



SMSU RN to BSN Student Handbook
2023-2024

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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Welcome | 2 |
| Preface | 3 |
| SMSU Mission Statement, Vision Statement, Value Statement | 3 |
| Introduction | 4 |
| Alignment of University Mission | 4 |
| Program Goal Statement | 5 |
| End of Program Student Learning Outcomes | 6 |
| Levels of the RN to BSN Program Curriculum | 6 |
| Portfolio | 7 |
| Guiding Philosophical (QSEN) Concepts Map/Matrix | 8 |
| Code of Ethics for Nurses | 24 |
| Course Descriptions | 24 |
| Plan of Study Examples | 27 |
| Departmental Acceptance Policy & Requirements | 29 |
| Progression Policy | 30 |
| Individual Requirements and Support Systems for Students | 32 |
| Resource Requirements | 37 |
| Experiential Coursework | 37 |
| Support Services | 40 |
| Administrative Policies | 42 |
| Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct | 43 |
| Academic Honesty | 45 |
| SMSU Department of Nursing Plagiarism Policy | 48 |
| Grading Policy | 48 |
| Nursing Commencement Academic Honors Policy | 49 |
| Pinning Policy | 50 |

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

WELCOME

Welcome to the Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) RN to BSN student handbook. The following handbook will inform students 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 completely 100% online except for the experiential learning experience component completed within your home communities. The RN to BSN Program Orientation is asynchronous. All RN to BSN 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 critical thinking skills needed to advance their careers. 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.

ACEN Candidacy

Effective March 21, 2023, this nursing program is a candidate for initial accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. Refer to SMSU RN to BSN Nursing Website for more information:

<https://www.smsu.edu/academics/programs/nursingrntobsn/index.html>

Students accepted into the program can start their nursing courses during the 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:

Admission Requirements

Transfer Students ONLY

The RN to BSN program requires:

- Undergraduate Nursing GPA of 2.30 or above.
- Current, unencumbered RN License (Associate Degree students may apply in the last semester of their nursing program, with acceptance in the program contingent upon successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam and nursing licensure.)

For additional information, visit our website at

<https://www.smsu.edu/academics/programs/nursingrntobsn/index.html>

I look forward to partnering with you in reaching your educational goals. Please contact the SMSU RN to BSN Program at NursingDept@SMSU.edu or 507-537-7591 if you have any further questions.

Lindsay Rohlik, Department of Nursing Chair

Tracy Hadler, Director of Nursing

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 within 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 (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) 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, Quality Improvement and Safety, endorsed by the *Quality and Safety Education in Nursing (QSEN) Core Competencies* (QSEN Institute, 2022) and the SMSU RN to BSN Guiding Philosophical Concepts. 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 experiential practice and other advanced practice roles. The BSN graduate is prepared to function effectively in ambiguous, unpredictable, and complex environments; demonstrate critical thinking and flexibility; and translate, integrate, and apply knowledge to enhance patient care quality and safety.

Reference

QSEN Institute. (2022). *QSEN competencies*.

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

Alignment of Mission with University Mission and Program Goals

The RN to BSN Program adheres to and supports the mission and values of SMSU.

SMSU RN to BSN Program Mission

The mission of the RN to BSN Program 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 Goal Statement

Graduates of the RN to BSN program develop a holistic synthesis of the nursing process, knowledge, skills, and attitudes for professional nursing practice. Graduates combine critical thinking, leadership skills, lifelong learning, healthcare information technology, community nursing process, and effective communication skills to provide nursing care for individuals, and families in rural/urban settings, global communities, and populations. The BSN graduate integrates liberal arts, culturally congruent care, nursing knowledge, evidence-based practice, and interprofessional collaboration with the healthcare team and community stakeholders through caring and ethical nursing practice. The graduate practices person-centered care, incorporating health promotion including self-care, preventative care, and safety to promote quality outcomes for all persons.

Program Terms/Definitions

Individual: a single person with unique experiences, backgrounds, and values who is one member of a larger group.

Families: a group of people who may be biologically, legally, or socially related.

Local/Global Communities: a group of people who have a similarity in geography, religion, interests, race, etc. The local community is geographically nearby where the global community is worldwide. For example, members of a specific church are a local community. A community includes an interactive relationship with others in the group.

Local/Global Populations: a group of people who have a trait or factor in common. For example, all people with heart disease in the state of Minnesota (local population). A population may not have a relationship with others in the group or interact with others within the group. For example, persons with heart disease in Minnesota may not know others that also live in Minnesota and have heart disease, much less interact with the individuals. (Interactions and relationships are key differences.)

Knowledge is the condition of being familiar with content through an experience (Merriam-Webster, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/knowledge>)

Skills are the act of using knowledge effectively to perform or do something (Merriam-Webster, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/skills>)

Attitudes are mental states, feelings, and emotions regarding a fact or state (Merriam-Webster, 2022, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/attitudes>)

Health promotion is the advancement or furthering of human health states (World Health Organization, 2022, <https://www.who.int/westernpacific/about/how-we-work/programmes/health-promotion>)

Lifelong Learning is an ongoing practice of self-regulated learning and development throughout life (Oxford Handbook, 2022,

<https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195390483.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780195390483-e-001>)

End of Program Student Learning Outcomes

EOPSLO #1: Explain the Scope and Standards of Practice and the Nursing Code of Ethics.

EOPSLO #2: Construct an appreciation of cultural diversity through a comprehensive cultural health assessment.

EOPSLO #3: Assess health through a comprehensive health assessment.

EOPSLO #4: Integrate data related to health and illness in rural and urban settings for nursing process application to meet diverse and unique needs of individuals, families, local/global communities, and populations.

EOPSLO #5: Propose evidence-based resources in the community assessment process and propose person-centered health interventions.

EOPSLO #6: Analyze evidence to promote health, safety, and quality outcomes.

EOPSLO #7: Integrate informatics and technology to inform nursing practice.

EOPSLO #8: Analyze theory, while critically evaluating the context of rural and urban healthcare settings and influences on health disparities to improve health outcomes.

EOPSLO #9: Recommend theory, professional communications, interprofessional collaboration, evidence, and clinical reasoning to address common situations in quality care and healthcare system leadership.

EOPSLO #10: Take part in intra and interprofessional collaboration with community health stakeholders and team members.

EOPSLO #11: Combine the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of the BSN nurse through community health leadership.

Levels of the RN to BSN Program Curriculum

Purpose: The purpose of leveling in the RN to BSN Program is to start with the care of individuals and families and enhance nursing skills by building on what is already known with new content and context of enhancing health in groups, communities, and population. Documented instructor and director permission is required for any course taken out of leveling sequence.

