academic Resources

*My Finances* tab includes the following channels:

### Billing

### Tuition & Fees

- Pay My Tuition/Manage My Account

### Refunds

### Scholarships and Financial Aid

*Student Life* tab includes the following channels:

### Parking and Transportation

### Student Involvement Purchase

### Optional Services Employment

### Internships

## Student Business Services

Tuition and fee statements are accessed and may be paid through the [Howdy portal](#). For more



tuition and billing information, contact [Student Business Services](#). When mailing payment, please include the student's name and UIN number on the check to ensure accurate posting of payments.

## Registration Process

Registration for classes is coordinated by the [Office of the Registrar](#) in cooperation with the CON. Tuition and fees are payable in full at the designated date (see the Student Business Services website for tuition due dates) unless arrangements for installment payments have been completed with the [Office of Student Business Services](#).

To be eligible for registration, the student must have been officially admitted as a new student and must have satisfied all admission requirements or must be a continuing student. Any student ineligible due to an academic, administrative, or disciplinary sanction or hold will be blocked from registration until all sanctions are removed. Only the unit that placed a hold may lift a hold. If tuition and fees have not been collected by the due date, the Office of the Registrar will drop the student administratively from all classes.

Registration opening and deadline dates are published on the Registrar's website. It is the responsibility of the student to register for the appropriate courses according to their degree plan.

## Cancellation of Registration

A student may cancel registration after payment through the Office of the Registrar without financial penalty (with the exception of the Matriculation Fee) if the student does so before the official first class day. The student is regarded as never having registered. Note: students receiving Title IV financial aid must advise the Office of Financial Aid if they cancel their registration.

## Late Registration

Late registration may be permitted only until the publicized late registration dates and upon payment of the appropriate late fee. More information may be found on the [Student Business Services](#) website.

## Request for Minor

Speak to your academic advisor if requesting a minor on your academic record. The academic advisor in the major-granting department will add the minor to the record. In some cases, approval by the academic advisor of the minor-granting department is required before the minor is added by the academic advisor in the student's major. Students declaring a minor are required to meet with their academic advisor before registration each semester.

## Request for Double Degree

Speak to your academic advisor if requesting a double degree. According to [Student Rule 14.4.2](#), a student currently enrolled at Texas A&M University who wishes to pursue a double degree must receive approval from the departments, programs, or college(s) offering both the primary and secondary degree, normally no later than the time the student reaches senior standing. The student must meet the grade point requirements of both the primary and secondary academic departments at the time of application. Students pursuing a double degree are required to meet with their academic advisor before registration each semester.

## Student Name or Address Changes

The [Office of the Registrar](#) is responsible for maintaining a student's official legal name for Texas A&M University and for the State of Texas. For official name change procedures, visit [Aggie One Stop](#). Name changes for degree candidates must be completed by the date designated on the Registrar's website. Students submitting a name change request after this date must pay an additional diploma fee to receive a diploma with their new name.

Also, diplomas ordered after this deadline may not be received in time for distribution at the commencement ceremony.

The student's current mailing address and permanent address must be correctly listed in the academic record. Any change in the student's address should be promptly reported to the CON and changed through the Howdy portal. Because of SEVIS reporting requirements, international students are not permitted to make changes to their permanent address in Howdy. These students should contact International Student Services if their permanent address is incorrect or needs to be changed. A student will not be excused from penalties on grounds of not receiving communications mailed from the CON if the student failed to report the new address.

## Transcript Requests

An official transcript is a comprehensive record of a student's academic progress at Texas A&M University. The transcript section of the Office of the Registrar produces only official transcripts. *Current students* needing an unofficial transcript may print one from [Howdy](#) on the My Record tab.

For information on ordering transcripts, go to the [Aggie One Stop](#) webpage. Students with outstanding financial obligations to the University may be blocked from receiving an official transcript. Current students may check for transcript blocks on [Howdy](#) on their My Record tab.

## Undergraduate Registration for Graduate Level Coursework

A senior undergraduate student (one who has finished  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the nursing curriculum) with a cumulative grade point ratio of at least 3.0 or approval of the academic Dean or designee, is eligible to enroll in a graduate course and reserve it for graduate credit by filing a petition obtained from the student's undergraduate college and approved by the course instructor and the ADUNE.

An academically superior undergraduate student with a cumulative grade point ratio of at least 3.25 or approval of the academic Dean or designee, is eligible to apply graduate credit hours toward his or her undergraduate degree program by filing a petition obtained from the student's undergraduate college and approved by the course instructor and the ADAA. Graduate credit hours used to meet the requirements for a baccalaureate degree may not be used to meet the requirements for a graduate degree.

## Verification of Enrollment

The Office of the Registrar will provide enrollment verification when requested. A link to Student Self Service Enrollment Verification is accessed via [Howdy](#). Under the *My Record* tab, access the Verification of Enrollment link in the Records and Grades Channel.

## Excess Credit Hour Policy

The state of Texas will not provide funds to state institutions of higher education for excess

semester credit hours earned by a resident student. Since funding will not be provided by the state, and as permitted by state law, TAMU will charge tuition at the non-resident rate to all students that exceed the semester credit hour limit of their program.

Effective with students initially enrolling in the fall 1999 semester and subsequent terms, excess credit hours are those hours attempted by a resident undergraduate student that exceed by more than 45 hours the number of hours required for completion of the degree plan in which the student is enrolled. Effective with students initially enrolling in the fall 2006 semester and subsequent terms, excess credit hours are those hours attempted by a resident undergraduate student that exceed by more than 30 hours the number of hours required for completion of the degree program in which the student is enrolled.

The limitation on excess credit hours applies only to those undergraduate students who first enter higher education in the fall of 1999 and thereafter. For purposes of excess hours, resident undergraduate student includes a nonresident student who is permitted to pay resident tuition. Exceptions to the rule may be accessed on the registrar [Excess Credit Hour](#) webpage. For questions or concerns, you may email: [excesscredithours@tamu.edu](mailto:excesscredithours@tamu.edu) or call (979) 845-1085.

## Leave of Absence (LOA)

Students wishing to take a leave of absence should speak to their academic advisor, view information on the TAMU website and contact the Financial Aid Office.

Pregnancy, childbirth, false pregnancy, termination of pregnancy, and recovery are justification for a LOA for so long a period of time as is deemed medically necessary by the student's health care provider, at the conclusion of which the student shall be reinstated to the status which they held when the leave began (Title IX Education Amendments, Section 106.40(b)(5)). Prompt and appropriate communication by the student is necessary to ensure appropriate accommodations are provided. While retroactive requests will be considered, making arrangements in advance is preferred, and requests that are untimely may be denied on that basis.

## Military Leave

Withdrawal due to a call-up to active military duty is not processed through the online withdrawal system. [A special procedure](#) has been established for students who must withdraw from TAMU for this reason.

## Q-Drops

Undergraduate students will normally be permitted four Q-drops during their undergraduate studies; however: State law prohibits students from having more than six dropped courses from all state institutions attended during their undergraduate career if they entered higher education as a first-time enrolled freshman beginning the 2007 fall semester or after. Q-drops in one-hour courses will not count in the Texas A&M limit of four but will be included in the State-mandated limit of six dropped courses. If a lecture and companion lab are dropped at the same time, this will count as one Q-drop rather than two. ([Texas A&M University Student Rule 1.16.4](#))

The University allows a student to drop a course without academic penalty through the 60th class day of a fall or spring semester, the 15th class day of summer term or the 35th class day of a 10-week summer semester. The symbol Q shall be placed on the academic record to indicate a drop without academic penalty. Courses Q-dropped must have approval of the student's Dean or designee or department as determined by the respective college. Nursing students in jeopardy of failing a course

should speak to their instructor, their academic advisor and be aware of all program progression rules.

## Readmission

Any student admitted to the CON who withdraws will be required to reapply. Contact your academic advisor for more information. The Undergraduate Admissions, Progression, and Graduation Committee reviews all requests for readmission to the CON.

## Withdrawal

Any student considering withdrawal should first notify their academic advisor. Information on the process will be provided to the student. Students who drop to zero (0) hours in a semester or term must officially withdraw from the University. This process is initiated in the office of the student's academic dean. Students may withdraw by the deadline for Q- dropping (60th class day of a fall or spring semester; 15th class day of a 5-week summer term; 35th class day of a 10-week summer semester). After the deadline, deans may permit students to withdraw under non-academic extenuating circumstances. Withdrawals cannot be granted once final exams have begun.

Students are reminded that withdrawing from the University does not dismiss the repayment of student loans borrowed and may impact payment and grace periods. To learn more about repaying your student loans, please visit [Federal Student Aid](#) website and to find your current loan history, see the [National Student Loan Data System](#). For questions, contact Scholarships & Financial Aid at (979) 845-3236.

[Withdrawal instructions](#) may be found on the Registrar's website.

# Chapter 6: Academic Rules, Policies, and Procedures

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"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

## Aggie Code of Honor

TAMU is dedicated to the discovery, development, communication, and application of knowledge in a wide range of academic and professional fields and assumes as its historic trust the maintenance of freedom of inquiry and an intellectual environment nurturing the human mind and spirit. Living in accordance with the [Aggie Code of Honor](#) is critical to these ideals, to the goal of assuming a place of preeminence in higher education, and to the development of the whole student.

The [Aggie Honor System Office](#) (AHSO) administers the TAMU Honor System. As such, it is the central office responsible for maintaining records and coordinating communication, prevention, training, remediation, and adjudication efforts for the TAMU Honor System.

Additionally, it aids members of the university community when questions or concerns arise pertaining to academic misconduct. It oversees the operations and functioning of the Honor Council, a body of students and faculty established to hear and adjudicate honor cases. Instructors as well as students may report a violation to the AHSO.

## Student Rules

Each student has the responsibility to be fully acquainted with and to comply with the [Texas A&M University Student Rules](#). The Texas A&M University Student Rules are broken down into three sections, with additional information provided in the appendixes:

- [Part I: Academic Rules](#) (Rules 1 - 22 & 61)
- [Part II: Student Life Rules](#) (Rules 23 - 44)
- [Part III: Student Grievance Procedures](#) (Rules 45 - 60)
- [Appendices](#)

The Texas A&M Office of the Dean of Student Life has primary jurisdiction over reports of behaviors that implicate rules contained in the Student Code of Conduct. For rules and regulations governing the Student Conduct Code, see [Student Rule 24](#). The CON has primary jurisdiction over reports of behaviors that implicate the Professional Standards of the academic program.

