



BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN NURSING RN TO BSN PROGRAM

STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026

UPDATED: FEBRUARY 2026

**RN to BSN PROGRAM
STUDENT HANDBOOK
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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidelines, policies, and procedural information about the School of Nursing to guide students on the journey through the entry-level BSN program. Information contained in this *Entry-Level Nursing Student Handbook* is supplemental to the:

1. Notre Dame of Maryland University Handbook
2. Notre Dame of Maryland University Undergraduate Catalog: College of Undergraduate Studies
3. Notre Dame of Maryland University Undergraduate Catalog: College of Adult Undergraduate Studies
4. School of Nursing Course Syllabi

The contents of this *Handbook* provide information for the student. Contents are accurate at the time of printing and reflect current guidelines, policies, and procedures, but are subject to change from time to time as deemed appropriate by the university and/or School of Nursing to fulfill its role and mission or to accommodate circumstances beyond its control. Changes may be implemented without prior notice or obligation, unless otherwise specified. Changes are effective when made. The School of Nursing may notify students of any changes through announcements distributed in class, NDMU email, the Learning Management System, and/or U.S. Mail. Students are responsible for staying up to date with current information and are accountable for the policies herein.

II. ORGANIZATION

History of the School of Nursing

Overview — The SON is one of four Schools in the University. The SON offers four programs: An Entry-Level BSN program through the College of Undergraduate Studies, an Entry-Level Accelerated Second-Degree BSN program, an accelerated RN to BSN program through the College of Adult Undergraduate Studies (CAUS), and an MSN program through the College of Graduate Studies.

1974 — The Faculty and Administration of the College of Notre Dame of Maryland (now Notre Dame of Maryland University) recognized that many adult workers needed more innovative schedules and teaching methods to pursue baccalaureate education. In response to this need, the Weekend College was initiated. This format, which was the first of its kind in Maryland, combined traditional on-campus classroom experience with guided independent study.

1979 — RN-to-BSN nursing program began at the College of Notre Dame, now Notre Dame of Maryland University. This program received approval from the Maryland Board of Nursing in 1985, and in the fall of 1986, the program was accredited by NLNAC. The program is offered through the College of Adult Undergraduate Studies and taught at various locations, including hospitals and educational centers across Maryland.

1979-1981 — The first Registered Nurses enrolled in the program in September 1979, with nursing courses first offered in Summer 1980. By August 1981, 30 of the 47 students who completed nursing courses had met all requirements for the Bachelor of Science Degree and received their degrees. During the first 10 years of the program, approximately 1,000 RNs earned their BSN degrees through the Weekend College.

2003 — Faculty submitted changes to the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) and the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON) for a redesigned curriculum. Both agencies approved the new curriculum, and subsequently, the SON admitted its first students.

Summer of 2006 — The curriculum design for a 21-month-long Master of Science in Nursing was completed. It was designed with two concentrations: Leadership in Nursing Education and Leadership in Nursing Administration. The first cohort of the MSN program entered in 2007 with 17 students enrolled in the education concentration and 15 students in the administration concentration. In the years that followed, the MSN program's ongoing success has been realized. Partnerships with Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) and the University Center (formerly HEAT Center) enabled the MSN program to expand to new sites across Maryland.

2007 — MSN program began enrolling students in two concentrations: Leadership in Nursing Administration and Leadership in Nursing Education. The first class graduated with a Master of Science in Nursing in May 2009.

2009 — RN to BSN program received full (eight years) continuing accreditation, and MSN program received initial accreditation (five years)

Entry-Level BSN and MSN Nurse Practitioner Program Implementation

2013 — School of Nursing accepted its first students into the Entry-Level nursing major. The Center for Caring with Technology opened to support the curriculum with simulation and other clinical nursing practice opportunities.

2014 — Entry-Level BSN program received initial accreditation; RN to BSN received continuing accreditation. The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (formerly National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission) and the MSN program received full (eight-year) accreditation.

2015 — Inaugural Entry-Level BSN class graduated 26 students.

2017 — All programs received initial accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education for five years.

2019 — Inaugural Entry-Level Accelerated Second-Degree BSN class enrolled.

2020 — Inaugural Entry-Level Hybrid Accelerated Second-Degree BSN class enrolled.

2021 — Planning began for new Family Nurse Practitioner and Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner programs to be added to the master's degree programs offered by the SON. Work on the curriculum design and CCNE and BON approvals continued through the spring and summer of 2022.

2022 — Inaugural Family Nurse Practitioner and Adult Gerontology Nurse Practitioner students enrolled.

Accreditation

In 2009, the RN to BSN program received a full eight-year continuing accreditation, and the MSN program received an initial five-year accreditation. In 2014, accreditation was extended to the newly developed Entry-Level (pre-licensure) program for the baccalaureate program. ACEN re-accreditation for the baccalaureate program (Entry-Level and RN to BSN) was scheduled for 2016-2017. In 2015, School of Nursing faculty and staff agreed to switch accreditation bodies to the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE)*. An on-site evaluation was conducted in February/March 2017. Subsequently, CCNE granted accreditation to the Bachelor of Science in nursing program for five years, extending to December 31, 2022. A CCNE site visit was conducted in March 2022, resulting in the program's continued accreditation for 10 years.

*Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
655 K Street, NW, Suite 750
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University Mission Statement

Notre Dame of Maryland University educates leaders to transform the world. Embracing the vision of the founders, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, the University provides a liberal arts education in the Catholic tradition. Distinctive undergraduate and graduate programs challenge women and men to strive for intellectual and professional excellence, build inclusive communities, engage in service to others, and promote social responsibility.

Mission of the School of Nursing

The School of Nursing educates students to transform nursing and healthcare through authentic presence, caring connections with patients, students, colleagues, and the discipline of nursing, and by preserving care and compassion as the ethical foundation of nursing practice and scholarship.

School of Nursing Philosophy

Nursing and the teaching of nursing are journeys through deep caring connections with patients, students, colleagues, and the discipline of nursing. Nursing is imagined and known through caring, authentic presence with others, and multiple ways of knowing. Nursing is a presence to life lived with those entrusted to our care, a beacon, attentive to the extraordinary in the mundane and boldly entering questions of meaning. All stories of individuals and of the discipline are valued as necessary to the growth and advancement of the profession. Healing practice is possible in partnership relationships; nursing creates safe, welcoming places that encourage growth, seek to understand, and help us know each other's hearts.

Nurses are called to care through advocacy, action, 'power-with', and trusting relationships with persons and groups in diverse settings. Nursing embraces diversity and commitment to social justice. With perseverance and fortitude, caring and compassion remain the ethical foundation of nursing practice and scholarship.

The nursing way of being requires reflective practice, listening, which allows for meaning-making in all dimensions of academic and practice endeavors. Nursing practice is characterized by thoughtfulness and is necessarily lived out with intention. This way of being a School of Nursing in all aspects opens the door to our mission being realized—educating nurses to transform the world.

Professional Standards and Guidelines

The RN to BSN Program utilizes the following documents: *Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice* (ANA, 2010); *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008); *American Nurses Association Code of Ethics* (ANA, 2015); *Institute of Medicine's Health Professions Education, A Bridge to Quality Report* (2003); and *Quality and Safety Education for Nurses Competencies* (2014).

Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct Standards

The BSN Program adopts the American Nurses Association (ANA, 2015) Code of Ethics and the State of Maryland Code of Ethics for Nurses, which is contained in the Nurse Practice Act, specifically in Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 10.27.09.03 (<http://mdrules.elaws.us/comar/10.27.09>), as a guide for professional nurse behavior. These standards are based on the understanding that, to practice nursing as an RN, the student agrees to uphold the trust society has placed in the profession. The Code and Standards provide guidance for RN students in developing an ethical foundation. They are not limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment but can assist in the holistic development of the person.

Nursing Program Valued Ends/Outcomes

Presence

Cultivate a caring environment that reveals authentic nursing presence for the provision of meaning-making, cultural understanding, and reflective ethical practice in diverse settings.

Praxis

Apply nursing science and reflective practice through multiple ways of knowing to optimize quality of life for those entrusted to our care.

Advocacy

Respond to the call to protect the health and welfare of all persons and communities locally and globally, while attending to the unique needs of the vulnerable.

Scholarship

Engage in critical inquiry to advance nursing knowledge and translate research into practice.

Self-care

Self-Care: Create a healing environment that fosters resiliency, personal and professional growth, and a culture of caring for self and others.

Leadership

Inspire excellence in nursing science and the advancement of the profession through collaborative relationships and innovative leadership practices.

(Reviewed and Revised August 2022)

BSN Program Student Learning Outcomes

Presence

Create a space for being with diverse patients, families, communities, and health care colleagues that reveals authentic nursing presence.

Praxis

Demonstrate excellence in clinical practice through technological competence and synthesis of evidence, theory, and reflective practice.

Advocacy

Influence change by serving as an active voice through altruistic behaviors that support patients, families, and the community in health policy and social justice within an ethical framework.

Scholarship

Integrate multiple ways of knowing to promote a lively spirit of critical inquiry and innovative practice.

Self-Care

Establish a place for healing, personal and professional growth, and a culture of caring for self and others.

Leadership

Promote excellence in nursing by leading collaborative transformational practice informed by caring science within complex systems.

(Reviewed and Revised August 2022)

Faculty and Staff

RN to BSN Program Administration and Advising

The RN to BSN program is housed within the College of Adult Undergraduate Studies (CAUS). Students enrolled in the program receive academic advising and support from the School of Nursing's designated RN to BSN student advisor, the Academic Success and Advising Professional II.

The School of Nursing is led by the Dean, who reports directly to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Nursing faculty and staff report to the Dean.

The School's leadership structure also includes an Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs and a Program Director for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs. Both positions report to the Dean and support oversight of curriculum, program implementation, and student success initiatives. The School of Nursing is located in the University Academic Building (UAB). The administrative office for the Traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing (TBSN), accelerated second-degree BSN (ABSN), and RN to BSN programs is located on the 2nd floor of UAB. The administrative office for the hybrid ABSN is located on the 3rd floor of the Elkridge Campus, 6810 Deerpath Rd, Suite 320, Elkridge, MD 21075.

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Sigma Honor Society of Nursing, Mu Eta Chapter

Sigma, International Honor Society of Nursing, Mu Eta Chapter, is open to baccalaureate and master's nursing students who have demonstrated superior academic achievement and leadership potential. Membership encourages, fosters, and actively supports further professional development, thus promoting nursing scholarship, leadership, creativity, and commitment to nursing.

The School of Nursing Honor Society had its first induction ceremony in May 1987. Through the diligent work of two faculty members, Dr. Katharine Cook and Eileen Fox, the honor society was formed. It became a chapter of Sigma Theta Tau, International Honor Society of Nursing, by 1990. In 1989, Sigma Theta Tau conducted a site visit to the College of Notre Dame of Maryland and recommended that the chapter be granted chapter status. In April 1990, the chartering ceremony was held at the College of Notre Dame of Maryland, and all honor society members were inducted into the newly formed Mu Eta Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau. The Mu Eta Chapter remains in good standing with Sigma.

Traditional students with a 3.0 GPA or higher and who are in the top 35% of their class are invited to join during their Senior year of the nursing program.

Accelerated Second-Degree BSN students with a 3.5 GPA or higher are invited to join during their 3rd semester in the nursing program.

RN to BSN students with a 3.5 GPA or higher are invited to join in their second semester of BSN coursework after graduating from their ADN program and obtaining RN licensure.

The annual induction ceremony is held in the Fall semester at Notre Dame of Maryland University.

More information on the Mu Eta chapter of Sigma is located at <https://mueta.sigmanursing.org/home>.

Graduation Honors

Latin Honors

The University confers Latin honors upon undergraduate students who achieve the following grade point average based on work at Notre Dame of Maryland University:

3.90 for the distinction *Summa Cum Laude*

3.70 for the distinction *Magna Cum Laude*

3.50 for the distinction *Cum Laude*

To earn honors at graduation, **students must complete at least 60 graded credits at NDMU**. This excludes credits earned in Pass/Fail courses (including standardized testing, petitioning for credit, and transfer). Students are limited to four Pass (P) grades on graded courses.

