

# NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021



EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY  
School of Nursing

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## Welcome/Introduction

Welcome to the East Texas Baptist University – School of Nursing!

You have chosen to pursue an exceptional career and we congratulate you upon entering and continuing in our professional nursing program. Our hope is that you will experience growth personally and professionally as you journey through our program. We endeavour to provide a strong evidence-based curriculum that will prepare you to deliver Christ-centered patient care.

The purpose of the ETBU Nursing Student Handbook is to provide you with the policies, guidelines, and general information that is specific to the School of Nursing. It is our expectation that each student read the handbook in its entirety to gain a full understanding of the structure of the program and the life of an ETBU professional nursing student.

The ETBU School of Nursing faculty and staff are here to support and encourage you on your path to become an ETBU BSN RN. Please know that we are prayerful for your personal success and the success of our ETBU nursing family.

Serving together,

ETBU Nursing Faculty & Staff



## Mission

The mission for East Texas Baptist University School of Nursing is to educate students with knowledge, skill, and experience to deliver Christ-centered, holistic care in a diverse health care system.

## Philosophy

The philosophy of the School of Nursing is congruent with the mission of East Texas Baptist University, which encourages faculty endeavors to aid students in development of intellectual inquiry, social embeddedness, and Christian character. Nursing faculty believe **persons** are individuals of inherent worth who are affected by physiological, psychological, socio-cultural, developmental, and spiritual variables. Persons interact with and react to environments, families, populations, and communities in unique ways to meet basic needs for optimal health and to move toward fulfillment as actively participating members in society. Nursing is integrally involved in assisting persons to reach their optimal health through evidence-based care.

**Health** is a dynamic process of being. It is a valued state that changes as a person develops and interacts with an assortment of environmental intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extrapersonal factors. A person's perception of his or her health is further influenced by culture and tradition, as well as by family, group, populations and community values. Preferences for outcomes of health are influenced by persons' values, their perception of health, and information received by healthcare providers.

**Society** is an open system that is comprised of individuals, families, groups, populations and communities. Individual persons possess values and beliefs that affect their pursuit of optimal health that have been acquired through cultural and spiritual tradition. Society recognizes professional nurses as members of health care teams that impact health through evidence-based decision-making.

The discipline of **nursing** integrates research and practice generated data with clinical expertise and reasoning to guide:

- Caring for patients, clients and families during acute and chronic illness
- Assisting individuals, families, groups, populations, and communities to attainment of effective lines of defense and resistance
- Supporting transition toward a dignified death.

These are the guiding principles for the curriculum in the School of Nursing. A further curricular principle from Christian scripture charges that as we care for ourselves, we should also care for others. Students incorporate knowledge from the natural and behavioral sciences into their critical thinking processes to make evidence-based decisions that result in competent clinical judgments about health promotion, disease prevention and illness care.

Evidence-based nurse-client interventions are predicated on **caring** behaviors. Caring includes knowledge, reflection on that knowledge, and competence application of that knowledge, as well as verbal written, and non-verbal communication. Christian nurses function in a holistic, open, available, genuine perceptive, and empathetic manner that demonstrate the caring nature of their faith.

ETBU nurse graduates contribute to nursing practice as competent beginning generalists in nursing. Professional nurses on the health care team serve as important colleagues, leaders, managers, and models of client advocacy to assist these new graduates in their roles that span a multitude of settings.

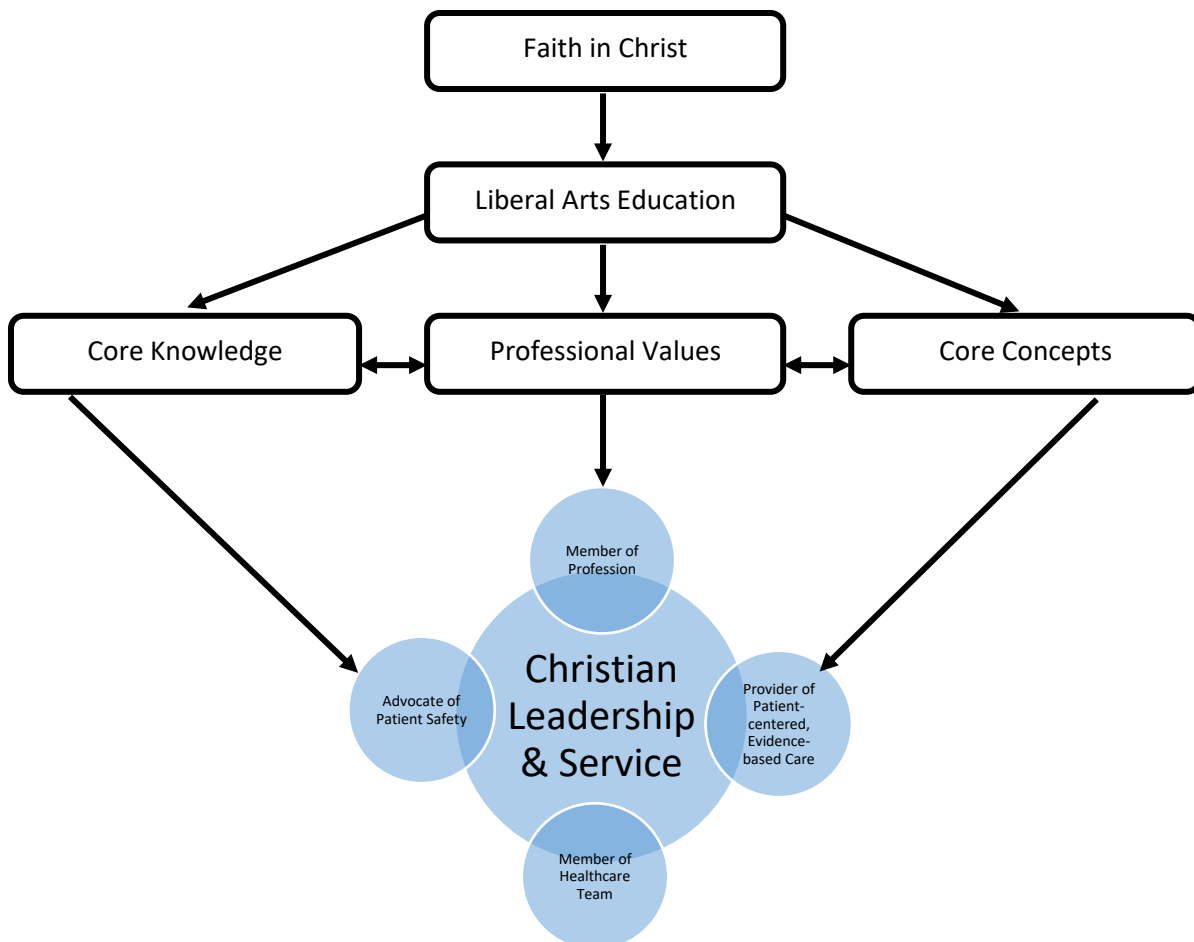
Nursing faculty believe that **nursing education** systematically prepares professional nurses that provide high quality, cost-efficient evidence-based care. Reflection and re-reflection are part of this education, as is an attitude of active life-long learning that leads to persistent and continued growth in behaviors and values. Educators guide individuals toward becoming contributing members of society and effective members of the profession. Students are responsible for strategically and intentionally engaging opportunities for learning,

actively contributing to personal development and growth, successfully accomplishing personal and professional learning objectives, and evaluating identified unique and universal outcomes.