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential force in the academic life of a university. It enhances the quality of education and celebrates the genuine achievements of others. It is, without reservation, a responsibility of all members of the TAMU community to actively promote academic integrity. Apathy or acquiescence in the presence of academic dishonesty is not a neutral act -- failure to confront and deter it will reinforce, perpetuate, and enlarge the scope of such misconduct. As such, a primary responsibility assumed by TAMU students is to promote the ideals of the Aggie Code of Honor. Various methods of encouraging integrity exist, such as setting an example for new students, education through student organizations, and student-to-student moral suasion. Students have the responsibility to confront their peers engaging in

compromising situations, and if unsuccessful, to report the matter to the Aggie Honor System Office. Self-reporting is encouraged and may be considered a mitigating circumstance in the sanctioning phase of a particular case.

Instructors are expected to take proactive steps to promote academic integrity. Instructors should have an open discussion about academic integrity with students in their courses early in the semester. Instructors and staff share in the responsibility and authority to challenge and make known acts that violate the Aggie Code of Honor. Additionally, instructors are expected to adhere to the policy pertaining to the reporting and adjudication of violations of the Aggie Code of Honor. Initiating formal procedures is a necessary and obligatory component of this shared responsibility.

Collaboration and sharing information are characteristics of academic communities. These become violations when they involve dishonesty or are used in ways that give a student an unfair advantage. Instructors shall make clear to students their expectations about collaboration and information sharing. Students should seek clarification when in doubt.

While Texas A&M values and affirms all cultures, it is important to recognize that only one standard of academic integrity will be tolerated; this is the Aggie Code of Honor.

If the alleged misconduct meets the definition of "misconduct in research or scholarship" under [System Regulation 15.99.03 - Ethics in Research and Scholarship](#) and relates to federally funded research, either by an active federal research project or the use of data that was compiled in whole or in part with federal funds the procedures set out 15.99.03 and [University Rule 15.99.03.M1 - Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship](#) will apply.

Violations of academic rules are likely to violate the Code of Conduct for Nurses as well. It is not uncommon for violations of an academic nature to also be reviewed for possible disciplinary sanctions. For student guidance related to any academic rules or policies, please contact your academic advisor.

## Definitions of Academic Misconduct

Definitions of academic misconduct may be found in Student Rule 20.1.2.3. They include cheating, fabrication, falsification, multiple submissions, plagiarism, complicity, abuse and misuse of access, violation of college rules, and university rules on research. Clarification on each of these areas is provided under Student Rule 20. The listing is not, however, exclusive of any other act that may reasonably be called academic dishonesty. Students should also be familiar with Student Rule 52 and Student Rule 53. All student rules may be found at the [Student Rules website](#).

TAMU students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, is sufficient grounds to initiate an academic dishonesty case.

## Other Types of Conduct Concerns

Student rule violations outside of the academic classroom environment are reported through [Student Conflict Resolution Services](#).

To report a behavioral concern on the part of a member of the student body, faculty, or staff, refer to the [Tell Somebody Reporting process](#).

To report instances of suspected waste, fraud, or a suspected ethics violation, use the [Texas A&M University Systems Risk, Fraud, and Misconduct Hotline](#).

## Grading Policy

A four-point (4.0) grading system is utilized in the CON. The grading scale is as follows:

A – Excellent	Four grade points per credit hour	90 - 100
B – Good	Three grade points per credit hour	80 – 89
C – Fair	Two grade points per credit hour	70 - 79
*D - Poor	One grade point per credit hour	60 - 69
*F – Failure	No grade points	Below 60
I – Incomplete	No grade points	
NG – No Grade	Grade removed from record, no grade points, hours not included in GPR	
±Q	Course dropped with no penalty, no grade points, hours not included in GPR	
S – Satisfactory (C or above)	No grade points, hours not included in GPR	
U – Unsatisfactory (D or F)	No grade points, hours included in GPR	
X – No grade submitted	No grade points, hours not included in GPR	
W – Withdraw	No grade points, hours not included in GPR	

\*Minimum academic requirements for retention in the program are a grade of “C” in all nursing courses. A grade of “D” or “F” are failing grades in the CON.

## Grade Rounding Policy

- All graded assignments and exams will be calculated to the hundredth (i.e. two decimal points).
- No grades will be rounded including final exam averages and final course grades.
- For courses in which it is required to achieve an exam average of 70% or better in order to pass the course, students must have an average exam score of greater or equal to 70% on unit exams and comprehensive final exam (if given) to pass the course. The average of 70% on exams must be achieved BEFORE the remaining content percentages are factored into the final course grade. If an exam average of 70% is not achieved, the final grade earned for the course will reflect the average of exam scores.

## Progression

## Good Academic Standing

Good academic standing is defined as having a minimum grade point average of a 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale), maintaining a minimum grade of “C” in all courses, and non-probationary status. Students must be in good academic standing in order to progress in the program.

All Nursing students have the obligation to make satisfactory progress toward completion of all degree requirements. A minimum standard to measure degree progress requires satisfactory completion of 75 percent of attempted course credit hours each academic year.

## Academic Progression Criteria

Rules for program progression are as follows:

- Students must meet all co-requisites or prerequisites to progress in the program.
- Some nursing courses are sequential and may not be taken out of sequence. Progression into the next semester’s nursing courses are contingent upon the successful completion (grade of C or better) of all previous semester courses.
- Grades of D, F, or U are not acceptable in nursing courses.
- Students who receive a grade of D, F or U in any course in any given semester will be automatically placed on probation and notified in writing of probation status. The student will remain on probation until the course is repeated with a C or better. The course can only be taken through the Texas A&M CON unless approved by the ADAA.
- A second attempt in a course cannot be “Q” dropped. The grade earned in a second attempt will stand.
- Students who earn a grade of D or F upon repetition of a nursing course or have two nursing course failures are ineligible to continue enrollment in the CON.
- Students who are unsuccessful in meeting clinical objectives of a clinical course will receive a final grade of “F”, regardless of what the current grade is for the didactic portion of the course.
- Spaces in clinical courses are tightly controlled by both accreditation and clinical agency policies, so permission to retake/repeat a course will be granted on a space- available basis. A student who is out of sequence in the curriculum (whether due to illness, course failure, or other reasons) cannot be assured of a space in subsequent courses, though every effort will be made to accommodate him/her.
- If a student repeats a course which he/she has failed in the CON, the official grade for the final graduation degree audit is the last one earned. See [Student Rule 10](#) regarding calculation of the cumulative GPR.
- If there will be a sequential break of time spent in the clinical setting of one semester or more, then the student may be required to enroll and successfully complete a zero-credit hour course before progressing in the curriculum.
- Students must complete the program to which they enrolled in three (3) consecutive years or six (6) long semesters. Exceptions for extenuating circumstances (i.e. serious illness, pregnancy, etc.) will be considered.



In addition to obtaining grades of C or above in all nursing courses, students must demonstrate their ability to deliver safe care to patients at all times. Failure to provide safe patient care may result in immediate withdrawal from the course and, potentially, dismissal from the CON.

## Academic Success Plan for Nursing Students

Students who are not successful in meeting the requirements for testing within a course are responsible to develop their own success plan using all available resources. For more information see the Academic Success Plan for Nursing Students (Appendix A).

## Q Drop Policy

Q drops for students who fail the practicum objectives of a course for safety, competence, or professionalism are not allowed. The student will receive a grade “F” regardless of what the current grade is for the didactic portion of the course. In addition, students must withdraw and/or may not enroll in any other clinical courses until the situation has been resolved or the student has been successfully remediated. Students who are not meeting the objectives for the clinical portion of a clinical course for reasons other than the three concerns noted above may opt to ‘Q’ drop (a drop without academic penalty) before the designated deadline. In addition, students must withdraw and/or may not enroll in any other clinical courses until the situation has been resolved or the student has been successfully remediated. Student may continue attending the didactic portion of class, however, they will not be allowed to take exams, submit assignments, earn credit or a grade for the course.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

An incomplete grade (I) may be assigned when there is unfinished work and the student is in good academic standing (at least a C grade) in the course. A student who requests an incomplete must initiate contact with the faculty member. This discussion will be converted to a written Incomplete Contract and signed before the last class meeting of the semester in which the I will be recorded.

The instructor shall give this grade only when the deficiency is due to an authorized absence or other cause beyond the control of the student. When an instructor reports an incomplete grade to the registrar, he or she will fill out an “Incomplete Grade Report,” which is filed with the AD SA. Copies should be provided to the student and to the student’s academic dean(s). This report includes (1) a statement of the instructor’s reason for awarding the incomplete grade and (2) a statement concerning the remaining work to be completed before the last day of scheduled classes of the next fall or spring semester in which the student enrolls in the university unless the student’s academic Dean or designee, with the consent of the instructor grants an extension of time for good reason. The student and the faculty member should discuss a plan, including a schedule, for completing the remaining work prior to the conferral of an I. All requirements of the contract must be satisfied in order for the student to progress in the program.

A grade of incomplete will be marked on the grade roster at the end of the term. It is the responsibility of the instructor to initiate and complete a Change of Grade form. An I must be completed before the end of the subsequent semester in which the I was given. The grade of I will automatically become an F if not removed within the prescribed time limit; however, an extension may be requested by the instructor when the Request for an Incomplete Grade form is submitted with the submission of grades, provided that a definitive time frame for completion is presented. An extension will be granted only for circumstances beyond the control of the student.

## Grade Disputes & Undergraduate Appeals Process

The instructor of the class is the primary authority with respect to a student's proficiency and final grade in the course as noted in [Student Rule 48. Grade Disputes](#). A student who believes that his or her final grade reflects a capricious, arbitrary or prejudiced academic evaluation must follow the resolution procedures and deadlines as described in [Student Rule 57 Undergraduate Academic Appeals Panel](#).

## Academic Dismissal

Students will not be permitted to continue in the nursing program or apply for readmission if they: 1) receive a grade of D or F in more than one course, 2) receive any combination of grades of D or F on two attempts of the same course, or 3) receive written email notice of dismissal from the program by the ADAA or ADSA for failure to adhere to CON policy.

