



2024-2025 Practical Nursing Student Handbook

The Practical Nursing (PN) Student Handbook contains important information to help nursing students succeed at Minnesota West Community & Technical College. It is a supplemental document to the information located on our Current Students page at <http://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/current-students>. The section on "Student Information & Policies" contains important information for all students. It is the student's responsibility to know the content of the Practical Nursing Student Handbook and the Minnesota West Student procedures and policies. All Minnesota West policies and procedures are uniformly applied.

The policies, rules, and procedures found herein are formulated on the most recent rules and regulations, laws, information, and dates available. They are subject to revision by state and federal agencies, which are beyond control of the College. Changes in rules and regulations or policies made by government agencies may supersede the information in this handbook. The College attempts to reconcile any conflict with government rules and to provide policy updates.

Message to Students

Welcome to the Minnesota West Community & Technical College Practical Nursing Program. Nursing students at Minnesota West have chosen a rewarding and fulfilling degree program.

Nursing is a respected and highly demanding profession. Being a nurse and becoming a nurse require a unique commitment and special personal and professional qualities. Nursing students must therefore meet certain standards. Clinical experiences in a variety of health care settings require travel and time away from home and family. Schedules vary and the time required for study, homework and preparation for clinical experiences is demanding. Individuals choosing nursing as a career must have the necessary physical, emotional and financial resources to meet the demands of the nursing program and of the nursing profession.

To prepare for a career in nursing, students are expected to:

- demonstrate behaviors characteristic of personal and professional integrity
- attend scheduled classes and clinicals
- display a willingness to explore new and different concepts and an inquiring attitude
- accept personal accountability for student's own learning and progression through the nursing program
- establish realistic priorities and methods for meeting program requirements
- complete assignments and course requirements **on time** and at a minimum academic level of "C"
- comply with policies set forth in this student handbook
- address questions and concerns with the individual instructor or advisor

Nursing students have responsibilities throughout the year to attend mandatory campus class activities. The activities may include, but may not be limited to:

- Designated class meetings (e.g. orientations, annual trainings, accreditation/board of nursing meetings)
- Major Exams (e.g. midterm and final exams)
- Class presentations/evaluation (e.g. ATI exams, NCLEX review courses)

This handbook is intended to serve as a valuable resource and guide for nursing students. Students are encouraged to refer to it often.

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PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The practical nursing curriculum provides students with the skills needed to administer safe, basic nursing care within the scope of the practical nurse as defined in Minnesota statutes. The practical nurse gives bedside care to clients under the supervision of registered nurses or doctors. Employers of practical nurses include hospitals, clinics, long-term care facilities, home care agencies, facilities that care for those with developmental disabilities, ambulance services and child care centers.

The first courses of the program are an introduction to practical nursing as a part of health care. To provide groundwork for future learning and understanding, the program will assist students in developing knowledge about the healthy individual, normal growth and development, the aging client, basic human needs for daily living, and the skills needed to assist those individuals unable to meet their basic needs. In addition, students will learn medications and drug calculation.

Early in the program students will survey common problems with health and various types of therapy. In the subsequent term, the study of problems with health continues. The study of the effects of illness on the child and family and the maternity client will also be studied. Students will identify the particular needs, health deviations and problems of these clients. This learning includes classroom, online, skills laboratory, and clinical experiences.

Mission and Philosophy

The following is not intended to be a comprehensive statement of the philosophy of the faculty of the Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program. Rather, it sets forth those beliefs and values that have high priority for the faculty and will, therefore, have a strong influence upon the nursing program and the manner in which it is implemented.

Mission

The Minnesota West Practical Nursing Programs provide nursing education using a variety of delivery methods to a diverse population with the goal of preparing graduates who practice safe, entry-level practical nursing care.

Philosophy

The Practical Nursing Program believes that Practical Nursing (PN) is grounded in the biological, psychological, sociological, and spiritual sciences. Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) care for diverse individuals in a variety of inpatient and community-based settings by providing safe, culturally sensitive, individualized patient/relationship centered care and by participating as a member of the health care team.

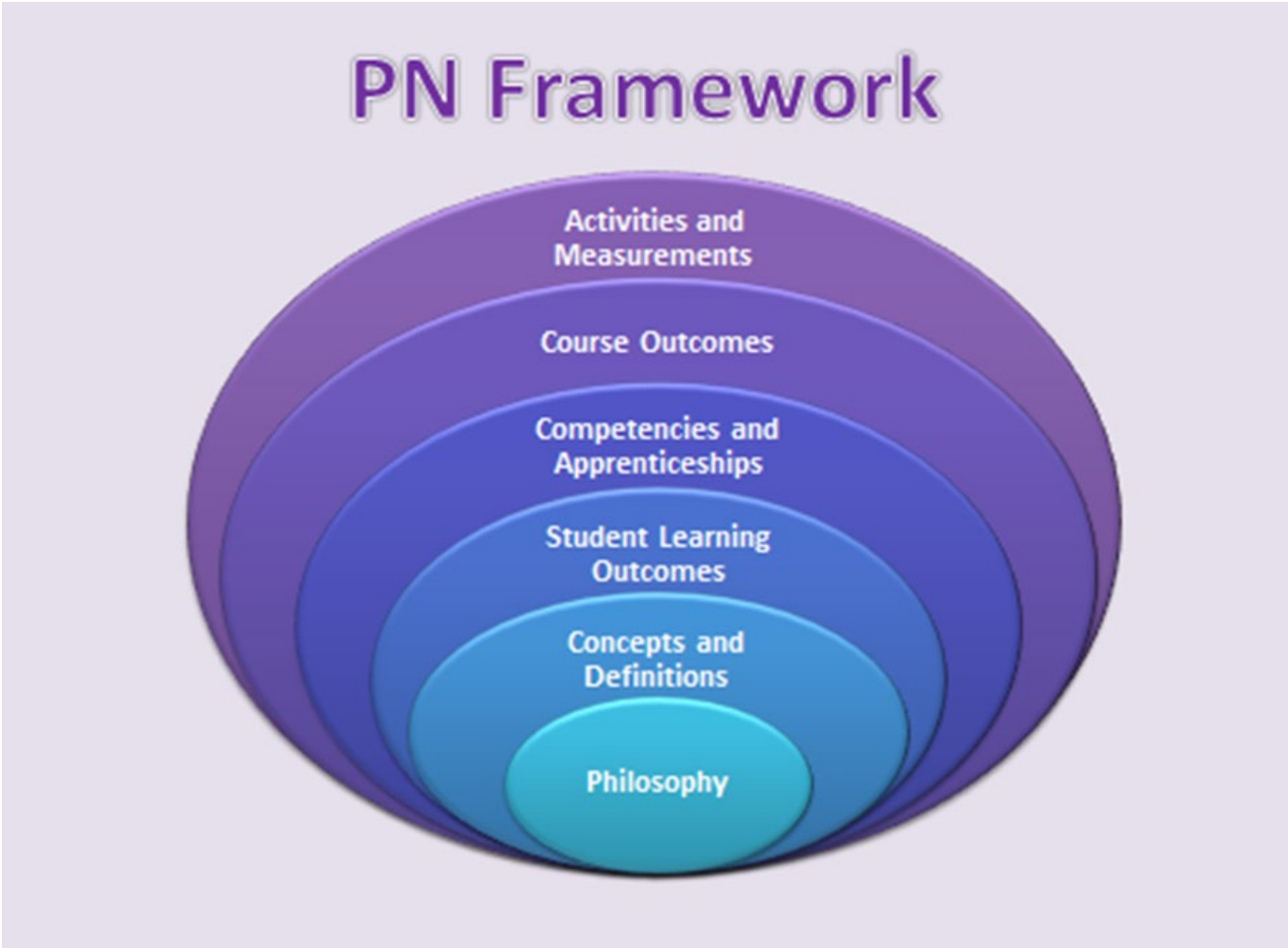
LPNs recognize that teamwork and interprofessional collaboration among health care professionals is critical to delivering safe, quality patient care. The ability to provide safe, patient-centered care is dependent on effectively utilizing information technology and informatics in the healthcare setting. Ongoing quality improvement activities are performed in concert with other members of the health care team. Implementing established evidence-based care is essential to the delivery of quality, safe, patient-centered care.

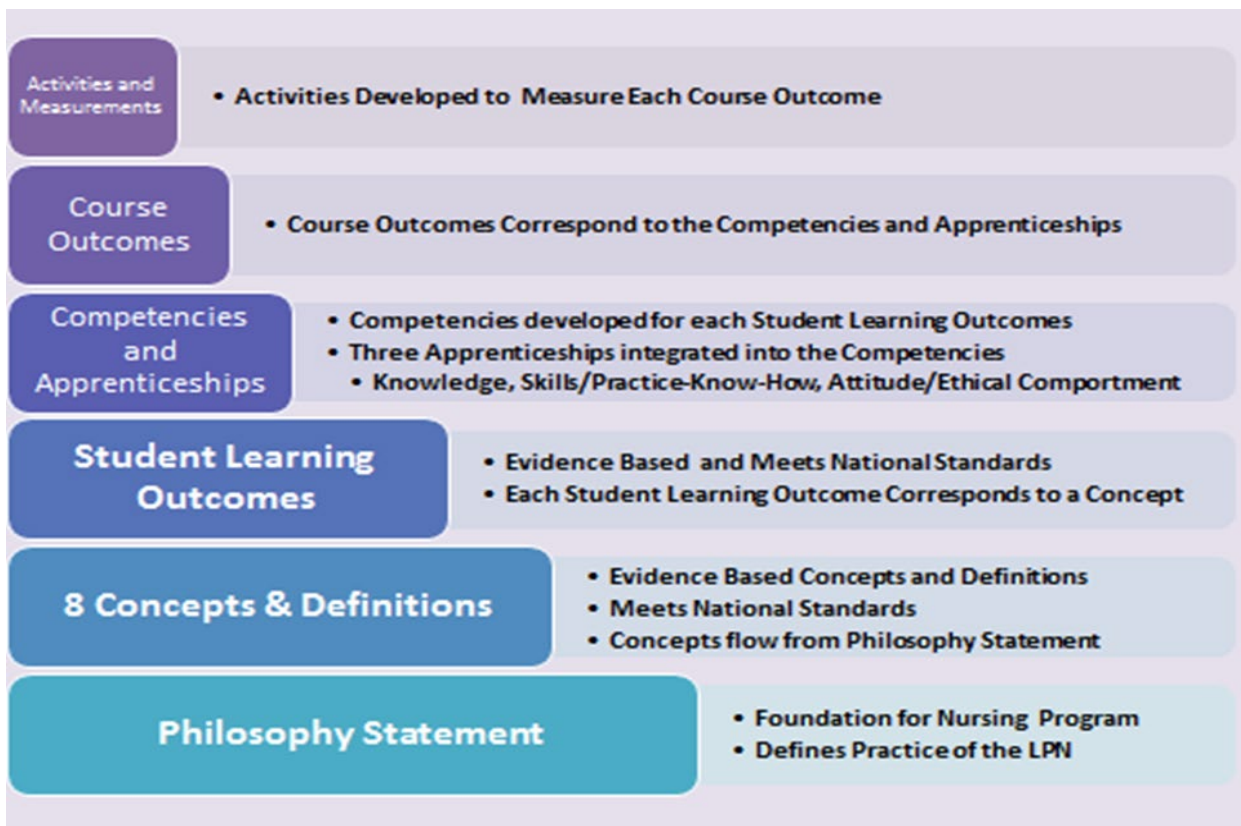
Professional values guide interactions with individuals, families, and the health care team. LPNs demonstrate professional behaviors by exhibiting accountability for one's actions, meeting the health care needs of patients, and assuming legal responsibility for the care provided. LPNs demonstrate professional identity by upholding a commitment to the public and by adhering to an established code of ethics.

