Practical
Nursing Program
Student
Handbook

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Welcome to the Practical Nursing Program

The faculty and administration of Hennepin Technical College welcome you to the Practical Nursing Program. This nursing student handbook contains important information that will help facilitate your progress in the program.

The purpose of the Practical Nursing Program is to assist each student to develop effectively as a Student Practical Nurse and to be eligible to apply for practical nursing licensure.

As a student in the nursing program, you are responsible for knowing and following all the policies in the Hennepin Technical College Student Handbook, school catalog, and the LPN handbook.

The Hennepin Technical College practical nursing program is approved by the Minnesota Board of Nursing, and graduates are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam.

This nursing education program is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). For further information about our accreditation process and criteria, please visit www.acenursing.org.

Section I: General Information

Program Mission and Philosophy

The mission and philosophy of the practical nursing program are consistent with the mission, values, and goals of Hennepin Technical College (HTC). The Practical Nursing program mission is to provide excellence in nursing education, preparing students for success in the national licensure and practice as nurses serving the healthcare needs of a diverse community.

Nursing education is a learner-centered process incorporating multiple instructional methodologies, resources, and learning opportunities. The learning process is based on principles of critical thinking and is enhanced by the presentation of information from simple to complex. The nursing faculty believe teaching and learning is a process in which students demonstrate personal and professional accountability by taking an active role in the learning process.

The faculty of the Nursing program recognize nursing is a dynamic profession founded in arts and sciences and is a practice discipline based on caring in a culturally diverse society. Graduates will be prepared to work in a variety of healthcare settings with diverse populations.

Practical Nursing Program Standards

Performance standards, based on the Minnesota Nurse Practice Act, define standards nursing students need to meet and maintain to provide safe and effective care:

- Critical-thinking Skills- Students have the ability to understand complex situations and assimilate information from class, lab, and clinical to demonstrate achievement of learning outcomes.

- Interpersonal & Emotional-Behavioral Skills- Students maintain and protect client confidentiality and privacy. Students provide safe effective care while demonstrating empathy, compassion, and sensitivity in interactions and relationships. Demonstrate ability to be flexible in rapidly changing environments and recognize limits of knowledge, seeking assistance as needed.

- Communication Skills- Students assimilate verbal and non-verbal information and use therapeutic communication techniques to provide support to peers and clients. Students understand relevant information, to allow for accurate and timely communication to healthcare team.

- Assessment & Psychomotor Skills- Students demonstrate the ability to complete a focused assessment, and safely administer medications and treatments.

- Environmental Stressors & Professional Conduct Skills- Students understand the need to protect self and work safely with infectious agents, potential violence, and chemical or radiation hazards. Demonstrate professional accountability and provide care to clients throughout the age continuum without regard to disability, ethnic origin, gender status, or social standing.

The full Nurse Practice Act can be found here.

Program Award Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the diploma, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate effective communication techniques while providing patient care founded on basic physical, developmental, spiritual, cultural, functional, and psychosocial needs of individual patients across the lifespan.
2. Manage care through planning, organizing, or assigning aspects of care to UAP's and LPN's under the direction of an RN or other licensed health care provider.
3. Participate as a member of the inter-professional team collaborating with other health care providers to promote safe, quality, patient-centered care.
4. Demonstrate nursing safety principles.
5. Utilize information technology effectively in the provision of care.
6. Demonstrate professional behaviors in accordance with legal and ethical nursing practice standards.
7. Utilize evidence-based nursing judgment when providing individualized patient care when prioritizing care across the lifespan.
8. Participate in quality improvement.

Student Eligibility

Student enrollment and completion of the nursing program requires students to maintain eligibility with standards set forth by licensing agencies, clinical partners, and the College.

<u>Background Study Information</u>

Minnesota law requires that any person who provides services that involve direct contact with children, patients, and residents at a health or childcare facility licensed by the State of Minnesota have a background study conducted by the State. Individuals with specified felony convictions are prohibited from having direct contact with children, patients, and residents of licensed facilities. Refusal to complete the criminal background study results in the student's inability to continue in the nursing program.

The Minnesota Board of Nursing requires fingerprinting as a component of the national background study process. It is the responsibility of the student to complete this within 14 days of registering for the background check. If this is not completed within 14 days, the student will be assessed another $50 fee for re-registration.

The student is responsible for the confirmation of completion letter from the Minnesota Department of Human Services. Previous background checks from employers cannot be accepted.