III. ADMISSION

Admission to the RN to BSN Program

1. All students who matriculate with a nursing major must meet the admission requirements for students entering the College of Adult Undergraduate Studies (CAUS). Applicants must matriculate before taking courses.
2. Graduation from a diploma or associate degree in nursing program with a minimum Grade Point Average of 2.5 (on a four-point scale). Students with a GPA between 2.0 and 2.49 may be required to pass the Adult Placement Exam to qualify for admission and will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
3. Students must have earned a grade equivalent to “C” (2.0 or higher) in all courses that *must* be completed before beginning the upper division nursing major courses. Examples of courses that must be completed include Anatomy and Physiology I and II, Microbiology, Introduction to Psychology, and *Human Growth and Development*.
4. When previous coursework has not been completed, for example, *Human Growth and Development*, admission to the program and the timeframe to complete courses will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
5. Students who matriculate into the nursing major must meet additional requirements:
 - Active Maryland RN license or verification of licensure through a compact state, or NCLEX-RN eligible.
 - Students who begin the RN to BSN program without an RN license will not be permitted to enroll in NUR-412 *Population Health through a Caring Lens* and NUR-450 *Capstone* until they receive a license. The adult student advisor must be notified when students receive an RN license. Refer to p. 14 for the advisor’s name.
 - Students who are considered Associate to Bachelor (ATB) students cannot enroll in NUR-412 *Population Health through a Caring Lens* and NUR-450 *Capstone* until they receive a license. The adult student advisor must be notified when students receive an RN license. Refer to p. 14 for the advisor’s name.
 -
6. Additional Information
 - The Registrar's Office determines the maximum number of credits accepted for transfer. Generally, up to 68 credits can be transferred.
 - No community college *nursing* credits will be transferred.
 - All RNs with an active license in Maryland or a compact state will be granted 30 upper-level nursing credits per the Maryland Articulation Model.
 - RNs will complete the remaining 30 upper-level nursing credits and any additional program requirements through Notre Dame.

Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program & NUR-440 Caring Nursing Leadership for Professional Nurses

Students who have completed a Vizient/AACN Nurse Residency Program in the past 5 years may qualify to receive three (3) credits for NUR-440 *Caring Nursing Leadership for Professional Nurses*. Students should inform the Adult Student Advisor when they have completed the residency program and can present a certificate of completion. The Adult Advisor will complete the Petition for a Course Substitution form, send it to students for signature, and then submit it to the Registrar's Office.

IV. CURRICULUM

Program of Study

Overview of Program

The total number of credits for graduation: Nursing majors must complete a minimum of 120 credits and all University and School requirements to earn the Bachelor of Science degree. The required credits include 24 general education credits, 21 nurse major (department) requirements credits, 30 upper-level (300/400) nursing credits earned at Notre Dame, and lastly, 30 upper-level nursing credits per the Maryland RN to BSN Articulation Agreement.

Students who have earned an A.A. or A.S. degree from a Maryland community college have met Notre Dame of Maryland University's general education requirements and are only required to take one mission-oriented course (outside of their major and taken at NDMU) from the approved courses in "*Pursuing Meaning and Purpose*" (RST or PHL) or "*Becoming an Engaged Citizen*", or a *Modern Foreign Language* course at the 102 level or above.

Students who *have not earned* an A.A. or A.S. degree from a Maryland community college must take the general education requirements.

General Education Requirements and Credits

- 200-level Philosophy (3)
- 200-level Religious Studies (3)
- 300/400-level Religious Studies (3)
- English Composition (3)
- Literature (3)
- History (3)
- Math (Basic Statistics) (3)

Nursing Major Requirements and Credits*

- Human Anatomy & Physiology (6-8)
- Microbiology (3-4)
- Introduction to Psychology (3)
- Human Growth & Development (3)

*These courses are transferred in or taken before the Upper Division Nursing Courses

Upper Division Nursing Courses

- NUR-306 *Writing for Professionals* (1)
- NUR-309 *Foundations of Caring Science* (3)
- NUR-314 *Nursing Situations in Palliative Caring* (elective) or
- NUR-315 *Advocacy, Politics, & Power* (elective) (3)
- NUR-319 *Holistic Health Assessment and Nutrition
Across the Life Span for Professional Nurses* (5)
- NUR-400 *Information Systems for Caring Practice* (3)
- NUR-411 *Healthy Aging for Professional Nurses* (3)
- NUR-412 *Population Health through a Caring Lens* (4)
- NUR-420 *Nursing Research for Professional Nurses* (3)
- NUR-440 *Caring Nursing Leadership for Professional Nurses* (3)
- NUR-450 *Capstone Experience* (2)

Courses are 37.5 hours per 3-credit nursing course offering.

Course with required Experiential Learning: NUR-412 *Population Health through a Caring Lens*

This 4-credit course includes a variety of required experiential learning activities, such as simulations and a comprehensive community assessment. Students work with social workers, teachers, and other members of an organization's interdisciplinary team to develop a health promotion activity that meets the identified need. Examples include the Center for Addictions and Pregnancy at Johns Hopkins Bayview, St. Vincent de Paul Head Start, the Caroline Center, and the Lighthouse Shelter.

Center for Caring with Technology

The Center for Caring with Technology (CCT), located at both the Baltimore campus and the Elkridge Learning Center, is a state-of-the-art simulation environment designed to support the development of clinical competence through experiential learning grounded in caring science. The CCT includes dedicated health assessment and medical-surgical laboratories, maternal-child and home health simulation spaces, standardized patient rooms, skills labs, and structured debriefing areas. Advanced simulation technology, task trainers, and integrated audio/visual systems support realistic, evidence-based learning experiences and performance feedback.

Simulation activities are integrated throughout the pre-licensure programs and the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program, specifically, the Leadership in Nursing Education and Nurse Practitioner concentrations. Simulation is incorporated into both clinical and didactic courses to support achievement of program outcomes/valued ends: Presence, Praxis, Advocacy, Leadership, Scholarship, and Self-Care.

Because the RN to BSN program is delivered fully online and designed for licensed registered nurses, students in this program do not utilize the CCT. RN to BSN students build upon prior clinical preparation and engage in practice-based, community, and leadership learning experiences appropriate to their role as professional nurses.

*Refer to the Center of Caring with Technology Handbook located on the SON Simulation Lab Learning Management System site for more information regarding policies and procedures.

V. PROGRAM EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF OUTCOMES

The RN to BSN Program evaluation processes are folded into the current University-wide SON evaluation practices. The purposes of the School of Nursing's program evaluation are to assess curriculum, instruction, and student outcomes systematically; identify areas of challenge and opportunities for improvement; and facilitate program improvement. The processes of collecting, analyzing, and providing data for reports to state agencies, accrediting agencies, and governing bodies are essential to program evaluation. Multiple data sources from students, faculty, and employers are used to assess student learning and evaluate the RN to BSN Program. The following table provides a snapshot of these data sources:

Source	Why	Who	When
<i>Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes</i>	Assess student learning using key assignments	Course faculty	At the end of the course
<i>Course Evaluations</i>	Evaluate faculty's teaching effectiveness.	Students	At the end of the course
<i>Course Reviews</i>	Evaluate the course and offer suggestions for improvement	Course faculty	At the end of the course, there will be a full review as designated in the Systematic Plan for Evaluation.
<i>Clinical Practice Site and Preceptor Evaluations</i>	Evaluate the experience and preparation of the student	Associate Dean	At the end of the course
<i>Employment Rates</i>	Determine if graduates are employed as RNs	Associate Dean	Six and twelve months after graduation
<i>Completion Rates</i>	Determine if graduates complete within the specified timeframe, and if not, the reason(s) for not completing the program	Associate Dean Institutional Research, Director	Annually
<i>Satisfaction with CCT</i>	Evaluate hours and support in CCT	CCT Director	Every other year
<i>Graduate Exit Survey</i>	Provide data on students' satisfaction with the program and personal transformation from soon-to-graduate students.	Outcomes Circle, Chair	Every semester, as applicable

The School of Nursing's Systematic Plan for Evaluation (SPE) is a mission-driven, outcomes-based framework that ensures continuous assessment of program quality, student learning, and institutional effectiveness. The SPE integrates five core domains—Program Effectiveness; Admission and Progression; Simulation; Student Learning; and Faculty Outcomes—and aligns with AACN Essentials (Levels I and II), CCNE Standard IV, and the School's Valued Ends (Presence, Praxis, Advocacy, Scholarship, Self-Care, Leadership). The faculty systematically evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum, student achievement of program and course outcomes, and overall program quality. Findings inform evidence-based decision-making and continuous quality

improvement initiatives to strengthen student learning and program outcomes. Student Learning outcomes provide direct evidence of curricular effectiveness.

VI. ADVISEMENT

Academic Advisement

The Academic Success and Advising Coordinator in the School of Nursing serves as the designated Professional Advisor for RN–BSN students. Students are introduced to their advisor upon admission and are encouraged to maintain ongoing communication throughout the program.

The Academic Success and Advising Coordinator establishes supportive advising relationships, guides students' academic progression, and provides individualized counsel regarding program requirements and course registration each semester. Additional responsibilities include monitoring progress toward degree completion, responding to student questions and concerns, and collaborating with the Associate Dean to develop and implement individualized success plans for students at risk of delayed progression or non-completion.

Refer to p. 14 for the advisor's contact information to schedule an in-person or virtual meeting.

VII. GUIDELINES AND POLICIES: PROGRESSION POLICY

Progression in Nursing 300/400 Level Courses

Students must meet the following criteria to progress in the nursing program:

- Adhere to the *NSNA Code of Ethics for Nursing Students—Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct*. See <https://www.nsna.org/nsna-code-of-ethics.html>
- Maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 in nursing (NUR-) courses.
- Achieve a grade of C or better in all nursing (NUR-) courses.
- Only one nursing course (NUR designation) may be repeated—and only one time. A second failure of a nursing course results in dismissal from the nursing program.
- Students are limited to two withdrawals from nursing courses during their course of study.
 - All students should be aware that dropping or withdrawing from courses could also impact their state and/or institutional aid, and/or employment-based tuition remission.
 - Eligibility for state or federal aid is determined based on enrollment at the time of census. If a return of funds calculation is required, institutional aid will be adjusted according to Notre Dame's tuition adjustment percentages. Review the catalog for more information about the tuition adjustment policy.
- Students who withdraw from the program due to non-academic reasons may be reinstated on a space-available basis. Students must have withdrawn in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above in all nursing courses. University admission policies are followed.

Academic Nursing Program Probation

Students are placed on academic program probation when:

- A grade less than 'C' is earned in any nursing (NUR-) course. A student who earns a grade less than 'C' in any nursing course must repeat the course.
- The cumulative GPA is less than 3.0. Students have one semester to raise their GPA to 3.0. If a student is unable to raise their GPA after the probationary semester, they will be dismissed from the nursing program.
- Students placed on academic probation in the nursing program must create a success plan in collaboration with the Academic Success and Advising Coordinator.

Final Course Grade Appeal

Reasons for Appeal

- Only *final course grades* may be appealed. A final course grade may be appealed if a student believes there is evidence that the grade was not given in accordance with the grading policies outlined in the course syllabus or announced syllabus modifications.
1. The principle of seeking a reasonable, fair, and speedy resolution prevails throughout the process. All information related to the appeal and the appeals process will remain confidential.

Process for Final Nursing Course Grade Appeal

- Timelines for an appeal are tight due to the quick switch between Term A and Term B.
- When a student wishes to appeal a final nursing course grade, the student must email/write to the faculty member setting forth the basis for the appeal, provide evidence documenting the alleged discrepancy between the syllabus grading policy and the grade received, and the remedy sought within five business days of final grade submission in Self-Service.
- The faculty member will respond in writing to the student's appeal within three business days of the official posting of grades in Self-Service. Note that a text message about a grade appeal, with or without screenshots, is not an acceptable form of communication between a student and NDMU faculty.
- The student should also submit a copy of the appeal materials to the Program Director, Undergraduate & Graduate Program. Refer to the list of faculty and staff on p.14.
- Before informing a student of the faculty member's decision, the Program Director will review the response and may agree or disagree with the response. If the Program Director disagrees, they collaborate directly with the faculty member before informing the student.
- If not satisfied with the response, the student may, within five business days of the response, appeal to the School of Nursing Associate Dean. The student appeals in writing, setting forth the basis for disagreement with the faculty member's and Program Director's response.
- The Program Director informs the Associate Dean of the student's appeal and obtains a copy of the course syllabus and the faculty member's written response to the student. The Program Director then reviews the submitted evidence with the Associate Dean. In some cases, the Associate Dean may request to speak directly to the student and/or faculty member.
- The Associate Dean writes a response, including a description of the steps taken in the review process. The Associate Dean's written response is sent to the student, the Program Director, and the faculty member within one week of the review process's conclusion. The Associate Dean's decision is final.