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| <p>Level 1: The Level 1 course is the first course of the RN to BSN program; must take this course with other courses in the same term or before taking other courses</p> | <p>Level 2: Level 2 courses are with or after NURS 300 and focus on nursing care of individuals, groups, communities, and populations.</p> <p>The courses in Level 2 may be taken concurrently with Level 1, 3, and 4 as long as</p> | <p>Level 3: NURS 410 must be taken the semester prior to NURS 450 but NURS 450 should be taken in the final semester of the program</p> <p>NURS 410 must be taken while, or after meeting Level 1. NURS 410 must be</p> | <p>Level 4: NURS 450 is the last course of the RN to BSN program</p> |
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| | the pre-requisites are met | taken while, or after meeting part or all of Level 2 | |
| NURS 300 | NURS 310 | NURS 410 Take this course the semester before finishing and taking NURS 450 | NURS 450 (NURS 410 and 400 are pre-requisites) |
| | NURS 320 (must take before taking NURS 434) | | |
| | NURS 360 | | |
| | NURS 390 (must take before taking NURS 435 and 437) NURS 400 (take this course before taking NURS 450) NURS 420 | | |
| | NURS 434 (take NURS 320 before taking 434) NURS 435, 437 (take NURS 390 before taking 435 or 437) | | |
| | NURS 440 | | |

Portfolio

Students in the 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, the nine SMSU RN to BSN Guiding Philosophical Concepts, and learned how to critically evaluate healthcare-related events. Several course assessments throughout the program meet multiple QSEN competencies and Guiding Philosophical Concepts.

| RN to BSN Course | NURS 1100 Portfolio Artifact |
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| NURS 300- Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing | Ethical Dilemma Paper Standard of Professional Nursing Practice Presentation |

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| | Questionnaire Professional Nursing Organization Flyer |
| NURS 310- Transcultural Assessment | Transcultural Assessment |
| NURS 320- Chronic Illness in Rural Settings | Chronic Illness Family Care Plan |
| NURS 360- Pathophysiology | Genomics Presentation |
| NURS 390- Evidence-Based Practice | Evidence-Based Practice Paper/Dissemination Critical Appraisal of Research Article Statistical & Evidence-Based Quality & Safety Improvement Assignment IRB/Research Ethics Assignment |
| NURS 400- Prevention and Population | Community Health Assessment Epidemiology & Interprofessional Collaboration Virtual Module Self-Care & Lifelong Learning Assignment |
| NURS 410- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning Seminar | Public Health Nursing Training: Foundations of Population Health Science and Practice: Mini-Course for Public Health Professionals Health Disparities Assignment |
| NURS 420- Healthcare Policy and Informatics | Health Literacy and Person Education Project |
| NURS 434- Care of the Rural Population | Care of the Rural Population Paper |
| NURS 435- Clinical Reasoning and Judgment | Strategies to Improve Nursing Practice and Person Outcomes Putting It All Together Paper Discussion 1 and 3 |
| NURS 436- Comprehensive Health Assessment | <i>Note:</i> Course currently not being offered |
| NURS 437- Mental Health Nursing | Evidence-Based Mental Health Advocacy Project |
| NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership | Planned Change Process Poster Nurse Manager/Leader and Team Building and Coaching Nurse Manager/Leader and Performance Appraisals |
| NURS 450- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning | Focused Self Reflections Culmination in Nursing paper Evidence-Based Community Health Promotion Project Political Advocacy Brief Societal Health Construct Poster |

SMSU RN to BSN Guiding Philosophical Map/Matrix

The curricular map/matrix has been coded and mapped according to the Guiding Philosophical Concepts and the QSEN Competencies.

QSEN Competencies

| Person-Centered Care (NURS 300, 310, 320, 360, 390, 400, 410, 440, 450) | | |
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| Definition: Recognize the person or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for person's preferences, values, and needs (QSEN, 2022). | | |
| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
| <p>Integrate understanding of multiple dimensions of person-centered care: person/family/community preferences, values coordination and integration of care information, communication, and education physical comfort and emotional support involvement of family and friends transition and continuity (NURS 320, 400, 410, 440, 450)</p> <p>Describe how diverse cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds function as sources of person, family, and community values (NURS 310, 320, 360, 400, 450)</p> | <p>Elicit person values, preferences and expressed needs as part of clinical interview, implementation of care plan and evaluation of care (NURS 310, 320, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Communicate person values, preferences and expressed needs to other members of health care team (NURS 300, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Provide person-centered care with sensitivity and respect for the diversity of human experience (NURS 310,</p> | <p>Value seeing health care situations "through persons' eyes" (NURS 300, 310, 450)</p> <p>Respect and encourage individual expression of person values, preferences and expressed needs (NURS 300, 310, 320, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Value the person's expertise with own health and symptoms (NURS 310, 320, 360, 450)</p> <p>Seek learning opportunities with persons who represent all aspects of human diversity (NURS 310, 410, 450)</p> <p>Recognize personally held attitudes about working with persons from different ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds (NURS 300, 310, 320, 410, 450)</p> <p>Willingly support person-centered care for individuals and groups whose values differ from own (NURS 310, 320, 400, 450)</p> |

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| | 320, 360, 400, 410, 450) | |
| Demonstrate comprehensive understanding of the concepts of pain and suffering, including physiologic models of pain and comfort (NURS 360, 400) | <p>Assess presence and extent of pain and suffering (NURS 360, 400)</p> <p>Assess levels of physical and emotional comfort (NURS 320, 360, 400, 420)</p> <p>Elicit expectations of person & family for relief of pain, discomfort, or suffering (NURS 320, 400, 420)</p> <p>Initiate effective treatments to relieve pain and suffering in light of person values, preferences and expressed needs (NURS 320, 400)</p> | <p>Recognize personally held values and beliefs about the management of pain or suffering (NURS 300, 320, 400, 420)</p> <p>Appreciate the role of the nurse in relief of all types and sources of pain or suffering (NURS 320, 400)</p> <p>Recognize that person expectations influence outcomes in management of pain or suffering (NURS 320, 400, 420)</p> |
| <p>Examine how the safety, quality and cost effectiveness of health care can be improved through the active involvement of persons and families (NURS 300, 450)</p> <p>Examine common barriers to active involvement of persons in their own health care processes (NURS 300, 310, 320, 400, 450)</p> <p>Describe strategies to empower persons or families in all aspects</p> | <p>Remove barriers to presence of families and other designated surrogates based on person preferences (NURS 450)</p> <p>Assess level of person's decisional</p> | <p>Value active partnership with persons or designated surrogates in planning, implementation, and evaluation of care (NURS 360, 450)</p> <p>Respect person preferences for degree of active engagement in care process (NURS 300, 320, 450)</p> <p>Respect person's right to access to personal health records (NURS 450)</p> |