The basis for an appeal on grades are outlined in [Student Rule 57 Graduate Academic Appeals Panel](#).

The basis for an appeal based upon dismissal for failure to adhere to CON Professional Standards Policy will follow the procedures as noted in the section on Violation of the Professional Code of Ethics found in this handbook.

Dismissed students are expected to make arrangements with the Office of Student Affairs to begin the formal withdrawal process in a timely manner. Dismissed students will be required to turn in any equipment or materials belonging to the CON as well as any CON ID badges.

# Chapter 7: Classroom & Clinical Expectations

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## Civility Statement

The Texas A&M CON is committed to creating and maintaining a positive learning environment consistent with the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics which states nurses are required to "create an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating colleagues, coworkers, employees, students, and others with dignity and respect" (ANA, 2015, p. 4). To support an environment for positive learning any disregard for the effects of one's actions on others, bullying, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, threats, or violence are always morally unacceptable behaviors (p.20).

Each course is geared at helping all students learn to think and act like a nurse. Each student toward the end is expected to demonstrate ethical and professional behavior in all aspects of the course. To assist in a healthy and respectful learning environment, we ask that students follow the protocols below:

For online classes:

- Use proper netiquette. (Netiquette is a combination of words "network" and "etiquette")
- Be respectful of each other and your instructor.
- Address each person individually when you create responses. For example, when you respond, be friendly, begin your writing with a greeting, i.e. howdy or hello.
- Praise and support your fellow Aggies

For face-to-face classes:

- Be on time to class and attend class regularly.
- Refrain from unsavory or unprofessional use of language.
- Silence your cell phone during class; refrain from texting during class.
- Keep chit-chat to a minimum in class to avoid distraction to others.
- Treat your colleagues, the agency staff, and the faculty with respect.
- Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior in all aspects of this course.

In addition, TAMU and the CON expect all students to abide by the Aggie Honor Code and conduct themselves as an Aggie (see Chapter 7).

## Clinical Expectations

NOTE: Clinical settings include: skills lab, simulation encounters with and without standardized patients, virtual simulation, hospitals, clinics, and other patient care settings, as well as general community based encounters. All clinical experiences are selected to offer valuable learning opportunities.

## Patient Safety

Faculty who teach clinical nursing courses are responsible for guiding students in the development of professional nursing skills and values. Clinical objectives will be clearly defined for students and requirements stated in the course syllabi as well as information on how the clinical grade will be determined.

Students will provide nursing care to clients under the facilitation of clinical faculty and supervision of an assigned registered nurse. Students are expected to participate in all nursing care activities that the students has been successful in checking off in the skills lab. Students are held responsible for all nursing skills learned from previous courses. When providing clinical care, nursing students are held to the same standards as the RN (i.e. what would the reasonably prudent nurse with like education and experience do).

Patients should be able to expect safe, quality care. Faculty may request a student be removed from the clinical setting if the level of performance does not meet an acceptable level of competence. Reasons for clinical setting dismissal may include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of preparation for clinical
2. Unsafe practice
3. Unprofessional behavior, conduct, or dress
4. Breach of confidentiality, lack of patient identification prior to care or medication administration
5. Medication administration without appropriate preparation, supervision, or technique
6. Violation of the Texas Nurse practice Act of ANA Code for Nurses
7. Endangerment of patient rights and/or safety.

Clinical setting dismissal for any of the reasons noted above may constitute immediate clinical failure for the semester. If a student is removed from one clinical setting due to concerns about professionalism, safety or competence, he/she will not be allowed to continue in other course clinical rotations until the situation has been resolved. Legal and ethical grounds exist for dismissal of a student who is clinically deficient. Any unsafe or unprofessional act that leads to, or could lead to, injury of a patient may result in immediate removal from the clinical setting. Consequences may range from additional written paperwork up to dismissal from the nursing program.

## Clinical Course Concerns

Students may not be allowed to continue in a clinical course if the following situations arise:

### **Not meeting clinical objectives in a timely manner.**

Students who are not meeting the objectives for the clinical portion of a clinical course may opt to Q drop (a drop without academic penalty) before the designated deadline. They will be allowed to continue attending the didactic portion of class, however, they will not be allowed to take exams, submit assignments, earn credit or a grade for the course.

### **Not meeting expectations for patient safety, competence or professionalism as**

expected for the level of education and experience to which they have attained through the nursing curriculum.

Students who fail the clinical portion of a course for safety, competence, or professionalism concerns may not Q drop or withdraw from that clinical course. They will receive a grade of F for the course. They may continue attending the didactic portion of class but will not be allowed to take exams, submit assignments, or earn credit for the course. In addition, students must withdraw and/or may not enroll in any other clinical courses until the situation has been resolved or the student has been successfully remediated.

Practice is determined to be unsafe if, due to student knowledge deficits, lack of effective clinical decision making, failure to appropriately monitor patient's condition and respond appropriately (clinician notification and direct care actions), or inappropriate communication, a patient is harmed or very likely to be at risk for harm. Unsafe practice is also related to the appropriate level of supervision that can be provided to support student learning and practice. Students in more advanced stages of their undergraduate curriculum are expected to be able to practice safely with decreasing levels of direct faculty and preceptor supervision. Other factors contributing to an assessment of unsafe practice include falsified documentation, failure to communicate truthfully and aggressive/non- collaborative interpersonal communications patterns.

Errors related to patient care are to be reported to clinical faculty and students will complete a report detailing all aspects of the incident. Severity of errors will be analyzed by faculty to determine students' progression in the course. Safety is a critical element on all clinical evaluation tools.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all clinical and/or lab sessions including classes in the Simulation Lab. Failure to appear for scheduled clinical sessions, coming unprepared, and tardiness are viewed as unprofessional behavior. The course syllabus will provide information regarding the attendance policy for each course.

Students are expected to be present for change of shift report. First tardy may result in a Professional Improvement Plan (PIP) from your clinical instructor. Second tardy will result in a PIP from your clinical instructor. The third tardy will result in a PIP in addition to action as determined by the clinical instructor and may lead to an unexcused clinical absence.

Clinical paperwork (clinical prep forms, concept maps, etc.) is due at the time designated by the clinical faculty. Failure to have appropriate paperwork to present to the clinical instructor may result in additional assignments, being sent home for the day, rescheduling of clinical time, and/or receiving a PIP. n

Violation of confidentiality, including photocopying patient documents, taking photographs, removing documents from the hospital or postings on internet social networking sites will be subject to disciplinary action (Refer to HIPAA policy).

Loss of the hospital issued ID and room access badges will result in a minimum \$25 replacement fee. Use of another student's ID badge is unprofessional behavior and will not be allowed. University ID badges must be worn at all times in the clinical setting. Any student who forgets their ID badge will be dismissed from clinical until they present with proper identification. Failure to return to clinical will result in a clinical failure for the day.

Students are expected to meet clinical expectations as outlined in the course syllabi specific to each course.

## Policy for Clinical Concerns

Faculty may complete Safety Improvement Plan (SIP) or Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) should students fail to meet expectations in either course or clinical settings. These require a meeting with the professor and discussion regarding the incident and the report is submitted to the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs to be filed in the student's record. Note this is not a part of the student's permanent academic record but may be considered should additional disciplinary action be required. Students have the opportunity to add comments, additional facts, etc. in response to the written report. Informative coaching that results from a PIP/SIP are cumulative. After 3 have occurred (may be from more than one course or semester), the 3rd occurrence will result in a disciplinary meeting with the ADAA.

Complete honesty with the clinical instructor is an expectation of every student. Dishonesty shall be defined to include withholding information and/or failing to immediately disclose appropriate information pertaining to the client and/or clinical scenario to the faculty member and/or the assigned staff nurse. Students who are found to be practicing in a dishonest manner will be asked to leave the clinical setting and may receive a failing grade in the course and dismissal from the nursing program. In the event that a student is dismissed from clinical, no make-up will be provided. A PIP/SIP will be completed for the day.

If a student violates any of the standards on the clinical evaluation tool (CET) the faculty will:

- Complete the PIP/SIP;
- If it is an unsafe behavior, contact the ADAA as soon as possible;
- Make an appointment prior to the next clinical day to meet with the student to counsel them, give them an opportunity to respond, and provide them with an action plan for remediation;
- Attach a copy of the CET with all objectives that were not met identified with an Unsatisfactory marking;
- Submit the PIP/SIP to the ADSA for placement in the student's unofficial academic file;
- Provide copies to the student, the coordinator of the course, and the ADUNE.

## Reporting of Illness & Absence

It is the responsibility of a student to promptly inform their clinical instructor in the event of an absence or illness. If students in a clinical course cannot reach their faculty member, the student should call the nurse in charge of the unit to which they are assigned at least one hour (or earlier, if possible) before the scheduled assignment.

Clinical absences, unless a true emergency or pre-arranged with clinical faculty approval, are not acceptable. In the event of a no call and no show, the absence may result in a conference with clinical faculty, course coordinator, and the ADAA.

## Dress Code/Uniforms Rules

The CON expects students to reflect professionalism and maintain high standards of appearance and grooming in the clinical setting as well as in the classroom. Clinical faculty will have final judgment on the appropriateness of student attire and corrective action for dress code violations.

## Traditional/Second Degree B.S.N. Student Dress Code:

As students in a professional program, it is important to dress as professionals. We often have unexpected visitors to the CON and wish to represent it well. The following items are not deemed appropriate in the classroom:

- clothing that shows the mid-drift or low cut tops
- halter tops or tube tops; spaghetti straps tops
- mini-skirts or shorts above the mid-thigh
- see-through clothing
- clothing with distasteful or crude lettering or messages

Uniforms must be standard nursing scrubs with sleeves (style, color, and vendor to be designated by CON). Uniforms may be purchased through the [Texas A&M Bookstore](#). Uniforms from other companies are not allowed. Additional uniforms may be purchased at any time during your enrollment through the Texas A&M Bookstore. Students will have 2 sets of uniforms (maroon scrub tops and maroon scrub pants).

