

VITERBO UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF NURSING  
STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK  
**2019-2020**



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## **School of Nursing Philosophy**

We believe nursing represents multiple ways of knowing in viewing the professional work of nurses. Our core values- caring, integrity, commitment, collegiality, and wisdom- together with our 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 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 an evidence base to build confidence and competence. Additionally, 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.

### **School of Nursing Mission**

The School of Nursing prepares nursing students for faithful service and ethical leadership as professionals who will advance high standards of practice.

### **BSN Mission**

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program prepares students for professional holistic nursing practice. Faculty create an educational experience that embraces the pursuit of wisdom and the values of caring, integrity, collegiality, and commitment as preparation for faithful service and ethical leadership in a dynamic health care environment.

### **BSN Vision Statement**

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.

### **Core Values**

#### ***CARING***

- We recognize and honor the God-given dignity of our students and all persons.
- 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 the education of our students.
- We are committed to advocate for social justice and the health of all persons and while advancing the profession of nursing.
- We are committed to professional development through the scholarly activities of our faculty and students.

#### ***COLLEGIALITY***

- We recognize and celebrate our diversity and contribute our individual talents to our common work as scholars.
- We value our inter- and intraprofessional partners and strive to identify ways to collaborate in creating opportunities for learning/working together.

#### ***WISDOM***

- We recognize that reflection is integral to learning and professional growth and that it is vital for advancing nursing practice.
- We encourage thoughtful reflection and discernment in ourselves and in our students.

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

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

**The goals of the School of Nursing are to:**

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.

**Undergraduate Program Outcomes**

**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:**

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

**Nursing Curriculum**

The sequencing of courses is designed to provide the student with essential courses in the natural and social sciences as a foundation to build upon in later courses. The sophomore curriculum begins developing the cognitive, communication, and psychomotor skills unique to a professional nurse. Using the foundation of the sophomore year, the curriculum at the junior level shifts in intensity with the addition of theory/clinical courses incorporating not only a nursing focus on the person over the lifespan, but also the family. Senior level courses focus on complex health care in settings of adult health, mental health and public health with an increased emphasis on interdisciplinary collaboration, healthcare systems, and nursing leadership. Teaching and learning practices embody a variety of strategies to engage the student in active learning and develop a passion for life-long learning. The School of Nursing's state of the art Clinical Simulation Learning Center allows for students to be challenged in a safe learning environment that mimics real life nursing. Assessment of program outcomes is achieved through course-embedded assessment and other appropriate assessment strategies.

The curriculum leading to a degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing typically consists of 8 academic semesters. Core curriculum courses, supporting courses, and nursing courses are taken concurrently during the four years. (rev.2016)

## **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)

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.

### **Undergraduate Curriculum**

The university core courses and designated support courses provide a foundation for the discipline-specific courses of the curriculum. Nursing has its basis in theory, research, and practice. Similarly, the curriculum was designed after review of education and nursing theories and current research, keeping in focus the student population and practice changes in the healthcare environment. This consideration is reflected in the goals of the School of Nursing, one of which is “to implement a professional curriculum that builds on a strong liberal arts foundation for undergraduate learners...” (Viterbo University BSN web page: <http://www.viterbo.edu/bsn/>). (rev. 2012)



# PROGRESSION AND RETENTION





## **Academic Honesty**

Viterbo Nursing Students will be held responsible for abiding by the Viterbo University Academic Integrity Policy as outlined in the university student handbook. The student is expected to earn the course grade independently. Students who exhibit academic dishonesty may be given a failing grade for the course. All students sign an honor code during the sophomore year which is displayed until graduation. In addition, students sign an honor code in each nursing course. (rev. 2018)

### **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 values that flow from the Franciscan tradition.\*

##### *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, justice and veracity.

\*Values include reflection, service, hospitality and stewardship.

## **Academic Planning**

It is the student's responsibility to track the completion of all course prerequisites.

Students are responsible for monitoring their Progress Report through Student Planning to be sure they have completed all of the requirements for graduation.