- If the faculty on record for the course in which a final course grade is being appealed is the Associate Dean, the Dean will work with the faculty, the Program Director, and the student to address the appeal and determine the final decision of the appeal.
- If a grade change is authorized, the Registrar will be directed in writing to make the change in grade in Self-Service.

RN to BSN Dismissal and Reinstatement Policy

Authority and Expectations

Enrollment in the RN to BSN program requires adherence to the academic, professional, and ethical standards of the School of Nursing and the University. As licensed registered nurses, RN to BSN students are expected to demonstrate behaviors consistent with baccalaureate-level nursing practice and the professional role of the registered nurse.

The School of Nursing retains the authority to take appropriate academic action, including dismissal, when a student's performance or conduct is inconsistent with program standards, professional expectations, or the integrity of the learning environment.

Grounds for Dismissal

A student may be dismissed for reasons including, but not limited to:

- Academic failure
- Unprofessional conduct
- Violations of School of Nursing policies
- Violations of the University Student Handbook (Section VI—Behavioral Conduct Standards)
- Violations of the *Code of Ethics for Nurses (2015)*
- Conduct inconsistent with the professional role of the registered nurse
- Failure to maintain an active, unencumbered RN license

These examples are illustrative and not exhaustive. Dismissal may occur regardless of academic standing if professional or ethical standards are not met.

Academic Failure

Academic dismissal will occur when:

- A second grade lower than a "C" is earned in a nursing course; or
- A student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.8 and is not raised to at least 2.8 within one probationary semester.

Students whose GPA falls below 2.8 will be placed on academic probation for one semester. Failure to meet the minimum GPA requirement at the conclusion of the probationary semester will result in dismissal.

Appeal and Reinstatement Process (Academic)

A student who has been dismissed for academic reasons may request reinstatement by submitting a written appeal within the timeline outlined below. Failure to submit an appeal within the designated timeframe will result in forfeiture of the appeal opportunity. Reinstatement is not automatic and requires review by the School of Nursing.

The School of Nursing's Handbook appeal and reinstatement process due to academic reasons takes precedence over the University's Student Handbook.

Letter of Appeal

The appeal must be submitted electronically in a letter format to the Associate Dean and must include:

- A clear request for reinstatement;
- A detailed explanation of the circumstances contributing to the dismissal;
- Supporting documentation, when applicable; and
- A specific and actionable plan for academic and/or professional improvement.

The responsibility rests with the student to provide sufficient information for review.

Review Process

Upon receipt, the Associate Dean forwards the appeal materials to the Reinstatement Circle, composed of nursing faculty.

The Circle reviews:

- The student's academic and professional record;
- The appeal letter;
- Supporting documentation; and
- Relevant faculty input, as appropriate.

The Reinstatement Circle determines whether meeting with the student would assist in the review. A meeting is not automatically granted. Following review, the Circle makes a recommendation to the Associate Dean and Dean.

Final Decision

The Dean renders the final decision and notifies the student and the appropriate faculty in writing. The Dean's decision concludes the School of Nursing appeal process. Reinstatement decisions remain within the academic judgment of the School of Nursing.

If reinstatement is granted, it is not conditional; however, recommendations may be provided to support continued success. The Academic Success and Advising Coordinator II monitors student progression following reinstatement.

Limitation on Reinstatement

A student who has been dismissed and subsequently reinstated is not eligible for a second reinstatement. A second dismissal for any reason is final.

Record Retention

Records related to dismissal and appeal are maintained in a secure, password-protected system accessible only to authorized personnel and retained for up to five (5) years following graduation or final separation from the program.

Timeline

Action	Fall semester	End of Term A* Fall and Spring	Spring and Summer Semesters
Student notified of dismissal decision and process for appeal.	Within 7 business days* of the posting of final course grades and before the university closes for winter break	Within 7 business days* of the posting of final course grades	Within 7 business days* of the posting of final course grades
Student submits appeal packet to the Associate Dean (electronic).	Within 5 business days* after receiving the letter of dismissal and by 5:00 p.m. on the 5 th business day		
The Associate Dean notifies Reinstatement Circle members of the appeal and forwards the materials.	Within 1 business day* after receiving the student appeal		
Reinstatement Circle agrees on date and time to meet. Circle convenes to deliberate. If requested, the chair notifies the student to participate in an invited portion of the Circle meeting.	The Circle meets within 5 business days* after notification of appeal		
The Reinstatement Circle Chair communicates in writing to the Associate Dean and Dean.	Within 1 business day* of the Reinstatement Circle meeting		
Associate Dean and Dean write a response to the student's letter with a decision about the appeal and notify the appropriate faculty of the decision.	Within 3 business days* of receiving the recommendation from the Reinstatement Chair		

* Business days (Monday through Friday), excluding University holidays and all federal holidays

Withdrawal from the University

The University reserves the right to request, at any time, the withdrawal of a student for poor scholarship, violations of attendance policy, or unsatisfactory conduct. Students who voluntarily withdraw from the University for any reason must file an official withdrawal request form with the Dean of the School of Nursing. The date the form is submitted will determine whether a tuition refund is applicable.

Failure to notify the University of a Withdrawal will prompt termination of enrollment. A student who withdraws from the University *on* or *before* the official withdrawal date forfeits credit for the work done in that semester. A grade of “W” will be recorded in all courses for the semester.

Resignation Guidelines

NDMU recognizes that, on rare occasions, serious extenuating circumstances may prevent a student from completing a term/semester. Resignation is reserved for students who find themselves in this situation after the end of the withdrawal period and up to the last day of the semester.

Keep in mind, however, that the University *strictly adheres* to its published policies, procedures, and deadlines. Only in *extraordinary circumstances* will resignations be considered and approved. The burden of proof of these circumstances falls upon the student. Also note that any action taken in response to this request will only affect the student’s academic record; resignation from a term does not release the financial obligation for that term.

Students must be in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or above in all nursing courses. If approved by the School of Nursing Dean, the resignation will be processed by the Registrar’s Office. **All decisions are final.** The student will be notified of the outcome of the request via NDM e-mail. The checklist obtained from the Academic Success and Advising Coordinator is below:

Resignation Checklist (please obtain signatures in the order provided on the form)

- Completed Resignation Form (See Academic Success and Advising Coordinator).
- Meet with the Academic Success and Advising Coordinator to review options/ability to complete the term, and obtain a signature.
- Meet with Financial Aid to discuss the impact this resignation will have on your current and future Financial Aid needs, and obtain a signature.
- Meet with the Business Office to discuss your current and future financial obligations to the institution, and obtain a signature.
- Detailed explanation for this request.
- Supporting Documentation (Resignation requests submitted without supporting documents will not be considered).
 - Medical Records (Submit to Office of Accessibility and Health Promotions)
 - Accident Reports
 - Police Reports
 - Letters/Email from attorneys, faculty, advisor, etc.

- Email completed Institutional Resignation Form and full documentation to the Registrar's Office (registrar@ndm.edu). **MAKE SURE THAT THE SUBJECT LINE INCLUDES ATTN: RESIGNATION.** Check Self-Service or with the Registrar's Office for the appeal's outcome.

Students who resign from the nursing program due to non-academic reasons may be reinstated on a space-available basis. University admission policies are followed.

Please note that before any withdrawal, it is the student's responsibility to seek guidance from the Financial Aid Office if receiving any merit scholarship, Pell Grant, or other type of financial aid. Students are ultimately responsible for paying back expenses incurred at NDMU.

VIII. COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

Communication-- Nursing Student-Faculty and Staff

All messages for students in the RN-to-BSN program are sent via NDMU email, including announcements posted on the Learning Management System. Some communications may also be handled by the U.S. Postal Service or announced in relevant courses.

All email communication will be through NDMU student email accounts. Email is the primary means of communication. Students are expected to check NDMU email daily and notify relevant SON staff and faculty if email/internet access is disrupted for any reason.

Students may send messages to nursing faculty/staff through the University voice mail or email systems; email is the preferred method of communication.

Course faculty will always respond to your phone calls and emails if they are received. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, it probably means we did not receive your phone message or email. This means you must get back in touch with us by email or by phone. *Do not wait*; if you have a question, please call to resolve it.

Cancellation/Rescheduling of Classes

NDMU will determine whether classes are canceled or delayed. Any class canceled due to inclement weather will be made up at the faculty's discretion. Text-alert message notifications for University closings or delays are available. NDMU offers a mass notification system. The system sends messages instantly and simultaneously to registered text-message-capable cell phones and email addresses. For information and to sign up for this service, visit the [University website](#). Click on “Public Safety” (at the bottom of the home page), then “e2campus.” Or use this direct link: [e2Campus](#)

Cancellation of classes for reasons other than weather will be communicated to students via an announcement on the Learning Management System and NDMU email.

Inclement Weather Information

For information about the University closing, listen to WBAL-AM 1090, WPOC-FM 93.1, WIYY-FM 98, WCAO-AM 600, WQSR-FM 105.7, WLIF-FM Lite 102, WCBM-AM 680, or watch WJZ-TV Channel 13, WBAL-TV Channel 11, or WMAR-TV Channel 2 for announcements regarding the closing of the University. In the Washington D.C. area, listen to WTOP-AM 1500.

Under adverse weather conditions, students are expected to make a reasonable attempt to be on time for class, lab, or clinical. However, students must exercise their own judgment when driving in adverse weather conditions.

IX. FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

Overview

The SON defines a formal complaint as a written expression of serious dissatisfaction related to any aspect of NDMU nursing programs. A formal complaint is distinguished from a dispute about a course grade or other course evaluation matter, which is handled under the NDMU academic appeal procedures. The SON handles harassment complaints in accordance with guidelines and policies outlined in the University Student Handbook. The SON's guiding principle is to settle disputes promptly and fairly. Anonymous complaints are not accepted.

First Level

In general, the operational principle is to maintain open communication at the most immediate point of access and to work upwards when appropriate. This means that the student should work with the faculty member with whom they have a dispute, or, if possible, with the Academic Success and Advising Coordinator or Adult Student Advisor.

Second Level

The next level would be the Associate Dean. When an NDMU faculty member receives a formal complaint, the Associate Dean is also notified. The Associate Dean initially screens the formal complaint unless it directly involves the Associate Dean, in which case the Dean of the School of Nursing screens it.

Third Level

If the complaint involves a complex or multi-campus issue, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs may get involved. Additionally, the Dean or Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs may appoint an ad hoc panel to seek a resolution of the complaint. Complaints about discrimination/sexual harassment shall be directed to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of the President.

Steps

1. A student having complaints about instruction or grading should attempt to resolve those issues directly with the instructor. The student should send an email to the instructor using their official NDM email account within 7 business days.
 - This email should briefly outline the complaint and be copied to the Associate Dean and Program Director *at the main campus*.
 - If the complaint is not resolved with the instructor within 7 business days of sending the email, then the student may reach out to the Associate Dean.
2. The Associate Dean's decision shall be rendered within 7 additional business days.
3. After the Associate Dean's decision, the student or the instructor may appeal to the School of Nursing Dean's Office. Complaints must be submitted in writing within 7 business days of the Associate Dean's decision.

4. The written statement should describe the complaint, indicate how it affects the individual, and include the remedy or outcome sought from the Dean.
5. The decision of the Dean or her designee shall be rendered within 20 business days. The Dean's decision is final.
6. A copy of all written complaints and a written record of all subsequent actions will be filed in a confidential Academic Grievance File in the SON Dean's Office.

X. CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

Online Attendance

Students should be in the online course room at least 4 days/week and plan to spend 3 times the number of credit hours on coursework. Each course syllabus will indicate the requirements for class participation and online assignments. Missed class quizzes and graded activities may not be made up. Assignments and postings must be completed by the designated time.

Cell Phones

Students are asked to keep all cell phones, pagers, and other electronic devices in silent mode and are expected to return phone calls during the break or after class, unless the call is an emergency. Texting, emailing, or checking email during class is not permitted. Students engaging in these activities may be asked to leave the classroom until they are fully prepared to participate.

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning is integral to the classroom experience in the BSN program. The following chart illustrates how a collaborative learning classroom might differ from previous classroom experiences.

Traditional	Collaborative
The student is a listener / note-taker/ observer.	Student is a contributor/discussant / problem-solver
Source of authority – professor & text “sage on the stage”	Source of authority – a group of which the professor is a member
Low – Moderate class preparation	High expectations for class preparation
Learning independently	Learning interdependently
Attendance by personal choice	Attendance by group expectation
Private classroom presence	Public classroom presence
Competition with peers	Collaboration with peers
Some engagement with peers	Committed to supporting and encouraging one another

In summary, the characteristics of collaborative learning are:

- Active participants who engage in active listening, discussion, and conversation rather than speech-making and debate
- Learning partnerships equalize the relationship between professor and student.
- Community created where divergent opinions are tolerated.
- Locus of knowledge is in the community, and each member develops a sense of commitment and responsibility to the group for learning.
- Creation of knowledge by examining and challenging each other’s ideas; judging each other’s ideas, not the person themselves.

Grade Appeal for Assignments

A student has a seven (7) day period, beginning with the date a graded assignment, exam, etc., is returned, to question the assigned faculty member about the grade received. After this time period, grades are final.

Self-Service

Self-Service provides students with real-time information, including grades, class schedules, advisor information, email contact, request forms for transcripts and enrollment verifications, and financial aid award information.

Written Requirements in Nursing Courses

Written work in all nursing (NUR-) courses follows the guidelines set forth by the American Psychological Association in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Resources and tutorials for APA HELP are available in the Learning Management System, on the Loyola/Notre Dame Library (LNDL) website, and on APastyle.org.

Turnitin

Turnitin is an Internet-based plagiarism-detection service that allows both students and instructors to check written work for its originality. The purpose of *Turnitin* is to help detect and monitor plagiarism. By checking the originality of texts, students and instructors can work together to improve the quality of scholarly work and reduce the risk of plagiarism. Please refer to the course syllabus for each course's requirements.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Students are required to submit their own, original work when an assignment is being evaluated by faculty for academic credit. Large language models (LLMs) such as ChatGPT and Gemini should not be used to write reflections or provide language for a written assignment. Plagiarism detection services such as Turnitin can detect AI-generated text. Students who submit assignments that include any percentage of recognized AI language may receive a grade of zero on the assignment at the faculty's discretion.

University Resources for Writing Assistance

Services are available for all students by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Peer tutors are available to help develop essay topics, increase the significance and depth of presentation, support the development of ideas, improve and better organize material for writing/presentation cohesiveness, and more.

[Tutoring and Academic Assistance](#)

XI. REQUIRED EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING GUIDELINES

Attendance

- *Absence due to religious holidays*—The School of Nursing honors the celebration of our diverse student body. Absence for a religious holiday is considered an excused absence. Students who miss class due to religious holidays must give the faculty prior notice at the beginning of the semester.
- *Absence due to Cancellations or Delays*—In the event of inclement weather, cancellation or delays, it will be announced through selected media (radio, television, website). Classes will be cancelled when the university is closed. If the university opens late due to weather-related or other emergencies, classes will commence at the announced opening time and resume the normal schedule for the remainder of the day.

Behavior Expectations During Required Experiential Learning Activities

The Maryland Nurse Practice Act states that the Nursing Program Administrator and faculty are responsible for *“developing and implementing a written plan that provides that all students participating in clinical practice settings are physically and mentally competent at all times to provide safe patient care.”*

Any student participating in a clinical experience is expected to demonstrate behaviors that lead faculty to believe that the student is physically and mentally competent to provide safe patient care. Examples of behaviors that might be indicative of potential threats to patient safety include: slurred speech, uncoordinated movements, ineffective attention, inability to follow simple commands, and/or an odor of alcohol or marijuana. Inappropriate behaviors, including repeated violations of critical behaviors identified during the clinical evaluation, will be considered detrimental to patient safety, trust, and security. The jeopardy to the patient’s physical and psychological safety will be immediately addressed at the discretion of the clinical faculty, and the student may be asked to leave the clinical setting. Nursing faculty will be available to the clinical agency via cell phone for consultations, emergencies, or issues of inappropriate student conduct.

A decision to allow a return to the clinical setting will be made on a case-by-case basis. Recommendations from the student’s health care provider may be requested and considered in the final decision. See Classroom and Clinical Policies and both the University’s and School’s Substance Abuse Policy for additional information.

Dress Code for Required Experiential Learning Activities

Students are expected to maintain a professional appearance during required experiential learning activities. Professional attire is required. Students are to adhere to the agency's dress code.

The SON considers clothes options, noted below, as non-professional attire and unacceptable when representing the SON and/or the nursing profession in public forums, such as Blessing of the Hands, BSN Symposium:

- miniskirts, jeans, shorts, pajama bottoms, sweatpants, leggings, jeggings;
- slacks, skirts, or pants that expose skin below the waist;

- sweatshirts, tee shirts, tank tops, tube tops, halter tops, spaghetti string or off-the-shoulder tops; and
- clothes that are torn, sheer, low cut, revealing, or tops that do not cover to the waist.

No tongue studs or lip studs are allowed. A Notre Dame student ID must be displayed at all times.

Non-Academic Requirements for Experiential Learning Activities

RN to BSN students *must* comply with all requirements before the start of experiential learning activities. Requirements are submitted via Exxat/Approve.

Students are responsible for all fees/payments associated with these clinical requirements, as well as for submitting all data to Exxat/Approve. Failure to submit required documentation by the Wednesday before the semester starts will result in the first clinical warning. Failure to fully comply with all experiential learning activities requirements by the first Wednesday after the semester starts will result in a second clinical warning and withdrawal from NUR-412.

Documentation of accountability for all academic and clinical policies must be submitted to Exxat/Approve by uploading the signed acknowledgement form by the deadline posted on the Exxat/Approve website. Requirements include:

Current CPR Certification – Must be the American Heart Association’s or American Red Cross, *Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Provider Course* or its equivalent. This course includes CPR for victims of all ages (including ventilation with a barrier device, a bag-mask device, and oxygen), use of an automated external defibrillator (AED), and relief of foreign body airway obstruction (FBAO). Students must submit a copy of both the front and back of the card verifying this certification; all signatures, including the students’, must be present. Certification must remain current while in the program.

Influenza Vaccine – Must provide documentation that an annual influenza vaccine was received between August 15 and October 15 each year. Students in clinical experiences must have verification of receiving the flu vaccine by October 15 of each year. Students will not be allowed to enter the clinical site unless they adhere to the institution's requirements. This may mean wearing a mask while on the premises or discontinuing the experience.

Note on Exemptions for Flu Vaccine

If requesting a religious exemption for the flu vaccine, you will need to provide documentation to support the need for an exemption. A formal letter from a religious/spiritual leader, a member of the religious organization the requestor attends, or a person with personal knowledge of the religious organization's doctrine/beliefs prohibiting immunization will be required.

Medical Exemption Request: If requesting a medical exemption for the flu vaccine, you will need to provide documentation to support the need for an exemption. Please provide a letter from a healthcare provider detailing the medical reason(s) for the exemption based on your current or past medical condition(s). This may include a documented history of medical contraindications, such as a severe allergy to the vaccine or its components, as outlined in the latest recommendations from the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP).

To maintain a flu vaccine exemption, you must resubmit your exemption documentation annually by the deadline for other clinical requirements. Keep in mind that all requests are subject to approval from both the University and the clinical site.

Drug Screening/Background Checks – The dominant accrediting body for healthcare organizations and programs, The Joint Commission (TJC), mandates that criminal background checks be performed on all persons who have any opportunity for patient interaction at its accredited organizations. This includes employees, volunteers, and students. A criminal background check revealing a conviction for certain crimes could result in a ban from participation in clinical rotations and thus prevent graduation/completion of the nursing program. Based on the updated TJC accreditation standards, the Notre Dame of Maryland University has put into place the following policy:

All students entering the nursing program will undergo a criminal background check. Students will be directed to use Exxat/Approve when submitting a criminal background check. Students may not request assignment to sites that do not require a criminal background check and/or drug screening. Students are responsible for all costs incurred with the criminal background check and drug screening.

Criminal background checks must be completed before participating in clinical rotations. This may also be the case if the clinical site requests drug screening.

A positive drug screening test could result in dismissal from the clinical site, preventing completion of the course/clinical outcomes and ultimately graduation from the nursing program. The same would hold for a criminal background check, which may affect a student's eligibility to participate in a clinical rotation, practicum, or other clinical experience and ultimately the ability to graduate from or complete the nursing program.

Both the criminal background check and the drug screening will be performed just before the beginning of clinical coursework. Background checks must be done annually. The student will be responsible for all costs incurred. Each student will still be required to comply with any requests to complete additional criminal background checks and/or drug screenings for specific clinical sites to which they are assigned for clinical experiences. Students are encouraged to contact the Clinical Placement Coordinator in the School of Nursing with any questions. H-ABSN will contact the Director of Nursing Services at the NDMU Elkridge Learning Center with any questions.

The clinical agency will decide whether to accept or deny the student for clinical placement based on the results of the background check and/or drug screen. If a clinical agency rejects a student, the clinical faculty will make one additional attempt to place the student at another clinical agency. If the second clinical agency rejects the student, the student will not meet program requirements and will not be able to continue in the nursing major.

Maryland RN License

Initial licensure information is verified by Enrollment Management staff. Before the practicum course begins, the School of Nursing staff verifies licensure through the Maryland Board of Nursing online license verification process. If the RN license is due for renewal during practicum courses, the license will be verified again. Students are responsible for renewing their licenses before their expiration dates.

Other

Some clinical agencies may require documentation of additional health-related requirements. Health-related requirements could include, but are not limited to: flu vaccines and mandatory events training (provide written evidence from the hospital). Students will be notified of these requirements as soon as possible and will be expected to pay any associated expenses.

All documentation of compliance with these requirements must be uploaded to Exxat/Approve and approved before the practicum begins. Sign-on information and details of required documentation will be sent out the semester before practicum requirements are due.

Students who do not promptly present updated documentation will be unable to attend their Capstone experiential learning activities until the School of Nursing receives the required documentation. Capstone grades will be adversely affected by noncompliance with the policy.

Mandatory Clinical Site Training – Some clinical agencies may require documentation of additional health-related requirements. Health-related requirements could include, but are not limited to, mandatory event training. Students will be notified of these requirements as soon as possible. Students will complete annual training modules through Universal Onboarding, a web-based program used by healthcare professionals and students to meet mandatory regulatory requirements.

Confidentiality

Information concerning patients is privileged and must remain confidential. Appropriate information regarding patients that needs to be shared among team members or for educational purposes will only be discussed in a private setting away from patient care areas. Nursing students must abide by *the Nurses' Code of Ethics* as well as state and federal laws and agency regulations to safeguard patient information. Students may be legally required to disclose information. Faculty will maintain strict confidentiality regarding both students' personal and academic information.

Posting of protected/personal medical information (PMI) on social media sites may result in dismissal from the program. Please note that the last item on the list is broad in scope. Healthcare facilities have used this item to discipline and/or terminate employees. The list of PMI includes the following:

- name,
- address (anything smaller than a state),
- dates (except years) related to an individual -- birthdate, admission date, etc.
- phone number,
- fax number,
- email address,
- Social Security number,
- medical record number,
- health plan beneficiary number,
- account number,
- certificate or license number,
- vehicle identifiers, such as serial numbers, license plate numbers,
- device identifiers and serial numbers,
- web URL,
- Internet Protocol (IP) address,

- biometric IDs, such as a fingerprint or voice print,
- full-face photographs and other photos of identifying characteristics, and
- any other unique identifying characteristic.