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| <p>of the health care process (NURS 300, 320, 400, 450)</p> | <p>conflict and provide access to resources (NURS 450)</p> <p>Engage persons or designated surrogates in active partnerships that promote health, safety and well-being, and self-care management (NURS 320, 360, 450)</p> | |
| <p>Explore ethical and legal implications of person-centered care (NURS 300, 310, 320, 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Describe the limits and boundaries of therapeutic person-centered care (NURS 300, 450)</p> | <p>Recognize the boundaries of therapeutic relationships (NURS 300, 310, 320, 450)</p> <p>Facilitate informed person consent for care (NURS 390)</p> | <p>Acknowledge the tension that may exist between person rights and the organizational responsibility for professional, ethical care (NURS 300, 310, 320, 440, 450)</p> <p>Appreciate shared decision-making with empowered persons and families, even when conflicts occur (NURS 320, 440, 450)</p> |
| <p>Discuss principles of effective communication (NURS 310, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Describe basic principles of consensus building and conflict resolution (NURS 300, 440)</p> <p>Examine nursing roles in assuring coordination, integration, and continuity of care (NURS 320, 400, 410, 450)</p> | <p>Assess own level of communication skill in encounters with persons and families (NURS 310, 410, 450)</p> <p>Participate in building consensus or resolving conflict in the context of people's care (NURS 320, 440)</p> <p>Communicate care provided</p> | <p>Value continuous improvement of own communication and conflict resolution skills (NURS 410, 440, 450)</p> |

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| | and needed at each transition in care (NURS 400, 410, 450) | |
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| Teamwork and Collaboration (NURS 300, 320, 390, 400, 410, 435, 440, 450) | | |
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| Definition: Function effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality person care (QSEN, 2022). | | |
| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
| Describe own strengths, limitations, and values in functioning as a member of a team (NURS 410, 435, 440, 450) | <p>Demonstrate awareness of own strengths and limitations as a team member (NURS 390, 410, 450)</p> <p>Initiate plan for self-development as a team member (NURS 390, 400, 410, 440)</p> <p>Act with integrity, consistency, and respect for differing views (NURS 300, 410, 435, 440, 450)</p> | <p>Acknowledge own potential to contribute to effective team functioning (NURS 400, 410, 435, 440, 450)</p> <p>Appreciate importance of intra- and inter-professional collaboration (NURS 390, 410, 450)</p> |
| <p>Describe scopes of practice and roles of health care team members (NURS 300, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Describe strategies for identifying and managing overlaps in team member roles and accountabilities (NURS 300, 390, 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Recognize contributions of other individuals and groups in helping person/family achieve health goals (NURS 410, 440, 450)</p> | <p>Function competently within own scope of practice as a member of the health care team (NURS 410, 440, 450)</p> <p>Assume role of team member or leader based on the situation (NURS 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Initiate requests for help when appropriate to situation (NURS 400, 450)</p> <p>Clarify roles and accountabilities under conditions of potential overlap in team member</p> | <p>Value the perspectives and expertise of all health team members (NURS 300, 400, 410, 435, 450)</p> <p>Respect the centrality of the person/family as core members of any health care team (NURS 320, 400, 410, 435, 450)</p> <p>Respect the unique attributes that members bring to a team, including variations in professional orientations and accountabilities (NURS 300, 400, 410, 450)</p> |

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| | <p>functioning (NURS 300, 400, 450)</p> <p>Integrate the contributions of others who play a role in helping person/family achieve health goals (NURS 400, 410, 450)</p> | |
| <p>Analyze differences in communication style preferences among persons and families, nurses, and other members of the health team (NURS 310, 440, 450)</p> <p>Describe impact of own communication style on others (NURS 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Discuss effective strategies for communicating and resolving conflict (NURS 400, 440, 450)</p> | <p>Communicate with team members, adapting own style of communicating to needs of the team and situation (NURS 400, 450)</p> <p>Demonstrate commitment to team goals (NURS 390, 450)</p> <p>Solicit input from other team members to improve individual, as well as team, performance (NURS 400, 450)</p> <p>Initiate actions to resolve conflict (NURS 440)</p> | <p>Value teamwork and the relationships upon which it is based (NURS 390, 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Value different styles of communication used by persons, families, and health care providers (NURS 450)</p> <p>Contribute to resolution of conflict and disagreement (NURS 440)</p> |
| <p>Describe examples of the impact of team functioning on safety and quality of care (NURS 300, 320, 400, 440, 450)</p> <p>Explain how authority gradients influence teamwork and person safety (NURS 440)</p> | <p>Follow communication practices that minimize risks associated with handoffs among providers and across transitions in care (NURS 320, 400, 450)</p> <p>Assert own position/perspective in discussions about person care (NURS 450)</p> <p>Choose communication styles that diminish the risks associated with authority gradients among team members (NURS 390, 440)</p> | <p>Appreciate the risks associated with handoffs among providers and across transitions in care (NURS 320, 400, 435)</p> |

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| Identify system barriers and facilitators of effective team functioning (NURS 440) Examine strategies for improving systems to support team functioning (NURS 440) | Participate in designing systems that support effective teamwork (NURS 440) | Value the influence of system solutions in achieving effective team functioning (NUR 390, 440) |
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Evidence-Based Practice

(NURS 300, 320, 360, 390, 400, 410, 420, 434, 435, 440, 450)

Definition: Integrate best current evidence with clinical expertise and person/family preferences and values for delivery of optimal health care (QSEN, 2022).

| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|---|--|
| Demonstrate knowledge of basic scientific methods and processes (NURS 300, 390, 400, 420) Describe EBP to include the components of research evidence, clinical expertise, and person/family values (NURS 320, 390) | Participate effectively in appropriate data collection and other research activities (NURS 310, 390, 400, 420) Adhere to Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines (NURS 390) Base individualized care plan on person values, clinical expertise, and evidence (NURS 310, 320, 390) | Appreciate strengths and weaknesses of scientific bases for practice (NURS 390) Value the need for ethical conduct of research and quality improvement (NURS 390, 420) Value the concept of EBP as integral to determining best clinical practice (NURS 320, 360, 390) |
| Differentiate clinical opinion from research and evidence summaries (NURS 390) Describe reliable sources for locating evidence reports and clinical practice guidelines (NURS 360, 390, 410, 420, 450) | Read original research and evidence reports related to area of practice (NURS 300, 390, 400, 410, 420, 434, 435, 440) Locate evidence reports related to clinical practice topics and guidelines (NURS 360, 390, 410, 435, 440, 450) | Appreciate the importance of regularly reading relevant professional journals (NURS 390, 410, 450) |

