



# PROGRAM HANDBOOK

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**UTICA**  
UNIVERSITY

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## PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This handbook is to be used in conjunction with the [Utica University Student Handbook](#), and students are responsible for adhering to the content of both handbooks. Changes in policies and procedures may be made annually and communicated to students via the updated handbook. The information included in this handbook has been chosen with two purposes in mind. First, an informed student is a better student. We want students to understand the educational goals and mission of the entire program to facilitate integration of individual course content into your overall view of the nursing profession.

The faculty and staff are committed to providing students with a quality education that will prepare them to fulfill their responsibilities as a professional nurse. However, the student is the one ultimately responsible for taking full advantage of the program. This handbook provides students with the information necessary for them to take on that responsibility.

## DEPARTMENT OF NURSING MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to provide high quality, innovative, and transformational education to diverse learners and professionals to promote equitable healthcare. We prepare nurses to excel in critical reflection, clinical competency, collaboration, caring, and leadership through evidenced-based nursing science. Nurses prepared at Utica University are a vital component of the interprofessional healthcare team, providing safe, quality, and ethical care to diverse populations across the lifespan in a variety of settings.

## VISION STATEMENT

The Utica University Department of Nursing will be recognized as an innovative center of nursing excellence for learners and professionals. The educators, clinicians, and researchers will inspire the next generation of nurse leaders to respond to the challenges of a dynamic and diverse healthcare environment encompassing the spheres of care.

## DEPARTMENT OF NURSING GOALS

1. Liberal Education Foundation: Assimilate theories and concepts from liberal education into generalist foundation practice.
2. Leadership: Practice leadership concepts to deliver high quality health care.
3. Professional Behavior: Incorporate professional standards of moral, ethical, and legal conduct into practice.
4. Clinical Competence: Provide safe, competent care across the lifespan.

## PRELICENSURE PROGRAM GOALS

(Domain 1) Apply contemporary nursing knowledge as well as knowledge from other disciplines, including a foundation in liberal arts and natural and social sciences in the care of diverse patients within a variety of settings.

(Domain 2) Provide evidence-based person-centered care that is holistic, individualized, just, respectful, compassionate, coordinated, and developmentally appropriate across the lifespan.

(Domain 3) Engage in population health care activities from prevention to the management of health care needs across diverse populations through partnerships with communities, public health, government entities, and others to promote social justice and close the gap for health inequity for the improvement of population health outcomes.

(Domain 4) Evaluate and apply nursing knowledge to inform practice, improve patient outcomes, and influence health care.

(Domain 5) Apply established and emerging principles of quality and safety in the delivery of care as core values of nursing practice, to enhance quality and minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance.

(Domain 6) Collaborate across professions and with care team members, patients, families, and communities, to optimize care, enhance the healthcare experience, and improve outcomes.

(Domain 7) Utilizes available resources to coordinate safe, quality, and equitable care across diverse populations within complex systems.

(Domain 8) Utilize informatics and healthcare technologies to inform care and deliver safe, high-quality, and efficient healthcare services in accordance with best practice and professional and regulatory standards.

(Domain 9) Cultivate a sustainable professional identity that includes accountability, integrity, perspective, collaborative disposition, respect for others, inclusivity, and ethical comportment that reflect nursing's characteristics and values.

(Domain 10) Participate in activities and self-reflection that foster personal health, resilience, and well-being, contribute to lifelong learning, and support the development of nursing expertise and leadership qualities.

## ADMISSION CRITERIA

Prior to entering the program, students must complete 60 credits in liberal arts courses, including admission courses. They must have a minimum of 65 credits for transfer. Students must have a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or higher and a Science GPA of 3.0 or higher. A grade of C or higher is required in all prerequisite courses. Students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.8 throughout the program and earn a grade of C+ or higher in all nursing courses.

Applicants who have previously been enrolled in another nursing program must submit two (2) letters of recommendation from faculty in the program with their application.

Required Science Admission Courses must be completed within the past 10 years and have a combined GPA of 3.0 in the follow courses:

	Admissions Science Courses	Credits
	Human Anatomy & Physiology I with Lab	4
	Human Anatomy & Physiology II with Lab	4
	Chemistry with Lab	4

	Other Admissions Courses	Credits
	Statistics	3
	Developmental Psychology (Lifespan)	3
	Microbiology with Lab	4

## BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG SCREENING

All students are required to complete a level II background check, fingerprinting, and drug screening before course registration. Compliance with these requirements is essential for clinical placement and program progression. If your initial toxicology screen is positive, you will be notified within 30 days of the test date. After receiving the notification, you must complete a urine drug test within 24 hours. Failure to submit both the initial and repeat toxicology screens or receiving a positive result on either test may result in dismissal from the program. Students who fail to submit a background check or students whose background checks indicate a conviction may be dismissed from the nursing program. A history of past arrest and conviction may prohibit students from being licensed as a Registered Nurse or Family Nurse Practitioner. Students should contact their state board of nursing to determine their eligibility for licensure based on their criminal background before submitting an application to the nursing program. Students are subjected to random drug screening throughout the duration of the program.

## ALCOHOL, DRUG, AND SUBSTANCE POLICY

It is expected that all students adhere to the Utica University alcohol and other drug policies. Refer to the Annual Drug and Alcohol Notice [Utica University Alcohol, Drug and Substance Policy](#). It is the policy of the Department of Nursing that students be free of chemical impairment during participation in any part of their program including classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical activities. A chemically impaired student is defined as a person who, while in the classroom, laboratory, or clinical setting, is under the influence of, or has abused, either separately or in combination: alcohol, over-the-counter medication, illegal drugs, prescribed medications, inhalants, or synthetic designer drugs. Students who are chemically impaired in the clinical setting may jeopardize the lives of their clients.

