



# CARTHAGE COLLEGE

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## DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Student Handbook  
Academic Year 2023-2024

Revised: July 12, 2023

## INTRODUCTION

The BSN program was granted initial accreditation by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) in February, 2018. Since that time, the department continues to distinguish itself in its programming, scholarship, and innovation. The Department of Nursing is committed to improving the health of the citizens of Wisconsin by providing excellence in nursing education and creating innovative and effective community partnerships that support and nurture the educational experiences of our students. Thus, the faculty commit themselves to excellence in education, service, and scholarship, and desire to transmit that commitment and expectation to their students.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide the students with the necessary policies and procedures to enable them to contribute effectively to, and be productive members of, the Department of Nursing and of the Carthage College community. Refer to the Carthage College Catalog for further information on college policy and course descriptions.

### Philosophy

Nursing is a scientific discipline and a practice profession. The practice of professional nursing is the application of its science. In concert with the American Nurses' Association, the faculty espouse the belief that nursing is a human science concerned with the protection, promotion, optimization, and restoration of human health and abilities; the prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response; and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities and populations (American Nurses Association, 2013). In its scientific and practice endeavors, nursing seeks to understand the dynamic patterns that arise out of the human-health environment interface. The goal of nursing is to understand these patterns within their unique contexts, and to create innovative and effective approaches to nursing and health care that improve human quality of life and ensure safe and effective nursing and health care outcomes.

Nursing education is a process whereby the science, art, norms, values, processes, and standards of professional nursing are inculcated in the student. Faculty views the teaching-learning process as an interactive and collaborative relationship with students. Faculty are responsible for creating and supporting a positive and inspiring learning environment. Students are accountable for and expected to engage in the learning process. Faculty believe that a broad, liberal arts education is the essential foundation upon which the education of a competent and compassionate professional nurse is built, and that a conceptual approach to nursing education is crucial for developing the nursing professional needed for tomorrow's health care system.

### Mission

In concert with the mission of Carthage College, and consistent with the faculty's philosophy of nursing and nursing education, the mission of the Carthage College Department of Nursing is to develop excellent nurses who are entry-level:

- **Clinical Scholars** that seek truth and are dedicated to a spirit of inquiry to advance the science of nursing, and evaluate evidence that leads to better nursing and health care outcomes;
- **Leaders** who are committed to excellence, understand the process of change and outcome improvement, and are able to build human capacity and strength to promote innovative approaches that transform practice;
- **Clinicians** who have safe and accurate clinical judgment; who are grounded in professional values and ethics, and who engage in and inspire service to holistically and compassionately improve nursing and health care outcomes.

Faculty and students strive to challenge and support one another, to accept responsibility and require

accountability, and collaborate in the best interest of one another and the communities they serve.

### **Vision**

Carthage College Department of Nursing will be recognized as a premier baccalaureate nursing program. Faculty and students will strive to improve the health outcomes of the community and beyond, and to actively promote the development of the science and profession of nursing.

### **Values**

*Collegiality:* We will interact and work collaboratively with everyone with whom we come in contact.

*Respect:* We will uphold the worth and dignity of everyone with whom we interact. *Excellence:* We are committed to producing superior work, going above and beyond what is expected of us.

*Diversity:* We value a multiplicity of views, cultures, values, and opinions, and strive to include these in all that we do.

*Innovation:* We will look at things in novel ways to improve our teaching and our scholarship, and we will encourage innovative thinking in our students.

*Transparency:* All of our interactions will be authentic and truthful; all of our processes will be apparent.

## Student Learning Outcomes

Level I Student Learning Outcomes	Level II Student Learning Outcomes	Program Student Learning Outcomes
<p>Explain the relationship of the arts, humanities, and sciences in guiding nursing practice.</p> <p>Competently use clinical reasoning processes in simple care situations.</p> <p>Perform nursing care safely.</p> <p>Communicate therapeutically with patients, families, and health care colleagues.</p> <p>Identify common attributes of leadership in clinical practice environments and articulate personal leadership abilities and assets.</p> <p>Explain the roles and responsibilities of health care team members and identify promotion of and barriers to collaboration.</p> <p>Describe the importance of evidence-based nursing practice.</p> <p>Use patient care technologies and information systems to promote safety and quality.</p> <p>Accept accountability for own professional and ethical behavior.</p> <p>Describe scope and standards of nursing care.</p>	<p>Analyze knowledge from the arts, humanities, and sciences to support clinical decision making and clinical reasoning across the lifespan and continuum of care.</p> <p>Develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive, evidence-based plans of care that include primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention strategies for individuals and families across the life-span and continuum of care.</p> <p>Use intra- and inter-professional communication to promote coordination of care resulting in safe and quality patient outcomes in varying health care contexts.</p> <p>Integrate best practices in the delivery of nursing care and for determining health outcomes.</p> <p>Evaluate patient care technologies and information systems to ascertain effectiveness in promoting safety and quality of care.</p> <p>Accurately articulate ethical and professional standards for patients and families across the lifespan and continuum of care.</p> <p>Understand health policy, finance, and regulatory implications when devising strategies to improve care outcomes.</p>	<p>Integrate knowledge from the liberal arts, humanities, and sciences as a foundation for professional nursing practice.</p> <p>Employ safe and effective clinical reasoning to design, implement, deliver, and evaluate nursing care and to improve health outcomes across the lifespan and care continuum.</p> <p>Develop effective, compassionate, culturally appropriate, and family-centered therapeutic relationships to promote quality health care across the lifespan and care continuum.</p> <p>Demonstrate self-efficacy in applying transformative and collaborative leadership behaviors across diverse constituencies that improve nursing and health care outcomes.</p> <p>Utilize a scholarly approach to evaluate and apply best evidence to design and evaluate nursing and health care practices.</p> <p>Apply informatics and other technologies to plan, improve, and evaluate nursing and health care outcomes.</p> <p>Integrate ethical and professional standards to guide professional nursing practice.</p> <p>Analyze the influence of socio-political-economic factors that influence the provision of nursing and healthcare.</p>

## BSN Program Requirements

The faculty of the Department of Nursing ascribe to a philosophy of concept-focused education, which allows for a deep understanding of critical, common concepts employed in practice, while helping the student to understand their applications across lifespan and health care contexts. Central to this curriculum is teaching the student to ‘think like a nurse’. That is, to develop safe and effective clinical reasoning abilities, and the ability to analyze and apply conceptual knowledge in many realms of practice, both now and in the future. Refer to Carthage College Catalog for specific courses and requirements.

