
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT CHATTANOOGA

SCHOOL OF NURSING

Undergraduate and Gateway Student Handbook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Message from the Director	3
Vision/Mission/Core Values	4
Conceptual Framework	5
Curriculum Outcomes	8
Admissions	8
ADA Awareness Statement	8
Attendance	9
Uniform Policy	9
Policy on Drug Screening	10
N 95 Fit Test	12
Core Performance Standards	13
Professional and Academic Standards	13
Nursing Program Course(s) Withdrawal	23
Returning to the School of Nursing Program	23
Nursing Transfer Policy	24
Achievement Tests	24
University Exit Exam	24
The Gateway Track	24
Learning Laboratory	26
UTC Policy for Computer Use	26
Guidelines for Work Hours	27
Infection Control Policy	27

A Message from the Director

We know that your journey to become a professional nurse and leader in your chosen discipline, nursing, is difficult, yet will be very rewarding. This handbook has been carefully developed to serve you during your journey so you will know the ground rules. You should use it appropriately as you progress through the program. It will help you be successful. I highly encourage you to explore this handbook to become familiar with the established regulations that govern our/your program.

Kay Lindgren PhD RN
Director and UC Foundation Professor
School of Nursing

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE AT
CHATTANOOGA
SCHOOL OF NURSING**

Undergraduate Student Handbook

Our Vision

The School of Nursing (SON) is dedicated to ensuring quality nursing education that is responsive to the needs of our community of interest.

Our Mission

The mission of the SON is to prepare qualified nursing professionals who influence the health care environment and enhance the quality of life for individuals, families and society. We are committed to providing leadership in health care.

Our Core Values

As the SON moves forward its mission and vision; it is guided by values that are grounded in a professional nursing practice that embraces clinical and scholarly excellence. The faculty, staff and students will:

1. Uphold, and at all times, act in concert with ethical values and principles.
2. Communicate with integrity, keep promises, and honor commitments.
3. Partner with our community of interest by creating relationships to promote common interest and shared values.
4. Practice stewardship through fair and responsible management of gifts and resources.
5. Espouse life-long learning, inquiry, and critical thinking.
6. Commit to quality and excellence in all we do.
7. Generate commitment and passion for the practice of nursing.
8. Foster creativity.
9. Model leadership.
10. Create an environment of inclusiveness where individual, intellectual and social diversity is valued.

PHILOSOPHY

Introduction

The School of Nursing frames its philosophy and programs within the theoretical structure of Dorothea Orem's Self-Care Deficit Nursing Theory. Orem identifies Self-Care Deficit Nursing as "a general theory of what nursing is and should be in concrete nursing practice situations" (Orem, 2001, p.136).

The School of Nursing's philosophical definitions of person, environment, health, nursing and nursing education are infused with Orem's terminology. Agency refers to an individual's capabilities and is used in the context of both the nurse and patient.

Person

A person has the actual or potential attribute of self-care agency. This agency, or capability, allows the person to deliberately learn and perform actions for survival, health and well-being. Factors affecting learning include age, mental capacity, culture, societal conditions, and a person's developmental or emotional state.

People dynamically move toward maturation and achievement of their full human potentials by integrating physical, psychological, interpersonal and social aspects of their lives. To do this they must reflect upon themselves and their environments and provide input into both self and environment. People use both symbols and words to express their ideas to communicate with others.

People gather in groups or structured relationships. These relationships both define and support self-care.

People have the power to act deliberately to identify their own and others' needs. The way people meet self-care needs is not instinctual, but is a learned behavior. If any person is unable or unwilling to learn, others must learn for and or provide for that person's self-care. Likewise, when a person has therapeutic self-care demands that he or she cannot meet, others with knowledge and skill must provide the means to meet those demands. If neither the person, the family nor a group to which the person belongs is able to supply therapeutic health care requisites, that person needs professional nursing care. (Orem, 2001)

Environment

Environment is the domain in which people exist. The interaction between the environment and people affects health, well-being, growth and development positively or negatively throughout the life cycle. The reciprocal relationship between the person and environment is influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors include the biological, psychological and spiritual attributes of the person, while external factors comprise physical, chemical, socio-cultural, economic, political, legal, ethical, and organizational elements.

The environment can be analyzed and understood. In some instances environment can even be regulated and controlled especially through community health efforts (Orem, 2001).

Health

The term health is used to describe living things when they are structurally and functionally whole or sound. The physical, psychological, interpersonal and social aspects of health are inseparable in the individual.

When “health” or “healthy” are used as descriptive terms for an individual, a judgment is being made on the basis of data about that person and his or her ability to maintain self-care. A person’s overall state of health is not necessarily modified by temporary changes in the state of wellness. The individual with an injury, for example would be considered injured and/or disabled, rather than sick or unhealthy, but would, for a short time require assistance with self-care. Ideally, health is the responsibility of both a society and its individual members and not of any one segment of that society.

Nursing

“Nursing is a direct human service provided by a qualified person to help persons to continuously know and meet their own or their dependents’ therapeutic self-care demands and to regulate the exercise or development of their self-care or dependent-care agency whenever their limitations for action are associated with their own health states or that of their dependents” (Orem, 2001, pp. 517-518).

Professional nursing rests upon the characteristics of nurse agency (communication, teaching, cultural competence, leadership, professional behavioral, legal understanding, professional technological skills) and is operationalized in the nursing systems of wholly compensatory, partially compensatory, and supportive-educative care. Nursing care is always tempered by the art and prudence of nursing. Art is the “intellectual quality . . . that allows . . . creative investigations, analysis, and synthesis” (Orem, p. 293). Prudence is selecting “the right reason about things to be done”; “a virtue of the mind and of the character of individuals” (p.293). “Art and prudence serve nurses in their performance of the interrelated operations of nursing practice” (p. 294).

Nursing care is based on professional standards, ethics, competencies and knowledge drawn from the natural, social, medical sciences, and the humanities, as well as nursing’s own body of knowledge. Professional nursing supports research and education to expand nursing knowledge and its use.

Nursing Education

The UTC School of Nursing prepares an educated person who nurses. Nursing education focuses on the development of nursing agency, the development of capabilities needed to provide professional nursing care.

Education encompasses both teaching and learning. Learning is a deliberate and dynamic process characterized by the acquisition of knowledge, self-awareness, breadth and depth in critical thinking, and by cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills all of which change the behavior of the learner. Learning is an individualized process which occurs best when learner's rights are respected and when the learner accepts responsibility for self-direction and for decisions. The outcome of learning is an enriched outlook, a new perspective.

Teaching is a transaction involving both learner and teacher where the teacher acts as a facilitator, a role model and a resource person using multiple modes of instruction. Teachers guide the learner by developing, organizing, and structuring knowledge; by fostering a spirit of inquiry, a sense of discovery and a desire for life-long learning. The outcome of teaching is an enriched outlook, a new perspective.

Undergraduate Nursing Education focuses on developing nursing agency through didactic and clinical experiences that build upon the student's foundation in the liberal arts curriculum.

Graduate Nursing Education is based on a sound baccalaureate program of studies. Graduate studies immerse the student in nursing practice, supported with a theory, research and policy core of graduate-level nursing courses, which precede a concentration in a specialty area.

The Nurse Anesthesia Concentration focuses upon the self-care demands and abilities of patients as they undergo an peri-operative experience.

The Nurse Practitioner Concentration focuses on the self-care demands and abilities of patients and families in the primary health care setting.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice is a clinical leadership degree that encompasses all of the nursing systems. It emphasizes the use of research-based evidence in collaboration with other disciplines to promote individual and population self care agency.

Approved by Faculty, 05/01/08

CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program, the graduate is able to apply Orem's Conceptual Model: The Self-Care Deficit Theory of Nursing to:

1. Synthesize theoretical and empirical knowledge from the natural, behavioral, and nursing sciences, and the humanities, in making decisions about nursing practice.
2. Systematically evaluate the quality of nursing practice.
3. Demonstrate leadership skills in working with others toward improving health and nursing care in a variety of settings.
4. Use research findings in practice.
5. Use communication skills including collaboration and counseling in a variety of nursing roles and settings.
6. Act in an ethical manner in making decisions and taking actions on behalf of clients.
7. Evaluate own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and relevant statutes and regulations.
8. Value life-long learning.
9. Value individual differences in others and their right to make health care decisions.
10. Demonstrate critical thinking skills.
11. Demonstrate professional behavior.
12. Integrate knowledge of resource management into nursing practice.