If a student has been assessed by a faculty, staff, or clinical agency representative to possibly be impaired, a second nursing or healthcare professional is needed to confirm the suspicion. The student will be asked in writing to complete screening at the student's cost **immediately**. The student will not leave the premises independently and must seek alternate transportation. The student will not be permitted in the clinical environment until the results are received and confirmed to be negative.

Should the results indicate the presence of substances, the student will be dismissed from the program if this is a second offense. If the positive result is the first occurrence, the student will be referred to the Counseling office and the student will be considered for return into the program with evidence of a clean screen.

If the student refuses follow-up testing, the student will be dismissed from the program.

# HEALTH CLEARANCE REQUIREMENTS

The following **must be completed and documented prior to** the start of the ABSN program. Failure to meet these requirements will prohibit your ability to start the ABSN Program. Health forms are available on the Utica University Nursing Website: <http://www.utica.edu/nursing> Student health records should be submitted to the student's health portal (e.g Castlebranch or ACEMAPPS).

These requirements **must** be updated as indicated:

## **New York Students:**

1. Physical examination within the last 12 months prior to beginning the program and updated every 12 months
2. Quantiferon Gold within the last 12 months prior to beginning the program and yearly thereafter.
3. DT within 10 years
4. Proof of Measles, Mumps, Rubella vaccination with positive titer results. If titers are negative, proof of re-immunization is required
5. Hepatitis B vaccine series or written waiver refusing vaccination
6. Varicella (chicken pox) titer
7. Flu vaccine annually
8. Meningococcal Meningitis vaccine or signed refusal form
9. COVID-19 Vaccine and Booster

## **Florida Students:**

1. Physical examination within the last 12 months prior to beginning the program and updated every 12 months.
2. Hepatitis B series if done, if not a signed waiver is required
3. Hepatitis B Antigen and Hepatitis C antibody test
4. Complete CDC recommendations for exposure to airborne pathogens and/or other airborne contaminants if the possibility of exposure exists
5. Titers for Varicella, Rubeola, Rubella and Mumps – if equivocal or negative must have booster shot before going to clinical and titers redrawn a couple months after booster
6. Two step TB Skin Test or Quantiferon within 2 months of placement
7. Possess a negative 5-panel urine drug screen within less than 30 days of starting clinical practice.

8. Annual Flu vaccine
9. Date of last tetanus shot (must be within 10 years to be valid).
10. Meningitis vaccine or signed waiver is required.
11. Covid-19 Vaccine and Booster

\*\*\*Individual clinical agencies may request additional health requirements which will be the responsibility of the student.

### Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure

Strict adherence to barrier precautions and infection control practices that decrease the opportunity for blood-to-blood exposure for both health care personnel and patients is required. Any student who has an exposure to a bloodborne substance that places the student at risk **must seek medical care immediately while following the clinical agency policy and protocol**. Such exposure should first be reported to the clinical instructor who will direct the student for appropriate care. (Students are responsible for the personal medical care costs accrued.)

### Latex Allergy

Any student with a known latex allergy must notify the faculty to avoid placing the student at risk of an allergic reaction. Latex-free gloves will be made available in the nursing laboratory and in each clinical setting.

### Notice of Compliance

The Department of Nursing adheres to the statement of equal opportunity in every aspect of student recruitment, admission, and retention. It is the policy of Utica University to admit students who can benefit from the educational opportunities it offers and whom the University has the capability to serve. Students are admitted on the basis of their potential for intellectual, social, personal, and professional growth. Please review the Utica University non-discrimination policy for more information.

<https://www.utica.edu/directory/human-resources/title-ix-utica-university>

## RETENTION

Success in the nursing curriculum requires that students demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors expected of an entry-level registered nurse. Knowledge and skills are examined in a variety of formats including written assignments, testing, and clinical observation. The faculty at Utica University strive to provide a successful educational experience for every student. Each student is required to meet the following criteria in order to remain in the nursing program:

The student must:

1. Achieve and maintain a minimum 2.8 cumulative G.P.A. throughout the entire nursing program.
2. Demonstrate the professional and ethical behaviors required for successful performance of professional nursing practice as noted by faculty and clinical instructors.
3. Adhere to established course sequence in nursing major.
4. Adhere to Utica University academic rules and regulations. (See Undergraduate Catalog with the exception of GPA requirement that is specific to the nursing programs).

### Retention Criteria

1. Students are expected to be aware of prerequisite course requirements. Prerequisites will not be waived. Program courses are listed and scheduled in semester sequence, thus making them prerequisites for successive semesters.
2. A minimum grade of **C+ (77%)** will be required for all nursing courses. A student who achieves a grade of less than a C+ in a nursing course has one opportunity to repeat the course. **A maximum of one nursing course may be repeated.** Failure to achieve the minimum grade of C+ in the repeated course will result in academic dismissal from the nursing program.
3. Students may withdraw from an individual course **once**. If a student chooses to withdraw from the same course two times, it will be considered as one course failure in the program.
4. Progression in the nursing program is based on seat availability. Student who withdraws from any nursing course or is unsuccessful in a course jeopardizes his or her progression in the program.
5. To achieve a passing grade, the student must meet the following criteria:
  - a. Exam grade of 77% or higher based on weighted average of unit exams and final exam (321,326, 371, 421, 471).
  - b. Course grade of 77% or higher when all theory components are added to the exam grade.
  - c. Successfully pass clinical (when applicable) as outlined in the clinical evaluation measurement tool.
  - d. Successfully pass lab (when applicable) as outlined in the lab course.