## General Course Policies

### 1. Grading Scale

The following grading scale is used for all **nursing (NSG)** courses in the nursing program:

<b>A</b>	95% or above
<b>A-</b>	93 – 94
<b>B+</b>	90 – 92
<b>B</b>	87 – 89
<b>B-</b>	84 – 86
<b>C+</b>	81 – 83
<b>C</b>	78-- 80
<b>C-</b>	74-- 77
<b>D+</b>	71-- 73
<b>D</b>	68 -- 70
<b>D-</b>	65 -- 67
<b>F</b>	< 65

### 2. Examination average

In all clinical nursing courses, a student must attain a 78% average on all objective assessments (quizzes, examinations, ATI) **BEFORE** any other course assignments are included in the calculation of the final grade. If an average of 78% is not attained, the final course grade assigned will correspond to the objective assessment average. For example, if the objective assessment average is 77%, the assigned final grade will be C-.

### 3. ATI Examination Policy

The Department of Nursing uses the Assessment Technologies Incorporated (ATI) learning system to enrich students’ learning. In addition to case studies, skills videos, and other learning enrichments, ATI also provides practice and proctored examinations in all of the nursing subspecialties. These examinations provide an opportunity for students and faculty to assess students’ progress toward becoming successful in their respective course and on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

#### **4. General Quiz and Examination Policies**

- a. Quizzes and examinations are expected to be taken on the day and at the time determined by the faculty as printed in the course schedule.
- b. Students who are tardy for the start of the quiz or examination will not be given additional time to complete the quiz or examination.
- c. Students who are absent for a quiz or examination, and who did not inform the faculty of this absence, may receive a zero grade for the quiz or examination. Students who are ill must inform the faculty member at least 2 hours prior to the examination of their illness and anticipated absence as reasonable.
- d. Faculty may elect to hold quiz or examination grades until all students have completed the examination.
- e. Only computerized versions of the quizzes or examinations will be given, as the NCLEX is a computerized exam administered by the National Council of State Board of Nursing.

#### **Dosage Calculation Policy**

##### **For the Class of 2025(0525) cohort and beyond:**

Students will take an ATI Proctored Dosage Calculation Exam in each clinical course, beginning with the semester in which dosage calculation is taught. Students must achieve the passing standard applicable to their program year.

Sophomore – 90%

Junior – 95%

Senior – 100%

Students who are unsuccessful on the first attempt of any ATI Proctored Dosage Calculation Exam will complete mandatory remediation activities before sitting for a second attempt.

#### **Dismissal from the Nursing Program**

Nursing students may be dismissed from the nursing program for any of the following reasons:

- A. Providing false or incomplete information on the admissions application form.
- B. Knowingly obfuscating history of past criminal records.
- C. Receiving a C- or below twice in the same course or three different nursing or correlative courses.(see Progression Policies)
- D. Academic Honesty. See the Carthage College policy:  
[https://www.carthage.edu/community-code/academic-concerns/academic-honesty\\_guidelines/](https://www.carthage.edu/community-code/academic-concerns/academic-honesty_guidelines/)
- E. Second violation of clinical agency policies.
- F. Generating a third clinical improvement contract.
- G. Unsafe client care.
- H. Cumulative GPA below 2.75 for two consecutive terms.
- I. Inability to complete the clinical portion of the program.
- J. Falsifying documentation relative to any aspect of the nursing program.
- K. Unprofessional behaviors or attitudes that are inconsistent with the ANA's Code of Ethics or the Carthage Nursing Student Code of Behavior.

#### **Petition for Readmission**

A student who has been dismissed from the nursing program may petition the faculty for readmission. The petition must address the circumstances that led to the student's dismissal and include a comprehensive and reasonable plan to ensure the student's progress if they are readmitted. The student may consult with their academic advisor for assistance in constructing the petition. Readmission is not guaranteed. A petition for

readmission is to be submitted to the Director of Nursing within 5 business days of receiving the letter of dismissal.

### **Unsafe Client Care Policy**

A student is considered unsafe may be dismissed from the clinical area if they commit any of the following:

1. Evidence of alcohol or drug intoxication while in the clinical area.
2. Consistent pattern of lack of preparedness for client care.
3. Performing skills for which they were unprepared.
4. Failure to provide basic client safety precautions.
5. Verbal or physical abuse of a client, family member, colleague, faculty, or staff member.
6. Administering medication without appropriate supervision.
7. Engaging in any activity outside the scope of nursing student practice.
8. Falsification of client records/documents.
9. A consistent pattern of poor or impaired judgment.
10. A consistent pattern of tardiness.
11. Behaviors that result in potential or actual impairment of clinical judgment, such as anxiety or fear.
12. Willfully violating clinical agency policies and procedures.

Depending on the severity of the offense, a student may be dismissed from the program or may incur other disciplinary action. The faculty member involved in the incident will contact the course director and director of nursing immediately to determine further action.

