



**SMSU Department of Nursing
Student Handbook
2021-2022**

Approved by the Department of Nursing Chair

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Department of Nursing Chair

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Date

SMSU Department of Nursing Student Handbook 2021-2022

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(Please Note: The Student Handbook is subject to changes at any time)

Welcome to the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) Department of Nursing Student Handbook. The following handbook will inform the student about the SMSU RN to BSN Program, designed for two-year associate degree registered nurses (RNs) or three-year diploma degree RNs seeking a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

The courses in the SMSU RN to BSN Program are online. All nursing students are provided with a virtual opportunity once a semester to attend the RN to BSN Day at SMSU to meet with faculty and peers while being surrounded by resources to help facilitate their success in the RN to BSN program. Graduates from the RN to BSN Program will possess leadership and management skills as well as the critical thinking skills needed to advance their career. The RN to BSN Program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). Students may apply to register as a Public Health Nurse in Minnesota upon graduation.

SMSU has been accepting students to the RN to BSN Program since the fall of 2013. Students accepted into the program can start their nursing courses during fall or spring semesters. If students need additional courses, including Liberal Education courses, during the RN to BSN Program, they will be advised appropriately.

Application to the SMSU RN to BSN Program is as follows:

Complete the following steps in order to be considered for the RN to BSN program:

Apply to SMSU

- Apply online at [smsu.edu](https://www.smsu.edu)
- Have **official** college/university transcripts from non-MinnState schools sent to the admission office

Apply to RN to BSN Program

- Once admitted to SMSU, the student will receive instructions to apply to the SMSU RN to BSN Program including an application code (*STUDENT MUST APPLY AND BE ADMITTED TO SMSU BEFORE APPLYING TO THE RN TO BSN PROGRAM*).

Once these two steps have been completed, the eligibility of the applicant will be determined.

Nancyruth Lebiold, Chair
Lindsay Rohlik, Director of Nursing

The RN to BSN Program at Southwest Minnesota State University is accredited by the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.

Preface

The SMSU RN to BSN Program is designed for working RNs, allowing flexibility for students to take courses at their own pace.

SMSU Mission Statement

SMSU prepares students to meet the complex challenges of this century as engaged citizens in their local and global communities. Our comprehensive degree programs, taught in the liberal arts tradition, are dedicated to connecting students' academic and practical professional development experiences in southwestern Minnesota to the wider world.

SMSU Vision Statement

SMSU aspires to be recognized throughout Minnesota and beyond for being an inclusive and student-centered university.

SMSU Value Statement

We value:

1. Discovery through innovative teaching, research and other high-impact experiences.
2. Civic engagement and strategic partnerships.
3. Developing broadly educated and well-rounded leaders.

Southwest Minnesota State University views itself as a community and expects that each community member will become familiar with the standards of the community and assume responsibility for making decisions governing their behavior with this community. The SMSU Student Handbook is intended to provide the student with information about services available at the University and University procedures and should be used as a reference for basic University expectations. Updates, as they occur during the year, will be made to the handbook on the SMSU website. SMSU Student Handbook is available at <http://www.smsu.edu/administration/studenthandbook/>

Introduction

The RN to BSN Program nursing curriculum was designed to provide a broad base of principles from science and liberal arts, including additional specialized courses in leadership and management, healthcare delivery systems and informatics, community and public health nursing, health promotion, nursing research, and evidence-based practice. 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 a commitment to lifelong learning to expand nursing knowledge and its use within the profession. To ensure the program's quality and integrity, the RN to BSN Program follows two standards endorsed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), including the *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008) and the *Quality and Safety Education in Nursing (QSEN) Core Competencies* (QSEN Institute, 2020). The RN students come to the program with real-world experiences and pre-existing abilities that are a foundation for their learning in and out of the classroom. The BSN graduate embraces the nursing profession as a nurse generalist with a strong foundation for developing specialized clinical practice and other advanced practice roles. The BSN graduates are prepared to function effectively in ambiguous, unpredictable, and complex environments; to demonstrate critical thinking and flexibility; and to translate, integrate, and apply knowledge to enhance patient care quality and safety.

References

- American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN). (2008). *The essentials of baccalaureate education for professional nursing practice*.
<http://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Publications/BaccEssentials08.pdf>
- QSEN Institute. (2020). *QSEN competencies*.
<http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas>

Alignment of Mission with University Mission and Program Goals

The Department of Nursing adheres to and supports the mission and values of SMSU.

SMSU RN to BSN Program Mission

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to provide leadership in nursing education, scholarship, and practice that reflects cultural, ethical, and compassionate presence in the preparation of nurses that will serve with excellence in a diverse and ever-changing society.

SMSU RN to BSN Program Goals

1. Integrate nursing knowledge, liberal arts, cultural awareness, and caring through collaboration with the health care team to provide patient centered and holistic care. Measurement Courses - NURS 300, 310, 436
 - 1.1- Student Learning Outcome
Examine the Scope and Standards of Practice and the Standards of Professional Performance
 - 1.2- Student Learning Outcome
Construct an appreciation of cultural diversity through cultural assessment
 - 1.3- Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate skills and knowledge of health assessment through a comprehensive health assessment

2. Provide competent and meaningful care to clients and communities who are healthy, ill, or dying. Measurement Courses - NURS 320, 400, 437
 - 2.1- Student Learning Outcome
Integrate awareness of issues related to chronic illness in rural settings and apply nursing process to meet diverse and unique needs of individuals and families
 - 2.2- Student Learning Outcome
Utilize evidence-based resources in the community assessment process and propose patient-centered health teaching interventions
 - 2.3- Demonstrate skills and knowledge of comprehensive mental health assessment

3. Combine critical thinking, health care information technology, and evidence-based findings to make decisions that promote safety and quality to improve patient outcomes. Measurement Courses - NURS 330, 375, 430, 434, 435
 - 3.1- Student Learning Outcome
Demonstrate the ability to apply scientific method to a public health concern
 - 3.2- Student Learning Outcome
Analyze evidence related to pathophysiology to promote patient safety and quality outcomes
 - 3.3- Student Learning Outcome
Evaluate evidence-based practices for integration into nursing practice
 - 3.4- Student Learning Outcome
Apply theory, while critically evaluating the context of rural healthcare

settings and influences on rural health disparities, in order to address health of the rural population

3.5- Apply theory, research findings, clinical reasoning, and evidence to address common situations in quality improvement leadership

4. Demonstrate collaborative leadership through communicating verbally, nonverbally, and through technological means with individuals, families, communities, and healthcare systems to achieve mutually determined health related goals.

Measurement Courses - NURS 410, 440, 450

4.1- Student Learning Outcome

Demonstrate collaboration as a healthcare team member through the formulation of connection with community health agencies and nurse leaders

4.2- Student Learning Outcome

Apply theory, research findings, and evidence to address common situations in health care system leadership

4.3- Student Learning Outcome

Combine the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the BSN nurse through community health and nurse leadership precepted opportunities

Portfolio

Students in RN to BSN Program are asked to contribute to the development of a portfolio throughout the time they spend in the program. At the completion of each of the courses, they are required to place artifacts of their coursework in the portfolio. The portfolio is meant to represent a student's professional commitment and provide the student with a professional collection of individual accomplishments while completing the BSN program. The portfolio will also represent how each student met the six QSEN competencies, nine BSN essentials, and learned how to critically evaluate healthcare related events. Several course assessments throughout the program meet multiple QSEN competencies and BSN essentials.