XII. BEHAVIOR STANDARDS

Professionalism

Professionalism is defined as the active demonstration of professional attributes. These attributes include knowledge and skills of the profession, commitment to self-improving those knowledge and skills, service orientation, pride in the profession, a covenantal relationship with the patient, creativity and innovation, conscience and trustworthiness, accountability for one's work, ethical sound decision-making, and leadership.

Professional socialization is the process by which an individual develops the attitudes, values, and beliefs of a professional. The goal of professional socialization is to develop professionalism as described below, and this process must begin at the beginning of an individual's professional education. Therefore, consistent with the practice environment, professional behavior and attitudes are expected of all students enrolled in the School of Nursing.

Communication and interpersonal interactions encompass the student:

- Using appropriate verbal and non-verbal communication,
- Communicating assertively – actively and appropriately engages in dialogue or discussion,
- Demonstrating an attitude of open-mindedness towards others and situations, does not “stereotype” others or prejudge situations,
- Demonstrating regard for self, standardized patients, peers, faculty, staff, and University property,
- Appreciating others' positions, attempts to identify with others' perspectives, demonstrates consideration towards others,
- Using diplomacy by showing fairness and tactfulness in all dealings with patients, peers, faculty, and staff,
- Acting and communicating in a self-assured manner, yet with modesty and humility,
- Acting cooperatively in a non-argumentative manner, and
- Expressing truthfulness in all interactions by being straightforward.

Work Ethic

- Is punctual, reliable, dependable, and accountable for one's actions
- Behaves in an ethical manner
- Produces quality work
- Accepts constructive criticism and modifies behavior if necessary
- Is self-directed in undertaking tasks, self-motivated
- Handles stress – remains calm, levelheaded, and composed in critical, stressful, or difficult situations
- Is an active learner – seeks knowledge, asks questions, searches for information, takes responsibility for own learning
- Follows through with responsibilities – if the task is left incomplete or the problem is not resolved, the student seeks aid

Adapted with permission from the School of Pharmacy, NDMU

Relationship to University Policies

Students in the School of Nursing are expected to uphold the University's **Honor Code**. The Honor Code, the University's **Academic Integrity/Misconduct Policy**, and the University's **Behavior Standards** (University Student Handbook, Sections 1 and 2) guide the School of Nursing in reviewing alleged violations of academic or behavioral expectations.

When an alleged violation involves professional conduct or behavior related to a student's readiness for safe and ethical professional practice, the *School of Nursing Professional Conduct and Professional Behaviors Investigation and Resolution Policy* will govern the review and resolution process. This policy shall take precedence over other University policies to the extent permitted by University procedures.

The School of Nursing retains the authority to determine the appropriate policy and review process applicable to a reported concern.

Professional Conduct and Professional Behaviors Investigation and Resolution Policy

A. Policy at a Glance

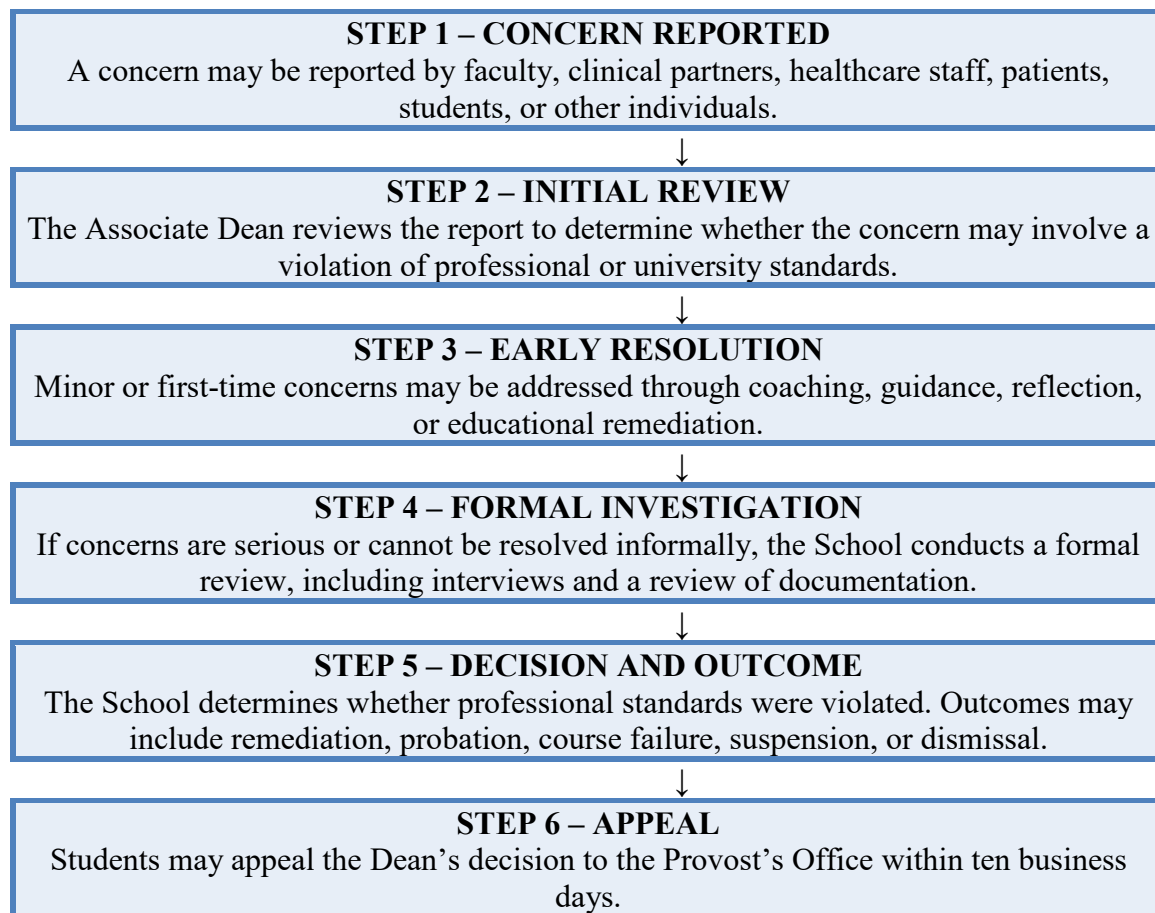
This policy explains how the School of Nursing reviews concerns regarding professional conduct and behavior. Because nursing is a practice profession that involves patient care and preparation for professional licensure, students are expected to meet professional conduct standards that may exceed those required in other academic programs. The School may take immediate administrative action when patient safety, professional standards, or the learning environment may be at risk.

Key points of this policy include:

- Concerns may be reported by faculty, students, clinical partners, healthcare staff, patients, or others.
- The Associate Dean conducts an initial review to determine whether further review is necessary.
- Some concerns may be addressed through early resolution and coaching.
- More serious concerns may lead to a formal investigation.
- Possible outcomes may include remediation, probation, course failure, suspension, or dismissal.
- Students may appeal decisions according to the procedures described in this policy.
- Students are encouraged to read the full policy to understand expectations and procedures.

B. Professional Conduct Review Process at a Glance

The flowchart below illustrates the review process.



C. Definitions – How to Read This Section

The following definitions explain how certain terms are used in this policy. These terms help clarify the roles of individuals involved when concerns about professional conduct are reviewed.

1. Complainant or Reporting Party

The **Complainant or Reporting Party** is any individual who reports or provides information regarding conduct that may violate the School of Nursing's professional standards (*Code of Ethics for Nurses*, 2015) and/or the Student Code of Conduct or other types of violation of the Standards of Conduct found in the *University Student Handbook*. The individual may choose to make a report or may provide information about an incident.

Examples may include a clinical nurse manager, staff nurse, patient, patient family member, faculty member, clinical instructor, healthcare staff member, another student, or any individual who observes or experiences the conduct. In some situations, the University may become aware of a potential concern even if no individual formally reports the incident. In those cases, the University may still review the situation.

2. Responding Party

The **Responding Party** is the student alleged to have violated the School of Nursing's professional standards (*Code of Ethics for Nurses*, 2015) and/or the Student Code of Conduct or other types of violation of the Standards of Conduct found in the *University Student Handbook*. For example, if a concern is raised about a student's behavior in a clinical setting, classroom, simulation lab, or professional communication, the student would be considered the Responding Party during the review process.

3. Student

A **Student** is any person currently enrolled at Notre Dame of Maryland University, whether full-time or part-time, in undergraduate, graduate, or professional studies. This includes students pursuing degrees or certificates, as well as students from cooperating institutions taking courses for credit through the University. Individuals on an approved leave of absence remain subject to this policy and are considered Students.

D. Professional Standards Expected of Nursing Students

Nursing students are preparing to enter a trusted profession. As such, students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior consistent with nursing ethical standards and the School of Nursing's expectations.

a. Professional standards include:

- Demonstrating honesty, integrity, and accountability.
- Treating patients, families, faculty, staff, and peers with respect.
- Protecting patient confidentiality and privacy.
- Following clinical safety procedures and professional guidelines.
- Communicating professionally and respectfully.
- Accepting feedback and demonstrating willingness to learn and improve.
- Representing the nursing profession positively in academic, clinical, and community settings.
- Maintaining professional readiness for clinical practice, including compliance with clinical health, background check, and drug-screen requirements.

- b. These expectations apply in all learning environments, including classrooms, simulation laboratories, clinical placements, and online communications.

E. Professional Conduct Standards

The list of examples illustrates behaviors that may raise concerns about professional conduct. These examples are provided for clarity and are illustrative and not exhaustive.

1. Patient Safety and Clinical Practice

- Performing clinical skills or administering medications without appropriate supervision or authorization.
- Failing to follow clinical safety procedures.
- Falsifying or inaccurately documenting patient information.
- Breaching patient confidentiality.
- Practicing or appearing in clinical settings while impaired or under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or substances that affect safe clinical judgment.

2. Academic and Professional Integrity

- Cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresenting one's own work in assignments related to clinical learning experiences.
- Falsifying clinical hours or documentation.
- Misrepresenting information related to clinical learning experiences.

3. Professional Communication and Conduct

- Disrespectful or disruptive behavior toward patients, faculty, staff, or peers.
- Unprofessional written or verbal communication:
 - Inappropriate use of social media related to patients or clinical settings.
 - Using disrespectful, hostile, or inappropriate language when communicating with patients, faculty, staff, clinical personnel, or peers.
 - Sending unprofessional emails, messages, or electronic communications to faculty, staff, clinical personnel, or classmates.
 - Posting comments, images, or information on social media that reflect negatively on patients, clinical agencies, classmates, faculty, or the nursing program.
 - Discussing or sharing information about patients or clinical experiences in ways that violate privacy, confidentiality, or clinical agency policies.
 - Speaking to patients, families, faculty, or clinical staff in a manner that is dismissive, disrespectful, or inconsistent with professional nursing standards.
- Using personal phones, texting, or electronic devices during clinical activities in ways that interfere with patient care, learning responsibilities, or clinical agency policies.

4. Professional Responsibilities

- Repeated tardiness or absence from required academic or clinical activities.
- Failure to follow instructions from faculty or clinical adjunct faculty.
- Failure to comply with required clinical placement policies.

The School of Nursing reserves the right to review and address conduct concerns not explicitly listed in this policy that raise questions about a student's readiness for safe and ethical professional practice.

F. Professional Judgment and Scope of Authority

The examples of professional conduct concerns described in this policy are illustrative and are not intended to represent a complete list of behaviors that may raise concerns about professional standards. The School of Nursing reserves the right to review and address conduct that may affect patient safety, professional integrity, or readiness for nursing practice, even if the behavior is not specifically listed in this policy.

G. Detailed Conduct Review Procedures

Step 1-Report of Concern

Concerns about professional conduct may be reported by faculty, staff, clinical partners, students, or other individuals. Reports may be submitted verbally or in writing to a faculty member, program director, Associate Dean, or the Dean. Concerns should be documented in writing to ensure accurate review. The Associate Dean of the School of Nursing reviews reports.