- e. Students who do not meet all of the above course requirements will receive a final course grade of C, unless the overall course grade is less than a C, in which case the final course grade will reflect the grade the student has earned.
6. Students must successfully complete **all** of the nursing courses in a semester before moving on the next semester of courses.
7. Students must adhere to established course sequence in nursing major
8. Students who are placed on academic probation by the University will be suspended or requested to withdraw from the nursing major.
9. Students are expected to maintain standards of professional behavior within academic and clinical settings. The student who fails to meet these standards may be subject to dismissal from the ABSN program and the University. Expected behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - a. Attend all labs, exams, and clinical experiences, and arrive on time. In the case of an emergency, the appropriate faculty member must be emailed **prior to** lab/exam/clinical.
  - b. Prepare for class/lab/clinical according to course requirements identified in each course syllabus.
  - c. Complete all assignments according to the time frame posted in the course and/or syllabus.
  - d. Demonstrate respect and courtesy toward faculty, staff, and fellow students.
  - e. Demonstrate honesty and integrity in all academic and clinical settings.
  - f. Contribute to the educational growth of self and fellow students.
  - g. Wear appropriate attire for the course as identified by ABSN Handbook.
10. It is the responsibility of the student to check Banner and make sure all requirements are met and posted.
11. For graduation requirements, students are encouraged to review the University Catalog and their individual degree evaluations.

**Students must successfully complete all of the nursing courses in each semester before they can take courses in the next semester- they must follow the program sequence.**

## GRADING POLICY

The Department of Nursing grading policy is defined by a numerical rating system as follows:

Acceptable Grades –	Unacceptable Grades
A =94 –100%	C =73-76%
A- = 90 – 93%	C- =70-62%
B+ =87 – 89%	D+ =67-69%
B =83 – 86%	D =63-66%
B- =80 – 82%	F =62% and below
C+ =77 – 79%	

\* Incomplete (I) grades may be granted according to the University policy (see University Catalog).

**A minimum of C+ (77%) must be achieved to successfully pass a nursing course.**

### **Grading Policy for Med/Surg courses (321,326, 371, 421, 471)**

To achieve a passing grade, the student must meet the following criteria:

1. Exam grade of 77% or higher based on weighted average of unit exams and final exam.
2. Course grade of 77% or higher when all theory components are added to the exam grade.
3. Successfully pass clinical as outlined in the clinical evaluation measurement tool (when applicable).
4. Successfully pass lab (when applicable) as outlined in the lab course.
5. Students who do not meet all of the above course requirements will receive a final course grade of C, unless the overall course grade is less than a C, in which case the final course grade will reflect the grade the student has earned.

### ***STUDENTS WHO ARE UNSUCCESSFUL IN A COMPONENT OF A COURSE THAT INCLUDES DIDACTIC, CLINICAL/PRACTICUM, SIMULATION, AND LAB:***

The student must be notified in writing of the following:

- Student will not remain in clinical and lab, effective immediately

- Student may elect to observe the remaining didactic component but will not be allowed to take exams or submit assignments
- The student must submit in writing that they would like to stay in the didactic portion of the course to observe
- Should the student be granted an appeal, the course requirements would be completed using an incomplete designation

## **GRADING MEDICATION DOSAGE CALCULATION QUIZ**

Math Quiz – (Pass/Fail) Students must pass one medication calculation quiz (med math quiz) per semester within 3 attempts. There are NO make-up quizzes. Quizzes will be short answers. Quizzes will be administered with paper, pencil, and calculator. Each quiz will have ten (10) questions; the time allotted to take the quiz is 30 minutes. Quizzes will be scheduled by the site and the date/time will be posted. Students must achieve a 90% or better on the med math quiz. Students are able to take the test up to a total of three times during the semester. Students are required to complete remediation and re-test within a week after each unsuccessful attempt under the guidance of a faculty member. Students must wait a minimum of 48 hours before the next attempt. Students will not pass medications in the clinical area until they have passed the quiz. Students will also receive an unsatisfactory grade for medications on the clinical evaluation tool until the student passes the quiz. **If the student fails to pass the math quiz after three attempts, this will result in failure of the course.**

### **Grading of Clinical Experiences**

All clinical experiences are graded on a Pass/Fail basis. A grade of Pass is achieved when the student consistently meets or exceeds clinical expectations and has met clinical course objectives satisfactorily. The student must pass the theory, lab, and clinical components to pass the course.

### **Program Academic Standard**

A student must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.8 to remain in the Nursing Program.

# PROCEDURE FOR MODIFIED PROGRESSION AND DISMISSAL

## Modified Progression or Dismissal

Students in the nursing program are required to comply with specific requirements regarding progress in academic, clinical and behavioral criteria. When a student fails to meet these requirements, the student may be put on a modified completion schedule or dismissed from the program. The student receives written notification regarding this change in their progression.

- **Modified Progression** means that the student must retake and successfully complete the course if they did not earn a C+ or better or a grade of P before moving forward in the program.
- **Dismissal** means that the student has been officially dismissed from the nursing program.

***If a student believes he or she has been treated unfairly by the University, please see the Grievance and Complaint Procedure in the Utica University Catalog.***

## Immediate Dismissal from the Nursing Program

Immediate dismissal may be considered for students engaging in egregious acts of professional misconduct, including but not limited to:

- HIPAA violation
- Theft
- Physical violence or abusive behavior
- Falsification of documents
- Conviction of a felony

## TESTING POLICY

- All material provided to you within the course, all class activities, lectures and powerpoints, (and any other learning resources provided) are testable on the exams.
- When on campus students are required to adhere to the uniform policy, the same is true for examinations.
- Students who are not in compliance with the Utica University Uniform Policy for an examination, will not be permitted to take the examination and will be sent home.
- Examinations are to be taken when scheduled. Make-up exams are not permitted, except in the case of medical emergencies. **Refer to the Examination Absence Policy.**