Approved by faculty Fall 2005

ADMISSIONS

Admission to the nursing major is competitive because of limitation of space and the number of qualified candidates. Criteria used to consider candidates for admission are described in the UTC Undergraduate Catalog and include completion of all prerequisites; overall GPA and prerequisite science GPA (the first science grade is calculated when a science course is repeated); ACT, and number of courses taken at UTC, and the TEAS™ examination.

Students are admitted in the Fall and Spring semesters. Applicants must be admitted to the university for consideration for the nursing program (requires two separate applications). Nursing school applications are available at the School of Nursing or online at www.utc.edu/Academic/Nursing

ADA AWARENESS STATEMENT

This statement is intended as the first statement of awareness.

Nursing is a practice discipline, with cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor performance requirements. The faculty of the School of Nursing has identified the skills and professional behaviors that are essential to pursue a course of study to be eligible to write the National Council Licensure Examination-RN and practice as a professional nurse. In order to progress in the nursing curriculum, a student must possess a functional level of capability to

perform the duties required of a professional nurse. The essential eligibility requirements for participation in the nursing program are identified as Core Performance Standards. These standards are adopted from the Southern Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (SCCEN) and are congruent with the skills presented in the document entitled Essentials of College and University Education for Professional Nursing, a publication of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing. If these standards cannot be achieved by the student, either unassisted or with dependable use of assistive devices, the faculty reserves the right to dis-enroll the student from clinical courses. Potential students are provided copies of the Core Performance Standards in materials sent when a request is made for information about the program. The information is available on the School of Nursing web page. A copy of the Essentials of College and University Education for Professional Nursing is available for review in the School's Office of the Director.

ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UP WORK

Students are expected to be present and prepared for all learning experiences planned by the School of Nursing. Promptness is expected for all classes and clinical laboratory/practicum. Attendance for didactic courses is determined by the course faculty. Attendance at clinical laboratory/practicum is mandatory. Absences may necessitate review of the student's record by course faculty to determine need for make up days. Tardiness is not acceptable. Students must follow course policies for clinical absences and tardiness, which to do so constitutes a grade of unsatisfactory. Students may be asked to leave the clinical area due to lack of preparation or inappropriate attire or behavior. Should this occur, the absence will be considered unexcused and the day will be counted as unsatisfactory. Students are to follow the course syllabus for further information.

SCHOOL OF NURSING UNIFORM POLICY

1. The official uniform consists of:
 - A. Female –
 1. Navy blue uniform pants and collared shirt purchased from Educational Outfitters. Shoes must be white and comfortable; all white, leather tennis shoes are acceptable as are the traditional white oxford or loafer.
 - B. Male –
 1. Navy blue uniform pants and collared shirt purchased from Educational Outfitters. Shoes must be white and comfortable; all white, leather tennis shoes are acceptable as are the traditional oxford or loafer.
 - C. Navy blue or white cardigan sweater (optional).
 - D. An official picture ID is required and is obtained from a contracted vendor.
 - E. Miscellaneous items:
 1. Plain white lab coat must be purchased from Educational Outfitters. (optional)
 2. Bandage scissors
 3. Watch with second hand
 4. Pen (black ink)
 5. Stethoscope

6. Small pocket calculator (optional)

2. General guidelines:

- A. Jewelry limited to one set of very small gold or pearl post-type earrings in the ear and wedding bands.
- B. No visible tattoos
- C. Shoes and uniforms must be neat and clean at all times.
- D. Dress uniform length should be no shorter than knee length.
- E. Hair must be constrained and groomed in accordance with the policy of the clinical agency.
- F. Complete nursing uniforms are to be worn in the clinical laboratory unless otherwise specified. A student inappropriately dressed may be asked to leave the clinical area and this will be considered an unexcused clinical absence.
- G. Student uniforms are only to be worn when students are functioning under the auspices of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga School of Nursing.

Approved by faculty, 4-21-09

Policy on Drug Screening

It is the policy of the College of Health, Education and Professional Studies (CHEPS) and the School of Nursing (SON) to be in compliance with all policies of the clinical facilities with which the College affiliates for student clinical learning experiences. The Chattanooga Area Consortium of Healthcare Education requires all students in a health care related program be required to submit to a drug screen for cause.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a safe working environment for students, patients, visitors, healthcare agency staff and university faculty and staff. In order to participate in the clinical experiences required in the health science programs, the student may be required to undergo drug screening prior to admission to a program. In addition, all students are subject to subsequent testing on a reasonable suspicion that he/she is under the influence of drugs or alcohol such that it impairs the student's ability to perform competently.

If a student's behavior demonstrates that he/she is impaired (functioning in any impaired manner, exhibiting inappropriate behavior in the classroom or clinical setting, or demonstrating any unprofessional conduct or negligence associated with impairment), the faculty academically responsible for that student will document the specific behaviors of the student. This written communication will include any supportive facts and/or documentation of the occurrence (at a minimum: time, places, circumstances, behaviors, witnesses or other persons who possess knowledge of the student's behavior). A determination of functioning in an unprofessional manner will be established by the professional responsible for the student based standards of the profession.

The student will sign that he/she has read the documentation completed by the faculty regarding his/her behavior. If the behavior is observed in clinical practice, the student will be immediately removed from the agency for the sake of patient safety. If the behavior occurs in the classroom, the student will be removed from the classroom. The student may not return to class or clinical until reviewed by the Dean of CHEPS.

Documentation of behavior will be forwarded to the Dean or Designee for review on the day of the incident. The documentation will become part of the student's record. The Dean or Designee(s) will evaluate the documentation presented, and if warranted, request an immediate drug screen. The Dean or Designee may ask to meet the student. The final review will be completed by the Dean or Designee within five days of the incident.

If a student has a positive drug screen, s/he will not be allowed to participate in the clinical courses at the assigned clinical agency or any other clinical agency. The student will be dismissed from the program. The student will then be required to complete, at the student's cost, chemical dependency evaluation and treatment to be considered for readmission to the program. Readmission into a program in the CHEPS will be considered only upon completion of a treatment program, and the recommendations of the program's student/academic admission committee, the Department Head and the Dean. Any student with a positive drug screen shall be dismissed from the program and will be immediately withdrawn from all courses.

If the student desires to reapply to the program, he/she must provide proof of a minimum of one year of treatment in a program and documentation of ongoing treatment if readmitted to the program. If readmitted to a program in the CHEPS, random drug screens will be required and these results must be conveyed to the Department Head. The student will be required to obtain random drug testing until the student withdraws or graduates from the program. All testing is at the student's expense.

Licensed Students

Licensed students, who test positive on a drug screen, will be reported to Tennessee Professional Assistance Program (TNPAP). Readmission into a program in the CHEPS will be considered only upon completion of a TNPAP approved rehabilitation program or the recommendation of TNPAP, and the recommendations of the program's student/academic admission committee, the Department Head and the Dean.

The CHEPS encourages impaired students to seek assistance voluntarily and assume responsibility for their personal and professional conduct.

2/22/06

Reviewed 10-4-08

POLICY ON N 95 FIT TEST

It is the policy of the College of Health, Education and Professional Studies (CHEPS) and the School of Nursing (SON) to be in compliance with all policies of the clinical facilities with which the College affiliates for student clinical learning experiences. The Chattanooga Area Consortium of Healthcare Education and healthcare facilities affiliated with this group require all students in a health care related program to complete a N 95 Fit Test.

The unique environment of an acute care setting has been identified as having a high risk direct care provider environment, and the safety of the patient and the care provider must be maintained. The use of an N95 mask and its proper fit is an OSHA standard implemented for

the protection of workers in “dangerous respiratory environments” including the health care setting. The requirement to complete the N95 Fit Test is based on a need to protect the students as well as other patients from the spread of debilitating and/or fatal diseases to which the student could be exposed.

Thus, as a student who must meet all clinical requirements in order to participate in clinical courses, a N 95 Fit Testing will must be completed through the WorkForce Corporate Health Services at Erlanger for a \$15.00 fee. Students should contact WorkForce for an appointment

2/22/06

Reviewed 10-4-08

Core Performance Standards*

Essential eligibility requirements for participation in the nursing program

Nursing is a practice discipline, with cognitive, sensory, affective, and psychomotor performance requirements. The following Core Performance Standards identify essential eligibility requirements for participation in the nursing program.