### **Technical Standards for Admission and Progression in the Carthage College Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program**

Successful participation in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program requires that a candidate possess the ability to meet the requirements of the program. Carthage College adheres to the tenets set forth in the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and will make reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities. The program may modify certain course requirements to provide an individual with disabilities an equivalent opportunity to achieve results equal to those of a non-disabled person; however, there are no substitutes for the following essential skills.

The applicant/candidate must initially meet the health requirements and technical standards to gain admission to the nursing program and must also continue to meet them throughout participation in the program. If a student has a change in health status while enrolled in the nursing program, the student is required to inform the director of nursing, submit a physician release, and update the technical standards form. Students unable to meet the Carthage College Nursing Department technical standards will be unable to complete the program. Students shall notify the program of any change in their ability to meet the technical standards.

### **Technical Standards for Carthage College Nursing Students**

The Carthage College Department of Nursing technical standards apply to all candidates for admission and progression through the program. The technical standards include but are not limited to the following:

- **Observational Ability**

The student must have the ability to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of clinical/laboratory activities and patient care experiences. The student must be able to document these observations accurately.

- **Communication Ability**

The student must effectively communicate both verbally and non-verbally to obtain information and explain that information to others. Each student must have the ability to read, write, comprehend and speak the English language to facilitate communication with instructors, peers, patients, family members, and other members of the health care team. The student must be able to document and

maintain accurate records, present information and instructions in an effective and professional manner.

- **Motor and Sensory Ability**

The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to provide safe and effective care for patients. The student must have sufficient levels of neuromuscular control and eye-to-hand coordination, as well as possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving and physical exertion required for safe patient care. The student is expected to be able to maintain consciousness and equilibrium and have the strength and stamina to perform satisfactorily in clinical settings.

- **Intellectual – Conceptual Ability**

The student must have the ability to develop reasoning and problem-solving skills with the ability to measure, calculate, analyze, synthesize objective and subjective data, and to make decisions in a timely manner that reflect thoughtful deliberation and sound clinical judgment. The student must demonstrate application of these skills and possess the ability to incorporate new information from peers, instructors, and preceptors, as well as the nursing/healthcare literature to formulate sound judgment, develop/implement/evaluate plans of care, and develop priorities for patient care activities.

- **Behavioral and Social Attributes**

The student is expected to possess the emotional stability required to optimally exercise intellectual and cognitive skills for sound judgment and reasoning. Compassion, integrity, motivation, and concern for others are personal attributes required of those in the nursing program. The student must fully utilize intellectual capacities that facilitate prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical settings, the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and other members of the health care team. The ability to establish rapport and maintain interpersonal relationships with individuals/families/groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds. Each student must be able to adapt to changing environments; display flexibility; accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical settings; and effectively collaborate in the clinical setting with other members of the healthcare team.

- **Ability to Manage Stressful Situations**

The student must be able to adapt to and function effectively in stressful situations encountered in both the classroom and clinical settings, including emergency situations. Students will encounter multiple stressors in the nursing program, which may include personal, patient-related, family, faculty, peer, or program-related.

- **Evaluation**

An applicant/candidate with a disability shall not, based on his or her disability (except those which would preclude the essential skills outlined above) be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, nor be subjected to discrimination in the program. Carthage College may require that the applicant/student undergo a physical examination and/or an occupational skills evaluation.

### **Policy on Missed Class, Laboratory, and/or Clinical Experiences**

Professional nursing is committed to the provision of safe, competent, ethical care (Fowler, 2015).

Educational experiences for nursing students at Carthage College are designed to fulfill this commitment and produce graduates who are safe, compassionate, and ethically and clinically competent entry-level clinicians. These educational experiences, whether they be in the classroom, the laboratory, or the clinical setting are purposeful activities that develop nursing competencies in a purposeful and ongoing manner.

Competent nursing practice requires the attainment of knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, skills, and, most importantly, judgment. Achieving these abilities requires active engagement on the student's part in all planned learning experiences. Missing these experiences may impede the student's ability to attain an



acceptable level of competence and to achieve the desired level of judgment, and hence jeopardize successful completion of the student learning outcomes for a particular course or courses.

Nursing Faculty have the responsibility to society to ensure that the graduates of the BSN program at Carthage College are safe upon entering practice.

To that end, the faculty have agreed upon the following policy:

1. It is expected that students will attend all nursing courses, laboratory, and clinical experiences.
2. Students who will be absent from class, laboratory, and/or clinical must notify their appropriate faculty member by texting and/or sending an email or leaving a phone message before or on the day of the scheduled class, laboratory, or clinical experience.
3. A student who is absent must provide an explanation, a note from a health care provider (if necessary), or other supporting evidence for the absence. Illness or injury is an excused absence with documentation from a healthcare provider, including the campus nurse. Oversleeping, forgetting or social reasons for not attending clinical are unexcused absences. A pattern of unexcused absences may result in a non-passing grade for clinical. This also includes not attending mandatory skill practice in Lab if assigned in your course.
4. Student clinical absences will be logged and tracked by the clinical instructor and documented on the student's midterm and/or final clinical evaluation, and reported to the course director at the time of the absence.
5. If the student misses clinical time, they must meet with the clinical instructor to establish learning goals and assignments that support ways to make up the missed time hour for hour and that fulfill the objectives of that particular clinical. If patterns of missed clinical time persist, a Clinical Improvement Contract will be developed to facilitate the student's ability to demonstrate the attainment of the clinical objectives. All plans will be shared with the course director and the Director of Nursing.
6. Student clinical absences are tracked during each clinical rotation and patterns of absence are discussed at course meetings and at the Progression Committee levels.
7. A failing grade will be assigned to a student when clinical time and/or lab time experiences preclude the student from demonstrating attainment of the required competencies and/or course objectives, and/or the ability of the faculty to adequately assess clinical competencies and learning outcomes at the expected level.