It is recommended that you buy sizes that will allow you to freely move about, bend, and reach as this will be required for your work in clinical settings. Students will frequently be in a clinical setting 2 or more days each week so should consider purchasing 2 or more of each item. Lab coats are not allowed in clinical facilities due to the possibility of transferring harmful substances or agents. Students may wear a long sleeve solid white t-shirt under the uniform or the approved optional uniform item (snap front jacket) during cooler times of the year or as needed. Make sure to wash the maroon-colored garments separately from other colored items as the colors may bleed if not washed appropriately.

Students are required to wear their student identification badge with picture during all clinical experiences. The badge must be worn in plain sight. Names on the badges must not be covered up with tape, pins, stickers, etc.

The student must wear a name badge and appropriate shoes (leather or leather-like, closed toe and closed heels).

All students are also required to purchase a CON polo shirt (style to be designated by CON). The CON polo shirt is worn when visiting clients in the community or collecting data on the hospital or agency unit for next-day clinical assignments. Students must wear the polo shirt with black or khaki slacks or skirt unless otherwise instructed by faculty. No shorts or jeans are to be worn when in the hospital or in any clinical agency. Shoes should be closed-toed with flat or low-heels (1 ½ inches or less). Tennis shoes or flip flops are not acceptable community attire. Name badges are required at all times when students are in a clinical setting. Students are advised to purchase at least two uniforms and one CON polo shirt.

Strict adherence to the dress code is expected.

The following rules apply to the clinical setting (unless otherwise instructed by your professors):

*NOTE: Mental Health Nursing will be more prescriptive in the dress code for these clinical rotations.*

## Shoes

- Shoes must be impermeable (non-mesh), leather or leather-like, closed toe and closed heels, with a non-skid or non-slip sole. Students must follow clinical agency policy regarding shoes.

## Jewelry

- Watches must be plain, simple timepieces with no jewels or stones; a watch with a second hand is necessary; digital watches are acceptable if they allow for counting seconds
- One plain wedding band (no stones) is the only ring wear allowed but may need to be removed when safety or infection control is a concern
- Pierced jewelry may only be stud or button style earrings
- No other pierced jewelry on any other visible part of the body (other than the ear) is allowed
- No necklaces are allowed

## Hair

- Hair is to be clean, neat, and well groomed
- Shoulder length hair or longer must be pulled back behind the ears and secured up completely off the neck in a bun
- Hair should be kept off the face and in no way obscure vision
- Hair must be a natural color (i.e., a shade of black, brown, red, gray, or blonde)

## Nails

- Nails are to be clean, groomed, manicured and cut to the tip of the finger
- Artificial nails are prohibited
- No nail polish may be worn
- No fingernail jewelry may be worn; no stenciling or glitter is permitted on nails

## Other

- Stethoscope covers are not allowed
- Ankle socks or stockings must be worn with uniform shoes
- Personal hygiene including oral care, daily showering/bathing, and the use of deodorant is expected
- No perfume or scented lotions are to be worn
- Gum chewing is not permitted
- No tattoos on the face or front of the neck will be permitted, with the exception of permanent makeup that is not extreme in nature. Tattoos deemed as inappropriate, vulgar, or obscene must be covered. Students must follow clinical agency policy regarding the visibility of tattoos
- Long-sleeved white t-shirt under the uniform is allowed as needed following clinical unit policy
- Outer garments are not permitted in patient areas
- Undergarments should not be visible
- Headbands should be plain, subtle, modest, unadorned and unembellished
- Student facial hair should be cleanly shaven and/or beards neatly trimmed

Students may not wear a uniform with the CON logo and student name tag while working as an employee of any agency, observing or volunteering in a healthcare capacity.



Many agencies have dress codes that exceed CON uniform requirements. Students and faculty will comply with the dress code of the agency in which clinical learning activities are scheduled. Dress code guidelines will be addressed further during clinical orientation. Strict adherence to the dress code is expected.

## RN-BSN Dress Code:

When RN-BSN students' practicum experiences are in acute care facilities,

- Wear business casual clothes with clean and pressed white lab coats. The lab coat must not have any other identifiers on it. Covering identifiers with tape is not acceptable.
- Wear the CON name tags at all times in practicum experiences.
- Wear only close-toed shoes in the acute care setting.

While in case management or leadership experiences, students may opt to wear scrubs with a lab coat, or street clothes with a lab coat. Lab coats should be plain and not reflect affiliation with another facility/institution/employer. Scrubs must be maroon in color. These requirements apply to NURS 464, 465, 466, and 467.

In the community, RN-BSN students are expected to wear business casual with the CON name badge. This situation occurs during community settings with family experiences and the community health project. These requirements apply to NURS 464, NURS 466, and 467.

## Evaluation of Faculty, Courses, and Program

Student participation in faculty, course, and program evaluations is both the student's right and responsibility. The process of evaluation is viewed as the student's opportunity for input into curriculum development and the assessment of faculty effectiveness and student learning needs. Students are therefore encouraged to participate in all evaluations which will be done during the course of each semester. Evaluations are anonymous.

## Standardized Testing

The CON utilizes computerized specialty and exit exams throughout the curriculum offered through the leading nursing publisher and leading provider of exams predicting student performance on the NCLEX exam. These exams (also known as Health Education Systems Incorporated or HESI exams) are offered through Evolve Reach and may be used confidently to assess students' progress as well as their preparedness for the licensure exam. The tests reflect questions on the actual NCLEX exams, and [all items have evidence-based reliability and validity](#) to ensure accurate measurement of test scores and prediction of NCLEX examination success.

Immediate diagnostic reports are provided to identify areas that require further study. [Remediation content](#) is customized based on the individual student areas of weakness. HESI exit exams evaluate student readiness for the NCLEX exam, with an average predictive accuracy of 97.4%.

## Guidelines for Classroom Experiences

### Electronic Devices

Electronic devices may only be used for clinically related purposes as approved by supervising clinical

faculty. The electronic device may be loaded with required reference- based software and utilized in the clinical setting to facilitate learning. Students must adhere to the policies of the clinical site, as well as the CON policy regarding the use of electronic devices in clinical settings.

Cleaning of electronic devices must comply with the organization's infection control policy and procedures. If the device becomes contaminated, it should be cleaned with the recommended disinfectant. If a patient is in isolation, the electronic device cannot be taken into the patient's room unless it is approved within the organization's infection control policy and procedures.

## Intellectual Property

All course materials developed by the faculty and posted within a course are the intellectual property of the individual faculty and can only be used for the purpose of participating in the course in which they are posted unless express consent is given by the faculty member. Any posting of course materials outside the enrolled course violates the intellectual property rights of faculty. The student is referred to the Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: Intellectual Property and Fair Use policy, available at

[http://library.tamu.edu/services/library\\_tutorials/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://library.tamu.edu/services/library_tutorials/academic_integrity/index.html). Netiquette & Discussion Board Expectations Guidelines for acceptable online classroom behavior are posted in the learning management system course syllabus. Students will be expected to adhere to rules for acceptable online behavior and communication.

Expectations for course discussion board posts and grading criteria are posted in each course learning management system website. Standard grading rubric are used throughout the undergraduate nursing program, although frequency and subject matter will differ per course.

## Course Recording

Synchronous class sessions, where faculty instruction includes lecture delivery as a teaching strategy, will be recorded. Course lecture content will be available via the Learning Management System. Recordings will only be shared with the students registered for this course at the time of distribution. Enrolled students should not distribute the recording to anyone. Class recordings will not be used in subsequent semesters.

Class recordings will capture the following:

- Students' faces and background
- Students' verbal communications

## Exam Guidelines

Exams are given by computer or occasional written tests. Be prepared with appropriate supplies for either. It is the expectation of the CON that every student has a computer capable of running the required software for all assignments, exams, and quizzes. It is the responsibility of the student to download and install the software as directed.

Students are required to act with integrity according to the Aggie Honor Code while preparing for and taking all nursing school examinations. Contents of all exams are considered confidential and are not to be shared with other students through verbal, written, or electronic communications. No attempt should be made to acquire, save or reproduce exam content. The use of outside materials (i.e. written materials, electronic devices) is strictly forbidden on all exams (except in specific cases in which the

students will be notified by the exam instructor or proctor ahead of the exam). Failure to adhere to these policies could result in corrective actions up to and including dismissal from the CON.

In fairness to all exam takers, it will not be possible for examination proctors to answer questions of interpretation that may arise during examinations. After completion of the examination, you may receive a preliminary raw score at the discretion of course faculty. This raw score may change following the statistical review by faculty. After faculty have completed a detailed examination question analysis and all students have taken the exam, you will receive a final examination score. Typically, examination results will be released in the Learning Management System within three to five working days following an examination, but may take longer under certain circumstances. Individual exam item appeals are not permitted. There is no curving of grades.

Refer to the syllabus provided with each CON course for detailed exam guidelines.

## HIPAA Policy

All educational experiences in the CON abide by Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) regulations. In addition, the CON adheres to the new national privacy standards issued by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that went into effect on February 17, 2010. HIPAA standards address the use and disclosure of individuals' health information as well as standards for individuals' privacy rights to understand and to control how their health information is used. A major goal of this act is to assure that individuals' health information is properly protected while allowing the flow of health information needed to provide and promote high quality health care and to protect the public's health and well-being.

Students are provided orientations in the classroom and clinical settings regarding HIPAA regulations in addition to completing online modules covering these regulations prior to entering into a patient care setting. It is the legal and ethical responsibility of CON faculty, staff, and students to use, protect, and preserve personal and confidential patient information in accordance with state and federal laws as well as university policies.

If an unauthorized use or disclosure of public health information has occurred, this incident must be reported immediately to the supervisor (i.e. a CON student notifies CON faculty instructor, CON staff notifies CON supervisor, CON faculty notifies ADAA). The supervisor initiates an investigation, completes an incident report with findings and outcomes, notifies the clinical site and CON ADAA, and submits the report to CON Dean for review.

## Needlestick Guidelines

The CON endorses standard precautions as the single best strategy to reduce the risk of bloodborne pathogen (BBP) exposure. Healthcare personnel are at risk for occupational exposure to bloodborne pathogens, including hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Exposures occur through needlesticks or cuts from other sharp instruments contaminated with an infected patient's blood or through contact of the eye, nose, mouth, or skin with a patient's blood. Adequate barrier protection (e.g., gloves, safety glasses, mask) when performing any activities is needed where the potential exists for BBP exposure. Familiarity with and use of safety devices on needles, syringes, and intravenous equipment can also reduce the risk of accidental BBP exposure.

