

The University of Texas at Austin
School of Nursing

Undergraduate Student Handbook

2009-2010

Updates to information contained in this handbook will be made to the on-line version on the School of Nursing website (www.utexas.edu/nursing).

2009-2010 Important Dates

Fall 2009 Semester

August 26	Classes begin.
August 31	Last day of the official add/drop period.
September 7	Labor Day holiday
September 11	Last day undergraduate student may add a course except for rare and extenuating circumstances; last day to drop a course for possible refund.
September 23	Last day to drop a course without possible academic penalty.
October 21	Last day a student may, with dean's approval, withdraw or drop a course except for urgent and substantiated, non-academic reasons. Last day a student may change registration in a course to or from the credit/no credit basis.
October 22-Oct. 28	Academic advising for continuing and readmitted students for the spring semester.
October 26-Nov. 6	Registration for the spring semester for continuing and readmitted students.
November 26-28	Thanksgiving holidays.
December 4	Last class day.
December 5-6	UT Fall graduation ceremonies (School of Nursing Convocation TBA)
December 7-8, 13	No class days.
December 9-12, 14-15	Final exams.

Spring 2010 Semester

January 7	Payment deadline for students who registered for the spring semester.
January 11-12	Add/drop for spring semester for students who have registered and paid.
January 13	Registration for the spring semester for continuing students not yet registered.
January 15	Add/drop for the spring semester for students who registered and paid their fees by Jan. 7. Registration for the spring semester for new, readmitted, and continuing students not yet registered; to complete registration, fees must be paid by 5:00 pm.
January 18	MLK holiday.
January 19	Classes begin.
January 22	Last day of the official add/drop period.
February 3	Last day an undergraduate may add a course except for rare and extenuating circumstances. Last day to drop a course for possible refund.
February 15	Last day to drop a course without a possible academic penalty.
March 15-20	Spring Break.
March 29	Last day an undergraduate student may, with the dean's approval, withdraw from the University or drop a course except for urgent and substantiated, nonacademic reasons.

March 29	Last day a student may change registration in a course to or from the credit/no credit basis.
April 14-16, 19-23	Academic advising for continuing and readmitted students for the summer session and the fall session.
April 19-30	Registration for the summer session and the fall semester for continuing and readmitted students.
May 7	Last class day.
May 10-11, 16	No class days.
May 12-15, 17-18	Spring semester final exams.
May 22	Commencement (Official graduation date) School of Nursing convocation (date TBA)

Summer 2010 Semester

May 25-27	Add/drop for the summer session for students who have registered and paid their fees.
May 31	Memorial Day holiday.
June 1-2	Registration for the summer session.
June 3	First-term, nine-week and whole-session classes begin.
June 4	Last day of the official add/drop period for first-term, nine-week, and whole-session courses.
June 8	Last day to drop a first-term, nine-week, or whole-session course for a possible refund.
June 10	Registration begins for the fall semester for continuing and readmitted students who have not yet registered for fall.
June 16	Last day to drop a first-term, nine-week, or whole-session course without a possible academic penalty.
June 23	Last day a student may change registration in a first-term, nine-week, or whole-session course to or from the credit/no credit basis.
July 8	Last class day for first-term courses. Last day to drop a first-term course.
July 9	Registration for students enrolling for second term only
July 9-10	Final examinations for first-term courses.
July 12	Classes begin for second-term courses.
July 13	Last day of the official add/drop period for the second term.
July 15	Last day to drop a second-term course for a possible refund.
July 23	Last day to drop a second-term course without a possible academic penalty.
July 30	Last day a student may change registration in a second-term course to or from the credit/no credit basis.
August 13	Last class day for second-term and whole session courses. Last day to drop a second-term or whole-session course.
August 14	Final examinations for second-term and whole-session courses.

Important University Phone Numbers and Websites

School of Nursing

	www.utexas.edu/nursing
Clinical Affairs Office	512-471-8563; 512-471-8039
Graduate Office	512-232-4701
Learning Center	512-232-4773
Student Affairs Office	512-232-4780

UT Offices

Accounting (Student)	475-7777	www.utexas.edu/business/accounting/sar
Financial Aid	475-6282	www.utexas.edu/student/finaid
Parking	471-7275	www.utexas.edu/parking
Registrar	475-7575	www.utexas.edu/student/registrar
University Police	471-4441	www.utexas.edu/admin/utpd
UT Health Services	471-4955	www.utexas.edu/student/health

Undergraduate Student Manual

Table of Contents

Introduction

Message from the Dean	1
Philosophy	2
Mission.....	5
Goals	5
Objectives for the BSN Program	6

Academic Policies and Procedures

Advising and Registration.....	7
Adding a Class	8
Dropping a Class	8
Changing Majors.....	9
Student Responsibilities and Syllabi.....	9
Honor Code	9
Student Conduct Policy.....	10
Scholastic Dishonesty Policy and Professional Integrity.....	10
Academic and Program Accommodations.....	11
for Students with Disabilities	
Academic Grievance Procedure.....	11
Medications and Calculations Test	12
Information Found in General Information	12

Clinical Courses Policies

Compliance Requirements for Clinical Courses.....	13
Criminal Background Check.....	13
Employment Record Check	13
Professional Liability Insurance	13
Student Module Completion for Clinical Practicum Courses.....	14
School of Nursing Drug Screening Policy	14
Attendance Policy	15
Infectious Disease Policy	15
Guidelines: Contaminated Needle Stick/Hazardous	15
Exposure: Blood Products	
Clinical Errors	16
Uniform Policy and Equipment	17
Use of Personal Vehicles	18
Student Employment.....	19

Support Services

Office of Clinical Affairs	20
Office of Graduate Affairs	20
Office of Student Affairs	20
Office of Student Financial Services	21

School of Nursing Scholarships	21
Army Nurse Corps/ROTC Scholarships	22
School of Nursing Learning Center	23
School of Nursing Learning Enhancement Services	23
University Electronic Mail Student Notification Policy	23
Campus Computers	24
Nursing E-mail Discussion Groups	24
Bulletin Boards	24
Student Organizations	25

The Professional Sequence

Degree Plan (2008-2010)	28
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Licensure

RN Licensure	29
Eligibility for Licensure/Declaratory Order.....	29
BNE Initial Licensure Instructions	30

A Message from Dean Dolores Sands

Welcome. The 21st century will encompass many dramatic changes in American society that will affect nursing: increases in the number of elderly, major technological advances, the rise of newly identified viral diseases and severe repercussions from unhealthy life styles. These changes dictate that the nursing profession increase its ranks. We will need more nurses prepared to practice in hospitals, in community health agencies, in nursing homes and in home health care.