Issue	Standard	Examples of Necessary Activities (not all-inclusive)
Critical Thinking	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment	Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations, develop nursing care plans
Interpersonal	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds	Establish rapport with patients/clients and colleagues
Communication	Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form	Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, document and interpret nursing actions and patient/client responses
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces	Move around in patient rooms, work spaces, and treatment areas; administer cardio-pulmonary procedures
Motor skills	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care	Calibrate and use equipment, lift and position patients/clients
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs	Hears monitor alarm, emergency signals, auscultatory sounds, cries for help
Visual	Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in nursing care	Observes patient/client responses
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment	Perform palpation, functions of physical examination and/or those

related to therapeutic intervention,
e.g., insertion of a catheter.

If you believe that you cannot meet one or more of these standards without accommodations or modifications, you may request appropriate assistance and guidance. The nursing program will determine, on an individual basis, whether or not the necessary accommodations or modifications can reasonably be made.

*Adopted from the Southern Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (SCCEN), 1993

*Revised by the Academic Affairs Committee 9/06.

PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC STANDARDS

All students who have been admitted to the nursing program are required to meet the following professional and academic standards.

1. Tennessee Board of Nursing Requirements
2. UTC Honor System
3. School of Nursing Confidentiality Policy
4. Clinical Agency Policies
5. Nursing Code of Ethics
6. Individual Course Policies
7. Academic Policies
8. Dismissal Policies

1. Tennessee Board of Nursing Requirements

“...Nurses care for clients and families in a variety of settings where there may be no direct supervision. Individuals to whom care is given are often vulnerable, both physically and emotionally. The nurse has access to personal information about the patient and/or his/her family, has access to the client’s property and provides intimate care to the client. The Board believes that persons who receive nursing care in Tennessee should be able to have confidence that an individual licensed by the Board does not have a history of mistreatment, neglect, violence, cheating, defrauding the public, or otherwise taking advantage of another person.”

“1000-1-.13 UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT AND NEGLIGENCE, HABITS OR OTHER CAUSE.

(1) Unprofessional conduct, unfitness, or incompetency by reasons of negligence, habits or other causes, as those terms are used in the statute, is defined as, but not limited to, the following:

- (a) Intentionally or negligently causing physical or emotional injury to a patient;
- (b) Failure to maintain a record for each patient which accurately reflects the nursing problems and interventions for the patient;
- (c) Abandoning or neglecting a patient requiring nursing care;
- (d) Making false or materially incorrect, inconsistent or unintelligible entries in any patient records or in the records of any health care facility, school, institution or other work place location pertaining to the obtaining, possessing or administration of any controlled substance as defined in the Federal Controlled Substances Act;

- (e) Unauthorized use or removal of narcotics, drugs, supplies, or equipment from any health care facility, school, institution or other work place location;
 - (f) The use of any intoxicating beverage or the illegal use of any narcotic or dangerous drug while on duty in any health care facility, school, institution, or other work place location;
 - (g) Being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, or under the influence of drugs which impair judgment while on duty in any health care facility, school, institution or other work place location;
 - (h) Impersonating another licensed practitioner;
 - (i) Permitting or allowing another person to use his or her license for the purpose of nursing the sick or afflicted for compensation;
 - (j) Revocation, suspension, probation or other discipline of a license to practice nursing by another state or territory of the united States for any act or omission which would constitute grounds for the revocation, suspension, probation or other discipline of a license in this state;
 - (k) Practicing professional nursing in this state on a lapsed (state) license or beyond the period of a valid temporary permit;
 - (l) Assigning unqualified persons to perform functions of licensed persons or delegating nursing care functions and tasks and/or responsibilities of others contrary to the Nurse Practice Act or rules and regulations to the detriment of patient safety;
 - (m) Failing to supervise persons to whom nursing functions are delegated or assigned;
 - (n) Aiding, abetting, assisting or hiring an individual to violate or circumvent any law or duly promulgated rule intended to guide the conduct of a nurse or any other licensed health care provider;
 - (o) Exercising undue influence on the patient including the promotion of sale of services, goods, appliances, or drugs in such a manner as to exploit the patient for financial gain of the nurse or of a third party;
 - (p) Discriminating in the rendering of nursing services as it relates to race, age, sex, religion, national origin, or the condition of the patient;
 - (q) Violating confidentiality of information or knowledge concerning the patient, except when required to do so by a court of law;
 - (r) Failing to take appropriate action in safeguarding the patient from incompetent health care practices;
 - (s) Failing to report, through proper channels, facts known to the individual regarding incompetent, unethical or illegal practice of any health care provider;
 - (t) Over-prescribing or prescribing in a manner inconsistent with Rule 1000-4-08 and 1000-4-09;
 - (u) Practicing professional nursing in a manner inconsistent with TCA 63-7-103;
 - (v) Performing nursing techniques or procedures without proper education and practice;
 - (w) Engaging in acts of dishonesty which relate to the practice of nursing.”
- (TBN Rules and Regulations of Registered Nurses, Chapter 1000-1-13, p. 28-29, June, 2005 [Revised])

2. UTC Honor System

The School of Nursing abides by the Honor system as specified in the UTC Student Handbook under the Academics Section. Students reported for violations of the Honor Code must follow the procedure as outlined in the UTC Student Handbook.

3. School of Nursing Confidentiality Policy

All faculty employed in the School of Nursing and all students enrolled in both the BSN and the MSN programs of the School of Nursing must follow the confidentiality policy. This policy states that faculty and students shall respect the confidentiality of all patient information and records and shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations concerning their maintenance and protection, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA) and any regulations promulgated under the Act relating to patient information and records.

Confidentiality and protection of client privacy is a priority. Students will not under any circumstance, discuss any patient, hospital, or staff information outside the confines of the classroom, clinical, or post-conference area and/or without the guidance of a faculty member. Any concern about a breach in confidentiality occurring in the clinical area must be discussed with the supervising faculty member and/or a member of the staff responsible for the area where the breach occurred.

4. Clinical Agency Policies

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga School of Nursing shall direct its students and faculty to comply with the policies and procedures of any agency with which it has an agreement.

5. Nursing Code of Ethics

All faculty and students abide by the American Nurses Association (ANA) code of ethics.

1. The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worthy and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, or community.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.
4. The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse's obligation to provide optimum patient care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence, and to continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining, and improving healthcare environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality health care and consistent with the values of the profession through individual and collective action.
7. The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs.

(From American Nurses Association. [2001]. *Code for nurses*. Kansas City, MO: Author. [Online] Available at: <http://www.nursingworld.org/ethics/chcode.htm>)

6. Individual Course Policies

Individual course policies are printed in course syllabi given to students or accessible on Blackboard at the beginning of each semester.

7. Academic Policies

A. Grading Scale:

1. Didactic Course Grading Scale:

The following numerical grading scale will be used in all didactic nursing courses:

93-100	A
85-92	B
78-84	C
70-77	D
<70	F

2. Clinical Course Grading:

S = Satisfactory
NC = No Credit

a. ATI Examinations

S=Satisfactory
N=No Credit

The ATI examinations are part of the Clinical Course Evaluation. Students must achieve Proficiency Level 2 on the Content Mastery ATI examination in order to achieve “S” (satisfactory) in the clinical course. If Proficiency Level 2 is not achieved, the student will have an opportunity to take a second ATI Content Mastery examination two (2) weeks following the first attempt. If Proficiency Level 2 is not achieved, the student will receive “NC” for the course and will not progress to the next level in the nursing program.

“clarified” 2-19-08

B. Retention

For semester 4: “Students who earn < Proficiency Level 2 on the Med-Surg ATI on the first attempt, and/or < 98% probability of passing on the ATI RN predictor will enroll in Virtual ATI (VATI).”

approved by faculty vote 2/12/08

C. Math Proficiency.

Medication administration represents a major safety issue. It is essential that the nurse has knowledge of mathematical concepts and uses these in preparation of medications.

