



**VITERBO** UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL *of* NURSING

## **BSN Completion Program**

## **Student Policy Handbook**

2021/2022

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## **BSN Completion Common Course Rotation**

### 18-month Plan

	FALL SEMESTER		SPRING SEMESTER		SUMMER SESSION	
	Session 1	Session 2	Session 1	Session 2	Session 1	Session 2
YR 1	Nurs. 340-3 cr.	Nurs. 353-3cr.	Nurs. 315 – 3 cr.	Nurs. 462-3cr. AND Theology –3 cr.	Nurs. 450 –3cr.	Nurs. 451 – 1 cr. (at clinical site near you) AND Core – 3 cr.
YR 2	Nurs. 472 – 3 cr.	Nurs. 476 – 3 cr.	Core – 3 cr.	Core – 3 cr.	<b>NOTE:</b> The number of Core Curriculum credits needed will be dependent on credits transferred. Generally, students need 6 - 12 credits.	
			Nurs. 481–3 cr. (Ind. Study)			

- Two sessions comprise one semester
- All courses online with the exception of N451 which includes 24 hours of arranged clinical
- Minimum university requirements: 30 credits of upper division, 30 credits completed at Viterbo, and 120 total credits needed to graduate.
- **This is not an individual degree plan; students should refer to their degree audit.** This plan will be modified, by your advisor, to reflect your degree requirements. Degree requirements vary depending on your transfer of credits from other schools.

## **Program Requirements & International Student Requirements**

- Students must show documentation of an active, unrestricted U. S. registered nurse license or it’s international equivalent, **prior to beginning the nursing course in the BSN Completion Program.**
- Students who have graduated from a non-accredited program will be considered individually.
- All students are required to complete the Public Health Clinical requirements, which includes 24 hours of arranged clinical at a site near you. See section, “Public Health Clinical Policies.”
- Students must have the ability to collect appropriate subjective and objective data associated with obtaining a nursing history and performing a physical assessment. The emphasis is on knowing normal findings and normal variations in the healthy adult, well child, and the well elder person as demonstrated by one of the following:
  - Currently completing health histories and physical assessments in your nursing practice.
  - Graduated after 1990 from an ADN program.
  - A course must be completed prior to registering for Nursing 451 – Public Health Nursing: Clinical Application if students **do not meet** one of the previous criteria.

## **Degree Audit**

Please log in and gain access your degree audit. The Registrar's Office uses this to determine that final graduation requirements have been met. THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT. Please make a point of checking your degree audit each semester and notify your academic advisor, if you see any errors or if you have questions about your degree requirements. It is your responsibility as a Viterbo University student to be aware of the requirements for your degree.

## **Application for Degree**

Once your degree audit is in place it is your responsibility to assure the anticipated graduation date is accurate, as it's a computerized determination based on credits. Students must complete the on-line "Application for Degree" in October if graduating in December and in January if graduating in May. **If your coursework for the program is completed in a summer semester, you must apply for the May graduation because students must graduate in a semester in which they are enrolled in courses.**

## **Attendance**

Regularity in attendance correlates positively with success. For online students this includes following the syllabus requirements by maintaining weekly coursework commitments. Because of the compressed time frame for courses, regular attendance is expected. If an absence cannot be avoided then arrangements for makeup will need to be discussed with the respective faculty person. Prior notification does not necessarily assure an excused absence.

Missing more than one week of class in a 7 ½ week online course may result in the student being asked to withdraw and repeat the course. Missing the first week of a course may also result in the student being asked to withdraw from the course.

## **Class Participation**

It is an expectation that students are prepared for class discussion by having preparation work completed which includes reading and other faculty requirements. It is also an expectation that class discussion is always professional and respectful of fellow classmates as well as the instructor. Please see the Viterbo University Student Handbook, under "Code of Student Conduct" for further information, and "Online Etiquette," in the Online Course Policies link in Moodle.