To meet the demand for nurses in the future and prepare nurses of the future, we periodically update our undergraduate and graduate programs to ensure flexible, accessible and unique programs. We offer programs that will transform you into thinking, caring nurses sought by employers throughout the nation. You will be prepared to embrace changes in yourself and the health care system. You will be imbued with a sense of ethics and commitment to the intrinsic dignity and worth of each of your patients and clients.

The faculty who will guide you includes experienced, renowned teachers and researchers who embody the belief that nursing is a noble, honorable profession vital to the public good. Whether teaching students how to give basic bedside care, how to organize and supervise care, or how to improve that care through research, faculty members impart their steadfast belief that “the sole meaning of life is to serve humanity.”

In the 21st century, service professions such as nursing will determine the quality of American life. The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, through its commitments and innovations in nursing education, research, and service, will be at the forefront of the service professions. We are among our nation’s top ten schools of nursing. The School is energized by top-quality programs, students, staff, alumni, and community support. Welcome to our School. Thank you for choosing our School of Nursing and best wishes for your success.

School of Nursing Philosophy

We, the faculty of The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing, present herein our shared values and perspectives so that these may guide us in our teaching, research, and curricular decision making.

As faculty members of The University of Texas at Austin, a major research institution, we believe that the advancement of the profession of nursing depends upon the generation of knowledge through scholarly inquiry and its dissemination in curricula that prepare students for excellence and leadership in nursing and society. The faculty is dedicated to providing an environment of innovative educational excellence to prepare students for a complex and changing world.

As faculty members of a school of nursing, we believe that nursing is a caring health profession, whose practice is built on knowledge, theory, and research. The nursing profession provides indispensable health services to persons, families, groups, and communities. Those services emphasize the promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health in illness or wellness contexts, as well as in health policy formulation. We believe excellence in nursing is achieved by thoughtful use of the nursing process and attention to clients' needs and values. Further, we affirm the intrinsic dignity and worth of every person as a composite of unique genetic and cultural attributes and diverse physical, psychological, spiritual, and social needs.

As health professionals, we recognize the complex nature of health—as a feeling of well-being, as the capacity to perform to the best of one's ability, and as adaptation to varying situations throughout the life cycle. Health care for individuals, communities, and society requires the efforts of many professions. Among health professions, nursing contributes a unique perspective by emphasizing a holistic view of each person within his or her family and community environment. In that context, individuals have the right to participate in decisions affecting their health care and well-being; the right to function at their most independent level, and the right to refuse care or services. Furthermore, specific nursing interventions should take place within a recognized framework of cultural variations and norms.

As educators, we express a firm commitment to excellence within the University and, in particular, to excellence in nursing scholarship. To foster that scholarship, we share with students the responsibility to create an educational climate that reflects democratic attitudes and beliefs, stimulates intellectual inquiry and creativity, and encourages the development of students to their highest potential. As educators, we believe that critical thinking is a core competency of all professional nurses and foster the development of these skills in all of our programs. We, as a faculty, further believe that continued learning throughout a career is essential to maintaining standards of professional competency for both faculty members and alumni. We recognize and value the contributions of our clinical colleagues and collaborative partners in the community who support our missions of education, research, and scholarly practice.

As a teaching faculty within a professional discipline, we believe that degree programs which provide entry into practice, whether at the undergraduate or graduate level, should prepare students to be accountable and knowledgeable members of the profession, and partners with other professionals in planning, delivering and evaluating high quality health care. Recognizing the changing nature of occupations among adults, we support multiple degree pathways for entry into professional nursing. Each must be based on sound educational principles and encourage excellence and leadership in nursing.

Because nursing as a discipline has demonstrated tremendous scholarly growth over the last 20 years, we strongly affirm the belief that nursing education, including baccalaureate, masters and doctoral, is founded on mastery of nursing scholarship. Nursing scholarship involves both the theoretical and research contributions of nursing scholars, as well as processes of research and intellectual inquiry which challenge those contributions. We encourage educational experiences that clarify ethical issues. The baccalaureate program prepares nurses to practice effectively as generalists within the health care system, functioning in roles as providers, designers, managers, and coordinators of care. It provides students with the opportunity to acquire theoretical knowledge and competence in the practice of nursing and an appreciation of professional nursing's historical, present, and potential impact on society. The baccalaureate program fosters the development of professional values and value-based behaviors.

Further, because nursing is a professional discipline, clinical scholarship forms a core within which graduate nursing education takes place. That core includes, but is not limited to, the phenomena of concern to the nursing discipline: person, environment, health and nursing. In master's education, the phenomena are examined in terms of scholarly clinical practice in advanced roles, while in doctoral education the emphasis is on original research and theory development related to nursing phenomena. We support the scholarly development of advanced practice nursing professionals for future leadership roles in the delivery of health care.

In both master's and doctoral education, phenomena of concern to nursing are studied intensively, in a specific area of concentration, and broadly, within the context of nursing education and health care delivery. To be responsive to graduate student's goals, we, as faculty, encourage flexibility about programmatic choices within curricular plans. In addition, to participate fully in the University community graduate nursing students should study scholarly works of those other disciplines that share nursing's broad concerns for individuals in families and communities. As faculty, we encourage educational experiences that assist students to develop skills as critical thinkers and ethical decision makers.

As a community of scholars, faculty members at all levels should demonstrate a spirit of scholarly inquiry in teaching, research, and practice. We wish to be known for our intellectual excellence and our collegial manner in human relationships.

Faculty, alumni, and students contribute educational, consultative, and health services to the community. The faculty believes health policy is an integral part of effecting change in a democratic environment. To that end, the faculty is committed to contributing to the formulation

of health policies at the local, state, national, and international level to optimize health care delivery services.

Lastly, as faculty, we strive for excellence in educational programs that position our graduates for leadership roles in health care settings of the future, able to adapt to and direct a rapidly changing health care environment.

School of Nursing Mission

The purpose of the School of Nursing is to achieve excellence in undergraduate education, graduate education, research, and public service, advancing the missions of the University of Texas through:

1. Preparing individuals at the baccalaureate level to assume roles in professional nursing practice;
2. Preparing individuals at the graduate level to assume nursing roles in advanced practice, public health, administration, education and research;
3. Promoting excellence in nursing scholarship;
4. Advancing the health of the public through developing and disseminating new knowledge about health, health care, and health care delivery through scholarly inquiry; and
5. Providing consultation, health care programs, and health care services in response to emerging and urgent public health needs.

