REGISTERED NURSE TO BACHELOR DEGREE IN NURSING (RN-BSN) COMPLETION PROGRAM

2019 STUDENT HANDBOOK

…preparing RN to BSN nursing students for evidence-based practice, service and leadership in urban communities.
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Welcome Student!

Welcome to the University of Houston-Downtown, RN-BSN Nursing Program. We are pleased to provide you with an innovative, interdisciplinary program of excellence toward continued advanced education and service to your community as a BSN.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information regarding the RN-BSN program policies and information. In addition to this handbook the student should access the University of Houston-Downtown Catalog http://catalog.uhd.edu/ and University of Houston-Downtown Student Handbook https://www.uhd.edu/student-resources/handbook/Pages/default.aspx. Please access the sites and review program information at the beginning of each semester since the policies may change. The RN-BSN Nursing Program staff and faculty encourage constructive communication and discussions regarding effective student outcomes and program revisions. The Nursing Student and UHD Student Handbooks are available to provide a foundation for such discussions. Refer to course syllabi for specific policies and grading distributions.

The program courses may be on campus, blended with online activities, or provided online in the future. The UHD Technology Teaching & Learning Center https://www.uhd.edu/computing/labs-technology-centers/technology-teaching-learning-center/Pages/ttlc-index.aspx provides specialized talent in technology to support you as a UHD student. You can obtain help and support around the clock for all of your e-learning needs.

The University of Houston-Downtown seeks to provide equal educational opportunity without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age, disability or veteran status in compliance with Title IX regulations and all other federal and state regulations.

NOTE: Changes in this document are posted in course syllabi, announced in class, or sent by email or Blackboard posting.

Linda Dune, PhD, RN, CNL
Associate Professor and Director, Registered Nurse to Bachelor of Nursing Program
STRUCTURE AND GOVERNANCE

The University of Houston-Downtown’s Mission and Vision

The University of Houston-Downtown is a comprehensive four-year university offering bachelors and selected master's degree programs and providing strong academic and career preparation as well as life-long learning opportunities. Located in the heart of the city, the University reflects the diversity of the Greater Houston Area, and through its academic programs, engages with the community to address the needs and advance the development of the region. UHD is an inclusive community dedicated to integrating teaching, service and scholarly research to develop students' talents and prepare them for success in a dynamic global society.

The University of Houston-Downtown will be a premier city university engaging every student in high-impact educational experiences and ensuring that students graduate with 21st century skills.

The College of Sciences and Technology (CST) Mission and Vision

The College of Sciences and Technology (CST) at the University of Houston-Downtown mission provides a variety of educational experiences to meet the intellectual and technical demands for the ever-changing world. CST offers bachelor’s degrees in broad disciplines in the computer science, engineering technology, natural sciences, mathematics and statistics.

The CST will be a model of science education toward providing each student the opportunity to learn by working in diverse teams on faculty-led projects, gaining hands-on experience, and advancing individual skills and qualifications toward using their knowledge and skills in professional settings.

The Nursing Program Mission/Vision/Philosophy:

Mission:

The mission of the RN-BSN Program is to advance registered nurses, who are already competent and caring, to meet the population-focused health care needs of the community in the 21st century. The professional program graduates from University of Houston-Downtown will be able to practice within complex healthcare systems exemplifying the roles of: a) member of a profession, b) provider of patient-centered care, c) patient safety advocate, and d) member of the health care team.