- Students should arrive 15 minutes prior to exam start. Students should be prepared to start the exam at the scheduled time.
- Any student who arrives late for a test, as evidenced by the clock on the wall in the testing room, will be denied entry into the testing room and the test and will receive a zero for the exam.
- Exams must be downloaded before the exam start time. Students will not be permitted to download the exam after the exam start time.
- Once the exam has begun students are not permitted to leave and re-enter the exam room. Students are not allowed to leave the exam room for bathroom breaks. Please use the restroom ahead of time.
- Exams must be uploaded by the upload deadline. Students who do not upload their exam by the upload deadline will receive a grade of zero for the exam.
- Students must show successful completion and upload of the examination to proctor, prior to exiting the exam room.
- No resources or materials are permitted in the testing room. This includes cell phones, smart watches, headphones/earbuds, scrap paper, white boards, course materials, recording devices, pens/pencils, food and/or beverages. Students can bring only their computer into the exam room. All electronic devices must be turned off prior to the start of the exam, and all personal belongings (jackets, purses, backpacks, laptop cases, water bottles) need to be left in a designated area.
- Students may not talk to or otherwise communicate with any other student for any reason during the testing period.
- Students may not read questions and/or answer choices aloud.
- Students must exit the exam and turn off their computer before leaving the testing room.
- Students who do not upload and exit the exam before leaving the testing room will receive a grade of zero on the exam.
- Students are asked not to congregate outside testing room doors at any time (this includes before and after exams) or in the hallways.
- Students receiving special testing accommodations from the Office of Learning Services must present their signed accommodations letter to the course faculty, success coach, and director of academic operations at least 72 hours in advance of an exam to receive their accommodations on that exam.

## Exam Absence Policy

Student attendance is mandatory for all testing. Students experiencing a medical emergency and are unable to attend an examination should contact the Director of Academic Operations and Course Faculty prior to the exam to request permission to reschedule. Documentation of the medical emergency must be provided. If an examination makeup is permitted, please be aware that the same blueprint may not be applicable, item analysis will not be applicable, and ten points will be deducted from the overall exam score. Permitted make-up exams will need to take place within seven (7) days of the regularly scheduled exam.

## Exam Review Policy

Exam review will occur immediately after your exam. This is an opportunity to visualize incorrect test questions and answers. Students will have 15 minutes to view the test questions they answered incorrectly. Taking notes on test questions/answers is strictly prohibited and will be considered academic dishonesty. Individual questions will not be answered during the exam review. If a student skips exam review or enters exam review password incorrectly, they forfeit the opportunity to review the exam. **Exam review does not occur after a final examination.**

## CLINICAL EXPERIENCES

1. Clinical experiences are designed to provide support and integration of the academic coursework. A nursing faculty member will provide direct, on-site supervision for clinical experiences except for selected clinical courses. Attendance is required at ALL scheduled clinical experiences.
2. All students must provide their own transportation to clinical settings. Parking at clinical facilities is at the student's expense.
3. All students must meet health requirements for clinical upon admission to the program and maintain thereafter. All required documentation must be successfully uploaded to the designated health portal (e.g. Castlebranch/ ACEMAPP). Expiration and or lapse of health requirements at any point of the program is not allowed. Students whose health requirements lapse or expire during the program will lead to clinical/course failure.
4. Attendance at clinical orientation is mandatory. Failure to attend clinical orientation may result in clinical/ course failure.
  - a. Students who have exemptions from required vaccinations due to religious reasons must present a form DH 681 from the County Health Department (CHD). Florida Certification of Immunization is used for all medical exemptions and requires a physician's statement and signature. Form DH 681, Religious Exemption From Immunization is required for religious exemptions and is issued by the County Health Department (CHD).

- b. Students must understand that submitting the documentation to request exemption DOES NOT mean that it will be granted. It is at the sole description of the clinical partner to grant a petition for waiving ANY established requirement.
5. Fingerprinted Level II background checks are required. Students must understand that the results of the background check must be disclosed to the clinical partners. As such, background checks that indicate any criminal activity will be evaluated by the clinical partner directly. Clinical partners may refuse to allow students to participate in clinical studies based upon background check findings. Further, background checks indicating any criminal activity may result in program dismissal.
6. Students understand that an inability to meet all of the clinical partner requirements to be cleared for clinical use may result in an inability to continue in the program.
7. Clinical assignment may occur anywhere within a 60-mile radius of students' assigned campus.
8. Cell phone use is prohibited at clinical sites unless directed otherwise by the clinical instructor. Cell phone use in instances other than authorized by the clinical instructor will be considered unprofessional and warrant further action such as the writing up of a clinical corrective action plan and/or a behavioral contract.
9. Clinical experiences are graded on a pass/fail (P/F) basis. Outcome criteria for clinical evaluation are clearly stated within the course and clinical evaluation tool.
10. A student who is found to endanger the health/welfare of a client will be considered to have engaged in misconduct. **The following constitute cause for immediate dismissal from the clinical setting and failure of the clinical course, as well as dismissal from the nursing program:**
  - a. Coming to clinical practice under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
  - b. Emotional or physical jeopardy. This includes any action by the student toward a patient, family/significant other of patient, or staff member(s) such as, but not limited to the following: threat to emotional and/or physical well-being; willfully harassing; physically, verbally, or emotionally abusing; use of intimidation.
  - c. Student actions incongruent with Utica University Nursing Department policies, actions incongruent with clinical partner organizations, actions inconsistent with course objectives, and actions inconsistent with the principles of patient safety, professional behavior, and ethics.
  - d. Actions and behaviors that demonstrate persistent disregard for client, colleague, religious, ethnic, and cultural practices.
11. Students who commit acts judged by the clinical instructor to be unsafe may be dismissed from the clinical setting and/or course. Examples of unsafe acts include, but are not limited to:

- a. Error in medication administration.
- b. Administration of a medication without having knowledge of the drug.
- c. Inaccurate recording or failure to record medication administration.
- d. Error in administration of intravenous fluids.
- e. Failure to report changes in patient's condition.
- f. Failure to seek supervision when necessary.
- g. Failure to report and document nursing care.
- h. Compromising patient care by inadequate preparation for clinical experience.
- i. Breach of confidentiality.
- j. Neglecting personal safety.
- k. Creating or causing personal safety hazards.
- l. Sleeping in the clinical area.
- m. Disregard for clinical faculty instructions.