School of Nursing Goals

The mission of the School will be met by working toward these goals:

1. Maintaining excellence in curricula at all levels.
2. Expanding recruitment efforts to enlarge and diversify the pool of well qualified student applicants.
3. Generating research and scholarship that advances knowledge for nursing and health care.
4. Actively recruiting a diverse faculty with a developing or established scholarship record, clinical expertise, whose professional goals are aligned with the mission of the School of Nursing.
5. Foster faculty growth and development.
6. Seeking endowments to support the mission of the School of Nursing.
7. Performing continuous quality improvement to maintain curricular responsiveness to a constantly changing health care environment.
8. Maintaining strong liaisons and creative service partnerships with the health service agencies, other schools and disciplines.
9. Maintaining strong relationships with alumni, community groups, and other support groups.
10. Upgrading facility, library and other resource supports in accord with evolving needs.

Objectives for the Bachelor's Degree Program

The graduate of the baccalaureate program in nursing is expected to:

1. Use critical thinking to integrate knowledge from nursing, biological and behavioral sciences, and the humanities in planning, implementing, and evaluating nursing care;
2. Use critical thinking and clinical judgment within a problem solving process to meet the health care needs of individuals, families, aggregates, and communities in a variety of settings;
3. Accept responsibility and accountability for one's own actions as a health care professional;
4. Participate in the delivery of health care through case management, interdisciplinary collaboration, delegation, coordination, and consultation;
5. Participate in nursing and interdisciplinary efforts to improve the delivery of high quality health care to diverse individuals, families, aggregates, and communities;
6. Demonstrate core professional values to complement continued personal and professional growth;
7. Practice nursing according to professional and ethical standards;
8. Critically appraise and apply research findings to demonstrate evidence-based nursing practice,
9. Examine health policy and its effects on individuals, families, aggregates, communities, and health agencies,
10. Integrate the appropriate use of information and health care technology in nursing practice, administration, education, and research.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Advising and Registration

Advising is required before any student is permitted to register. Lower-division pre-nursing students are assigned a staff adviser whom they may see in the Office of Student Affairs at the School of Nursing (NUR 2.104). Students should meet with their adviser for academic advising prior to the FIRST registration access period for the fall and spring semesters. Specific advising periods will be announced on the web (www.utexas.edu/nursing). School of Nursing course schedules are posted in the Student Affairs hallway at the School of Nursing and on the School of Nursing web-site. Pre-nursing students should contact the Student Affairs Office (232-4780) to schedule an advising appointment. Upper-division nursing students will have group advising to clarify courses to be taken in the next semester and be assigned a faculty career advisor. Upper-division nursing students should contact faculty as needed for career counseling and academic assistance.

Students who have completed a diploma or Associate Degree in Nursing program and wish to pursue the BSN should ask for the ADN-BSN advisor. Students who hold a bachelor's degree in a field other than nursing should seek advising from a pre-nursing advisor to consider the BSN program and from the School of Nursing Graduate Student Affairs Office, to consider the Alternate Entry Master's degree in Nursing.

Upper Division

The upper-division professional sequence is a carefully structured sequence of courses requiring classroom, simulated lab, and clinical coursework. A grade of C or better is required for each nursing course. A student may repeat a nursing course only once. If the student does not earn a grade of at least C upon repeating the course, the student cannot continue in the School of Nursing. If while repeating the course, the student drops or withdraws from the University at a time when the student's performance in the course is considered to be inferior to that required for a grade of C, the student may not enroll in the course or continue in the School of Nursing. No more than two nursing courses may be repeated.

Students who need to repeat nursing courses must make application to the Assistant Dean for Student and Clinical Affairs, and are encouraged to do so as soon as they are aware of the need to repeat a course. They will be readmitted to courses on a space-available basis following the priority system guidelines shown below. Spaces in clinical courses are tightly controlled by both accreditation and clinical agency policies. Therefore, a student who is out of sequence (whether due to illness, course failure, part-time status, or other reasons) cannot be assured of a space in subsequent courses, though every effort will be made to accommodate her/him. To assure fairness for all, a priority system for registration has been developed.

Priority groups for registration in required clinical nursing courses are as follows:

- 1) Continuing full-time students registered during their initial (first access) registration period.
- 2) Continuing part-time students registered during their initial (first access) registration period.
- 3) Repeating students (who were unable to repeat a course for one semester) registered during their initial (first access) registration period.
- 4) Repeating students in the semester immediately following the one in which they failed a nursing course.

Adding a Class

A student may add a class through the TWELFTH class day of a long semester or the FOURTH class day of a summer session provided that the student has obtained all necessary approvals, the student is eligible to take the course, there is space available in the course, and compliance with the quantity of work rule is maintained (see *General Information*). Students wishing to add a course should check with the Student Affairs Office at the School of Nursing and with the department offering the course. Only under unusual circumstances will a student be permitted to add a clinical or skills nursing course after the fourth class day of a long semester or the second class day of a summer session.

Dropping a Class

An undergraduate may drop a course through the mid-semester deadline that is established for each long-session semester or the last class day in a summer term. Please see the current semester *Course Schedule* for the particular deadline date. Drop forms are available from the Student Affairs office.

To drop a course **through the twelfth class day of a long semester or the fourth class day of a summer session**, the student should initiate the drop through the online registration system. For certain courses, however, the drop request may not be accepted by the online registration system. In that case, the student should consult the department offering the course for more information.

To drop a course **after the twelfth class day through the fourth week of classes during a long semester**, the student must initiate the process through the Office of Student Affairs. If the student is allowed to drop the course, he/she receives a *Q* on his/her academic record indicating a drop without academic penalty. Fees are refunded only through the twelfth class day.

To drop a course **after the fourth week of classes through the mid-semester deadline**, the student must have the approval of the instructor and the Assistant Dean for Student and Clinical Affairs. The instructor will assign the symbol *Q* or a grade of *F*. The symbol *Q* indicates that the

student has a grade of at least *C* in the course, that no grade has yet been assigned, or that no academic penalty is in order for compelling nonacademic reasons.

To drop a course **after the mid-semester deadline**, the student must have urgent and substantiated nonacademic reasons and the approval of the Assistant Dean for Student and Clinical Affairs.