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| <p>Explain the role of evidence in determining best clinical practice (NURS 390, 420, 450)</p> <p>Describe how the strength and relevance of available evidence influences the choice of interventions in provision of person-centered care (NURS 390, 410, 434, 450)</p> | <p>Participate in structuring the work environment to facilitate integration of new evidence into standards of practice (NURS 390, 450, 440, 450)</p> <p>Question rationale for routine approaches to care that result in less-than-desired outcomes or adverse events (NURS 390, 420, 440, 450)</p> | <p>Value the need for continuous improvement in clinical practice based on new knowledge (NURS 390, 410, 420, 440, 450)</p> |
| <p>Discriminate between valid and invalid reasons for modifying evidence-based clinical practice based on clinical expertise or person/family preferences (NURS 390, 450)</p> | <p>Consult with clinical experts before deciding to deviate from evidence-based protocols (NURS 390, 420, 450)</p> | <p>Acknowledge own limitations in knowledge and clinical expertise before determining when to deviate from evidence-based best practices (NURS 390, 450)</p> |

| Quality Improvement (NURS 390, 435, 400, 420, 440, 450) | | |
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| Definition: 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 (QSEN, 2022). | | |
| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
| Describe strategies for learning about the outcomes of care in the setting in which one is engaged in clinical practice (NURS 390, 450) | Seek information about outcomes of care for populations served in care setting (NURS 400, 435, 450) Seek information about quality improvement projects in the care setting (NURS 390, 435, 450) | Appreciate that continuous quality improvement is an essential part of the daily work of all health professionals (NURS 390, 400, 440, 450) |
| Recognize that nursing and other health professions students are parts of systems of care and care processes that affect outcomes for persons and families (NURS 400, 450) Give examples of the tension between professional autonomy and system functioning (NURS 440) | Use tools (such as flow charts, cause-effect diagrams) to make processes of care explicit (NURS 390, 420) Participate in a root cause analysis of a sentinel event (NURS 390, 435) | Value own and others' contributions to outcomes of care in local care settings (NURS 390, 440, 450) |
| Explain the importance of variation and measurement in assessing quality of care (NURS 440) | Use quality measures to understand performance (NURS 435) Use tools (such as control charts and run charts) that are helpful for understanding variation (NURS 420, 440) | Appreciate how unwanted variation affects care (NURS 440) Value measurement and its role in good person care (NURS 440) |
| Describe approaches for changing processes of care (NURS 390, 440, 450) | Design a small test of change in daily work (using an experiential learning method such | Value local change (in individual practice or team practice on a unit) and its role in creating joy in work (NURS 440, 450) |

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| | <p>as Plan-Do-Study-Act) (NURS 390, 420, 435)</p> <p>Practice aligning the aims, measures and changes involved in improving care (NURS 450)</p> <p>Use measures to evaluate the effect of change (NURS 440, 450)</p> | <p>Appreciate the value of what individuals and teams can do to improve care (NURS 400, 440, 450)</p> |
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| Safety (NURS 300, 390, 400, 410, 435, 450) | | |
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| Definition: Minimizes risk of harm to persons and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance (QSEN, 2022). | | |
| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
| <p>Examine human factors and other basic safety design principles as well as commonly used unsafe practices (such as, workarounds and dangerous abbreviations) (NURS 435, 450)</p> <p>Describe the benefits and limitations of selected safety-enhancing technologies (such as, barcodes, Computer Provider Order Entry, medication pumps, and automatic alerts/alarms) (NURS 420, 435, 450)</p> <p>Discuss effective strategies to reduce reliance on memory (NURS 420,450)</p> | <p>Demonstrate effective use of technology and standardized practices that support safety and quality (NURS 390, 420, 450)</p> <p>Demonstrate effective use of strategies to reduce risk of harm to self or others (NURS 390, 400, 410, 450)</p> <p>Use appropriate strategies to reduce reliance on memory (such as, forcing functions, checklists) (NURS 450)</p> | <p>Value the contributions of standardization/reliability to safety (NURS 450)</p> <p>Appreciate the cognitive and physical limits of human performance (NURS 400, 420, 450)</p> |
| <p>Delineate general categories of errors and hazards in care (NURS 400, 435)</p> | <p>Communicate observations or concerns related to hazards and errors to</p> | <p>Value own role in preventing errors (NURS 400, 410, 450)</p> |

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| Describe factors that create a culture of safety (such as, open communication strategies and organizational error reporting systems) (NURS 300, 410, 450) | persons, families, and the health care team (NURS 400, 450) | |
| Describe processes used in understanding causes of error and allocation of responsibility and accountability (such as, root cause analysis and failure mode effects analysis) (NURS 420) | Participate appropriately in analyzing errors and designing system improvements (NURS 440) Engage in root cause analysis rather than blaming when errors or near misses occur (NURS 390, 435) | Value vigilance and monitoring (even of own performance of care activities) by persons, families, and other members of the health care team (NURS 440) |
| Discuss potential and actual impact of national person safety resources, initiatives, and regulations (NURS 434, 435, 450) | Use national person safety resources for own professional development and to focus attention on safety in care settings (NURS 390, 450) | Value relationship between national safety campaigns and implementation in local practices and practice settings (NURS 434, 435, 450) |

Informatics

(NURS 390, 400, 420, 434, 435, 450)

Definition: Use information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making (QSEN, 2020).

| Knowledge Competency Statements | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|---|--|
| Explain why information and technology skills are essential for safe person care (NURS 420, 450) | Seek education about how information is managed in care settings before providing care (NURS 420, 450) Apply technology and information management tools to support safe | Appreciate the necessity for all health professionals to seek lifelong, continuous learning of information technology skills (NURS 420, 450) |

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| | processes of care (NURS 420, 450) | |
| Identify essential information that must be available in a common database to support person care (NURS 450) Contrast benefits and limitations of different communication technologies and their impact on safety and quality (NURS 420) | Navigate the electronic health record (NURS 450) Document and plan person care in an electronic health record (NURS 450) Employ communication technologies to coordinate care for persons (NURS 420) | Value technologies that support clinical decision-making, error prevention, and care coordination (NURS 450) Protect confidentiality of protected health information in electronic health records (NURS 420, 450) |
| Describe examples of how technology and information management are related to the quality and safety of person care (NURS 420) Recognize the time, effort, and skill required for computers, databases, and other technologies to become reliable and effective tools for person care (NURS 450) | Respond appropriately to clinical decision-making supports and alerts Use high quality electronic sources of healthcare information (NURS 390, 400, 420, 434, 435, 450) | Value nurses' involvement in design, selection, implementation, and evaluation of information technologies to support person care (NURS 420, 450) |