Vision:

The RN-BSN program aspires to be the provider of baccalaureate prepared nurses within a diverse downtown community to address the needs and enrich the lived experience of populations served through leadership and scholarship in the greater Houston area

Philosophy: (Key terms are bolded and defined to follow)

The UHD Nursing Program faculty believe that nursing is both an art and science. Nurses improve the health of individuals, families, communities and populations within the local neighborhood, the state, the nation and the world. The art of nursing is the caring and collaboration that nurses use to foster individual dignity, morals and values. Nurses reflect their ability to use science as a foundation of practice while incorporating concepts of evidence-based practice, health science, and healthcare delivery in order to care for persons as members of society. Faculty view all students as human beings who are unique and multidimensional. Faculty raise professional and social consciences of our students enabling them to become successful leaders in the healthcare workforce. The RN-BSN Program seeks to instill the desire for life-long learning continuing through graduate studies in our students. The UHD RN-BSN Program faculty view the concepts of nursing, person, community,
health, caring, collaboration, and evidence-based practice as dynamic, independent and interdependent as defined in the following statements:

**Nursing** is a caring profession gleaning concepts from multiple disciplines to assist people, families, communities or populations toward health, well-being and learning to maintain health. Nurses alleviate suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of the human response to illness. The professional nurse advocates for legal, ethical, political or economic issues that may influence a patient’s health. In addition, the BSN delivers care in a complex healthcare environment by using delegation and resource management.

A **person** is a complex being worthy of comprehensive care by a multidisciplinary team. The person is composed of cultural, emotional, intellectual, physiological, and spiritual characteristics. People are responsible for participation in maintaining their own health.

**Health** is an ever-changing state of well-being. It is an active process measured on a continuum shared by the person, family, community and population while collaborating with the multidisciplinary healthcare team.

**Community** is a group of individuals composed of persons who each have cultural, ethnic, religious concerns. A community is a dynamic arrangement within boundaries of a locality and may expand to global in nature.

**Caring** is the way in which nurses connect with persons with empathy and compassion. Nurses connect with the person, family, community, and population through translation of principles of altruism, integrity, and social justice into sensitive, safe and exemplary quality care.

**Evidence-based practice** is the interventional approach that nurses use to deliver high quality care within a systematic problem solving approach based on scholarly activity.

**Collaboration** is a partnership that recognizes and accepts others within the healthcare team as unique providers with expertise, power, and a unique sphere of influence. The healthcare team has commonality of goals that benefit the person receiving care and each member of the team.

**RN-BSN Program Goals:**

1. Provide innovative high-impact courses that combine online and face-to-face support for the diverse community of nurses from varied professional experiences.
2. Provide a foundation for student research and evidence-based practices to support future graduate study.
3. Develop and maintain strong collaborative partnerships with community agencies, organizations, and colleges within the UHD Nursing community of interest.
4. Involve faculty and students in community and university transformative leadership initiatives.
5. Foster faculty and student research incorporating creative activities to expand scholarly collaborations across UHD and community college disciplines.
RN-BSN Program Expected Student Outcomes

The RN-BSN Program provides problem-based, student-centered learning that demonstrates the acquisition of competencies and proficiencies from the AACN Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice and The Texas Board of Nursing Differentiated Essential Competencies of Texas Baccalaureate Degree Education Programs.

The graduate will:

**Essential I: Liberal Education for Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice**
As a Provider of Patient-Centered Care, use knowledge from biological, social, behavioral science, and the humanities to apply the nursing process in care provision to diverse persons, families, communities and populations.

**Essential II: Basic Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Care and Patient Safety**
As a Patient Safety Advocate, lead safety and quality improvement activities as a manager and advocate of high quality patient care.

**Essential III: Scholarship for Evidence Based Practice**
As a Provider of Patient-Centered Care, provide patient-centered holistic care based on evidence-based practice, research, and theory analysis.

**Essential IV: Information Management and Application of Patient Care Technology**
As a Provider of Patient-Centered Care and as a Member of the Healthcare Team, coordinate information resources, use decision-making and patient technology in providing quality care for patients, families, communities, and populations.

**Essential V: Health Care Policy, Finance, and Regulatory Environments**
As a Member of the Profession and a Health Care Team, practice within legal scope of practice, coordinate effective and cost conserving care, and following policies of the practice setting.

**Essential VI: Inter-professional Communication and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes**
As a Member of the Healthcare Team, communicate with inter-professional team to plan, deliver, and evaluate care within a safe environment.

