Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

STUDENT POLICY HANDBOOK

2023-2024

Gaze...Consider...Contemplate...Imitate
St. Clare of Assisi

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School of Nursing 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. (rev. 2020)

Metaparadigm Definitions (rev. 2020)

As an Undergraduate Nursing Program rooted in Catholic Franciscan values, we believe that:

Persons
- Persons are multidimensional beings who seek to find meaning and purpose in their lives. Persons have inherent dignity and worth, the capacity for self-healing, and the right to autonomy and self-determination in their life choices. There is unity and inter-connectedness within the individual and with families, communities, societies, and the global environment.

Health
- Health is seen as the dynamic balance, integration, harmony, and sense of well-being between the mind, body and spirit. Wellness and illness are personal lived experiences and a natural part of life, learning, and movement towards change and development. Healing is multi-dimensional, creative, unfolding and unpredictable. Healing is a lifelong journey into wholeness in one's own life, family, community, and global relations.

Environment
- Environment consists of internal and external factors that influence the health and wellness of persons, families, communities, and societies who impact, create and co-exist within their environment. The interconnectedness of the person and the environment cannot be separated. Environmental fields are infinite, innovative, unpredictable, and characterized by increasing diversity. Environmental and human fields are identified by wave patterns manifesting continuous mutual change. The nurse becomes the environment.

Nursing

- Nursing is a discipline grounded in holistic, caring science which honors the inherent dignity and worth of persons and the environment. Nursing is relationship-centered, advocating for and promoting optimal health and wellness of persons, families, communities and systems. These relationships are transpersonal, forming connections using authentic presence and intentionality. The discipline of nursing provides the foundation for professional holistic nursing practice. (rev. 2020)

Key Definitions (rev. 2020)

Professional holistic nursing practice

- Professional holistic nursing practice is built on the foundation of a baccalaureate education, which integrates the liberal arts and sciences with disciplinary knowledge, skills, and values. Professional nursing practice in a dynamic health care environment is independent, collaborative, evidence-informed, interdisciplinary, and interprofessional. Professional nurses are committed to self-care, reflective learning, contemplative practice, and scholarly inquiry.

Learning

- 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, personal experience, and disciplinary expertise.

Teaching

- 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

Teaching-learning practices encourage multiple ways of knowing, incorporate active learning strategies, promote critical thinking and clinical judgment, and provide opportunities to develop professional values. Effective teaching and learning is student-centered and takes place in an encouraging, challenging, and respectful environment.

Mission

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. (rev. 2020)

Vision Statement

The School of Nursing will develop 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 (rev. 2020)

Caring
- We recognize and honor the dignity of students, faculty, and those we serve.
- We strive to create an inclusive environment which honors the diverse life experiences, perspectives, and backgrounds of 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 values that flow from the Franciscan tradition.*

Commitment
- We are committed to pursuing excellence in education and learning.
- We are committed to living by the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion and ensure that all voices are heard.
- 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.

*Ethical Principles include autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice and veracity. *Values include contemplation, integrity, service, hospitality and stewardship.

Goals

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 in a values-based context;
3. create a collegial environment that facilitates the professional development of students and faculty;
4. prepare graduates for professional practice in a dynamic health care environment.

Undergraduate Program Outcomes – Students admitted to PNS before Fall 2022

1. **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.
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.

Undergraduate Program Outcomes – Students admitted to PNS on or after Fall 2022

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. Provide holistic relationship-based care that is congruent with the principles of diversity, equity, and inclusion for all persons, families, communities, and society.
2. Communicate and collaborates effectively with clients, health team members, and community stakeholders to achieve optimal holistic health outcomes.
3. Integrate knowledge from the liberal arts, the sciences, health information technologies, and the discipline of nursing to provide professional holistic nursing care.
4. Demonstrate safe, evidence-informed clinical reasoning in designing and providing professional holistic nursing care to achieve quality health outcomes.
5. Provide respectful and compassionate care through incorporating the values, standards, and ethical principles of the nursing discipline.
6. Demonstrate development as a professional holistic nurse leader through reflective practice, self-care, and scholarly inquiry.