Reference:

Fowler, M. (2015). *Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). ANA.

Approved by the faculty, May 18, 2016.

### **Required Certifications and Data Archiving**

The Department of Nursing uses a data management system for verifying and storing required data. All students are required to submit required documents to this system. Requirements include: a background check, a drug screen, current American Heart Association Healthcare Provider CPR certification, facility identified vaccinations and titers, physical examination, and required release forms. Information on this system is to be completed prior to the beginning of the first clinical rotation. All information is to be uploaded to the system before the start of the fall term of the sophomore year. Students will not be allowed to participate in clinical without this information being on file and verified by the department. Unexcused clinical absences may result in a failing grade for the course. Information must be kept updated as required by clinical site request.

### **BSN Health and Safety Requirements**

All nursing students must have proof of having met the following health and safety requirements prior to beginning clinical and have uploaded all necessary documents into Castle Branch by the date published by the department. Students are also responsible for updating their requirements as detailed below in the online archiving system. Students who do not have proof of the following requirements will not be allowed in the clinical area, and this time will be considered unexcused absences.

- Annual physical exam by credentialed health care provider (physician, nurse practitioner, etc.)

- Annual TB assessment (either two-step skin test or Quantiferon blood test)
- Varicella Vaccine or Titer (one time)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella Titer (one time)
- 10 Panel drug screen (one time)
- Hepatitis B Vaccine or Titer (one time)
- Annual Influenza Vaccine
- Basic Life Support Certification (BLS) Provider Course by the American Heart Association.
- Completion of an OSHA approved courses ( located in Castle Branch under eLearning)
- Completion of an acceptable course in HIPAA (located Castle Branch under eLearning)
- Signed acknowledgment of having read the Department of Nursing Student Handbook in entirety.
  - Signing this acknowledgement means that the student has read the entire handbook and agrees to abide by its policies in their entirety.

### **Additional Program Costs**

The table below presents additional costs for which the student will be responsible above and beyond their tuition. These costs are incurred either because these items are required by regulatory agencies (i.e., health and safety requirements, CPR certification), or because the faculty has deemed them necessary for student learning and progress in the program (books and testing fees). ATI and graduation fees are assessed by the Office of Student Accounts based actual costs. All other items, including white coat ceremony, are estimates of student cost. Prices are subject to change.

	<b>Year I</b>	<b>Year II</b>	<b>Year III</b>
CPR Certification	\$50		\$50
Uniform/Supplies	\$210		
Health and Safety Fees	\$140		
Books/Testing (ATI) -estimate	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000
White Coat/Pinning/Graduation Fees		\$75	\$100
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1400</b>	<b>\$1075</b>	<b>\$1150</b>

### **Code of Professional Conduct**

Nursing majors at Carthage College pledge themselves to:

- Maintain the highest standard of personal and professional conduct.
- Actively promote and encourage the highest level of ethics and professional behavior within nursing education, the profession of nursing, and the student nurses' association.
- Come to class, clinical, and laboratory prepared to engage in the learning experience for the day.
- Maintain the confidentiality of privileged information at all times.
- Refuse to engage in or condone discrimination on the basis of race, gender, age, citizenship, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability.
- Refuse to engage in or condone any form of cheating or plagiarism.
- Take appropriate action to report dishonorable practices to proper authorities using established channels.
- Communicate in a respectful, truthful, and professional manner with colleagues, faculty, staff, and clinical partner employees.
- Dress appropriately (see dress code).
- Attempt to resolve conflict in a mature and professional manner.
- Advocate for the rights of all clients.
- Take appropriate action to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others.

- Provide care in a timely, compassionate, and professional manner.
- Communicate client care in a truthful, timely, and accurate manner.
- Accept responsibility for your own actions.
- Promote excellence in nursing by encouraging lifelong learning and professional development.
- Treat others with respect and promote an environment that respects human rights, values, and choice of cultural and spiritual beliefs.
- Collaborate in a reasonable manner with faculty and clinic staff to ensure the highest quality of client care.
- Use every opportunity to improve faculty and clinic staff understanding of the learning needs of nursing students.
- Refrain from performing any technique or procedure for which the student has not been adequately educated.
- Refrain from any deliberate action or omission of care in the academic or clinical setting that creates unnecessary risk of injury to the client, self, or others.
- Refrain from misusing educational materials either on campus or at the clinical site.
- Abstain from use of alcoholic beverages or any substances that impair judgment in the academic and clinical setting.
- Strive to achieve and maintain an optimal level of health.
  - Adapted from the NSNA Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct, 2001

### **Academic and Clinical Misconduct**

Misconduct in academic or clinical settings refers to any actions or attempted actions that may result in creating an unfair advantage for oneself or unfair disadvantage for any other member of the community. This situation occurs when any student intentionally attempts to falsify, fabricate, or tamper with data, information, records, or any material that is relevant to any course, laboratory, or academic exercise or function. Such actions include but are not limited to behaviors characteristic of cheating, collusion, plagiarism, fabrication, and deception.

#### **Activities Considered Offenses of Academic or Clinical Misconduct**

***Cheating*** refers to any attempt to give or obtain assistance in a formal academic or clinical exercise where assistance has not been previously authorized. This includes possessing or utilizing any unauthorized aid or materials before, during, or after any quizzes, exams, essays, or assessment activities. Students may not copy, distribute, or recreate information presented during quizzes, exams, labs, essays, or assessment exercises. Thus, selling, posting, or publishing course information and content such as lecture notes, handouts, recordings, or any other information without the expressed permission of the instructor is prohibited. Furthermore, students are expected to refrain from seeking unauthorized aid from other classmates and/or from outside sources. This prohibits students from sharing work and condemns the utilization of electronic devices such as smartphones, tablets, and watches, to hide, share, or look up information when not pre authorized.