**Essential VII: Clinical Prevention and Population Health**
As a Provider of Patient-centered Care, use critical thinking and the nursing process to provide evidence-based preventive and restorative care to patient, families, communities and populations.

**Essential VIII: Professionalism and Professional Values**
As a Member of the Profession, demonstrate professional values fundamental to the discipline of nursing including life-long learning, community interaction, and membership in professional organizations to enhance professional growth.

**Essential IX: Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice**
As a Provider of Patient-Centered Care, provide holistic care to patients, families, groups, communities, and populations across the lifespan in a variety of settings inclusive of the nursing process, leadership principles, and teaching-learning approaches the lifespan and across the continuum of healthcare environments.
RN TO BSN PROGRAM ORGANIZATIONAL CHART
ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The academic calendar of University of Houston Downtown contains important information regarding course beginning and ending dates, final exams, holidays and deadlines for enrollment. The course dates for this program reflect UHD official calendar dates. Please access and review often at: https://www.uhd.edu/academics/calendars/Pages/default.aspx

RN-BSN PROGRAM CURRICULUM

RN-BSN Plan of Study

This plan of study consists of 33 hours of upper division nursing coursework. Sequencing of coursework is dependent on if the student is full-time or part-time. Students must complete the AASN/ADN prior to acceptance. Students planning to matriculate part-time and/or have non-nursing coursework to complete, need to follow University and Departmental degree requirements. For general degree requirements, review the information found at: http://catalog.uhd.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=9&poid=2561&hl=nursing&returnto=search

The following 11 courses comprise the RN-BSN plan of study. For general education and UHD core courses, refer to the University catalog or department website.

PSY 2317 Statistics in Health Care, SOS 3312 Statistics in the Social Sciences or HEA 3312 Biostatistics
NURS 3230 Trends and Issues in Nursing
NURS 3340 Pathophysiology
NURS 4210 Information Management and Health Informatics
NURS 4315 Health Assessment across the Lifespan
NURS 4320 Community Care
NURS or HEA Elective
NURS 3310 Health Care of Older Adults
NURS 4330 Basic Concepts in Nursing Research
NURS 4350 Resource Management in Healthcare
NURS 4595 Professional Practice Capstone

RN-BSN Course Descriptions

NURS 3230 Trends and Issues in Nursing
Credits: 2 Class: 2 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Admission into RN-BSN program or permission of instructor. This course prepares the bachelor’s level professional nurse to focus on political, legal, ethical, and advocacy issues. This course will prepare the student for an enhanced role in policy development and advocacy for patients, families, communities, and populations.

PSY 2317 Statistics in Health Care (please explore other possible courses in UHD Catalog)
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): PSY 1303 and 020 Core Complete
An introduction to the logic and practice of behavioral statistics used in psychological research. Students will learn to compute descriptive and inferential statistics by hand and/or use of computer software.

NURS 3340 Pathophysiology
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): BIOL 1303 and BIOL 1304 or equivalent. This course provides a conceptual base of pathophysiological processes of diseases across the life span. Modifiable risk factors are explored to direct development of a patient-centered nursing process and provide foundations for evidence-based practice.


**NURS 4210 Information Management and Health Informatics**  
Credits: 2 Class: 2 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Permission of instructor.  
This course provides students with knowledge and skills to use technology for safe, efficient and effective patient care. Principles of decision-making, product testing, acquisition, and technology’s role in the nation’s health care delivery and payment systems are explored.

**NURS 4315 Health Assessment across the Lifespan**  
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Admission into the RN-BSN program.  
This course builds on the knowledge and skills of RN’s attained during previous courses that introduced health assessment. In-depth, comprehensive health assessment skills, analysis of normal and abnormal assessment data, and health promotion topics are presented. Competency practice and verification in a lab environment are essential to successful completion of this course.