Course	Portfolio Artifact
NURS 300- Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing	1. Ethical Dilemma paper 2. Standard of Professional Nursing Practice
NURS 310- Transcultural Assessment	1. Transcultural Assessment
NURS 320- Chronic Illness in Rural Settings	1. Chronic Illness Family Care Plan
NURS 330- Healthcare Policy and Informatics	1. Health Literacy and Education Project
NURS 375- Pathophysiology	1. Genomics Presentation
NURS 400- Prevention and Population	1. Community Health Assessment
NURS 410- Public/Community Health Clinical Experience Seminar	1. Student Learning Objectives and Goals
NURS 430- Evidence-Based Practice	1. Evidence-Based Practice Paper and Presentation
NURS 434- Care of the Rural Population	1. Care of the Rural Population Paper
NURS 435- Clinical Reasoning and Judgment	1. Putting It All Together
NURS 436- Comprehensive Health Assessment	1. None
NURS 437- Mental Health Nursing	1. None
NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership	1. Change Project
NURS 450- Public/Community Health Clinical Experience	1. Concept Map

Curricular Map

The curricular map has been coded and mapped according to the four program goal areas, the Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, and the QSEN Competencies.

Nursing Goal 1- ■ Goal 2- ■ Goal 3- ■ Goal 4- ■

CCNE BSN Essentials	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	QSEN Competency
NURS 300 Transitions to BSN	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
NURS 310 Transcultural Nursing	X			X		X	X	X	X	1
NURS 320 Chronic Illness in a Rural Setting					X	X	X	X	X	1, 2, 3
NURS 330 Healthcare Policy and Informatics			X	X	X	X		X		3, 6
NURS 375 Pathophysiology							X	X	X	1, 3
NURS 400 Prevention and Population Health	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	2
NURS 410 Public/Community Health Clinical Experience Seminar		X				X	X	X	X	1, 2, 5
NURS 430 Evidence-Based Practice			X					X	X	3
NURS 440 Organizational and System Leadership	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
NURS 450 Public/Community Health Clinical Experience	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
*Elective Nursing Courses										
NURS 434 Care of the Rural Population	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	1, 2, 5, 6
NURS 435 Clinical Reasoning and Judgment		X	X			X			X	2, 3, 4, 5, 6
NURS 436 Comprehensive Health Assessment	X		X	X				X	X	1, 3, 6
NURS 437Mental Health Nursing	X	X	X	X			X		X	1, 3, 5, 6

QSEN Competencies

1. *Patient Centered Care:*

Recognize the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for patient's preferences, values, and needs

2. *Teamwork and Collaboration:*

Function effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality patient care

3. *Evidence-Based Practice:*

Integrate best current evidence with clinical expertise and patient/family preferences and values for delivery of optimal health care

4. *Quality Improvement:*

Use data to monitor the outcomes of care processes and use improvement methods to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems

5. *Safety:*

Minimizes risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance

6. *Informatics:*

Use information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making

Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice

Essential I:

Liberal Education for Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice

A solid base in liberal education provides the cornerstone for the practice and education of nurses.

Essential II:

Basic Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Care and Patient Safety

Knowledge and skills in leadership, quality improvement, and patient safety are necessary to provide high quality health care.

Essential III:

Scholarship for Evidence-Based Practice

Professional nursing practice is grounded in the translation of current evidence into one's practice.

Essential IV:

Information Management and Application of Patient Care Technology

Knowledge and skills in information management and patient care technology are critical in the delivery of quality patient care.

Essential V:

Health Care Policy, Finance, and Regulatory Environments

Healthcare policies, including financial and regulatory, directly and indirectly influence the nature and functioning of the healthcare system and thereby are important considerations in professional nursing practice.

Essential VI:

Inter-professional Communication and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes

Communication and collaboration among healthcare professionals are critical to delivering high quality and safe patient care.

Essential VII:

Clinical Prevention and Population Health

Health promotion and disease prevention at the individual and population level are necessary to improve population health and are important components of baccalaureate generalist nursing practice.

Essential VIII:

Professionalism and Professional Values

Professionalism and the inherent values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice are fundamental to the discipline of nursing.

Essential IX:

Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice

The baccalaureate graduate nurse is prepared to practice with patients, including individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations across the lifespan and across the continuum of healthcare environments.

The baccalaureate graduate understands and respects the variations of care, the increased complexity, and the increased use of healthcare resources inherent in caring for patients.

References:

American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) (2008). The

essentials of baccalaureate education for professional nursing practice.

<http://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Publications/BaccEssentials08.pdf>

QSEN Institute. (2020). *QSEN competencies.*

<http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas>

Code of Ethics for Nurses

The College of Nursing faculty subscribes to the American Nurses' Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses, 2015. Students are expected to learn and perform in accordance with this code. The nine provisions of the ANA Code of Ethics are available free of charge via the ANA website:

<http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/Code-of-Ethics-For-Nurses.html>

Course Descriptions

NURS 300 Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing (3 cr) **

This course serves to assist the registered nurse in the transition to baccalaureate nursing practice. Trends and topics related to achieving higher levels of education, such as professionalism and patient centered care, will be examined. Admission to the Nursing Program required. This course is the first NURS course taken in the SMSU RN to BSN Program. It may be taken alone or in conjunction with other NURS courses.

NURS 310 Transcultural Nursing (3 cr)

This course builds on previously acquired nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes to holistically assess and plan care for culturally diverse individuals, families, and groups with an emphasis on patient and family centered care. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 320 Chronic Illness in Rural Settings (3 cr)

Students will explore continuity of care issues that impact the individual, family, community, and health care systems in the area of chronic illness as well as death and dying in a rural setting. Palliative care, common trajectories, ethical issues, patient and family teaching, as well as economic concerns are explored. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 330 Healthcare Policy and Informatics (3 cr)

This course provides analysis of the historical and current factors that impact healthcare systems. Healthcare policies and information technology (informatics) as they influence the nature and function of nursing practice related to safe, patient centered care are explored. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 375 Pathophysiology (3 cr)

This course will explore the altered health states and patterns of illness in the individual. Concepts related to pathophysiology will be explored. Content in this course builds upon previous knowledge of natural sciences. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 400 Prevention and Population Health (3 cr) **

This course focuses on an introduction to public health, and population-based nursing care. Public health principles are applied to health promotion, risk reduction, and disease prevention needs of clients, families, and communities. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 410 Public/Community Health Clinical Experience Seminar (1 cr)

Student will work with faculty to determine site for the public/community health experience, identify a qualified preceptor, and develop student objectives and a plan for the precepted clinical experience. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 430 Evidence-Based Practice (3 cr) **

This course introduces students to scientific inquiry in the discipline of nursing. Students study a basic foundation of the nursing research process. The overview includes the steps in the research process, research designs, research methodology, data collection, analysis, ethical issues related to human research, and utilization of research in nursing. The emphasis is placed on developing students as effective consumers of research. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 440 Organizational and Systems Leadership (3 cr)

This course focuses on nursing leadership and management issues, such as leadership development, staffing, delegation, ethics and law, organizational, political, and personal power, management and technology, and conflict resolution. Students will participate in the development and implementation of imaginative and creative change process while they refine leadership and communication skills to effectively implement safety and quality initiatives to impact communities and organizations. Admission to the Nursing Program required.