Changing Majors from Nursing to a Different College/School

To initiate a change of major, the student must contact the student division of the school or college to which he/she wishes to transfer and obtain the appropriate form and approval. Students who have completed **45 or fewer** semester hours may transfer between colleges or schools if they satisfy all conditions and procedures that apply to students who enter that school or college when first admitted to the University. Students who have completed **more than 45** semester hours must be in good academic standing to qualify for transfer between colleges and schools and meet all the normal prerequisites and requirements of the new college.

Student Responsibilities and Syllabi

Students should watch the School of Nursing home page <http://www.utexas.edu/nursing> for “beginning of semester information.” This will tell you where to locate your syllabi and other specifics for your course.

Please read carefully the policies stated in all nursing syllabi. Each student is responsible for adhering to all of the stated policies. If any student has a question about any stated policy, see the course instructor or the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs.

Honor Code

The profession of nursing has a legacy of public respect and trust. We provide specialized care for the health needs of individuals and the community with integrity, honesty, compassion, and state of the art knowledge and skills. Learning and practicing responsible and ethical professional behavior is a vital part of professional education. The Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities given in the General Information Catalog (Chapter 11) and The University of Texas at Austin’s Honor Code apply to all nursing students:

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Additionally, the School of Nursing has its own honor code:

As a student in The University of Texas at Austin’s School of Nursing, I pledge myself to be honest in all of my student activities including, but not limited to, all of my scholastic work and

interactions with patients, members of the community, faculty, and peers. Furthermore, I will not use any substance prior to or during my interaction with patients that could alter my judgment or ability to render safe care: this includes but is not limited to any use of alcohol, illegal drugs, and prescription or over-the counter drugs that may impair my mental and/or physical abilities required to perform safe patient care. I will disclose to my instructor any violations of the above standards of conduct.

Student Conduct Policy

Students and faculty in The School of Nursing each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and respect and to guide the teaching/learning process. Students are expected to refrain from verbal and nonverbal behaviors in the classroom and clinical that may be distracting to others, such as, but not limited to: arriving late or leaving early, side conversations, text messaging, note passing, surfing the internet or answering e-mail on laptops, and answering cell phone or pager. Students who persistently engage in behaviors that are disruptive to the teaching/learning process may be required to leave the setting. For further information refer to *General Information*, Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities, Chapter 11: Student Discipline and Conduct.

The School of Nursing is a professional school and we often have members of the public visiting our facility; therefore, we require students to dress in a professional manner at all times. There is a very specific School of Nursing uniform policy for clinical settings and within the School of Nursing building we can be a bit more relaxed; however, general rules of dress still apply.

1. Body piercing, other than ears, must not be visible.
2. Revealing clothing must not be worn or, at a minimum, must be covered while in the School of Nursing
 - a. Revealing clothing consists of
 - i. midriff baring shirts
 - ii. short-shorts or short skirts
 - iii. low-rise pants &/or low cut shirts that reveal “cleavage”

Please remember that you are representing the School of Nursing and the nursing profession. As such you are expected to maintain an appropriate level of professionalism at all times.

Scholastic Dishonesty Policy and Professional Integrity

Refer to the *General Information* for information on the Scholastic Dishonesty Policy Sec. 11-802. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and misrepresenting facts. The Dean of Students Office records acts of dishonesty and notifies the School of Nursing of each incident.

In addition to all of the University statements and policies relative to academic dishonesty, the School of Nursing recognizes the strong link between honesty in academic work and

professional integrity. Any act of academic dishonesty, including fabrication of reports or records of interactions with clients, is considered incompatible with ethical standards of nursing practice. **The School of Nursing does not admit students who have a record of violations to the professional sequence. Students who engage in scholastic dishonesty may be subject to dismissal and may jeopardize their eligibility for licensure as a registered nurse.**

Students will have access to confidential medical records and sensitive information regarding the patients, families, and community agencies while providing nursing care as a student. Students must agree to maintain the highest standards of professional integrity with regard to this information and comply with all legal requirements regarding the privacy of patient records. This includes but is not limited to written, verbal, and electronic social-networking transmission of information.

Academic and Program Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Refer to the *General Information* for information on Academic and Program Accommodations for Students with Disabilities or contact the Services for Students with Disabilities office in the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259. The School of Nursing works to ensure that students who have disabilities have equal access to the University's programs and services.

If you have any questions about services or accommodations for students with disabilities, please talk with the faculty member, the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs, or the Assistant Dean for Student and Clinical Affairs or directly call the Office of the Dean of Students, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

Academic grievances at the School of Nursing should be handled by the following procedure:

- 1) Make an appointment with the instructor involved to discuss the problem. Ask him or her for constructive feedback. Use this as an opportunity to grow and improve academically and personally.
- 2) If this effort to resolve the matter is unsuccessful, make an appointment with the appropriate course facilitator [designated by (F) on the list of instructors on the course schedule]. If the course is not a practicum, or the course facilitator does not resolve the problem successfully, discuss the problem with the Division Chair. Tell him or her exactly what you perceive to be the problem. Ask for advice and constructive feedback to resolve the situation.
- 3) If a resolution still has not been found, make an appointment with the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs for clarification of procedures in filing a formal grievance.
- 4) Prepare a written statement of your grievance and submit it to the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs. Clearly state the problem and why you are dissatisfied. Give clear examples or evidence to support your position. The Assistant Dean for Undergraduate

Programs will review your grievance statement and will make a decision in consultation with your instructor and the Division Chair.

- 5) You will be informed of the decision in writing by the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs. Copies of the decision will also be sent to the instructor, the Division Chair, and the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs. If after following all the steps of this procedure you still feel that the problem has not been solved, you may appeal directly to the Dean. It is imperative that you have followed all of the preceding steps and have made a good faith effort to resolve the issue before scheduling an appointment with the Dean.

Medications and Calculations Test

As a prerequisite to medication administration in clinical nursing courses, students are required to pass a medications and calculations test with a grade of at least 90. Calculators may not be used in any medication examination.

Refer to *General Information* (<http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi08-09/index.html>) for information regarding:

- Withdrawing from the University
- Scholastic Dishonesty Policy
- Student Discipline and Conduct
- Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy
- Services for Students with Disabilities
- Grievance Procedures and the role of the University Ombudsman

CLINICAL COURSES POLICIES

Compliance Requirements for Clinical Courses

No later than 30 days prior to the first class day, upper division professional sequence students must submit proof of immunizations, CPR and First Aid certification, a cleared background and employment check, liability insurance, and HIPAA, Environment of Care, and Workplace Violence training to the Student Affairs Office. The Student Affairs Office will review and confirm that each student is in compliance. Students will not be permitted in clinical practicum courses until compliance requirements are met. Students are responsible for maintaining their compliance throughout the semester. Consult the School of Nursing website (www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/compliance_students.html), for the most current requirements.