The major roles of the LPN include provider of nursing care and member of the nursing profession. As providers of care, LPNs contribute to the promotion of wellness, use nursing judgment in the identification of current and emerging patient problems, and function as advocates for individuals and families. LPNs help to manage patient care through the use of established protocols and evidence-based practices incorporating the nursing process and caring as essential tools. In addition, LPNs demonstrate leadership by guiding and directing other LPNs and unlicensed assistive personnel to provide safe, quality patient care within the state's scope of practice. LPNs provide selected patient education using established protocols and reinforce education provided by other members of the health care team to achieve positive clinical outcomes.

The nursing program believes that students graduating from Minnesota West Community and Technical College's Practical Nursing Program must be ready to practice in a complex and changing clinical environment. The program measures eight student learning outcomes with identified competencies and apprenticeships by which the student must successfully complete to demonstrate proficiency in the role as a graduate of this PN program. From gradual leveling and evaluation in the didactic, lab, and clinical courses, students grow knowledge, skills, and values/attitudes to prepare for the LPN scope of practice. The student is given the opportunity to reflect on the importance of patient/relationship centered care, teamwork and collaboration, leadership skills, quality improvement, safety, informatics/technology, professional identify/behaviors, and nursing judgment/evidence-based care within individual practice as a future LPN.

Program Framework





Program Outcomes

- Student academic achievement is measured by program completion rates. The completion rate is based on the number of admitted students who are attending after the drop/add date. The goal of the nursing program is that 45% of the students graduate within 100% of the time allotted to complete the program based on the student's attendance plan and terms courses are offered.
- Student ability to pass the NCLEX on the first try is an indication of the success of the educational preparation the student received. The goal of the Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program is to be at 80% or above on the NCLEX exam pass rate on the first attempt.
- Graduates with a job in nursing 6 to 12 months post-graduation are an indicator of the appropriateness of the number of students prepared for a nursing career and the job demand in the area. Many graduates seek additional education in nursing while working, altering job placement rates which focus on graduate work status only. At 6 to 12 months post-graduation, at least 50% of graduates will report working as practical nurse at a employment location and time percentage they desire.
- Final program outcomes measured are related to specific course and resource achievements. In the NURS 1280 and 1295 courses, it is the program's goal to have 80% of students earning a satisfactory grade on SLO/Role Competency Criteria, 80% of students earning a satisfactory grade on the SLO reflection paper.

Student Learning Outcomes & Concepts

Table 2: Concepts and Student Learning Outcomes	
Concept	Student Learning Outcome (SLO)
Concept: Informatics/Technology	SLO Information/Technology: Utilize information technology in the health care setting.
Concept: Managing Care	SLO Managing Care: Utilize an established plan of care for an individual patient to organize or assign aspects of care under the direction of a RN or other HCP.
Concept: Nursing Judgment/Evidence Based Care	SLO Nursing Judgment/Evidence Based Care: Utilize evidence-based nursing judgment when providing and prioritizing care and promoting the health of patients across the lifespan.
Concept: Patient/Relationship Centered Care	SLO Patient/Relationship CC: Demonstrate therapeutic communication skills to practice holistic nursing that is patient and family centered, culturally sensitive and based on the physiological, psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients across the lifespan.
Concept: Professional Identity and Behavior	SLO Professional Identity and Behavior: Demonstrate professional behaviors and accountability to legal and ethical nursing practice standards.
Concept: Quality Improvement	SLO Quality Improvement: Participate in quality improvement by recognizing opportunities for improvement and collaborating with the health care team to enhance effective and cost-efficient health care services.
Concept: Safety	SLO Safety: Promote quality care, recognize complications and provide a safe environment for patients, self, and others.
Concept: Teamwork and Collaboration	SLO Teamwork and Collaboration: Serve as a member of the interprofessional team using open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision making to promote safe, quality, patient centered care.
References	Massachusetts (2010); Meeting Minnesota's Workforce Needs (2012); QSEN (2007); NLN (2010); NAPNES (2007); & NFLPN (2003).

Practical Nursing Program Concepts

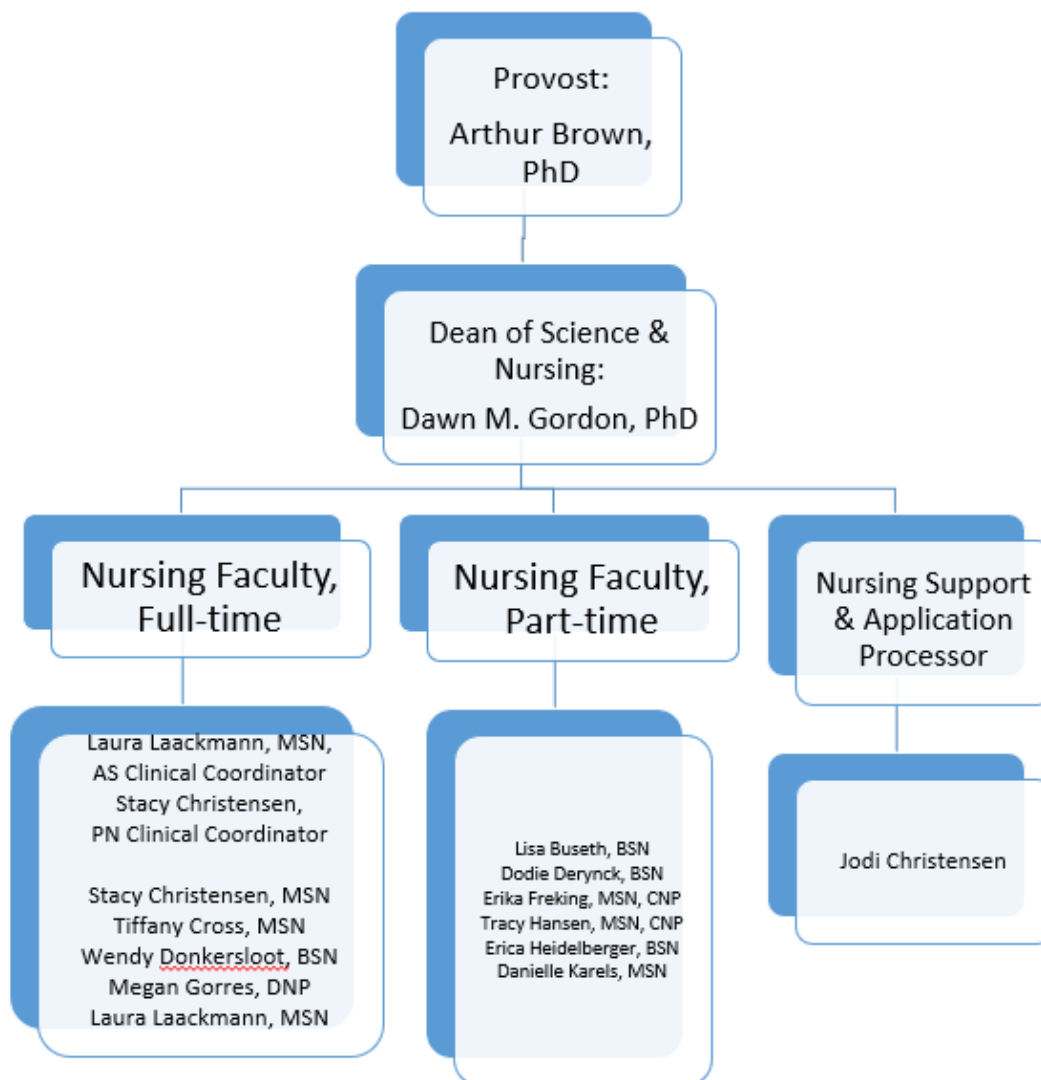
Table 1: Concepts and Definitions	
Concepts	Definition
Concept: Informatics/ Technology	<p>Informatics is defined as the use of information technology as a communication and information gathering tool that minimizes errors, supports clinical decision making and scientifically based nursing practice.</p> <p>Nursing informatics facilitates the integration of data, information, and knowledge to support patients, nurses, and other providers in their decision making in all roles and settings (ANA definition, retrieved from: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC344585/ P. 16</p> <p>Essential to this concept is the utilization of information technology by the practical nurse to support and communicate the planning and provision of patient care.</p> <p>Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>
Concept: Managing Care	<p>Managing care is defined as the effective use of human, physical, financial, and technological resources to achieve the patient identified outcomes while supporting organizational outcomes. The LPN manages care through the processes of planning, organizing, and directing.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NAPNES, 2007.</p>
Concept: Nursing Judgment/ Evidence Based Care	<p style="text-align: center;">Nursing Judgment encompasses three processes: Critical thinking, clinical judgment, and integration of best evidence into practice.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Essential to this concept is</p> <p>(1) Critical thinking which is defined as identifying, evaluating, and using evidence to guide decision making.</p> <p>(2) Clinical judgment which refers to the process of observing, interpreting, responding, and reflecting situated within and emerging from the nurse's knowledge and perspective.</p> <p>(3) Integration of Best Evidence which is defined as using current information from research and other credible sources upon which clinical judgment and patient care are based (NLN, 2010).</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NAPNES, 2007; NFLPN Standards, 2003; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>
Concept: Patient Relationship Centered Care	<p>The provision of care that is age and developmentally appropriate and based on a patient's physiological, psychological, sociological, spiritual and cultural needs, preferences, and values.</p> <p>Essential to this concept is effective communication by which the practical nurse displays caring, compassion, and cultural awareness which establishes a trusting relationship, fosters mutual respect and shared decision making and is directed towards promoting positive outcomes and patient/family satisfaction.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NAPNES, 2007; NFLPN Standards, 2003; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>