Interim Administrative Action. When necessary to protect patient safety or maintain the learning environment, the Associate Dean or Dean may implement temporary measures during an ongoing review. These measures may include temporary removal from clinical placements or other academic activities. Interim administrative action does not constitute a determination of responsibility.

Step 2-Initial Review

The Associate Dean conducts an initial review to determine whether the concern may involve a violation of professional standards or university policy. Following the initial review, the Associate Dean may 1) terminate the investigation and dismiss the concern if insufficient information exists, 2) address the matter through early resolution, or 3) refer the matter for formal investigation. If the concern does not require further review, it may be addressed through advising, guidance, or educational support.

Step 3-Early Resolution (When Appropriate)

Some concerns may be addressed through early resolution before a formal investigation is initiated. This may occur when the concern involves a minor or first-time issue that can reasonably be addressed through guidance, coaching, or professional development.

Early resolution may include conversations with faculty, written reflection, professional development activities, or other educational actions designed to support the student's growth.

Early resolution outcomes will be documented in Navigate, the student's advising record, for internal educational and advising purposes. If Navigate is unavailable, a Teams folder will be created.

If the concern cannot be resolved through early resolution or involves serious issues such as patient safety or ethical misconduct, the matter may proceed to a formal investigation.

Step 4-Formal Investigation

If further review is required, the School of Nursing will conduct a formal investigation. The investigation may be conducted by the Associate Dean, the Dean, or another qualified individual designated by the Dean.

When the initial assessment results in a determination that a formal investigation will occur, the Dean will issue a Notice of Investigation and advise the Responding Party (Respondent) of their rights under this Policy, including the following:

- has a right to a prompt, fair, and impartial investigation;
- has a right to produce relevant documents, witnesses, and other materials they would like the investigator to consider; and
- may have an advisor of their choice present to provide advice during the investigative interview; however, the advisor may not speak or act on behalf of the party.

The investigation may include interviews with individuals involved and a review of relevant documents or information. Students are expected to cooperate with the investigation process and to provide truthful and complete information. Official communication with the student will occur through the student's NDMU email address in accordance with University policy. Students are expected to cooperate with the investigation process and provide truthful and complete information.

If a student declines to participate or fails to respond to requests for information, the School of Nursing may proceed with the review and render a determination based on the available information. Students may bring an advisor to meetings; however, the advisor may not speak on the student's behalf.

Step 5-Decision and Outcomes

After reviewing the information, the School of Nursing determines whether professional standards were violated. Decisions are based on a preponderance of the evidence, meaning it is more likely than not that the conduct occurred.

Possible outcomes may include, but are not limited to, remediation, probation with a remediation plan, course failure, suspension, or dismissal from the program. Participation in the School of Nursing program is contingent upon continued demonstration of academic competence, professional conduct, and readiness for professional practice. Continued enrollment and progression in the program are *not* guaranteed and depend on meeting program expectations and outcomes.

Step 6-Appeal

Students may appeal the Dean's decision by submitting a written appeal to the Provost's Office within ten (10) business days of receiving the final decision issued by the Dean or the Dean's designee.

An appeal may not be based solely on dissatisfaction with the decision. Grounds for appeal are limited to the following:

- **Procedural error** that materially affected the outcome of the review or investigation;
- **New information** that was not reasonably available at the time of the investigation and that could significantly affect the outcome; or
- **Disproportionate outcome**, where the decision or sanction is substantially disproportionate to the nature or severity of the concern.

H. Clinical Placement Requirements

Clinical education is an essential component of the nursing curriculum. Clinical agencies maintain independent authority over who may participate in clinical learning within their facilities. The School of Nursing cannot guarantee alternative clinical placements if a student is removed from a clinical unit and/or agency.

If a clinical unit/agency denies or removes a student from placement, the School of Nursing may determine that the student cannot meet program requirements. In such circumstances, the School may impose academic consequences, including course failure, which may result in delayed progression or dismissal.

Decisions made by clinical units and/or agencies are not subject to appeal through the School of Nursing. The School of Nursing cannot override or alter decisions made by clinical units and/or agencies regarding student participation, and the inability to secure or maintain a clinical placement may prevent a student from meeting program requirements.

I. Licensure Eligibility

Completion of the nursing program does not guarantee eligibility for licensure or certification. The Maryland State Board of Nursing independently determines licensure eligibility and may consider factors such as criminal history, ethical conduct, and professional behavior.

J. Reinstatement Following Dismissal

Students dismissed from the nursing program are not automatically eligible for reinstatement. The Dean or designee determines whether a reinstatement request is eligible for consideration on a case-by-case basis. If permitted, the student must submit a written request outlining the basis for reconsideration and evidence of readiness to meet program standards.

K. Records and Confidentiality

The School of Nursing will maintain records related to reviews, decisions, and appeals in accordance with University record retention policies and applicable privacy regulations. Information will be handled in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and other applicable privacy regulations. Records may include reports, investigation notes, correspondence, and decisions.

University Honor Code

From the NDMU Student Handbook, August 2024

<https://www.ndm.edu/student-handbook>

4880-6805-9613, v. 1

Introduction

The Honor Code of Notre Dame of Maryland University has been a tradition since 1936. It is founded on a pledge each student takes to act with integrity in academic and personal life. Based on the individual's personal integrity and active concern for others, the Honor Code is motivated by personal values, religious conviction, good taste, and the common good. Its purpose is to establish a University community founded on personal honor and mutual trust. This combination of personal commitment and community responsibility helps strengthen each student as an individual and develop mature powers of judgment and reason, as well as intellectual and social honesty. The Honor Code signifies the ideal of academic and personal integrity that each student is expected to model. Living the Honor Code strengthens the entire community and cultivates an atmosphere of unity founded on trust.

Belonging to the Notre Dame Community is both a privilege and a responsibility. It is a privilege for those who qualify and carry the responsibility to abide by the Honor Code. Adhering to the Honor Code is a responsibility shared by the entire campus community. Its effectiveness depends upon individual acceptance of responsibility and the reciprocal cooperation of students, faculty, staff, and administration. Ultimately, each member of the community is expected to assume responsibility for her/his/his own conduct and to assume reasonable responsibility for the conduct of others. This results in mutual respect and each member of the community's commitment to civility. Within the spirit of the Honor Code, this may mean kind and courteous admonition when one observes another's inappropriate conduct. At other times, it means cooperating with authorities when allegations of violations of academic or behavioral standards arise, or encouraging violators to self-report.

Students in the Notre Dame of Maryland University School of Nursing are expected to demonstrate high standards of character. Honesty and ethical behavior are hallmarks of the nursing profession and essential qualities for anyone who aspires to become a professional nurse. The nursing profession requires Registered Nurses and nursing students to maintain impeccable character and to live professional and private lives that exemplify high standards of ethical conduct.

Honor Pledge

With a keen sense of responsibility, I accept this symbol of my entrance into the world of scholarship. And I give this pledge of my purpose to wear it worthily.

I shall try to follow all truth,
I shall try to see all beauty,
I shall try to be all goodness,
and thus, to come to that Eternal Wisdom
Which is the Word of God.

Honor Commitment

I agree to uphold academic and social integrity in furthering my education and the welfare of the University of Notre Dame, my classmates, and myself. In fulfilling my obligations under the Honor Code, I agree to abide by all academic and social policies and standards at Notre Dame of Maryland University and the School of Nursing.

Alleged Violations of Academic Standards

From the NDMU Student Handbook, August 2024

<https://www.ndm.edu/student-handbook>

4880-6805-9613, v. 1

Section 1: Academic Integrity/ Misconduct Policy

To participate as a student at Notre Dame of Maryland University, one must agree to uphold academic integrity. The University's Honor Code requires academic honesty, and all work submitted by a student is expected to be the student's own. Violations of the Academic Integrity/Misconduct Policy can result in severe penalties, including expulsion from the University. Violations of Academic Integrity/Misconduct Policy include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, falsification, or other actions that violate commonly accepted intellectual and ethical standards within academic communities. The Academic Integrity/Misconduct Policy applies to both in-progress and completed work.

- **Cheating** is taking credit for work that another person has completed, or assisting others in the misrepresentation of their academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - giving or using prohibited written and/or oral information during tests, quizzes, or examinations;
 - stealing, buying, selling, or in any way distributing an examination;
 - copying ideas or facts from another's paper during an examination or quiz;
 - submitting the same paper in two or more classes, even if the paper is the student's original work;
 - obtaining or providing previously undisclosed test questions or information pertinent to an exam that has not yet been administered;
 - substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such substitution for oneself;
- **Plagiarism** is defined as the appropriation of ideas, facts, phrases, or additional materials (such as maps, charts, artwork, or computer programs) from any source without giving proper credit or offering appropriate documentation. Any material in a paper, report, artwork, or computer program that is not acknowledged is understood to be the original work of the author, unless such material is considered general knowledge. *Students who are unsure whether they have used and documented source material correctly should consult with their instructor before submitting the assignment.*
- **Fabrication and falsification** include the following:
 - Fabrication and/or falsifying laboratory and clinical experiences, internship records, attendance records, research data, survey results, research methods, research results, research conclusions, or any other information and/or process used in the collection and presentation of academic, scientific, or professional materials.
 - Misrepresenting, falsifying, or withholding information concerning admission requirements, university enrollment or status, financial aid application, health records, or other materials required by the University.

Section 1.1: Procedures for Handling Suspected Violations of Academic Integrity/Misconduct Policy

According to the University Honor Code, it is the responsibility of each member of the Notre Dame of Maryland University community to respond to suspected acts of academic dishonesty by:

- Consulting with the individual(s) thought to be involved and encouraging them to report it themselves and/or
- Reporting it to the instructor involved; and/or
- Reporting it to a representative of the Office of Community Standards.

Reporting oneself after committing academic dishonesty is strongly encouraged and may be considered in determining sanctions

A faculty member who, based on personal observations or information provided by others, suspects that a violation has occurred will speak to the suspected student about the situation and, if the violation involves work submitted by the student, shall keep an original copy of the work, if available. In all such cases, the following shall be observed:

- If a faculty member has reasonable proof of a violation, the faculty member shall meet with the student and learn the facts. In consultation with the Department Chair, the faculty member will judge the offense and impose the appropriate sanction(s) from any of the following:
 - an oral reprimand
 - a written reprimand
 - an assignment to repeat the work, to be graded on its merits, for full or partial credit
 - a lower grade or 0 grade on the test, project, or assignment
 - a lower grade in the course
 - a failing grade in the course
 - the successful completion of the academic integrity course/workshop
- The faculty member shall then complete and submit an Academic Integrity Incident Report of the violation to the Office of Community Standards, including the name of the student, the date of the violation, the course, a detailed summary of the violation, the resolution, including any imposed sanctions, and any supporting documentation. The Office of Community Standards will send the report to the student, department chair, and area dean.
- The student will be held to the sanction imposed by the faculty member unless the student files a timely appeal as described below under Academic Standards Appeal. For instances of repeated academic integrity violations or an egregious academic integrity violation, the student may be considered for additional sanctions beyond those imposed by the faculty member. In such instances, the Office of Community Standards may refer the case to the Honor Board to consider additional sanctions, such as 1) placement on disciplinary probation, 2) suspension from the University, or 3) expulsion from the University. A student dismissed for this reason will not be eligible for readmission to the University. In such an instance, the Responding Party has the right to appeal under Section 7 of this Handbook (rather than Section 1.2) with the Provost or designee serving in place of the AVPSL.
- Except with the approval of the Dean in extenuating circumstances, a student accused of academic dishonesty in a course may not withdraw from that course before a final resolution has been reached regarding an allegation. The option to withdraw from the course with a “W” grade is available only to students who have not been found in violation.

- The Office of Community Standards will maintain records of Academic Integrity Incident Reports and the outcomes.