## Organizing Framework

The Organizing Framework for the East Texas Baptist University School of Nursing is comprised of five dynamic, overlapping paradigms that guide the faculty in the education of competent beginning practitioners. Four of the paradigms; patient-centered care, evidence-based care provider, member of healthcare team, member of profession, and patient safety advocate, are grounded in the central paradigm of Christian leadership and service. The emphasis placed on each of these paradigms is balance in the overall curriculum, but flexible in the amount of relevant content taught in each course. The model is simple yet broad in scope, providing opportunities for students and faculty to readily incorporate the paradigms into teaching and learning activities. Faith in Christ provides the strong spiritual foundation for life and the integration of faith and learning in pursuit of academic excellence. A liberal arts education provides an academic program rich in the humanities natural and social sciences, and selected professional areas. Core knowledge and its application, professional values, and core concepts represent the essential components of professional nursing education. The circles, as illustrated in the graphic representation of the framework, overlap to illustrate the independence as well as interdependence of the five paradigms. This model embodies the art and science of nursing and facilitates the adaptation of the curriculum to a constantly evolving nursing profession.

ETBU School of Nursing – Organizing Framework



## Organizing Framework Concepts and Definitions

### Core Knowledge

- **Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, and Disease Prevention** – Achievement and maintenance of an optimal level of wellness across the lifespan.
- **Illness and Disease Management** – Holistic assessment and management of symptoms across the lifespan to maximize quality of life and maintain optimal level of functioning throughout the course of illness, including end of life.
- **Information and Health Care Technologies** – Traditional and developing methods of discovering retrieving and using data in nursing practice.
- **Ethics** – Values, codes, and principles that govern decisions in nursing practice, conduct, and relationships.
- **Evidence-based Care** – Use of external and internal evidence in combination with expertise and clinical reasoning with desired patient preferences to achieve best patient outcomes. Where there is a paucity of evidence, generation of research is appropriate, which is scientific inquiry relevant to nursing practice.
- **Global Health Care** – Care that utilizes knowledge and skills related to the effects of the global community on health, health policy, and the health care delivery system.
- **Health Care Systems and Policy** – Decisions about allocation of resources shape health care delivery and impact the organization and environment of nursing practice.
- **Human Diversity** – Expression of cultural, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, religious, and lifestyle variations on health status and responses to health care.
- **Theory** – Organized and systematic way of understanding phenomenon.

### Professional Values

- **Altruism** – Concern for the welfare and well being of others personally and professionally.
- **Autonomy** – Right to self-determination.
- **Human Dignity** – Respect for the inherent worth and uniqueness of others.
- **Integrity** – Acting within a code of ethical standards.
- **Social Justice** – Upholding moral, legal, and humanistic principles.

### Core Concepts

- **Assessment** – Gathering, analysing, synthesizing, and evaluating information about the health status of patients to determine nursing practice.
- **Christian Leadership and Service** – The core that grounds the ETBU Nursing paradigm and fosters one who demonstrates a commitment to transforming lives through faith in Christ, servant leadership, and caring for others.
- **Clients** – Individuals, families, systems, groups, populations and communities.
- **Communication** – Process of assimilating and using information in the written, oral, nonverbal, and technological forms.
- **Competence** – Demonstrated knowledge and skill characteristic of a contributor to the nursing profession, provider of care, and coordinator of care that delivers positive outcomes.
- **Competent, Evidence-Based Nursing Practice** – The ETBU nursing conceptual framework integrates patient-centered, evidence-based care provider, member of healthcare team, member of profession and patient safety advocate that is grounded in Christian leadership and service.
- **Critical Thinking** – Process of reasoning, synthesizing, analysing, interpreting and evaluating subjective and objective information.
- **Technical skills** – Performance of psychomotor activities in nursing practice.

## Paradigms

- **Member of Profession** – One who utilizes knowledge and skills that embrace life-long learning, incorporates professionalism into practice, and identifies with the values of the profession.
- **Provider of Patient-Centered, Evidence-Based Care** – One who recognizes the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care; based on respect for patient's preferences, values, and needs and integrates research and practice data, along with clinical experience in decision-making with patients.
- **Member of Health Care Team** – One who utilizes knowledge and skills in communication, collaboration, negotiation, delegation, coordination, and evaluation of care to achieve best outcomes for patients.
- **Advocate of Patient Safety** – One who observes and modifies the culture, milieu and circumstances to ensure best patient care and outcomes.
- **Christian Leadership & Service** – One who demonstrates a commitment to transforming lives through faith in Christ, servant leadership, and caring for others.

[Source of nursing definitions: *American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, The Texas Board of Nursing Differentiated Essential Competencies and the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) competencies as funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.*]

## Program Outcomes

*Upon completion of the professional nursing program, graduates are expected to:*

1. Synthesize and incorporate external evidence (i.e., research/empirical knowledge) from nursing, religion, science, humanities and other disciplines into nursing practice.
2. Provide holistic nursing care based on knowledge derived from theory, practice and research.
3. Utilize a critical thinking process as a basis for providing care for individuals, families, groups, populations and communities of varying cultures and ethnicities.
4. Collaborate with other health care providers and consumers in promoting health and effecting change in the health care system through the use of technology, evidence-based practice and Christ-centered care.
5. Demonstrate accountability for incorporating professional, ethical, moral and legal aspects into nursing practice.
6. Demonstrate accountability for incorporating independent and self-directed learning as a prerequisite for professional growth.
7. Identify and implement nursing roles designed to meet changing health care needs of society, including health promotion, disease prevention, illness care, restoration, rehabilitation, and health teaching.
8. Exhibit competent clinical reasoning and judgment to deliver evidenced-based care in structured and unstructured settings.
9. Demonstrate the ability to implement appropriate leadership strategies and management competencies as generalists in professional nursing.

The profession of nursing requires practice and application of theoretical concepts. This is accomplished in learning laboratories on campus as well as in various community, primary, secondary and tertiary health care facilities. Faculty and/or approved registered nurse preceptors employed in these agencies provide supervision. Students will be required to complete criminal background checks and drug screens as required by various clinical agencies, in addition to providing documentation of all required immunizations for healthcare workers.

The program prepares graduates to assume entry level positions in nursing practice and provides a foundation for advanced study in nursing. Graduates are eligible to apply to take the examination for licensure as registered nurses (NCLEX-RN®), as set forth in the Texas Occupations Code and Statutes Regulating the Practice of Professional Nursing.



The School of Nursing does not guarantee that each person admitted to the nursing program will pass all elements of the program or that those graduated from the program with the BSN degree will pass nursing board examinations and/or secure employment as a nurse. Attaining these goals depends upon the degree to which students diligently apply themselves to their studies and upon the economic forces influencing the health care industry. Neither of these factors is within the control of the ETBU School of Nursing.

## Accreditation

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at East Texas Baptist University is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccnaccreditation.org>).

The program is approved by the Texas Board of Nursing, 333 Guadalupe, Suite 3-460, Austin, TX 78701, (512)305-7400, (<http://www.bon.tx.us>).

## Developmental Standards for Admission and Retention

A candidate for the BSN degree must have the abilities and skills as listed below. Reasonable accommodations may be made for some disabilities; however, an ETBU professional nursing student is expected to perform in an independent manner.

1. **Observation:** A candidate must be able to observe a patient/client accurately. Examples of observation include, but are not limited to, listening to heart and breath sounds, visualizing the appearance of a surgical wound, detecting the presence of a foul odor, and palpating an abdomen.
2. **Communication:** A candidate must be able to communicate/interact effectively with patients/clients and other members of the health care team to obtain information, describe patient situations, and effectively plan care. Candidates must also be able to perceive nonverbal communication.
3. **Motor:** A candidate must have adequate motor function to work effectively with nursing problems and issues and carry out related nursing care. Examples of nursing care include, but are not limited to: ambulating and positioning clients; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; administration of intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous and oral medications; application of pressure to stop bleeding; opening an obstructed airway; and provision of client daily hygiene care.
4. **Behavioral:** A candidate must possess the emotional health required for total utilization of his or her intellectual abilities. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively during stressful situations. They must be capable of adapting to ever-changing environments, displaying flexibility, appropriately interacting with others, and learning to function in the case of uncertainty that is inherent in clinical situations involving clients.