Questions should be directed to the Minnesota Department of Human Services. More information can be found at the Background Study website: www.DHS.state.mn.us, select General Public; Office of Inspector General; Background Studies.

<u>Accommodations</u>

Illnesses, injuries, or conditions in which physician or practitioner intervention was sought and limitations or restrictions are needed, a signed release statement is needed before attendance at clinicals.

Pregnancy is considered a normal event, for the student's safety, the nursing program *requires* a statement from the student's healthcare provider providing permission to continue clinical experiences or delineate any special needs or restrictions.

Students who need other assistance for test taking or class work accommodations should contact HTC's [Access Services](#).

Program Structure

The program is two semesters in length. The Brooklyn Park cohort starts in the Fall term (August) and graduates in May. The Eden Prairie cohort starts in the Spring term (January) and graduates in December.

 First semester:

- Fundamentals of Nursing (NURS1375)
- Medical Surgical Nursing I (NURS1380)

Second semester:

- Medical Surgical Nursing II (NURS2375)
- Transition to Practice (NURS2380)

Section II: Attendance

Nursing students are expected to attend all lectures, lab, simulation, and clinical sessions. Lectures are offered via zoom and recordings are posted, if students do not attend the lecture synchronously, it is the student's responsibility to listen to the recording.

In the event an illness or emergency inhibits a student from attending as scheduled, it is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor. Students who will be absent or tardy must contact the instructor **one hour prior** to the assigned time of the activity. Students failing to notify the instructor may receive a failure for the lab, clinical, or simulation, resulting in a failure of the course.

Clinical, Simulation, & Lab Attendance:

Students who miss a clinical, simulation, or lab jeopardize meeting the course objectives and may receive a course failure. Students are expected to be on-time, prepared, and wearing HTC uniform to assigned rotations. If a student is not present due to an emergency, the following will occur:

- **Emergency Events**- Students are expected to contact their instructor as soon as possible, at least one-hour prior to the scheduled start time if able. Extenuating circumstances, supported by documentation, are reviewed and if approved are followed by plans to make-up the missed hours.
- **No Call/No Show**- Students who do not contact the instructor prior to the scheduled start time or within a reasonable time frame, may receive a failing grade.
- **Leaving a Clinical Rotation Early**- Students leaving a clinical site early, without faculty approval, is considered patient abandonment. This may result in a failure of the course.

Extenuating circumstances may include court/immigration appointments or hospitalizations. Unexcused absences include, but are not limited to, lack of childcare, work schedule conflicts, or oversleeping.

Exam Attendance:

All exams occur in person, on campus, in a proctored environment. Students arriving after the scheduled start time for an exam will not be permitted to enter the testing room. A make-up exam, if approved, incurs a 20% deduction from the earned testing score. A student completing a make-up exam must complete this within 7 days.

Students are required to use school computers for testing. A simple calculator, a blank sheet of scratch paper, and a pencil are provided during the exam. Following the exam, each of these items is required to be turned into the proctor before the student leaves the testing environment.

Personal belongings are not allowed into the testing environment, with the exception of student ID and car key. Cell phones, smart watches, earbuds, headphones, or other personal communication devices are not allowed into the testing environment. Hats, scarves, and clothing with hooding are not permitted in the testing environment, with the exception of religious head coverings.

Once the exam has started, students are not allowed to leave the testing environment, with the exception of exams that take more than 2 hours in length. Students are then allowed one personal break without access to personal belongings or electronic devices. Upon completion of the exam, students are expected to leave the testing space quietly and without disrupting others still testing.

Students are expected to maintain integrity of all exams. This includes not discussing exam questions and answers with others or sharing or posting any exam information. Students who wish to challenge an exam question must do so in writing to the instructor within 48 hours of completion of the exam.

Section III: Professionalism

Code of Conduct

Hennepin Technical College Nursing Department recognizes that all students have responsibilities as members of the college community. The HTC Student Code of Conduct and academic integrity policies apply to all students.

Professionalism

Professionalism is an important part of the nursing profession and is outlined in the Nurse Practice Act.

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior, including, but not limited to:

- Being responsible for own actions
- Demonstrating respect for others
- Turning off or silencing cell phones during lectures
- Demonstrate profession verbal, written, and nonverbal communication
- Not falsify any patient/client record, or any other document prepared or utilized during, or in conjunction with, nursing practice
- Establish and maintain professional boundaries with each patient/client
- Maintain patient confidentiality, adhering to regulations identified by HIPPA; students will not take from clinical site anything containing patient identifying information

Communication with Instructors

A student's HTC email is their official means of communication with the college. Students are required to e-mail from their student my.hennepintech.edu address when communicating with instructors. Students should check their HTC e-mail and D2L course announcements regularly.