Section 1.2: Academic Standards Appeals

If the student wishes to appeal the faculty member's finding, the student may file a written appeal, accompanied by documentation, with the Office of Community Standards within five (5) business days of receiving notice of the finding and the imposed sanction. To receive consideration, a student's appeal must be complete upon its submission, including the basis for appeal and any supporting documentation. Within five (5) business days of a timely receipt of the documentation, the area Dean, in consultation with the Office of Community Standards, will determine if the request meets the standards for an appeal. The original decision will only be reviewed to determine if any of the following conditions were present:

- Significant Procedural Error that affected the findings and/or sanctioning decision;
- New Information/Evidence that was not available at the time of the findings and/or sanctioning decision, or that could not have reasonably been discovered with due diligence, that may/would change the finding and/or sanctioning decisions;
- Substantive Due Process Violation; and/or
- Excessiveness or insufficiency of the sanctioning decision

The original decision will stand if none of the above conditions are met. If one or more of the above conditions are met, the area Dean shall refer the case to the Honor Board.

Academic Standards Appeals are a review of the written record. Parties are not entitled to a hearing or a meeting with the Honor Board. The Honor Board may take one of the following actions on appeal:

- A. Dismiss the appeal for failure to meet a deadline or articulate a valid ground of appeal;
- B. Deny the appeal and uphold the initial finding/sanction;
- C. Send the case back to the original or an alternate investigator with specific instructions on the remanded issue(s);
- D. Modify the finding(s) and/or sanction(s);

Within ten (10) business days, the Honor Board will issue a written decision, including a summary of its rationale. The decision of the Honor Board shall be final. The Office of Community Standards will communicate the final determination to the student, faculty member, and area dean.

If the student is found responsible, the Office of Community Standards will impose the final corrective measures, conditions, or sanctions.

Concurrent Violation of Behavioral Standards

If, in the course of a faculty member's investigation of a suspected violation of the University's Academic Standards, the faculty member learns of potential violations of the University's Behavioral Standards, the faculty member may include such alleged Behavioral Standard violation(s) and relevant evidence in their Academic Integrity Incident Report, the Office of Community Standards will investigate and, if appropriate, adjudication.

Section 2: Behavioral Standards

The primary goal of the student disciplinary process is to:

- restore and contribute to the health of the community
- foster academic and communal integrity
- establish facts and determine responsibility,
- and collect and examine information.

Section 2.1: Behavioral Conduct Standards

The University's Honor Code also concerns social accountability and assumes that all students are responsible for themselves, other students, and their guests. The following are examples of prohibited behaviors and activities, irrespective of location (on or off University property) and whether they are committed against members of the University community or others.

- **Alcohol:** Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, except where permitted by law and University policy. (See Substance Abuse Policy).
 - Possession of common source containers, such as kegs; devices, such as beer bongs or funnels; or participation in games or activities whose purpose is the consumption of alcohol.
 - Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons under 21 years of age.
 - Open containers or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons 21 years of age or older in any public area (unless it is an official University-approved event), including common space within a residence hall. Intoxication is defined as when an individual has consumed enough alcoholic beverages to observably affect their manner, speech, muscular movement, general appearance, or behavior.
 - Sale, distribution, or provision of alcoholic beverages to and/or by anyone under 21 years of age.
 - Transportation of alcohol by individuals 21 years of age or older must occur in its original, unopened container.
 - Collections of containers that contain or previously contained alcohol are not permitted.
- **Complicity:** Allowing a violation to occur by another University community member, by enabling or not reporting it. Students who know of another person's attempt to violate the Code are required to remove themselves from the situation and report the behavior to an appropriate university official.
- **Unauthorized Entry/Damage to or misuse of property:** unauthorized entry into University facilities or property, and unauthorized use or misuse of University property or the property of others.
- **Violent, Abusive, or Threatening Conduct:** Behavior that jeopardizes the safety and health of self or others.
 - Acts or threats of physical assault or abuse.
 - Stalking is defined as a course of conduct (repetitive and menacing) that is directed (pursuit, following, harassing, or interfering) at a specific person that is unwelcome and would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

- Brandishing a weapon or an object, which appears to be a weapon, in a threatening manner.
- Intimidating, threatening, or directing abusive language toward another person.
- Failure to cease repetitive unwanted behavior directed toward a particular individual or individuals.
- **Harassment and Discrimination:** (See Non-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Misconduct Policy, and Student Harassment and Discrimination Policy).
Unlawful discrimination, which includes verbal, physical, or graphic conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group based on their Protected Status, when such conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive that it alters the conditions of education, employment, or participation in a University-sponsored, recognized, or approved program, visit, or activity; and creates an environment that a reasonable person in similar circumstances would find intimidating, hostile, humiliating, demeaning or offensive.
- **Disorderly Conduct** includes the following:
Loud, aggressive, or other behavior which disrupts or obstructs, or is intended to disrupt or obstruct, the orderly functioning of the University (including classrooms) or disturbs the peace of person(s) on University Premises. For example,
making excessive noise or gestures either inside or outside a building.
- Verbally abusing University officials (including students appointed to act as representatives of the University), acting in performance of their duties
- Behaving in a lewd or indecent manner.
- Rioting – Taking part in a violent public disturbance.
- **Dishonesty:** Non-academic dishonesty, including but not limited to:
 - Furnishing false or misleading information to the University or University personnel, including Public Safety, or at University disciplinary proceedings.
 - Forgery, unauthorized alteration, or unauthorized use of any University documents, records, or identification cards, including computer records, misuse of computer facilities, and electronic mailing systems.
 - Fraud, through act or omission, committed against another member of the University community or others.
 - Knowingly initiating, or causing to be initiated, any false report, warning, or threat.
- **Drugs:** Possession, use, and/or distribution of illegal drugs or controlled substances as defined by law, including those without a valid prescription. (“Drugs”)
 - Possession of paraphernalia, including any item typically used to inhale/ingest/mask Drugs, regardless of whether the item has been used for illegal purposes
 - Possession of illegal drugs
 - Use of illegal or controlled substances without a valid prescription
 - Distribution (any form of exchange, gift, transfer, or sale) of drugs
- **Gambling:** Illegal gambling, defined as playing games of chance for money in violation of any federal, state, or local law.
- **Hazing:** Any action taken or any situation created intentionally or unintentionally that causes humiliation, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule and risks emotional and/or

physical harm to a member or members of a group or team, whether new or not, regardless of the person's willingness to participate.

- **Interfering with Fire and Safety Regulations:** Knowingly or negligently causing or attempting to cause a fire on University Premises.
 - Unauthorized use of, tampering with, or misuse of fire and safety equipment, including, but not limited to, fire extinguishers, smoke alarms, sprinkler systems, or exit signs.
 - Unauthorized fire setting of any material on any University Premises, or on areas adjacent to University Premises.
 - Disregarding a fire alarm signal or refusing to evacuate a building or a section of a building when a fire alarm is sounding.
 - Possession, use, or threatened use of fireworks, bombs, or explosive devices of any character.
 - Use of open flame devices or combustible materials, including chemicals, which endanger the safety or well-being of the University community.
- **Failure to Comply:** Failure to comply with reasonable directions of University officials, including students appointed to act as representatives of the University who are acting in performance of their duties. Directives to cooperate in the administration of this handbook, including those to appear and give testimony at a University disciplinary proceeding, as well as directives to produce identification, are included in the scope of this provision.
- **Noxious Odor:** A noxious odor is ANY fragrance or aroma that has such intensity that it can become apparent and disruptive to those around. This may become noxious when the smell is unreasonably intense to the average person (e.g., cigarettes, cannabis, cigars or pipes, perfume, air freshener, or a larger amount of dirty laundry).
- **Solicitation:** Unauthorized solicitation, sale, or promotion of any goods or services in University-owned or operated property, including residence halls, or at University-sponsored events.
- **Theft**
 - Attempted or actual theft of and/or damage to University properties, property of a member of the University community, or other personal or public property
 - Unauthorized possession of University property or the property of others: and/or
 - Theft or other abuse of computer equipment, network, or facilities, including illegal or unauthorized downloading of files. (See Acceptable Usage Policy for Technology)
- **Violation of Laws:** Violating local, state, and federal laws, regulations, or ordinances.
- **Weapon Violation:** Use, possession, or storage of any firearms, firearm replicas, or other items that can be mistaken for firearms, ammunition, air rifles, slingshots, paintball guns, swords, knives with blades longer than 3' (other than kitchen utensils used and possessed solely for that purpose), tasers, and anything else that can cause intentional bodily harm to others and, other weapons, or objects that could be construed as weapons, on University Premises. Illegal or unauthorized possession of explosives, dangerous chemicals, or any other items of any kind that pose a potential hazard to the safety or health of others on University Premises. Brandishing a weapon or an object that appears to be a weapon in a threatening manner.

Section 2.2: Types of Conduct Proceedings

Behavioral violations of the Student Code of Conduct or other University Policies shall be resolved by one of the following:

Administrative Hearing

An administrative hearing involves a meeting between the conduct administrator or designee(s) and the Responding Party. In cases of minor violations in University housing, the conduct administrator or designee(s) will meet with the reporting party, witnesses, and others involved, and obtain and review relevant evidence. The conduct administrator or designee(s) will review the allegations and evidence with the Responding Party and allow the Responding Party to respond. The conduct administrator or designee(s) will determine based on preponderance of the evidence whether the responding party is responsible for the alleged Code violation(s), and, if so, issue (an) appropriate sanction(s).

Agreed Resolution

An agreed resolution meeting is an informal resolution option in which the Responding Party meets with a conduct administrator to discuss the incident and, together, determine whether the Responding Party violated a policy and, if so, what sanctions may be appropriate. If the Responding Party agrees to the resolution, they waive the right to a formal hearing and appeal, and the resolution is final. If an agreement cannot be reached, the Responding Party may proceed to a formal hearing.

Honor Board

A hearing comprising 1 faculty member, 1 staff member, and 1 student representative to determine responsibility for the alleged violations and to assign disciplinary outcomes. The Honor Board receives annual and ongoing training in matters relevant to this Student Handbook. The conduct administrator or designee serves as a non-voting advisor to the Honor Board.

Fitness for Safe Clinical Practice and Substance Use

Expectations for Students

Expectations

To ensure patient safety and professional conduct in all learning environments, nursing students are expected to:

1. Report to all simulation, laboratory, and clinical learning experiences in a condition that supports safe and effective patient care, including full control of judgment, mental faculties, and manual dexterity.
2. Comply with all safety directives issued by faculty, clinical instructors, or clinical agency personnel, including requests to leave the learning environment or participate in required drug or alcohol screening.
3. Adhere to the professional standards expected of nurses, including those outlined in the *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, the *Maryland Nurse Practice Act*, and the University's behavioral and academic policies.

Suspected substance use is considered a violation of professional standards as outlined in the *Code of Ethics for Nurses* and the *University Student Handbook*. In accordance with the *Maryland Nurse Practice Act (§8-316(7))*, a nurse is prohibited from providing professional services while:

1. under the influence of alcohol; or
2. using any narcotic or controlled dangerous substance, as defined in §5-101 of the Criminal Law Article, or any other drug in excess of therapeutic amounts or without a valid medical indication.

Students enrolled in the nursing program are considered to be providing professional services during all simulation learning experiences and during all aspects of designated direct patient care learning experiences. To protect patient safety and maintain a safe learning environment, the School of Nursing reserves the authority to immediately remove a student from simulation, clinical experiences, or other educational activities if a faculty member or clinical supervisor determines that the student's behavior, condition, or performance may pose a risk to patient safety or the safety of others, whether or not actual impairment is confirmed.

Failure to comply with a faculty or clinical supervisor's directive related to safety—including a request to leave a clinical or simulation environment or to participate in required drug or alcohol screening—may constitute a violation of professional conduct standards.

Refusal to comply may result in removal from the learning environment and referral for review under the *School of Nursing Professional Conduct and Professional Behaviors Investigation and Resolution Policy*.

The School of Nursing is responsible for maintaining a safe academic and clinical learning environment for students, faculty, staff, and patients, and will cooperate with clinical partners to ensure the safe and effective care of patients during nursing students' clinical experiences.