Nursing Curriculum

The sequencing of courses is designed with holistic principles 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 competencies 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 a nursing focus on the person across the lifespan. Senior level courses focus on complex health care 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. 2023)

Undergraduate Curriculum Conceptualization

Nursing as a healing art and science is grounded in compassionate and faithful human service. The nursing curriculum is grounded in a strong liberal arts foundation and understanding of the unique discipline of nursing.

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.

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.

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..."

The Nursing Pin

For the faculty of the School of Nursing, the seal of Viterbo University depicts the significant themes which are infused throughout the curriculum. It forms the basis of the school's pin which is awarded to students upon graduation from the BSN program.

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)

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 and policies outlined in the SON 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. In addition, students are expected to abide by the Viterbo University School of Nursing Honor Code. All students sign this honor code during the sophomore year and in each nursing course. Students may be subjected to disciplinary action for unprofessional conduct up to and including violations of the honor code (rev. 2022)

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

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Ethical Principles include autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, justice and veracity.
Values include contemplation, integrity, service, hospitality and stewardship.
To attain these ideals, I embrace this honor system as my way of life.

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 Description and Policy

Description of ATI:

    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 throughout their nursing school program in a variety of ways. ATI has been shown to increase NCLEX pass rates and reduce student attrition in nursing programs 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 nursing program 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 be given in core nursing courses and in Nutrition 280.

    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 and Comprehensive Predictor do not have a level benchmark.

Scoring:

Points may be given for any activities utilizing ATI at the discretion of the instructor(s). If points are given, it will be included in the grading section of the syllabus.

Practice Assessments – All nursing students are required to take a practice assessment in the core area. Points will be given for completion of the practice exam assigned per the instructor syllabus.

Proctored Assessments – Points will be given for each proctored assessment based on level achieved per instructor syllabus.

The Nutrition ATI exam is given in NUTR 280. The Nutrition Professors will decide what point system to use for their specific courses as this is a non-nursing course. Points will be listed in the syllabus for the course. All nursing students will follow the same guidelines for testing and remediation as listed above.

Focused Review:

All students will be required to utilize tools provided by the ATI program to improve their mastery of content learned. A level 2 is the benchmark set by Viterbo. All students that do not meet the benchmark for each assessment will complete focused review activities. A minimum of 2 hours of focused review will be required. Specific instructions will be sent to all students detailing these requirements. All documentation of focused review activities will be sent to the course instructor within 3 days (72 hours) from the date of the exam. If not received within 3 days, the points achieved for the proctored exam will not be awarded.

RN Comprehensive Predictor:

All graduating senior nursing students will take the RN Comprehensive Predictor in their final semester of the program. The goal is for all students to score a 92% probability of passing the NCLEX the first time. The score to reach this probability is determined each semester according to the guidelines set by ATI. All students regardless of score will be required to complete focused review activities and develop a plan of study for success in passing the NCLEX. Specific guidelines and expectations will be given to students during their courses in this final semester.

Attendance

Attendance in lecture is an expectation. The Viterbo University Attendance Policy is followed within the School of Nursing.
   Attendance is mandatory for:
   1. clinical
   2. nursing skills laboratories
   3. exams
   4. simulation experience

A student unable to attend any of the above must contact the instructor prior to the class, seminar, clinical experience, clinical orientation, nursing skills laboratory, simulation and/or exams. Failure to do so will result in a failure for that missed experience. Prior notification does not necessarily assure an excused absence or ability to make up missed activity. Please reach out if your absence is unavoidable due to illness or injury. (rev. 2023)

A student who is absent from clinical two (2) days or more 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 and Health 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.2022)

Dropping Questions Versus Curving on Exams

Basically, dropping questions and curving the exam are philosophically and operationally different. Questions are dropped when they do not measure what the faculty intended to measure. Exams are curved when they are fair, but overall more difficult than anticipated. In the School of Nursing, a detailed process is followed for making this determination.