NURS 450 Public/Community Health Clinical Experience (3 cr)

Precepted clinical course provides students with an opportunity to mature into the baccalaureate nursing role in a leadership and public/community health setting. Students will meet individualized objectives established in the Public/Community Health Clinical Experiences Seminar course. Admission to the Nursing Program required. Admission to the Nursing Program required. Prerequisite: NURS 400 and NURS 410.

Nursing Elective: NURS 434 Care of the Rural Population (2 cr)

This course provides an advanced analysis of rural health care disparities, disparities of health for the rural population, along with strategies to care for the rural population. Areas of emphasis will include: unique demographics of the rural population, nursing theories applied to vulnerable populations, recruitment and retention issues for rural healthcare, and challenges facing rural hospitals. Admission to the Nursing Program required. Prerequisite: NURS 320

Nursing Elective: NURS 435 Clinical Reasoning and Judgment (2 cr)

This course serves to assist the registered nurse in enhancing and improving critical thinking, clinical judgment and clinical reasoning skills. Emphasis will be on the application of clinical reasoning skills to change nursing practice and improve patient outcomes with the role of the nurse as an individual as well as part of the interprofessional team. Admission to the Nursing Program required. Prerequisite: NURS 430

Nursing Elective: NURS 436 Comprehensive Health Assessment (2 cr)

This course builds on previously acquired liberal arts and nursing knowledge, skills, and cultural considerations related to health assessment. The foundation of health assessment is in research evidence and evidence-based practice.

Admission to the Nursing Program required. Prerequisite: NURS 430

Nursing Elective: NURS 437 Mental Health Nursing (2 cr)

This course focuses on an introduction to theories and concepts of behavioral health nursing, psychopathy, and treatment modalities related to the nursing care of clients and their families. This course is designed to provide the learner with basic knowledge and a skill set that will enable them to function in the clinical environment as they provide, manage, and coordinate care when working with clients and families experiencing disturbances in mental health. Admission to the Nursing Program required. Prerequisite: NURS 430

Southwest Minnesota State University
Department of Nursing

RN to BSN Program Full-Time Plan of Study

Spring Semester

NURS 300- Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing	3
NURS 310- Transcultural Nursing	3
NURS 320- Chronic Illness in Rural Settings	3
NURS 400- Prevention and Population Health	3

Fall Semester

NURS 330- Health Care Policy and Informatics	3
NURS 375- Pathophysiology	3
NURS 410- Practicum Seminar	1
NURS 430- Evidence-Based Practice	3

Second Spring Semester

*NURS 435- Clinical Reasoning and Judgment	2
NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership	3
*NURS 450- Clinical Practicum	3

RN to BSN Program Part-Time Plan of Study

Fall Semester

NURS 300- Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing	3
NURS 330- Health Care Policy and Informatics	3

Spring Semester

NURS 310- Transcultural Nursing	3
NURS 320- Chronic Illness in Rural Settings	3

Second Fall Semester

NURS 375- Pathophysiology	3
NURS 400- Prevention and Population Health	3

Second Spring Semester

NURS 410- Public/Community Health Clinical Experience Seminar	1
NURS 430- Evidence-Based Practice	3
NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership	3

Third Fall Semester

*NURS 436- Comprehensive Health Assessment	2
*NURS 450- Public/Community Health Clinical Experience	3

***Courses with prerequisites**

Students may begin the RN to BSN Program NURS courses in the fall or spring semester.

The two plans of study above are just some of the examples of course plans available. Standard 16-week (as displayed above) and 8-week course options are available. Flexibility is offered in scheduling courses to meet student needs, allowing that SMSU may not offer all courses per schedule, dependent on enrollment. Students may take courses at a pace that meets their needs, ranging from taking one course at a time to taking courses full time. Summer course offerings are available if desired. Students may change the pace at which they take courses while in the program. Students are encouraged to review the course catalog for the course offerings each semester. Additional courses may be needed to complete the Liberal Education Program/SMSU graduation requirements. The student's advisor will be able to help the student create their personal plan of study to progress through the program, with each student having a unique, individualized course plan.

Departmental Acceptance Policy

Application Process Students first apply for general admission to SMSU. Admittance to SMSU is required prior to applying to the SMSU RN to BSN Program. Following admittance to SMSU, the student will be sent information via email and U.S. mail in order to complete the RN to BSN Program application. The student may then apply to the SMSU RN to BSN Program. The application to the RN to BSN Program, along with acceptance requirements, must be completed prior to enrollment into the RN to BSN Program.

Application Deadlines

Nursing applications are available for fall and spring semesters. Applications are considered in the order they are received, after acceptance requirements have been met completely. Applications expire two years from their completion date.

Students admitted to SMSU, but not yet enrolled in the RN to BSN Program, may take non-nursing courses while applying to the RN to BSN Program. The SMSU Department of Nursing accepts students who live in a state in which SMSU has authorization to grant a degree, as well as meet state board of nursing clinical requirements.

Notification of Decision

The SMSU Department of Nursing will notify applicants of their standing upon completion of acceptance requirements. Students are admitted as they meet the acceptance requirements. Students will receive an acceptance, provisional acceptance, or non-acceptance notification by email and U.S. mail.

Departmental Acceptance Requirements

Selection Criteria

The SMSU Department of Nursing values the applicant's unique experiences along with their academic achievements. Considering the broad range of factors which reflect on the applicant's academic readiness, the following are the requirements needed for acceptance into SMSU's RN to BSN Program. Space may be limited with all qualified applicants not guaranteed acceptance. Requirements include:

1. Apply for admission to SMSU
2. Completion of RN to BSN Program application (application expires two years from the completion date)
3. Current, unencumbered RN license
 - a. Associate degree nursing students may apply in the last semester of their nursing program, with acceptance into the program contingent upon

successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam and attaining an RN license.

4. Achievement of a nursing GPA of 2.75 or greater
5. Students newly admitted in the RN to BSN Program may choose to move their admission date to a future semester (as long as their application has not expired by that start date)

Provisional acceptance into the RN to BSN Program will be considered for students not achieving the required nursing GPA of 2.75 or greater (GPA completion of previous nursing degree program). Prior to applying to the RN to BSN Program, the student may submit an appeal, in writing, along with a letter of reference, to the Director of Nursing stating past experiences while taking nursing courses and future plans to be successful. The appeal letter should include the reason for the appeal request, an explanation of previous experiences leading to nursing GPA, objectives of being accepted into the RN to BSN Program, and a plan for success in the RN to BSN Program. The Nursing Admissions Committee, comprised of the Chair/Director of Nursing, Nursing Student Services Coordinator, Registrar's representative, and/or student advisor/faculty member, will review the appeal. If provisional acceptance will be considered, an individualized plan of study will be created between the student and advisor.