Intellectual Property & Copyright

Materials utilized in the nursing program and courses are considered intellectual property of the instructor and/or nursing program as a collective. Students may not reproduce or share any materials (which includes, but is not limited to, lectures, assignments, quizzes, or tests) from their courses or program. Sharing of materials includes posting materials from courses and/or the program on information-sharing websites, including, though not limited to, Quizlet,

CourseHero, and StuDoc. If students wish to share materials from a course or the program should contact the creator(s) of the materials or the Associate Dean of Nursing.

Students who share materials from courses and/or the program without explicit permission of the instructor may receive academic discipline that may include being exited from the program.

Solicitation at Clinical Sites

During clinical experiences, the student will not promote any business or activity that will provide them with current or future personal or financial gain.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones are not allowed in the lab or during clinicals. Devices must be stored away and not accessible in uniform pockets, including earbuds and headphones. Violation and use of a cell phone in these settings may result in a failure of the lab or clinical.

Alcohol & Drug Use

In the interest of patient safety, any student suspected of being under the influence of a substance or displaying behaviors possibly indicating chemical or alcohol use at the college or at the clinical site will be escorted from the setting. Transportation will be obtained at the student's expense.

Students who are impaired by alcohol or other chemicals are in violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#) and will follow the disciplinary process as outlined.

Section IV: Professional Appearance & Uniform

Dress Code & Hygiene

Nursing students are expected to dress appropriately and demonstrate good hygiene. Nursing students represent the program to internal constituents of the College, clinical partners, and prospective employers.

Uniform Requirements for Lab and Clinicals

Students are required to wear a student uniform to lab, simulation, and clinicals. Students who do not wear a uniform may be sent home for the day and risk failure of the lab/clinical.

The required uniform includes:

- A solid, dark purple (eggplant) uniform top
- Matching colored pants or skirt, at least knee length or longer.
- Any undergarments/stockings/socks worn under the required uniform should be neutral in color and design.
- White or black rubber/non-slip soled shoes or tennis shoes. For safety and infection control reasons no canvas tennis shoes, sandals, open toed shoes, or clogs are allowed.
- HTC nursing student name badge.
- A watch with a second hand (not a smart watch)
- A stethoscope

Optional:

- A matching-colored scrub jacket may also be worn. White lab coats are not allowed.
- White or black, professional looking shirts may be worn under the scrub top.
- A head scarf or covering may be worn; it must match the uniform.

Dress Code:

- Hair- clean, neat, pulled back and secured; facial hair must be shaven or neatly trimmed.
- Uniform must be neat, clean, and wrinkle-free. It must be washed between wearing.
- Only wedding bands or smooth band rings are permitted.
- One pair of small post earrings worn in the ears is allowed. No other visible jewelry is allowed – this includes facial and tongue piercings.
- Body art (tattoos or other forms of body art) should be covered whenever possible.
- Fingernails must be kept short not over the tops of the finger pads. Acrylic or artificial fingernails are not allowed. Students may wear clear or natural colored fingernail polish; however, no polish is preferred.
- Artificial eyelashes must not interfere with eye protection or infection control practices.
- Students must be clean and free of offensive odor (i.e. cigarette smoke, body odor, perfumes, etc.). Students cannot wear perfume or highly scented fragrances, including scented grooming or hair products.
- Students' breath free of offensive odors. Limit or avoid eating strong spices prior or during clinical.
- Chewing gum is not allowed while on the patient care units.

Students who violate these guidelines may be dismissed from clinical the day of occurrence. This will be counted as a clinical absence. Students who have an absence may not be able to meet course requirements, and therefore, may fail the course.

Mandatory Clinical Requirements

Students must meet immunization requirements, CPR card, negative pulmonary tuberculosis test, and current influenza vaccine. Students may not attend clinicals without the necessary documentation of clinical requirements.

The student will immediately notify the instructor of any incidents that occur during clinical, whether the student was directly involved or only a witness of the incident. If a student injury occurs, the student will be directed to consult his/her medical provider.

The facility/clinical site nursing staff may also send a student home from the clinical site if there is concern for patient safety and/or professional behavior violations.