Criminal Background Check

Students will be required to submit to criminal background checks prior to matriculation in the upper-division professional sequence. Complete information about the background check process is on the School of Nursing website. Pre-nursing students, who have concerns about their eligibility for participation in clinical courses and ultimately licensure as a registered nurse, are urged to seek an eligibility determination from the Board of Nurse Examiners (BON). See information on the BON website about Declaratory Orders (<http://www.bon.state.tx.us>).

Students who have issues disclosed in the background check will be required to seek a Declaratory Order ruling from the Board of Nursing. This process can take several months so applicants to nursing programs must begin the process immediately.

Employment Check

Students are also required to have an Employment Check completed before starting the upper-division program. Information and an application for the Employment Check are posted on the School of Nursing website (www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/compliance_students.html).

Professional Liability Insurance

A specially designated student professional liability insurance policy is required of all students enrolled in the professional sequence in The School of Nursing. Each student must pay the insurance premium at the Office of Student Affairs before he or she begins upper-division coursework. 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.

Orientation Training Modules

Students are required to complete 3 training modules as part of the clinical compliance requirements. The orientation training modules can be located at this web address: www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/compliance_students.html.

Complete the following modules, print the completion certification and bring a copy to the Student Affairs Office:

- Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)
- Workplace Violence
- Environment of Care Test

School of Nursing Drug Screening Policy

Nursing students are expected to comply with regulations of the health care facilities in which they receive supervised clinical training from the faculty of the School of Nursing. They are expected to report to class and clinical experiences in a drug-free, unimpaired state. Nursing faculty are responsible for assuring the safety of patients whose care is assigned to nursing students. Moreover, the faculty are in a unique position to recognize early signs of abuse and dependence and to refer the student to appropriate resources for assistance. If a student's behavior suggests possible abuse of any substance, whether prescribed or not, the student will be removed immediately from the clinical site by the faculty member. The student will be expected to provide documentation of assessment and successful treatment as appropriate prior to being readmitted to clinical practice. Both the nursing faculty and the School are required to report students impaired by chemical dependency to the Texas Board of Nursing.

The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing does not require students to participate in a drug screen. However, the School of Nursing will inform students that they may be asked by a facility (clinical agency) to submit to a drug screen before participating in clinical experiences at their facility. In the case that an agency requires a drug screen, the School of Nursing will provide students with the procedure to follow to obtain the drug screen.

The School of Nursing will post a list of facilities requiring drug screening and will update the list once per semester. Please be informed that clinical agencies can update their policy to include drug screening at any time. Updates will only be made to the list on a semester-by-semester basis.

If a student has a positive drug screen s/he will not be allowed to participate in the clinical component of the course at the assigned clinical agency or any other clinical agency. The student will be required to withdraw passing from all clinical courses. The student may continue in lecture courses if proof is provided that the student is currently receiving treatment. The student must meet prerequisites and co-requisites of any courses taken. Return to clinical courses is allowed only with documentation of assessment and completed treatment. The Student Affairs Office will provide required reporting to the Board of Nursing.

The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing encourages students to assume responsibility for their personal and professional conduct and to seek assistance for substance abuse from various campus resources such as the University Student Health Counseling Center.

Attendance Policy in Skills and Clinical Courses

Students are expected to attend all clinical sessions. This includes classes in the Skills Lab and Clinical Practicum lab days in various clinical agencies and community settings. Failure to appear for scheduled clinical practicum sessions and tardiness are viewed as unprofessional behavior. Students may be dropped from a practicum course or may receive a failing grade for patterns of absences or tardiness. Please consult each course syllabus for the specific attendance policy for each course.

If students find it impossible to be present for a clinical practicum, arrangements must be made with the instructor AND the clinical agency in advance and may result in a reduction of one letter grade from the final course grade.

Infectious Disease Policy

To protect students and patients, students in all clinical courses are asked, not required, to report any infectious diseases they are carrying at the time of clinical placement to supervising faculty. Students should not attend clinical experiences if they are febrile or carrying any possibly communicable disease. Students are urged to consult their clinical faculty.

Guidelines for Nursing Students Following a Contaminated Needle Stick or Hazardous Exposure to Blood or Blood Products While in Clinical Learning Experiences

The faculty and administration of The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing endorse the following: Clinical learning sites include such settings as hospitals, clinics, physicians' offices, patients' homes, schools, learning center simulation labs, and other settings where students may learn and apply nursing care/skills.

Students who have been exposed to needle sticks or to potentially infectious blood or blood products should be evaluated and have treatment initiated within two hours according to established criteria that conform to federal and state law, CDC standards, and University procedures. The treatment/management guidelines are as follows:

Upon receiving a contaminated needle stick or exposure to blood or blood products during clinical, a student should:

1. Report incident immediately to clinical faculty member, charge nurse and agency's employee health office/occupational health office.
2. Wound should be inspected, cleansed and dressed.

3. Student's treatment intervention should be provided within 2 hours of the exposure incident. Treatment may be provided by:
 - University Health Services (UHS) - Call the Nurse Advice line at 475-6877 to arrange appointment within the 2 hour time frame. The Nurse Advice line is available 24/7. If incident occurs after 5PM you'll be referred to either the UHS urgent care clinic or an area provider.
 - Private health care provider – Student should contact health care provider before arriving at the clinic.
 - At this time, if the incident occurs while in a clinical learning experience in one of Seton's facilities, Seton will provide the initial treatment intervention at no cost to students. (St. David's does not cover the cost for this and is unable to accept private health insurance for this care. St. David's will run baseline exposure labs on the source for no charge to the student).

Students are responsible for obtaining their own health insurance and are responsible for the costs of medical/health care assessment, treatment, and follow-up that are not covered by the student's health insurance.

In responding to an incident in which a student experiences a contaminated needlestick or exposure to hazardous blood or blood products, the faculty will:

1. Confirm with the student that all of the above guidelines have been followed
2. Counsel the student as needed regarding follow-up and the most recent CDC protocols.
3. Complete the School of Nursing's "Clinical Incident Report" and deliver it to the Assistant Dean for Student and Clinical Affairs at The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing.

Clinical Errors

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

Uniform Policy (clinical courses)

Students wear white uniform tops with the burnt orange longhorn on the collar and the School of Nursing patch above the left pocket. The pants are burnt orange scrub bottoms with either an elasticized or drawstring waist. UT uniforms are available at Co-op East.