## Disability Accommodation Statement

A student with a disability may request appropriate accommodations for their courses by contacting the Office of Academic Success, Marshall Hall, Room 301, and providing the required documentation. If accommodations are approved by the Disability Accommodations Committee, the Office of Academic Success will notify the student and the student's professor(s) of the approved accommodations. The student must then discuss these accommodations with his or her professor. Students may not ask for accommodations the day of an exam or due date. Arrangements must be made prior to these important dates. For additional information, please refer to the current ETBU Undergraduate Catalog.

## Admission Policy

The ETBU School of Nursing enrolls a new nursing cohort at the beginning of each fall and spring semester. Cohorts are initiated based on current university guidelines for class size, available resources, and at the discretion of the university.

Applicants are considered for acceptance into the program once all admission requirements have been completed, with the exception of successful completion of outstanding pre-requisite coursework in which the applicant is enrolled during the semesters prior to the start of the fall or spring nursing cohort.

Letters of acceptance, pending completion of outstanding course requirements, will be sent according to the timeline included in the application packet. Applicants must acknowledge acceptance into the program, in writing, by the deadline listed in the letter in order to secure their place in the upcoming cohort. Letters to applicants who are not offered a seat in the upcoming cohort will also be mailed within this same time frame.

#### **Application Process:**

- Completed application packet, including all forms and other documentation required, must be received by the School of Nursing no later than the date specified on the application packet in order to be considered for acceptance into the fall cohort:
  - Application form
  - Recommendation forms (2)
  - ETBU Health Information form (*Note: A copy of the ETBU Health Information form on file in Student Services may be provided in lieu of completing the form a second time.*)
- Completion of standardized admission acceptance exam (TEAS). (*Note: The maximum TEAS testing limit is 2 full test attempts at least 3 months apart within a calendar year. TEAS exam must have been completed within 5 years prior to application for admission. Tests taken at ALL testing locations count towards the maximum number of test attempts.*)

#### **Admission Requirements:**

- Enrollment or accepted as a student at ETBU.
- Completed application packet, as stated above, including all forms and other required documentation; must be received by the School of Nursing no later than the date specified on the application packet in order to be considered for acceptance into the fall cohort.
- Immunization Records showing completed requirements, including statements regarding vaccinations that are “in progress” such as the Hepatitis B series.
- Standardized preadmission assessment exam (TEAS); Overall and Reading scores must fall within the Proficiency Range or higher.
- Cumulative GPA of 2.8 or higher, with grades of C or higher in each of the following courses: BIOL 1322, CHEM 1305, CHEM 1105, ENGL 1301, ENGL 1302, MATH 1342 and PSYC 2314. Of the following courses, only one (1) grade of C is accepted; the other four course grades must be either A or B: BIOL 1421, BIOL 1422, BIOL 2421, NURS 3311 and NURS 3350.
- Signed Criminal Background Check consent and compliance agreement.
- Completed Criminal Background Check cleared by the Texas Board of Nursing as eligible to sit for the NCLEX-RN® exam.
- Passed or met other agency-imposed requirements including, but not limited to, drug screens.

## **Academic Integrity**

The highest standard of academic honesty is expected of students. Evidence of dishonesty of any kind will be grounds for dismissal from the course and a grade of “F” will be recorded. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to plagiarism, accessing test banks, copying another student’s work. Use of any electronic device(s) while completing written exams, quizzes, and computer-based exams (such as HESI) will be considered as academic dishonesty.

Faculty will report occurrences of academic dishonesty to the Office of Academic Affairs per the ETBU Academic and Classroom Integrity Policy.

Any amount of plagiarism will result in an automatic “F” for the course. Wilson (1985) stated:

Plagiarism means to steal and pass off the work of another as one's own. It usually results from bad paraphrasing or referencing. Both paraphrasing that merely substitutes a few word changes for those of the original author and forgetting to use quotation marks and a reference citation are technically considered plagiarism, even if you somehow hypnotize yourself into thinking that those were your own words to express your own ideas. The only safe way to paraphrase is to read the original over several times and then write your conception of what you've read without looking at the original. In other words, when paraphrasing, keep the source book closed. [Wilson, H.S. (1985). *Research in nursing*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley, p. 523.]

## Code of Academic and Clinical Integrity – “Beyond the Grade”

You have chosen to enter one of the most trusted professions in the world. Studies have shown that both in the United States and other areas of the world, people have a trust and faith in nurses that far surpasses most other professions. With this honor also comes an incredible responsibility to conduct oneself in a manner deserving of this trust. This responsibility does not begin at graduation; it begins upon admission into the ETBU Professional Nursing program.

As an ETBU professional nursing student, you are expected to conduct yourself with dedication, honesty and integrity in both the academic and clinical settings:

- ★ Academic honesty and integrity involve refraining from lying, cheating, plagiarizing or doing anything to gain an unfair academic advantage. Sharing passwords and log-in information and completing another student's work in online or hybrid courses is considered academic dishonesty. Honesty and integrity also include reporting unethical behavior that is being conducted by other students.
- ★ Clinical honesty and integrity involve refraining from falsifying information (such as vital signs and intake and output records), seeking out your clinical instructor if you have made a mistake, maintaining confidentiality, and only documenting care that was provided.

As an ETBU professional nursing student, you will demonstrate respect for your instructors, peers and patients:

- ★ Respect for faculty and staff includes calling them by their appropriate titles and last names, e. g. Ms. Smith, Dr. Jones; refraining from talking when the instructor is speaking, and raising your hand if you have a question in class. This respect should be demonstrated in written correspondence as well.
- ★ In class, respect for your peers includes refraining from talking when another student is speaking, refraining from making comments when another student has a question, and never making fun of other students.
- ★ In clinical, respect for your patient includes refraining from talking down to your patients, maintaining an appropriate provider/patient relationship and treating your patients as you would want to be treated.

As an ETBU professional nursing student, you will demonstrate responsibility for your actions:

- ★ Academic responsibility includes handing assignments in on time and not representing the work of another as your own. You should never give your paperwork to another student taking the same course, and should not accept paperwork or guidance from other students regarding exams or assignments.
- ★ Clinically, responsibility refers to the execution of duties associated with the student nurse's assigned role. This will depend upon the level within the program to which you have progressed. Clinical responsibility involves arriving on time to your clinical agencies, remaining there the entire time even if you are at an observational site and your instructor is not present, and informing your instructor if changes in the assignment occur. Failure to perform these acts can be considered patient abandonment.

As an ETBU professional nursing student, you will demonstrate ethical conduct. Ethics involves the following principles:

- ★ Nonmaleficence: The duty to do no harm to others; not inflicting harm to others.

- ★ Beneficence: The duty to do good; benefiting others by doing good.
- ★ Justice: Treating others fairly; conforming to truth or reason.
- ★ Fidelity: Faithfulness to an obligation, trust, or duty; remaining true to others.

## Student Fees

ETBU Professional Nursing Program Fee is assessed each semester. This fee provides specialized reviews and other preparations to students in preparation for engaging learning and licensure requirements for professional nursing. This fee is associated with one nursing course per semester. Generally, that is the clinical courses; however, if a student is not taking a clinical course during the semester, the program fee will be associated with the nursing course taken. This program fee covers various costs unique to professional nursing education, such as practice testing, review and case studies to prepare for national licensure, licensing paperwork and lab equipment/materials. In addition, there is a onetime Uniform & Clinical Equipment fee that is assess in the first semester of the Professional Nursing program.

## Malpractice Insurance Policy

Students enrolled in clinical courses must carry nursing student malpractice insurance. As a courtesy to students, the School of Nursing will coordinate the annual purchase of student malpractice insurance.