**Upon the incidence of an unsafe act by a student, the clinical instructor will:**

1. Inform the student immediately of the unsafe act.
2. Provide the student with written documentation concerning the unsafe act.
3. Review the incident and counsel the student, recommending remediation as needed.
4. Place copy of incident report in student's academic file.
5. Place an Academic Alert regarding the incident.
6. Follow the policy for reporting an incident as required by the clinical agency or institution.

## Health Insurance

All students enrolled in clinical experiences must have personal health insurance. Students may obtain such insurance through individual/family health insurance policies or through the University. Health insurance policy forms are available in the University Student Health Center. Please contact your Success Coach if you need to waive the student health insurance fee.

## Malpractice Insurance

Students must have professional liability (malpractice) insurance. The University participates in a group malpractice insurance plan in which the student will be included upon registration in clinical nursing experiences.

## CPR/BLS Certification

The CPR/BLS certification is a prerequisite for all clinical nursing experiences. Certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (Community) and Basic Life Support (BLS) **must** be obtained through the **American Heart Association** and be kept current throughout the nursing program. Failure to meet these requirements will prohibit your attendance at clinical experiences. Please submit a copy to the student's Certified Background account.

- CPR/BLS Card must not expire during the nursing program. Must be valid for 2 years.
- Copy of card must be front & back of the card, and it must be signed by the instructor and student.
- If you have any specific questions about health documentation or CPR certification, please contact your Admissions Representative.

## CLINICAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

**Policy Statement:** Successful completion of all assigned clinical practice hours is required for nursing students to progress in the program.

Students are expected to complete all scheduled clinical hours, as specified per each course. An absence from a clinical experience must be reported via Utica University email, including **both** the Clinical Instructor and the Director of Nursing Services **prior to the start of clinical**. If a student is absent from a clinical experience, this may lead to additional sanctions, up to clinical course failure. Students who are absent from the clinical setting **MUST** submit an appeal to the Clinical Appeal Committee within 5 business days of clinical absence. Please see the process below. In order for an appeal to be heard by the Clinical Appeals Committee (CAC), there must be clear evidence of extenuating circumstances that prevented the student from completing the University requirement for which they are appealing. Petitions will ONLY be accepted if official documentation of extenuating circumstances (i.e. strong evidence) is attached to the petition at the time of submission. Completed appeals should be submitted to the Director of Academic Operations and Director of Nursing Services via Utica University email.

Tardiness in clinical practice is unacceptable. In the event a student anticipates arriving beyond the scheduled start time, there must be proactive communication to the clinical instructor and the Director of Nursing Services or Clinical Coordinator. Arriving beyond 5 minutes after the clinical start time is considered an absence and the student will not be allowed to participate in the day.

Students presenting to clinical late, but within 5 minutes of the start time may participate in clinical but will receive a clinical alert accordingly. Two occurrences of tardiness that fall within 5 minutes of the start time will result in a clinical absence and will follow the process as outlined for clinical absences.

“No Call/ No Show” is defined as, lack of timely notification related to an absence prior to the start of clinical, or after the start of clinical. A “No Call/ No Show” will result in an immediate failure of the clinical course.

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF NURSING STUDENT

The student, with the support of the clinical instructor/preceptor and faculty course coordinator, has the responsibility for his or her learning and is expected to actively participate in the clinical learning experience. The student is expected to:

1. Prepare for each clinical experience as instructed.
2. Conduct himself/herself in a professional manner.
3. Maintain confidentiality of client information per Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) guidelines.
4. Adhere to nursing ethical standards congruent with the American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics.
5. Adhere to agency contractual agreements.

## Placement of Students in Clinical Groups

For all clinical experiences, students will be automatically assigned a clinical group for each course that has a clinical component. No requests for specific instructors, facilities, assigned day/time or individual concerns (e.g. childcare/ transportation) will be honored. Under no circumstances may students negotiate a clinical placement directly with the clinical setting. Students who contact the clinical partner directly will be liable for disciplinary action. Clinical placement in transitional and community-based courses may vary based upon the institutional partner processes. Students participate in clinical learning activities under the supervision of the registered nurse preceptor and the nursing faculty member responsible for the course. Preceptors are assigned through a joint process between the Department of Nursing and the participating agency.

## **UNIFORM POLICY / DRESS CODE**

As representatives of the Utica University nursing program and the nursing profession, students are expected to behave and dress in an appropriate manner. Students will be required to wear their Nursing uniform in both the lab and clinical setting. The purpose of the uniform policy is to identify personnel in agencies and to promote safety for both students

and patients in the prevention of cross-infection. The uniform is a representation of the Utica University Department of Nursing and, therefore, should be worn in all professional settings. All students should have a minimum of three (3) Utica University nursing uniforms, one (1) solid navy-blue warm-up/scrub jacket, and a set of non-skid white closed-toe uniform shoes. The uniforms are available at the Bookstore and must have the Utica University insignia on the scrubs.

- The student uniform and student Nursing photo ID must be worn and visible when in the clinical and lab area. Your scrubs must be clean, wrinkle free and be the Utica University-issued scrub uniform.
- You may wear a clean, wrinkle-free, solid white long-sleeved shirt under your scrub top if you get cold or a solid navy-blue warm-up/scrub jacket
- Jogger scrub pants or scrub coats other than navy blue are not acceptable, no pullover fleeces, no hooded sweatshirt, etc.
- Shoes must be white and clean (no crocs with holes, no canvas flats, open-toe shoes, etc).
- Students must also wear their Utica University Nursing name badge when on campus in the lab or at clinical.