## **Grades**

The students' grade in each subject is determined by the individual instructor based on the evaluative criteria stated at the beginning of the course and/or in writing in the course syllabus. The grading scale for Viterbo University School of Nursing is as follows:

A	94-100%
AB	92-93%
B	87-91%
BC	85-86%
C	80-84%
CD	78-79%
D	73-77%
F	Below 73%

## **Time Commitment**

### **CREDIT HOUR EQUIVALENTS**

Regardless of format, all courses are required to meet the required credit hour standards by a combination of seat time and instructional work. Instructional work could include additional outside reading, group work, service projects, field work, clinical rotations, among other learning activities. Viterbo defines one credit hour as 750 minutes over 15 weeks. In addition, each credit of a course requires that

students spend two hours of work outside of class per week. Minimum class and outside work time are calculated according to this formula:  $(750 + 1800) * \text{the \# of credits of a course} = \text{the minimum number of minutes of seat time and outside work required}$ . The following table illustrates how the instructional time and outside work time requirements should be met *for an undergraduate 2 or 3-credit courses* in each format:

Course Format	Instructional Time Requirements		Outside Work Time Requirements (time spent on outside activities <i>per week</i> )	Total Time per week times number of weeks
	In Class (face-to-face) time <i>per week</i>	Online instructional activity time <i>per week</i>		
2 credit courses partially 7 ½ wk. classes	188 minutes (or 3hrs. 8 min.)  (*1500 min./sem.)	0 minutes (or 0 hours)	450 minutes (or 7.5 hrs.)  (*60 hrs./sem.)	$188 + 450 \times 8 =$ <b>5104 minutes</b>
3 credit courses 7 ½ week partially online course	222 minutes (or 3 hrs. 42 min.)  (*2250 min./sem.)	60 min. (or 1 hr.)	675 minutes (or 11 hrs. 15 min.)  (*90 hrs./sem.)	$222 + 60 + 675 \times 8 =$ <b>7656 minutes</b>
3 credit courses 7 ½ week fully online course	0 minutes (or 0 hours)	282 minutes (or 4 hrs. 42 min.)  (*2250 min./sem.)	675 minutes (or 11 hrs. 15 min.)  (*90 hrs./sem.)	$282 + 675 \times 8 =$ <b>7656 minutes</b>

### ***Methods of Evaluation***

The students will be informed of the methods of evaluation at the beginning of each course. Students are responsible for completing assignments on or before the designated time. Extensions on assignments can be arranged by contacting the course instructor. If an extension is not requested or granted a penalty for late papers may apply according to the policy listed in each syllabus.

The format to be used for all written papers is that which is stated in the current edition of the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association**.

### ***Academic Integrity***

Viterbo Nursing Students will be held responsible for abiding by the Viterbo University Academic Honesty Policy as outlined in the Viterbo University Student Handbook and Planner. The student is expected to earn the course grade independently. Students who exhibit academic dishonesty **may be asked to redo the assignment or may be given a failing grade for the assignment or the course**.

In addition, the School of Nursing asks students to commit to academic honesty and the five core values of the School of Nursing (Caring, Integrity, Commitment, Collegiality, and Wisdom), even in the face of adversity, by signing an Honor Code for each BSN Completion Nursing Course. The Honor Code (see p. 16 of this document) was developed in congruence with the mission and values of Viterbo University.

### ***Code of Conduct***

Viterbo University is committed to maintaining a community environment that supports learning, academic achievement, social development, moral and spiritual growth, emotional well-being, and individual discipline. Viterbo campus community members are responsible for upholding the values of human dignity and world respect emphasized in the University Mission Statement. The purpose of issuing disciplinary regulations is to give students general notice of impermissible behavior and to outline procedures that typically follow such behavior. Viterbo University reserves the right to take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of the campus community (for more information see [Viterbo University Student Handbook and Planner](#)).

### **Formal Complaint Process**

Formal complaints should be written and follow prescribed steps, with the use of [Viterbo Speaks Up](#). The specific student complaints procedure is outlined in the [VU Student Handbook](#).

### **Class Concerns**

1. Talk to the instructor about the concern and try to find a resolution. This step should be taken first.
2. If the situation is not resolved with the instructor, then contact the Department Chair. In communication with the Department Chair, outline the conversation with the instructor related to the concerns and the inability to find a resolution.
3. After the Department Chair is given an opportunity to respond to the concerns and discuss with the instructor, and you feel your concerns have not been adequately addressed, then outline your concerns and your responses from the instructor and the chair to Dean of the school in which the course is offered.
4. The last person in this chain is the Academic Vice President.