Other notes about uniforms and professional appearance:

1. T-shirts or undershirts worn under uniform must be plain white: long sleeves for cooler winter months is OK, as long as they can be pushed up out of the way during certain procedures and gloving.
2. Public Health and Psychiatric settings usually do not require the standard uniform, but suggest professional street clothes. Students should consult professors in those courses for specific requirements.
3. Lab coats must have the School of Nursing patch sewn on the right upper side, and name tags are always required. Patches can be purchased at Co-Op East.
4. Photo identification nametags will be available through the Learning Center. Replacements or additional nametags will cost \$5.00 each. Name tags must be worn during clinical or when in a clinical agency.
5. A lab coat may be worn instead of the uniform in some situations. A three-quarter length or full-length lab coat is required with the School of Nursing patch. When a lab coat is worn, appropriate professional clothing should be worn underneath. Shorts, low cut tops, t-shirts, shirts with slogans, flip flops and jeans are NOT considered appropriate. In all clinical settings, students must project a professional image and clearly be identified as a University of Texas student nurse (i.e., name tag).
6. Shoes must be all white (white leather athletic shoes are OK as long as they are clean and all white). Heels of shoes are not to exceed 2 inches in height. Socks must be white. Support hosiery is recommended. Clogs and cloth/canvas shoes are unacceptable.
7. Hair must be worn above the collar at all times when in uniform. If hair is long, it must be tied back securely or put up in a manner that prevents it from falling below the collar. Hair must be a natural color (i.e., a shade of black, brown, red, gray, or blonde). You may need to fasten hair back so that it will not drag over open wounds or get in the way of sterile fields.
8. Nails must be short enough to allow for deep palpation of the abdomen without leaving fingernail marks in the client's skin. Artificial nails and nail polish are not permitted in clinical settings.

9. Jewelry must be kept to a minimum. A watch with second hand is necessary. Limit rings to one and it must not have large stones. Remember that hands will be going into gloves, sliding under mattresses and giving care. Small stud-type or small hoop earrings (one per earlobe) are acceptable in clinical. Large or dangling earrings may get in the way and often attract small children and disoriented clients to catch hold and pull them through the earlobe.
10. Body piercings, other than earlobe, must not be visible while in clinical settings.
11. Tattoos must not be visible as they detract from a professional image.
12. No perfume, cologne, or heavily scented lotions or hair spray may be used.

Equipment and Supplies

Instructors will advise incoming students on equipment purchases. There is time during the first couple weeks of class to acquire required equipment. Label all books, equipment, pens, etc with your name.

1. Stethoscope with changeable sizes of diaphragm and bell attachments.
2. Bandage scissors, 5-6 inches.
3. Watch with second hand, preferable with a stretch band and military designations.
4. Straight Kelly forceps (not needed until J2)
5. Black ink pen (hospital charting done in black ink)
6. Penlight
7. Clip Board (optional)

Use of Personal Vehicles

Because clinical experiences are held throughout the Austin area, it is important for each student to have their own transportation during the professional sequence semesters.

However, students are not permitted to transport clients or family members of clients in their own or other vehicles at any time. Malpractice liability insurance does not provide coverage should an accident occur while transporting a client. Students are encouraged to assist the client to make transportation arrangements with family, friends, neighbors, volunteer agencies or public transportation resources.

Student Employment

A student's combined employment and semester-hour load (including clinical practicum hours) should not exceed 40 hours per week in either long-session or summer terms. *NOTE: During the long-session, full-time upper-division students will be in class 6-9 hours and in clinical 16 hours for a total of 22-25 hours a week. Therefore, they should not plan to work more than 15-*

18 hours per week. Likewise, the class, laboratory, and work hours for lower-division students should not exceed 40 hours per week.

During the last semester, students will have concentrated course and clinical hours, making outside work hours impossible, especially during the final month of the program.

Students preparing to become RNs may be employed as nurse's aides, performing functions for which they have been trained by the employing institution and for which the employing institution has a clearly discernible policy either in writing or by precedent, defining the scope of these functions. Any individual not licensed in the State of Texas to practice professional nursing, and who engages in such practice, is doing so illegally and may be prosecuted accordingly. Supervision by a professional, licensed nurse does not provide protection to the student or make the student's actions legal if the student is practicing beyond the scope of a nursing assistant/aide.

Students should be aware that: (1) the School of Nursing assumes no responsibility for their activities as employees of agencies; (2) they are personally responsible and liable for any activity in which they participate while employed; (3) professional liability insurance purchased by students through the School of Nursing is valid only in their student role, not their employment role; (4) individuals who practice illegally may jeopardize their futures since persons who are convicted of violation of the Nurse Practice Act may not be eligible to write State Board examinations and subsequently could not receive licensure. Those who are licensed as RNs may jeopardize their licensure by performing illegal acts.

Students employed in agencies have responsibility, personally and professionally, to engage in only those activities that fall within their job descriptions (i.e., aides). They have a responsibility to refuse to participate in activities which they have not been legally licensed to perform (e.g., giving medications, assuming total responsibility for a division, etc.).

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Sue Walker, Administrative Associate
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Office of Student Financial Services

To apply for federal, state, and institutional financial aid, students must complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*. The *FAFSA* can be completed online at www.fafsa.ed.gov. You are required to report certain biographical, income, and asset information.

The priority deadline for the academic year is March 31. Students who meet the deadline are guaranteed to receive any grant funds for which they show eligibility.

For more information about assistance available through the Office of Student Financial Aid, consult the General Information bulletin or the OSFA web site, www.utexas.edu/student/finaid.

Office of Student Financial Services

3rd floor, Student Services Building (SSB)
100 West Dean Keeton Street
P.O. Box 7758, UT Station, Austin, TX 78713-7758
(512) 475-6282

School of Nursing Scholarships

The School of Nursing awards scholarships to a number of qualified students each year. Preference is given to applicants who are full time graduate or upper-division students. Both financial need and merit are considered when determining awards, and some scholarships require the recipient to meet special criteria, such as an interest in a particular clinical area or residency.

To apply for a scholarship from the School of Nursing, complete the following steps:

- Complete the *Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)*. The *FAFSA* is online at www.fafsa.ed.gov.
- Complete the School of Nursing Scholarship Application (available from the Student Affairs Office and from our web site, www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/scholarships_son.html)
- Write a 1 page typed essay outlining your nursing career goals or why you selected nursing as a career.
- Submit the application and essay to the Student Affairs Office by **February 1**.