SMSU RN TO BSN Guiding Philosophical Concept Map/Matrix

SMSU Nursing (RN to BSN) Curriculum Guiding Philosophical Concepts

| Nine Concepts | Sub-Concepts | Descriptions | Courses |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| Liberal Arts Education | Goals 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking 3. Natural Sciences 4. Math and Logical Reasoning 5. History Sociology Behavioral Sciences 6. Humanities/Fine Arts 7. Human Diversity 8. Global Perspective 9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility | The Liberal Education Program at Southwest Minnesota State University provides students with the opportunity to obtain a solid, general education across the fundamental domains of human knowledge. When empowered with these ideas, facts, skills, and | NURS 300 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking 9. Ethical and Civic Responsibility NURS 310 1. Communication 2. Critical Thinking 5. History Sociology Behavioral Sciences 7. Human Diversity 8. Global Perspective |

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| | <p>10. People and Environment</p> | <p>values, students can understand and effectively participate in the affairs of the community, nation, and wider world. Graduates of SMSU will continue their liberal arts education as lifelong learners who will engage in a process of integration of the mind, body, and spirit.</p> | <p>9.Ethical and Civic Responsibility 10.People and Environment</p> <p>NURS 320 1.Communication 2.Critical Thinking 10.People and the Environment</p> <p>NURS 360 1.Communication 2.Critical Thinking 3.Natural Sciences</p> <p>NURS 390 1.Communication 2.Critical Thinking 4.Math and Logical Reasoning</p> <p>NURS 400 1.Communication Culture 2.Critical Thinking 3.Natural Sciences 4.Math and Logical Reasoning</p> <p>NURS 410: 1.Communication 9.Ethical and Civic Responsibility 10.People and the Environment</p> <p>NURS 420 1.Communication 2.Critical Thinking 4.Math and Logical Reasoning 8.Global Perspective</p> <p>NURS 434 1.Communication</p> |
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| | | | <p>2.Critical Thinking</p> <p>NURS 435</p> <p>4.Math and Logical Reasoning</p> <p>NURS 437 (Fall 2022)</p> <p>NURS 440</p> <p>1.Communication</p> <p>2.Critical Thinking</p> <p>9.Ethical and Civic Responsibility</p> <p>5.Behavioral Sciences</p> <p>NURS 450</p> <p>1.Communication</p> <p>2.Critical Thinking</p> <p>9.Ethical and Civic Responsibility</p> <p>10.People and Environment</p> |
| <p>Leadership, Management, and Advocacy</p> <p>(QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, person-centered care)</p> | <p>1.Teamwork</p> <p>2.Interprofessional collaboration</p> <p>3.Leadership approaches</p> <p>4.Healthcare policy</p> <p>5.Finances</p> <p>6.Legislation</p> <p>7.Regulations</p> <p>8.Healthcare safety and quality care</p> <p>9.Communication skills</p> <p>10.Conflict management</p> | <p>The baccalaureate nurse incorporates teamwork and interprofessional collaboration in a leadership role within an organization. Through the use of leadership approaches, advocacy and teamwork, the nurse leader is engaged in healthcare policy, finances, legislation, and regulatory work in healthcare. Additionally, the nurse leader uses effective communication skills and conflict management.</p> | <p>Courses:</p> <p>NURS 390</p> <p>NURS 400</p> <p>NURS 420</p> <p>NURS 434</p> <p>NURS 440</p> <p>NURS 450:</p> <p>1.Teamwork</p> <p>2.Interprofessional collaboration</p> <p>3.Leadership approaches</p> <p>4.Healthcare policy</p> <p>6.Legislation</p> <p>8.Healthcare safety and quality care</p> <p>9.Communication skills</p> |

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| | | Interprofessional collaboration is two-way collaboration between at least two healthcare professionals from different disciplines. | |
| Health Care Safety and Quality Care (QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, person-centered care) | 1.Safety 2.Continuous quality improvement 3.Quadruple Aim 4.QSEN 5. Nurse self-care 6. Self-care for all | The baccalaureate nurse is an active agent who promotes healthcare safety and quality care. Through continuous quality improvement projects and outcomes tracking, the nurse serves as an interprofessional team member to improve health outcomes. Nurses recognize that self-care impacts work performance and safety. | Courses: NURS 300 NURS 310 NURS 360 NURS 390 NURS 400 NURS 420 NURS 434 NURS 435 NURS 437 NURS 440 NURS 450: 1.Safety 2.Continuous quality improvement 3.Quadruple Aim 4.QSEN 5.Nurse self-care 6.Self-care for all |
| Evidence-Based Practice and Statistical Literacy (QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, person-centered care) | 1.Database searches 2.Applying statistics to nursing practice 3. Building statistical vocabulary 4.Writing literature reviews of research 5.Scholarship 6.Making practice recommendations to improve outcomes based on evidence 7. Identifying gaps in the research literature 8.Appraising research evidence | The baccalaureate nurse demonstrates skills essential to the consumer role of research evidence. The skills include database searches, defining problems, applying statistics, developing statistical vocabulary, writing literature reviews of research, and making practice recommendations to improve health outcomes based on evidence. Additionally, nurses identify gaps in research literature, | Courses: NURS 300 NURS 310 NURS 320 NURS 360 NURS 390 NURS 400 NURS 410 NURS 420 NURS 434 NURS 435 NURS 437 NURS 440 NURS 450: 1.Database searches 2.Applying statistics to nursing practice 6.Making practice recommendations to |

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| | | and develop basic research appraisal skills. | improve outcomes based on evidence |
| <p>Informatics and Technology</p> <p>(QSEN links: quality improvement, evidence-based practice, person-centered care)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Information management 2.Use of software programs 3.Database use 4.Electronic Health Records 5.Informatics and Technology Legislature/Regulations 6. Telehealth 7. Virtual tools (literacy, decision-making tools) | <p>The baccalaureate nurse is prepared with knowledge and skills to protect privacy and security by applying informatics and technology legislation/regulation. Nurses use software, databases, electronic health records, telehealth technology, and virtual tools in professional roles. Nurses engage in lifelong learning skills through accessing information through technology.</p> | <p>Courses</p> <p>NURS 300</p> <p>NURS 310</p> <p>NURS 390</p> <p>NURS 400</p> <p>NURS 410</p> <p>NURS 420</p> <p>NURS 435</p> <p>NURS 437</p> <p>NURS 450:</p> <p>3.Database use</p> <p>5.Informatics and Technology</p> |
| <p>Integrative Preventative and Population Health (persons, families, local/global communities, and populations) and Health Promotion Practices</p> <p>(QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, informatics, person-centered care)</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Upstream thinking 2.Commitment to social justice and the greater good 3.Reducing health disparities 4.Increasing health equities 5.Rural and urban health populations 6.Self-care | <p>The baccalaureate nurse has knowledge, skills, and attitudes to promote preventative health and disease prevention in persons, families, local/global communities, and populations.</p> | <p>Courses</p> <p>NURS 310</p> <p>NURS 320</p> <p>NURS 330</p> <p>NURS 360</p> <p>NURS 400</p> <p>NURS 430</p> <p>NURS 434</p> <p>NURS 437</p> <p>NURS 450:</p> <p>1.Upstream thinking</p> <p>2.Commitment to social justice and the greater good</p> <p>3.Reducing health disparities</p> <p>4.Increasing health equities</p> <p>5.Rural and urban health populations</p> <p>6.Self-care</p> |
| <p>Professional Nursing Practice</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.Lifelong learning 2.Self-care (self and others) | <p>The baccalaureate nurse practices lifelong learning,</p> | <p>Courses</p> <p>NURS 300</p> <p>NURS 310</p> |