All healthcare personnel who have a reasonable chance of exposure to blood or body fluids should receive hepatitis B vaccine. Healthcare workers should be tested 1-2 months after the vaccine series is complete to make sure that vaccination has provided immunity to HBV infection. Hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG) alone or in combination with vaccine (if not previously vaccinated) is effective

in preventing HBV infection after an exposure.

There is no vaccine against hepatitis C and no treatment after an exposure that will prevent infection. Neither immune globulin nor antiviral therapy is recommended after exposure.

For these reasons, following [recommended infection control practices](#) to prevent percutaneous injuries is imperative. [Center for Disease Control \(CDC\) Guidelines](#) may be found here.

There is no vaccine against HIV. However, results from a small number of studies suggest that the use of some antiretroviral drugs after certain occupational exposures may reduce the chance of HIV transmission. Post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is recommended for certain occupational exposures that pose a risk of transmission.

Students who have been exposed to needlesticks or to potentially infectious blood or blood products or body fluids should be evaluated and have treatment initiated within 2 hours according to established criteria that conform to federal and state law and Center for Disease Control standards. Any expenses incurred by treatment are the sole responsibility of the student.

### First Aid for percutaneous and mucocutaneous exposures:

1. Needlesticks or puncture wounds: express blood from wound, scrub area vigorously with soap and water for 5 minutes.
2. Oral mucous membranes: rinse area several times with oxygenating agent such as 50% strength hydrogen peroxide. Do not swallow.
3. Ocular (remove contacts if applicable): irrigate immediately with water or NS solution.
4. Human bite: cleanse with povidone-iodine and sterile water.

### Exposure to Blood Borne Pathogens Procedure

Immediately upon receiving a contaminated needlestick or exposure to blood, blood products, or body fluids, the student will:

1. Begin first aid measures
2. Report the incident to the clinical faculty member/preceptor and the appropriate person in the clinical agency.
3. Complete the appropriate clinical agency incident report. If incident does not occur within a clinical facility, follow CON reporting requirements as required by the [Occupational Health & Safety Administration](#) (OSHA).
4. Follow institutional protocols regarding wound care and reporting procedures. Clinical faculty should be notified as soon as reasonably possible.
5. Seek treatment intervention from the University Health Center, or a private health care provider within 2 hours of the exposure incident (at student's expense).

Based on information provided to the health care provider, baseline lab values may be ordered. In responding to an incident in which a student experiences a contaminated needle stick or exposure to blood, blood products, or body fluids, the clinical faculty will:

1. Verify appropriate first aid measures have been initiated.
2. Counsel the student to seek follow-up care at the University Health Center or a private health care provider.
3. Confirm with Chief Nursing Officer (or appropriate personnel) that appropriate patient testing is currently available or has been initiated.
4. Advise the student to consult the clinical facility's protocol or the CDC for follow-up on contaminated needlesticks or exposures to blood, blood products, or body fluids should he/she choose to seek a private health care provider.
5. Assist the student in completing any administrative paperwork that may be required.
6. Complete the CON Needle Stick Incident/Exposure Report Form

#### References:

Centers for Disease Control. (2016). [General Resources on Bloodborne Pathogens](#). Retrieved 9/19/2017

Smith, S., Duell, D. & Martin, B. (2016). Clinical Nursing Skills. (9th Ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

## Substance Abuse Rules

The Texas A&M University System is committed to maintaining an environment that is free from substance abuse, as well as complying with state and federal laws. The Texas A&M System policy governing this may be found in the following regulation: [34.02 Drug and Alcohol Abuse and Rehabilitation Programs](#).

As health care professionals, the CON faculty members support a policy wherein each individual providing patient care in a clinical setting or preparing educationally to become a care provider adheres to high personal health standards. This includes, but is not limited to, the avoidance of substances that impair thinking and behavior.

The CON requires all students to participate in a drug screen after admission into the program through a company determined by the CON. Pre-licensure students are required to repeat screening annually at minimum. RN to BSN students must be drug screened after admission and as required by their employers and clinical agencies for practicum experiences. The student is responsible for obtaining the drug screens at their expense. Drug screens will be completed through the CastleBranch portal.

If a positive drug screen is reported, the student will not be allowed to continue in the program. The student will be required to withdraw from all courses with the grade earned at that point in the semester. To return to the program, the student must re-apply and be accepted, have a negative drug screen, and provide satisfactory documentation to the CON of successful drug counseling and treatment, all at the expense of the student. If accepted back into the program, he/she will be subjected to unannounced random drug screening at their expense.

For the protection of patients, faculty, staff, and students, the CON retains the right to require a student to submit to testing for substance abuse at the student's expense when the nursing program has reasonable cause to believe that a student is abusing controlled substances.

- Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug or alcohol, such as, but not limited to, slurred speech, noticeable change in grooming habits, impaired physical coordination, inappropriate comments or behaviors, or pupillary changes
- Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior, absenteeism, tardiness or deterioration in performance
- Report of drug use provided by credible sources
- Evidence that a student has tampered with a previous drug or alcohol test
- Possession of drug paraphernalia

If a faculty member observes such behavior, and if such behavior is observed or validated by another faculty member or clinical agency staff member, the faculty member must excuse or remove the student from the educational or patient setting immediately. The student will be transported immediately to the designated site for a drug screen. The cost of the testing will be the responsibility of the CON. Reports will be sent to the Dean and ADSA.

If questionable behavior is observed by a preceptor or other agency personnel overseeing a student's clinical experience performed in conjunction with, or as a component of, meeting the requirements of a course of study in the CON, such preceptor or other agency personnel and a member of the nursing staff, in the interest of patient safety, shall have the authority to take action in the same manner as an assigned faculty member.

## Additional Testing Conditions

During the clinical experience, students may be required to undergo additional substance abuse testing if the following situations arise at the facility:

- An injury occurs while participating in a clinical experience
- If a medication or handling discrepancy is discovered
- If medication may have been stolen or improperly used
- Other conditions wherein all employees of the facility are required to undergo testing

## Description of the Drug Screen Panel

The CON requires each student to submit to a 10 panel urine screening. The panel includes the following classes of drugs: Amphetamines, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Cocaine Metabolites, Ethanol, Extended Opiates, Marijuana Metabolite, Meperidine, Methadone, Methaqualone, Phencyclidine, Propoxyphene, Tramadol. Drug screens are completed through the CastleBranch portal.

## Appeal and Retesting Guidelines

Drug screen results will be reviewed by the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. Positive tests may be appealed by submitting a written request to the ADSA within three (3) business days after being informed of positive test results. The appellant has the right to have a second test performed at a certified laboratory of their choice and all expenses of such retest will be the responsibility of the appellant. The specimen transfer between laboratories will follow standard protocol.

## Disciplinary/Actions

Any student who fails an alcohol or drug test will be subject to disciplinary sanctions and a disciplinary hearing. These sanctions could result in dismissal. An individual's participation in and successful completion of an approved drug or alcohol counseling program coupled with consent to random testing may be considered in the disciplinary process but does not ensure that dismissal will not occur. The Dean will make the final decision on action to be taken.

TBON requires formal disclosure of an outstanding eligibility issue that may prevent an applicant from taking the licensure examination. A Declaratory Order petition must be filed if there has been any history of substance abuse. For more information, go to: [Online Examination Application - Eligibility Information](#). See further information below regarding the responsibility of the CON as it relates to reporting substance abuse.

## Refusal to Consent to Testing

Any student who refuses to consent to an alcohol or drug test or fails to provide an adequate specimen will be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal.

## Confidentiality

TBON has a policy that any substance-related condition(s) may affect the ability of a nurse to safely perform nursing duties, thus creating a threat to public safety. The policy applies to all nurses or those individuals seeking to obtain licensure. A nursing education program shall report a student to TBON if they have reasonable cause to suspect that the ability of the nursing student to perform the services of the nursing profession would be, or would reasonably be expected to be, impaired by chemical dependency (as noted in the Nursing Practice Act Sections [§301.404. Duty of Nursing Educational Program to Report](#)). Students should be aware that test results may be used for administrative hearings and court cases and may be sent to state and/or federal agencies as required by applicable law. Beyond the scope of these regulations, every effort will be made to keep the results of alcohol and drug testing confidential.

## Transportation Expectations

The CON transportation policy requires that students are responsible for arranging their own transportation, including to and from clinical sites. Students are required to have reliable transportation to and from campus, to clinical rotations off campus, and to other community activities as required. In order to provide the best possible clinical experiences, the CON may establish placements that require travel outside the campus locations. Lack of transportation will not be accepted as an excused absence for non-attendance or tardiness at experiential or clinical rotations.

Students will be responsible for covering all gas and parking fees incurred by that mode of travel. Carpooling and cost sharing with fellow students is recommended whenever feasible. The student would be responsible for paying all transportation costs incurred. The state of Texas requires all drivers to maintain minimum liability automobile insurance coverage.

## Student Volunteer Observation

College of Nursing students may volunteer in area hospitals, clinics, and agencies as observational experiences. However, it is important for students to note the issues related to the scope of practice in

the student role, as well as student personal liability when participating in such experiences. Observational experiences that are voluntary and that exist outside approved CON clinical experiences do not qualify for clinical hours and these experiences must be completed during students' own time. Additionally, students may function in the role of an RN as a part of clinical learning in the BSN program during CON- approved clinical experiences ONLY. During volunteer observational experiences, students may inform the agency they are a nursing student at Texas A&M University however, under no circumstances may a nursing student wear Texas A & M scrubs, Texas A & M polos, or any Texas A & M identification badge or function in the nursing student role. Students should be aware that (1) the CON assumes no responsibility for student activities while observing in these agencies; (2) students are personally responsible and liable for any activity engaged in while participating in the observation experience (3) professional liability insurance purchased by students covers activities engaged in during student practice in approved CON clinical experiences *only*; (4) students who practice illegally as outlined in the Nurse Practice Act and the Texas Board of Nursing (TBON) rules jeopardize their future careers; violations of TBON rules may result in the inability of a student to sit for state board examinations and subsequent RN licensure; and (6) students are expected to uphold Aggie core values through their manner and dress.