To foster client safety and promote self-confidence, the faculty of the School of Nursing have adopted the following policy:

1. A dosage and solutions examination will be given in Nursing 254 and all subsequent clinical laboratory/practicum courses. Students must achieve a score of 90% on a drugs and solution calculation exam in order to meet course requirements and to participate in clinical experiences. If this score is not achieved the student will be given one (1) more opportunity to achieve this score by rewriting a comparable exam which will be given outside of class time. Students who do not achieve 90% proficiency at the second writing of the drugs and solution calculation exam will not have met one of the course requirements and will be unable to successfully complete the course.
2. Students in N254 (the first clinical course) will have two (2) opportunities to repeat the test for a total of three (3) times.
3. Students who do not achieve a 90% proficiency will be considered unsafe and therefore unable to participate in clinical practice in the clinical lab/practicum course in which the math deficiency occurred, resulting in either a grade of “D” or “No Credit” in the clinical course.
4. Gateway students must meet the math proficiency requirements to participate in N454.

D. Continuation/progression policies

- a. To progress in nursing, students are required to:
 - i. Make a minimum grade of “C” or “S” in all nursing and required courses
 - ii. Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 2.0
 - iii. Maintain active clinical requirements:

Clinical agencies such as hospitals, health departments, etc., have certain criteria with which we must comply. As a School of Nursing, we must certify that the students we take into clinical agencies as part of clinical courses meet these requirements. Each student, therefore, must submit evidence that the requirements are met prior to entering clinical agencies. These clinical requirements are listed below, with the frequency in which they must be submitted.

At the end of every semester classes will be designated a time for each student to view his/her file to verify documentation of clinical requirement expiration dates. The clinical requirements that must be verified are in the table below.

In the administrative assistant’s office, there is a bin with a hanging file for each student’s clinical requirements. In each file will be documentation of the student’s clinical requirements. Students will need to follow the process below:

1. Sign and date the Review of Clinical Requirements Check-Off Sheet on the clipboard reflecting your **current** semester. By signing, you are verifying you know what clinical requirements are due the **next** semester. **Please note clinical requirements must not expire during the semester.** All requirements must be valid until the last day of clinical the following semester.

Undergraduate students may not take the ATI examination if you have not completed step one above. This means your only opportunity to take the ATI will be at the designated second attempt for that ATI. You will NOT get a second opportunity. Clinical faculty will verify you have reviewed your file prior to giving you your ATI exam at the end of the semester. Graduate FNP students will not be allowed to take their final exam until the clinical requirement folder is reviewed.

2. Bring copies of your updated clinical requirements on the first day of class of the next semester and put in your file. Make copies of the clinical requirement documentation prior to bringing them to the School of Nursing – no originals. Do not ask School of Nursing staff to make copies.
3. Sign and date the Update of Clinical Requirements Check-Off Sheet on the clipboard for your **current** semester. By signing, you are verifying you have submitted the updated requirements.
4. Clinical faculty will verify all requirements are updated on the first day of class every semester. If the requirements are not updated on the first day of class, the student will receive one unsatisfactory day in the clinical course for each day the requirements are late. Please refer to the course syllabus and the UTC Undergraduate and Gateway Handbook regarding unsatisfactory days.

REQUIREMENT	FREQUENCY
History and physical examination. The physical exam should be completed at the UTC Student Health. Students should schedule an appointment or walk-ins are welcomed (waiting time to see physician or nurse practitioner will vary with walk-ins).	Upon admission to School of Nursing (one time only)
CPR for HealthCare Providers. Students must maintain current certification throughout the program. The CPR course must be one that is equivalent to the AHA HealthCare Provider course. The School of Nursing offers the course at the beginning of each semester (signs are posted throughout the building).	Upon admission to the School of Nursing; AND evidence of recertification before current one expires (every two years).
Personal Health Insurance. A copy of a health insurance card must be in your file.	Upon admission to School of Nursing. Must be updated if health insurance changes while in the program.
Hepatitis Vaccine. A series of 3 hepatitis B vaccines must be initiated prior to entry to the program. The second and third vaccine in the series must be completed within the recommended times (one month and six months following the first, or whenever the person administering recommends). The Hepatitis B Vaccine form should be turned into the UTC Student Health.	Upon admission to School of Nursing (evidence that series has begun), AND evidence that series has been completed within time period.
Tuberculosis testing. This is an annual requirement and will be administered at the UTC Student Health	Upon admission to School of Nursing AND every year
Liability Insurance. This must be obtained through the University of Tennessee system. The insurance coverage is from July 1 to June 30, so if you are entering in the Spring, you will pay in the spring, and then each subsequent fall. If you enter in the Fall, you pay each fall. This provides coverage	Upon admission to School of Nursing AND then every fall semester

ONLY when providing care as a student. Liability Insurance is purchased in the Bursar's office. Students must bring a copy of their receipt for their file.	
Proof of Immunizations must be presented to the UTC Student Health.	Upon admission to School of Nursing
Forms: Confidentiality and release of information waiver, School of Nursing Policy, N95 Fit Testing Policy, Drug Screening Policy and Background check forms.	Upon admission to School of Nursing
Background check	Prior to entry.
JCAHO and HIPPA requirements** are met through the TCPS system. These are completed annually prior to starting clinical.	Prior to entering first clinical, then annually
N95 Fit Test – completed by Workforce Corporate Health	Upon admission to School of Nursing AND every year.
Drug Screen – completed by Workforce Corporate Health	Upon admission to School of Nursing
Influenza vaccination form	Every year in the spring.
** These clinical requirements are subject to change at the discretion of the School of Nursing and/or with changes in clinical agency policies.	

Approved by faculty 11/08

E. Students in the Nursing major may earn a grade of “D” or “F” or “NC” in only one course with a nursing (N) designation. If a student earns a second “D”, “F”, or “NC”, the student will be dismissed from the program, even if the second “D”, “F”, or “NC” is earned in the same semester as the first failed grade.

F. Students who do not complete a course, or who make a grade of “D”, “F”, or “NC”, in an undergraduate nursing course, and who are eligible to repeat a course, are permitted to register for that course on a space-available basis.

G. If in the judgment of the professor there is reason to question the emotion or physical condition of a student or the safety or quality of nursing care provided, the professor has the right and obligation to exclude the student from the clinical area.

8. Dismissal Policies

A. Dismissal Policies

Students may be dismissed from the School of Nursing when:

1. they earn a second course grade of “D”, “F”, or “NC”
AND/OR
2. they are found guilty of unprofessional conduct, negligent habits, unsafe behaviors, or other cause as may be specified in the Tennessee Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations of Registered Nurses
AND/OR
3. they are found guilty of a violation of the ANA Code of Ethics
AND/OR
4. they are found guilty of a violation of the UTC Honor Code

B. Dismissal Process

1. Dismissal for grades—When a student earns a course grade of “D”, “F”, or “NC”, in an undergraduate nursing course, the course faculty will
 - notify the School of Nursing (SON) Recruitment and Retention Coordinator via official UTC email within 3 business days. A copy of this notification will be kept in the student’s file in the SON.
 - After the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator is notified of a second earned grade of “D”, “F”, or “NC”, s/he will send notification to the Director of the SON and the Chair of the SON Academic Affairs Committee via official UTC email within 3 business days.
 - The Chair of the SON Academic Affairs Committee will notify the student of his/her dismissal from the SON via official UTC email and in writing within 3 business days.

2. Dismissal for reasons other than grades—When a faculty member determines that a student has exhibited either unprofessional conduct, negligent habits, unsafe behavior, or other cause as may be specified in the Tennessee Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations of Registered Nurses and/or violated the ANA Code of Ethics, that faculty member
 - a. notifies the Academic Affairs Committee Chair and requests a meeting within 5 business days to discuss the student’s behavior.
 - b. If the Academic Affairs Committee deems that the student’s behavior justifies dismissal from the SON, the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee will notify the student, the SON Recruitment and Retention Coordinator and the Director of the SON via official UTC email and in writing within 5 business days of the decision. If the faculty member who notifies the Academic Affairs Committee is a member of the Academic Affairs Committee, that faculty member will not vote on the student’s dismissal.

C. Appeal Procedure

1. Students who wish **to appeal a course grade**, will follow the procedure as outlined in the University grade appeals procedure as outlined the UTC Student Handbook.

2. Students who wish to **appeal program dismissal for grades**
 - a. The student must submit a written appeal that explains the basis for the appeal to Academic Affairs Committee within 5 business days of receiving official UTC email notification of SON dismissal from the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee.
 - b. The Academic Affairs Committee will call a meeting upon receiving the appeal. The Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee will notify the

student by official UTC email of the decision within 5 business days of the meeting.