**NURS 4320 Community Care**  
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Permission of faculty.  
This course focuses on the role of the nurse in the community while considering the environment and epidemiological impact of care for vulnerable populations across the lifespan in home communities and within various agencies in the public health system. This scientific, public health, and nursing process approach to cultural diversity within the health-illness continuum are explored. The clinical experience will involve a clinical assessment and project plan.

**NURS or HEA Elective that may include any of the listed courses:**

- **HEA 3301 Medical Case Management**
- **HEA 3302 Wellness and Aging**
- **HEA 3303 Biological Theories of Aging**
- **HEA 3304 US Healthcare Payment System**
- **HEA 3305 Health and Culture**
- **HEA 4302 Health Policy and Politics**
- **HEA 4303 Ethics for Healthcare Professionals**

**NURS 3310 Health Care of Older Adults**  
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Permission of faculty  
This course provides an overview of the issues affecting the health care of older adults. Common physical, psychological, and societal changes of the population are explored. Health promotion needs of the gerontological patient in diverse settings are a primary focus of this course.

**NURS 4330 Basic Concepts in Nursing Research**  
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0  
Prerequisite(s): One of the following statistics course or equivalent as approved by instructor: PSY 2317, SOS 3312 or HEA 3312. This course introduces the research process and explores commonly used nursing research methods. Critical appraisal and utilization of evidence-based practice in professional nursing are emphasized.

**NURS 4350 Resource Management in Healthcare**  
Credits: 3 Class: 3 Lab: 0 Prerequisite(s): Permission of instructor.  
This course emphasizes leadership, nursing finance, and theories of asset management. Budgeting strategies for effective management in the health care system and management of clinical resources are included in this course.
NURS 4595 Professional Practice Capstone
Credits: 5 Class: 3 Lab: 2 Prerequisite(s): Permission of instructor. Must be taken in the last semester of the BSN program.
This capstone course focuses on collaborative care of patients, families, communities, and populations across the lifespan with complex health care needs. Students apply concepts from previous program courses by creating and implementing a clinical project that provides health promotion activities enabling direct and indirect care for a selected aggregate group. Two (2) semester hours are outside clinical experiences culminating in an outcomes paper.

Two Semester Curriculum Plan

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<td>NURS 3310 (Health Care of Older Adults)</td>
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<td>NURS/BIOL 3340 (Pathophysiology)</td>
<td>NURS 4330 (Basic Concepts in Nursing Research)</td>
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<td>NURS/MIS 4210 (Information Management and Health Informatics)</td>
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<td>NURS 4315 (Health Assessment Across the Lifespan)</td>
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<td>NURS 4320 (Community Care)</td>
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### Three Semester Curriculum Plan

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<td>NURS/MGT 4350 Resource Management in Healthcare</td>
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<td>NURS 4595*** Professional Practice Capstone</td>
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<td>NURS/BIOL 3340 Pathophysiology</td>
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<td>NURS 4320 Community Care</td>
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**Mandatory first course in program

***Mandatory final course in program
UNIVERSITY CORE, GENERAL STUDIES and NURSING COMMON PRE-REQUISITE REQUIREMENTS:

Students must satisfy all University requirements for a bachelor’s degree as found in the section title University Degree Requirements or have a Texas Public institution transcript marked core complete in addition to the program requirements below:

General Education transfer credits are evaluated and approved by the University’s Office of Admissions

Refer to the current University online catalog for University Degree Requirements http://catalog.uhd.edu/content.php?catoid=9&navoid=752#graduation-requirements

Program Completion Requirements:

In addition to general University requirements, students seeking the BSN degree must meet the following:

Completion of at least 120 credits, including:
- 30 final semester hours residency requirement;
- A grade of “C” or better in each nursing course, common core and program of nursing courses.
- Adherence to the standards of acceptable conduct as outlined in the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, the Texas Nurse Practice Act, as well as in the University of Houston-Downtown Student Handbook https://www.uhd.edu/student-resources/handbook/Pages/default.aspx, the Undergraduate Catalog, and the RN-BSN Student Handbook.