## Chapter 8: Student Conduct Code Procedures

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The University views the student conduct system as an educational experience that can result in growth in personal understanding of one's responsibilities and privileges in the University community. Acceptable standards of conduct have been established to protect the rights of others and the orderly operation of the University. [Part II: Student Life Rules](#) provide direction on student expectations and consequences for misconduct. The focus of student conduct proceedings is to determine whether the University's standards of conduct have been violated. To this end, student conduct proceedings attempt to balance an understanding and knowledge of the students' needs with the needs of the University community. Individuals may bring a complaint against a student for alleged violations of the Student Conduct Code. Such complaints may be submitted to the Office of the Dean of Student Life. An investigation may be initiated to determine if the complaint has merit.

Complaints may result in charges, a form of alternative dispute resolution, or dismissal of complaint. These decisions are made at the sole discretion of the University.

To ensure that students understand how to appropriately pursue a grievance at Texas A&M University, students are encouraged to seek clarification and advice regarding procedures before initiating a grievance. Although a student may seek such advice from any faculty or staff member, the Office of the Dean of Student Life has staff members trained to help students who have grievances.

### Professional Code of Ethics

The nursing profession expresses its moral obligations and professional values through the Code of Ethics for Nurses (ANA, 2017). Each student should read the [American Nurses](#)

[Association Code of Ethics](#) and be accountable for its contents. Ethics is the foundation upon which nursing is built. Nursing has a distinguished history of concern for the welfare of the sick, injured and vulnerable. This concern is embodied in the provision of nursing care to individuals and the community.

The Code of Ethics for a profession makes explicit the primary goals, values, and obligations of the profession. Students are expected to function within the framework of the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses.

Nursing students are expected not only to adhere to the morals and norms of the profession, but also to embrace them as part of what it means to be a nurse. The nurse recognizes that their first obligation is to the patient's welfare.

Any situation that threatens patient safety, exhibits a lack of moral character, demonstrates a lack of professionalism or good judgment, and/or is a violation of CON/Hospital policy may result in immediate termination from the program.

Verbal or written derogatory statements about patients, clinical placements, the Health Science Center, CON students, faculty or staff will be subject to disciplinary action. This includes postings on internet social networking sites (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.)

Students are expected to demonstrate and embrace the following principles:

- Be responsible for their own learning and clinical practice and honor other students' right to learn and be successful in academic and clinical environments.

- Demonstrate respect in verbal and non-verbal behaviors to all others in clinical and academic settings. The use of abusive language or disruptive behavior directed toward faculty, staff, or other students will not be tolerated.
- Provide safe, competent care, seeking assistance when personal knowledge and/or skill are not adequate. Avoid use of any substances that would impair clinical ability or judgment.
- Provide the same standard of care to all patients and families regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sexual preference, disability, religion, economic status, employment status, or the nature of their health problem. Accept that others have the right to their own cultural beliefs and values and respect their choices.
- Document in a thorough, accurate, truthful, and timely manner data that reflects findings from one's own personal assessment, care, interventions, teaching, or the patient's and/or family's response to those activities.
- Act in a manner that contributes to the development and maintenance of an ethical educational and practice environment. Recognize that the primary commitment in clinical practice is to the patient and that respectful interactions are expected.
- Complete legally required HIPAA training and University or clinical site requirements regarding confidentiality prior to the beginning of the academic year. Use patient data in all schoolwork, papers, presentations, research findings and in the clinical setting in a manner that is accurate, truthful, and confidential.
- Refrain from unauthorized use or possession of college or clinical setting's equipment, patient's belongings, or items dispersed or intended for patient use.

Students may purchase the [Code of Ethics for Nurses](#) by contacting the American Nurses Association Publishing Company.

## Disciplinary Penalties for Violation of Professional Code of Conduct

One or more of the following penalties may be assessed for violation of any provision of Academic Integrity and Honesty, Code of Conduct, or CON professional standards policies:

- Written reprimand
- Financial restitution for any property damage or for any property destroyed or taken and not returned
- Grade adjustment
- Special remediation report or community service project based on the nature of the offense, to be determined by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. The ADAA shall set a reasonable date for completion of the project or report.
- Disciplinary probation for a definite period of time
- Suspension for a definite period of time
- Revocation of academic credit, requiring repetition of course work

- Dismissal
- Bar against readmission
- Denial of degree
- Revocation of degree and surrender of diploma

Disciplinary probation, suspension, dismissal, bar against readmission, denial of degree and revocation/surrender of degree will be recorded on the academic transcript.

## Reporting Violations

The Texas A&M Office of the Dean of Student Life has primary jurisdiction over reports of behaviors that implicate rules contained in the Student Code of Conduct. For rules and regulations governing the Student Conduct Code, see Student Rule 24. The CON has primary jurisdiction over reports of behaviors that implicate the Professional Standards of the academic program as outlined by the Professional Code of Ethics and Clinical Expectations.

Violations of professional standards should be reported in writing to ADSA by the reporting party within 10 business days of the violation. The ADSA will investigate the complaint.

## Procedures for Handling Uncontested Case Investigations

If it appears that a student has breached CON rules or procedures in such a way that there is a reasonable concern that injury or harm may come to patients, faculty, staff, students or the facility, interim disciplinary action may be taken in the best interest of the individuals involved and the CON. Such action may result in written notification up to and including immediate suspension of the student pending final disposition of the case.

If, after full investigation, the complaint turns out to be founded and the infraction warrants removal from participation in any part of the curriculum, suspension, dismissal from the CON, bar from readmission, denial of degree, revocation or surrender of a degree, ADAA will apply one or more disciplinary penalties.

If the student does not contest the facts of the incident, they must sign a written admission that the violation took place and that the facts reported are accurate. This admission will be recorded by the ADAA as a disciplinary infraction and the disciplinary action will be imposed. The student has the right of appeal to the Dean in writing within ten (10) university business days for penalty only. In these cases the Dean's decision is final.

## Procedures for Handling Contested Case Investigations

If an incident cannot be handled as an uncontested offense, the CON has two (2) options of addressing the case: 1) refer the case to the Aggie Honor System Office for reported violations of the Aggie Code of Honor and/or, 2) initiate formal procedures to review the case as outlined in this section upon the written request of the student. The request should be sent to the professor (if course related) and the ADSA.

The ADSA shall investigate the allegations that a student has violated one or more of the rules of the CON.

1. If the allegations are determined to be of a minor nature that can be handled informally

without initiation of disciplinary proceedings, the person filing the complaint, the student, and the Dean will be informed of this decision.

2. If the investigation reveals that the evidence presented substantiates a likely breach of professional conduct, the ADSA will initiate a hearing. The ADSA shall prepare a written notification to the student to be either hand delivered, with written acknowledgement of receipt, or sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, containing the following:
  - a statement of the charge(s) against the student with a description documenting the violation(s)
  - a statement of the date, time, and place of the hearing on the charges. Normally, the hearing will be held not less than 10 business days or more than 21 business days from the student's receipt of the letter. Exceptions to this time frame require the party requesting to show good cause.
  - a statement which informs the student that the student may choose to appear at the hearing or waive that right in writing.
  - a list of the witnesses furnishing the evidence supporting the charge(s).
  - a request that the student provide to the Committee a list of witnesses, legal counsel, or others that will be in attendance 24 hours before the scheduled date of the hearing.
  - a FERPA waiver form to be signed by any parties that attend at the request of the student.
  - a copy of the procedural guidelines for due process.
  - a listing of potential penalties if the student is found guilty.

## Disciplinary Hearing

The Student Appeals Committee shall be an ad hoc committee consisting of faculty and student members; a faculty chair will be selected by the committee members. The ADSA will also serve as a non-voting member. A faculty member who is directly or indirectly involved in a particular case will be automatically excused from the committee and replaced by a substitute faculty member. The disciplinary hearing will follow these guidelines:

- The date of the hearing must be set, at the earliest, ten (10) university business days following student receipt of the written statement of the charges against them but no longer than 21 university business days following receipt, unless agreed to by both the student and the committee.
- All meetings, investigations, proceedings, and hearings conducted under the provisions of this document shall be confidential. Faculty and students on the panel will sign a confidentiality agreement.
- The ADSA and/or the ADAA will present the case to the committee by stating any pertinent evidence along with an explanation of the investigative process. The ADAA/ADSA will address any questions the committee or the accused has in regard to the evidence or the investigation process.

- The CON has the burden of presenting the evidence and proving the charges by a preponderance of evidence. Evidence, to be admissible, need not meet the standards of admissibility established by the rules of evidence.
- The student has the right to be present at the hearing and may question witnesses.
- The student has the opportunity to present their version of the facts through personal statements, affidavits or witnesses.
- The student may have legal counsel present to provide advice but cannot question or interview other participants in the proceedings.
- The student may request a transcript or a copy of the recording of the hearing.
- The Committee may question the student and will summon, present and reasonably question all witnesses.
- All decisions by the Student Appeals Committee shall be secret ballot and majority rule.
- The Committee shall make a decision of guilty or not guilty based solely on the evidence presented at the hearing.
- The decision of the Committee will be provided in writing to the student and the Dean within three (3) university business days of the hearing.

## Right to Appeal

1. Within ten (10) university business days after the student has been notified of the decision, the student may appeal the decision of the Committee to the Dean.
2. The appeal must be in writing and specifically state the reason for the appeal and what action by the Dean is sought.
3. The Dean may approve, reject or modify in whole or in part, the decision and/or assessed penalty in question. Should the Dean choose to reject or modify the decision in question, he or she will clarify the position to the appropriate parties.
4. In these cases, the Dean's decision is final.
5. Within 10 business days after notification by the Dean of an adverse decision, the student may appeal the decision of the Dean to the Provost only on grounds of procedural due process.

## False Alarm/Reporting Penalties

Recent legislative changes established new penalty provisions for an offense committed under Section 42.06, Penal Code, of making a false alarm or false report involving a public or private institution of higher education. As of September 1, 2013, an offense committed under this section is a Class A misdemeanor, punishable by a fine of up to \$4,000 and a jail term not to exceed one year. However, it is considered a state jail felony offense if such a false report or false alarm relates to an emergency involving a public or private institution of higher education or involving a public primary or secondary school, public communications, public transportation, public water, gas, or power supply or other public service. A state jail felony is punishable by a fine of up to \$10,000 and a jail term from 180 days to two

years.