Table 1: Concepts and Definitions

Concepts	Definition
Concept: Professional Identity and Behavior	<p>Professional Identity and Behavior is defined as the responsible behavior of the nurse that demonstrates accountability for nursing care that is consistent with moral, altruistic, legal, ethical, regulatory, and humanistic principles. The nurse embraces and internalizes these fundamental values to form a professional identity that is evident in the lived experience of the nurse, in his or her ways of “being” “knowing” and “doing” (NLN, 2010).</p> <p>Essential to this concept includes adherence by the practical nurse to standards of care, accountability for one’s own actions and behaviors, the use of legal and ethical principles in nursing practice and the participation of lifelong learning. Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NAPNES, 2007; NFLPN Standards, 2003; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>
Concept: Quality Improvement	<p>Quality Improvement is defined as the ability to raise questions, challenge traditional and existing practices, and seek creative approaches to problems by using data to improve the quality and safety of health care systems and needs of patients.</p> <p>Essential to this concept is the "management of care by the practical nurse which includes the effective use of human, physical, financial, and technological resources" (NAPNES, 2007, Section F) to support quality improvement of the environment of the health care system in which the nurse works.</p> <p>Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NFLPN Standards, 2003; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>
Concept: Safety	<p>Safety is defined as the identification and minimization of risk potentials that could cause injury or harm while promoting quality care and maintaining a secure environment.</p> <p>Essential to this concept, the practical nurse recognizes when a patient is experiencing potential/actual complications, and determines the appropriate actions and the need to communicate and consult with other team members (MASS, 2010; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007).</p> <p>Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>
Concept: Teamwork & Collaboration	<p>Teamwork and Collaboration are defined as the ability to "function effectively within nursing, interprofessional teams, including patients/families by fostering open communication, mutual respect, shared decision making" (NLN, 2010, p. 69), team learning and development to achieve safe, quality, patient centered care.</p> <p>Essential to this concept are conflict management skills and interpersonal communication skills with other interprofessional team members (MN Workforce needs, 2012).</p> <p>Massachusetts, 2010; Minnesota Workforce Needs, 2012; NAPNES, 2007; NFLPN Standards, 2003; NLN, 2010; & QSEN, 2007.</p>

Organizational Chart

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART MINNESOTA WEST COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE NURSING DEPARTMENT



Additional Resources found at: <http://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/directory>

PN CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

MINNESOTA WEST COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE OUTLINE OF THE NURSING CURRICULUM

Practical Nursing Program, Diploma

Location:

Pipestone, Granite Falls, Worthington – on campus
Granite Falls, Pipestone, Worthington – ITV
Online lecture courses

Practical Nursing is designed to create upward mobility nursing education opportunities. After successful completion of the Practical Nursing Program, students may choose to receive the Practical Nursing Diploma and be eligible to take the NCLEX-PN examination. Students may exit at this point or continue in the program to receive the Associate Degree in Nursing after successful completion of the NCLEX-PN Licensing Exam and meeting the AS Nursing application requirements/standards.

PREREQUISITES: These must be taken prior to starting the nursing program: Nursing Assistant (NA) course (from a state approved NA course and location), BIOL 2201 Anatomy, EMS 1112 AHA CPR for Healthcare Provider. CPR certification must be the American Heart Association-Basic Life Support. Students must remain certified through the completion of the program.

The following course sequence is required for completion of this program. Only students who have been accepted into the Practical Nursing Program are allowed to take the nursing courses. The non-nursing courses listed may be taken either before or during the program, with the exception of the prerequisite courses which must be taken before the beginning of the program.

Prerequisites

BIOL 2201 Anatomy - 4 credits

Fall Semester

PSYC 1150 Developmental Psychology - 3 credits
NURS 1100 Principles & Practices of Nursing - 3 credits
NURS 1120 Nursing of the Adult I - 3 credits
NURS 1130 Pharmacology I - 3 credits
NURS 1140 Nursing Skills Lab - 2 credits
NURS 1180 * Clinical Applications I - 2 credits

Spring Semester

NURS 1220 Nursing of the Adult II - 3 credits
NURS 1230 Pharmacology II - 3 credit
NURS 1250 Family Nursing - 4 credits
NURS 1260 Mental Health Nursing – 1 credit
NURS 1280 * Clinical Applications II - 6 credits

May Term

NURS 1295 PN Integration – 2 credits

* Clinical experiences are a part of the program and are done locally in area healthcare facilities. On-campus and distance learning students need to be prepared to travel to nursing labs and clinical sites as part of the program.

PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM INFORMATION

Accreditation and Approval

Accreditation

The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools accredits Minnesota West Community & Technical College. The Higher Learning Commission can be contacted at the following address:

Higher Learning Commission
230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500
Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411
Phone: Toll Free - 800.621.7440 or 312.263.0456
Fax: 312.263.7462
info@hlcommission.org

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) is the nursing accreditation organization for the Practical Nursing Program. The PN program achieved initial accreditation over 2018 and 2019. Renewal of accreditation is due in 2024. ACEN may be reached at:

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing
3390 Peachtree Road NE
Suite 1400
Atlanta GA 30326
404.975.5000
<https://www.acenursing.org/>

Approval Status of Nursing Program

Minnesota West Nursing Programs approval was renewed by the Minnesota Board of Nursing June of 2018. The Minnesota Board of Nursing can be contacted at the following address:

Minnesota Board of Nursing
1210 Northland Drive
Suite 120
Mendota Heights, MN 55120
Phone: 612.317.3000
<http://mn.gov/health-licensing-boards/nursing/>

Note: The Minnesota Board of Nursing, which is responsible for licensing nursing personnel in Minnesota, has varied restrictions that may affect persons with a history of a felony conviction. Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program assumes no responsibility for the denial of licensure by the State Board of Nursing. Prospective students are responsible for contacting the Board concerning any questions regarding their eligibility for licensure.

American Disabilities Act & Reasonable Accommodations

There are conditions for which accommodations may be appropriate under the American Disabilities Act (ADA). Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program will make all reasonable accommodations required by law for otherwise qualified individuals. To receive accommodations, the student must contact the ADA advisor on a campus for assistance to establish a plan of appropriate accommodations in courses. The ADA advisor will communicate the plan with the student and faculty.

Non-Discrimination and Affirmative Action

It is the policy of Minnesota West Community & Technical College to undertake and maintain a program of affirmative and positive action and of nondiscrimination as determined by Minnesota State policy 1B.1 in educational opportunities and employment. No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of employment, personnel practices or access to and participation in, programs, services, and activities with

regard to race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission as defined by law.

Harassment of an individual or group on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, sexual orientation, or membership or activity in a local commission has no place in a learning or work environment and is prohibited. Sexual violence has no place in a learning or work environment. Further, Minnesota West shall work to eliminate violence in all its forms. Physical contact by designated College staff members may be appropriate if necessary to avoid physical harm to persons or property.

Student Governance/Student Representatives

Nursing faculty value student input and professional communication of program concerns and questions. Students are encouraged to participate in student leadership and governance opportunities, both in nursing education programs and at the college campuses/centers.

A minimum of two, with maximum of six, student representatives will be chosen by their nursing student peers. Both classroom and online cohorts will be represented. Nursing student representatives are invited to the student representative and/or faculty meetings via Zoom throughout the fall and spring terms. When a group of nursing students share similar concerns regarding the nursing program, they are encouraged to bring professional, constructive suggestions to the chosen student representatives, who will then communicate concerns/suggestions to faculty at faculty meetings. It is not the responsibility of the student representatives to solve student problems. Nursing faculty will respectfully consider student concerns/suggestions and will collectively make a decision on student requests.

The Dean of Nursing will communicate faculty decisions to students by emailing all students or D2L communication. Student representatives will also be invited to the Minnesota West Community and Technical College Nursing Advisory Board Meetings which are held twice a year in October and April.

Concerns that impact individual students should be communicated to the faculty member most directly involved with the issue of concern. If satisfactory resolution is not attained, the student is encouraged to contact the Dean of Nursing.

Student Senate – Student Government

Nursing students have the opportunity and are encouraged to become involved in the Minnesota West campuses Student Senate.

Information related to the student senate organization is found at <http://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/student-services/student-senate>.

Criminal Background Checks

Clinical experiences are an integral part of the nursing education program. To provide clinical experiences, Minnesota West contracts with a variety of health care facilities throughout southwest/central Minnesota and southeastern South Dakota. State law requires that any person who provides service that involves direct contact with clients or residents of health care facilities must have a background study conducted by the State.

Minnesota West **REQUIRES** all nursing students to complete two **background study forms** so that background studies can be initiated prior to clinical experiences:

1. National criminal background check through the CastleBranch database. Students are responsible for payment.
2. Minnesota Department of Human Services Background check- included in nursing clinical course tuition. If additional fingerprints or photo are needed it is at the expense of the student.