## Immunization Policy

Each student must show proof of required immunizations, immunity, or screening prior to participating in clinical experiences. It is the student's responsibility to see that this information is current and on file with the School of Nursing. Failure to maintain current status may result in the inability to meet course requirements. The ETBU School of Nursing follows the CDC guidelines for healthcare workers:

- MMR – Measles, Mumps, Rubella (A titer or a physician's statement that it is unsafe for student to receive the immunization at this time will be accepted.)
- Tdap – Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Td within the last 10 years.)
- Hepatitis B – Must show evidence of completion of the three (3) injection series vaccination (or immunity titer) before starting clinical courses (or sign a waiver that indicates understanding and acceptance of risks associated with lack of immunity).
- Varicella – Chickenpox; titer or immunization accepted
- Flu – annually
- TB – 2-step screening test required upon admission; students must show evidence of a negative tuberculin test annually. If the tuberculin test is positive, the results of a chest x-ray are required along with a physician's signed statement indicating student is free of tuberculosis symptoms. The student must complete an annual tuberculosis health questionnaire.
- Hepatitis A vaccines are not required, but should be considered by students as recommended by their own health care provider(s).

Students must meet any additional or new requirements set by clinical agencies including, but not limited to drug screens.

## Safety and Infection Control Policy

Many nursing procedures require the use of needles, syringes, and other pieces of equipment referred to as "sharps". The learning process requires that certain procedures, such as administering injections, be practiced and competently demonstrated in the on-campus skills lab prior to students being allowed to perform these

procedures in actual clinical settings. Safety of students and others who must handle these items is of utmost importance.

Red sharps containers are located in each skills/sim lab area for disposal items used in these procedures. All needles, syringes, and other sharps must be disposed of in these approved containers whether or not they are contaminated with body fluids.

Students are prohibited from practicing invasive procedures on one another in the clinical skills labs.

Prior to beginning clinical activities on site at assigned agencies, students are required to participate in agency-specific orientation programs which will include expected safety practice.

Violation of safety practices, in campus labs and/or at clinical agencies, is grounds for disciplinary action and may result in a clinical failure.

## Chemical Dependency and Mental Health Policy

Nursing students are expected to report to clinical activities, classes, and all other School of Nursing events in a drug-free, unimpaired state. Failure to do so places patients at risk for unsafe care and creates an unsafe environment for others, including the impaired student. It is important to note that this includes impairment that is caused by prescription or non-prescription medications, sleep deprivation, and excessive anxiety. Students are also expected to comply with regulations of the health care agencies in which clinical activities are conducted.

Any student displaying behaviors suggesting impairment at any location, activity, or event associated with the ETBU School of Nursing will be subject to a mandatory mental health and chemical dependency evaluation, which may include random drug screening. The student will be removed immediately from any clinical setting by the responsible faculty member, assigned preceptor, or other appropriate agency personnel, and must submit to random drug screening plus any other screening required by the affected clinical agency. Any monetary costs will be at the expense of the student.

Random drug screens may be required by clinical agencies and also may be done at the discretion of the ETBU School of Nursing.

Behaviors suggesting impairment include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Observable indication of actual use or impairment
- Possession of drugs or alcohol
- Odor of drugs or alcohol
- Clinical errors or other behaviors that cause observers to suspect impaired mental judgment

Any student who tests positive for drugs or alcohol will be dismissed from the program. The student may apply for readmission to the program following appropriate counselling and referral for treatment, if indicated. A declaratory order from the Texas Board of Nursing is required in order for readmission approval to be granted. Other current program admission criteria also apply.

Additional policies and guidelines regarding alcohol, tobacco, drugs, and available counselling are located in the ETBU Student Handbook.

## Description of Nursing Courses

Nursing courses consist of a theory component alone or a theory component plus a clinical component. Course assignments may include student presentations, daily written work major exams, quizzes, library work, process recordings, nursing care plans, research papers, patient care and assigned observations as well as other activities that facilitate learning and enable instructors to evaluate student progress. Each course-specific syllabus outlines course requirements and criteria for determination of the final course grade.

A theory course will include evidence-based learning activities in the classroom. Examples include lectures, discussions, online assignments/discussions, self-study modules, games, student-led presentations and associated laboratory activities such as case studies. A theory course may also be delivered in a hybrid or online format.

A clinical component of a theory course provides for the application of concepts learned in the theory component. Clinical activities such as patient care and observations generally occur at specified clinical sites such as hospitals, clinics, schools, community agencies and homes. Simulation-based learning activities will also be included as clinical learning experiences, simulating the patient-centered healthcare environment. Clinical activities may also occur in laboratories that are school-based or located at a clinical agency.

## Attendance Policy

Responsibility for attendance at class and clinical/laboratory experiences rests with the student. Students are expected to arrive early and prepared for class and clinical. Attendance for the entire class or clinical times as schedule, or until dismissed by the instructor, is expected of students as part of the professional nurse role. The syllabus for each course will address any additional specific class or clinical attendance guidelines beyond the scope of this handbook.

### Class Attendance

Class attendance will be monitored according to the university attendance policy as outlined in the current ETBU Academic Catalog. Hybrid or online participation, through the current Learning Management system (LMS), will be monitored according to the guidelines set forth in the course-specific syllabus.

Students must personally notify the instructor in advance if it is necessary to be absent from class. Sending messages with classmates is not acceptable. Students may notify an instructor of a class absence or tardy by telephone, email, or in writing.

Any student who is absent or tardy, and misses an examination, quiz, or is not able to turn in an assignment that is due, must have notified the instructor in advance to make alternate arrangements for turning in the assignment or be considered eligible to make up the exam or quiz.

### Clinical Attendance

Attendance at all clinical or laboratory experiences is required for successful completion of any course that carries a clinical or lab requirement. This statement also applies to any pre or post clinical conferences or meetings.

Students are required to remain at the clinical agency for breaks and the majority of lunch breaks. Lunch breaks are limited to 30 minutes. Leaving for the lunch break is only appropriate during certain types of clinical activities, such as home visits. The faculty member responsible for the course will inform students when it is permissible to leave the clinical site for lunch.

For most courses, it is not possible to make up clinical absences. This is due to the fact that clinical experiences require either faculty or preceptor supervision of student performance. For those courses in which a clinical make-up is possible, the student must complete the make-up activity as assigned in order to receive credit. The choice of make-up activity will be at the discretion of the instructor.

In the event that a student fails to complete greater than 25% of the clinical hours required by any course, the university absenteeism rule will apply and the student will receive a failure for the clinical component of the course.

Clinical performance is based on standard competency levels, and consistency of performance is an important consideration in all clinical evaluation processes and criteria. It is not possible to alter performance expectations based on individual student circumstances and attendance.

Students must implement the following protocol in the event that a clinical absence (or tardy) will occur. Failure to give these notifications will result in an unexcused absence for that clinical day.

1. Call the clinical instructor **prior to** the designated clinical start time.
2. Call the clinical agency **prior to** the designated clinical start time.
3. Document the name of the agency representative contacted, along with the time.

### **Class or Clinical Cancellation and Rescheduling**

Occasionally the need may arise to cancel a scheduled class meeting or clinical activity. Examples of reasons for cancellation include inclement weather and instructor illness. Students should check the ETBU website and TigerMail for announcements regarding cancellation of classes by the university. It is highly recommended that students register for the university's emergency alert system in order to receive text notification through cell phones. The method for notifying students of cancellation of specific courses or clinical activities will be determined by the individual faculty member responsible for the course and communicated to students at the beginning of the course.

Depending upon the specific class or clinical activity that was cancelled, a make-up activity may or may not occur. This decision is at the discretion of the individual faculty member. If a make-up activity is deemed necessary, faculty will invite input from students to the extent possible when planning the activity. The individual faculty member responsible for the course will ultimately make the final decision.