Students are required to meet with their faculty advisor for semester registration during the time frames scheduled by the advisor. (rev. 2018)

## **Assignment Due Dates**

Five percent per day of the total points will be assessed against any assignment that is submitted and/or completed after the designated time and due date. A student may ask for an extension on an assignment prior to the due date if it is mutually agreeable. Exceptions to this policy may be noted in course syllabus. (rev.2019)

## **ATI Testing Policy**

Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) is a comprehensive online assessment and review program that is designed to provide nursing students with a variety of tools that will assist them during their courses in the professional nursing sequence. ATI has been shown to increase NCLEX pass rates and reduce student attrition when implemented consistently. Participation in the ATI program will allow the student to gain experience in taking computerized nursing exams similar to NCLEX, increase confidence in nursing knowledge base and comprehension, identify strengths and weaknesses, developing a plan for remediation and ultimately enhance success in the professional nursing sequence and the NCLEX upon graduation. Both students and faculty can find significant benefits through the use of ATI with consistent implementation, clear communication, appropriate valuation of assessments, and creation of a positive, mutually accountable environment.

### **Policy:**

All nursing students are required to participate in the ATI program. The program will involve a proctored assessment of Critical Thinking at the beginning and end of the nursing program.

Proctored assessments will also be given in the following core areas:

- Adult Medical/Surgical
- Leadership
- Community Health
- Mental Health
- Pharmacology
- Maternal/Newborn
- Child
- Fundamentals
- There will also be an assessment of knowledge from Nutrition Foundations.

## **Criteria for Progression in the nursing program related to ATI**

### **Benchmark:**

There are four levels in the ATI testing program. Level 3 is the highest and Below Level 1 is the lowest level of proficiency. Viterbo School of Nursing's benchmark is set at Level 2 for all ATI assessments. The Critical Thinking assessment does not have a benchmark.

### **Scoring:**

Points may be given for any ATI activities, including practice and proctored assessments, at the discretion of the instructor(s). Points awarded for a proctored assessment are based on the achieved level. If points are given for any ATI activities, it will be included in the grading section of the course syllabus.

### **Remediation:**

All students will be required to utilize tools provided by the ATI program to improve their mastery of content learned. All students that do not meet the benchmark for each proctored assessment will complete focused review activities. A minimum of 2 hours of focused review will be required when the level 2 benchmark is not met for a proctored assessment. Focused review will include completing an active learning template for review topics in which the student did not receive the benchmark score. Specific instructions will be sent to all students detailing these requirements. All documentation of focused review activities will be sent to the ATI Coordinator as outlined in the instructions sent to all students needing to complete remediation.

**No points will be given for remediation.**

### **RN Comprehensive Predictor:**

The benchmark for the RN Comprehensive Predictor is set at 70%, which represents a 91% probability of passing the NCLEX. All students not achieving 70% will be required to complete focused review activities and develop a plan of study for success. Specific instructions will be sent to all students requiring remediation. All students, regardless of passing score, are strongly required to complete the focused review activities as well, as a way to prepare for the NCLEX. All students will be required to take a second predictor assessment. Any student who does not meet the benchmark on the second predictor will be required to take a 3<sup>rd</sup> predictor and meet with their advisor to make sure that preparations for NCLEX are on track.

## **Attendance**

Attendance in lecture is expected. The Viterbo University Attendance Policy is followed within the School of Nursing.

Attendance is mandatory for:

- A. clinical
- B. nursing skills laboratories
- C. exams
- D. simulated experiences

A student unable to attend any of the above must contact the instructor prior to the clinical experience, clinical orientation, nursing skills laboratory, and/or exams. Failure to do so will

result in a failure for that experience. Prior notification does not necessarily assure an excused absence.

A student who is absent from clinical more than two (2) days may be required to withdraw from the clinical and related theory courses. (rev.2018)

### **Criminal History Search**

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) **prior to beginning the professional sequence.** Healthcare agencies may require additional criminal history searches prior to student placement in that agency. Students are required to comply and are responsible for the cost of the search.