***Collusion*** refers to any type of collaboration that occurs on an assignment or assessment without permission from the professor or clinical instructor. Working with another person on an academic undertaking for which a student was expected to be individually responsible is considered dishonest. This includes dispersing the objectives of a particular assignment among multiple students so as to reduce the burden of the workload. Such behaviors are unacceptable.

***Plagiarism*** refers to the adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person without due acknowledgement. This includes submitting the work of another as one's own or failing to provide proper citation for content or thoughts in a work that are not one's own. Upon submission of any oral or written work for credit that includes words, ideas, or data of others, the source of such information must be

acknowledged through complete, accurate, and specific references. If verbatim statements are made, quotation marks must be utilized appropriately. To provide proper citations, students are expected to refer to the most current version of the American Psychological Association (APA) manual.

**Fabrication** refers to the falsification of documents, reports, or records of any kind. Altering information or data and presenting it as legitimate so as to deceive or mislead members of the academic community including classmates, professors, or instructors, is strictly prohibited. To avoid such behaviors students must refrain from misrepresenting either one's own attendance or another's attendance in any given class, lab, seminar, or assessment activity. All information presented in documents, charts, journals, and logs is expected to be legitimate. Students must refrain from reporting or documenting any information which they did not truly perform or obtain without proper notation.

**Deception** refers to the provision of false information to an instructor concerning any formal academic or clinical exercise. Students are prohibited from providing misleading excuses for missing a deadline or claiming to have experienced technical difficulties so as to justify failing to complete assigned activities on time. This form of misconduct refers to any active addition or omission of information that is intended to deceive an instructor or someone in authority for an advantage.

### **Ethical Implications**

Nursing is considered to be one of the most honest professions, so academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Content knowledge and skill performance are expected. The well-being of patients and clients depends on it. Engagement in any of the previously mentioned behaviors violates trust in the nursing profession. Furthermore, committing these acts in either academic or clinical settings results in a lack of the acquisition of the knowledge that is essential to providing, competent, safe, and quality care to all the patients a student may encounter throughout their career. Academic integrity implies that each person will be honest in their academic and clinical work and report any violations of the honor code committed by other students as outlined in the College's Community Code and the Department of Nursing's Student Handbook.

### **How to Avoid Academic and Clinical Misconduct**

To prevent engaging in any of the aforementioned acts of misconduct in either the academic or clinical setting, follow the recommendations below.

1. Do your own work.
2. Avoid searching for shortcuts.
3. Do not copy and paste information *\*if you do, include quotation marks and cite appropriately*
4. Do not lend your work to others.
5. Do not "borrow" another's work.
6. Understand the aforementioned definitions and acts of academic and clinical misconduct.
7. When in doubt, seek clarification and communicate with your instructor.
8. Utilize available resources for assistance such as the writing center and tutors.
9. Utilize your time wisely – time management is the key to success.

### **Consequences**

It is the expectation of all students that they will be honest in all of their academic and clinical work. By enrolling in the program, students agree to adhere to high standards of academic honesty and integrity while understanding that failure to comply with this pledge may result in disciplinary action as outlined in both the Carthage College Community Code and the Carthage College Department of Nursing Handbook.

Engagement in any of the aforementioned acts of misconduct will result in further investigation by the individual instructor.

At their discretion, this information can be submitted to the Provost's Office. Failure of the work or activity in question, failure of the course overall, or dismissal from the program is to be determined by the faculty member whenever proof that an honesty violation has occurred. A written report of the violation must also be submitted to the Provost. Any student who receives two or more academic dishonesty reports, is

automatically dismissed from the college. In a similar manner, students enrolled in the nursing program are subject to adhere to the Academic Improvement Contract Policy as outlined in the Carthage College Department of Nursing Handbook. Any student who receives three Academic Improvement Contracts is dismissed from the program.

### **Health Risks Related to Nursing Care Activities**

During the course of caring for patients and their families, nursing students may be exposed to infectious diseases such as Hepatitis B or C, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), Tuberculosis (TB), or other infectious/communicable diseases. Nursing students are also at risk for injuries during caregiving activities, including needle stick injuries, back injuries, or fall injuries. The Department of Nursing mandates learning opportunities that assist learners to identify risks and reduce exposure, such as standard precautions training, and it has instituted safeguards such as immunization requirements to assist students in reducing health risks and preventing injuries. It is the learner's responsibility to inform the Department of Nursing and the College Nurse of any change in their health status, such as pregnancy, contraction of a communicable or infectious disease, or any injury that could affect their performance as soon as possible. In the event of an injury during clinical, the policy of the agency where the practicum is occurring will be followed. Students will be asked to sign a form indicating that they have read and agree to follow this policy.

### **Pregnancy**

If a student is engaged in clinical and has been confirmed as being pregnant, the student must submit documentation from their primary care provider (Physician or Nurse Practitioner) or obstetrician verifying that the student may engage in clinical practice without medical restriction. This document must be submitted to the Program Director and it will be placed in the student's file. If it is determined by the Program Director that the student will not be able to safely fulfill clinical requirements, a leave of absence from the course and clinical will be required. Following the delivery or cessation of pregnancy, the primary care provider or obstetrician must document that the student may return to class and clinical without restrictions. This document must be submitted to the Program Director.