If clinical facilities require a specific background check, students are responsible to meet this requirement in order to participate in clinical experiences at the facility. Results of background checks are available to health care facilities where clinical experiences are planned.

If a student has been arrested, charged or convicted of any criminal offense, the student should investigate the impact that the arrest, charge or conviction may have on a student's ability to participate in a clinical experience. In addition, chances of becoming licensed, finding employment in nursing or the ability to obtain federal, state, or other higher education financial aid, may be affected. Disqualifying offenses can be found at: <https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/?id=245C.15>. Criminal background discrepancies may be reviewed by clinical facilities. Clinical facilities will have the final decision on if a student with a discrepancy may attend clinical experiences at their location.

Failure to complete a required background check for a clinical facility will result in the inability to participate in the clinical experience and/or program.

Any individual who is disqualified from having direct client contact as a result of a background study issue and whose disqualification is not set aside by the Commissioner of Health will not be permitted to participate in a clinical placement in a health care facility. The nursing program is not obligated to find alternative clinical placements for students that have background check issues. Failure to participate in a clinical placement required by the academic program will result in ineligibility to qualify for a degree in this program.

Data Practices Advisory and Informed Consent

Some health care facilities impose certain requirements regarding the health of persons working in their facilities and may require that health information about students participating in clinical experiences be made available to them. Minnesota West nursing programs ask students participating in clinical experiences to provide health information that will be used to determine whether they meet a clinical facility's health requirements for care providers.

Health information collected is private data. The information provided will be disclosed, as needed, to Minnesota West Dean of Nursing and should any clinical site request the data, to any clinical site where students are placed. Students are not legally required to provide this information to the College. However, refusal to provide the information requested could mean that a clinical site might refuse to accept the student for clinical experiences. The nursing program does not guarantee alternative clinical placement. If no alternative facility is available, the student will be ineligible to progress in the nursing program.

CastleBranch Student Health Records Database and Health Care Costs

Nursing students are required to register and upload health documents/records to CastleBranch database. CastleBranch is a secure database for permanent health record storage for students. Students pay an initial registration fee and upload private, health sensitive documents to their individual account. Access to student records in CastleBranch is provided only to the Minnesota West Dean of Nursing and Nursing Administrative Assistant. If requested, clinical facilities will be provided with a spreadsheet of student immunizations and health information. CastleBranch requirements are required to be maintained throughout a student's participation in the program, including renewing any annual requirements. The student is responsible for registering and paying the CastleBranch database fee. Any health care costs incurred during the period of time a student is in the nursing program are the responsibility of the student.

Professional Liability Insurance & Health Insurance

Professional liability insurance is provided for students enrolled in the clinical courses for major medical events. Students may purchase additional professional liability insurance if desired for additional insurance covering minor or other medical events. Students are required to have health insurance.

Test Proctoring & Off Campus Testing

The nursing program seeks to deliver the program in formats that accommodate student learning styles while maintaining academic integrity for the student and the program. Test proctoring services may be used in nursing courses to ensure online test integrity and allows student testing flexibility. The cost of the test proctoring service

is paid by the college when used during testing in the NURS courses. Entrance testing or other licensure preparation testing/proctoring costs are the responsibility of the student.

Test integrity is critical to the test proctoring structure. Concerns of test integrity can impact the continuation of off-campus proctoring and electronic testing. The faculty reserve the right to move tests to campus or non-electronic options (i.e. paper/pencil) for test integrity situations.

Part-time/Slower Pace Student Learning

Part-time or a slower paced learning structure may be best for students balancing many life commitments. Students choosing to attend the program on a part-time basis will need to develop a plan via the student petition form with the Dean of Nursing. Considerations related to financial aid, annual trainings, annual background check expenses, etc should be considered by the student prior to completing a petition for this request. Students learning in a slower pace/part-time complete the program in 2 years, which is the length before expiration of successfully completed NURS courses.

Workers' Compensation

It is the position of the health care facilities used for clinical experiences and Minnesota West that nursing students are not employees of either the clinical facilities to which assigned or of Minnesota West for purposes of Workers' Compensation insurance.

Financial Aid and Attendance Policies

Minnesota West Community & Technical College adheres to requirements of Federal Financial Aid in issues of satisfactory progress toward graduation, which does include monitoring of attendance. For more detail, please refer to the Minnesota West Financial Aid weblink: <http://www.mnwest.edu/financial-aid/>

Student Employment

The decision whether or not to work while a student is a personal one for students and their families. However, work must not interfere with clinical or classroom performance or attendance. The program recommends that students work as little as possible. Homework for the nursing courses alone can exceed 30-40 hours per week - the equivalent of a full-time job! Students who do work should not represent themselves as student nurses by performing specific functions learned as a student, unless the functions are part of her/his job description.

Transfer of Credit

Credits obtained from course work obtained at other accredited Colleges may be transferable to Minnesota West for credit. Courses which are equivalent to the course content required by the nursing program at Minnesota West, and in which a C or above has been achieved, will be accepted to apply to the degree requirements for the diploma degree in practical nursing. General education program courses with a 5-year requirement are the biology courses (prefix BIOL) and PSYC 1150 (Developmental Psychology). Nursing course credits earned at other accredited institutions within twenty-four months of the anticipated date of admission to Minnesota West may be transferable. (See readmission section of handbook if reapplying to the nursing program at Minnesota West). Nursing courses will be evaluated by the Dean of Nursing and nursing faculty to determine transferability. A student wishing to take a clinical course must have successfully completed a clinical course with the previous institution or take the Minnesota West lab course.

Applicants seeking advanced placement and/or transfer credit must meet the same pre-entrance requirements as other students being admitted to the program. (See Admission Policies of the program). Entering students who have been exempted from courses are subject to the same progress and graduation standards as the generic student. Individual arrangements will be made to assure the faculty and student that the necessary competencies have all been met. It is a Minnesota West policy that students must take a minimum of 20 credits at Minnesota West to graduate from the College.

CLEP examinations (College Level Examination Program) are available for highly qualified students to obtain credit in courses without completing the class. While a student in the PN program, CLEP examinations may be completed to prepare for the AS nursing program at Minnesota West; the AS nursing program may accept up to 10 credits by CLEP exam for the sociology elective, speech/communication, ethics, and general education

electives. Standardized scores are used to determine successful attainment of the credits. Students should contact their advisor for the appropriate forms and more information.

Please note: all testing and transferring of credits must be completed **at least four weeks** prior to the start of the particular course(s). Applicants requesting advanced placement in nursing courses through CBE (Competency Based Education) must be accepted into the Practical Nursing Program before any testing will take place. (This does not apply to the NA course, for which testing SHOULD be completed prior to starting the nursing program).

NCLEX Review Course & Licensure

Students must complete NCLEX-PN review courses from ATI and Hurst to meet graduation requirements for the PN Program. Students must meet MN Board of Nursing and Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program requirements prior to receiving an authorization to test (ATT) for the NCLEX-PN. Students must successfully pass the licensure exam (NCLEX-PN) and meet the requirements of the MN Board of Nursing to become a licensed practical nurse in the state of MN. The Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program prepares students for licensure in the state of MN. If a student wishes to license in another state, the student should review licensure and program curriculum requirements of that state as they may be different than MN requirements.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the Nursing Practical Nursing Program

1. Minnesota health care agencies used for clinical experiences are required to obtain background checks on personnel providing direct patient care, including student nurses. Students must submit a student background checks annually per program requirements.
2. Completion of the prerequisite coursework, BIOL 2201 (within 5 years), and the clinical prerequisites of Nursing Assistant (NA) course and CPR.
3. The NA course must be taken at an approved state governed location meeting the 75-hour requirement. Pass/Fail courses or test outs are not accepted in lieu of grades for the prerequisite or program course requirements.
4. Current health insurance (required); health coverage does not provide the same protection level and is not allowed.
5. Current valid driver's license (required).
6. Students are required to meet certain health requirements before beginning the nursing program. These include completion and submission of:
 - a. Minnesota West Nursing [Health History Form](#).
 - b. This form includes required immunizations/tests for Tuberculin (Mantoux or equivalent) test, MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella), Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis), Hepatitis B series, Influenza, Chicken Pox, and COVID (declination/exemptions allowed for COVID).
 - c. Current CPR certification from the American Heart Association (AHA) or American Red Cross (ARC) of Basic Life Support (BLS). CPR certification must include "hands-on" skills test out. The AHA does offer a portion of the CPR course to be taken online at AHA.org. Be sure the online course meets the correct certification level, healthcare provider level, and includes a "hands-on" skill test out at a college or local healthcare facility.
7. Students are responsible for transportation and other costs (i.e. CPR, immunizations, etc) for the nursing clinical experiences.
8. Students may need to complete a toxicology drug screen per clinical facility policy if required for learning experiences. Fees for all toxicology screening and/or re-screening costs are paid by the student. Failure to complete a required screening for a clinical facility will result in the inability to participate in the clinical experience and/or program. A failed drug screen, no matter the substance, makes the student ineligible for progression in the program due to the inability to complete the clinical course.
9. Students are required to take ongoing integrated examinations and a standardized achievement examination near the completion of the program to assist in preparation for the licensure examination after graduation. The cost of this preparation tool and examinations by ATI is included with the program textbooks purchased at the Minnesota West bookstore.
10. Students must earn a grade of C in all courses (NURS and other program courses) to continue progression in the nursing program. A GPA of 2.0 is required for admittance and retention of a nursing program major. NURS courses are valid for 24 months from the start of the course. Nursing students follow the same satisfactory progression standards as all students at the College, and are subject to suspension and probation.
11. Students must be able to complete required clinical facility documents for student learning experiences. Data collected will likely include student name, demographic information (address, phone, social security number, etc) and other needed information for clinical experiences. Data collected may also include gender at birth, citizenship, and country at birth information.

Note: Records with any personal medical information are considered confidential documents. These records are only kept within the program as long as a student remains in the program. Upon graduation or program exit, documents are destroyed.