For each exam, performance statistics are obtained on every question. Faculty look at questions that a large number of students answered incorrectly. Faculty 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.

If a question is not measuring what it was designed to measure, it is dropped. Faculty 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 question that did not measure up. 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 a question is dropped, the score distribution is reviewed and a decision is made 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. (2015)

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)

Grade Appeal Policy

When a student has a grievance related to a course grade, the student should first discuss the matter with the individual course faculty member and put the concerns in writing. If a satisfactory conclusion is not achieved, the matter may be brought, in turn, to the Associate Dean, the College Dean or other College Administrator, and then to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Students need to review the Viterbo University Student Handbook at https://www.viterbo.edu/residence-life/resources-current-students for details of the grade appeal process. (rev. 2021)

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 your second semester of the professional nursing sequences. Transfer students directly accepted into the professional sequence will be contacted by the clinical coordinator about meeting this requirement. (rev. 2018)

Nursing Course Transfer Policy

Viterbo University School of Nursing has carefully planned an undergraduate nursing curriculum to prepare nurses beginning professional practice. The content of the curriculum is designed to meet outcomes unique to this program, the mission of the university and the school, and professional standards. Given these considerations, previously completed nursing coursework from NLN and AACN accredited nursing programs will be reviewed on an individual basis. Once a student is admitted to the professional nursing sequence at Viterbo University, all classes with a nursing prefix must be taken at Viterbo. (rev. 2023)

Nursing Student Success Plan

A Success Plan may be established for academic and non-academic reasons 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. Students are expected to provide and discuss their success plan with each faculty of subsequent nursing courses. (rev. 2021)

Probationary Status in Nursing

A student who earns a grade of "CD" in one or more concurrent 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.

Eight-week nursing courses are not concurrent nursing courses even though they are taken in the same semester. If more than one CD is earned in those courses in any semester, the student shall be dismissed from the nursing program.

A student who earns a "D" or "F" in a nursing course is placed on probation and is required to retake the course the next time it is offered if space is available. If space is not available, students who need to be re-tracked must wait until space is available in the needed course(s).

When a course is repeated, both grades will still remain on the transcript however, the GPA will be adjusted to reflect the repeated course grade. Both grades will be counted as completed credits for the semester, but only the second will be counted in completed cumulative credits. When a course is repeated 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 required nursing courses. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the nursing program.

Students readmitted into the nursing program after being dismissed must retake the course(s) that resulted in dismissal from the nursing program.

Students on probation are strongly advised to seek assistance from the Academic Resource Center. (rev. 2020)

Admission 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.The student also must meet all other holistic review requirements, including a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.75. (2021)

Progression Requirements for Nursing

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. 2021)

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 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 15th if readmission is desired for the next spring semester, or April 15th 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 faculty 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

Re-entry into the professional nursing sequence after a leave of absence from the program is contingent upon the availability of open clinical placements

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

If for whatever reason, students choose to interrupt their education during the professional nursing sequence, and the absence becomes equal to an academic year (i.e. two semesters), students must be required to demonstrate competencies. The Associate Dean and Faculty will determine competency requirements, which may include examination and skills testing. The purpose of this policy is to assure that returning students have the necessary competencies to re-enter the professional sequence safely. Additionally, students need to refer to Viterbo University's Leave of Absence Policy in the University Handbook for specific information if students choose to leave the University. (2020)

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)

https://www.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 holistic review requirements and 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. 2021)

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

<u>Auditing of Nursing Courses</u>

Students are only allowed to audit non clinical courses per university policy. Students may not audit clinical nursing courses due to limited clinical areas and nursing faculty. (rev. 2021)

<u>Clinical Evaluations</u>

Viterbo University School of Nursing emphasizes the practice of professional nursing. The clinical performance tool has specific criteria that will be evaluated. These criteria are expected to be performed at a satisfactory level. Repeated ratings 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. 2021)

<u>Communication with Clinical Partners</u>

Students are **<u>not</u>** to contact agencies inquiring about their policies or student clinical placement. The School of Nursing will inform students of their clinical placements and agency contacts. Contacting agencies without Viterbo School of Nursing permission may jeopardize Viterbo's longstanding positive relationship with those facilities. Not adhering to this policy may result in disciplinary action.