At the end of the course, if you are not satisfied with the outcome based on your concerns, you can appeal your grade. The details of this process are found online in the University Student Handbook, and Planner.

### **Withdrawal from Course(s)**

A student shall be permitted to withdraw from courses. However, please know that this may affect financial aid status if dropping below 6 credits. An undergraduate student who wishes to withdraw completely from Viterbo during a semester must contact his/her academic advisor to discuss the decision and complete the necessary paperwork. The Withdrawal form is on the Registrar's Forms web page. Failing grades are recorded for students who do not officially withdraw from the university. Any applicable refunds for courses are prorated according to the deadline dates printed in the class schedules for the fall, spring, and summer terms. A student who wishes to reenter for any subsequent term must complete a reentry application form for re-acceptance. Failing grades are recorded for students who do not officially withdraw from the university.

### **Minimum Cumulative GPA**

A student who does not maintain a 2.5 cumulative GPA may not be allowed to progress in nursing designated courses until the GPA is re-established at 2.5.

### **Student Academic Success Plan**

A success plan may be established if a student is not performing at a satisfactory level at any time during a nursing course. The success plan will outline the expected performance to be achieved by graduation (or a specified date) and may be shared with upcoming nursing faculty. A copy will also be kept in the student's file with the academic advisor.

### **Less than a CD in a Nursing Course**

A non-probationary student who earns a "D" or "F" in a nursing course may be given the opportunity to repeat the course the following semester (if the course is offered). The student will be permitted to take another nursing course pending development of a success plan.

### **Probationary Status in Nursing**

A student who receives a grade of "CD" or below in a nursing course is placed on probation and must earn grades of "C" or better in any repeated courses and in all remaining non-concurrent nursing courses. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the nursing program.

### **Less than a C in N-481 Capstone**

A student must earn at least a C for NURS 481- Professional Nursing Capstone or the student will be required to repeat the course. Only one repeat is allowed.

### **Repeating Courses**

Students may take a course no more than three times. Each grade is listed on the permanent record. Unless the course is repeatable for credit, only the last grade is used in computing the grade point average. Repeating courses may affect financial aid, academic progress, and athletics eligibility. Grades from courses repeated at other institutions to replace grades earned at Viterbo University will not be used in computing the grade point average. Students must seek approval before taking a course at another institution.

### **Re-entry to University and BSN Completion Program**

Former Viterbo students who wish to reenter the University should contact the Registrar for a reentry application form. An application fee of \$25 is required. Students need not resubmit copies of records already on file. However, a reentering student who has attended one or more schools since leaving Viterbo must have official transcripts sent directly to the Office of the Registrar. A student follows the catalog in effect at the time of reentry, and the curriculum requirements contained therein remain in effect as long as the student attends Viterbo on an uninterrupted basis and completes a degree within a period of six years.

### **Readmission to School of Nursing after Dismissal**

An individual previously dismissed from a Viterbo University School of Nursing seeking readmission to a School of Nursing program shall be required to complete the program's readmission packet. The packet shall be obtained from the Program Chair of the respective program. The completed readmission packet will be reviewed on an individual basis by a BSN Completion committee.

### **Change in Sequence of Course Work**

Any change in the sequence of core curriculum and/or nursing courses required for the BSN degree may result in difficulties scheduling course work and a delay in the date of graduation. Effort will be made to assist the student in completion of the degree requirements.

## **NURSING 451: PUBLIC HEALTH CLINICAL EXPERIENCE POLICIES**

### **Clinical Requirement:**

- 24 hrs. RN clinical supervision is required, or approximately three, eight-hour days (days/times to be determined with a preceptor).
- Viterbo University faculty will obtain student placement with an attempt to keep the placement within a 60 mile radius. It is the student's responsibility to formalize the required hours with the assigned preceptor. The student **must have some flexibility** to meet the preceptor's schedule, which may mean taking vacation time to complete.