Most agencies allow a white lab coat to be worn over the uniform. It is preferred that the Utica University Department of Nursing warming jacket be worn. Check the uniform policy for the agency.

Psychiatry/Community Health Students will wear street clothes that portray a professional image with the university photo ID and flat, close-toed shoes. Jeans, “low-rider” pants, shorts, cut-offs, tank tops, or any other tight-fitting clothing that exposes the torso or under clothing is not acceptable.

### **Jewelry**

1. A watch with a second hand must be worn with the uniform.
2. A plain wedding band may be worn, but in some settings, it must be removed when caring for patients in isolation and when working in the operating room, delivery room, or nursery.
3. Only small post-type earrings are acceptable (limited to 2 per ear). No hoop or pendant earrings. Other body piercings (eyebrows, nose, lips, tongue) are not acceptable.
4. No other jewelry is worn with the uniform; it has the potential for scratching clients and for harboring bacteria.

## Grooming

1. It is assumed that high standards of personal appearance, neatness, and hygiene will accompany the wearing of the uniform.
2. All hair must be off the collar and neat. Unnatural hair color (such as blue, green, or purple) is not allowed.
3. No nail polish or false fingernails (including acrylic, dip, or gel nails) may be worn.
4. Fingernails may not extend beyond the fingertips; otherwise, they can scratch clients and impede manual dexterity.
5. Makeup is to be moderate and unobtrusive.
6. Fragrances (perfume, cologne, after-shave) are not to be worn since they may induce discomfort, nausea, or an allergic reaction in clients.
7. Tattoos must be covered.

The instructor and the agency have the prerogative to send students away from a lab or clinical unit if they do not meet the appropriate dress criteria.

Please note: We are guests in our partner healthcare organizations. As such, we are required to abide by the established dress code and presentation requirements. It is your responsibility to know these requirements before the first day of clinical. If an organization representative identifies you as out of compliance and you are requested to leave the clinical environment, this will be counted as an absence and you will be required to make up this time. Prior to returning to the clinical environment and/or scheduling make-up clinical time, it is expected that the violation will be resolved.

## LAB EXPERIENCES

### Lab Policy

- Lab Tardiness Rules- Students who present to the lab environment after class start time are considered to be tardy and will not be allowed to participate in the concept quiz and will receive a zero for the missed concept quiz.
- If a student is late twice, the Lab Tardiness Rules still apply and the accumulation of two lab tardies will result in a Lab absence.
- Lab absences related to tardiness are not able to be made up.
- Two lab absences will result in a failure of the Lab portion of a course.
- A “No Call/ No Show” to a lab competency will result in immediate failure of the lab.

- Students should be prepared to participate in their education, which includes obtaining necessary medical clearance, completing any pre-work, etc.
- Students must bring a laptop, notebook, a pen, a stethoscope, and required textbooks to every lab.
- The Lab is a cell-phone free environment.
- Students may bring a covered drink with them into the lab but eating is not allowed in the lab.
- **Lab participation is mandatory.** Active participation requires students to be prepared to engage in content review, ask appropriate questions, attempt to answer any questions asked by faculty, and be prepared to demonstrate any assigned skills in the lab with some level of understanding.
- Openness and tolerance of each other is expected. Negative attitudes, bullying behavior, and drama are never tolerated in any form in the lab environment.
- Students enrolled in a lab course that includes skill competencies will have a maximum of three attempts to demonstrate proficiency. If a student fails to pass after three attempts, they will receive a failing grade for the lab, which will also result in a failure of the entire course. Failure to meet competency requirements will prevent the student from participating in associated clinical placements.

### Dishonesty/Plagiarism

- Review the course syllabi and the University's plagiarism policies, including guidelines on self-plagiarism. If you are repeating a course, you may not submit work that has already been graded. Doing so is considered self-plagiarism and may result in a zero for the assignment or failure of the course.
- Forming study groups to discuss assignments is encouraged. However, unless an assignment is specifically designated as a group project, each student must submit their own work. Submitting work that is not entirely your own is considered plagiarism.

## Completion of the Clinical and Lab Requirement

Students must complete all the required number of clinical and lab hours as outlined within each course. All hours must be completed within the scheduled semester.

## LEAVE ACCOMMODATIONS

### Military Leave

If you are leaving for military duty, or are returning from assignment, please contact any of the Utica University's Veterans' Liaison listed as contacts on this page.

Utica University policy for military-related withdrawal:

- You will need your official orders for military duty sent to the Utica [Registrar's Office](#) and the ABSN Director of Academic Operations and the Director of Nursing Services/Clinical Faculty Coordinator.
- There will be no academic penalty for withdrawing from your courses provided that you - (a) notify each of your instructors of your leave within reasonable timeframes, (b) work out arrangements with your instructors to complete assignments, and (c) mutually agree on a course completion plan.
- There will be no financial penalties for withdrawing from your courses provided that you - (a) notify the [Center for Student Success](#) of your leave, and (b) speak personally to your financial aid counselor.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** *Didactic/Lab/Clinical Instructors MUST be given adequate communication regarding your leave and are only required to give you reasonable accommodations for your military leave. Reasonable accommodation is determined by your instructor. If you feel reasonable accommodation is not being made, please notify the veterans' liaison, and provide written proof of your case.*

<https://www.utica.edu/veterans-and-service-members-utica>

### Religious Accommodation

Utica University does recognize the right of each student to observe religious holidays and other religious commitments. If a student wishes to observe religious commitments that will conflict with class times or other class-related activities, it is the student's responsibility to notify faculty members well in advance in order to work with faculty members to find an accommodation that satisfies both the learning goals of the class and the religious commitment of the student.