## **Uniforms and General Appearance Policy**

Personal appearance guidelines as stated in the current ETBU Academic Catalog and ETBU Student Handbook apply to School of Nursing classroom and most on-campus nursing activities.

### **Classroom Attire**

Students are expected to adhere to the personal appearance guidelines found in the ETBU Student Handbook. Special situations or events will be addressed by individual course faculty.

### **Clinical/Simulation Environment Attire**

All clothing items worn during assigned clinical activities must be clean, in good repair, and properly fitted.

The following general appearance and uniform policies apply to nursing students in clinical areas and serve to prevent the spread of infection, to promote safety and avoid unnecessary obstacles while providing patient care, to promote professional appearance in clinical settings, and to help assure that students have basic tools for providing patient care with them upon arrival at a clinical setting.

Failure to adhere to these standards will be noted by faculty in the student's evaluation documents and may result in dismissal from the clinical activity for that day, which would be recorded as a clinical failure (F). Repeated noncompliance with uniform and general appearance policies will result in clinical failure for the entire course.

Any additional requirements related to specific clinical activities or clinical agencies will be provided by the faculty member responsible for the course.

### **General Appearance**

#### **Jewelry**

- Simple watch with a second hand
- Simple wedding and/or engagement band (no protruding stones)
- One pair of small, neutral color pierced earrings (one earring in each earlobe only)
- Other visible facial and body piercings and tongue rings are not allowed

## Hair

- Must be clean, neat, well-groomed, off the collar, and away from face
- Elaborate hair styles are not allowed
- Long hair must be pulled back and secured
- Bows and other ornate hair ornaments are not allowed
- Barrettes and clips must match hair color
- Beards must be short and neatly trimmed
- If hair is dyed, only naturally occurring colors are allowed

## Nails

- Must be well-groomed, free of polish, and no longer than finger-tip length
- Artificial nails or nail decorations are not allowed

## Personal Hygiene and Makeup

- Daily bathing, deodorant, and oral care are required
- Fragrances and odors are not allowed, including perfumes, smoke, and body odor
- Unscented lotions and aftershave are permissible
- Makeup must be natural looking and applied in moderation

## Shoes and Hosiery

- Shoelaces must be clean and intact
- Open-toed shoes are not allowed
- See section below on uniforms for additional information

## Laboratory Coats

- Must be solid white, full length, worn over professional business attire, and buttoned while in the clinical area
- The ETBU patch should be sewn on the left front chest at the midclavicular line approximately 1 inch below the clavicle.
- ETBU Nursing name badge must be secured on the outside of lab coat in either the left or right shoulder area

## Other

- Denim jeans, jeans-style pants, shorts, pants shorter than mid-calf, T-shirts, tank tops, low necklines, skirts shorter than 2 inches above the knee, jogging or exercise attire, athletic shoes (other than as specified below in uniform section), sheer clothing, tightly-fitted clothing, visible undergarments, clothing that is not properly fitted, and clothing that is not properly positioned on the body **are not** acceptable for wear in a clinical area when representing ETBU.
- Tattoos must be covered
- Exposed skin in the midriff area is not acceptable
- Expose cleavage is not acceptable
- Lab coats and uniforms bearing ETBU patches and ETBU Nursing name badges may not be worn to personal jobs or other events when the student is not officially representing the ETBU School of Nursing

## Uniforms for Clinical/Simulation Experiences

### Full Uniform

- Approved uniform consists of (scrub pants and top and approved scrub jacket [optional]). One set of scrubs is part of onetime uniform fee. The ETBU patch should be sewn on the left front chest at the midclavicular line approximately 1 inch below the clavicle on scrub top and jacket.



- ETBU Nursing name badge must be secured on the outermost garment (scrub top or jacket) on the right chest (lapel) area, 1 inch below the clavicle.
- Collarless plain white (or matching uniform color) pullover shirt may be worn under uniform top for extra warmth if desired; shirt-tail of pullover must be tucked into waist of pants; no other color or style is allowed
- White leather/leather-like (or matching uniform color) slip-on or lace-up duty shoes or white leather/leather-like (or matching uniform color) tennis shoes (without mesh inserts), with no brightly colored trim.
- Watch with second hand, bandage scissors, penlight, stethoscope, hemostat

### Partial Uniform

At various times throughout the ETBU Professional Nursing program, the partial uniform is considered appropriate. Examples include most community health and mental health clinical experiences, some leading and managing clinical experiences, organized School of Nursing activities such as field trips or community service events, and going into clinical agencies for the purpose of gathering data in order to prepare for the next day's patient care assignment.

The partial uniform consists of professional business attire and white laboratory coat. The ETBU Nursing name badge must be secured on the outside of the lab coat in right lapel area. All general appearance guidelines as stated above and any specific clinical agency guidelines also apply. The faculty member responsible for the course will inform students when it is appropriate to wear the partial uniform.

## Hand-Held Electronic Devices and Social Networking Sites

Students in the nursing program are expected to adhere to the high standards of the nursing profession with regard to maintaining confidentiality. This includes guarding patient confidentiality at clinical sites as well as in the classroom, at home, and online.

Most clinical agencies do not permit staff to use or carry personal hand-held devices/cell phones in the nurses' stations or in any patient care area; therefore, students must abide by the same guidelines. Students who choose to carry personal devices into clinical environments must store the devices in book bags or back packs in the designated areas, which may or may not be secured.

Personal use of cell phones, including receiving and sending text messages, **is strongly discouraged** while class is formally in session. Devices must be turned off or silenced and stored in book bags, back packs, or purses during class. If it is urgent or imperative that personal messages be received or responded to during class, the student must leave the classroom in order to do so. Appropriate times to receive and respond to messages include before and after class and during official class breaks. Faculty may elect to include additional guidelines in course syllabi as it pertains to the use of cell phones and texting during their respective class times.

**All** digital devices must be surrendered at the front of the classroom during written exams, quizzes, or computer-based testing (such as HESI). Failure to submit a device or breach of this policy will be considered academic dishonesty and will be grounds for dismissal from the program.

It is imperative to observe ethically prescribed professional patient-nurse boundaries. Standards of professionalism are the same line as in any other circumstance. The following guidelines apply to the use of cell phones, **all** social networking sites:

- Do not text, email, or post online any information you encounter about patients, patients' circumstances, patients' families, nurses, other healthcare providers, and institutions.
- Do not take photos or videos in the clinical setting **for any reason**.
- Do not initiate or participate in online contact with patients.

- Promptly report transmitted content that breaches confidentiality to the appropriate ETBU nursing faculty member or clinical agency representative.

Failure to comply with guidelines regarding the use of hand-held electronic devices and social networking sites will result in the student being dismissed from class or clinical for the day and marked as absent. Failure to comply with the guidelines listed above as related to confidential patient information that is texted, emailed, or posted online may result in criminal charges and/or penalties as established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and may result in dismissal from the program.

## Professional Clinical Behavior Policy

ETBU School of Nursing faculty share in the concern for safety of clients entrusted to the care of nursing students under their direction and supervision. Students are expected to be informed, dependable, and ethically accountable. The faculty members have adopted the following policies in addition to the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses. Students are responsible for adhering to these policies regarding clinical behaviors.