# Chapter 9: Student Life

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## Community Service Opportunities

In conjunction with the CON goal to assist students in serving the community as new healthcare providers, leaders and consultants, students are encouraged to participate in community service events/opportunities. On occasion students may receive a limited number of clinical credit hours for their participation. Instructors will identify these opportunities and students will be required to provide in writing details of the event.

The advisor or another CON faculty member must be present at all times at special events that might include or lead to nursing interventions, i.e. patient assessment or patient care. Teaching activities may be provided in community settings without an advisor or CON faculty present if approved by the advisor.

## Recreation Center

Students in Bryan/College Station will be allowed to utilize the [Texas A&M University Recreation Center](#) located on the main campus of Texas A&M University. Opened in 1995, it remains one of the premier recreational facilities in the nation. The Student Rec Center provides an outlet to help clear your mind, stay in shape and recharge your spirit. Whether you are interested in aerobics or body building, swimming or volleyball, rock climbing or simply running, you will find it all at the Student Recreation Center.

Students at other campuses or those taking distance education classes will not be assessed the Recreation Center fee; therefore, they are not eligible to utilize the TAMU Rec Center.

Students are encouraged to utilize local facilities to promote health and well-being.

## Sports Pass/Ticket Options

All students will be given the option of purchasing a ticket package to Texas A&M University sporting events. This option will be available during fall registration and, if requested, cost of the tickets will be added to the tuition and fee statement. Students must have a Texas A&M University identification card to use a sports pass.

## Student Participation in Committees

Students can serve on various [CON committees](#) by election from the student body or through appointment. Student input, feedback, and vision is extremely valuable in guiding curriculum, academic policy, and program evaluation and effectiveness. Interested students should contact the ADSA.

## Student Organizations

Each nursing student is encouraged to actively participate in professional organizations to enhance the educational experience, to further develop personal growth and professional identity as well as to facilitate communication and camaraderie among fellow students.

Officers of student organizations must maintain a 2.5 grade point average in order to continue in their position(s). If their grade point average falls below a 2.5 they must withdraw from their position. A

student may not serve as an officer during a year that is repeated or modified.

A list of recognized College of Nursing student organizations can be found on the [CON website](#).

## New Student Organization Recognition and Approval Process

All student organizations wishing to be affiliated with the CON, acknowledged as an official student organization, and a recipient of all rights and privileges afforded formal student organizations within the college must be reviewed and approved. All official student organizations affiliated with the CON must demonstrate both in purpose and actions consistency with the mission and vision of the CON. In addition, official student organizations must follow CON and A&M System regulations and codes of conduct. Finally, all official student organizations affiliated with the CON must successfully proceed through the formal student organization recognition process through the TAMU Student Activities organization unless a waiver is granted by the approving entities.

Student organizations that are not fully approved and recognized as official student organizations within the CON may not use the College's name or resources in any way in the execution of their organization's business. The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for providing additional information and assistance to anyone considering proposing a new official student group within the CON.

**Required Documentation for Proposal:** Any group interested in being recognized as an official student organization within the CON, must submit a proposal including information on the following:

- the purpose and mission of the proposed organization;
- proposed activities of the organization;
- needs and interests among the student body the proposed organization will fulfill that are not currently being met by another official student organization within the CON;
- estimated membership and membership criteria;
- signature of at least one CON faculty member willing to serve as the organization's faculty advisor

**Required Review and Approvals for a New Student Organization:** In order to secure the requisite approval and recognition as an official student organization within the CON, the proposal (see above) must be reviewed (and documented) by the following entities (in the order indicated):

- CON Student Policy and Scholarship Committee
- CON Dean

Once reviewed by these entities, the proposed student organization is free to proceed through the final stages of the TAMU Student Organizations recognition process. Once approved and fully recognized by the Office of Student Activities at TAMU, the organization must submit its constitution and bylaws to the Office of Student Affairs in the CON.

## Honor Societies

### Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society



Phi Iota Chapter is the CON chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. This organization recognizes outstanding scholarly achievements of nurses worldwide. It exists to recognize superior achievements in nursing, encourage leadership development, and foster high nursing ideals of the profession. Sigma Theta Tau currently has over 500 chapters and more than 135,000 members in 90 countries. Colleges and universities across the United States with accredited nursing education programs which grant baccalaureate and higher degrees have chartered chapters.

On May 15, 2011, the College of Nursing's Phi Iota chapter was named as a new charter chapter in Sigma Theta Tau International. This chapter is active in bringing together nursing students and professional nurses in the area. Nursing undergraduate and graduate students as well as nursing professionals may be inducted into the organization. Eligible students will be invited for membership during the fall term with induction in the spring.

Criteria eligibility for the undergraduate student:

1. Have completed at least one-half of the nursing curriculum
2. Have a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale (calculated from 58 hour prerequisites along with grades earned from nursing curriculum)
3. Rank in upper 35% of graduating class
4. Meet the expectation of academic integrity and professional leadership potential

## Other Leadership Opportunities

### College of Nursing Ambassadors

College of Nursing Ambassadors serve as official student representatives for CON recruitment activities, former student and community events, CON ceremonies, and special events. During prospective student visits and other CON events, Ambassadors lead tours of the Clinical Learning Resource Center.

## Interprofessional Organizations

There are many other student organizations with healthcare focus within TAMU. Some organizations have leadership representation from all Health Science Center colleges. Examples include: Healthcare Professionals for Life, Global Health Outreach, One Health. To find other organizations, go to the [Texas A&M Student Activities webpage](#).

# Chapter 10: Graduation and RN Licensure Information

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## Graduation Requirements

In order to qualify for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, each student must fulfill the following:

- Complete the nursing curriculum with a grade of C or better in all nursing coursework and a minimum 2.0 (on a 4.0 scale) cumulative grade point average,
- Successfully complete the Core Curriculum for TAMU if not met in previous coursework or conferred degree,
- File an application for degree through the *Howdy* portal by the designated deadline
- Pay any associated graduation fees

Provision will be made for pre-licensure BSN students to retake the program comprehensive HESI exam up to three times, if needed, to obtain a passing grade. Should the student need to retake the exam, see the NURS 430: Transition into Professional Practice course syllabus for more information.

All graduates must complete the following:

1. Foreign Language Requirement. This graduation requirement can be satisfied by the satisfactory completion in high school of two units of the same foreign language or one year of the same language at the college level. Students who wish to demonstrate foreign language proficiency without taking acceptable high school or college courses may do so through the existing credit by examination process. In cases where students wish to demonstrate proficiency in a language not taught at Texas A&M, the following procedures require a request for exam from the Head of the Department of Hispanic Studies or the Head of the Department of International Studies. All arrangements shall be made and fee paid by the student. American Sign Language may be used to fulfill the requirement.
2. Writing Course Requirement. The requirement may be met by taking two writing (W) or one writing (W) and one oral communication (C) course. This may not be met by any course listed as a University Core Curriculum communication requirement nor through credit by exam. Nursing courses that currently meet these requirements include NURS, 411, 424, 461 and 467. All Trad, SD, and RN to BSN students should have taken 2 of these courses as part of your curriculum.

## Graduation Commencement

As students enter their final semester, the Office of Student Affairs will provide information to graduating students. Commencements will vary depending on the track to which the student is enrolled. Students must complete the application for graduation by the deadline in order to participate in the commencement ceremony. The Registrar's website provides details on this process.

To be eligible for graduation with honors, a student seeking a baccalaureate degree must enroll in and complete a minimum of 60 semester hours at TAMU preceding graduation and have a grade point ratio at this institution equal to or greater than that required for the appropriate category of honors. Course credit received by examination, and courses reserved for graduate credit only, are excluded from the calculation of the number of hours and the grade point ratio for graduation with honors.

RN to BSN students are not eligible to earn University honors due to the fact that they earn only 30 semester credits.

No upper division student found responsible for misconduct may receive Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, or Summa Cum Laude honors at graduation. Upper Division status is defined as having earned 60 or more credit hours (including transfer hours and advanced placement credits) on the date of the violation. This sanction is automatic upon a finding of academic misconduct, and is imposed without regard to the severity of other sanctions imposed by either the instructor or the Honor Council.

Categories for honors shall be designated as follows:

- Summa Cum Laude: A student may be graduated “Summa Cum Laude” with a grade point ratio of 3.90 or above.
- Magna Cum Laude: A student may be graduated “Magna Cum Laude” with a grade point ratio range of 3.70 through 3.899.
- Cum Laude: A student may be graduated “Cum Laude” with a grade point ratio range of 3.50 through 3.699.

Stoles for honor graduates will be distributed during line-up before graduation. These stoles may be kept by the graduate after the ceremony.

These honors designations do not require participation in any honors courses. Students who have taken honors courses may also qualify for [university-level designations](#). Students may contact Honors and Undergraduate Research at 845-1957 or by email to [honors@tamu.edu](mailto:honors@tamu.edu) for details about these additional designations.

Grade point averages used to determine Latin honors designations are calculated during the final degree audit the day before the graduation ceremonies and include hours and final grades in courses taken during the graduation semester. Latin honors designations will not be changed after the final graduation clearance deadline. [TAMU Student Rules](#) specify certain credits that are excluded from the calculation.

## CON Recognition Ceremony

The CON will hold a separate ceremony from Commencement during which students will receive their baccalaureate nursing college pin and student awards will be given. This event is typically held on the same day as Commencement.

## RN Licensure

The practice of nursing is controlled by state law. In the interest of public safety, state licensure is required to be employed as a professional nurse and to use the designation registered nurse or RN. Criteria for licensure include: graduation from an accredited program of professional nursing education, demonstrating good professional character, successfully completing the Jurisprudence Exam and the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN). Good professional character is confirmed through a criminal background check and a strong record of academic integrity. More information may be found on professional character, standards of nursing practice and unprofessional conduct by reviewing the [Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations Rule 213.27-213.30 and Rule 217.11 – 217.12](#).