- c. If the student wishes to continue the appeal process, s/he must submit a written document that explains the basis for appealing the decision of the Committee to Director of the SON within 5 business days of receiving official UTC email notification from the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee denying the appeal. The Director will make a decision and notify the student and the Academic Affairs Committee Chair via official UTC email within 5 business days explaining the basis for the decision.
 - d. The student or the Academic Affairs Committee may appeal the Director's decision to the Dean of the College of Health, Education and Professional Studies in writing within 5 business days following receipt via official UTC email of notification of the Director's decision. The written document to the Dean must explain the basis for the appeal. If an appeal is made to the Dean, the Director will forward all relevant documentation pertinent to the appeal to the Dean.
 - e. The Dean will make a decision and notify the student, the Academic Affairs Committee Chair, and the Director of the SON via official UTC email stating the decision and explaining the basis for the decision.
 - f. The student, the Academic Affairs Committee, or the Director of the SON may appeal the decision of the Dean to the Chancellor in writing following notification via official UTC email of the Dean's decision. The written document to the Chancellor must explain the basis for the appeal. If an appeal is made to the Chancellor, the Dean will forward all relevant documentation pertinent to the appeal to the Chancellor.
 - g. The decision of the Chancellor shall be final and all involved parties will receive official UTC email notification.
3. Students who wish **to appeal program dismissal for reasons other than grades**
- The student must submit a written document that explains the basis for the appeal to Director of the SON within 5 business days of receiving official UTC email notification of SON dismissal from the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Director will make a decision and notify the student and the Academic Affairs Committee Chair via official UTC email within 5 business days explaining the basis for the decision.
 - The student may appeal the Director's decision to the Dean of the College of Health, Education and Professional Studies in writing within 5 business days following receipt via official UTC email of notification of the Director's decision. The written document to the Dean must explain the basis for the appeal. If an appeal is made to the Dean, the Director will forward all relevant documentation pertinent to the appeal to the Dean.
 - The Dean will make a decision and notify the student, the Academic Affairs Committee Chair, and the Director of the SON via official UTC email stating the decision and explaining the basis for the decision.

- The student or the Director of the SON may appeal the decision of the Dean to the Chancellor in writing within 5 business days following notification via official UTC email of the Dean's decision. The written document to the Chancellor must explain the basis for the appeal. If an appeal is made to the Chancellor, the Dean will forward all relevant documentation pertinent to the appeal to the Chancellor.
- The decision of the Chancellor shall be final and all involved parties will receive official UTC email notification.

Approved by faculty vote, 10/27/09

9. Complaints/Grievances

The School of Nursing policy related to student complaints and grievances mirrors the University policy. As noted in the Faculty Handbook (Chapter 5: Faculty-Student Relationships

<http://www.utc.edu/Departments/fcouncil/FacultyHandbook/Ch5Handbook.pdf>), disputes

“will arise occasionally in the faculty-student relationship and should be clarified at the earliest possible time and at the level closest to the locus of the complaint. Students who have such complaints are urged to address them directly to the faculty member in an appropriate setting. It is understood that some issues may need to be addressed to the nearest administrator, generally the department or program unit head. Every effort should be made to resolve such matters informally by conversation. A matter unresolved on the departmental level may be brought to the appropriate dean and, after that, the provost. Specific policies for grade appeals and for allegations of sexual harassment are found elsewhere in this hand book and the *Student Handbook*.”

The following steps shall be followed within the School of Nursing:

1. Student meets with faculty to discuss the complaint. The meeting must be initiated within ten (10) business days after the student became aware, or could have reasonably been expected to become aware, of the issue. The Director may meet separately with the student and faculty member, or if both agree, jointly, to discuss the report.
2. If the issue is not resolved in Step 1, the student will meet with the Director within 5 business days after final scheduled discussion in Step 1. The student will submit a written report that describes the issue.
3. The Director will meet with the faculty to discuss the issue with faculty. The faculty will submit a written report to the Director within five (5) business days addressing his/her perception of the issue.
4. The Director shall inform the student and the faculty member in writing of his/her conclusion within five (5) business days of the completion of Step 3 via e-mail.
5. If either student or faculty is not satisfied with the Director's conclusion, the student may file the complaint with the Dean of the CHEPS within the five (5) business days of the receipt of the e-mail.
6. If the faculty member involved in Step 1 is the Director, the student will meet with the Dean to address an unresolved complaint.

NURSING PROGRAM COURSE(S) WITHDRAWAL

Policy: Students withdrawing from the UTC School of Nursing program may be at-risk for readmission to the program. Withdrawal from any nursing course seriously jeopardizes progression in the nursing program. Please review the School of Nursing Program/Course(s) Withdrawal Procedure carefully.

Procedure: Students considering withdrawing from the School of Nursing Program/Course(s) must:

1. Meet with the School of Nursing Recruitment and Retention Coordinator to discuss the withdrawal process and considerations for readmission prior to initiating withdrawal process.
2. Provide a letter to the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator stating they are withdrawing from the School of Nursing Program/Course(s). In the letter, the student should include if or when s/he might anticipate returning to the program. This letter will be kept in the student's permanent nursing file.
3. If withdrawing for medical reasons, documentation from the physician must be included with the letter from the student.
4. Turn in the School of Nursing name badge to the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator upon withdrawal.

Approved by faculty, 1/13/09

RETURNING TO THE SCHOOL OF NURSING PROGRAM

Policy: Students who have withdrawn from the School of Nursing will be considered for readmission based upon:

1. Space available, unless withdrawal was for medical reasons or military service.
2. Eligibility to return to any other college attended during withdrawal period.
3. Ability to meet UTC continuation standards.
4. Ability to meet core performance standards.
5. Enrolling in Nursing 498R Clinical Refresher, if the student has not been engaged in clinical activity for greater than or equal to one year during the withdrawal period.

Procedure: The process for readmission for students who have withdrawn from the UTC School of Nursing:

1. Submit a letter requesting readmission to Recruitment and Retention Coordinator by February 1 for the fall semester and September 1 for the spring semester.
2. If student has received credit for additional nursing courses since withdrawal, s/he must with the letter transcripts, a letter of good standing from previous school and copies of syllabi of all previous nursing course(s) taken to Recruitment & Retention Coordinator.
3. Students who withdrew for medical reasons must submit a letter from their physician saying they can meet core performance standards.

Approved by faculty, 1/13/09

NURSING TRANSFER POLICY

The process for admission for students transferring from a nursing program to the UTC nursing program:

1. Admitted to UTC by the School of Nursing application deadline.
2. Student must turn in a complete nursing application, letter of good standing from previous school, transcripts and copies of syllabi of all previous nursing course(s) taken to Recruitment & Retention Coordinator prior to the application deadline.
2. Recruitment & Retention Coordinator reviews the syllabi to see who the appropriate faculty member is to approve and distributes them for approval.
3. Recruitment & Retention Coordinator completes a student profile sheet and an advisement sheet with the nursing courses approved.
4. Recruitment & Retention Coordinator brings all of the information to the next Academic Affairs admissions meeting for a decision to be made on placement in the nursing program. All nursing transfer students must complete Nursing 250 their 1st semester prior to progression to upper level courses.

Approved by faculty, 1/13/09

ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Each semester, while in the nursing major, achievement tests will be given. The tests have costs that are identified to students at the beginning of each semester. Testing policies are made available in relevant course syllabi.

The purpose of achievement tests is to measure the degree of mastery of nursing content. Test results provide an indication of the degree of success on the licensing examination to become a registered nurse. The test results also identify content areas, which need additional study prior to taking the examination for licensure.

UNIVERSITY EXIT EXAM

All students are required to take a final evaluative exit exam during the last year at UTC. The exam should be taken seriously since it affects university funding and is required for graduation from UTC.

THE GATEWAY TRACK

The UTC School of Nursing's Gateway track enables registered nurses to obtain a baccalaureate degree in nursing while maintaining their roles in career and family. Planned with the busy, working RN in mind, the Gateway Track allows maximum college credit for previous educational experiences.

A. **Admission to the Gateway Track (RN – BSN Concentration)** – The registered nurse must meet the following requirements.

1. Graduation from an accredited diploma or associate degree nursing program.
2. Show eligibility to return to the last educational institution and meet UTC continuation standards (see UTC undergraduate catalog on-line at <http://www.utc.edu/catalogs/>).