All students shall:

1. Refrain from making verbal and physical sexual advances and engaging in all other inappropriate behavior towards clients, visitors, employees, faculty, and other students.
2. Avoid any act of omission or commission which might endanger the life, health, and/or safety of any patient or individual associated with the clinical agency or University.
3. Accept responsibility for assigned duties by being punctual, regularly attending clinical activities, using the approved protocol for notification when absence or tardiness will occur, and being prepared to care for assigned clients according to course requirements.
4. Present self in an alert and rested mental state, able to make safe decisions, and prepared for clinical experiences. Refrain from use of any agents/drugs (such as alcohol or sensory altering medication) which interfere with the above noted physical and mental abilities or which may cause erratic, explosive, or acting-out behaviors, deteriorating appearance, and avoidance of interaction with faculty, peers, clients, and/or staff.
5. Respect the rights and property of others.
6. Maintain confidentiality of client/clinical situations and records. Avoid discussion of clinical activities in any public or inappropriate areas that would violate the client's right to privacy.
7. Maintain an effective working relationship with clinical faculty, employees, healthcare team members, and fellow students. Refrain from behaviors such as fighting, arguing, coercing, threatening, or manipulation.
8. Follow the uniform and general appearance policy.
9. Refrain from use of tobacco products and fragrances.
10. Miss no clinical time except for a personal emergency or a serious illness or impairment.
11. Not act as witnesses for the signing of any legal documents in the clinical setting, including admission forms, operative permits, durable powers of attorney, and release/discharge forms.
12. Follow Center for Disease Control (CDC) and agency-specific universal precaution guidelines in all client care situations.
13. Follow procedures for faculty and/or agency staff check off of all medications and skills.
14. Report any new patient related accident, trauma, surgery or medical condition to the clinical instructor as soon as possible.
15. Report any medication error or other patient related incident, in which the student was involved, to the clinical instructor and dean immediately.
16. Not have personal visitors at the clinical site.
17. Refrain from leaving the hospitals or other clinical settings during break or lunch, except as deemed necessary and approved by the responsible instructor.

18. Always inform appropriate agency personnel (such as preceptor or unit manager) when leaving the immediate work area for any reason, including lunch break or accompanying a patient to another treatment area.
19. Not exceed the allowed maximum of 30 minutes for lunch break.
20. Refrain from use of cell phones/electronic devices as these are prohibited by clinical agency policy and per ETBU nursing policy as described earlier.

Failure to adhere to these standards will be noted by faculty in the student's evaluation documents and may result in dismissal from the clinical activity for that day, which would be recorded as a clinical failure (F). This includes pre-clinical visits to an agency for the purpose of preparing for a clinical assignment. Single infractions of a serious nature may result in immediate dismissal from the professional nursing program. Repeated noncompliance with clinical behavior standards will result in clinical failure for the entire course and the student will be subject to the University Disciplinary Policy as indicated in the ETBU Student Handbook.

## Other Professional Responsibilities

In addition to expected student behaviors as indicated in the ETBU Academic Catalog and Student Handbook, professional nursing students are expected to demonstrate the following professional standards:

1. A student who experiences any health-related occurrence, which includes pregnancy, surgery, a significant accident while enrolled in clinical nursing courses (or prior to starting clinical courses) must obtain a written release from the physician indicating that it is safe to participate in clinical activities. The student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities only after providing this release to the ETBU School of Nursing. This policy is for safety reasons for both the student and for patients in the clinical agencies. In the event that it is not safe for the student to perform clinical activities, withdrawal from the course may be necessary due to the inability to fulfill course requirements.
2. Students are responsible for maintaining a current status of CPR certification (American Heart Association Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers) and required immunizations and screenings. Copies of documents providing proof must be provided to the ETBU School of Nursing.
3. It is important that students carefully consider their personal capabilities for balancing classes, clinicals, labs, outside assignments, exams, and study time before deciding to accept employment during the regular fall and spring semesters. Learning is the priority. The goal of the ETBU School of Nursing is for students to be successful by being well prepared to meet graduation requirements and to take the professional nurse licensing exam (NCLEX-RN). Students who choose to be employed are advised to refrain from working late evenings or nights prior to attending a clinical activity or class the following morning.
4. All students are responsible for consulting the course-specific faculty member(s) relative to their academic progress by scheduling a formal appointment. Faculty members are available for conference by appointment during regular office hours. If a student is unable to meet with a faculty member during regular office hours, special arrangements will be made to accommodate the student's need. Students are expected to promptly discuss any problems and concerns regarding grades or clinical performance. When a student is notified by a faculty member of the need to discuss academic progress, the student is expected to respond within one week.
5. Students are asked to keep in mind that classes are ongoing and that exams require minimal noise. Respect for fellow students is a professional role expectation. Removing distractions for students who may be in class or taking exams is a marker for EBTU professional nursing students. Students may gather in the nursing lounge or outside the building.
6. The **official communication method that ETBU Nursing uses with students is TigerMail (email)**. Students are strongly encouraged to check their email inbox daily. School of Nursing faculty and staff will use email to notify students of any nursing program or course-related information and announcements.

Furthermore, the mailbox should be checked frequently to avoid the inbox becoming “full”. Having a full inbox could mean that important information is not received. **Faculty and staff are not responsible for emailed communications that are not received by students whose TigerMail inboxes were full at the times that the messages were sent.**

7. Students are responsible for establishing and maintaining their own professional portfolios. Such documents are useful when applying for positions, interviewing, and accepting employment. Students should refrain from routinely asking faculty and staff for copies of documents that should already be in their possession such as immunization records, formal papers, Texas Board of Nursing communications, etc.

## Grading Policy

Credit for each course is dependent upon completion of all academic assignments required for that course. Grades for all theory courses are determined using the School of Nursing grading scale (see below). A clinical component is graded as either “Pass” or “Fail”, as determined by the criteria listed in the course syllabus. In order to pass a theory course that has a clinical component, the student must pass the theory portion of the course and also earn a grade of “Pass” in the clinical component. A clinical “letter” grade is not recorded separately from the overall course grade on the transcript; the overall course grade will be recorded as the letter grade earned in the theory component of the course, using the School of Nursing grading scale.

To complete a course successfully, students must:

1. Achieve a grade of “C” or higher in the theory course, AND
2. Achieve a grade of “Pass” in the clinical component of a course, if one exists.

The grading scale for nursing courses is as follows:

- A 92-100%
- B 82-91%
- C 75-81%
- D 65-74%
- F Below 65%

While other course assignments may figure into the final course grade, a student must achieve a weighted average grade (as shown in each syllabus) of 75 % on all major unit exams (combined) in order to pass the course. In the event that the required unit exam average is not achieved, the final course grade will reflect only the unit exam average; grades on other assignments will not be included.

Five (5) points will be deducted for each day that an assignment is late past the due date. This applies to class and clinical assignments. Hybrid assignments (such as online discussion board posts or other assignments to be posted to Blackboard) may be graded differently based on the grading rubric found in the course specific syllabus.

Courses with a clinical component will always include the course and level specific Clinical Evaluation tool that is used by the instructor and student to record the outcome of the student’s achievement of competencies as well as identify the student’s strengths and areas needing improvement. The clinical evaluation tools reflect higher expectations of Level 4 students as compared to Level 1 students. This reflects the increasing capabilities deemed necessary for students to achieve course competencies as they progress through the curriculum. Criteria for successful completion of clinical components are outlined within each syllabus. In addition to the Clinical Evaluation Tool, students must complete and submit other evaluations (such as agency, preceptor) in order to meet the course requirements.

A student who earns a failing grade in a course clinical component will receive an overall failing grade for the entire course even if the student earned a “C” or better in the theory component of the course. Only one letter grade is recorded for each course.

If the student withdraws from the nursing course having already failed the course and/or the clinical component, the outcome will be recorded as a failure in the student’s record in the School of Nursing. Please note; however, that any student who withdraws from a course following ETBU guidelines will receive a “W” on the official transcript according to current university policy.

Clinical failures may occur when a student fails to comply with the Professional Clinical Behaviors as defined in this handbook, the ANA Code for Nurses, and the Clinical Evaluation Tool contained in the course syllabus. **Two clinical failure days will result in failure of the course.**

Rounding will be used only twice throughout a course: the first numerical rounding will occur to determine the major exam average, and the other rounding will occur to determine the overall final course grade. Numerical grades will be rounded up at 0.5 or above by only one digit, and rounded down at anything less than 0.5 by only one digit. For example, 92.4 will be 92; 89.5 will be 90.