### **Clinical Placement Requirements - Beyond Viterbo's Clinical Region:**

Students living outside the state of Wisconsin, beyond currently established contracts within the Northeast region of IA, and the Rochester/Winona, MN areas will need to seek an appropriate, desired clinical agency for the required 24 clinical hours. As well, find an appropriate RN (ADN, BSN, MSN, or DNP) willing to precept, providing clinical supervision at all times. The student will be working with the preceptor, as a student of Viterbo University, not acting as a licensed RN in that role. Students will sign any formal paper work as, "student nurse."

- **Deadline:** Students obtaining their own placement must establish this by May 1<sup>st</sup> or sooner
- **Community health agencies may include:**
  - Public Health agencies
  - Home Health agencies
  - Hospice and Palliative care
  - Governmental and non-governmental agencies caring for vulnerable populations.
  - Agencies involved in regulation and policy development for nursing and health care.

- **Placement established:** Once placement has been established and an RN has accepted the role of preceptor, all contact information must be provided to the Clinical Coordinator. Information includes:
  - Agency name and address
  - RN Preceptor name, credentials, state licensed and license #, e-mail, and phone number
  - Agency's Nursing Director or Health Officer name, address, phone, and email

The clinical coordinator will work with the appropriate individuals to establish a clinical contract. In the event that a clinical contract is not agreed upon, the student must secure a new placement, as soon as possible, in order to complete the above described process.

### **Criminal History Search Policy:**

The caregiver criminal background search is conducted and kept on file through Viterbo. Federal and state statutes require that criminal background checks be completed for all persons who provide care for others or who have access to people who receive care. Clinical agencies prohibit placement of students with criminal histories of specific crimes and offenses that have been identified by the State of Wisconsin as bars to employment or licensure (such as abuse, assault, or neglect). Viterbo University School of Nursing requires that all students complete a disclosure statement and submit a criminal history search (criminal background check). A complete criminal background check is required every three years. The School of Nursing requires a disclosure statement every year the student is in the nursing program. In addition, students are required to disclose any arrest or conviction during their tenure in the program. All disclosures will remain confidential and will be analyzed on an individual basis to determine if such an arrest or conviction is "substantially related to" care of clients in an agency. Falsification or omission of relevant information may constitute dismissal from the program.

#### **Procedure for Criminal History Search with positive findings**

1. Reports of positive findings will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the School of Nursing. Students will be informed of positive findings and will be consulted before a decision is made regarding eligibility to care for clients in contracted agencies. Any individual whose background check identifies bars to clinical placement may not be allowed to progress in the program.
2. Only students who have evidence of a criminal record will be notified, either by telephone or letter. A follow-up appointment must be made with the Dean of the College of Nursing, Health and Human Behavior and the Program Chair to discuss the implications for progression in the nursing program.

### **Public Health Agency/Clinical Experience Policies:**

The clinical coordinator is required to contact the agency to obtain clinical experiences. After the agency has given permission, the instructor will notify the student that the appropriate arrangements have been made and that the student will receive further instructions regarding the experience. Some will consist of BSN Completion students shadowing a RN from the agency selected for clinical experience. **Due to liability issues the student will need the agency RN's permission and supervision in order to be able to provide direct care.** According to Viterbo University's liability insurance policy, a BSN Completion nurse is considered a student; this status stipulates that you must be supervised if you wish to give direct care to a client. When charting, you will need to use the designation VUSN rather than RN. The reason for this is you are in a student role and need to identify this by your charting.

- **Attire:** Students are expected to wear casual clothes and a name pin. Please abide by policy from assigned agency.
- **Charting:** Students will follow the assigned agency's policy for charting. The signature should include VUSN.
- **Clinical agency assignment:** Clinical placement will be arranged on the designated clinical class day and located close to the student's residence or class location if possible. On occasion, the clinical day may need to change due to agency needs.



- **Absences:** Any absences require instructor notification prior to the clinical day. The student and the instructor will arrange a make-up day in coordination with the assigned agency.
- **Immunizations:** Current immunization records must be on file prior to the clinical beginning.