BSN Degree Graduation Requirements

To File for Graduation all forms and steps listed on link below must be completed: https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/records-requests/Pages/registrar-graduation.aspx

Graduation application: The online graduation application has nine (9) steps. Please allow 15-20 minutes to successfully complete the online application for graduation in its entirety.

Graduation certification would depend on you successfully completing:
- All requirements on your degree audit.
- Pending courses registered at UHD when graduation application was submitted
- Pending courses in another institution approved by college advisor. Documentation of this needs to be submitted to the Registrar’s office at time of approval. You are required to submit an official transcript with these courses to the Admissions Office to continue with degree certification. Delaying submission of official transcript will affect degree certification.

Commencement

There are typically two commencement ceremonies per year, one for Spring and one for Fall semesters. Please access the commencement webpage for more information. https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/commencement/Pages/default.aspx
STUDENT ADMISSION AND PROGRESSION

Admission Requirements

Submit an application via www.applytexas.org  
Pay non-refundable $50 application fee  
Submit official transcripts from all colleges/universities attended  
Submit an official transcript of an associate degree in nursing (ADN)  
Provide evidence of a valid, unencumbered Texas Registered Nurse or a multi-state compact license  
Submit proof of current CPR/AED certification  
Other admissions requirements, 2.0 GPA, C or better in ADN courses

Minimum Criteria for Consideration for Admission to the RN-BSN Program

Conditional admission may be granted to students of partnership schools to enable joint enrollment at a partner college and UHD. Unconditional acceptance to the UHD RN to BSN is contingent upon completion of all admission requirements.

Academic Advisement

All students must be advised prior to registering for any courses in any given semester. Upon initial acceptance to a nursing program, the student should contact the Nursing Program Coordinator or Advisor to obtain course registration information. Students may contact the advising staff at any time regarding questions about the curriculum requirements. It is the student’s responsibility to validate curriculum requirements for the RN to BSN degree and meet the requirements for graduation.

Progression Policy

Grades in all nursing courses are calculated per the course syllabus and are reported as a letter grade. Students are required to earn a grade of "C" or higher in all nursing courses. All nursing courses required for the program will be evaluated based on satisfactory completion of class, lab, and clinical performance experiences (CPE). In a course, which includes both theory and CPE components, the student must pass both components separately in order to pass the course.

CPE performance is evaluated per the course syllabus and posted rubric. Scoring an “unsatisfactory” rating on the final CPE score constitutes a course failure. Students must successfully complete the CPE component of the course to successfully complete the course. Scoring an unsatisfactory rating on the CPE component of the course results in a grade of "F" for the course and CPE. A grade of “pass” in the CPE component of the course is required to successfully complete, or pass, the co-requisite theory portion of the course.

Students are placed on academic probation in the Nursing Program if they withdraw and/or drop from one nursing course and/or receive a grade of "D" or "F" in any nursing course. Students on academic probation must notify the Nursing Program Academic Progression Committee at Nursing@UHD.edu within two weeks of receiving a letter of probation. Approvals for readmission are not automatic.

Students on academic probation are subject to dismissal from the Nursing Program if they withdraw and/or drop for a second time from any nursing course and/or receive a second "D" or "F" while on academic probation even if the student has passed a repeated course with a "C" or above.
Students who withdraw from the University, drop a nursing course, or have a failure in a nursing course must notify the Nursing Program Coordinator or Director as to their intent prior to re-enrollment. If a student is readmitted to the UHD Nursing Program, the student’s re-enrollment is contingent on available space. The decision of this committee is confidential and final. An appeal is possible through the College of Science and Technology appeal process. The student is required to submit the Academic Suspension Appeal Form at [https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/academic-history/Pages/academic-suspension-appeal-CS.aspx](https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/academic-history/Pages/academic-suspension-appeal-CS.aspx)

Undergraduate students may enroll in a course at UHD no more than 3 times. Students who withdraw and/or drop from a nursing course with a co-requisite requirement must withdraw and/or drop from the other co-requisite courses as well.