3. Show a “C” (2.0) average on all postsecondary (college) courses.
4. Admission to UTC (register as a “pre-nursing student, Major code # 0989)
 - a. Provide transcripts from all post-secondary schools to Admissions Office
 - b. Have transcripts and all previous course work evaluated for credit at UTC by Admissions office.
5. Meet with Gateway Coordinator and
 - a. Complete a Personal Information Form
 - b. Provide proof of current registered nurse licensure
 - c. Collaborate on individualized plan of study
 - d. Have status (major code) changed to RN-BSN by Coordinator (Major code # 2791)

B Continuation in Track- each student must maintain contact with the Gateway Coordinator each semester to remain active in the program, even if taking classes at another college or university. An annually updated Personal Information Form must be submitted by August 15th of each year to remain active in the track, and contact must be made, via phone, email or visit each semester to review progress. In addition, individual "advise codes" for students to register for classes will only be provided by either the Gateway Coordinator or the Recruitment & Retention Coordinator each semester. Students active in the program will remain members in the Gateway Community Black Board site where they will be able to communicate with others in the program and receive updated information from faculty and staff at UTC.

C. Course Requirements in the Nursing Major as specified for the Gateway Track

1. 27 hours of nursing courses offered through UTC. Only one course (N444) is a clinical practicum, which requires students to be current in their health insurance, malpractice insurance (through UTC), JCAHO required education, up-to-date immunizations, as well as to have a background check by the UTC contracted company. Students are informed of requirements through the Gateway Community online site once they are "members" of the Gateway Track.
2. 27 additional hours of clinical courses in med/surg., ob/peds., and psych (300-400 level) will be added to the transcript the semester of graduation by verification of a current RN license.
3. Required Non-Nursing courses related to the BSN Major with a “C” or better
 - English Comp I & II (prior to taking 300-400 level nursing classes)
 - Human Anatomy and Physiology (4hrs)
 - Microbiology – *(meets general education science requirement)
 - General Chemistry with laboratory – *(meets general education science requirements)
 - Intro or General Psychology – (meets general education requirements)
 - Statistics – (meets general education requirements)
4. Students may repeat only 1 nursing class with a grade below C.

D. General Education requirements –(must be UTC approved general education courses)

- Composition – 6 hrs *(also a requirement of the School of Nursing)
- Mathematics 3 hrs
- Statistics *(also a requirement of the School of Nursing)
- *Natural Science 7-8 hrs. (School of Nursing requires General Chemistry 121 and lab 123 for one of the sciences: microbiology may be used for the other)
- Culture and Civilization 9 hrs

- Humanities and Fine Arts 6 hrs
- Behavioral science 6 hrs
 - *(the School of Nursing requires Psy. 101 for one of the requirements. The second course **cannot** be from the Psychology department.)

Second degree students with a BS or BA degree do not have to take gen. ed. Classes unless they are required by the School of Nursing)

E. UTC graduation requirements

- 120 total hours (includes transfer hours, NCLEX credits, UTC nursing and university requirements).
- 60 hours must be from a 4 year school (27 hours RN-BSN courses and 27 hours of 300-400 clinical courses by verification of RN license = 54 hours so an additional 6 hours must be at UTC.)

The last 24 hours must be at UTC. (The 27 hours by verification do not count toward the last 24 hours at UTC). AND, at least 25% of the 120 hrs. MUST be taken at UTC (30 hrs).

LEARNING LABORATORY

The School of Nursing's learning laboratories consist of the basic skills lab, the Anne P.Y. Chien Learning Resource Lab, the Sim-Man lab, the FNP lab, and computer-testing lab. The basic skills lab has hospital beds, medical equipment, and various audiovisual models for learning nursing skills and physical assessment techniques. Learning stations equipped with VCR's and television sets reinforce teaching. Hours for the basic skills lab and computer lab are posted.

The computer lab has personal computers with various software programs. All computers in this lab are Internet linked. A printer is available in the lab and utilizes the "GoPrint/MocsPrint pay system".

The computer-testing lab allows students to take tests utilizing a format similar to the NCLEX licensing exam.

UTC POLICY FOR COMPUTER USE

Use of UTC's network and computing facilities must be in accordance with the Acceptable Use Policy found at www.utc.edu/trc/aup.

GUIDELINES FOR WORK HOURS

Students enrolled full time in the BSN program in the School of Nursing may need to work. Based on our experience, it is often difficult to accommodate the demands of academic and work schedules concurrently. We recognize that work in clinical setting may positively affect students' professional development. However, there must be a balance of academic demands in the School of Nursing and student work for students to be successful in the BSN Program. While the School of Nursing does not have a policy limiting the number of hours a student enrolled full time in the program may be employed, we recommend the following.

- a. Limit work dealing as much as possible to insure students can meet academic responsibilities. The nursing program is full time Monday through Friday. The scheduling of clinical and classroom experiences may change during the semester depending on opportunities and needs, therefore, outside work should be limited to weekends.
- b. The literature and experience reveals that full-time undergraduate nursing students who attempt to work more than 16 hours per week are most likely to jeopardize academic performance
- c. Students who exceed a total of 15 hours of employment need to make an appointment with their advisor or the Undergraduate Coordinator to discuss their situation. **Students who fail to meet the established academic standards in the School of Nursing due to employment will not receive special consideration on appeal. Employment shall not be considered a reason for students not achieving academic responsibilities and performance.** Students who need to work should discuss their situation with an advisor/mentor before risking academic jeopardy. Students may need to temporarily defer academic course work and/or explore various loans and scholarships. UTC Financial Aid Office is available to discuss loan options. Scholarships from the School of Nursing are available, and an annual call for applications is conducted each fall for disbursement. All students are encouraged to apply. Some awards are based on need and others on merit/scholarship

POLICY ON INFECTION CONTROL FOR STUDENTS, FACULTY AND STAFF

College of Health, Education and Applied Professional Studies
School of Nursing
Student Health Center

I. INTRODUCTION

The School of Nursing and UTC Student Health Center will provide an environment for the safe conduct of its mission in education, research, community service, and patient care. This policy is intended to provide reasonable protection for students, faculty and staff against the transmission of infectious diseases within the environment of an educational institution that houses professional programs. The health of the students, faculty and staff at University of Tennessee at Chattanooga is managed by the UTC Student Health Center.

The populations in the university setting, particularly students, are vulnerable to communicable diseases such as measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, polio, meningitis, varicella, and tuberculosis. These diseases are susceptible to control by appropriate immunizations.

The populations in the university setting who practice in a health care environment, school, or other care facility have special risks other than the general university population.

All statements made herein pertain to all students, faculty and staff in the School of Nursing and the Student Health Center.

Infectious Disease Control Program

The center for Disease Control and the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration have determined that employees in any occupation where they are directly exposed to body fluids are considered to be at substantial risk of occupational exposure to HIV (human immunodeficiency virus) and/or HBV (hepatitis B virus). The following program establishes UTC's rules to protect the employees from occupational exposure to such bloodborne diseases.

This program applies to all employees who have contact with human blood or body fluids while performing their duties at UTC. Everyone in the following job titles are specifically included:

- Student Health Center Employees
- Faculty and Students in School of Nursing

II. LABORATORY PRACTICE

The safe handling of infectious agents in research and clinical laboratories is managed in accordance with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and National Institutes of Health (NIH) publication, *Biosafety in Microbiological and Biomedical Laboratories*. This publication outlines procedures for the safe handling of biologically hazardous agents/waste to assure protection of laboratory, animal care, housekeeping, and emergency personnel. Chairs and principal investigators are responsible for assuring adherence to these guidelines by employees and students.

At times, students, faculty and staff members may come in contact with bodily fluids. Safe handling practices apply to contact with human blood and other potentially infectious materials including semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures and any body fluid visibly contaminated with blood. The program does not apply to feces, nasal secretions, sputum, sweat, tears, urine, vomitus or saliva **unless** they contain visible human blood.

All faculty, staff and students are to follow these procedures:

1. Standard Precautions

Standard precautions also known as universal precautions shall be followed at all times. All body fluids are assumed to be infected with hepatitis B virus (HBV), hepatitis C virus (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and all personnel

and students exposed to direct contact with body fluids must be protected as though such body fluids are known to be infected.

2. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Personal Protective Equipment shall be worn during all contact with body fluids. Bloodborne pathogens can enter the body through a needle stick injury, through contact of non-intact (i.e. chapped or cut) skin with infected blood or through a splash of infected blood to the eye, nose or mouth of the employee. The personal protective equipment listed below must be worn to prevent entry of infectious material into the body.