Note: The curriculum in the nursing program may expose students to hazardous materials, radiation, and/or infectious diseases. Students will be provided with information via education to protect themselves and their patients from harm. Students are expected to utilize appropriate safety precautions in the classroom, lab, and clinical. For more information, refer to the Blood Borne Pathogens policy found at http://www.mnwest.edu/images/student-information-policies/bloodborne_pathogen_policy.pdf. The policy can also be reached from the Minnesota West homepage (go to Current Students, Student Information and Policies, and finally Bloodborne Pathogens Policy (Allied Health Students)).

GRADING, PROMOTION, AND PROGRESSION POLICIES

Grading Information for Nursing Courses

Grading Scale

93 - 100% = A

86 - 92% = B

80 - 85% = C (80% is passing benchmark)

75 - 79% = D

74% & below = F

Grading – Theory & Lab Courses

1. Grades in theory and lab classes are achieved through a variety of assignments, classroom activities, and examinations. Examinations will encompass both multiple choice and alternative format questions (short answer, essay, multiple select, ordering, etc.). The established grading scale, as noted above, is used. The breakdown of theory components (i.e., number of quizzes and exams) is explained in each course.

2. Students must demonstrate an average of 80% on proctored exams (course exams, midterms, and finals) and additional assigned points at the completion of each nursing theory course to pass in the Practical Nursing courses.

Grading – Clinical Courses

1. The clinical grade is a combination of actual performance in the clinical or simulated laboratory, and written assignments associated with the clinical experience:

A. Clinical Performance

Students are evaluated in a formative (day to day) manner and summative (at the completion of the clinical class) manner:

- Criteria established by faculty for a clinical course (written in course syllabi) and the *Minnesota West Standards for Professional Performance* are used for on-going formative (day-to-day) evaluation.
- Unsafe clinical performance (during each semester) may result in ineligibility to progress in the program.
- Final evaluation of clinical performance occurs at the end of each semester using the formative evaluation tool and summarizing the results. Students must meet or exceed the minimum performance standards established in the evaluation tool to achieve a passing grade in the practicum component of the course and a minimum cumulative grade of 80% on case studies to pass the course.

B. Assignments

- Points are awarded for assignments. To pass the course, students must achieve the 20% for the Practical Nursing Program of the total points possible on assignments.

Incomplete Grades

According to College policy, incomplete work must be completed within one year or the "I" will be recorded as an "F".

Withdrawal from the Nursing Program

If students find it necessary to leave the program prior to 80% completion of a course (last day to withdraw) during a semester, students must arrange for official withdrawal in the office of the Registrar or an "F" will be recorded for each course in which students are enrolled. If students withdraw from the nursing program, students should schedule an interview with the Dean of Nursing.

Students must follow the petition/late application process for readmission to the nursing program. Withdrawal from

either a nursing course or a general education course **may** prevent a student from continuing in the nursing program.

Failure to Progress in the Practical Nursing Program

Students should understand that faculty members are true advocates for students, but are ultimately accountable to the public for promoting and graduating safe, competent practitioners. The faculty has established promotion criteria that students must meet to progress and graduate. If it is evident during a semester that a student does not meet those classroom and/or clinical standards expected of nursing students at a particular point of the program, the student will meet with the faculty member. Occasionally it does not become evident until late in the term that a student is failing to keep up to expected standards. While this is painful for students and faculty alike, protection of the public is an essential responsibility of the nursing faculty and is not taken lightly by the faculty.

Progression into clinical courses occurs when a student demonstrates passing grades in the lab course and all current term lecture courses. If a student is not at a passing standard in one or more courses (at a A, B, or C only), students are not able to progress to the clinical course. In addition to safety of the patients/clients/residents, student success is important and a slower pace can assist in a student's overall program completion.

Continuation in the Nursing Program

One failure or one withdrawal in a nursing course requires a petition for continuation in the nursing programs. Student must have a 2.0 GPA to be reviewed for continuation. Continuation to the program requires a two-step process:

- 1) Student petition to be considered for continuation in the nursing program.
- 2) Nursing faculty determine acceptance or denial of the petition.

Continuation in the nursing program is a privilege, not a right, and occurs on a space available basis only. The nursing faculty will act upon petitions for continuation - the petition may be approved or denied by the faculty and the Dean of Nursing. Grounds for denial of a petition for continuation include but are not limited to problems with safe practice, transfer of nursing theory and knowledge to practice, qualities required for the practice of professional nursing such as responsibility and accountability for own actions, ability to evaluate own strengths and limitations, ability to accept constructive criticism, and integrity.

Grounds for denial of continuation petition follow*:

1. Integrity - The student has demonstrated a pattern of dishonesty in either theory or clinical experiences in the past. Demonstrates behaviors implying the absence of professional values.
2. Transfer of knowledge - The student's past clinical performance demonstrated a lack of core knowledge which resulted in safety concerns.
3. Critical thinking - The student's past clinical performance has demonstrated a pattern of inability to respond to situations requiring problem solving, analysis, and application of knowledge at the skill level expected and demonstrated by other students.

(*Examples are not all inclusive.)

- Students petitioning to seek continuation need to do so at least one semester prior to the course for which continuation is being sought so that any continuation criteria can be met on a timely basis.
- Students must petition to seek continuation into the program within one semester of leaving the program (the time between leaving the program and continuation cannot exceed one year.)
- After two failures or withdrawals a student will need to apply for readmission to the nursing program. Students exceeding two failures/withdrawals due to extenuating circumstances can complete a petition form requesting continuation and will be reviewed on an individual basis by the faculty and director.

Readmission to the Nursing Program

Student must reapply to continue in the program after two failures or withdrawals. Students need to complete the reapplication process (application, PSB test, ACT test, etc) by the annual February 15th deadline. Readmission is

not guaranteed. Students may be readmitted only one time for a maximum of 2 admissions to the program. Preferences for readmission will be given to students who have not previously failed the course for which they are seeking readmission. Students must have a 2.0 GPA to be readmitted to the program.

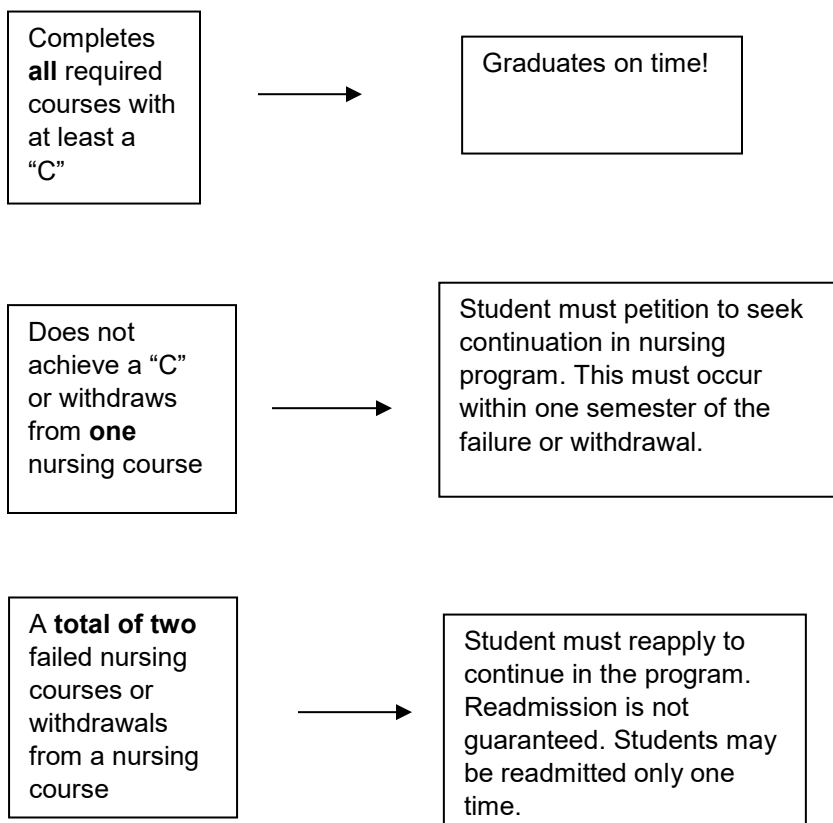
By readmission to the nursing program, the student will follow the current catalog program requirements, not a previous program format or graduation requirement.

Nursing course credits earned within twenty-four months of the anticipated date of readmission to the program are accepted. Program curricular changes may have occurred related to national licensure examinations requiring the student to take additional coursework to ensure all nursing content is provided prior to graduation.

Late Admission Process

Students that earn two failures or withdrawals or a second failure or withdrawal in the Spring term are eligible to submit a late application. It is the goal of the nursing program that a student continues when knowledge is fresh and also prevents the delay of program completion. NURS courses are valid/current for 24 months from the start of the NURS course. Readmission criteria follows the process outlined in the previous heading above.

Program Progression



In the case of extraordinary circumstances, exception to program progression policies may be requested using the college petition process.

After 2 unsuccessful admissions, a student needs to wait to reapply for 5 years. If a student wants to reapply sooner, the student must petition and submit documentation to demonstrate extreme circumstances along with a plan of what is different/changed to facilitate success.

Promotion through the PN Program to Graduation

1. After acceptance to the Practical Nursing program, students must earn a grade of C or higher in any course in order to continue full-time in the program. If a grade of a C is not earned in any course, the student may not continue full time and may be ineligible to progress in the nursing program. If a grade of D, F, or W is earned in a NURS course, the student must petition to continue on a space available basis. If space is available for the student to repeat the course, the student continues on a part time basis. In order to repeat a course, a petition must be submitted to the Dean of Nursing. Petitions to continue must be received one full semester prior to the offering of the course. Upon approval of a petition, nursing students may repeat the course only once. Students may take NURS courses up to two times. If the student is not successful, the student may reapply to the program (students can be accepted into the nursing program twice – see Progression/Readmission sections in this handbook).
2. In special instances, a student may receive an “incomplete” (I) grade in a nursing course and be allowed to continue to the next semester. This will be considered on an individual basis when special circumstances exist and it is determined that the student can satisfactorily complete the course requirement. The decision to allow the student to progress with an “I” will be made by the nursing faculty and the Dean of Nursing.
3. Confidentiality – Clients and their families are not to be discussed outside of the classroom. Conversations related to a patient or the health care facility is only permitted in the clinical conference area or a secure classroom. Patients or any clinical occurrences are not to be discussed in public places including, but not limited to, the cafeteria and student lounge. Removing care records or photocopying of clinical documents is not permitted. Sharing any patient or clinical site information via social media including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, etc., is strictly prohibited. Accessing any patient/resident/client information without being assigned to their care violates HIPAA and is prohibited. Personnel or policies of the cooperating clinical agencies are not to be discussed outside of the clinical conference area or a secure classroom. Violation of confidentiality may be cause for ineligibility to progress in the program.