Clinical Organization Requirements

Prior to practicing in the clinical settings each student **must** complete organizational based requirements. Failure to complete these requirements will result in the student not being able to practice clinically. (2020)

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)

Professionalism and Attire

Viterbo University School of Nursing values professionalism and a professional image 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 attitude and appearance 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 nursing students demonstrate the professional attributes of nursing through their actions and attire. Not adhering to these standards will result in an unsatisfactory for the clinical day and/or possible dismissal from the nursing program.

Professionalism

Viterbo University School of Nursing requires our students to display professionalism in all interactions in the classroom, lab, and simulation, and individual communication with faculty and staff. Attributes of professionalism include collegiality and civility. Viterbo University School of Nursing defines collegiality and civility in the following ways:

Collegiality: Cooperative interaction among peers, faculty, and staff.

Civility: An act of showing regard and respect for others including politeness, consideration, tact, good manners, graciousness, cordiality, and courteousness. Ultimately, civility is treating others as we would like to be treated.

Professional attitudes are challenged during times of frustration, disappointment, and dissent. Learning and displaying the skills to manage these situations in a professional manner demonstrates the personal accountability and leadership qualities essential to fostering the professional reputation of the Viterbo nurse and further enhances the professional image of nursing as a profession.

Attire

The Viterbo Nursing Student Uniform consists of: (rev. 2023)

White scrub top with patch (2 required)
Red scrub pants (2 required)
Red scrub jacket with patch (1 required)
Gray polo shirt with logo and navy dress pants or navy scrub pants
Solid white or nude undergarments
Solid white, black or navy-blue shoes (NO open backs or Crocs)
Solid white, black or navy-blue socks
Viterbo University Student Nurse Name badge and any site/facility required ID's

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 gray, navy, black or white t-shirt may be worn.

2. The gray polo shirt, with navy dress pants or navy scrub pants (no leggings) are worn for selected clinical settings and on campus clinical labs.

3. The uniforms may only be worn to clinical environments. Clinical environments include simulation and skills lab.

4. The scrub jacket should be worn over professional attire (no blue jeans/shorts) for designated assignments in the clinical setting.

5. The Viterbo University Student Nurse name badge (and site/facility ID if required) are 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. Headbands/head coverings will be allowed in solid colors of black, navy blue, red or white. Facial hair must be neatly trimmed (or must follow organizational policy).

7. The following standards are required when in clinical settings:
   - Only small stud earrings may be worn.
   - Facial and tongue jewelry will not be allowed.
   - A single small stud or ring in the nose are permitted. For any other facial piercing, a clear retainer is permitted. Septal jewelry is not allowed.
   - All other body piercings must be removed.
   - Wristbands, hairbands (on the wrist) or bracelets are not allowed.
   - Necklaces are not allowed, unless needed as a medical alert.
   - Every attempt should be made to cover tattoos in the clinical setting.
   - No perfume/body spray/cologne will be worn while providing patient care.
   - Fingernails should be trimmed and well-manicured and not extend beyond the fingertips. Neutral/muted colored nail polish is acceptable as long as there are no chippings in the paint. Artificial/gel nails are not allowed.
   - Make-up should be neutral toned.

- Rings, other than smooth wedding or commitment bands without gemstones, should not be worn. One smooth surfaced ring band may be worn.

8. Students shall adhere to additional dress code policies <u>as required by clinical facilities</u>.

<u>Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Policy</u>

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 (e.g. 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 Clinic Health System- Franciscan Healthcare of La Crosse 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 ADA Coordinator.* 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 personably 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. 2020)

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

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 BLS for Healthcare Providers CPR course through American Heart Association 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 the Student Passport system**.** (rev. 2020)

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

Physical Examination: 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 the Student Passport system.