When students have been accepted into the RN to BSN Program, they declare the semester they plan to start taking nursing courses. Students have the option to delay the start date after acceptance into the RN to BSN Program with the option to complete the *SMSU RN to BSN Program Semester Commencement Extension Request Form*. This form will communicate the student's plans to change the semester they plan to start taking nursing courses. The proposed extended start date may not extend past the expiration date of their application to the RN to BSN Program as nursing applications expire two years after their completion date. If a student desires to propose an extended start date beyond the expiration date of their application to the SMSU RN to BSN Program, they will need to reapply to the RN to BSN Program.

Progression Policy

Nursing students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 and attain a minimum grade of 2.0 in all courses required in the RN to BSN Program. Any nursing course (indicated by NURS) may be retaken once to attain a grade of 2.0. The student may not retake or withdraw from more than two nursing courses.

The student may not progress in the RN to BSN Program if -

- If it becomes necessary for the student to retake or withdraw from more than two nursing courses.

- Student is unable to maintain an acceptable RN license, demonstrate successful completion of a Minnesota background study, and provide current HIPAA training, CPR certification, medical provider examination including health history, vaccinations, and tuberculosis screening prior to a clinical course.
- Student is removed from a clinical setting related to a safety or criminal situation
- Not taking any courses (NURS or general courses) during the spring or fall semester and has not requested Study Leave.
- Student does not meet all policies stated in the most recent edition of the Department of Nursing Student and SMSU's Student Handbook at <http://www.smsu.edu/administration/studenthandbook/>

STUDY LEAVE REQUEST

- Purpose of the Study Leave Request is to allow the nursing student to remain in the RN to BSN Program while not enrolled in courses relevant to the BSN degree.
- Students currently enrolled in the SMSU RN to BSN Program may request a Study Leave Request on a semester basis for spring or fall semester (no study leave is required for summer semester).
- For a Study Leave Request to be granted, the student must complete the Study Leave Request Form and have a study leave request advising session with their advisor to discuss future plans.
- During Study Leave, the student is responsible to have at least one general advising session with their advisor to plan for the upcoming semester.
- A student may only request one 15/16-week semester of Study Leave Request at a time.
- Throughout the RN to BSN Program, a student may request a maximum of two individual 15/16-week semesters of Study Leave Requests total, which may be concurrent. This will require the completion of two separate Study Leave Requests.
- If the Study Leave Request process is not completed at the beginning of a semester, and the student is no longer enrolled in RN to BSN Program course work, the student will be considered withdrawn from the RN to BSN Program (no longer progressing in the RN to BSN Program).
- The Department will automatically withdraw the student from future NURS courses if the student is no longer progressing in the RN to BSN Program by not taking any courses (excluding summer semester) and not requesting Study Leave.

READMISSION

Students who are no longer progressing in the RN to BSN Program may apply to seek re-admission to the program. At that time, the student will be requested to send a letter of appeal to the Director of Nursing, if desired. Requested in the letter of appeal will be:

- The student's Plan for Success, providing information regarding the reason(s) for non-progression in the nursing major
- The course(s) not meeting grading criteria and grades attained in those courses
- A description on how they plan to be successful in the future

The Nursing Admission Committee, comprised of the Director of Nursing, Nursing Student Services Coordinator, Registrar's representative, and/or advisor/faculty, will review the student appeal for re-admission. The Director of Nursing will send a letter of approval or disapproval to the student. The letter will indicate any stipulations for re-admission (e.g., medical provider clearance, other pertinent evidence) and progression in the RN to BSN Program. The student seeking re-admission to the program will need to complete the RN to BSN Program application and will demonstrate an unencumbered RN license. Nursing courses must be completed seven years from the first term enrolled in the RN to BSN Program. NURS courses completed greater than seven years prior to graduation will need to be repeated in order to complete the degree requirements.

Individual Requirements and Support Systems for Students

The professional nurse performs many tasks as part of their practice. Training for this type of work requires the student to perform these same tasks and demonstrate certain characteristics. The following is a list of possible tasks/characteristics that may need to be performed/demonstrated as part of the training to become a professional nurse. This is not an all-inclusive list; it is a collection of examples of what might be encountered throughout the program.

- Gross motor - walking, stooping, bending, pulling, pushing (significant strength, endurance, and balance are required for many of these tasks)
- Fine motor - writing (English), pinching, injections, keyboarding
- Sensory/perceptual - hot/cold, sight (acuity, color), smell, hearing (high/low pitch/volume)
- Emotional – stability, sensitivity, caring
- Moral - reliable, honest

Health Requirements

Following admission to the SMSU RN to BSN Program, prior to the NURS 450 clinical course, nursing students will be required to:

- Provide a demonstration of personal health consistent with safe nursing practice determined by a medical provider examination within twelve months of initiation of the NURS 450 course. Cost of medical examination is student responsibility.
- Provide current immunizations and TB testing documentation, or waivers
- Be in compliance with the immunizations required by the clinical facility/agency

The nursing student will provide TB testing documentation and current immunizations or waivers for appropriate immunizations. Required immunizations/titers and tests that must be current are MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) immunizations or titers; Hepatitis B series and/or titer; Varicella (immunizations, laboratory confirmation of immunity of disease, or diagnosis or verification of a history of varicella disease by a healthcare provider); Tetanus/diphtheria/acellular pertussis (Tdap) immunization; and the Influenza immunization. Students are encouraged to always keep original documents of health history forms and immunizations as federal law prohibits SMSU from providing a copy of the documents to a student or healthcare facility.

Any significant change in health while actively taking nursing courses must be immediately communicated to a nursing faculty member or advisor. The faculty member or advisor will then work with the Director of Nursing to determine an appropriate course of action, such as clearance from medical provider. If documentation of medical clearance is needed at a clinical site, it will be the student's role to share medical clearance with the course Instructor, Director of Nursing, and the clinical site.

Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR)

- Dates of **two** doses of MMR immunizations (which must be after 12 months of age); **OR**
- An antibody blood titer documenting immunity of measles, immunity of mumps, and immunity of rubella.

Hepatitis B Immunization

- Series of three doses of Hepatitis B Immunization. At minimum, this series must be started before acceptance into the Program **OR**
- An antibody blood titer documenting immunity of Hepatitis B.

Chicken Pox (Varicella) – a history of varicella cannot be self-reported.

- Dates of **two** doses of varicella immunizations **OR**
- Laboratory confirmation (titer – a blood test that assesses the presence of antibodies against the chickenpox virus) of immunity or the disease **OR**
- Diagnosis or verification of a history of varicella disease by a licensed healthcare professional.

- If acceptable documentation of immunity cannot be provided and a titer does not confirm immunity, two doses of varicella immunization will need to be administered.

Tdap (diphtheria, tetanus, and acellular pertussis)

- Students must have proof of having received one Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) booster immunization.

Influenza Vaccine

- The Centers for Disease Control recommends influenza vaccination for all health care personnel. Nursing students are strongly encouraged to be vaccinated to protect their patients and themselves.
- Seasonal influenza immunization must be current prior to starting the clinical course in the Spring semester. In the Fall semester, students need to get the seasonal Influenza immunization when it becomes available. Students will not be able to progress with clinical hours in the Fall semester if seasonal influenza immunizations are available and not being utilized.