However, due to clinical partner involvement, Utica University ABSN Program **may not always be** able to accommodate all requests. This may include the scheduling of exams, labs, and clinical due to religious holidays or worship times. Any concerns in regard to religious accommodations must be brought to the attention of the appropriate faculty at the start of the

semester (refer to the chain of communication policy). Appropriate documentation will be required.

## DEPARTMENT POLICIES

### Confidentiality Statement

All students are required to be familiar with and comply with the Standards of Professional Behavior while enrolled in the Utica University nursing program. Confidentiality is a critical element to a professional health care provider and compliance is required by law in order to protect the privacy rights of patients. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) mandates standards that ensure privacy and security of patients' health information, as well as electronic medical records.

Students are required to know these privacy rules and will comply at all times.

1. Students in clinical practice have access to protected health information (PHI) of patients on a "need to know" basis and it is solely for use within the scope of duties relating to patient treatment.
2. Students may only access the PHI of patients if they are directly participating in their treatment.
3. Students may not record PHI of patients (such as name, social security number, date of birth, etc.) on forms which are turned in for clinical or class assignments. PHI will not be removed from the health care facility. This includes oral, written, and electronic disclosures.
4. Students may never discuss PHI in public or inappropriate areas including but not limited to hallways, elevators, restrooms, cafeterias, etc., or with friends/family at any time.
5. Failure to protect PHI may be considered a violation of a patient's right to privacy. Properly dispose of documents containing PHI by discarding them in assigned containers marked for proper disposal; do not throw these documents in the trash.
6. If a student is unsure whether his or her actions will be in violation of these policies, he or she must consult the instructor *prior* to taking action with the PHI.
7. Any student in violation of these policies may be terminated from a clinical position, fail the class, and/or be removed from the nursing program, depending on the circumstances of the violation.

## Professionalism and Communication Standards

1. Students are expected to communicate professionally with all staff and peers. Students are expected to maintain professional and ethical behaviors in line with the [ANA Code of Ethics](#) and your student handbook.
2. All verbal communication must be done in a calm and professional manner. No yelling, foul language, invading personal space, or threatening (language or behaviors).
3. All electronic communication should follow professional netiquette (address peers or staff by requested name and/or title, write in full sentences, use appropriate language, no use of excessive exclamation marks, bold print, or caps).
4. Students must only use their [utica.edu](mailto:utica.edu) email for all course-related communications, no personal email addresses.
5. Students are to allow **24-48 hours** (response time may vary during weekends and holidays) for faculty communication via e-mail per policy.
- 6. It is the student's responsibility to read all announcements, emails, and faculty communications.**
- 7. Students are expected to access [utica.edu](mailto:utica.edu) email, canvas, and all other relevant e-communication platforms daily.**

## Academic Honesty Policy

In addition to the Utica University regulations regarding academic honesty ([Utica University Catalog](#)), and the [Code of Student Conduct](#), the Department of Nursing faculty has developed the following policy statement: *The faculty and students of the Department of Nursing believe that ethical behavior in the American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses implies the highest standards of honesty and integrity, and applies equally to nursing students and practicing nurses. All aspects of the Department of Nursing life and culture are designed to further the achievement of these standards. Students should maintain academic honesty at all times. Students must do their own work on all tests and assignments without the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Any quoted or paraphrased phrases or sentences from published material, Internet sources, or other individuals' work must be correctly referenced. Students may not resubmit their own previously graded work when retaking a course or for a grade in a different course without faculty approval. Resubmitting earlier work will be considered self-plagiarism and treated as any other form of academic dishonesty. Refer to the [Utica University Academic Honesty site](#).*

## Progressive Discipline Policy

1. The progressive discipline process will apply to any violation of the student code of conduct as outlined in the Student Handbook for non-academic issues
2. Prior to issuing any disciplinary action, the faculty will check the Utica University Navigate system to identify any previous violations.
3. When the nature of the incident requires a verbal warning, it will be documented as such.
4. A verbal or written warning will be issued by the faculty based on the incident that occurred or past violations.
5. Following the written warning, the student may progress to non-academic probation when a subsequent issue warrants further discipline.
6. Utica University's Nursing administration reserves the right to apply the most appropriate disciplinary action for the offense committed, inclusive of dismissing the student from the clinical setting, probation, or dismissal from the program
7. Discipline/Probation document to include a summary of the verbal or written incident. The faculty and student will sign the document. A copy of the form is provided to the student.
8. All completed progressive disciplinary documentation will be scanned into the student's file in Navigate and will remain there until program completion.
9. Progressive discipline actions continue in effect throughout the student's enrollment in the program. Actions will be sequential and/or appropriate for the offense committed.

## Social Media Policy

Nursing students may not video or audio record at any time in a clinical setting. In the lab setting, audio and visual recording may be permitted at the discretion of the instructor as it relates to course assignments. They may not post any material that could potentially violate patient confidentiality on social media sites. Students may be subject to disciplinary action by the school and the clinical agency for comments that are either unprofessional or violate patient privacy. HIPAA regulations apply to comments made on social networking sites, and violators are subject to the same prosecution as with other HIPAA violations.

When using electronic communications, it is important to be mindful of the consequences of their use. See below for a list of guidelines.

- Recognize the obligation to maintain privacy and confidentiality
- Do not disseminate any patient/ patient-related information

- Do not refer to patients in a disparaging manner
- Do not take photos or videos in the healthcare setting
- Do not take photos or videos of patient/s
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Adhere to the policies and procedures of the clinical affiliates
- Report any breach of confidentiality
- Do not post disparaging remarks about students, faculty, or staff members

## PROFESSIONALISM AND COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

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3. All electronic communication should follow professional netiquette (address peers or staff by requested name and/or title, write in full sentences, use appropriate language, no use of excessive exclamation marks, bold print, or caps).
4. Students must only use their [utica.edu](#) email for all course-related communications, no personal email addresses.
5. Students are to allow **24-48 hours** (response time may vary during weekends and holidays) for faculty communication via e-mail per policy.
6. **It is the student's responsibility to read all announcements, emails, and faculty communications.**
7. **Students are expected to access [utica.edu](#) email, canvas, and all other relevant e-communication platforms daily.**

# CHAIN OF COMMUNICATION POLICY

## Student Communication Policy- Academic Concerns

When students have a concern about their learning experience, the following is the best path to a resolution\*.