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| (QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, person-centered care) | 3. Interprofessional Collaboration 4. Professional Standards-Scope and Standards of Nursing 5. ANA Public Health Nurse Scope and Standards | promotes self-care, and incorporates the professional scope and standards of nursing practice. The professional nurse practices interprofessional collaboration routinely to promote health outcomes. | NURS 320 NURS 390 NURS 400 NURS 410 NURS 420 NURS 434 NURS 435 NURS 437 NURS 440 NURS 450: 1. Lifelong learning 2. Self-care (self and others) 3. Interprofessional Collaboration 4. Professional Standards-Scope and Standards of Nursing 5. ANA Public Health Nurse Scope and Standards |
| Ethics (QSEN links: safety, teamwork and collaboration, quality improvement, evidence-based practice, informatics, person-centered care) | 1. Privacy 2. Security 3. ANA Code of Ethics 4. Professional Standards-Scope and Standards of Nursing 5. ANA Public Health Nurse Scope and Standards 6. Professional Values | The baccalaureate nurse has knowledge, skills, and attitudes of ethical nursing practice. Concepts of confidentiality and privacy are vital in protecting privileged health information about humans. Ethical practice is guided by the ANA Code of Ethics, and Professional Scope and Standards of Nursing and Public Health Scope and Standards. | Courses NURS 300 NURS 310 NURS 320 NURS 360 NURS 390 NURS 400 NURS 410 NURS 420 NURS 435 NURS 440 NURS 450: 1. Privacy 3. ANA Code of Ethics 4. Professional Standards-Scope and Standards of Nursing 5. ANA Public Health Nurse Scope and Standards 6. Professional Values |
| Transcultural Nursing (QSEN links: person-centered care, teamwork) | 1. ANA Ethics 2. ANA Scope and Standards | The baccalaureate nurse has the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes for | Courses NURS 310 NURS 320 NURS 400 |

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| <p>and collaboration, evidence-based practice, quality improvement, safety)</p> <p>Reference QSEN Institute. (2022). <i>QSEN competencies</i>. http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas</p> | <p>3. Includes Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the workplace</p> | <p>providing culturally congruent quality care to diverse populations across the lifespan in a variety of healthcare settings. In some instances, interprofessional collaboration may be included with providing culturally congruent care. In other instances, nurse leaders promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Nurse leaders also promote equity and inclusion in health services.</p> | <p>NURS 437 NURS 450</p> |
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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. Growth as a BSN-prepared nurse surfaces through topics that will be examined surrounding professional nursing practice, Nursing Standards of Practice, ethical comportment, advocacy, evidence-based practice with statistical literacy, and nursing competencies. Admission to the RN to BSN Program required. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites. 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.

This course must be successfully completed prior to taking further NURS courses in future semesters.

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. Students examine the use of Transcultural Nursing frameworks to guide the nursing process. Pre-requisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

NURS 320 Chronic Illness in Rural Settings (3 cr)

Students will explore factors that impact the individual, family, community, and health care systems in a rural setting. Chronic illness, end-of-life care, ethical issues, person-centered care, as well as social determinants of health are explored. Admission to the RN to BSN Program is required. Pre-requisites: The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites. This course must be successfully completed prior to taking NURS 434.

NURS 360 Pathophysiology (3 cr)

This course will explore patterns of illness and wellness in the individual. Concepts related to pathophysiology will be explored. Health promotion and disease prevention are highlighted. The impact of genomics, lifestyle, and social determinants of health are addressed. Content in this course builds upon previous knowledge of natural sciences. Pre-requisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program required. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites

NURS 390 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 conduct related to human research, lifelong learning, and evidence-based practice in nursing. The emphasis is placed on developing students as effective consumers of research. Pre-requisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites. This course must be successfully completed prior to taking NURS 435, NURS 436, or NURS 437.

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

Students examine concepts, ethics, and theoretical frameworks of public health and population-based nursing care in this course. Students apply public health principles to health promotion, risk reduction, and disease prevention needs of persons, families, communities, and populations. Students study self-care and lifelong learning in the role of the professional nurse. Prerequisite: Admission to the RN to BSN program. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

NURS 410 Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning Seminar (1 cr)

Students will work with the course faculty to determine public/community health experiential nursing learning experiences. Students will collaborate with community partners and health agencies to assess populations, develop health promotion projects, provide health education, and assist vulnerable populations within communities to maintain optimal health. Pre-requisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program is required. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites. This course must be successfully completed prior to taking NURS 450.

NURS 420 Healthcare Policy and Informatics (3 cr)

Students in this course analyze the historical and current factors that impact healthcare systems and population health. Students examine healthcare policies and information technology (informatics) as they influence the nature and function of nursing practice related to safe, person-centered care, and self-care. Students examine the connection between interprofessional collaboration, healthcare policy, and informatics. Prerequisite: Admission to the RN to BSN program. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

NURS 440 Organizational and Systems Leadership (3 cr)

Students in this course focus on nursing leadership and management concepts in the contemporary healthcare environment. Students will engage in the exploration and discovery of challenges facing the emerging nurse leader. Students develop leadership skills related to providing safe, quality care for communities and healthcare organizations. Prerequisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

NURS 450 Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning (3 cr)

Students in this public/community health experiential nursing learning course study the baccalaureate nursing leadership role in population health settings. Students partner with community agencies to apply and evaluate the population-

focused nursing process. Students consider levels of disease prevention and practice, community assessment, and interprofessional collaboration in various community settings to promote optimal health. Students explore a variety of community-based settings that promote and advocate for healthy outcomes for individuals, families, communities, and populations. Prerequisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program. Completion of NURS 400 and NURS 410. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisite

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. Prerequisites: NURS 320 Chronic Illness in Rural Settings and Admission to the RN to BSN Program required. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

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

This course assists the registered nurse in enhancing and improving critical thinking, clinical judgment, and clinical reasoning skills. Emphasis is the application of clinical reasoning skills to a quality improvement project. The nurse uses interprofessional collaboration to promote change and improve health outcomes. Prerequisite: Admission to the RN to BSN Program and NURS 390 or 430 Evidence-Based Practice. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to remove students from the course who do not meet the course requirements and prerequisites.