Final course grades that have been submitted to The Registrar will only be changed in situations where the grade was incorrectly calculated. Any student who believes their grade was incorrectly calculated must report their concern to the responsible faculty member.

No provision is made within ETBU Nursing courses to earn extra credit or bonus points.

## Medication Calculation Exam Policy

Safety is of paramount important for nurses. The medication calculation exam in each level is designed to identify areas where safety could be compromised in this area. Students are required to achieve a score of 90% or higher on all level-specific medication calculation examinations. This exam is **required at each level** in order to begin clinical activities. The student is permitted a maximum of two (2) attempts for success on the exam. Upon failure of the first attempt, the student must present a remediation plan to the exam administrator outlining specific strategies and activities that support preparation for the second attempt. Failure to achieve a score of 90% will result in failure of the clinical component(s) of all clinical courses within the level. Failure of a course clinical component results in failure of the entire course. A grade of W will be posted on the student’s transcript, but will be recorded as a nursing course failure in the School of Nursing.

## Testing Standards

The following standards apply to all quizzes and major exams administered in ETBU Professional Nursing courses:

- Testing may include major exams, scheduled or announced quizzes, pop quizzes, or performance/demonstration of clinical nursing competencies. Exams and quizzes may be administered online or via scantron. Choice of testing method is at the discretion of individual instructors.
- Test blueprints are provided for all major unit exams approximately one week in advance of the scheduled exam. A blueprint is intended to serve as a guide for exam preparation, but should not be considered as the sole resource for preparation.
- Because the NCLEX-RN exam is time restricted, time limits will be placed on quizzes and exams. Time limits will be appropriate to the number and type of test items. The type of test item and level of difficulty will be considered when setting time limits. Any time limits will be announced prior to starting an exam or quiz. Promptness is part of professional nursing expectations. Any student who arrives late may, at the discretion of the instructor, be required to test on the scheduled exam make-up date.
- Prior to testing, cell phones and all other types of paging or digital devices, for example smart watches, shall be turned off or silenced and place at the front of the room. Notebooks and book-bags must be left at the front of the room along with caps, and any heavy jewelry that may cause distracting sounds

during testing. Failure to comply with this policy can result in a severe penalty, including termination from ETBU Nursing.

- Test dates may be postponed, but not administered earlier than the scheduled date unless all students and the faculty member agree.
- A time will be provided for students to review the exam as close as possible to the next scheduled class meeting time. The faculty member will review major concepts that were missed by significant numbers of students, but will not review all individual test items. It is expected that individual students will use this time to quietly review all missed items. Students may not debate test items or test scoring in this group setting. Any student who needs further clarification of tested concepts or desires to discuss the exam grade or scoring must schedule an individual appointment with the faculty member. The amount of time allotted for exam review will be limited based on the length of the test and the types of test items. If scantron is used, test booklets will be provided, along with each student's answer sheet.
- Any student with a mid-term exam average **less than 80%** must schedule a meeting with the faculty member to discuss improvement strategies and to document his or her understanding of grades necessary on remaining work in order to successfully complete the course. It is the responsibility of the student to implement improvement strategies and, if required by the faculty member, to provide progress updates within a timely manner.
- If a student desires further discussion of exam results following online review or class review, it is his or her responsibility to contact the faculty member **within 7 days** following the review to schedule an individual appointment. Except for highly unusual circumstances that would interfere with the student's or the faculty member's availability, this appointment must occur prior to the next major course exam.
- Test materials, including exam booklets and online exams, are not available for student review later in the semester as a means of preparation for final exams or other course exams.
- Students who have questions about test items must obtain clarification from the faculty member(s) who prepared the quiz or exam.
- For booklet exams, scantron sheets are sold in the ETBU Bookstore. All testing materials, including completed scantron sheets and other answer sheets/booklets used for testing are the property of the School of Nursing

## Makeup Exam Policy

Students must contact the instructor prior to missing a scheduled quiz or exam. Extenuating circumstances involved in missing an exam (documented illness, death of a family member, University approved absence, etc.) will be considered in decisions about eligibility for makeup exams. Failure to contact the instructor prior to missing the exam/quiz could result in forfeiting your ability to make-up the exam/quiz. The decision to allow a make-up exam or scheduled quiz is at the discretion of each individual instructor.

*Note: Barring any extenuating circumstances listed above, HESI exams are not eligible for make-up.*

If a make-up exam or scheduled quiz is allowed, it must be scheduled with the instructor and taken within 7 days (or prior to the next class time) of the originally scheduled exam or quiz. Exams taken after the original exam/quiz date will have a 5-point penalty deducted. Additionally, the make-up exam will not be the same as the original exam. Questions may vary in content or question style/format.

## National Testing Standards

Students will be required to take nationally normed tests throughout the curriculum as major components of selected course grades as detailed in individual course syllabi. Information on nationally-normed test scoring will be found in course syllabi. Failure of the exam may result in failure of the course. Students are expected to take advantage of any faculty or vendor recommended remediation in order to improve scores on future tests.

## Community Service Scholars

The School of Nursing believes that community service on the part of all professional nursing students is important. Students who graduate with a major in nursing are encouraged to accumulate a minimum of 50 hours of community service during the 2-year period they are enrolled in the Professional Nursing program. Students who accumulate at least 50 hours will be recognized as Community Service Scholars and will be awarded a certificate at graduation. Students may participate in service activities of their choosing; however, these hours must be volunteer hours and must be submitted to the School of Nursing using the appropriate form. Formal course-related activities, such as assignments and projects, and activities deemed as parental duties may not be counted towards community service hours.

## Progression Policy

In order to progress in the ETBU Professional Nursing curriculum, students must pass all courses within a level before progressing. Dean's permission must be obtained to enroll in any level course in which a student has failed to progress.

Failure to meet academic requirements for progression in the Professional Nursing program is operationally defined as one or more of the following:

- Failure to complete course requirements as outlined in the course syllabus
- Earning a final grade in a theory course of less than a "C"
- Earning a failing grade for the clinical component of a course
- Earning a failure in a course according to School of Nursing guidelines, even though a "W" is recorded on the student's official transcript
- Failure to attend classes or meet hybrid/online attendance/participation guidelines without officially withdrawing
- Receiving a grade of "XF" for the course, per university guidelines
- Repeated violations of professional student nurse behaviors as outlined in this handbook and course syllabi

A student who fails to meet academic requirements for progression as stated above will be dismissed from the program. Students who must interrupt progression in the program due to personal reasons (such as illness or urgent family situations) and are otherwise unable to meet course requirements must withdraw from the program.

Any student becomes eligible for readmission to the program at the next time the failed course(s) or dropped courses are offered provided the student meets current program admission requirements and completes the Course Remediation form. Transfer courses taken to replace failed ETBU nursing courses must be approved by the Dean before enrolling. Grades earned on repeated courses will be posted according to current university policy.

Any student who is dismissed or must withdraw from the program must schedule a conference with the Dean at the earliest possible date to discuss plans for progression.

Students may not take a course more than twice. Failing a course for a second time or failing another course result in dismissal from the School of Nursing. Two failures in nursing courses, regardless of the courses, result in dismissal from the program. Withdrawing from a course is treated as a course failure for nursing courses.

Students must complete the program within four (4) years from the time that they initially began the professional level component of the ETBU Nursing program. Exceptions to this timeline requirement include being called to active military duty and extended illness or injury. These types of delays will be evaluated on an individual basis.