### **Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Policy**

Students who are possibly exposed to blood borne pathogens by way of needle sticks or exposure to human body fluids must report the exposure to their clinical instructor immediately. Exposure during a precepted experience must be reported immediately to the preceptor and as soon as possible to the course faculty member. For students who are possibly exposed to blood borne pathogens by way of needle sticks or exposure to human body fluids at off-campus sites, such as hospitals or community health settings, the following policy will apply:

- For exposures in a hospital or another agency with a policy covering possible exposure to blood borne pathogens, the policy of the facility will be followed.
- For exposures in a setting where there is no policy on possible exposure to blood borne pathogens, the student should either report immediately to their personal health care provider, or to the nearest emergency room. The student should identify themselves as a Carthage College student and request the following baseline laboratory tests, as applicable, according to CDC guidelines. Students are responsible for the cost of testing and may submit costs to their health insurance:
  - HIV antibody
  - Hepatitis B surface antibody
  - Hepatitis C antibody
  - Testing for Viral Hemorrhagic Fevers
  - Pregnancy test (if appropriate)

Clinical instructors and course faculty members will keep a record of the circumstances of the needle stick or body fluid exposure and the counseling the student received about visiting an emergency department or other healthcare facility. A copy of this record will be sent to the Director of Nursing.

### **Clinical Agency Policy**

Students enrolled in a nursing course with a clinical component are expected to follow the policies and procedures of the assigned clinical agency. The first violation of a clinical agency policy will result in a student being placed on a clinical improvement contract. A second violation may result in failure of the nursing course and possible dismissal from the program.

### **Professional Boundaries**

Professional codes of conduct are the foundation for caring relationships. These relationships exist primarily during the student's education within the timeframe of their enrollment in the nursing program. These relationships are developed between the client-nurse, student-faculty, faculty-faculty, and student-student. The client-student relationship exists during the time the student is enrolled in a specific course. The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) presents fundamental information about such relationships at the link: <https://www.ncsbn.org/video/professional-boundaries-in-nursing>. Patients/families may express gratitude to the student for care provided in the context of the patient-student relationship. The Department of Nursing limits a student acceptance of gifts from a patient/client/family to those less than \$3.00 in value.

### **Patient Confidentiality**

Patients are entitled to confidentiality of their medical information. Federal legislation, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) mandates that no personally identifiable patient information be released without the patient's permission. All practicum policies and procedures comply with HIPAA. While students may share non-identifiable information for course and learning purposes, no patient information of any kind should be shared outside confidential settings in the practicum site or classroom.

No facility or facility information should be shared via email, on social networking sites, or by other means outside of the learning environment. Pictures of patients must never be taken, whether the patient gives permission or not. No reference to a patient, even if de-identified, should ever be shared electronically via email or on social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc. The student who violates any aspect of HIPAA may expect disciplinary action as outlined below.

### **Disciplinary Action for Violation of HIPAA Policy**

**Principles:** Protected health information (PHI) is confidential and protected from access, use, or disclosure except to authorized individuals requiring access to such information. Attempting to obtain or use, actually obtaining or using, or assisting others to obtain or use PHI, when unauthorized or improper, will result in counseling and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination or dismissal from the program.

<b>Level of Violation</b>	<b>Examples</b>
<b>Level I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Misdirected faxes, e-mails &amp; mail.</li><li>• Failing to log-off or close or secure a computer with protected PHI displayed.</li><li>• Leaving copy of PHI in a non-secure area.</li><li>• Dictating or discussing PHI in a non-secure area (lobby, hallway, cafeteria, elevator).</li><li>• Failing to redact or de-identify patient information for operational/business uses.</li><li>• Transmission of PHI using an unsecured method.</li><li>• Leaving detailed PHI on an answering machine.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improper disposal of PHI.</li> </ul>
<b>Level II</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requesting another individual to inappropriately access patient information.</li> <li>• Inappropriate sharing of ID/password with another coworker or encouraging coworker to share ID/password.</li> <li>• Failure to secure data on mobile devices through encryption/password.</li> </ul>
<b>Level III</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Releasing or using aggregate patient data without facility approval for research, studies, publications, etc.</li> <li>• Accessing or allowing access to PHI without having a legitimate reason.</li> <li>• Giving an individual access to your electronic signature.</li> <li>• Accessing patient information due to curiosity or concern, such as a family member, friend, neighbor, coworker, famous or “public” person, etc.</li> <li>• Posting PHI to social media.</li> </ul>
<b>Level IV</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Releasing or using data for personal gain.</li> <li>• Compiling a mailing list to be sold for personal gain or for some personal use.</li> <li>• Disclosure or abusive use of PHI.</li> <li>• Tampering with or unauthorized destruction of information.</li> </ul>

### **Definitions and Caveats:**

PHI = Protected health information; this includes all forms of patient-related data including demographic information

Depending on the nature of the breach, violations at any level may result in more severe action or termination

Levels I-III are considered to be without malicious intent; Level IV connotes malicious intent At Level IV, individuals may be subject to civil and/or criminal liability. For any offense, a preliminary investigation will precede assignment of level of violation. Final determination of the event’s severity and its outcome will be determined by the Director of Nursing.

### **Children and Pets in the Classroom**

No children or pets are allowed in the classroom unless their presence is directly related to class content and specific information has been obtained from the course director in advance. Service animals are an exception and will be allowed in the classroom if the student/faculty provides evidence for the accommodation.

### **Professional Appearance in Clinical Settings**

Students, when in the clinical setting, are representatives of the Department of Nursing and Carthage College. It is expected that their behavior and appearance will always be professional. Students should always be well-groomed when in the clinical area and ensure appropriate physical hygiene standards are met. If a student is inappropriately attired or does not exhibit appropriate physical hygiene, they may be asked to leave the clinical area and the day will be counted as an unexcused absence. Students who have questions about what is or is not appropriate should consult their clinical instructor or course director. Any deviations from the clinical attire policy will be reported to the Director of Nursing by the faculty involved.