**Exposure to Blood-Borne Pathogens:**

The student is responsible for protecting him/herself and all clients by rigorously applying standard precautions in all clinical settings. Students exposed to blood-borne pathogens in the clinical setting will follow the protocol for that agency regarding evaluation and prophylaxis following significant exposure and will be responsible for any expense incurred. If the agency protocol does not cover students, the student will report to the hospital of choice for evaluation and prophylaxis. Students are accountable to report exposure to the person responsible for the clinical experience in the agency and the instructor for initiation into the protocol.

**School of Nursing Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disabilities:**

The Viterbo University School of Nursing supports the Viterbo University Policy and guidelines relating to the non-exclusion of qualified students from college programs solely by reason of disability. To meet the requirements of and to successfully participate in the nursing program at Viterbo University a student must be able to perform skills that are essential to nursing. Needs of students with a diagnosis are assessed and accommodated based on the diagnosis and medical documentation provided to the Disability Services office.\* The applicant to the nursing program and the student throughout the program must be able to meet these requirements even with accommodations.

1. **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** The applicant/student must be capable of performing physical care of the client. This includes but is not limited to, the ability to move and position patients, to perform visual inspection, to differentiate among a full spectrum of colors, to differentiate between various sound, to perform venipuncture, to administer medications, and to read a wide variety of gauges and monitors. The applicant/student must be able to perform and maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
2. **COMMUNICATION:** The applicant/student must be able to gather information relating to the client to observe and describe physical, psychological changes and recognize non-verbal communication. He/she must be able to communicate sensitively and efficiently with clients and their families, and relate intellectually and personable with members of the health care team.
3. **INTELLECTUAL ABILITIES:** Critical thinking and problem solving are demanded of all professional nurses. This requires that the applicant/student possess abilities in logical thinking, measurement, calculation, reasoning, and analysis.
4. **BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES:** The applicant/student must possess emotional health and maturity to participate in the nursing program. He/she must be able to exercise good judgment and to act responsibly and promptly in completing client-related activities. The applicant/student must be able to function effectively under stress, to adapt to changing environments, to demonstrate flexibility, and to be able to function in uncertain circumstances while caring for clients. The applicant/student must be able to tolerate long hours and physically taxing workloads. The applicant/student must be able to demonstrate qualities of integrity, compassion, and skills in interpersonal relationships.
5. **EVALUATION:** The applicant/student may be required to take tests to evaluate abilities to perform required nursing skills.

Viterbo University School of Nursing recognizes its responsibility to prepare competent professional nurses and at the same time incorporate persons with disabilities into its program. With the exception of the abilities specified above, the school of Nursing will utilize technological advances and will be creative in introducing feasible alternative opportunities into the nursing program to follow applicants/students with some handicaps to complete the program.

\*handicapped as defined by the federal government pursuant to ss 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973. 29 USC secs. 706(8), 794; 34 C.F.R.S 104.3

***Graduating with Honors*** (<http://www.viterbo.edu/registrar/honors-policy>)

Honors for the commencement ceremony, are given to those who have applied for graduation by the deadline date and who have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.50 as of September 1<sup>st</sup> for the winter ceremony and January 1<sup>st</sup> for the spring ceremony (spring/summer graduates.) The candidate must also have or be projected to have a minimum of 45 letter graded credits earned at Viterbo University upon degree completion.

***Nursing Honor Society***

Viterbo University School of Nursing is a charter member of Sigma Theta Tau National Honor Society for Nursing. Students meeting the academic criteria for membership will be invited to apply in February of their final year at the University.

***Class Cancellation***

Discuss with instructor, policy will vary according to class.

***Additional Policies***

Refer to the Viterbo [University Student Handbook and Planner](#)

## **School of NURSING PROGRAM**

### **PHILOSOPHY**

We believe nursing is a holistic, caring science. Our core values – caring, integrity, commitment, collegiality, and wisdom – together with our Catholic Franciscan traditions form the basis of a curriculum and learning environment designed to instill a sense of scholarly inquiry, a quest for excellence, and an aptitude for leadership and service in a dynamic healthcare environment. Faculty, staff, and students collaborate in forming an innovative, transformative learning experience while cultivating the importance of diversity, relationship-based care, and a holistic approach to persons.