## Procedure for Reapplication & Readmission

Any student seeking readmission to the program must follow these guidelines:

1. Consult with the assigned Academic Advisor.
2. Notify the Dean and the Progression Committee Chair in writing of the request to be readmitted and the intended semester for readmission. Letters must be mailed, emailed, or hand-delivered. Notification must be received in accordance with the date indicated at dismissal from the program.
3. Complete and return the Readmission Questionnaire, which will be provided by the Progression Committee Chair.
4. Attend the Progression Committee meeting, if deemed necessary by the committee chair, to provide additional information or answer the committee's questions.
5. Complete any remediation required by the Progression Committee.

## Student Representatives

Student representatives are elected by their peers at the start of each academic year through the school's Texas Nursing Students Association (TNSA) chapter. A minimum of 2 representatives for each cohort are elected, with additional representatives elected based on the size of the cohort. The faculty sponsor will assist the chapter membership with determining the most effective number of representatives to elect, as well as offer suggestions on effective ways to operationalize the role and responsibilities of student representatives.

The roles and responsibilities of student representatives are to:

- Represent the cohort to the School of Nursing faculty and staff by attending designated sections of Nursing Faculty Organization (NFO) meetings.
- Solicit, compile, and report feedback from the cohort to the NFO on topics including, but not limited to, curriculum, policies, and collective teaching/learning experiences.
  - Reports should reflect positive feedback as well as address concerns or situations that may warrant improvement or change.
  - Feedback regarding situations of concern or dissatisfaction should be accompanied by students' recommended solution(s) for improvement.

The student representative's role is not to be the voice for an individual student's situation, grades, or concerns. A student with an individual concern should approach the appropriate course faculty member and/or their advisor for assistance. The student representatives must focus on the concerns of the cohort as a whole.

Faculty view the feedback process as a constructive method to identify actual or potential problems and address them through beneficial changes or provide needed clarity to students on situations that cannot be changed. It is hoped that students will view the process in the same way and apply it using a collaborative approach.

## Formal Complaints

A formal complaint is a dissatisfaction that is perceived by a student as significant enough to be addressed with the Dean and faculty of the School of Nursing after attempts to resolve the issue have been unsuccessful.

To be considered "formal", a complaint must be presented to the Dean, in writing, by the student. Also included, in writing, should be what the student believes is a realistic solution.

If unsure of an effective way to report a significant complaint, the student should seek guidance from a regular faculty member or the Dean.



## Student Grievance and Appeal Policy

Any individual student who believes that he or she was graded unfairly or a policy was incorrectly applied or was violated has the right to file a grievance or appeal. Policies in themselves cannot be appealed; students may address policy issues/concerns during scheduled Nursing Faculty Organization meetings through the class representatives.

When filing an appeal, it is necessary that the student state the exact nature of the appeal including what is believed to be graded or applied unfairly, the circumstances, and what the student is requesting be re-evaluated or handled differently.

A student must adhere to the following steps for resolving an individual student appeal in the School of Nursing:

1. Conference with individual faculty member: Notify the responsible faculty member, in writing, of the issue or concern along with the request for a meeting to discuss and resolve the matter. Meet with the individual faculty member. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, proceed to step 2.
2. Appeal to the Dean: Notify the Dean, in writing, of the unresolved matter. Provide documentation of the completed resolution step(s) to date. Meet with the Dean, the individual faculty member, and a third faculty member chosen by the Dean (Curriculum Coordinator unless already included). The Dean will communicate the outcome of the appeal to the student in writing, with a copy to the individual faculty member, within 5 business days following the meeting. If the matter is still not resolved to the student's satisfaction, proceed to step 3.
3. Appeal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs, according to the protocol provided in the ETBU Student Handbook.

## Texas Board of Nursing Eligibility and Declaratory Order Information

**Note:** Students will receive an additional handout that includes sections of the Nurse Practice Act and the Board Rules and Regulations regarding eligibility and licensure.

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) has identified certain circumstances that may render a potential candidate ineligible for licensure as a registered nurse in the State of Texas. The Board provides individuals the opportunity to petition for a Declaratory Order as to their eligibility for licensure.

If a candidate answers "YES" to any of the following questions, he or she must complete a Declaratory Order Form (available online) and return it to the BON. Review of applicants with eligibility issues can take 3 to 6 months to complete and also requires a filing fee paid to the BON by the applicant.

The following wording is taken directly from the current Texas Board of Nursing website:

- "For any criminal offense, including those pending appeal, have you:
  - A. been convicted of a misdemeanor?
  - B. been convicted of a felony?
  - C. pled nolo contendere, no contest, or guilty?
  - D. received deferred adjudication?
  - E. been placed on community supervision or court-ordered probation, whether or not adjudicated guilty?
  - F. been sentenced to serve jail or prison time? court-ordered confinement?
  - G. been granted pre-trial diversion?
  - H. been arrested or have any pending criminal charges?

- I. been cited or charged with any violation of the law?
- J. been subject of a court-martial; Article 15 violation; or received any form of military judgment/punishment/action?

(You may only exclude Class C misdemeanor traffic violations.)

**NOTE: Expunged and Sealed Offenses:** While expunged or sealed offenses, arrests, tickets, or citations need not be disclosed, it is your responsibility to ensure the offense, arrest, ticket or citation has, in fact, been expunged or sealed. It is recommended that you submit a copy of the Court Order expunging or sealing the record in question to our office with your application. Failure to reveal an offense, arrest, ticket, or citation that is not in fact expunged or sealed, will at a minimum, subject your license to a disciplinary fine. Non-disclosure of relevant offenses raises questions related to truthfulness and character.

**NOTE: Orders of Non-Disclosure:** Pursuant to Texas Government Code § 552.142(b), if you have criminal matters that are the subject of an order of non-disclosure you are not required to reveal those criminal matters on this form. However, a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure may become a character and fitness issue. Pursuant to other sections of the Government Code chapter 411, the Texas Nursing Board is entitled to access criminal history record information that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure. If the Board discovers a criminal matter that is the subject of an order of non-disclosure, even if you properly did not reveal that matter, the Board may require you to provide information about any conduct that raises issues of character.

- Are you currently the target or subject of a grand jury or governmental agency investigation?
- Has any licensing authority refused to issue you a license or ever revoked, annulled, cancelled, accepted surrender of, suspended, placed on probation, refused to renew a license, certificate or multi-state privilege held by you now or previously, or ever fined, censured, reprimanded or otherwise disciplined you?
- Within the past five (5) years have you been addicted to and/or treated for the use of alcohol or any other drug?
- Within the past five (5) years have you been diagnosed with, treated, or hospitalized for schizophrenia and/or psychotic disorder, bipolar disorder, paranoid personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, or borderline personality disorder?

Pursuant to Occupations Code §301.207, information regarding a person's diagnosis or treatment for a physical condition, mental condition, or chemical dependency is confidential to the same extent that information collected as part of an investigation is confidential under the Occupations Code §301.466. You may indicate "NO" if you have completed and/ or are in compliance with Texas Peer Assistance Program for Nurses (TPAPN) for substance abuse or mental illness."

**EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF NURSING**

## **2020-2021 ETBU Nursing Student Handbook Acknowledgment**

By signing this form, I acknowledge that I have **read, understand, and will abide by** the policies, procedures, and guidelines included in the East Texas Baptist University School of Nursing Student Handbook.

I understand that changes may be made to this handbook based upon new requirements from accrediting or oversight agencies and thorough analysis of practices that significantly impact student learning and ETBU Professional Nursing program outcomes. I further understand that if necessary changes are made, I will receive information explaining these changes and how they may impact me in a timely manner.

I understand that my scores on nationally normed tests will be major components of my overall course grades in selected courses, and that failure to achieve a passing score may result in an overall failing grade for the course.

If I need further clarification regarding topics and policies addressed in this handbook at any time while I am in the ETBU Professional Nursing program, I agree to seek assistance from School of Nursing faculty and/or the Dean.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Printed)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date