The Dean of the College of Nursing, Health, and Human Behavior will analyze reports on positive findings for a criminal record check on a case-by-case basis. Students will be informed of positive findings and will be consulted before a decision is made regarding eligibility to care for clients in contracted agency placements. Individuals whose background check identifies bars to the provision of care in contracted agencies or places restrictions on client contact **will not be allowed to progress in the program.**

A complete criminal background check is required every four 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 clinical agencies. Falsification or omission of relevant information may constitute dismissal from the program. (rev.2016)

### **Dropping Questions Versus Curving on Exams**

Basically, dropping questions and curving the exam are philosophically and operationally different. Questions are dropped when they are “bad” (i.e. they don’t measure what we intended to measure). Exams are curved when they are fair, but overall more difficult than anticipated. In the School of Nursing, we have a detailed process for making this determination.

For each exam, we obtain performance statistics on every question. We look at questions that a large number of students answered incorrectly. We also look at the discrimination factor for each question, which is an indicator of how well each person answered a question in comparison to how well each person did on the whole exam. Based on this information, we can identify bad questions.

If a question is bad (i.e. not measuring what it was designed to measure), we drop it. We realize that, at quick glance, this may seem unfair. Some students feel like they should get an extra point, if they managed to do well on a bad question. However, if a question is not performing appropriately, it is not fair to use it. No student should gain from it and no student should be penalized by it. It must be removed from the test.

After bad questions are dropped, we review the score distribution and make a determination on

whether the exam also needs to be curved. If an exam is curved, points are given to everyone, regardless of performance. Everyone's score goes up. An exam may be curved if it had too many good questions that were too difficult resulting in a disproportionate number of low scores. Curving has to do with the balance of an exam, not with individual questions.

Used with permission: Pharmacy Learning Collaborative - University of Minnesota College of Pharmacy.

## **Formatting Requirements**

The format to be used for written papers is that which is stated in the current edition of the **Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association**. Papers must be typed. Each grammatical, spelling, and APA error will be penalized, up to a maximum 10 percent of the paper. (rev.2019)

## **Licensing Restrictions**

Persons who have felony convictions may be barred from taking the licensing examination for Registered Nurses. The individual with such a conviction is responsible for contacting the State Board of Nursing for individual counseling. (rev. 2012)

## **Mathematics Competency for Nursing**

Nursing students will take a standardized nursing math test to establish competency. In the event a student does not pass the test, remediation will be required prior to retaking this test. This will be available to the student in the Academic Resource Center. This test must be successfully completed prior to NURS 221. Transfer students directly accepted into the professional sequence will be contacted by the clinical coordinator to meet this requirement. (rev. 2018)

## **Nursing Course Transfer Policy**

The Viterbo University School of Nursing has carefully considered and planned a curriculum to meet the needs of a beginning nurse in the healthcare setting, while maintaining the mission of the school and university. The content for the curriculum was designed for the curricular outcomes unique to this program. In light of the connection of the curriculum to the desired outcomes and the quality of the graduate, once a student has started classes at Viterbo University, all classes with a nursing prefix must be taken at Viterbo. (rev.2012)

## **Nursing Student 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 as set forth by the faculty and student. This success plan will be in effect until the completion of the nursing program. (rev.2016)

## **Probationary Status in Nursing**

A student who receives a grade of "CD" in one or more con-current nursing courses is placed on

probation and may progress to the next nursing course. The student must earn grades of “C” or better in **all** remaining nursing courses. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the nursing program.

A student who earns a “D” or “F” in a nursing course is placed on probation and may be given the opportunity to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. The student must retake course that resulted in dismissal. When a course is repeated the new grade will replace the previous grade, but the probationary status from the first grade will remain on the record and the student must achieve a grade of “C” or better in ALL remaining nursing courses. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the nursing program. This will lengthen the nursing program accordingly.