Section V: Evaluation of Nursing Courses

Students must progress through the courses sequentially. Students must achieve a passing grade in the previous course before enrolling in the next course in the program. Earning a minimum of a "B" is required to pass the course, in addition to meeting the benchmarks of the course.

Percentages for nursing course grades:

A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89.9%
C = 70 – 79.9%
D = 60 – 69.9%
F = 59.9% & below

An incomplete course grade is required to be changed to a letter grade before the student can progress to the next course. Grades are not rounded, as an example an earned grade of 79.9% is a "C" and cannot be rounded to an 80%.

Supporting Student Success
Students identified as at risk for failing a course or other identified barriers to success may be referred to the Tutoring Centers and/ or college CARE team. The CARE team consists of advisors, counselors, and others to guide students to support, services, and resources.

Missing and/or Late Work
Assignments are due as stated in the D2L course, late submissions of work will earn a 10% deduction each day for 5 days. The 6th day, no credit will be earned for the assignment and a 0 is then earned.

Course Benchmarks
Exam Benchmarks:
To best prepare students to pass the NCLEX, the Nursing Program policy requires students to meet a cumulative testing exam average for each course. Students who do not meet the exam benchmark, even if having received a higher grade on assignments will not progress to the next course and will receive a 79.9%, a "C".

Fundamental of Nursing (NURS1375) cumulative exam average is 80%.
Medical Surgical Nursing I (NURS1380) cumulative exam average is 80%.
Medical Surgical Nursing II (NURS2375) cumulative exam average is 80%.
Preceptorship in Nursing (NURS2380) cumulative exam average is 80%.

Simulation, Clinical, and Lab Grade:
Students must obtain a minimum cumulative grade of 80% to progress to the next course.

Medication Math:
Please review the course syllabus for more information.

HESI Exit Exam:
All students are required to take the HESI Exit Exam in NURS2380. This exam is taken twice during the course and all students are required to take both exams. Students must achieve a score of at least 800 on at least one of the attempts to successfully complete NURS2380.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is acting in a way that is honest, respectful, and responsible in academic coursework. This is a fundamental value to success as a student and is an indicator of future workplace behavior. Examples of academic integrity violations include, though are not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, lying, and assisting others with dishonest behaviors.

Cheating:

Cheating is any dishonest means of gaining an advantage in an assignment or exam. Cheating examples include using a cell phone, written notes, or other means to find answers to examinations. Cheating includes having someone else, including artificial intelligence, write a paper or complete an assignment. Cheating also includes copying from another student answers to examination questions or assignments. Students found cheating on an exam may be exited from the program.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is stealing the ideas or words of someone else and using them for one's own gain. The student submitting an assignment must be the author of the assignment. If a student submits a paper that was plagiarized, a zero will be given for that assignment, and the faculty will submit a Student Code of Code violation form.
Any repeat occurrences of plagiarism will result in failure of the course. Failing a course may also result in an exit from the nursing program.

The college Academic Integrity Policy is [here](#).

Course Withdrawal/ Failure

A grade of "W" (withdrawal), "C", "D", or "F" is not considered a passing grade for the course. Any of the grades listed above require the student to repeat and pass the course before progressing to the next course.

Students are able to repeat one withdrawn or failed course for the entire program. Due to cohort section size limits, there is no guarantee the student will be accommodated to repeat a course. The student may need to restart the program in a later semester. Students repeating a course also may be charged additional fees for learning products.

Program Exit

Students may earn an academic exit from the program for the following situations:

1. Earning a failing grade (grade C, D, NC, or F) or a Withdraw (W) twice in the program
2. Missing a course or semester, thus creating a time gap in the flow of the program. Students must complete courses consecutively, breaks in attendance are not permitted.
3. Failing to resolve an incomplete and earn a letter grade by the start of the next course/semester.
4. Violations of the HTC and/or Nursing Program Code of Conduct.

Students who are exited from the program and are still registered for a course, are responsible

for dropping their course(s). Students will be held financially responsible for courses not dropped following a program exit.

Appeal Process

Students may submit an appeal following an academic exit from the program or an exception to a program policy. Appeals, with supporting documentation of an extenuating circumstance, are submitted in writing to the Associate Dean of Nursing for review. Students may be readmitted to the program one time with an approved appeal.

The appeal form can be found on the Nursing Program D2L website in the "Content" area. Appeals must be submitted within 2 weeks of the program exit.