We recognize the importance of reflection, engagement, and curiosity in developing ethical leaders who embrace sustainability and service. Through a commitment to quality, we strive to provide learning spaces and activities for our students that are grounded in multiple ways of knowing and an evidence informed base to build confidence and competence. We recognize the importance of developing resilience that accompanies participation in self-care practices.

As a School of Nursing rooted in Catholic Franciscan values, we believe that:

**Persons** are biological, intrapersonal, interpersonal, and spiritual beings who develop and interact within families, communities and their environment. Persons have the inherent dignity and worth and the right to autonomy and self-determination in their life choices.

**Health** is a dynamic state of balance between the biological, intrapersonal, and spiritual components of persons, families, and communities. Wellness and illness are the personal lived experiences of health.

**Environment** consists of internal and external factors that influence the health and wellness of persons, families, and communities.

**Nursing** is a healing art and science that assists persons, families, and communities in achieving optimal health and wellness throughout life.

**Professional nursing practice** is built on the foundation of a baccalaureate education, which integrates the liberal arts and sciences with professional knowledge, skills and values. Professional nursing practice in a dynamic health care environment is independent and collaborative.

**Learning** is a lifelong endeavor that is self-motivated, reflective, and active. The processes and outcomes of learning include critical analysis and synthesis of knowledge and experience.

**Teaching** is a creative, reflective and interactive process that facilitates learning. Teaching involves the sharing of knowledge and experience grounded in theory, research, and practice.

**Teaching-learning practices** incorporate active learning strategies, promote critical thinking and clinical judgment, and provide opportunities to develop professional values. Effective teaching and learning take place in an encouraging, challenging, and respectful environment.

## **Viterbo University Mission**

The Viterbo University community prepares students for faithful service and ethical leadership.

## **School of Nursing Mission Statement**

The School of Nursing prepares nurse leaders for professional holistic nursing practice and advancement of nursing knowledge, through the pursuit of wisdom. Faculty create an educational experience that embraces diversity, equity and inclusion within the values of caring, wisdom, integrity, collegiality, and commitment for faithful service and ethical leadership in a global community.

## **VISION**

The School of Nursing will develop nursing leaders whose competence, caring, and commitment to excellence will empower individuals and communities to achieve their highest level of health and well-being.

## **GOALS**

1. Implement a professional nursing curriculum that builds on a strong liberal arts foundation for undergraduate learners and offers specialization, expansion, and/or advancement in nursing practice for graduate and professional learners;
2. provide an educational experience that emphasizes active learning, technology and simulation in a values-based context;
3. create a collegial environment that facilitates the professional development of students and faculty;
4. prepare graduates for professional roles in a dynamic health care environment.

## **CORE VALUES**

### ***Caring***

- We recognize and honor the dignity of students, faculty, and those we serve.
- We strive to interact with all persons in respectful and compassionate ways.
- We strive to create an inclusive environment which honors the diverse life experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds of all persons.

### ***Integrity***

- We accept personal accountability for all we say and do.
- We strive to base our actions on ethical principles and values that flow from the Franciscan tradition.

### ***Commitment***

- We are committed to pursuing excellence in education and learning.
- We are committed to professional development through scholarly activities.
- We are committed to advocate for the health of all persons and for advancing the profession of nursing.
- We are committed to living by the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and ensure that all voices are heard.

### ***Collegiality***

- We recognize and celebrate diversity and contribute our individual talents to our common work as scholars and professionals.

### ***Wisdom***

- We recognize that reflection and discernment are integral to learning and professional growth and are vital for advancing nursing practice.

\*Ethical principles include autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice and veracity.

\*Values include contemplation, hospitality, stewardship, integrity, and service.

### **Undergraduate Curriculum Conceptualization**

Nursing as a healing art and science is grounded in compassionate and faithful human service. For the faculty of the School of Nursing, the seal of Viterbo University depicts the significant themes which are infused throughout the curriculum.