Graduation

To graduate and to be eligible to apply for licensure as a practical nurse, the student must successfully complete the Practical Nursing Program. All candidates for the diploma in Practical Nursing must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Completion of a minimum of 29 semester credit hours in nursing, along with 10 general education prerequisite credits, and the nursing assistant requirement. A GPA of at least 2.0 (C) in each nursing and general education course.
2. Participate in program assessments: Program assessments will be provided from ATI and are given throughout the program. Emphasis is on review and exams at the completion of the nursing program to prepare for the licensure exam (NCLEX-PN). These standardized, integrative, computer adapted testing assessments will be given to measure specific knowledge points and end-of-program comprehensive knowledge and skill. Cost for the ATI integrative learning exams is part of the tuition and bookstore purchases for the program.
3. As a nursing student working towards the nursing diploma, he/she must take a minimum of 20 credits from Minnesota West. A diploma is granted upon satisfactory completion of the education program.
4. Students must submit an Application for Graduation during the term prior to graduation. The nursing program is divided into two semesters and a May Term. Graduation dates are reflected after May Term completion.

Nursing Student Graduates – Return for Knowledge/Skill Development

A nursing student graduate with a completed degree seeking additional knowledge development for his/her career or for NCLEX preparation, may be granted permission into a course pending space in the course section. Graduated students may retake didactic course(s) if space is available with the exception of the clinical courses per MN Board of Nursing rule. The process of taking one or more courses is completed through the petition form request and requires faculty and Dean of Nursing approval. The nursing application process is not required if he/she is a past Minnesota West nursing graduate. Current students have first priority in NURS courses.

ACADEMIC & PROGRAM POLICIES

Attendance

Attendance

Regular attendance in the classroom is essential in meeting the objectives of the nursing program. The responsible nursing faculty member is to be notified by the student in case of classroom absence.

Punctuality for class, lab, and clinical experiences is expected of all students. If students arrive late for class, students must enter unobtrusively. If a test is in session, students may not enter. Lab classes may deduct professionalism points for arriving late.

Theory/Lab: When a classroom absence occurs, students are held responsible for the content addressed. It is the student's responsibility to complete any and all assignments.

Clinical: Students are allowed a maximum of two clinical absences (16 hour) for full time students and one 8-hour absence for part time students for an academic year. Absences are designed for illness, jury duty, funeral leave of immediate family, and other emergent situations as approved by faculty and the Dean of Nursing. Weather cancellations may involve additional clinical hours at a later time in the term.

If a clinical absence is necessary, the clinical instructor must be notified at least one-half hour in advance of the scheduled experience. Failure to notify the clinical/lab instructor will result in a clinical failure and absence for the day.

The end of program preceptorship course requires hours to be completed prior to graduation. Preceptorship hours are not a part of clinical hours; any preceptorship hours missed need to be completed with additional preceptorship credits/hours.

Absence: An absence is defined as missing any portion of the patient care time, including report. Pre- and post-conference is part of the clinical day. If 0-4 hours are missed, a half day absence is incurred (in a typical 8-hour clinical day). Four or more hours is a full day absence (for a typical 8-hour clinical day). Be aware that the program occasionally offers 12 hours shifts; One 12 hours shift absence can be very impactful to clinical absence hour totals. For part time students that only need one semester of clinical during an academic year, one 8-hour shift of absence time is allowed. Two absences result in a meeting with the clinical instructor, Clinical Coordinator, and Dean of Nursing. Additional hours of clinical time will be added into another course, requiring a student to incur additional credits of coursework to complete the program. Incomplete grades in clinical courses will be given when 2 or more absences occur.

Tardy: A tardy is defined as any portion of missed time during pre-conference. Two tardies equals one 4 hours of absence. A third tardy equal 8 hours (added 4 hours) of absence and results in meeting with the Clinical Coordinator, Dean of Nursing, and the clinical instructor.

Breaks are allowed during classes in lecture, lab, and clinical. Time away from class or clinical for breast feeding is allowed within reason (15 minutes suggested). Students should make arrangements/communication in advance with the clinical instructor to allow for adequate time off the patient care area.

Make up clinical hours/course credits will be required for missed clinical experiences beyond the allowable absence time. There are not make-up assignments to replace hands-on clinical absences. If a student exceeds the 16 hours of allowed absence time, the student will need to pay for an additional 1 credit (or more depending on missed hours) for training time in the NURS 1295 preceptorship course in the May term.

Program and clinical orientation days in the fall and spring are mandatory. Failure to attend a mandatory orientation for required annual background checks or annual training will count as a clinical absence, unless arrangements are made with the clinical coordinator prior to the scheduled orientation day. Any missed orientation day must be made up prior to beginning the clinical experience.

Recordings

Recordings (live audio and/or video recordings) may be a part of the nursing program courses for purposes of skill assignments, assignment collaboration, simulation training, and content reference. Recordings may be posted in D2L for student reference. By attending the Minnesota West nursing programs, students acknowledge approval to be recorded in nursing courses. Note: Courses may not offer recordings of lectures – this varies per instructor/course. Student recording of lectures is only permitted with instructor approval.

Examination & Late Assignment Policy

All assignments, tests, quizzes, and exams are to be completed by the due date to receive FULL credit. If any course assignment, test, or exam is submitted after the due date, it will be accepted if turned in within one week of the due date but will receive a 20% deduction from the final score. No late work will be accepted the week prior to or during the week of finals. Grade calculation example: if the assignment or test is worth 10 points, the student will receive 2 points (20%) off the score. If a 10/10 is earned, the score will now be 8/10. If a 6/10 is earned, the score will now be 4/10. If a student is late on a proctored exam (worth 75 points), the student will get 15 points (20%) off the score.

Students are expected to take examinations/tests/quizzes when scheduled. If a student is late to class when an exam is scheduled, the student is not allowed into the classroom. If a student misses an examination, the student must notify the instructor that day. It is the student's responsibility to arrange a make-up. Early examinations are not given unless for significant reasons (medical, jury duty, funeral/death of family member, etc) and are subject to the 20% deduction policy. Students are not expected to take an examination when ill. If a student is not physically or emotionally well at the time of a scheduled exam, it is the responsibility to communicate this clearly with the instructor **before** the scheduled exam begins. Students are required to make up the test within seven (7) calendar days. An exam not taken within one calendar week of the scheduled date may not be taken and zero points will be earned.

There are no retakes for any quiz, test, mid-term, or final exams.

Smart watches may not be worn during testing (in additional to lab and clinical classes).

Electronic tests or quizzes of any type may not be printed. Students found to be printing these tests or quizzes are subject to the Code of Conduct of the College.

Examinations are not returned to students for their keeping. It is the student's responsibility to arrange to meet with the nursing faculty to discuss weak areas on the exam and to clarify theoretical content contained on the exam.

Examination/Late Assignment Policy Note: Policies related to late assignments and examinations were written to protect the student who is consistently on time with assignments and for examinations. Exceptions to the policies regarding late written assignments and missed examinations may be granted at the discretion of faculty. However, to be fair to all students, policies will be adhered to unless compelling justification for an exception is presented to the faculty.

Online Testing Guidelines

Nursing students may need to complete tests in a proctored home environment through Respondus Lockdown and Respondus Monitor or other required home proctoring provider.

Testing Guidelines:

- The testing space needs to be quiet and clear of the following items: no pets, no people (adults or children), no electronic devices (including cell phones, smart watches, ear buds/headphones, ipads/ipods, etc).
- No other person is allowed to enter the testing space while you are taking the test.
- No outside resources can be used such as textbooks, notes, or electronic resources.

- The testing space needs to be free of noise - windows closed from outside sounds/TV off in nearby rooms/music off. No interruptions should occur during the final tests.
- If a student prefers to wear non-electronic ear buds, they must be shown and placed into ears in front of the Respondus recording.
- Do not read questions out loud.
- No food and no beverages (no water bottles); No eating is allowed during final tests.
- A mirror may be required for environmental scans before and during testing.
- While testing, stay in your chair - do not get up or leave the testing space.
- Students may have one piece of blank 8 X11 inch paper and one pencil (must show during environmental scans). The paper (used or not) must be tore up into small pieces at the end of the test in front of the Respondus recording.
- You must keep your eyes on the computer screen unless you are writing on the blank paper.
- You must test in a well lit area so that the camera can pick up facial features.
- You must not communicate with any other person by any means during the testing.
- No other person is allowed to take the test for you.

Environmental Scans: Your testing space should include only your testing device and the allowed paper, pencil, and mirror. The environmental scan should include the entire testing area (the clean desk/table/testing area and the computer/device). The desk and walls must not have any writing on them in your testing space. Respondus may ask you for a second environmental scan during the test. The second environmental scan may be at random for each test per the instructor discretion. When this happens, do not log out of the test - show the environment (clear desk and testing space) and continue testing.

Deduction: These guidelines are given to avoid any test disruptions or distractions for you. We want your demonstration of your knowledge to successfully complete the course. A 20% deduction will be applied if guidelines are not followed. Any emergent issues should be communicated into the Respondus recording and notify the instructor immediately after completing the test. Test integrity and cheating will follow the college and program policy earning a 0/0% (zero points).