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 390.

(RN to BSN Program Full-Time Plan of Study (uAchieve Student Planner))

(Tentative Plan)

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 420- Health Care Policy and Informatics 3
 NURS 360- Pathophysiology 3
 NURS 410- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning Seminar 1
 NURS 390- Evidence-Based Practice 3

Second Spring Semester

*NURS Elective 2
 NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership 3
 *NURS 450- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning 3

RN to BSN Program Part-Time Plan of Study (uAchieve Student Planner)

(Tentative Plan)

Fall Semester

NURS 300- Transitions to Baccalaureate Nursing 3
 NURS 420- 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 360- Pathophysiology 3
 NURS 400- Prevention and Population Health 3

Second Spring Semester

NURS 410- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning Seminar 1
 NURS 390- Evidence-Based Practice 3
 NURS 440- Organizational and System Leadership 3

Third Fall Semester

*NURS 450- Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning 3
 *NURS Elective 2

*Courses with prerequisites

Students may begin the RN to BSN Program NURS courses in the fall or spring semester. The RN to BSN program at Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) is a 30-credit hour program with 11 core nursing courses. The two plans of study above are just some of the examples of course plans available. Standard 16-week (as displayed above) and accelerated course options (8-weeks) 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. Beyond the RN to BSN Program courses, additional courses may be needed to complete the Liberal Education Program (LEP) Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) SMSU graduation requirements. The requirements for SMSU baccalaureate degree completion include 120 semester credits, including 42 MnTC credits. MnTC includes general education courses reflecting competencies adopted by the higher education entities of Minnesota. To complete the entire MnTC at SMSU, students must earn a minimum of 40-42 credits in the ten goal areas and the requirements for each goal area. Successful completion of the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) earns 15 credits for prior learning. The student academic advisor will help the student create their personal plan of study to progress through the program, with each student having a unique, individualized course plan. Additionally, some RN to BSN students transfer into the program with all LEP MnTC credits met. Updated 2/2/23

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

Application Deadlines

Nursing applications are available for the 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 RN to BSN Program accepts students who live in a state in which SMSU has the authorization to grant a degree, as well as meet state board of nursing experiential learning requirements.

Notification of Decision

The SMSU RN to BSN Program 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.

RN to BSN Departmental Acceptance Requirements

Selection Criteria

The SMSU RN to BSN Program values the applicant's unique experiences along with their academic achievements. Considering the broad range of factors that reflect on the

applicant's academic readiness, the following are the requirements needed for acceptance into SMSU's RN to BSN Program. 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 (Associate Degree students may apply during their nursing program, with acceptance in the program contingent upon successful completion of the NCLEX-RN exam and nursing licensure.)
4. Achievement of a nursing GPA of 2.30 or above
5. Students newly admitted in the RN to BSN Program may choose to move their admission date to a future semester (if 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 2.30 or greater (GPA completion of a previous nursing degree program). Prior to applying to the RN to BSN Program Director of Nursing, the student may submit an appeal, in writing, to the RN to BSN Program Director 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 Department of Nursing Chair and the RN to BSN Program Director, Nursing Student Services Coordinator, Registrar's representative, and/or student advisor/faculty member, will review the appeal. Students who are provisionally accepted into the program must meet with the Nursing Student Services Coordinator to set up a plan for success and advising/study plan.

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. Nursing students must complete the RN to BSN Program within seven years from the first term the student enrolls in the RN to

BSN Program (a total of seven spring and seven fall semesters, including any study leave time). Students may appeal the seven-year completion time, given an unusual and significant situation is present. The appeal request includes the student writing a letter of appeal to the RN to BSN Director. The appeal will be reviewed by the Nursing Admissions Committee under the direction of the RN to BSN Program Director which in turn could further be reviewed by the University Appeals Committee.

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

Study Leave Request

- The 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 the spring or fall semester (no study leave is required for the 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 a 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 RN to BSN Program 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 the 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 RN to BSN Program Director of Nursing. Requested in the letter of appeal will include:

- The student's Plan for Success – setting up a meeting with the Nursing Student Services Coordinator, or faculty advisor, to establish a plan for success, providing information regarding the circumstances/reason(s) for non-progression in the nursing major (i.e., death of a loved one, personal or family reasons, etc.) or due to low GPA
- The course(s) not meeting grading criteria and grades attained in those courses
- A description of how the student plans to be successful in the future

The Nursing Admission Committee, comprised of the Director of Nursing, Department of Nursing Chair, Nursing Student Services Coordinator, Registrar's representative, and/or RN to BSN faculty advisor, will review the student's 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 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 Public/Community Health Experiential Nursing Learning course, nursing students will be required to:

- Provide a demonstration of personal health consistent with a safe nursing practice determined by a medical provider examination within twelve months of initiation of the NURS 450 course. The cost of the medical examination is the student's responsibility.
- Provide current immunizations, declination waivers, and TB testing documentation.
- Follow the immunizations required by the public/community health facility/agency

***Please note that: Depending upon the public/community health facility/agency experiential experiences selected, students may need to complete additional health compliance requirements**

The nursing student will provide TB testing documentation and current immunizations or declination 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 the NURS 450 faculty member or faculty 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 a medical provider. If documentation of medical clearance is needed at a public/community health facility/agency site, it will be the student's role to share medical clearance with the course instructor, Director of Nursing, and the 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 NURS 450 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 NURS 450 experiential 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), QuantiFeron 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 the absence of symptoms. Once a student has provided documentation of a negative chest x-ray taken after a positive TST, the student will need not repeat the chest x-ray as long as the 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. Students need 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 experiential experiences for the student. Experiential 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 experiential experiences necessary to graduate.
3. Please be aware that some experiential learning experiences/sites require additional immunizations, drug screens, background/criminal studies, and documentation to participate in the experiential experience. If a student is unable to complete immunizations for example, then this information must be communicated to their NURS 410/NURS 450 faculty member. The NURS 410/NURS 450 faculty member may be responsible in communicating this to the experiential location prior to the student initiating 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 experiential agencies are not responsible for injuries incurred as part of any type of nursing-related learning experience. The student is responsible for meeting all 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 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 the expiration of certification, will be verified prior to the NURS 450 course. This certificate is valid until the expiration date on the card/submitted document. A temporary certificate or letter from a 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 any experiential 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 RN to BSN Program requires students to complete a Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Background Study prior to the NURS 450 course. Minnesota law requires background studies on individuals who provide direct contact services to patients/clients in facilities and programs approved by MN DHS. Instructions on how to complete and pay for an 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 experiential activities, in certain facilities. Progression in the RN to BSN Program will not be guaranteed, as students convicted of these crimes may be unable to complete the experiential requirements of the RN to BSN Program. Any questions should be addressed to – the 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. **Agencies may require an additional background study, such as a criminal study.**

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 course.