Students who are in the process of appealing a course grade through the College of Science and Technology Academic Appeals process may not enroll in any subsequent nursing courses for which the course under appeal is a prerequisite. If students have registered early, they will be administratively withdrawn from those courses. RN-BSN students must maintain consecutive enrollment in the program until graduation. Students who do not maintain enrollment for one semester will be placed on inactive status and will need to submit a letter to the Nursing Program Progression Committee via Nursing@UHD.edu in order to continue.

In addition, RN-BSN students must maintain a valid unencumbered RN Texas license while a student in the program and must report any changes in status in writing to the Program Director.
Academic Honesty Policy

The UHD Academic Honesty Code: As a UHD student, I pledge to be honest in all academic activities and not tolerate dishonesty. [https://www.uhd.edu/administration/employment-services-operations/resources/Documents/PS03A19.pdf#search=honesty](https://www.uhd.edu/administration/employment-services-operations/resources/Documents/PS03A19.pdf#search=honesty)

The Nursing Program Honor Code incorporates UHD's Student Honor Code. In affirming acceptance to the codes students pledge to maintain academic integrity and professional behavior at all times. Students are responsible for doing their own work and avoiding all forms of academic dishonesty.


The most common academic honesty violations are cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:
- Submitting material that is not one's own.
- Submitting substantially similar material in more than one course, even if it is one's own work, without the instructor’s permission.
- Using information or devices that are not allowed by the faculty member.
- Obtaining and/or using unauthorized material.
- Fabricating information.
- Violating procedures prescribed to protect the integrity of a test, or other evaluation exercise.
- Collaborating with others on assignments without the faculty member's consent.
- Cooperating with or helping another student to cheat.
- Having another person take an examination in the student's place.
- Altering exam answers and requesting that the exam be re-graded.
- Communicating with any person during an exam, other than the faculty member or exam proctor.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:
- Directly quoting the words of others without using quotation marks or indented format to identify them.
- Using sources of information (published or unpublished) without identifying them.
- Paraphrasing materials or ideas of others without identifying the sources.

Anti-plagiarism software may be used in courses where papers are required. An unjustified similarity score of greater than 25% will be viewed as plagiarism.

Resolution of Academic Honesty Violations

A student involved in an academic honesty proceeding may continue to attend all classes until the matter is resolved. The student must follow the Appeal Procedure explained in the Academic Honesty Policy PS 3.A.19. [https://www.uhd.edu/administration/employment-services-operations/resources/Documents/PS03A19.pdf#search=honesty](https://www.uhd.edu/administration/employment-services-operations/resources/Documents/PS03A19.pdf#search=honesty)

If a faculty member believes a student has committed an academic honesty violation, the faculty member may request a meeting with the student as soon as reasonably possible to attempt to resolve the incident. If the faculty member determines a violation has occurred and/or a penalty has been assigned, he or she will send the student a copy of this policy statement to the student's official university email account, complete an Academic Honesty Report, and forward a copy to the faculty member's chair and the Office of the Dean of Students. The faculty member may assign a penalty; see section 2.5. If a penalty is assigned, the faculty member will send the student a copy of this policy statement and a completed Academic Honesty Report. If appropriate, the faculty member will file a Withdrawal Prevention form notifying the Registrar's Office that the student may not withdraw from the class. The faculty member will
send these documents to the student's official university email account and provide a copy to the faculty member's chair.

The Office of the Dean of Students will maintain a record of each Academic Honesty Report filed on a student. Faculty members or administrators investigating allegations of academic honesty violations may request that the Office of the Dean of Students release to them any previous reports that filed on the student charged with the current allegations.