Students on probation are highly advised to seek assistance from the Academic Resource Center. (rev. 2019)

### **Progression Requirements for Nursing**

Prior to starting the sequence of nursing courses, students must earn minimum grades of “C” in CHEM 106 and BIOL 104 and 114 and must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of **2.75**. A minimum grade of “C” in BIOL 296 is also required in order to progress. Since BIOL 296 is taken at the sophomore year, a grade below a “C” in BIOL 296 would require the student to repeat the course before progressing in the nursing program. (rev.2012)

A student who does not maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 will not be allowed to progress in the nursing designated courses until the GPA is re-established at 2.5. (rev. 2019)

### **Readmission to School of Nursing Policy and Procedure**

\*\*\*Readmission to the program is contingent upon the availability of open clinical placements\*\*\*

Application for readmission must be requested no more than one year following initial dismissal from the program.

The Readmissions board consists of at least three members of the Admission, Progression, Retention and Scholarship Committee, and the Associate Dean. The Associate Dean will coordinate the re-entry application and provide support for the process. Immediate placement in required nursing courses is not assured; qualified students who have not taken the course previously will have enrollment priority to those repeating a course.

**Readmission application deadlines are as follows:** November 15<sup>th</sup> if readmission is desired for the next spring semester, or April 15<sup>th</sup> if readmission is desired for the next fall semester.

A student may apply for readmission one time. The student must contact the School of Nursing Associate Dean to request a meeting. The student will be advised of the meeting date and the expectations of the Board.

The student will prepare a readmission folder and provide the Associate Dean with 4 copies of the folder and its contents at least two weeks prior to the meeting. If the folder is incomplete, the application for readmission may be rejected. The folder will include:

- a) A letter of application stating the circumstances of the dismissal from the nursing program and why the student should be considered for readmission.

- b) Three letters of support addressing student’s growth since dismissal and potential for academic success. These letters should come from college faculty and employers. One letter must come from a nursing faculty member.
- c) College transcripts to date. Unofficial transcript is acceptable.
- d) Organized and detailed academic plan for successful completion of the program, including how the student has sought to remedy the deficit(s) resulting in dismissal.
- e) Evidence of meeting current college catalog and School of Nursing handbook admission requirements.

In addition, the following shall be taken into consideration by the board:

- a) Viterbo academic record
- b) Evidence of growth, commitment, motivation to succeed
- c) Organized and detailed plan for the successful completion of the program, including how the student has sought to remedy the deficit(s) resulting in dismissal
- d) Letters of support
- e) Nursing faculty input

Student appeals will be heard individually. Students should be prepared to briefly present their case orally to the board. The board will hear the student’s appeal and consider all materials presented. The student will be notified in writing of the outcome within five business days of the meeting. The application file and the record of action taken by the board will be kept in the advisee’s academic file.

If the student is accepted for readmission to the School of Nursing, a success plan will be negotiated between the student and the Associate Dean, then reviewed with the academic advisor. The success plan will outline the details of the student’s progression through the nursing program. Two elements of this success plan will be:

1. The student must achieve a grade of C or above in all subsequent nursing courses
2. There will be no opportunity for progression on probation

If readmission is granted, certain academic requirements may be specified to ensure currency in nursing knowledge and skills prior to enrolling in clinical nursing courses. These requirements may include remediation and/or repetition of courses, depending on academic standing or length of time since leaving the program. (rev. 2019)

### **Re-entry into the Professional Nursing Sequence**

Students wishing to re-enter the professional nursing sequence must do so within one year following their leaving the professional nursing sequence. (rev. 2017)

### **Reporting of Student Complaints**

Students are encouraged to follow the formal complaint policy as found in the Viterbo University Student Handbook and utilize *Viterbo Speaks Up* to submit a complaint. (2019)  
<http://www4.viterbo.edu/student-affairs/viterbo-speaks>

### **School of Nursing Grading Scale**

|            |            |           |            |
|------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| A= 94-100% | AB= 92-93% | B= 87-91% | BC= 85-86% |
| C= 80-84%  | CD= 78-79% | D= 74-77% | F= 73%     |

## **Transfer of Nursing Credits from Other Nursing Programs**

Nursing students transferring into the Viterbo University Nursing Program must meet all prerequisites for each of the university courses and must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75. When considering the transfer credit of a nursing course, the registrar in collaboration with the Associate Dean, shall evaluate the content. The student may be required to take an equivalency test, make up deficiencies in the particular course(s), or take the course in question. Depending on the number of nursing classes transferred in at the undergraduate level, students may be required to take additional courses to meet University general education requirements. (rev. 2016)