TB Testing – students must complete a, b, or c as follows:

- a. A negative two step TB skin test (TST) consists of two separate negative tuberculin skin tests. The two-step TST involves placement of a purified protein derivative (PPD) to test for tuberculosis. The first reading must be read by a healthcare professional within 48 – 72 hours after placement, and the area of induration must be recorded. The second TST should be administered one to two weeks after the first test. TST must be done within the past 12 months.
- b. Submission of two previous negative TSTs within 13 months of each other, with the last TST in the past 12 months.
- c. One Interferon-Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) test, which include QuantiFeron TB Gold (QFT-G), QuanteFeron Gold in tube test (GFT-GIT) or T-Spot for TB (T-Spot) along with any required follow-up, done within the past 12 months.

Students who are positive reactors to a TST must have a report of one negative chest x-ray on file and the SMSU TST Reactor Form signed by a health care provider, assuring absence of symptoms. Once a student has provided documentation of a negative chest x-ray taken after a positive TST, student will need not to repeat the chest x-ray as long as student is symptom free.

Bacille Callmette-Gurerin (BCG) vaccinated individuals who test positive by TST and negative by IGRA are not required to have a follow-up x-ray.

Refusal to obtain immunizations or titers

If the student is unable to comply with any or all requirements, or if the student has contraindication(s) to a required immunization, the student must:

1. Sign an [Immunization Medical Exemption Acknowledgment form](#) indicating the specific immunization(s) or titers or tests that are being voluntarily refused and the rationale for the refusal and/or secure a letter from their physician indicating the medical reason for not obtaining the required immunizations(s).
2. The student needs to understand that SMSU will not be responsible for immunization medical exemptions or any related outcomes. SMSU will work with the student to make reasonable efforts to secure alternative clinical experiences for the student. Clinical experiences may not be available to the student without proper immunizations and as a result the student may not be allowed to complete the required clinical experiences necessary to graduate.
3. Please be aware that some clinical sites require additional immunizations, drug screens, and documentation in order to participate in the clinical experience. If a student is unable to complete immunizations, then this information must be communicated to their NURS 410/NURS 450 faculty member. The NURS 410/NURS 450 faculty member will communicate this to their clinical site prior to initiating clinical hours.

Students are encouraged to maintain current health insurance as the student is responsible for any injuries they may incur while studying at SMSU or with a community agency. Southwest Minnesota State University and clinical agencies are not responsible for injuries incurred as part of any type of nursing-related learning experience. The student is responsible for meeting all of their health care needs related to any issues or health concerns that arise.

Professional Requirements

RN license - Students are required to maintain a current, unencumbered RN license, which will be verified prior to the NURS 450 clinical course.

CPR - Students are responsible for maintaining continuous current certification in CPR/Basic Life Support for the Health Care Provider. Proof of current CPR certification, with expiration of certification, will be verified prior to the NURS 450 clinical course. This certificate is valid until expiration date on the card/submitted document. Temporary certificate or letter from provider will be accepted and approved for 30 days by which time the permanent documentation must be available. A lapse in coverage or failure to have current certification will result in an inability to continue clinical hours. Students are

responsible for keeping track of their CPR expiration date and for getting recertified in CPR before the expiration.

Background Study – following acceptance into the RN to BSN Program, the Department of Nursing will have students complete a Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Background Study prior to the NURS 450 clinical course. Instructions on how to complete and pay for a MN DHS Background Study will be provided to students in the NURS 410 course. If a student has been convicted of certain crimes, they may not be allowed to work, or perform clinical activities, in certain healthcare facilities. Progression in the RN to BSN Program will not be guaranteed, as students convicted of these crimes may be unable to complete the clinical requirements of the RN to BSN Program. Any questions should be addressed to - Minnesota Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing, Background Study Unit at 651-431-6620. Students are encouraged to always keep documentation of background studies as federal law prohibits SMSU from providing a copy of the documents to a student or healthcare facility.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, MN DHS background studies could be determined as an emergency study, aka 'Eligible COVID-19 Study,' since the applicable sites to complete the fingerprint/photograph portion may not be open. If a student's background study is processed as an emergency study, when the MN DHS resumes fully compliant background studies, the emergency studies will no longer be valid. At that time, all subjects with an emergency study that are still affiliated with our program will be required to complete a new background study with completion of the fingerprint/photograph portion at an additional cost to the applicant.

HIPAA training– the Minnesota Department of Human Services Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training will be completed by students prior to the NURS 450 clinical course.

Clinical Agency Requirements – Clinical experiences are held in a variety of public/community health settings. Students are always required to adhere to all agency policies and procedures in clinical and preceptorship settings.

Liability Insurance - Student nurse liability insurance is provided by SMSU and only covers students practicing as a nursing student at SMSU.

Providing Healthcare Services - It is unlawful for any person that is not a licensed health care professional to provide healthcare to others. Nursing students may not provide nursing care to any person unless that activity/task was appropriately delegated to them by designated licensed preceptor. For example, a nursing student may not practice

nursing procedures on others unless directed to do so by their designated licensed preceptor.

Substance Abuse or Impairment - Students may not participate in clinical, classroom, lab, etc. while under the influence of any substance that may impair judgment or result in disruptive or disorderly behavior. Any student using substances (including prescription medication) needs to communicate this to their clinical instructor and course faculty member. Discovery of prior history of substance abuse or impairment requires that the student's background and situation be reviewed by the Department of Nursing prior to acceptance or progression in the Nursing Program.

References:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011). *Immunization of health-care personnel: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)*. MMWR, 60(RR-07), 1-45.

<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6007.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2016). *Tuberculosis (TB)*.

<https://www.cdc.gov/tb/topic/testing/tbtesttypes.htm>

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Minnesota Department of Health. (2020). *Tuberculosis*.

<https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/tb/index.html>

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https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/68/wr/mm6819a3.htm?s_cid=mm6819a3_w#suggestedcitation

Resource Requirements

Book supplies

Students are responsible for attaining their own textbooks and supplies. Instructors and/or advisors can provide guidance regarding which textbooks to purchase, rather than rent, to create a cost-effective plan for the student.

Transportation

All students are responsible for meeting their own transportation needs for clinical experiences.

Uniform/Appearance

Students must maintain a neat, clean uniform in the style designated by the RN to BSN Program and clinical agencies. When the students are in clinical settings, the uniform will be professional pants (black, brown, or khaki) with a plain white, brown, or black professional shirt, and an SMSU nursing student nametag, unless clinical sites mandate otherwise. When street clothes are allowed, the student must wear professional dress that is modest, neat, and clean. Student must meet clinical facility policy. The instructor reserves the right to remove any student from clinical that they feel is not professional in appearance and presentation.

The following considerations (and perhaps other considerations) may be prohibited at some clinical sites –

- Tobacco odor
- Body odor
- Dirty clothes
- Visible tattoos
- Earrings that are not a simple post
- More than one pair of earrings
- Any visible body piercing other than one eyebrow and two ears (tongue piercings are not permitted at clinical)
- Rings with stones that are not inlaid
- Necklace that hangs down more than six inches from the neck when bent over
- Hair that falls more than three inches in front of the face when bent over
- Nails longer than the tip of the finger/thumb
- Artificial nails of any kind
- Perfume
- Open toed shoes
- Blue jeans
- Shorts
- Mini skirts
- Halter tops, tank tops, low cut blouses/shirts
- Abdomen exposed
- Visible undergarments
- T-shirts with any writing (other than SMSU logo)
- Anything indicated by the instructor or agency policy

Student concerns following the above prohibitive list, should contact the NURS 410/450 instructor.