- A. Name/ID Badge: Students will wear their Carthage College identification badge at all times when in the clinical area. Identification will be conspicuously displayed on the collar or lapel of the scrub top or shirt. If a clinical agency provides ID badges, students will wear them at all times when in the clinical agency. The badge and name tag must be visible at all times. A retractable lanyard of the photo ID can be worn on the lapel of the scrub top in accordance with hospital policies.
- B. Uniform: The Carthage nursing uniform consists of a red scrub top with the embroidered college logo, and black straight-leg scrub pants. No other scrub top is to be worn. Students may wear a turtleneck, mock turtleneck or a clean t-shirt in good condition, in either solid white, red, or black under the scrub top. A Carthage Nursing warm up jacket may be worn but is not required. Uniforms must be clean and wrinkle-free, and in good condition. In community or psychiatric settings, business casual attire may be worn as required by the clinical agency. Blue jeans, hoodies, halter tops, t-shirts, or any other informal attire are not allowed. If the student is unclear what constitutes business casual, they should consult their clinical instructor. In situations where a lab coat is required, the student will dress in business attire with the lab coat over the street clothes. The Carthage College patch is required. Appropriate identification must be displayed at all times. The clinical instructor will indicate when a lab coat is appropriate attire for their clinical.
- C. Footwear: Shoes are required and should be polished and/or clean and in good repair. Footwear should be comfortable and either black or white. Gym shoes are appropriate if clean, with clean laces. Footwear must have closed toes, no porous shoes allowed. Sandals and beach footwear are not acceptable. Shoes should not have holes in the top larger than a pencil and must have a strap on the back or a closed heel. The color of the socks should be appropriate to the uniform and should not draw attention to themselves. Black or white are acceptable.
- D. Hair: Hair should be neat and clean in the lab and clinical. For safety and patient care, long hair should be pulled back away from the face and secured so it does not fall onto patients or interfere with the work area. Male hair styles should be no longer than collar length or pulled back out of the face. Hair color should be natural in color. Beards and mustaches must be kept clean and neatly trimmed.
- E. Nails: Fingernails should be in good repair, clean, and neatly trimmed. Long nails, artificial nails, and nail adornments are not permitted in patient areas. If nail polish is worn, it should be free of chips and be of a natural color that compliments skin tone.
- F. Odor: Body odor and perfume/cologne can be offensive to patients, family members, or your peers. Perfumes/colognes may cause allergic reactions. Perfume and colognes should not be worn in areas with patient contact. Excellent personal hygiene, including oral hygiene, is an expectation of students.
- G. Body Adornments: Jewelry should be worn in moderation. Excessive jewelry such as numerous rings per hand, multiple bracelets, long necklaces, dangling earrings, long fingernails, excessive makeup, non-natural hair color, and other adornments are not appropriate for professional settings. Piercings and tattoos should be covered according to clinical institutional policy.
- H. Religious Attire: Carthage College provides clinical attire options in the bookstore. Please connect with the Director of Nursing if other options are needed.
- I. Medical or Other Exceptions: If a student has other exceptions to the professional appearance guidelines, please discuss them with your instructor.

### **Procedure for Clinical Absences**

Course syllabi may contain special instructions and should be adhered to according to the instructor's wishes. Generally speaking, however, if a student is unable to attend clinical, the student must:

- A. Contact the course and clinical faculty, at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled clinical time.
- B. Notify by phone the designated client or clinical agency, at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled clinical time.



C. Students who miss more than one (1) day of clinical experience due to illness or injury (or upon request from clinical instructor), may be requested to submit documentation from a health care provider.

### **Grade Appeals**

The Department of Nursing abides by the Carthage College procedure for appealing a grade. The procedure may be found here:

<https://www.carthage.edu/current-students/community-code/policy-on-grade-review/>

### **Formal Complaint Policy**

Formal complaints will follow the Carthage College policy:

<https://www.carthage.edu/current-students/community-code/general-college-policies/complaint-policy/>

For complaints other than grade disputes, made by parents of students, community members, clients or others must be in writing and directed to the Director of Nursing. All formal complaints will be evaluated by the Director and a written reply will be given within one month.

### **Student Accountability**

A student who practices unsafe nursing care at any time or fails to meet the inherent moral, ethical, and legal nursing practice guidelines, or who is not meeting the course or clinical objectives of any course or course, will meet with the faculty member responsible for the course/clinical to discuss the issue. Depending on the severity of the offense, the faculty member may include the Director of Nursing in this conversation. The outcome of this initial meeting may include generating an Academic or Clinical Improvement Contract (see below), failure of the course or clinical, or dismissal from the program. Persistent unsafe practice or unsafe performance, which results in untoward consequences or has the potential for untoward consequences for the patient or health care team member; failure to meet moral, ethical, and legal nursing practice guidelines in the course, may result in dismissal from the program, as well as Carthage College.

### **Clinical Improvement Contract**

A Clinical Improvement Contract (CIC) is developed by the course or clinical faculty to clarify expected student behaviors and to assist the student in improving their clinical performance. The CIC is generated when the student has been found to demonstrate behavior that is not consistent with course policies or objectives, or when behavior is inconsistent with professional nursing standards. The purpose of the CIC is to help students reflect on their behavior and to determine ways to improve their clinical performance and/or professional behavior. If the student cannot meet the outcomes of the course and/or the plan set forth in the CIC, the student will receive a non-passing grade for the course/clinical. A copy of the CIC form is appended to this handbook.

### **Academic/Clinical Improvement Contract Policy**

1. A student who demonstrates behavior inconsistent with course/clinical policies/expectations will receive written notification by the course/clinical faculty to arrange a meeting between the faculty and the student.
2. The faculty member will generate a Clinical Improvement Contract (CIC), which will be shared with the student's advisor and the Director of Nursing.
3. The student and faculty must meet to discuss the expectations outlined in the contract and each party must sign the contract.
4. The contract must be signed for the student to continue in the course/clinical. If the student does not sign the contract, then the student will not be allowed to continue in the clinical and a non-passing grade will be assigned to the student for that course/clinical. The student may respond with written comments.
5. At the completion of the course or clinical rotation, the faculty will write a summary of resolution of the CIC, which will be shared with the student, advisor, and Director of Nursing.
6. A student may receive only two CICs. More than two CICs will initiate a review of the student's academic

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## 18

## **Section I: Policy limiting student use of social media in clinical practicum**

Use of social media is prohibited while performing direct client care activities, unless social media use in these areas has been previously approved. Social media may be used during clinical rest or meal breaks, unless social media use for business purposes has been previously approved by the clinical site.