1. The student(s) shares the concern with the **faculty member** directly involved with the current course, clinical, and/or lab.
  - a. The student may wish to discuss the concern with their **success coach and/or advisor** to seek support and direction regarding the best way to articulate the concern, identify their need, and provide suggestions for collaborative problem-solving discussion.
2. If unresolved, the student(s) may request an appointment to discuss, or send a written description of their concern to the **Director of Academic Operations**.
3. If unresolved, the student(s) may request an appointment and send a written description of their concern to the **Director of the Nursing Program**.

**\*Seeking a resolution *without following the above outlined process* may hinder a timely resolution.**

## Appeals

- If a student has a complaint related to academic matters, the student has the right to first appeal to the Program Director. The appeal must be submitted through the Appeals Portal and should address why the student should not be held to the same standards as all other students and extenuating circumstances that should be considered.
- If the outcome of the appeal to the Program Director is not satisfactory to the student, she/he may appeal to the Chair of Nursing via email **within 7 days**.
- If the outcome of the appeal to the Chair of Nursing is not satisfactory to the student, she/he may appeal to the Dean of Health Professions and Education via email **within 7 days**.
- If the outcome of the appeal to the Dean of Health Professions and Education is not satisfactory to the student, and the student has additional information for the committee to consider, she/he may appeal to the University Academic Standards Committee **within 7 days**.
- If the outcome of the appeal to the University Academic Standards Committee is not satisfactory to the student, and the student has additional information for the Provost to consider, she/he may appeal to the University Provost **within 7 days. The decision of the Provost is final.**

# PROFESSIONAL LICENSING PROCEDURE

Upon fulfilling all academic requirements, the graduate is eligible to file an application with the New York or Florida State Board of Nursing (or to any other state in which the graduate wishes to be registered) to take the NCLEX-RN for licensure as a Registered Professional Nurse (RN). NCLEX-RN online applications and instructions for Florida are available at: <http://floridasnursing.gov/licensing/>. NCLEX- RN online application and resources are available at <https://www.op.nysed.gov/professions/registered-professional-nursing/license-requirements>

Additional resources are available at:

<https://www.nclex.com/registration.page>

[https://www.nclex.com/files/NCLEX Educational Program Codes.pdf](https://www.nclex.com/files/NCLEX_Educational_Program_Codes.pdf)

Once candidates have received their Authorization to Test (ATT), they have scheduled their exam using this link <https://www.nclex.com/scheduling.page>

## **COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT AND NCLEX-RN PRE-TESTING**

All nursing students are required to participate in the designated assessment and review program. The program involves assessment of critical thinking, assessment of nursing knowledge after selected nursing courses, and a comprehensive diagnostic predictor examination that is administered in the senior semester prior to graduation.

In preparation for the NCLEX-RN, assessment testing will be required by all students in their last semester. In addition, all seniors will participate in a mandatory review course. It is strongly recommended that the NCLEX-RN Licensing Examination be completed within 90 days of graduation. Outcome data show that graduates who take the exam within this time period after graduation tend to have higher pass rates than those who choose to delay taking the exam.

Note: Students should be aware that a felony conviction may cause a state to deny licensure.

# PROFESSIONAL NURSING CODE OF CONDUCT

Since students are preparing for a professional role, professional conduct is expected in all aspects of the course. The Utica University Department of Nursing will additionally uphold the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics as the standard for the professional conduct of nurses. Nursing students are referred to the [ANA Code of Ethics](#). The Utica University Department of Nursing is committed to the development of a professional nurse who will practice within the ANA Nursing Code of Ethics and whose practice is guided by the values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice. Our goal is to graduate students that will practice these inherent values and to ensure the profession continues to be accountable to and trusted by the communities we serve. Behavior that deviates from the ANA Nursing Code of Ethics will not be tolerated within the nursing program and can result in course failure and or dismissal from the Utica University Nursing Program.

## **AMERICAN NURSES' ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS FOR NURSES (2025)**

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the recipient(s) of nursing, whether an individual, family, group, community or population.
3. The nurse establishes a trusting relationship and advocates for the rights, health and safety of recipient(s) of nursing care.
4. Nurses have authority over nursing practice and are responsible and accountable for their practice consistent with their obligation to promote health, prevent illness, and provide optimal care.
5. The nurse has moral duties to self as a person of inherent dignity and worth including an expectation of a safe place to work that fosters flourishing, authenticity of self at work, and self-respect through integrity and professional competence.
6. Nurses, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting that affects nursing care and the well-being of nurses.
7. Nurses advance the profession through multiple approaches to knowledge development, professional standards, and the generation of policies for nursing, health and social concerns.
8. Nurses build collaborative relationships and networks with nurses, other healthcare and non-healthcare disciplines, and the public to achieve greater ends.

9. Nurses and professional organizations work to enact and resource practices, policies, and legislation to promote social justice, eliminate health inequities, and facilitate human flourishing
10. Nursing, through organizations and associations, participates in the global nursing and health community to promote human and environmental health, well-being, and flourishing.

## IMPORTANT LINKS: UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

[Course Descriptions](#)

ABSN [Sequence of Courses](#)

[Academic Policies and Procedures](#)

[University Academic Honesty Policy](#)

[Student Complaint Process](#)

[Graduation Requirements](#)

[Utica Email Communication](#)

[Applying for A Degree](#)