Bloodborne Pathogens Policy:

Students are responsible for immediately reporting all sharps injuries and suspected exposures to bloodborne pathogens and/or other potentially infectious materials during their clinical experiences to their preceptor, and subsequently to their course instructor. The student will be assessed and treated following the clinical agency policy. The cost of health care for injuries or illnesses sustained or contracted during clinical learning experiences is not covered by either SMSU or the clinical agency; such costs are the responsibility of the student.

Chemical Use and/or Abuse Policy:

Students are expected to attend clinical experiences free from the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. If student is taking medically authorized drugs or other substances, during their clinical experience, that may alter clinical judgment or performance, it is the student's responsibility to notify the clinical instructor and course instructor of this information prior to the clinical experience. If, during clinical experiences, reasonable suspicion arises surrounding a student's use or abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs, the nursing student should be assessed and treated following the clinical agency policy. The clinical agency will contact the course instructor and inform of situation. If the assessment verifies alcohol or illegal drug use, the student will no longer be eligible to continue the clinical experience. Future course plan actions for the student will be determined by the Department of Nursing and state regulations for reporting of chemical use and abuse for nursing practice will be followed. The cost of assessment and treatment for the suspected alcohol or illegal drug use is not covered by either the University or the clinical agency; such costs are the responsibility of the student.

Writing Assignments

The most recent edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) *Publication Manual* will be used as the style guide for all written assignments in the RN to BSN Program.

Assignment Usage Disclaimer

All assignments and written work submitted by students are subject to being shared with others for the purpose of meeting accreditation and regulatory requirements. Course material may also be used anonymously for assessment of student learning outcomes (SLOs) addressed by the Department of Nursing as well as assessment of the SMSU Liberal Education Program (LEP) SLOs. When student assignments are shared, the student's identity will be protected. Course artifacts may also be used for campus-wide LEP or program assessment.

Attendance Policies

Attendance policies may vary between courses, clinical experiences, and instructors. General attendance policy is as follows.

- Tardiness to clinical experiences may result in dismissal from the program
- Unexcused absence from clinical experiences may result in dismissal from the program

Photos, Audio and Videos

Images and audio of clients may never be used by students without written permission from the client and the Chair/Department of Nursing Director.

Mobile/Cellular Communication Usage

Students should follow all clinical agency policies related to mobile communication devices usage. Students may not use any portable electronic device in the presence of a patient.

If an emergency arises, the student should leave the learning area to take the call. This includes text messaging, email, and instant messaging.

Clinical Coursework

When a client is receiving nursing-related care, they have a right to the same level of quality care regardless of student interaction. This includes any person that the student interacts with as an SMSU nursing student. Therefore, the student has the full responsibility to be completely prepared for every clinical interaction. The student also has the responsibility to communicate relevant information to the instructor and nurse caring for the client. The client has the right to request that students not provide their care at any time without question.

A student that is determined to be unprepared for clinical or who fails to communicate pertinent information that places the client's safety at risk will be designated as "unsatisfactory" for clinical that day. If the student receives feedback that results in two "unsatisfactory" days within a clinical experience, the student will be removed from the clinical experience and will fail the clinical course.

Students are fully responsible for understanding and abiding by all clinical agency policies, all SMSU policies, and all course-related policies. Not knowing about a policy is never an acceptable reason for lack of compliance and will result in removal from the clinical experience and failure of the clinical course.

All instructors, preceptors, and clinical agency staff have the right to remove any student from interactions with clients due to suspicion of the use of any substance (to include prescription medication) that may impair judgment or result in disruptive or disorderly behavior. Any such situation will be referred to the Chair/Department of Nursing for further review before the student may continue clinical interactions.

Students participating in the NURS 450 clinical course are encouraged to determine what steps are needed to ensure personal safety. This includes letting friends/faculty know when and where clinical activity will be taking place. Students are encouraged to contact new clinical agencies well in advance to find approved parking. Students should never provide personal information to a client unless absolutely indicated by the clinical activities. It is the student's responsibility to obey all agency policies regarding interactions with clients. Students may not be compensated for any clinical time in which they are earning academic credit without prior consent of the Department of Nursing Chair/Director. For instance, a student may not 'punch in' while acting as a student nurse.

Clinical agencies and SMSU are not responsible for injuries incurred as a part of any type of nursing-related learning experience. The student is responsible for meeting all of their health care needs related to any issues or health concerns that arise. Should injury or exposure to a potential pathogen occur, the student is required to report the incident to their preceptor, instructor, and Chair/Director of Nursing, and follow the policy at the agency they are placed.

Clinical Evaluations

- In NURS 450, the student's clinical experience will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis by the course instructor.
- The clinical preceptor will provide feedback to student/course instructor based on observations in the clinical setting and course objective criteria.
- Final feedback will be provided using the Preceptor Feedback of Student Performance form.
- If the student does not pass the clinical portion of NURS 450, the student will receive an F in NURS 450.

Support Services:

<https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/campuslife/ssac/resource-guide.pdf>

Student Success & Advising Center (SSAC)	The purpose of the center is to encourage student development and academic success. The SSAC provides services for all SMSU students. The center coordinates programs and provides academic advising for specific populations, as well as assists students in the selection of an academic major and/or minor. In addition, the Advising Center answers student questions about academic forms and policies, as well as works with students on academic warning or probation due to their Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) status. The SSAC functions as a drop-in center for student questions and concerns, helping students to achieve their academic goals.
Career Services	Provides comprehensive career resources to assist SMSU students and alumni with their career development and employment goals. The role of Career Service is not to act as a placement center. Career Services strives to equip students with resources to successfully manage their career development during their academic experience and beyond their graduation.
Counseling and Testing Services	Provides a variety of assessments and test proctoring services as well as confidential, short-term counseling services to enrolled students by mental health professionals.
Disability Services	Provides an accessible university community, where students with disabilities have equal opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of the educational environment. Upon request, services, advocacy and accommodations are provided to students with documented disabilities in their academic program or to access university programs, facilities and/or activities.
Financial Aid	Provides fair, equitable, and unbiased service to students seeking financial aid. Guarantees delivery of federal and state financial assistance to students within rules and regulations established by the respective departments of education. Coordinates all federal, state, and institutional financial assistance, including grants, scholarships, student employment, and student loans.
Health Services	Provides registered students with free and confidential services, including medical evaluations. Assists students with off-campus referrals as necessary.
Technology Resource Center (TRC)	Provides support for teaching and learning, administration, and research. Support includes helpdesk support with services including login assistance, password resets,

	mobile device support, D2L Brightspace support, e-mail assistance, on campus Internet services including on campus wireless access, computer kiosks, and computer labs.
Speech Center	Provides free tutoring for all students for any course that requires public speaking or group presentations. The student does not need to be enrolled in a public speaking course. Tutors can help students with outlining and research strategies, computer slide presentations, brainstorming of topics, and delivery techniques.
Writing Center	Provides an opportunity for students to improve their writing skills. The student writing consultants offer tutoring for students who wish to discuss the drafting, revising, or editing of their written work.