- a. Gloves
 - Disposable latex or vinyl gloves shall be worn during patient / blood contact. Gloves shall be discarded and hands washed immediately after each patient contact
 - Small, medium, and large gloves should be available. Employees and students shall wear the correct size of gloves.
- b. Gowns
 - Faculty and students and other personnel shall use fluid-resistant disposable gowns when splashes to the clothing with body fluids may occur such as when drawing human blood or when treating a patient with profuse bleeding.
- c. Masks and Eye Protection
 - Masks and eye protection shall be worn when splashes to the face may occur such as when drawing human blood or when treating a patient with profuse bleeding.
- d. Pocket masks shall be used for resuscitation.
- e. Gloves, masks, eye protection, and gowns shall be worn when drawing human blood.

III. IMMUNIZATION AGAINST MEASLES, RUBELLA, MUMPS, DIPHTHERIA, POLIO, TETANUS, VARICELLA, INFLUENZA, MENINGOCOCCUS, AND HEPATITIS B FOR STUDENTS

The UTC School of Nursing requires that all entering students undergo tuberculin skin testing and have documentation of prior immunity or immunization for the following: measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, polio, and tetanus by recorded evidence of immunization or appropriate titer results. Documentation of receipt of two doses of measles (Rubeola) vaccine after the first birthday is required unless born prior to 1957. Anyone with an unknown or negative history of varicella must undergo serological testing. If serology and history are negative, the vaccine is required. The UTC Student Health Center will determine whether immunization documentation is adequate. Students who are unable to document immunity to these infections may be enrolled provided required immunization or TB testing is obtained within ten days of enrollment. Students may be excused from this requirement if contraindications are established by a provider in the UTC Student Health Center or the student presents a signed statement from a health care provider or clergy indicating the reason

for waiving the requirement. Annual influenza immunizations are recommended for all students. If student does not take the influenza immunization vaccine, reason for refusal must be documented.

New incoming students at any public institution of higher learning in Tennessee who live in on-campus student housing shall sign a waiver for meningococcal vaccine and return the completed waiver to the University Student Health Center. A waiver form shall indicate that the institution has provided detailed information to the student concerning meningococcal disease, the availability and effectiveness of the vaccine, and that the student has received and reviewed the information and has chosen to be vaccinated or not to be vaccinated for meningitis.

According to the guidelines established by the Centers for Disease Control to insure protection of students against transmission of blood borne pathogens, the UTC Student Health Center is required to assure that students in colleges where students are susceptible to Hepatitis B are immunized against Hepatitis B. Students who have had the Hepatitis B series must show proof of a positive Hepatitis B titer of equal or greater to 10 miu per CDC guidelines. The Hepatitis B series will be repeated one time if the past series has negative results. Students known to be Hepatitis B antigen or antibody-positive (or already immune) or for whom contraindications are established by a healthcare provider or the UTC Student Health Services may be exempted from this immunization.

IV. EARLY DETECTION OF TUBERCULOSIS FOR STUDENTS

All School of Nursing students are required to receive the tuberculin skin test annually. Students without documented testing within previous 12 month period will have a 2-step tuberculin skin test. Students who have been vaccinated with Bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) and do not provide documentation of a past positive tuberculin skin test are required to have an initial tuberculin skin test to determine PPD status. Persons who test positive or have previously tested positive are required to show proof from the Hamilton County Health Department of being free of tuberculosis.

Treatment for tuberculosis will be managed through the local Hamilton County Health Department. Those students who have tested positive and have a chest xray indicating no active disease will only need to have another chest xray if symptoms of active TB develop.

<http://www.cdc.gov/tb/pubs/tbfactsheets/skintesting.htm>

V. HIV INFECTION AND AIDS

Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) may be transmitted by the transfusion of blood or blood-products, sharing of contaminated needles, or intimate sexual contact. Exposures occur through needlesticks or cuts from other sharp instruments contaminated with an infected patient's blood or through contact of the eye, nose, mouth, or skin with a patient's blood. Based on current scientific evidence, the disease is not spread by casual contact.

The School of Nursing subscribes to the guidelines of the American College Health Association (ACHA), CDC guidelines, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's standard on blood borne pathogens.

A. Admission of Students with HIV Infection

The existence of HIV infection is not a factor in decisions regarding admission to UTC so long as the individual's physical condition is such that he or she can participate fully in the required activities of the program to which application is made. It is recognized, however, that this latter proviso might prevent acceptance of certain infected persons, particularly those with clinically evident AIDS. Confidential counseling is available to students who self-identify as HIV positive.

B. Screening for HIV Infection

The University will not undertake programs of routinely screening students for antibody to HIV. It is strongly recommended that all health-care workers know their antibody status. The Student Health Center in conjunction with the Chattanooga Hamilton County Health Department offer free HIV testing one afternoon each month during the hours posted in the Center and on the UTC Student Health Center Website. In addition, free testing is available at the Health Department at any time.

C. Curricular Implications of HIV Infection

The recommendations of the U.S. Public Health Service regarding prevention of HIV transmission must be scrupulously observed by all health science professionals and students.

Because of their special curriculum needs, health professional students may be required to obtain and process blood and other body fluids of patients. Faculty responsible for teaching laboratory techniques will establish guidelines for safe conduct involving blood and body fluids when such experiences are a part of the curriculum. Faculty responsible for educational training activities for students in hospitals, clinics, schools, community, and day care facilities will establish guidelines to assure that students are only required to perform possibly hazardous procedures if appropriate to their level of training and experience.

The School of Nursing subscribes to the safety guidelines proposed by the Public Health Service for protection of personnel in its hospitals, clinics, clinical laboratories, schools, and day care facilities. The appropriate infection control committees or other responsible groups in university-operated health care facilities establish guidelines and procedures (Exposure Control Plan) for the protection of students and employees against the possible transmission of HIV.

D. Exposure to HIV

The policy of the School of Nursing is to provide aggressive follow-up on student exposure to blood borne pathogens. Any student who is possibly exposed to HIV infection while

performing clinical-related duties will be referred to the UTC Student Health Center or the hospital in which the exposure occurred for medical evaluation and counseling. In accordance with current CDC guidelines, treatment should be instituted as soon as possible, preferably within two hours of exposure. Personal medical information is considered confidential, and the student's right to privacy will be protected to the extent allowed by law. Medical information, including test results, will not be released without the written consent of the student or as required by law. After initial treatment and evaluation at the hospital, the student should come to the UTC Student Health Center for follow-up.

VI. HEPATITIS B AND HEPATITIS C

The Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C viruses (HBV or HCV) may be present at high concentrations in blood and serous fluid of carriers and active cases and, to a lesser extent, in other body fluids such as saliva and semen. Transmission occurs when virus-containing materials are introduced by transfusion of blood or blood products, by contaminated needles, or by sexual contact. Infection also can occur by contact of infectious materials with skin lesions or mucosal surfaces. The groups at greatest risk for HBV and/or HCV are those at risk for HIV, including intravenous drug abusers, sexually active persons, patients in hemodialysis units, and health care workers who experience frequent contact with blood.

In the health care environment, students working in clinical areas who have contact with blood or body fluids are also at risk of infection with HBV and/or HCV. Precautions for the transmission of HBV and/or HCV are similar to those designed to prevent transmission of HIV. Barrier methods, including the use of masks, gloves, and protective eyewear, can minimize infection risk. Nevertheless, the only dependable way to prevent Hepatitis B is active immunization. Such immunization is safe and highly effective for health care workers whose activities are likely to involve contact with blood or blood products. However, for Hepatitis C there is currently no vaccine available for its prevention.

Students with an exposure to Hepatitis B and/or Hepatitis C will be treated in accordance with current CDC guidelines and may be referred to a specialist for specialized treatment. Persons known to have active Hepatitis B and/or Hepatitis C must be counseled by a UTC Student Health Center provider regarding the transmission of this virus and the means to minimize risk of such transmission.

Hepatitis B Vaccination

All faculty and staff in the School of Nursing and Student Health Center who have positions which put them at risk for contact with blood or body fluids shall be offered hepatitis B vaccinations.

Vaccinations shall be given at no cost to the employee at UTC Student Health Center.

Vaccinations are optional but are encouraged as the best means of protection against hepatitis B.

Records of both vaccination and the declination of vaccination for hepatitis B will be maintained in the Student Health Center.