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

A student shall be permitted to withdraw from a given nursing course with a grade of W on the transcript one time and may repeat the course the next time it is offered. (rev. 2019)





## CLINICAL



## **Auditing a Clinical Course**

Students are not allowed to audit clinical nursing courses due to limited clinical areas and nursing faculty. (rev. 2012)

## **Clinical Evaluations**

Viterbo University School of Nursing emphasizes the practice of professional nursing. The clinical performance tool has specific evaluation criteria that will be evaluated. These criteria are expected to be performed at a satisfactory level. Repeated evaluations of Needs Improvement (NI) and/or Unsatisfactory (U) on these criteria may constitute failure of the course. A final evaluation of Satisfactory is required in order to pass the course. Clinical behaviors jeopardizing patient safety may result in immediate failure of the course at which point, course withdrawal is not permitted. (rev. 2012)

## **Documentation**

Students will follow agency policies concerning documentation. (Refer to specific agency policy and HIPAA policy section.)

When using written documentation, Viterbo University students identify themselves on the patient's chart by signing their name in full and following it with VSN. (rev. 2016)

## **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Policy**

Confidentiality and Privacy:

Maintaining confidentiality is an essential part of ethical nursing practice. Information accessed by students for client care and for educational purposes is of a private nature and must be protected. Health information must be accessed and handled according to federal HIPAA standards and specific institutional policies. Special care must be taken to delete identifiers before using any private health information. During every clinical rotation all students must follow the institution/agency HIPAA policy as outlined in orientation at the respective institution/agency. Breach of the HIPAA policy could result in federal mandated fines or civil penalties as well as dismissal from the Viterbo nursing program.

Some simple guidelines to follow include:

1. Do not give patient/client information to anyone unless there is a "need to know".
2. When you need to discuss patient information, pay attention to who may overhear your conversation. Look for a private place to speak if others, especially members of the public, may hear you.
3. If you overhear others inappropriately discussing a patient/client, you may want to remind them that they have an obligation to maintain patient/client confidentiality.
4. Keep patient information out of public traffic areas. For example, do not leave paper containing patient information where others can see it.
5. Be responsible when disposing of patient/client information.
6. Follow all policies and procedures on protecting the confidentiality of patient/client information. Be sure to remove all identifiers from client information used in reporting cases in conferences or in writing papers for your courses.
7. If in doubt, talk to your clinical instructor or to a member of the nursing staff.

8. The Viterbo University policy on social networking will be adhered to as it relates to HIPAA and confidentiality.
9. Students may not discuss or post any information about faculty, peers, patients, family members, or any clinical facility on any electronic venue (ie. MySpace, Facebook, Twitter, cell phones).
10. Students may not leave/save any patient, family, faculty, clinical facility or student information on any open access desktop or hard-drive. Any infraction will result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

Source: (1-6 taken from Mayo Health Care System- Franciscan Healthcare Policy) (rev. 2016)

## **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 diagnosed 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 student must be able to meet these requirements throughout the program even with accommodations.

1. **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:** The 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 student must be able to perform and maintain certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
2. **COMMUNICATION:** The 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 personally 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 student possess abilities in logical thinking, measurement, calculation, reasoning and analysis.
4. **BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES:** The 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 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 student must be able to tolerate long hours and physically taxing workloads. The student must be able to demonstrate qualities of integrity, compassion, and skills in interpersonal relationships.
5. **EVALUATION:** Viterbo University School of Nursing recognizes its responsibility to prepare competent professional nurses and also include qualified students with diagnosed disability(ies) into the program. The school of nursing will utilize technological advances

and feasible alternative opportunities to encourage students with diagnoses the means to successfully complete the program. (rev. 2018)

**\*In accord with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.**

## **OSHA & Electronic Medical Record (EMR) Training**

Prior to practicing in the clinical settings each student **must** complete an annual hospital based OSHA educational program in order to comply with OSHA standards. In addition, EMR training must be completed. Failure to complete these requirements will result in the student not being able to practice clinically. Clinical agency guidelines for electronic documentation are to be followed. (rev. 2019)