Administrative Policies

Governance

The Department of Nursing will assist in identifying nursing students as representatives for regularly scheduled nursing departmental meetings. Students will volunteer, or be nominated, from 300 and 400 level nursing courses as available, to give a range of perspectives. Students may only be a representative once during their nursing course work. Student representatives will communicate between students and the Department of Nursing. Communication may include the presentation of their/peer suggestions for program improvement related to, but not limited to, the plan of study, student handbook policies, and clinical scheduling to the Department of Nursing, as well as communication of relevant team meeting discussions to the nursing student body. All nursing students will also participate in departmental governance through feedback on evaluations and surveys.

Communication

Communication will primarily happen via official SMSU email. For students to be successful when they are enrolled in a nursing course, it is important for students to frequently check their SMSU email account. Instructor email contact will be primarily via SMSU email and not personal email accounts. Specific guidance about communicating with course instructors is provided in each nursing course.

Effective communication is an important component of the student's overall professionalism. For effective communication, students must follow the appropriate channels. Nonclinical courses would require the students to contact the course instructor for questions or concerns.

Formal Complaints

Students should not use student representatives to discuss course learning opportunities. Professional communication between students and instructors is needed to discuss course concerns.

Academic Appeals: If a student has grounds to appeal a grade, she/he should present his/her case to the faculty member who awarded the grade. If the meeting of the faculty member and the student fail to resolve the student's complaint, she/he may appeal to the Academic Appeal Committee. The complete Academic Appeals policy is available in the SMSU Student Handbook -

<http://www.smsu.edu/administration/studenthandbook/?id=8216>

Student Grievance/Complaints: A student has the right to seek a remedy for a dispute or disagreement, including issues of institutional or program quality such as an institution's compliance with the standards of an accrediting agency, or a claim of consumer fraud or deceptive trade practices, through a designated complaint or grievance procedure. This policy does not apply to academic grade disputes.

Complete Student Grievance/Complaints policy is available in the SMSU Student Handbook - <http://www.smsu.edu/administration/studenthandbook/?id=8217>

Satisfactory Academic Progress

The intent of the SMSU Policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress is to make SMSU students aware when they are not making satisfactory academic progress toward earning a degree. While students need to maintain their academic standing as outlined in <https://www.smsu.edu/resources/webspaces/nca/policies/A-005.pdf> the nursing student needs to also meet the RN to BSN Program Progression Policy. The student may be presented with a Striving for Success Plan after evaluation of the circumstances that lead to the academic difficulty or low performance. The Striving for Success Plan may be presented to the student by the course instructor and shared with the Department of Nursing Director. This plan will include strategies that may help the student to improve academic performance and is created to guide the student to success.

The student is encouraged to take advantage of all the resources that exist for them at SMSU. Failure to meet the standards identified in the Striving for Success Plan may delay progression in the RN to BSN Program or dismissal from the RN to BSN Program. The Striving for Success Plan is not a part of the student's permanent academic record.

Handbook/Policy Revision

The nursing faculty will review the most current edition of the SMSU Department of Nursing Student Handbook at least annually and are encouraged to provide feedback to the Chair/Director of Nursing regarding the handbook. At the beginning of each fall semester, the most recent up-to-date version of the handbook will be placed on the Department of Nursing website and the D2L Brightspace RN to BSN Program Information Center course, with all students bound to the most current edition of the handbook. Updated versions of the handbook may be provided throughout the academic year.

All students will complete the Acknowledgement of Receipt of Handbook form upon entrance into the RN to BSN Program.

National Student Nurses' Association Inc. **Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct**

Preamble

Students of nursing have a responsibility to society in learning the academic theory and clinical skills needed to provide nursing care. The clinical setting presents unique challenges and responsibilities while caring for human beings in a variety of health care environments.

The Code of Academic and Clinical conduct is based on an understanding that to practice nursing as a student is an agreement to uphold the trust which society has placed in us. The statements of the Code provide guidance for the nursing student in the personal development of an ethical foundation and need not be limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment but can assist in the holistic development of the person.

A CODE FOR NURSING STUDENTS

As students are involved in the clinical and academic environments, we believe that ethical principles are a necessary guide to professional development. Therefore, within these environments we;

1. Advocate for the rights of all clients.
2. Maintain client confidentiality.
3. Take appropriate action to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others.

4. Provide care for the client in a timely, compassionate, and professional manner.
5. Communicate client care in a truthful, timely, and accurate manner.
6. Actively promote the highest level of moral and ethical principles and accept responsibility for our actions.
7. Promote excellence in nursing by encouraging lifelong learning and professional development.
8. Treat others with respect and promote an environment that respects human rights, values, and choice of cultural and spiritual beliefs.
9. Collaborate in every reasonable manner with the academic faculty and clinical staff to ensure the highest quality of client care.
10. Use every opportunity to improve faculty and clinical staff understanding of the learning needs of nursing students.
11. Encourage faculty, clinical staff, and peers to mentor nursing students.
12. Refrain from performing any technique or procedure for which the students has not been adequately trained.
13. Refrain from any deliberate action or omission of care in the academic or clinical setting that creates unnecessary risk of injury to the client, self, or others.
14. Assist the staff nurse or preceptor in ensuring that there is full disclosure and that proper authorizations are obtained from clients regarding any form of treatment or research.
15. Abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages or any substances in the academic and clinical setting that impair judgment.
16. Strive to achieve and maintain an optimal level of personal health.
17. Support access to treatment and rehabilitation for students who are experiencing impairments related to substance abuse and mental or physical health issues.
18. Uphold school policies and regulations related to academic and clinical performance, reserving the right to challenge and critique rules and regulations as per school grievance policy.

(Adopted by NSNA Board of Directors, October 27, 2009 in Phoenix, AZ)

Academic Honesty

SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY POLICY

I. Academic Honesty

- A. The aim of the academic honesty policy is to maintain the academic integrity of Southwest Minnesota State University and promote an intellectual climate of honesty and integrity. To maintain an environment of academic integrity all

students are required to accept personal responsibility for their work at SMSU. Any offense against the academic honesty policy compromises the educational integrity of SMSU and will be considered a grave offense.

- B. Offenses against academic honesty are acts which unjustly advance one's academic standing at SMSU and include knowingly permitting or knowingly aiding a person in an offense against the academic policy.

II. Forms of Academic Dishonesty

In line with the National Association of Student Personnel Administrator (NASPA), SMSU's academic dishonesty will include the following forms:

- A. *Plagiarism*: Presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own. Plagiarism will include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Submitting someone else's work or ideas as your own, including but not limited to homework assignments, term papers, research reports, lab reports, group projects, artistic works, tests, or class presentations.
 - 2. Submitting someone else's electronic work as your own, including but not limited to video clips, audio clips, electronic files, electronic programs, and any other copied electronic page, document, article, review, etc.
 - 3. Submitting someone else's work as your own with minor alterations. Paraphrasing without proper citation is also plagiarism.
 - 4. Submitting someone else's work without appropriate use of quotations, paraphrases, footnotes, or references.

- B. *Cheating*: Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study guide.
Cheating will include, but not be limited to:
 - 1. Copying from someone else during any type of examination.
 - 2. Communicating answers to an exam with other students and this includes allowing someone else to copy your own exam during a test.
 - 3. Using any material not permitted by the instructor for an examination.
 - 4. Requesting, acquiring, possessing, or providing someone else with an examination or portion of an examination without consent of the instructor.