Procedure for Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing

1. A student who demonstrates behavioral changes reasonably suspected to be related to substance use may be required to undergo drug testing. A determination of reasonable suspicion may be made by a faculty member, School of Nursing administrator, or the clinical agency. The basis for reasonable suspicion will be documented.
2. Drug testing for reasonable suspicion will be arranged by the **School of Nursing**, unless conducted in cooperation with the clinical agency. The student is responsible for the cost of testing unless otherwise required by the clinical agency.
3. Drug testing will be conducted by a certified collection facility using established **chain-of-custody procedures** to ensure specimen integrity and confidentiality.
4. Testing will screen for substances that are illegal or prone to abuse, including alcohol.
5. Non-negative screening results will be confirmed through additional testing in accordance with standard laboratory procedures.
6. The **Dean of the School of Nursing or designee** will notify the student of confirmed positive test results.
7. If testing results are negative, the result will be documented, and the investigation will conclude unless additional evidence warrants further review.
8. Failure to submit to drug testing when directed under this policy may be treated as a violation of professional conduct standards and may result in **dismissal from the nursing program**.
9. A confirmed positive drug test may result in **dismissal from the nursing program**, consistent with University and School of Nursing policies.

Confidentiality of Drug Testing Results

Drug testing results will be treated as confidential information and maintained in accordance with applicable privacy laws and University policies. Results will only be disclosed when:

- required by law,
- necessary for School of Nursing officials to perform their responsibilities, and
- necessary to protect patient safety or public health, authorized by the student in writing.

The School of Nursing and the University reserve the right to use and disclose drug testing results when necessary for internal academic proceedings or to defend student grievances or legal claims.

Consequences of Suspected Substance Abuse

Students who are suspected of substance use or who appear impaired while providing professional services as nursing students may be subject to actions, including, but not limited to:

- Immediate removal from the laboratory or clinical environment
- Reporting the incident to the Dean of the School of Nursing
- Notification of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs, when appropriate
- Notification of Student Life, when applicable
- Initiation of reasonable suspicion drug testing
- Implementation of actions consistent with University and School of Nursing policies

Fitness for Duty Determination

A student removed from a clinical or laboratory environment for suspected impairment will **not be permitted** to return to the clinical or simulation learning environment until an appropriate assessment has been completed and the School of Nursing has determined that the student is fit to participate safely in clinical learning activities.

***Impaired**—a person's mental or physical capabilities are reduced below their normal levels (with or without any reasonable accommodation for a disability). An impaired student manifests deterioration in function compared to previously observed levels, or does not function at a level normally expected under the prevailing circumstances. Impairment may exist in one or more domains, including psychomotor activity and skills, conceptual or factual recall, integrative or synthetic thought processes, judgment, attentiveness, demeanor, and attitudes as manifested in speech or actions. Impairment will include addiction to and/or physical dependence upon chemical substances.

XIII. RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND FACILITIES

Accessibility Support Services

Overview

Learning support services and accommodations are available to students covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Academic accommodations are set up on an ongoing basis upon students' request and submission of the necessary documentation.

Students seeking academic accommodation from Accessibility and Health Promotion (AHP) do so because they have a documented disability and/or health condition that impacts learning, or suspect it does. Students seeking accommodations should work with a medical professional who can assess the disability or condition and identify how it impacts the student's learning. Based on the findings, the provider will generate a list of recommended accommodations.

Accommodations related to mental health; it is not uncommon for mental health providers to see a client for a minimum of 4 sessions before making any diagnosis and accommodation recommendations.

Setting up accommodations can be a quick process if students have information about their learning style/ challenges,/disability. However, if a student is 'figuring out' or investigating their learning style due to challenges/disability/or chronic health conditions, the process may take longer, as a medical professional can best address the diagnosis and its impact on the student's learning.

Procedure

1. If a student requires accommodation in a course, they must contact the Director of Accessibility at 410-532-5401.
2. When requesting academic accommodations for *the first time*, please prepare a copy of the 504 plan, Psycho-Education evaluation, or the [Accommodation Request Form](#). Direct your questions about acceptable documentation to accessibility@ndm.edu.
3. After submitting the form, the Director will schedule a time to meet and review the documentation, discuss the services offered, and identify any accommodations required for specific courses.
4. It is extremely important that a student begin this process at the beginning of the semester. Students are encouraged not to wait until the first test or paper.
5. It is the student's responsibility to share the accommodation plan with the course faculty before the due date for tests or other assignments.
6. Please note that there are times when setting up academic accommodation at the end of the semester or before a final project or exam may not be possible.
7. Once the student has secured accommodation from the Office of Accessibility, it is the student's responsibility to forward the memo to each faculty member. Faculty may request a meeting with the student to clarify expectations and determine procedures for complying with the accommodations before the accommodations are honored. A student and faculty member will reach an agreement in writing before accommodations are honored.

Bookstore

The NDMU Bookstore is located on the **lower level of Caroline** and offers school supplies, snacks, apparel, and other personal items during the academic year. Please note that **in-person hours are limited**.

Online Bookstore:

Apparel, spirit wear, and textbooks may be purchased online:

[Online Bookstore](#) | [Home](#)

Questions:

For inquiries about textbook or merchandise orders, gift shop hours, or other bookstore matters, please email **bookstore@ndm.edu**.

Campus Ministry

The primary mission of the Office of Campus Ministry at Notre Dame of Maryland University is to strengthen the faith tradition upon which the University is built and to foster the spiritual development of the entire campus community. Campus Ministry provides such opportunities as Eucharistic liturgies, ecumenical and sacramental prayer services, discussion and prayer groups, retreats, counseling, and spiritual direction. Community Service is also a vital part of Campus Ministry, providing students with opportunities to volunteer in Baltimore and throughout the mid-Atlantic region. Several student organizations are integral to the office of Campus Ministry: the student Campus Ministry Team, the Community Service Organization, Peer Ministry, and the Liturgical Music Group. In its truest sense, Catholic Campus Ministry welcomes people of all faiths. To learn more, email campusministry@ndm.edu or call 410-532-3172.

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center offers confidential services to all full-time students at no cost, and to part-time students for a modest fee. The primary services provided are individual counseling (both brief and long-term) and group counseling (topics vary depending on client needs). Consultations, referrals, and programs/workshops are also offered. The Counseling Center is committed to promoting students' psychological and emotional wellness and, as such, is well utilized throughout the academic year. For counseling services, email CounselCtr@ndm.edu or call 410-532-5364.

Facilities and IT Resources

School of Nursing

The School of Nursing offers undergraduate and graduate nursing courses in the University Academic Building (UAB), a modern academic facility that has been in use for the past 13 years. Classrooms are intentionally designed to support interactive, student-centered learning and are furnished with moveable seating and tables to accommodate varied instructional strategies and learner needs. Classrooms are equipped with instructional technology, including computers, wireless internet access, projectors, and whiteboards, and typically accommodate 20-40 students.

The UAB also includes a large technology-enhanced study area with collaborative workstations that promote inclusive learning, peer engagement, and equitable access to academic resources. Additional collaborative study spaces are available at UAB and in selected campus buildings, with some locations accessible for up to 18 hours per day, supporting flexible study options for students balancing academic, work, and personal responsibilities.

Technology Access

Students have access to over 70 fully equipped computer workstations, loaner laptops, and troubleshooting services. Cloud-based tools, including Microsoft 365, allow students and faculty to access email, file storage, and Canvas from any internet-connected device.

Technology Support

NDMU provides comprehensive technological support to enhance student learning and engagement. A centralized help desk offers technical information technology (IT) support to both on-campus and remote users, ensuring timely assistance. The School of Nursing receives specialized support for simulation and testing technologies critical to its curricula.

Online courses are delivered by Canvas, with academic and technology support services available remotely, including 24/7 tech help. NDMU ensures that learning experiences are comparable in rigor and quality to those delivered in traditional modalities.

Help Desk

The Information Technology Help Desk is available to answer questions about campus technology, including software, email, the Learning Management System, and related topics, for students, faculty, and staff. Other services provided by the Help Desk include production and distribution of the official Notre Dame ID card, distribution of email account information, and assistance with phone mail. For information and hours, call 410-532-5200 or email HelpDesk@ndm.edu.

Financial Aid Office

This Office is responsible for preparing and communicating information on financial aid. This office assists students in applying for and receiving student loans, grants, scholarships, and other types of financial aid. Call or email the Office directly with financial aid questions. The Office is in the best position to facilitate answering students' questions. For additional information, click on this link: [Financial Aid](#). Students may also email Financial Aid at finaid@ndm.edu or call 410-532-5369.

Loyola/Notre Dame Library

In the valley below Knott Science Center is the Loyola/Notre Dame Library, which provides the information services and resources required to support the education programs of the two institutions. The Library's website is the gateway to a wealth of information, including numerous full-text databases, the Library's shared catalog (books from 3 other college/university libraries can be requested online and will be sent within 48 hours), and the full range of Internet resources. It also provides links to many other Internet sites that are particularly useful to students. Databases the Library subscribes to can be accessed from any campus network computer and are also available off-campus to current students. The Library's collection consists of 440,000 volumes, 1800 print and 14,000 electronic periodical

subscriptions, and 30,000 media items (many of which are videos, DVDs, and CDs). Books or articles not owned by the Library can be acquired through interlibrary loan. Reference librarians are available seven days a week to guide students using the Library and its resources. You can contact the Library at 410-617-6800 or www.lndl.org.

Parking

Students on the main campus must register their vehicle with the Public Safety/Security office located in the front hallway of Caroline. Students may park in any area designated for student parking, except those posted as reserved. No parking is allowed in areas designated by white-painted curbs or non-traditional parking lanes. Illegally parked or unregistered cars may be ticketed or towed at the owner's risk and expense. A student's grades may be withheld until outstanding parking tickets are paid.

Service Learning

Educational experiences are also designed to enhance multidisciplinary collaboration, strengthen professional integrity, and deepen the student's social and ethical commitments. Integrating service learning into the teaching-learning process may promote personal transformation for students—often strengthening empathy, deepening social commitments, and fostering a deeper, broader understanding of complex societal issues.

The School of Nursing is committed to providing academic service-learning experiences. Through service-learning projects/opportunities, academic coursework is linked with service to select community agencies. The teaching and learning process is enriched for students and faculty, and the agencies receive valuable resources.

Student Experience

Career Center

NDMU's Career Center supports nursing students and alumnae/alumni in developing a professional identity and making informed career decisions. The Center provides guidance on career planning, résumé and cover letter preparation, and interview strategies to help candidates effectively communicate their skills and experiences to prospective employers.

Students also receive support in navigating modern hiring processes, including automated application and recruitment systems. The Career Center uses Handshake to connect students with employers and partners with local college consortia to expand opportunities for internships, experiential learning, and employment.

For more information, visit the Career Center. [Career Center](#).

Student Success Center

NDMU Tutoring Services provides in-person and virtual academic support for students in the College of Undergraduate Studies. Peer tutoring is available to these students upon request. Graduate students, Adult Undergraduate Studies students, and Pharmacy students should contact their course instructor for academic assistance.

The Tutoring Center offers a variety of resources designed to support academic success and collaborates with multiple campus offices to meet students' diverse needs.

The Tutoring Center is located in Theresa Hall, Room 022, and serves as a central hub for academic support, including peer tutoring, workshops, writing assistance, academic coaching, and other learning supports.

Hours of Operation:

Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Appointments:

Students may schedule an appointment at: [Tutoring and Academic Assistance](#)

For additional information, contact tutoring@ndm.edu

Updates:

Follow Tutoring Services on Instagram [@ndmu_tutoringservices](#) for announcements and updates.

Student Life Division

The Division of Student Life has many offices, programs, and resources that support students.

Office of Accessibility & Student Inclusion

- Delivers services designed to assist students who have diagnoses that require accommodation to maximize successful participation in college life
- Provides leadership, partnership, support, and resources for all diversity initiatives to foster diversity, inclusion, and belonging

Office of Case Management & Community Standards

- Administering the student conduct system and ensuring that all student conduct proceedings are carried out in accordance with University policies and procedures, and providing comprehensive services to maintain the University's standard of conduct and the Honor Code.
- To ensure equal opportunity and compliance with related governmental requirements and anti-discrimination laws.
- Works with the Title IX Office to investigate discrimination and harassment.
- Follow-up of behavioral and academic incidents.
- Referral and support of students of concern.
- Advisement of the University Honor Board

Any questions can be directed to StudentLife@ndm.edu.

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