## **Use of Electronic Devices**

The use of electronic devices for clinical purposes may be permitted. The personal use of electronic devices during scheduled clinical time, except during breaks away from the patient care area, is prohibited. Anyone found using them will receive an unsatisfactory evaluation for that day and be asked to leave the clinical setting. (rev. 2018)

## **Pre-Clinical Requirements**

*All of the following must be completed prior to beginning the professional nursing sequence.*

### **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)**

Each student is required to complete a Health Care professional (two person, adult, infant, child) CPR course which involves hands-on skills verification. Students must remain current in CPR and documentation must be submitted to Student Passport.

### **Certified Nursing Assistant Certification (CNA)**

Each student must show evidence of current state certification as a nursing assistant prior to beginning the professional nursing sequence. (rev.2017)

### **Health Requirements**

Nursing students utilize Health Services at Viterbo University. A registered nurse is on campus to assist the students with any health problems.

Before beginning the clinical course in the sophomore year, the nursing student is required to have a physical examination. This report is to be submitted to Student Passport. The student is also required to have a Mantoux tuberculin test, 2 step unless previous test was done within the past year and documentation of this is provided. All nursing students are required to have a repeated TB test every year. Documentation of two TB tests within 12 months of each other must be on record at all times throughout the program. Evidence of all TB testing must be submitted to Student Passport. A student who has reacted positively to the TB test is required to have an initial chest x-ray, and a copy of the results must be provided to the Campus Nurse. A student who has had a previous positive tuberculin test and has had medical treatment will be required to have a chest x-ray prior to clinical in the sophomore year. Each year these students will be given a health questionnaire form to fill out rather than the TB test. Repeated chest x-rays are not required unless symptoms develop that could be attributed to TB.

Before beginning the clinical course, the student must also present a form indicating current immunizations for tetanus, diphtheria, poliomyelitis, and rubella, mumps, and rubeola (measles). The completed series of Hepatitis B is required. Influenza vaccine is required and also available at the Health Services Office while supplies last. Students will upload their immunization dates into the Student Passport website.

Laboratory tests are no longer required, but may be done if student prefers the titers over receiving the immunizations. These are titers or immune status for rubella, rubeola, varicella, and mumps. Copies of the completed laboratory reports must be submitted and uploaded to Student Passport. If the titer results reveal that the student is not immune, repeat vaccination is required, but further titers will not need to be drawn.

A student who does not submit the physical examination report and/or who is not immunized/tested according to policy will not be allowed in the clinical areas. If a student is unable to obtain a complete vaccination history and all efforts to find the records have been exhausted, a waiver form may be signed. (rev. 2019)

### **Professional Liability Insurance Policy**

Viterbo University requires all nursing students to purchase and supply proof of independent professional liability insurance if they are participating in an immersion clinical experience outside of the traditional course time. This provides protection in case of incompletes, immersion experiences, or other situations as deemed necessary. It also adds security for the individual student, the university, and the clinical organizations.

Though this is not a requirement for all students, it is recommended as added protection at a relatively low annual cost. Copies of this coverage must be shared with the School of Nursing office by either hard copy or electronic copy. Information on obtaining this coverage can be obtained from the School of Nursing administrative assistant or clinical coordinator. (rev. 2017)

### **Transportation**

Viterbo University School of Nursing utilizes a wide variety of community agencies to meet the nursing curriculum objectives. Each student is responsible for his/her own transportation to and from the assigned agencies. (rev. 2012)

## Uniforms

Viterbo University School of Nursing values the professional image portrayed by our nursing students. Viterbo students realize that they themselves play a part in forming the image of nursing on a daily basis. This professional image is formally evaluated by faculty because of the school's belief that the appearance and attitude of all Viterbo nurses have a direct impact on the public's perception of our professionalism, competency and quality of care. These standards are developed to ensure that all Viterbo University students' attire and attitude match the professional image of nursing demonstrated by Viterbo nurses. If students do not adhere to the uniform policy it will result in an unsatisfactory for that clinical day and possible clinical dismissal.