Each student will be provided with the Nursing Practice Act textbook during their first semester with content incorporated in the following courses: NURS 305 and NURS 430. The Jurisprudence exam will be given in the final semester in The Transition to Professional Practice course (NURS 430). A list of the requirements for licensure of graduates of nursing education programs within the United States may be found in Rule 217.2 Licensure by Examination for Graduates of Nursing Education Programs within the U.S., its Territories or Possessions of the Texas Administrative Code for the Texas Board of Nursing. Eligibility for taking the licensure exam is determined by the [TBON](#). Requirements are described in the following documents which are accessible from the TBON website.

1. Articles 301.252, 301.257, 301.452 to 301.469 of the *Nursing Practice Act Texas Occupations Code*
2. Rules 213.27, 213.28, 213.29, 213.30, 213.33 and 217.11 and 217.12 of the *Rules and Regulations Relating to Professional Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice*

TBON may refuse to approve persons to take the licensure examination, may refuse to issue or renew a license or certificate of registration, or may refuse to issue a temporary permit to any individual who has been:

- Convicted of a felony, a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, or engaged in conduct resulting in revocation of probation imposed pursuant to such conviction (Rules 213.28. Licensure of Persons with Criminal Convictions),
- Addicted to or treated for use of alcohol or any other drug within the past five years (Rules 213.29. Criteria and Procedure Regarding Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness (b) (1),
- Diagnosed with, treated or hospitalized for mental illness within the past five years (Rules 213.29. Criteria and Procedure Regarding Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness (b) (2).

See more information below regarding the students' right to petition TBON for a Declaratory Order of Eligibility.

Applicants registering for the NCLEX and applying to the state board for licensure in Texas will be required to submit fingerprint cards for the Department of Public Safety and Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal background checks and must attest to the truth of the statements listed on the licensure application. Disclosing criminal background, mental illness and substance or alcohol abuse is required. If the student submitted to the TBON background check prior to entry into the CON, they will not be required to repeat this process. Failure to meet TBON deadlines or those deadlines from other states will delay the licensure process. Students applying for licensure in other states are responsible for contacting those states' Board of Nursing for an application packet at the beginning of the semester of graduation and fulfilling any necessary requirements. The ADSA will assist currently enrolled pre-licensure students with the licensing application process.

## Licensure Discloser

Professional licensure/certification requirements vary from state to state, which may affect a student's ability to apply for a professional license/certification upon the completion of the program. The U.S. Department of Education regulation, [34 CFR 668.43 \(a\) \(5\) \(v\)](#), requires an institution to disclose whether the program will fulfill educational requirements for licensure or certification for each state. Persons wishing to be employed as an RN in another state should contact the appropriate state licensing agency in their state or the state where they intend to work to seek the most up-to-date information about state licensure/certification requirements before beginning the program.

Program	Meets state or US territory requirements	Does not meet	Determination has not been made
BSN	TX, AL, AK, AZ, AR, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, ID, IL, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MS, MO, MT, NE, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, NC, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV, WI, WY, District of Columbia (DC), Virgin Islands (VI), American Samoa (AS), Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), Guam (GU)		Puerto Rico (PR), Marshall Islands (MH), Federated States of Micronesia (FM), Palau (PW)

## Declaratory Order of License Eligibility

TBON has identified certain circumstances that may render a potential candidate ineligible for licensure as a registered nurse in the state of Texas. TBON provides individuals the opportunity to petition the Board for a Declaratory Order as to their eligibility in accordance with Article 301.257 of the Nursing Practice Act. A Declaratory Order is required if there is any history related to criminal activity, alcohol/substance abuse, or mental illness. It is the student's responsibility to read and respond, if needed, to the Order. Failure to file the Order with the TBON in a timely manner could prevent the student from being eligible to sit for the NCLEX.

## Nursing Jurisprudence Exam (NJE)

Effective September 1, 2008, a passing grade on the Nursing Jurisprudence Exam is required by TBON of all applicants for initial licensure. Under the terms of a recent amendment to Board Rule § 217.17, initial licensure applicants will be tested regarding their knowledge of board statutes, rules, position statements, guidelines, disciplinary sanction policies, frequently asked questions, and other resource documents accessible on the board's web page relating to the regulation, licensure, and practice of nursing under the following categories:

- Nursing Licensure and Regulation in Texas;
- Nursing Ethics;
- Nursing Practice;
- Nursing Peer Review; and
- Disciplinary Action.

Content for the NJE will be presented throughout the nursing curriculum with emphasis in Transition to Professional Practice (NURS 430) during which successful completion of the exam will be required. Students may repeat the exam if they do not score a 75 on the first attempt. There is no cost to the student for the exam.

## National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN)

The NCLEX-RN examination is a computerized national examination designed to test knowledge,

skills, and abilities essential to safe and effective practice of nursing at the entry level. Candidates who receive a passing level on the NCLEX may use the legally protected title, Registered Nurse, and are entitled to practice nursing with the scope of practice of the Registered Nurse.

Information on licensure will be given to students in the semester prior to graduation by the Office of Student Affairs.

The NCLEX is administered through Pearson VUE, a third party vendor who administers the exam. It is recommended that students register with Pearson Vue one (1) month prior to graduation or applying to the Board to take the NCLEX examination. [Register](#) for the NCLEX examination with Pearson VUE. For more information on the NCLEX, please go to [National Council of State Boards of Nursing \(NCSBN\)](#).

# APPENDIX A

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## Academic Success Plan for Nursing Students

This plan will assist students who have been unsuccessful in meeting the requirements for testing within a course. Each student is required to meet a minimum benchmark of >850 on HESI exams and >70% on non-HESI course exams.

Students are responsible for developing their own success plan using all available resources including but not limited to: faculty and academic support specialist recommendations, supplemental materials or instruction, case studies, HESI and NCLEX style test questions, exam question rationales, and HESI Exam student reports. Students may decline participation in the Academic Success Plan using a written Opt Out form.

### Exam 1:

If the student exam score falls between 800-865/68-73% on the first course exam, the student is responsible for completing an *Academic Success Plan - Short Form* and submitting the form in writing or on-line to the course lead faculty member before or at the next scheduled class meeting.

If the student exam score falls at or below 800/67% on the first course exam, the student must contact and schedule an appointment with the course lead faculty member or designee before the next scheduled class meeting. Appointments can be made based upon the faculty schedule and can be conducted via telephone, Zoom, or in person.

Together, the student and faculty will complete the *Academic Success Plan - Short Form* including recommendations for future exam preparation and mastery of course content. The student may be referred for evaluation by the Academic Support Team. All referrals will be reviewed by the Academic Support Specialist and may require additional meetings with faculty or the Academic Support Team.

### Exam 2 and beyond:

If the student exam score falls below passing 850/70% on any subsequent exam in that semester OR the student exam average is below 850/70%, the student must contact and schedule an appointment with the course lead faculty member or designee before the next scheduled class meeting. Appointments can be made based upon the faculty schedule and can be conducted via telephone, Zoom, or in person. Together, the student and faculty will complete the *Academic Success Plan – Long Form* including recommendations for future exam preparation and mastery of course content. The student will be referred for evaluation by the Academic Support Team. All referrals will be reviewed by the Academic Support Specialist and may require additional meetings with faculty or the Academic Support Team. Additional assignments or meetings may also be required for content mastery. The student will identify issues associated with overall success and work with faculty or the Academic Support Team members to reduce or eliminate barriers.

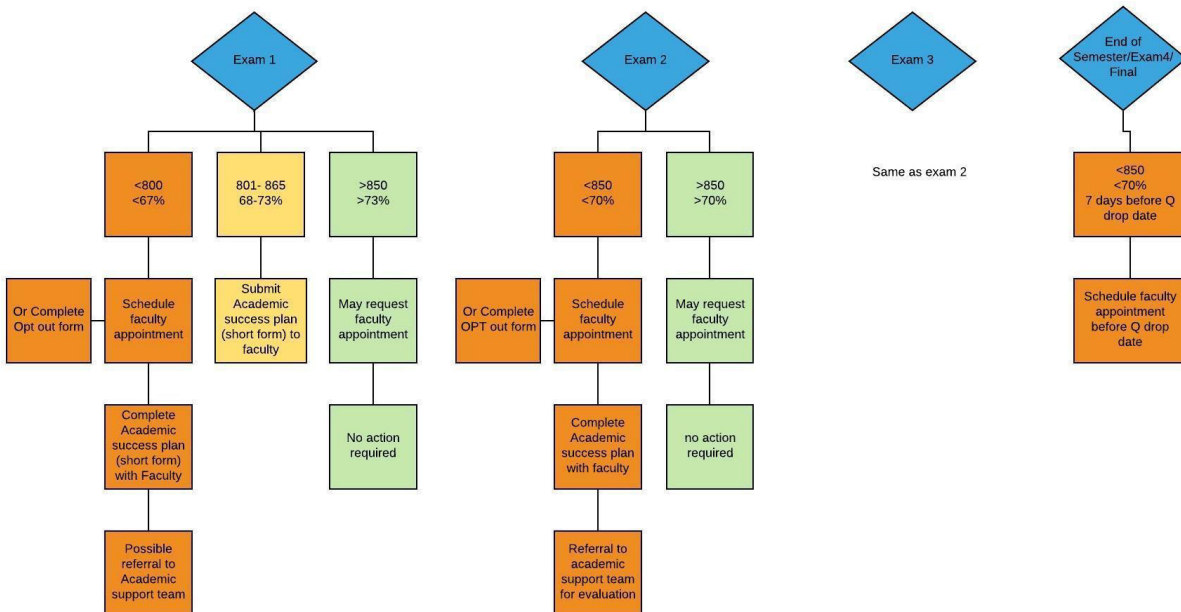
### End of semester: Exam 4/Final exam:

If the student's exam average is below 850/70% in the 7 calendar days before the Q- Drop date, the student must contact and schedule an appointment with the course lead faculty member or designee before the Q-Drop date to discuss academic options for course success.

**NOTE:**

*The plan for academic success applies to all courses except N430 which has specific guidelines associated with the Exit HESI.*

*This document is also available in eCampus with course syllabi.*



Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of information in this publication. Nevertheless, the College of Nursing reserves the right to change without prior notice: admission and degree requirements, curriculum, courses, teaching personnel, rules, regulations, tuition, fees, and any other matter described in this handbook. This handbook does not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any student or faculty member and the CON. The CON at all times retains the right to dismiss any student who does not attain and maintain adequate academic performance or who does not exhibit the personal and professional qualifications prerequisite to the practice of nursing.

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