Academic Misconduct, including Cheating and Plagiarism

Academic integrity and honesty are extremely important in the nursing profession and as students learn to be a nurse. Academic misconduct is defined in the Minnesota West Student Handbook Code of Conduct as 'cheating and plagiarism'. To find Code of Conduct policies go to http://www.mnwest.edu/images/student-information-policies/code_of_conduct.pdf

Cheating:

- A. Cheating is dishonesty of any kind with respect to examinations, course assignments, alterations of records, or unauthorized possession of examinations. Cheating is defined in the Minnesota West Student Handbook under Code of Conduct Policy 3.6.1 as:
- B. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Using any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations.
 - b. Using sources beyond those authorized by the faculty member in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments.
 - c. Acquiring without permission, tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the College faculty or staff.
 - d. Engaging in any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion.
- C. Students who help other students cheat are also guilty of cheating.

Plagiarism:

- A. Plagiarism is failure to give adequate credit to the proper source. Plagiarism is defined in the Minnesota West Student Handbook under Code of Conduct Policy 3.6.1 as:

- B. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.
- C. All ideas, statements or materials taken from any source for written or oral presentations must be acknowledged and documented.
- D. Using one's own work from a previous term(s) without appropriately citing the work is self-plagiarism and will be treated as academic misconduct.

Artificial Intelligent (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT, Chegg, or other AI resources/databases that may include course assignment examples, such as Quizlet or CourseHero, may contain tools to build learning. However, AI is not allowed to complete course assessments of any kind (such as papers, essays, tests, clinical assignments, etc) in the nursing programs. The following actions are prohibited in nursing courses:

- Submitting all or any part of an assignment statement to an online learning support platform
- Incorporating any part of an AI generated response in an assignment
- Using AI to brainstorm, formulate arguments, or template ideas for assignments
- Using AI to summarize or contextualize source materials
- Submitting your own work for a course to an online learning support platform for iteration or improvement

If you have questions about the use of AI tools in a course or whether you are using an online learning support platform appropriately, connect with your instructor for assistance and proper uses of AI.

Instructors will use tools to identify plagiarism and cheating (including AI generated work). An example of a plagiarism identification tool is Turnitin. Assignments submitted to the college are reviewed for prior use/submission in part or as a whole at Minnesota West and other colleges/universities. Minnesota West offers helpful resources in D2L for students in D2L called "Understanding Turnitin, Plagiarism Identifier".

Cheating, helping others cheat, plagiarism, inappropriate use of AI tools, or any type of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in the nursing program. A student, who is found guilty of these academic misconducts, as defined in the Minnesota West Student Code of Conduct, will be reported for an Academic Integrity Infraction violation and/or associated loss of program privileges.

Students found to be in violation of the Academic Integrity Infraction Policy in a nursing program may incur:

1. Zero for the assignment or examination
2. Failure of a course
3. Ineligible to progress in the nursing program

Students must be aware that an individual's academic conduct may be seen as a reflection of ethical standards. Ethical behaviors expected of nursing students while in the nursing program are also expectations of graduates and practicing nurses.

Petition Process

The Minnesota West Petition Form, available at www.mnwest.edu under "Student Forms", is used when a student wishes to 1) substitute one course for another, 2) waive a requirement, 3) enroll in a course without the designated prerequisite, 4) failure in any required general education or nursing course, 5) request a different learning format (online vs on campus course learning), or 6) request part time nursing student status. The petition form may also be used to have further review of a nursing program decision prior to submitting a formal grievance or course grade appeal. The Minnesota West Petition Form is the appropriate step when a student wishes to seek an exception to a policy.

It is the intent of the Minnesota West Practical Nursing Program and individual faculty members to make fair and reasonable decisions concerning individual students' academic performance and progress. A Petition Form submission is designed to give a student a means to address issues and/or decisions related to her or his status or progression in the nursing program. If a student disagrees with a decision made by nursing program staff, the

student is entitled to petition or seek an exception to the specific policy that lead to the decision. An example of a possible petition would be that of a student who seeks to continue in the nursing program despite not satisfying a particular course requirement.

Student Complaints/Grievances

A student has the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement through a designated complaint or grievance procedure. Students are encouraged to use available informal means to have decisions reconsidered before filing a complaint or grievance. No retaliation of any kind shall be taken against a student for participation in a complaint or grievance. For detail addressing complaints or grievances, please refer to <http://www.mnwest.edu/index.php/student-services/complaint-grievance>

Grades Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal for a grade review in instances where they believe that a final course grade was assigned unfairly or in a manner inconsistent with the stated course grading policy. For more detail, refer to http://www.mnwest.edu/images/student-forms/grade_appeal.pdf

STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE

Ethics

Nursing is a human service profession, and as a human service professional, the nurse has ethical and moral responsibilities. Ethical behavior is expected of nursing students and the *Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* (American Nurses Association, 2015) has been included in this handbook to guide nursing actions and to provide standards of ethical behavior.

The American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics for Nurses

Provision 1: The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Provision 2: The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

Provision 4: The nurse has authority, accountability and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to provide optimal patient care.

Provision 5: The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6: The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

Provision 7: The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

Provision 8: The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Provision 9: The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

Source: American Nurses' Association. [Code of Ethics with interpretive statements](http://www.nursingworld.org/code-of-ethics) (2015).

Silver Spring, MD: American Nurses' Association. Retrieved from

<http://www.nursingworld.org/code-of-ethics>

Electronics

Attentiveness during classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences is an expected component of professional behavior. Text messaging and similar activities during classroom, lab, clinical or post clinical experiences is not permitted. If such activity occurs, the student will be asked to leave and counted absent. Some clinical agencies do not allow personal electronic devices on the premises; students must abide by the policies of the clinical agency. If use is permitted for academic purposes, devices must be set to silence mode. Disrupting other students, faculty or staff with the use of electronic devices will subject the student to disciplinary action.

Cameras are not allowed in clinical classes for purposes of privacy and security.

Electronic recordings are not allowed unless the student has received permission from the instructor or has special accommodations for the classroom.

Cell phones may not be in the student pocket during clinical and may be accessed on break only.

Social Media

Social media allows for rapid exchange of information and networking, but is not without risk. Any social networking (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc) must reflect behaviors of honesty, respect, and professionalism. Information related to clinical experiences must not be posted on any social media sites. The inappropriate use of social media will apply to the student Code of Conduct. Students must always follow the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) related to protected information about patients and healthcare situations; this includes posting private information on social media.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) has published a white paper, *A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media* in 2018. The paper is located at <https://www.ncsbn.org/brochures-and-posters/nurses-guide-to-the-use-of-social-media>

The American Nurses Association published a *Social Networking Principles Toolkit* in 2011. The toolkit can be found at <https://www.nursingworld.org/nurses-books/ebook---anas-principles-for-social-networking-and-the-nurse/>

The toolkit includes the following principles:

1. Nurses must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information.
2. Nurses must observe ethically prescribed professional patient – nurse boundaries.
3. Nurses should understand that patients, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.
4. Nurses should take advantage of privacy settings and seek to separate personal and professional information online.
5. Nurses should bring content that could harm a patient's privacy, rights or welfare to the attention of the appropriate authorities.
6. Nurses should participate in developing institutional policies governing online conduct.

The toolkit lists the following tips to avoid problems

1. Remember that the standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance.
2. Do not share or post information or photos gained through the nurse – patient relationship.
3. Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.
4. Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, employers, or co-workers, even if they are not identified.
5. Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.
6. Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

Remember that any violation of patient confidentiality makes a student at risk for ineligibility to continue in the nursing program.

Incivility

"Incivility is any action that is offensive, intimidating, or hostile that interferes with the learning or practice environment" (Harris, 2011. p 16). It can take on a variety of forms and often occurs when people feel stressed, rushed, or are unhappy with a situation. Nursing students and faculty alike feel stressed and rushed at times, making them at risk for behaviors that may be characterized by incivility. Incivility as described by Harris can be subtle and initially seem benign. Incivility includes disrespectful behaviors which include, but are not limited to, eye-rolling, sarcastic comments, spreading rumors, back-stabbing, the 'silent treatment', dominating group conversations, showing up late, or setting another up for failure. Retrieved from <https://www.ncbn.com/myfiles/downloads/course-bulletin-offerings-articles/bulletin-article-fall-2011-incivility-in-nursing.pdf>

The ANA Code of Ethics indicates that any form of disrespect or harassment will not be tolerated by the profession of nursing. The Joint Commission asserts that incivility is a safety issue which impacts quality of care and as such should not be tolerated. Incivility is "one or more rude, discourteous, or disrespectful actions that may or may not have a negative intent behind them". (American Nurses Association, 2015). Incivility, bullying, and workplace violence. Retrieved from <http://www.nursingworld.org/Bullying-Workplace-Violence>

Faculty at Minnesota West believe that nurses, faculty members, and students are ultimately accountable for their own professional behaviors. We believe in a culture of open, respectful communication. The goal is that students, faculty members, patients, families, coworkers, and all team members enjoy and learn in a safe, respectful environment. Patterns of incivility will not be tolerated and can result in ineligibility to continue in the nursing program.

Clinical Responsibilities

A major focus of any nursing activity is client safety. Nursing students are legally responsible for their own acts, commission and/or omission. The nursing faculty is responsible for appropriate delegation to students in the clinical area. Students must adhere to the responsibilities listed below or they will receive a failing grade for the clinical day.

Student Responsibilities

1. Prior to the first clinical experience, students provide evidence of:
 - a. good health as evidenced by a completed physical examination and updated immunizations
 - b. current CPR certification (as specified in program requirements)
2. Students prepare for clinical experience by:
 - a. understanding assignments
 - b. understanding diet, activity level of client, scheduled diagnostics, and prescribed therapy
 - c. understanding medications (action, dosage, side-effects, time and method of administration)
 - d. understanding when to take vital signs and any other special assessments needed
 - e. understanding special precautions for client
 - f. understanding special needs of client
 - g. understanding delegated nursing interventions (e.g., procedures and treatments)
3. Students arrive on time.
4. Students come to clinicals in a state of psychological and physical health which is non-threatening to the client and/or student.
5. Students notify the instructor and/or the clinical facility within 30 minutes of the start of the clinical day when ill, late, or unable to come for clinical experience.
6. Students assume legal responsibilities for providing safe care (e.g., maintains asepsis, administers medications safely, uses side rails and restraints appropriately, reports medication errors).
7. Students show evidence of preparation for clinical prior to the experience at a level consistent with the course objectives (e.g. has a tentative plan of care ready for the day).
8. Students communicate effectively, accurately, and appropriately with peers, nursing staff, and instructor.
9. Students use therapeutic communication skills when communicating with clients and families.
10. Students adhere to the Dress Code.