Policy on Needle/Sharps Sticks

Goals

- A. To control employee and student needle stick/sharps injuries.
- B. To comply with OSHA, state regulations, requirements for a sharps safety program.
- C. To monitor sharps injury data and establish trend information.
- D. To establish an evaluation and implementation program for needle safety devices.

The following is to be implemented for injuries with needles/sharps for students:

1. The student shall immediately notify the instructor of the injury.
2. The instructor will notify the appropriate supervisor in the facility and have the student follow the facilities protocol.
3. A copy of the incident report will be placed in the student's permanent file.
4. The original copy of the instructions given to the student regarding follow up and the student's responsibility will be placed in the student's permanent file with a copy going to the student. This will be signed and dated by both the instructor and the student.
5. For Hepatitis follow-up, if no policy is in place in the facility, the student should contact his/her health care provider. If this is not feasible, the student will report to the UTC Student Health Center for follow-up.
6. For HIV follow-up, the procedure noted in step 5 should be followed. Present recommendations are to be tested on the date of injury, at 6 weeks, 3 months, 6 months and at one year.

The following will be documented for injuries with needles/sharps for faculty, staff and employees of School of Nursing and Student Health Center:

1. Documentation of the following:
 - a. Date, time and location of injury
 - b. Route of exposure
 - c. The identity of the source patient
 - d. The circumstances of the exposure
 - e. Type/ brand and purpose of device
 - f. Use of PPE when injury occurred
 - g. Notation of signs of visible blood on device
 - h. Specific circumstances associated with injury
 - i. Identification of source (if known) and source status related to bloodborne diseases
2. Collection and testing of the source patient's blood for HIV and HBV if possible
3. Collection and testing of the affected person's blood for HIV and HBV immediately
4. Medical evaluation of the employee by a physician at the University's current workers compensation medical provider

5. If the initial HIV test is negative, further testing for HIV will be at six weeks, 12 weeks, and six months and 1 year post exposure.
6. If the worker has not been vaccinated against HBV or the antibody response is not adequate, post exposure prophylaxis including treatment with immune globulins and the hepatitis B vaccine shall be provided under the direction of a physician.
7. Records of exposure including route of exposure, identity of human blood source, and circumstances of exposure shall be maintained in the office of the Department of Safety & Risk Management. Additionally, records of all follow-up procedures will be kept in the office of the Department of Safety & Risk Management. All exposure records will be maintained for 30 years.

Students with Infectious Diseases

Any student is expected to notify his/her instructor that he or she has been diagnosed as having an infectious disease. He/she will be put on a medical leave of absence pending a health care provider's statement regarding: 1) the vulnerability of the student to a secondary infection from being in the institution, and 2) the potential for infection of others by the student in his/her present medical state. The course instructor, working with the Student Health Center Physician will review the documentation and make a determination regarding returning to class and/or clinical site. Further consultation related to this matter will be obtained as appropriate.

If it is determined that the student is able to continue, but has an infectious disease, one or more of the following actions will be indicated:

1. The student will not be allowed to continue course work in a client contact area if the student or client can not be protected.
2. Within the academic year, the student shall continue on a medical leave of absence until cleared by the health care provider.
3. If the student is currently assigned to a non-client contact area and has been released by his/her health care provider, he/she will be allowed to return to class or the clinical site.
4. If it is determined that no reasonable accommodation is feasible for the student with an infectious disease, the student will continue medical leave of absence for a period of time defined by his/her health care provider and the Director/Dean. Upon termination of the medical leave of absence, the student will be evaluated for readmission according to department guidelines.

Faculty with Infectious Disease

Faculty are expected to notify the Director of the School of Nursing that he or she has been diagnosed as having an infectious disease. The Director will make the decision regarding the faculty's workload and clinical assignment depending on 1) the vulnerability to a secondary infection and 2) the potential for infection of others by the faculty's present medical state. A statement from the faculty's health care provider is required.

Assignment of Students to Infectious Disease Clients

Known clients with infectious diseases will not be assigned to student who have not completed a basic introduction of infection control. Students do not have the right to refuse to provide care to clients with infectious diseases. Prior to the first clinical event, the faculty member will ascertain that each student has the knowledge necessary to practice infection control management as required for assignment related to general or specific client care. The faculty member will also orient each student to the policy of the agency to be followed in the event of an injury to the student. If there is no care available to the student within the agency or setting, the faculty member will direct the student to his/her primary care provider or the UTC Student Health Center for appropriate follow up care.

Individual exemptions from above include students with active infections, immuno-suppressed students and pregnant students. In these circumstances, the clinical instructor will determine how the course/clinical objectives will be accomplished.

Documentation will be kept to record exposure to caring for a client with an infectious disease.

Assignment of Students To Clients with AIDS

Consistent with the School of Nursing's Values that all persons have dignity and worth, the faculty will include individuals who have AIDS, ARC (AIDS Related Complex) or are HIV Antibody Positive in their consideration of clients for learning assignments which are consistent with specific course objectives.

Students will accept learning assignment with clients who have AIDS, ARC or are HIV+ unless such assignments would not be compatible with the student's health condition (i.e. pregnancy, immunosuppression).

In their roles in the University , faculty and staff members and students will not discriminate against persons who are know to have or are suspected of having AIDS or ARC or to be HIV +.

Implementation of CDC Guidelines

Students and faculty will comply with current CDC guidelines for infectious diseases.

CDC guidelines protecting individuals from exposure to HIV will be followed.

Current guidelines will be available to students and faculty at all times. A copy of current CDC Guidelines will be kept in a notebook in the Administrative Office and are available to all on the Internet.

Students must pass the Standard Precautions Examination with identified pass rate before entering the clinical area.

VII. EDUCATION

One of the strongest and most effective defenses against infectious diseases is an understanding of their cause and modes of transmission that will lead to behavioral changes, minimizing the spread of infection. It is incumbent upon the leadership of School of Nursing to provide information on the cause and spread of infectious diseases within the environment of its programs.

It shall be the responsibility of the faculty to provide students with information on the cause and spread of infectious diseases as a part of the required education program. Strategies for such educational programs are contained in the American College Health Association (ACHA) and Centers for Disease Control will serve as guidelines for these programs.

Within the UTC School of Nursing, the Infection Control Coordinator will serve as an information resource for these educational activities. Faculty will identify the mechanism for educational activities.

All faculty and staff in School of Nursing shall receive training, which includes the following:

- A. A copy of the current regulations from TOSHA
- B. A general explanation of the epidemiology and symptoms of HIV, HCV and HBV
- C. An explanation of the modes of transmission of HIV, HCV and HBV.
- D. An explanation of the infection control program at UTC.
- E. An explanation of how to determine if a task will fall under this program.
- F. An explanation of the importance of universal precautions and other work practices to reduce worker exposure.
- G. An explanation of the availability, proper use, and disposal of personal protective equipment including the specific circumstances under which PPE is to be worn.
- H. An explanation of the follow-up procedure to follow if actual contact with human blood or body fluids occurs.
- I. An explanation of the labels and signs used.
- J. An explanation of the proper clean up of human blood spills.
- K. An explanation of proper disposal of contaminated items
- L. An explanation of the sterilization procedures for reusable equipments.
- M. An explanation of the risks and benefits of vaccination for HBV, and how to obtain same.

The training will be the responsibility of the department in which the students, staff and employees work. The Department of Safety and Risk Management is available to assist with this training by supplying training assistance and training aids.

Training records shall be kept in the departments. Training records shall include summary of program contents names and qualifications of persons conducting the training the names and job titles of persons attending the sessions.

VIII. REVIEW OF GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The School of Nursing will review all pertinent guidelines related to specific programs to insure that these are in keeping with the available evidence on the transmission of infectious diseases and blood borne pathogens and meet the requirements of this policy. The School of Nursing establishes a Policy on Infection Control for students based on the best available scientific evidence.

IX. REFERENCES

The following references provide guidelines for meeting CHEPS responsibility in protecting students and employees from acquisition of blood borne diseases.

Centers for Disease Control - www.cdc.gov

American College Health Association – www.acha.org

National Guideline Clearinghouse – www.ngc.org

Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Occupational Exposure to Blood borne Pathogens: Final Rule. Federal Register, 1910.1030.

CDC. Immunization of health-care workers: recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Hospital Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee (HICPAC). MMWR 1997; 46(No. RR-18).

Adapted from The University of Tennessee Health Science Center Memphis “POLICY ON INFECTION CONTROL FOR STUDENTS”.

Reviewed and Revised 9/07

CS, AR, KL