The School of Nursing also awards scholarships through the Scholarships for Disadvantaged Students (SDS) federal scholarship program. Recipients must be from an educationally or financially disadvantaged background. Obtain information and applications for SDS scholarships in the School of Nursing Student Affairs Office or on the School of Nursing website (www.utexas.edu/nursing/html/current/scholarships_sds.html).

Occasionally outside organizations will notify us about scholarship opportunities for nursing students. The Student Affairs Office will send e-mail messages to nursing students about these opportunities and will direct students to applications and instructions.

Army Nurse Corps/ROTC Nursing Scholarships at The University of Texas at Austin

The Army Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC) and the UT Austin School of Nursing have agreed to sponsor the Partnership in Nursing Education Program. This program allows a nursing student to enroll in the Army ROTC program and receive a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Degree and a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Army Nurse Corps. Additionally, nursing students are eligible for full Army ROTC scholarship benefits while attaining their degree. For more information contact the Department of Military Science at UT Austin at 232-5397 or e-mail to arotc@uts.cc.utexas.edu

Scholarships are also available through the Air Force and Navy ROTC programs. For more information contact the Air Force Science Department at 471-1776 (e-mail pas@uts.cc.utexas.edu) or the Naval Science Department at 471-7653 (e-mail co@navy.rotc.utexas.edu).

Learning Center

Director

Betty J. Skaggs, PhD, RN

bskaggs@mail.nur.utexas.edu

471-7948

5.102L

Resource Area (Fifth Floor)

Librarian

Nancy Hall, MLS

nhall@mail.nur.utexas.edu

471-7961

Nursing On-line Resources and Research: <http://www.utexas.edu/nursing/nancy/resources.html>

Simulation Area (Fourth Floor)

Simulation Lab Coordinator

Kathy Hansen, MSN, RN

khansen@mail.nur.utexas.edu

471-9062

Learning Enhancement Services

Coordinator, Learning Enhancement Services

Patricia Castañeda-English, PhD

pcastaneda-english@mail.nur.utexas.edu

232-4775

5.102K

The Learning Enhancement Services (LES) program provides academic support through Academic Counseling, Academic Peer Tutoring, Study Skills Workshops, SHINE volunteer program, Peer Mentor program, Seminars for First Semester nursing students, and referrals to campus services. All nursing majors are eligible for these free services. To obtain more information, please contact the Learning Enhancement Services Coordinator or visit the LES website at <http://www.utexas.edu/nursing/les> .

University Electronic Mail Student Notification Policy

Electronic mail (e-mail), like postage mail, is a mechanism for official University communication to students. The University will exercise the right to send e-mail communications to all students.

Every student must provide the University with his or her official e-mail address using the online update form in UT Direct. (The current Web address for the form is https://utdirect.utexas.edu/utdirect/bio/address_change.WBX). The student's official e-mail address is the destination to which the University will send official e-mail communications. It is the responsibility of every student to keep the University informed of changes in his or her official e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in

order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical.

The School of Nursing uses the e-mail addresses of nursing students for the School's e-mail notification system. Important information for current nursing students will be sent via this system.

Campus Computers

Your EID will give you access to any computer on campus and the ones in the Learning Center. Printing on campus computers is charged to your BEVO account.

Nursing E-mail Discussion Group

To subscribe to a nursing electronic bulletin board, where fellow students can discuss nursing issues and related topics, go to <https://utlists.utexas.edu> Click on 'First login ?' to set up your subscription. For additional information:

- Get the handout on Subscribing to the E-mail Discussion Group and follow the steps.
- Ask one of the LC staff or a fellow student to assist you.

Bulletin Boards

Notices for meetings and programs, as well as other announcements, are placed on bulletin boards throughout the building (lounge, elevators, classrooms, outside Student Affairs). Students are encouraged to check the boards once a week. If you wish to post signs on the elevator bulletin boards, check with Nancy Hall in the Learning Center.

Student Organizations

The University of Texas Nursing Students' Association (UTNSA)

The University of Texas Nursing Students Association is a pre-professional, student-run nursing organization. All undergraduate nursing students, including prenursing students, are automatically members of UTNSA and are encouraged to actively participate at the School and on the main campus. The organization provides access to information, aids in communication between SON faculty and students, undertakes community service projects and helps members develop leadership skills. Standing Committees include the Prenursing Committee, the Community Outreach Committee, the Multicultural Committee, the Fundraising Committee and the Social Committee.

Through this organization nursing students are represented at the University's Cabinet of Councils and Student Association and the School's Foundation Advisory Council. There are also undergraduate students on the School's Computer Utilization, Undergraduate Student Affairs, Undergraduate Curriculum and Undergraduate Admissions Committees. Any student wishing to serve on a UTNSA committee should contact the president of UTNSA. In addition to School and University activities, UTNSA is affiliated with the Texas Nursing Students' Association and the National Student Nurse Association and represents the School at state and national student nurses' association conventions.

See the bulletin boards for dates, times and locations of meetings. Also, the organization list serve will be used to notify students of meeting times. Communications to the Association may be mailed to the UTNSA at the School if placed in the UTNSA mailbox in the second-floor mailroom. Ronnie Walker and Dr. Pat Carter are the faculty advisors (rwalker@mail.nur.utexas.edu; pcarter@mail.nur.utexas.edu).

African American Nursing Student Association (AANSA)

The African American Nursing Student Association is a support group for African American nursing students at all levels. The purpose is to provide a sense of community and support to these students. Activities include program meetings with topics of special interest to this group. African American registered nurses in the Austin area serve as mentors. The students also interact with students from local high schools and from Huston-Tillotson College who are interested in nursing careers. All students, faculty and staff are welcome. Meetings are held monthly. Anyone interested in becoming a member may attend. Jan Fox (jfox@mail.nur.utexas.edu) is the faculty advisor.

University of Texas Hispanic Nursing Students' Association (UTHNSA)

The University of Texas Hispanic Nursing Student Association provides leadership and supports academic, personal, and professional development for ethnic minority nursing students at The University of Texas at Austin. To carry out its purpose, UTHNSA sponsors speakers on topics in nursing, encourages camaraderie and peer mentoring among the members, promotes leadership skills, fosters interaction between students, faculty, and the community, and represents Hispanic nursing student interests and issues to School of Nursing administration and faculty. Meetings

are held monthly. Check your email for announcements. All students are welcome to attend. Dr. Alexandra Garcia (agarcia@mail.nur.utexas.edu) and Dr. Patricia Castañeda-English (pcastaneda-english@mail.nur.utexas.edu) are the advisors.