The Viterbo Nursing Student Uniform consists of:

White scrub top with patch (2 required)

\*Red/Burgundy scrub pants (2 required)

\*Red/Burgundy scrub jacket with patch (1 required)

\*Gray/Burgundy Polo Shirt with logo and navy/khaki dress pants (not cargos)

Solid White shoes (NO open backs or Crocs)

Solid white or nude undergarments and socks

Name pin

\* Students admitted into the nursing sequence prior to 2018/2019 wear burgundy/khaki.

1. When the uniform is worn, it must be neat, clean and complete as described above. This includes clean shoes and shoelaces. The scrub jacket is to be worn instead of sweaters. If another layer of clothing is needed, a short or long-sleeved plain white t-shirt may be worn.
2. The Gray/Burgundy polo shirt, with navy/khaki dress pants (not cargos), and name pin is worn for selected clinical settings.
3. The uniforms are required for all clinical experiences including simulation and clinical labs. It may be worn to classes only if time does not permit changing.
4. The scrub jacket **over appropriate attire** (no blue jeans/shorts) is worn in the clinical area for certain designated assignments.
5. The Viterbo University name pin is to be worn at all times in the clinical setting.
6. Whenever the uniform or scrub jacket is worn, hair is to be neat & drawn back from the face. Unnatural hair colors, styles and accessories are considered unprofessional and therefore not allowed in the clinical settings. For male students, facial hair must be neatly trimmed.

7. The following standards are followed by all Viterbo University nursing students when on clinical sites:
  - Only one small stud earring per earlobe may be worn.
  - Facial and tongue jewelry will not be allowed.
  - All other body piercings must be removed.
  - Wristbands or bracelets are not allowed.
  - Every attempt should be made to cover tattoos in the clinical setting. Personal adornments that are visible such as tattoos which might be considered offensive to the public are discouraged and will be addressed on an individual basis by the faculty member. Each individual agency policy will be taken into consideration. (Rev. 1/2014)
  - No perfume/body spray will be worn while providing patient care.
  - Fingernails should be trimmed and well-manicured. Nail polish and artificial nails are not allowed.
  - Make-up should be conservative.
8. Students shall adhere to specific dress policies in the respective agencies.
9. Sphygmomanometer, stethoscope, bandage scissors and a watch w/ second hand are required.
10. Rings, other than wedding and engagement rings, should not be worn. (Rev.2018)

### **Use of Medical Records**

Student nurses may review medical records for their assigned patients only. Students must have been involved with the patient's care. Refer to specific agency policy and HIPAA policy. (rev. 2016)

### **Use of Students' Cars to Transport Patients**

Because of the risk of liability, students will not under any circumstances provide automobile transportation for a patient. (rev. 2012)

# HEALTH/SAFETY





## **Children in Class Policy**

The School of Nursing abides by the Viterbo University policies regarding children on campus (see Viterbo University Student Handbook). Infants and small children are not allowed in nursing classes on a routine basis. (rev.2012)

## **Exposure to Body Fluids**

The procedure known as Standard Precautions (related to the handling of body fluids) will be discussed and demonstrated to students before they begin clinical experiences. Subsequently, the student is responsible for protecting herself/himself and all patients by rigorously applying these precautions in all laboratory and clinical settings.

Students exposed to body fluids 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 agency staff and the clinical instructor for initiation of the protocol. (rev. 2016)

## **Student's Health Insurance**

Students are **not** provided health insurance by Viterbo University or by the hospital or health care agency in which clinical experiences are being conducted.

It is highly recommended that students carry their own health insurance. (rev.2016)

## **Student Injuries**

Injuries incurred by the nursing students during their laboratory/clinical experiences should be reported immediately to the agency staff and Viterbo Nursing clinical instructor. Agency policy will be followed in reporting incidents. All students are responsible for medical expenses to treat any injuries he/she incurs. In addition, the Viterbo accident/incident report form must be filled out and submitted to the Dean. (rev.2016)

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