Tuberculin Skin Test (TST): The student is required to have a TST. Another name for the TST is the PPD or Mantoux test. If this is the first TST or if it has been more than 12 months since the last negative TST, a two-step test is required. If the first test is negative, the second TST must be administered 1-3 weeks after the first test is read. Documentation is required of all test results. Also, the QuantiFERON-TB Gold (QFT) blood test an acceptable alternative to the TST, PPD or Mantoux. If student has had the BCG vaccine, it is recommended that they do the QuantiFERON Gold test. (rev. 2021)

All nursing students are required to have a repeated test for tuberculosis every 12 months. Documentation is required of all test results which must be submitted to the Student Passport system.

A student who has reacted positively to the TST is required to have an initial chest x-ray, and a copy of the results must be provided to the Director of Health Services at Viterbo University. 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 participating in clinical in the sophomore year. Each year these students will complete a health questionnaire rather than the TB test. Repeated chest x-rays are not required unless symptoms develop that could be attributed to TB.

Immunizations: Before beginning clinical courses, the student must present evidence of current immunizations:
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (TDaP) with Td update
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis B (complete series)
- Chickenpox / Varicella vaccinations series or titer
- Influenza – annual requirement by October 31st
- COVID-19 (complete series)

Students must upload evidence of completed immunizations including specific dates into the Student Passport System. (rev. 2022)

Students who choose not to receive the COVID-19 vaccination will need to apply for exemption in consultation with the School of Nursing Clinical Coordinator. It is the responsibility of the student to complete the application and return it to the Clinical Coordinator who will submit the application to the clinical partner. There is no guarantee that a facility that accepts exemptions will be available at the time of the student's assigned clinical rotation or that the exemption would be granted. Student progression in the program may be impacted.

Titers: A titer test is a measure of antibodies in the blood, providing a check of disease immunity. Titers are also required if there are no records of required immunizations. Titers are required to show immunity to MMR and Varicella; however, the immunization series is acceptable. Titers also are acceptable for Hepatitis B; however, the immunization series is preferred. Results of these blood tests must be uploaded into the Student Passport System, which provides more information related to titer and repeat vaccine requirements. 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, titers must be drawn showing immunity or new vaccinations must be completed. (rev. 2020)

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 a clinical experience outside of the official course start and end period. The insurance provides coverage for immersion experiences outside of course dates, make up time for an incomplete course grade, or other situations as deemed necessary. (rev. 2020)

The School of Nursing administration can provide information about this coverage. Once obtained, students must share this coverage with the School of Nursing office by either hard copy or electronic copy. The clinical coordinator will acquire and maintain these professional liability insurance records. (rev. 2020)

Transportation

Students are responsible for their own transportation to and from the assigned agencies. The School of Nursing follows the Viterbo University travel policy. (rev. 2022)

Use of Electronic Devices

The personal use of electronic devices during scheduled clinical time is prohibited, except during breaks away from the clinical area. Departure from these guidelines may be subject to securing the device for the remainder of the day and may result in an unsatisfactory for the clinical day. (rev. 2023)

Use of Medical Records

Student nurses may review medical records for their assigned patients only. Refer to specific agency policy and HIPAA policy. (rev. 2022)

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). (rev. 2022)

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, students are responsible for protecting themselves 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. 2022)

Students' 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.

Certain health care organizations require students to carry health insurance before participating in clinical experiences. Therefore, all students will be required to show proof of their own health insurance coverage and upload the information to Student Passport System. (rev. 2022)

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 they incur. In addition, the Viterbo faculty member will fill out an accident/incident report form that must be submitted to the Dean. (rev. 2022)

Emergency ID cards

Students will be provided with emergency ID cards and will be required to attach them to their Viterbo School of Nursing name badges or to those required by their assigned clinical facility.

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