Instructor's Responsibilities

1. Is prepared for clinical supervision and pre/post conferences.
2. Is punctual for conferences and clinical
3. Functions as learning resource by:
 - a. identifying essential learning
 - b. functions as a professional role model
 - c. identifying learning needs
 - d. directing learning experiences toward meeting individual needs
 - e. evaluating the student's achievement of essential learning
4. Maintains a working relationship with the nursing staff.
5. Coordinates and supervises the client care provided by the students.
6. Identifies and intervenes and /or guides the behavior of the student to provide safe care.
7. Assumes legal responsibility for herself and/or students in providing client care.
8. Shares methods and results of evaluation with students on an on-going basis.
9. Adheres to the Minnesota West Dress Code as stated in handbook.
10. Establishes office hours and notifies students of office hours.
11. Maintains a relationship with the student that is characterized by mutual respect, cooperation and is conducive to learning.

Dress and Grooming Code

1. The Minnesota West nursing programs have set a style of uniform that every student must wear for lab and clinical experiences: royal blue lab jacket with Minnesota West Nursing embroidery, white uniform top with Minnesota West Nursing embroidery, and royal blue uniform pants. Uniforms are purchased in the bookstore. Skirts can be substituted for pants if they are mid-lower leg or longer in length and are royal blue. White,

royal blue, or black (solid, no print) headdresses may be worn with no adornments and must be safely secured (no billowing, flowy fabric) as allowed per facility policy. (solid, no print) headdresses may be worn with no adornments and must be safely secured. White (solid, no print) tank tops, short-sleeve, or long-sleeve tops may be worn under white uniform top. Uniforms must be clean, unwrinkled, and mended when necessary. Students are responsible for laundering own uniforms.

2. A clean uniform may be worn to the lab/clinical facility if students come directly from home. After a lab/clinical, the uniform may not be worn out in the community setting. If a student appears for lab/clinical experiences inappropriately attired, or appearance does not conform to the standards stated in this handbook or by expectation of the clinical facility, the student will be sent home and will receive an absence for the lab or clinical day.
3. Uniforms: Pant length must not touch the floor for infection control reasons. Uniforms must not be tight to allow for appropriate movement. Pants must be worn at/above the waist. Appropriate undergarments must be worn (neutral or white).
4. Shoes: Neutral colors only (white, tan, black, brown and grey) are permitted. Athletic shoes with minimal mesh and minimal color allowed. No open heel or open toes (no Croc or clog style). No wedges or platform shoes allowed; no taller than a 3 inch rise allowed. Must wear neutral colored socks (white preferred) that cover the ankle.
5. Fingernails must not extend beyond the fingertips and must be clean. Clear nail polish is allowed or per facility policy. No artificial nails or gel nails of any type are permitted.
6. Hair must be worn back from the face. Hair color must be of a naturally occurring hue (no pink, blue, purple, etc). Hair must be worn so that it does not fall into the work area. Facial hair must be neatly trimmed. Hair should be free from decoration or adornment that are flashy, have beads, or have sharp points. Scarfs and hats are not allowed (see headdress note above).
7. Jewelry should be minimal and conservative in appearance. A wedding band may be worn, but no rings should be worn when doing invasive techniques or working in isolation. Bracelets and necklaces should not be worn with an exception for medical alert bracelets. Earrings must be simple, small posts, and must not dangle. Visible piercings are limited to no more than two (2) pairs of posts in the ear. The only visible body pierced jewelry allowed is pierced earrings as described above. Facial piercings other than the two small posts earrings must be covered or replaced with skin-tone plugs/spacers (including gauged ear jewelry).
8. Make-up should be minimal and conservative in appearance.
9. Visible tattoos (including henna) must be covered or in compliance with facility policy. Tattoos unable to be covered due to infection control (i.e. hands) must not be offensive and needs to follow facility policy.
10. A watch with a second-counting capacity is required. Smart watches are not allowed in patient care areas.
11. Name badges are provided to students by Minnesota West and must be worn to all required clinical activities and/or used for identification for major exams. Students should take care not to lose their name badges! The student will need to purchase an additional badge if lost.
12. Students are required to bring the following items to clinical (in addition to uniform): clinical badge, stethoscope, penlight, and black pen.
13. A scrub jacket and name badge must be worn while at the clinical facility collecting assignments, gathering data, and for certain clinical experiences (i.e. observations). Jeans are not to be worn to any clinical facility when participating in these activities. Dress in business attire (no jeans, no revealing necklines, no miniskirts and no shorts). No open-toed shoes or flip-flops.
14. No gum chewing, smoking, or chewing tobacco during clinical activities.
15. Any student suspected of being impaired due to lack of sleep, prescribed medication, alcohol or drug use, will be immediately removed from the patient care environment and sent home (as appropriate).

Hygiene

1. Students must be especially attentive to personal hygiene since close contact with others occurs during client care situations.
2. Students must not use strong scents such as perfumes, scented lotions, shaving creams, essential oils, etc. in preparation for or at clinical experiences. Strong odors are often offensive to ill and healthy individuals, and may trigger allergic reactions in certain people

3. Smokers should be particularly careful about odor of breath and clothes. Do not smoke in a car on the way to clinical experiences. Strong smells of smoke will result in the student being sent home, resulting in an absence for the clinical day.

Technical Standards for Nursing Programs – State of MN

Minnesota State Practical Nursing Program Performance Standards

<p>The system of Minnesota State Colleges provides the following example of performance standards, based on the Minnesota Nurse Practice Act, that practical nursing students are required to meet and maintain to provide safe and effective care, to be successful and progress in nursing programs. The examples listed are for illustrative purposes only and are not intended to be a complete list of all tasks in a nursing program.</p> <p>Students with documented disabilities, or who believe they may have a protected disability, can request accommodation, which may assist with meeting the standards for nursing programs. Please contact the Minnesota West Accessibility and Disabilities Services Coordinator at 800-658-2330 to schedule an appointment.</p>		
Requirements	Standards	Examples include but are not limited to...
Critical-thinking Skills	Critical thinking ability for effective clinical reasoning and clinical judgment consistent with level of educational preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understanding context of situations, make logical decisions and request assistance as needed. • Organize workload to manage time effectively and prioritize the delivery of client care. • Ability to recognize and report changes in client’s condition to registered nurse or instructor. • Assimilate information from class, lab and clinical to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes. • Ongoing demonstration of skills mastery while integrating new information.
Interpersonal Skills	Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interactions with a diverse population of individuals, families, and groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and protect client confidentiality and privacy. • Establish professional relationships. • Accept feedback and integrate new understanding into behavior. • Display personal accountability, integrity, understanding that student behavior affects others. • Practice the ability to assign tasks to other LPN’s and unlicensed personnel. • Promote a team-building environment. • Provide safe effective care in a variety of cultural settings. • Convey empathy, compassion and sensitivity in interactions and relationships.
Communication Skills	Communication skills sufficient for verbal and written professional interactions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assimilate verbal and non-verbal information, process and exchange information with clients, families, instructors and members of the healthcare team. • Accurately document nursing actions and client responses. • Display the capacity to participate in successful conflict resolution and advocate for client rights and needs. • Effectively communicate in English in verbal, written, and electronic resources with colleagues, school staff, and members of the interdisciplinary team. • Use therapeutic communication techniques to provide support to peers, clients and families. • Process relevant information; accurately and timely communicate to the healthcare team. • Ability to perform client education and adjust information to client understanding.
Psychomotor Skills	Psychomotor skills sufficient for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move about client’s room and/or workspaces to complete client assessment. • Ability to administer rescue procedures - cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

	providing safe, effective nursing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate the ability to work for long periods. • Safely use and calibrate equipment in a variety of settings. • Perform procedures necessary to safely admit, transfer, or discharge a client. • Prepare and administer medications and treatments. • Perform basic nursing skills safely and efficiently.
Assessment Skills	Assessment skills sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct focused assessment; compare data with normal findings, report changes to registered nurse or other licensed healthcare provider. • Observe client's condition, utilizing all senses, and data from equipment, report changes. • Ability to respond to client distress calls. • Implement interventions delegated or ordered by healthcare provider. • Participate with other members of the healthcare team to develop and modify care plans.
Emotional-Behavioral Skills	Demonstrates appropriate behavior to function effectively under stress and assume accountability for one's actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate emotional stability while encountering a wide variety of emotions in self and others. • Communicate empathy, recognize own values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions and experiences affect perceptions and relationships with others. • Personal flexibility to adapt to rapidly changing environments. • Ability to apply sound judgement in pressured situations. • Recognize limits of knowledge and abilities and seek assistance.
Professional Conduct Skills	Process attributes that include compassion, altruism, integrity, honesty, responsibility and tolerance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide safe and effective care to patients along the age continuum without regard to disability, ethnic origin, gender status or social standing. • Recognize and preserve individual human dignity. • Advocate for the client's best interest. • Demonstrate professional accountability and ability to work in hierarchical environment. • Demonstrate intent to follow the ANA Code of Ethics.
Environmental Stressors	Other considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work with infectious agents and blood-borne pathogens. • Ability to work in area with potential chemical and radiation hazards. • Ability to work with potential allergens such as latex. • Ability to work in areas of potential violence. • Ability to work in close proximity to others.
Other	Sensory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual and auditory ability to perform assessments, safe nursing care, and meet program outcomes.

References

H.C. Gonzalez, E-L. Hsiao / Teaching and Learning in Nursing 15 (2020) 53-56.

Minnesota Nurse Practice Act – Minnesota Statute Section 148.171.

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