## **Section II: Summary of other social media guidelines**

1. Confidential, proprietary, and trade-secret information about Carthage College and/or the Department of Nursing or its affiliates, students, employees, or alumni may not be posted.
2. Client privacy must be maintained in all communications. Do not disclose information that may be used to identify clients or their health condition and remember that even de-identified information may be recognized by clients, their families, or their employers.
3. Copyright and intellectual property rights must be preserved. Violations may result in lawsuits, fines, and imprisonment. Copyright content can be very valuable; owners may routinely search to see if their material is being used without permission and may take steps to enforce their rights.
4. Carthage College owns and controls its name(s) and other marks, logos, insignias, seal, designs, and symbols. Unauthorized use of these trademarks is prohibited by trademark and licensing policies.
5. Do not use Social Media sites for personal, non-work-related purposes when you are supposed to be in class or clinical. Recognize that other clinical agencies or departments may also set more restrictive or specific policies regarding access to social media sites.
6. There should be no expectation of privacy when using a Carthage account to visit internet websites. Email communications and internet use may be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act or for audit purposes.
7. Adhere to the rules that apply to all other aspects of your responsibilities as a Carthage College community member, including professionalism, integrity, confidentiality, and security.

## **Section III: Social Networking Guidelines**

1. **Think twice before posting.** Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely known and how that may reflect on both you and Carthage College or the Department of Nursing.
2. **Anonymity is a myth.** Write everything as if you are signing it with your name.
3. **Remember your audience.** A presence in the social media world is or can be available to the public at large. This includes prospective students, current students, current employers and colleagues, clients, and their families, and peers. Consider this before publishing to ensure the post will not alienate, harm, or provoke any of these groups.
4. **Strive for accuracy.** Get the facts straight before posting them on social media. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important if posting on behalf of the College or the Department in any capacity.
5. **Familiarize yourself with and use conservative privacy settings regardless of the content on your profile.** Practice restraint when disclosing personal information on social networking sites; your audience is everyone.
6. **Consider the professional image you would like to portray.** As a rule, only post online what you would want your director, faculty, or supervisor to see. Many employers search social networking sites as part of their background checks for new employees. Pictures and comments, no matter the content, can impact the respect and trust your patients have for you, now and in the future.
7. **Don't "friend" clients, family members, or those to whom your report in a professional manner on social networking sites.**
8. **If in doubt, don't post!**
9. **Do not harass, libel, slander, or embarrass anyone.** Do not post any material that is obscene, defamatory, profane, libelous, threatening, harassing, abusive, hateful, or embarrassing to another person or entity. Individuals may be held personally liable for defamatory, proprietary, or libelous commentary.

**10. Disclose your relationship.** If you make comments that could reasonably be construed as an endorsement of the College's or Department's services, disclose your relationship with Carthage and/or the Department of Nursing.

#### **Section IV: Violations of the social media**

Incidents where the social media policy has been violated by students, faculty, and/or staff, will be thoroughly investigated and will result in corrective action. This action may consist of a written warning or dismissal from the program/college, as befits the infraction.

#### **How to Use Proper Email Etiquette When Writing to Professor**

Simple steps to send an email message that will foster good faculty/student rapport.

- 1. Use your college or university email.** This marks the message as legitimate and not spam. It also gives the professor an idea of who's sending the message. Do not use personal emails when contacting your professors.
- 2. Always use subject lines.** When filling the subject line, make sure that you mention what the email is for or regarding. You don't want it to seem like a randomly generated subject and end up in your professor's spam folder.
- 3. Address your professor directly.** Don't just launch straight into a request. Examples: 'Dear Dr. Smith', 'Hi, Dr. Jones', 'Professor Zimmerman, I hope all's well with you...'
- 4. Be sure you identify yourself.** If your college or university email address doesn't use your full last name (in other words, it uses your initials or some other abbreviation of your name), then make sure your first sentence identifies who you are by name. If your class is large, or taught in multiple sections, you may want to include your class and meeting time as well. Example: 'This is John Schmidt from your Pharmacology.'
- 5. Be polite.** Don't make demands, don't accuse, remember to write please and thank you.
- 6. Be succinct.** Keep your message short and to the point. Just get to the point and politely, respectfully, ask your request.
- 7. Be specific.** This may seem to conflict with the previous step, but it needn't be. Make sure you are as clear as possible about what it is you need to ask of your professor without writing a novel.
- 8. Think before you send.** Do not use your email to argue and never send an email when angry. You want to be sure that you maintain a professional demeanor.
- 9. Class or Clinical Absence.** If you're going to have to miss class, offer to bring written proof up front, don't make your professor have to ask.
- 10. Always be polite.** Close your email with something polite like 'Thanks', 'Thanks for your time', 'See you in class Wednesday', 'regards', etc. Then re-type your first name. Use email software to create a professional signature line.
- 11. Grammar and Spell check.** Prior to sending your email, be sure that you proofread your message. You shouldn't write your email as though you are texting your friend. Make sure it's got full sentences, proper grammar, and real spelling. Do not use texting abbreviations or jargon.
- 12. Do not write in all capital letters.** This is generally interpreted as SHOUTING.
- 13. Consider using a closing and personalized signature line.** Program this in your email program.