The seal of Viterbo University has four symbols--the cross, a rose, three wavy lines and a torch. Each of these symbols has a meaning for the University. The cross symbolizes Christianity; the three wavy lines indicate the institution's geographic location where three rivers join; the torch of learning symbolizes the primary function of the University; the rose recalls the patroness of the University, St. Rose of Viterbo.

These four symbols, representing themes of spirituality, caring, wisdom and life-long learning, together with curricular emphasis on ethical leadership and faithful service combine to create a unique nurse who at graduation receives the nursing pin containing an imprint of the seal of Viterbo University. The nursing pin, and the symbols represented on it, will be an ever-present reminder of the qualities nurtured within the curriculum and learning environment of Viterbo University.

The first symbol is the cross. The interpretation for the curriculum is one of spirituality, a concept broader than Christianity. Spirituality is defined by the School of Nursing as the lived experience of one's belief, ensuing from a particular center of meaning, bringing a particular quality of energy and holistic awareness to self and others. Spirituality is intertwined and overlaps with caring, which is the second theme represented on the seal as the rose. Caring becomes an intentional action that encompasses the nurse's empathy for and connections with persons, families and communities as well as the ability to translate this intention into knowledgeable, compassionate, sensitive interactions.

The third symbol, the three wavy lines represents the current of learning that is enduring and continuous throughout a lifetime. The curriculum and learning environment seek to provide a taste of knowledge leading to a life-long quest for wisdom, depicted as the torch--the final symbol on the seal. Wisdom is being able to see things in their entirety. Contributing to this ability to envision wholeness is knowledge, an ability to discern inner qualities and relationships, and the capacity to make sound judgments. Wisdom is achieved through a gradual, maturing process nourished and shaped by experience (rev. 2014).

### **Undergraduate Program Outcomes**

Curricular outcomes are the measurable evaluation components that become the guiding statements driving the curriculum to prepare graduates for ethical leadership and faithful service in professional holistic nursing practice. Outcomes of the curriculum are formatted as graduate outcomes, the broad statements indicating behaviors to be observed at the end of the nursing program. Competencies reflective of 2008 Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice by the American Association of Colleges of Nurses are used within the program to identify progress toward the broad graduate outcomes.

### **Outcomes of the Curriculum**

Viterbo University School of Nursing prepares graduates whose competence, caring, and commitment to excellence is demonstrated through professional holistic nursing practice. The graduate has the knowledge and skill to:

- Incorporate effective interpersonal and inter-professional communication and collaboration skills.
- Articulate the direct and indirect relationship of healthcare policy, finance, and regulations.
- Assimilate professional values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice.
- Integrate health promotion, disease prevention, and safety principles for individuals and populations.
- Incorporate an evidence based practice approach to clinical decision making.
- Integrate critical thinking processes in an increasingly complex healthcare environment.

### **Building on Liberal Arts and Sciences**

A liberal education provides the baccalaureate nursing graduate with knowledge, skills, and values from the sciences, arts, and humanities which serve as the foundation and support for the study of professional nursing. General education courses support the nursing student in the attainment of graduate outcomes of the School of Nursing. Courses in the general education curriculum and required core courses either provide a foundation for study in nursing, or add breadth of perspective to nursing courses. In this way, the general education courses are viewed not only as critical in achieving the graduate outcomes, but also important in integrating aspects of spirituality, caring, wisdom and life-long learning.

### **Undergraduate Curriculum**

The core curriculum consists of courses from the humanities, fine arts, natural, and social sciences. As the name implies, the humanities study the human experience as an individual and as part of a family and community. The human community is examined through its communication patterns with courses in literature or composition. A study of history provides an opportunity to explore the forces that over time have formed our civilization and culture. Looking at past experiences to better understand the present and plan for the future is important to understanding the human condition. Philosophy, another of the humanities, leads to an examination of values and to a better understanding of the meaning of person and life. Philosophy and religion together, guide in a process of clarifying values and exploring the spiritual dimensions of one's culture and individual life. It can be said then, that in studying the humanities, individuals are studying themselves in order to better understand others.