Experiential Agency Requirements – Experiential experiences are held in a variety of public/community health settings. Students are always required to adhere to all agency policies and procedures in given settings. Although students do not attend campus as the NURS courses are online, the NURS 450 course requires experiential learning experiences and assignments to be completed within their home communities. NURS 450 is the only course where students will need to log experiential learning hours (135 total). Students may need to take time off work to complete experiential hours, so please schedule accordingly.

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

Providing Healthcare Services - It is unlawful for any person that is not a licensed healthcare 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 a 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 experiential learning activities or experiences, 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 course faculty member. Discovery of prior history of substance abuse or

impairment requires that the student's background and situation be reviewed by the RN to BSN Program prior to acceptance or progression in the RN to BSN Program.

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Resource Requirements

Books/Supplies

Students are responsible for attaining their own textbooks and supplies. Instructors or faculty advisors can provide guidance regarding which Open Education Resources (OER's) or textbooks to use to create a cost-effective plan for the student.

Experiential Learning Coursework

Transportation

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

Uniform/Appearance

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

The following considerations (and perhaps other considerations) may be prohibited at some experiential agencies, facilities, locations –

- 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)
- 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 the 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 experiential experiences to their preceptor, and subsequently to their course instructor. The student will be assessed and treated following the experiential agency or facility policy. The cost of health care for injuries or illnesses sustained or contracted during experiential learning experiences is not covered by either SMSU or the facility or agency; such costs are the responsibility of the student.

Chemical Use and/or Abuse Policy:

Students are expected to attend experiential learning experiences free from the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs. If a student is taking medically authorized drugs or other substances, during their experiential experience, that may alter clinical judgment or performance, it is the student's responsibility to notify the course instructor of this information prior to the experiential experience. If during any experiential experiences, reasonable suspicion arises surrounding a student's use or abuse of alcohol or illegal drugs, the RN to BSN student should be assessed and treated following the facility or agency policy. The agency or facility 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 experiential experience. Future course plan actions for the student will be determined by the RN to BSN Program 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 agency/facility; 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 RN to BSN Program 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, experiential learning experiences, and instructors. The general attendance policy is as follows.

- Tardiness to experiential experiences may result in dismissal from the program
- Unexcused absence from experiential 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 Department of Nursing Chair and RN to BSN Director.

Mobile/Cellular Communication Usage

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

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

Experiential Learning & Coursework

When a patient/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 RN to BSN nursing student. Therefore, the student has the full responsibility to be completely prepared for every experiential learning experience and interaction. The student also has the responsibility to communicate relevant information to the course 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 an experiential learning experience or who fails to communicate pertinent information that places the client's safety at risk will be designated as "unsatisfactory" for that day. If the student receives feedback that results in two "unsatisfactory" days within an experiential experience, the student will be removed from the experience and will fail the course.

Students are fully responsible for understanding and abiding by all agency and facility 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 experiential experience and failure of the course.

All course instructors, preceptors, and agency/facility 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 Department of Nursing

Chair/RN to BSN Program Director for further review before the student may continue patient/client and experiential interactions.

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

Experiential learning agencies, facilities, 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 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 Department of Nursing Chair/Director of Nursing and follow the policy at the agency they are placed.

Experiential Course Evaluation

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

SMSU Support Services

<https://www.smsu.edu/administration/academicdeans/resources.html>

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| <p>Deeann Griebel Student Success Center</p> | <p>The purpose of the Deeann Griebel Student Success Center is to encourage student development and academic success. The center provides services for all SMSU students and 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 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 center functions as a drop-in center for student questions and concerns, helping students to achieve their academic goals.</p> |
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| Career Services | Provides comprehensive career resources to assist SMSU students and alumni with their career development and employment goals. The role of Career Services 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 counseling services 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. |
| Student Health Services | 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. |

SMSU Administrative Policies

Governance

The RN to BSN Program will assist in identifying nursing students as representatives for regularly scheduled RN to BSN program 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 coursework. Student representatives will communicate between students and the RN to BSN program. 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 experiential learning/scheduling to the RN to BSN program, as well as communication of relevant RN to BSN program 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 accounts. 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. Non-experiential 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 Director of Nursing. 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 RN to BSN nursing faculty will review the most current edition of the SMSU RN to BSN Nursing Student Handbook at least annually and are encouraged to provide feedback to the Department of Nursing 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 RN to BSN 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 entry 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 that 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 (experiential) 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 student 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, Director of Nursing, and the Department of Nursing 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 considering 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 the Director of Nursing. The Department of Nursing Chair and/or the 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.
- A 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 RN to BSN Program.

The RN to BSN Program 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 RN to BSN Program 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 always professional in their communication with the course instructor and open to the rationales presented by the course instructor. Students can find the academic appeals process under Administrative Policies in the SMSU Student Handbook.

Graduation

Nursing Commencement Academic Honors Policy

Purpose: To honor and recognize RN to BSN students who have completed all BSN requirements and SMSU requirements at Commencement time.

Eligibility:

- All RN to BSN Students with a current SMSU Nursing GPA of 3.6 or higher (Inclusive of courses taken at SMSU Nursing only) in the final semester or with less than 15 total credits left in the RN to BSN program
- Students must complete their Degree Check by February 1 of the year of Commencement

The Nursing Commencement Honors involve:

- Students receive a certificate of acknowledgment from the RN to BSN Program.

Nursing Pinning Policy (RN to BSN program)

Purpose: The nursing pin is a symbol of welcoming and honoring nurses into the nursing discipline.

Eligibility: Candidates for Commencement are those who have completed graduation requirements and who have 15 or fewer total credits to complete (undergraduate degree) or 9 or fewer credits to complete (graduate degree).

Note: To verify the SMSU University policy on completing a degree in December and being eligible to attend May commencement, please refer to the SMSU Graduation Policy at <https://catalog.smsu.edu/policies-procedures/graduation-requirements/> and scroll down to read under “Conferring of Degrees and Participation in Commencement.”

- All RN to BSN Students in the final semester or have one more summer term or semester in the RN to BSN program with 15 or fewer total credits to complete
- Students must complete their Degree Check by February 1 of the year of Commencement

Pinning Ceremony: The SMSU Nursing Pinning Ceremony is held in May of each year. RN to BSN Students who meet the above eligibility criteria are invited to attend the pinning ceremony. It is vital that RN to BSN students RSVP if they will attend or not attend the pinning ceremony.