Longhorn Association of Men in Nursing (LAMN)

The Longhorn Association of Men in Nursing was founded to serve as the voice of the male nursing students at UT Austin. With men making up less than 10% of The UT Austin School of Nursing, it is our mission to encourage men to consider a career in Nursing and to address the issues that are unique to male nursing students. The Longhorn Association of Men in Nursing works cooperatively with UTNSA, while devoting the predominance of its focus to issues of importance to the men of the UT School of Nursing and the men in society as a whole. Education is an integral part of health promotion, and this organization addresses issues in men's health in the local community and strives to increase the level of wellness, by stressing disease prevention. As with UTNSA's other two constituent organizations, The Longhorn Association of Men in Nursing does not segregate or subdivide the student body of the School of Nursing. Rather, it strengthens the mission and objectives of UTNSA by addressing the issues of an underrepresented population in the field of nursing. Dr. Graham McDougall (gmcdougall@mail.nur.utexas.edu) is the faculty advisor.

Texas Nursing Students' Association (TNSA)

National Student Nurse Association (NSNA)

The Texas Nursing Students' Association is the statewide organization of nursing students. The organization addresses statewide issues, holds an annual state convention, and sponsors councils for training new officers of the individual school organizations. The National Student Nurse Association (NSNA) is the national organization of nursing students. The organization addresses national issues important to nursing students and also holds an annual convention. Officers for each organization are elected from member schools of nursing, and resolutions and bylaws are passed at the state and national conventions.

These organizations are important because they socialize nursing students into membership and activism in the professional organizations of nursing (Texas Nurses Association and American Nurses Association). Through participation, students learn to become politically active, and they become conversant with the ways in which membership in a professional organization can give them a voice in their chosen profession. Students are encouraged to join TNSA and NSNA.

Sigma Theta Tau International

Sigma Theta Tau International is the honor society for nursing. Epsilon Theta Chapter is the local unit that was chartered May 16, 1980 at The University of Texas at Austin School of Nursing. The purposes of Sigma Theta Tau are to recognize superior achievement, promote the development of leadership qualities, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the nursing profession. Examples of activities include program meetings, conferences and conventions, and awarding of scholarships and research grants. Members receive a monthly journal and other publications as a benefit of membership.

The qualifications for membership include superior scholastic achievement, evidence of professional leadership potential, or marked achievement in the field of nursing. Those invited to membership are selected from: a) students enrolled in the baccalaureate program who have a GPA of at least 3.0, have completed one-half of required upper-division nursing courses, and have demonstrated ability in the field of nursing, b) students enrolled in graduate study in nursing who have completed one grading period of their academic program and have a GPA of 3.6 or higher, and c) registered nurses with a baccalaureate or higher degree who have demonstrated marked achievement in nursing. Induction occurs in the spring of each year. Students completing coursework in the fall semester are encouraged to submit an application form in early December. For other students the date for submitting the form is usually in February. Application forms are available from the information rack outside the Student Affairs Office.

Phi Kappa Phi

Phi Kappa Phi is a national honor society recognizing academic achievement in all fields. It selects members twice each year. Membership is open to students in all departments and schools within the University. To be eligible for membership a student must have completed a minimum of one year (or 24 semester hours) at the University. Seniors must have a total of at least 90 semester hours with a grade point average of 3.75 or above. Juniors must have at least 75 semester hours with a GPA of 3.76 or above. Masters degree candidates must have at least 18 semester hours of graduate credit toward the degree at the University with a GPA of 3.80 or above. Doctoral candidates must have at least 24 semester hours of graduate credit at the University with a GPA of 3.80 or above.

UPPER DIVISION COURSES IN NURSING (2008-2010 Degree Plan)

First Semester Junior Year (16 hours) N224 Health Assessment Skills N325 Adult Health Nursing I N325P Adult Health Nursing I Practicum N226 Mental Health Nursing Across the Lifespan I N127P Clinical Nursing Skills I Practicum N227 Conceptual Bases of Aging N354 Spanish for Health Care Professionals
Second Semester Junior Year (14 hours) N455 Adult Health Nursing II N355P Adult Health Nursing II Practicum N356 Mental Health Nursing Across the Lifespan II N356P Problems in Mental Health Nursing Practicum N157P Clinical Nursing Skills II
Summer 3 (3 hours) N347 Specialized Topics in Nursing
First Semester Senior Year (16 hours) N265 Nursing Care of Childbearing Families N365P Nursing Care of Childbearing Families Practicum N266 Nursing Care of Children & Families N366P Nursing Care of Children & Families Practicum N377 Leadership and Management of Nursing Care N323 Genetics in Health Care
Second Semester Senior Year (12 hours) N275 Public Health Nursing N375P Public Health Nursing Practicum N377P Clinical Care Management Practicum N279P Capstone Preceptorship N278 Synthesis of Nursing Knowledge

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. Three of the criteria for licensure are graduation from an accredited program of professional nursing education, demonstrating good professional character, and successful completion of 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. Persons wishing to be employed as an RN in another state must seek licensure in that state.

Eligibility for taking the licensure exam is determined by the Texas Board of Nursing (BON). Licensure eligibility requirements are described in the following documents:

1. Articles 301.257, 302.252, 301.253, and 301.452 - 301.454 of the *Nursing Practice Act*,
2. Rules 213.27 – 213.30, and 217.11 and 217.12 of the *Rules and Regulations Relating to Professional Nurse Education, Licensure and Practice* (as revised 11/07),

These documents are available on the BON website (<http://www.bon.state.tx.us/>) and students will be directed to these materials upon admission into the program.

Under its rules concerning criminal conviction, chemical dependency, and mental illness, the BON 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. Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness (b) (1))
- Diagnosed with, treated or hospitalized for mental illness within the past five years (Rules 213.29. Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness (b) (2)).

Applicants registering for the NCLEX and applying to the state board for licensure in Texas 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. A criminal background check is required, and is done before students start the J1 semester.

Students having any question at all about their eligibility for licensure should immediately call the BON and request information about the Declaratory Orders Process. Hesitation could delay the licensure application by as much as 6-12 months.

For additional information, write the Texas Board of Nursing, Education Department, P.O. Box 430, Austin, TX, 78767 or see the BON web site: <http://www.bon.state.tx.us/> or call (512) 305-6818.

BON Initial Licensure Instructions

Complete instructions about the process is available on the BON website (<http://www.bon.state.tx.us/>). The Board currently recommends students submit all application materials at least 120 days before completion of the degree program. Application materials include the application and the application fee. Students also must register with the testing service for the examination.