The penalty for academic honesty violations is left to the discretion of the faculty member and may be modified upon appeal. The penalty will be consistent with the infraction. Giving the penalty of an F in a course should be given in instances of multiple and/or flagrant violations. When an academic honesty violation includes multiple and/or flagrant violations, such as having a substitute take an exam or stealing an exam, the faculty member shall also refer the matter to the Office of the Dean of Students for disciplinary action pursuant to the Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy. The Office of the Dean of Students may also initiate disciplinary action against a student with repeated academic honesty violations.

**Grading Policy**

The grading system for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (RN-BSN) program is based on a letter grade system using A, B, C, D and F. The specific criteria for determining grades and achievement of course requirements are described in each course syllabus.

**Grade Appeal Policy**

This policy provides the due process and resolution to student terminal grade appeal (UHD Student Handbook)

https://www.uhd.edu/student-resources/handbook/Documents/20182019.pdf

**Posting of Grades**

Grades are posted in Blackboard (Bb) as a convenience for students. The official, final course grade is submitted to the registrar’s office at the end of the semester.

**Grading System and Standards**

Refer to catalog and UHD Student Handbook for policies on incomplete grades, withdrawal policy, active military service.

**Email Account Policy**

The University provides email accounts to all current students. Students are required to use their UHD Blackboard email address when communicating with the Nursing faculty regarding course concerns. Students are required to use their UHD email address when communicating with Nursing Administration, faculty and staff who exclusively utilize UHD email addresses to contact students.
Audio/Video Recording, Screen Shot, Reproducing, and Photographing Policy

Students must receive prior permission of the person(s)/vendor presenting class information before photographing, taking screen shots, sharing, or in any way audio and/or recording or videoing formal presentations or informal discussions. Taping, video recording, or photographing in clinical settings is not permitted under any circumstance with the exception of Health Assessment for final evaluation and only as outlined in the course syllabi/guidelines. Photographing, videotaping, filming, digitally recording, or by any other means, secretly viewing with or without a device, another person without that person's consent in any location where the person has a reasonable expectation of privacy is considered a breach in professional conduct.

Student Handbook Policy

Students are responsible for complying with all policies and information contained in the UHD student handbook (http://www.UHD.edu/handbook/) and the UHD Nursing Program RN-BSN Student Handbook. Students will download and print the acknowledgement page to submit via the designated document-tracking site the first week of class as instructed by the site.

Americans with Disabilities Act Policy

The Office of Disability Services provides a variety of support services in compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans Disabilities Act of 1990/Amendments Act of 2008. The Office of Disability Services strives to empower students; foster independence; promote achievement of academic and career goals; and assist students to discover, develop, and demonstrate full potential and abilities. Please contact the Office of Disability Services to determine eligibility for services.

Financial Aid and Scholarship Policy

A variety of state and federal grants, loans, and scholarships are available to help you with educational expenses through the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid. Most of these programs are available to anyone who is enrolled at least on a half-time basis, has satisfactory academic progress and demonstrates financial need. Most financial aid requires submission of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or Texas Application for Student Financial Aid (TASFA) for undocumented students. To apply for financial aid or to receive more specific information about aid opportunities, contact the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, S330, 713-221-8041 or visit our web site at www.uhd.edu/financial. Some nursing student specific scholarships may be available. Contact the Nursing Program Director and/or Coordinator at nursing@uhd.edu or 713-221-5700.

Student Expectations Policy

The Nursing Program adheres to the same policies affecting all students within the University in regard to student rights and regulations. These rights and regulations are summarized in the UHD Student Handbook.

The Student Grievance Procedure in the UHD Student Handbook clearly defines the channel for receipt and consideration of students' views and grievances. Nursing Program students adhere to the same policy.
The University of Houston-Downtown, as an educational institution, has a special set of interests and purposes essential to its effective functioning. These include; (a) the opportunity for students to attain their educational objectives, (b) the creation and maintenance of an intellectual and educational atmosphere throughout the University, and (c) the protection of the health, safety, welfare, property, and human rights of all members of the University, and the property of the university itself. In the area of student conduct, the University has a clear responsibility to protect and promote the pursuit of its goals. The Student Rights and Responsibilities policy (PS 04.A.01) emphasizes the University’s commitment to promote the freedom, intellectual development, and personal responsibility of its students.