- C. *Fabrication*: Falsifying any information. Fabrication will include, but not be limited to:

1. Submitting or presenting falsified research.

D. *Tampering*: Tampering with the instructor's evaluation tools and/or documents. Tampering will include, but not be limited to:

1. Changing, attempting to change, or falsifying academic records, including attendance records or sign-in sheets.
2. Tampering with an examination, homework assignment, or project after it has been corrected.

E. *Assisting in Dishonesty*: Aiding or attempting to aid someone else to commit an act of dishonesty. Assistance will include, but not be limited to:

1. Any student who aids another student in the performance of the above acts or has clear knowledge of another student's misconduct concerning academic honesty and does not bring it to the attention of the proper authorities (instructor and/or department chair) will be held responsible for their non-action and subject to disciplinary measures for academic dishonesty.

F. Any other forms of academic dishonesty as outlined in the instructor's syllabus.

III. Procedures for Reporting Incidents of Academic Dishonesty

A. Procedures

1. The faculty member will meet with the student regarding the specific charge, consider the evidence, and hear the student's explanation. If it is not possible to meet with the student, the faculty member may proceed to number 2 below.
2. If the faculty member determines that the student has violated the Academic Honesty Policy, the faculty member informs the student in person or via U.S. Mail of the consequences of the violation and the grade-related sanctions the faculty member will impose. Faculty members must recommend any additional sanctions, (such as suspension, expulsion, etc.) to the appropriate Dean for action.

3. The faculty member completes an “Academic Dishonesty Incident Report Form” and forwards the completed form to the appropriate Dean. The form is found on the SMSU website at the Academic Deans’ Office webpage.
4. The Dean informs the student in writing that:
 - (a) This form has been filed with the Dean’s office;
 - (b) The Dean may impose sanctions in addition to those imposed by the faculty member in the event of subsequent, serious, or multiple violations; and
 - (c) The student has a right to appeal the sanction(s) given by the faculty member as described below.
5. The Dean keeps the complaint form, any supporting documentation, and records of the adjudication on file.

B. Sanctions

1. An incident of academic dishonesty that is determined to be minor in nature may result in one or more of the following sanctions: a warning; a verbal or written reprimand; or a reassessment of a resubmitted assignment with an appropriate reduction in points.
2. An incident of academic dishonesty that is determined to be major in nature may result in one or more of the following penalties: a failing grade for the assignment or test; a failing grade for the class; suspension from SMSU; expulsion from SMSU; or the revocation of a degree.
3. The punitive options available are not limited to the sanctions specified in the previous sections.

IV. Appeals

A student wishing to appeal the faculty member’s decision must submit a written appeal stating the grounds for such appeal within 5 class days of receipt of the written decision of the faculty member. This written appeal is to be routed through the appropriate Academic Dean’s office. The Dean will review the appeal, and decide if it meets the criteria for an appeal using the following guidelines:

Except as required to explain the basis of new information, an appeal shall be limited to a review for one or more of the following purposes:

1. To determine whether the decision was rendered fairly in light of the charges and information presented, and in conformity with prescribed procedures giving the complaining party a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present information

that the Academic Honesty Policy was violated, and giving the accused student a reasonable opportunity to prepare and to present a response to those allegations. Deviations from designated procedures will not be a basis for sustaining an appeal unless significant prejudice results.

2. To determine whether the decision reached regarding the accused student was based on substantial information, that is, whether there were facts in the case that, if believed by the fact finder, were sufficient to establish that a violation of the policy occurred.
3. To determine whether the sanction(s) imposed were appropriate for the violation of the policy.
4. To consider new information, sufficient to alter a decision or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information and/or facts were not known to the person appealing at the time of the original Hearing.

If an appeal does not meet the criteria for appeal, the appeal may be rejected and the student will be notified in writing.

If the appeal has merit, it is to be routed to the Academic Appeals Committee for a hearing. Procedures for the appeal hearing are found in SMSU Procedure G-005, Academic Appeals Committee.

All students will complete the Academic Honesty Statement form upon entrance into the RN to BSN Program.

SMSU Department of Nursing Plagiarism Policy:

The SMSU Department of Nursing adheres to the SMSU Academic Honesty Policy (A-032). When lack of academic honesty is a concern, the course instructors will alert the SMSU Department of Nursing Chair and Director of Nursing. The Chair and/or Director of Nursing may be involved in the communications with the student. Furthermore, they may be involved in the communications with the Dean of Business, Education, Grad & Prof Studies regarding academic honesty concerns.

Repercussions may also include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failing grade on assignment (0 points)
 - The repercussions may include the student successfully completing the plagiarized assignment while adhering to academic honesty without a change in posted grade. In cases with this requirement, failure to complete the assignment successfully will result in not passing the course.
- Failing grade in the nursing course
- Expulsion from the SMSU RN to BSN Program

The SMSU Department of Nursing does not allow nursing students to withdraw from a nursing course to prevent the awarding of an F grade due to academic honesty concerns.

Grading Policy

All grade point averages are managed by the registrar's office. Grade point averages are to be calculated to the second decimal and are truncated, not rounded. The following will not be calculated in determining the GPA: I, IP, AU, NA, W, CR, and NC. The actual GPA from the registrar is used in guiding acceptance decisions in the Department of Nursing.

The Department of Nursing uses the following grading. All grading will be based on a percentage of the total point's possible (points earned by the students, divided by total points possible). Nursing students must maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 and attain a minimum grade of 2.0 in all nursing courses required in the RN to BSN Program. Any nursing course (indicated by NURS) may be retaken once to attain a grade of 2.0. The student may not retake or withdraw from more than two nursing courses. The student may not progress in the RN to BSN Program if it becomes necessary for the student to retake or withdraw from more than two nursing courses.

Grading Table

A	90-100%
B	80-89.99%
C	70-79.99%
D	60-69.99%
F	Less than 60%

Grades

Students are required to score an average of 70% within a nursing course. If a student scores an average of less than 70% total in the nursing course, the student is required to repeat the course. Percentages will not be rounded up. The Department of Nursing has a set 70% as a minimum benchmark for every nursing student to obtain as an average on their scores within a course. A score of <70% indicates a possible safety concern or lack of competency in patient care.

If a student feels that points or grades awarded are inappropriate, the student is encouraged to discuss concerns with the course instructor. The student is encouraged to present appropriate documentation and/or research to support their concerns. The student is required to be professional in their communication with the course instructor at all times and open to the rationales presented by the course instructor. Students can

find the academic appeals process under Administrative Policies in the SMSU Department of Nursing Student Handbook.

Graduation

Completion of the RN to BSN Program requires the student to meet and maintain all departmental acceptance and progression requirements. Upon successful completion of all course work and requirements set forth by the SMSU academic catalog and the SMSU Department of Nursing Student Handbook, the nursing student will be recommended for the appropriate degree. At the completion of the RN to BSN Program, the student will be invited to the SMSU Nurse Pinning Ceremony which is generally held every spring. Those students completing the RN to BSN Program in the summer or fall will be invited to the SMSU Nurse Pinning Ceremony the following spring.