In addition to the study of humanities, fine arts courses are used to broaden the understanding of individuals and society through an appreciation of the underlying beauty and aesthetic nature of persons and the environment. The fine arts awaken creative awareness as individuals express themselves. Additionally, the fine arts allow an individual to experience the world through a new vantage point, which provides a window into the culture and history of the world.

The window opened with a study of the fine arts has a goal of appreciation of the beauty in persons and the environment, while a window opened by a study of the natural sciences leads to an understanding of the physical attributes that are a part of those persons and the environment. In a world filled with technology and change, individuals need to have a grasp of this information to live in harmony with the environment. The human body is a complex integration of chemical, biological and physical components that need to be understood and supported.

While the natural sciences may provide a study of the physical components of the human being, the social sciences expand the understanding of the whole person to include the intrapersonal aspects of the self, along with the social environment in which that person exists. Here the goal is not just to open the window of the mind, but to broaden the viewpoint seen through the window. A study of the social sciences challenges students to objectively view themselves and society from various perspectives. Through a study of social sciences, the individual gains insight into personal and social problems along with the complexity of solving these problems. The social sciences also lead to a deeper understanding of oneself and the relationships formed with others (Viterbo University, 2012-2013).

Social sciences, natural sciences, fine arts and the humanities together provide the student with an opportunity to develop fully as individuals and as professional nurses. Throughout the courses in these disciplines and in the nursing courses, students are encouraged to develop insights into how the general education classes relate directly to the profession of nursing and form connections to the graduate outcomes.

Viterbo University (2013-2014), *Undergraduate catalog*. La Crosse, WI: Author.

### **BSN Completion Program**

The courses in the BSN Completion program build on the sciences and nursing practice foundation obtained by the nurses in their basic degree. The program begins with a course in which students explore the transition to the role of the professional nurse. Students investigate how to manage a variety of new

roles and responsibilities in their lives, and study the curricular structure of the School of Nursing in relation to the University. Students learn about the use of information technology in the educational and practice setting, emphasizing the importance of computer literacy in the nursing profession. One of the foundational courses focuses on the exploration of the theories and issues associated with professional nursing practice. Following the foundational nursing courses, the students' progress to learning the concepts and theories associated with nursing research in evidence-based practice, leadership, organizational management, and public health nursing. Students validate their achievement of graduate outcomes throughout the nursing courses. Final achievement of the graduate outcomes is assessed via a Clinical Synthesis Portfolio using the Kolb Model. The portfolio is a compilation of prior professional experiences including exemplars supporting achievement of graduate outcomes. Course methodologies are appropriate and conducive to the adult learner, and students are inspired throughout the program to commit to life-long learning.

### BSN Curricular Conceptual Model



**HONOR CODE** (see p. 6 for description)

**Viterbo University School of Nursing ~ Honor Code**

I am committed to academic honesty and the five core values of the School of Nursing at Viterbo University, even in the face of adversity.

**Core Values**

*Caring*

We recognize and honor the dignity of students and faculty.  
We strive to interact with all persons in respectful and compassionate ways.

*Integrity*

We accept personal accountability for all we say and do.  
We strive to base our actions on ethical principles and Franciscan values.

*Commitment*

We are committed to pursuing excellence in education and learning.  
We are committed to advocate for the health of all persons and for advancing the profession of nursing.  
We are committed to professional development through scholarly activities.

*Collegiality*

We recognize and celebrate diversity and contribute our individual talents to our common work as scholars and professionals.

*Wisdom*

We recognize that reflection and discernment are integral to learning and professional growth and are vital for advancing nursing practice.

To attain these ideals, I embrace this honor system as my way of life.

- Ethical Principles include: autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and veracity.
- Franciscan Values include: reflection, service, hospitality, and stewardship.

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Please sign the BSN Completion Honor Code, which means you will pledge **to not cheat, plagiarize, or falsify information** in preparation for any course work.

Signature and date of the honor code will be collected in each nursing course.



### **Signature of Agreement – BSN Completion Handbook**

I have read and understand the policies and procedures required of me as a BSN Completion student at Viterbo University and by signing or typing (then, downloading to a course site) my signature signifies my understanding.

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

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(if signing by hand for submission)