Once students are admitted to the Nursing Program, student files are kept in an online secured document server. Files containing recent student classroom records are under supervision or locked at all times. Only faculty and other appropriate institutional officials have access to these records either online or temporary course materials.

**Name/Address Change**

Students are required to provide the UHD registrar current address and any name change [https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students](https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students)

**Electronic Records**

MyUHD e-services at [https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/registration-services/Pages/registrar-ACCESS-E-SERVICES.aspx](https://www.uhd.edu/registrar/students/registration-services/Pages/registrar-ACCESS-E-SERVICES.aspx) gives currently enrolled UHD students access to their electronic records. With student e-services you can:

- Check the status of your application
- View the UH-Downtown catalog
- Look up available classes in the Class Schedule
- Register for classes
- Print your class schedule
- Pay your tuition and fees
- Check your financial aid status
- View your grades
- Request your UH-Downtown transcript
- Change your address
- Access your GatorMail account
- And more...

Students can view current course grades in Blackboard.

**Social Media Guide**

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) Social Media Guidelines for Nurses [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QQpde9tSu8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6QQpde9tSu8) has a video resource to guide nurses and students in the responsible use of social media.

UHD RN-BSN program shares the views and values of the American Nurses Association (ANA) Principles and expects all UHD RN-BSN students to be knowledgeable and comply with these posting guidelines.

**Use of Social Media**

Nurses have a responsibility first and foremost to their patients. As a nurse, you must always ensure that anything you post or publish could never undermine your patient’s treatment or privacy. The Texas Board of Nursing (BON or Board), in keeping with its mission to protect the public health, safety, and welfare,
holds nurses accountable for knowing, recognizing, and maintaining professional boundaries of the nurse-patient/client relationship [22 TAC §217.11 (1)(J)]. Federal law reinforces and further defines privacy through the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). HIPAA regulations are intended to protect patient privacy by defining individual, identifiable information, and establishing how this information may be used, by whom, and under what circumstances.

Potential consequences for inappropriate use of social and electronic media by a nurse are varied. The potential consequences will depend, in part, on the particular nature of the nurse's conduct. 
https://www.nursingworld.org/social/

Written Assignments and APA Guidelines

Students will follow the instructions for written assignments and discussion boards as well as the grading rubrics provided. Papers are to be computer generated, grammatically correct, and referenced appropriately. American Psychological Association (APA) 6th Edition is the formal writing style adopted by the Nursing Program. All written assignments are to demonstrate a professional level of scholarship by adhering to the current American Psychological Association (APA) format. The APA manual contains specifications for research, writing, documenting and formatting type-written work. Guidelines for writing in APA style may be found in the 6th Edition publication manual and at http://www.apastyle.org/

Writing Assistance

The Academic Success Center is available to assist all students https://www.uhd.edu/academics/university-college/gatorsuccess/Pages/default.aspx The Center provides writing assistance regarding paper reading/critiquing and tutoring in grammar and usage, mechanics, and sentence structure. Nursing faculty encourage BSN students to seek assistance with any writing issues early in their academic studies.

TurnItIn

UHD maintains a university license agreement for an online text matching service called TurnItIn. The instructor may use the TurnItIn service to determine the originality of student papers. In addition, this tool assists students in ensuring they properly cite and reference their work. Please refer to available Blackboard tutorials. https://www.uhd.edu/computing/services-training/;training/Pages/Student-Training-Materials.aspx

Technology Requirements

Access these webpages for more information regarding supported browsers and technology requirements.

Blackboard Test Taking Best Practices or https://www.uhd.edu/computing/services-training/blackboard/Pages/blackboard-testbestpractices-student.aspx

Supported Browsers and Operating Systems or https://www.uhd.edu/computing/services-training/blackboard/Pages/blackboard-browsers.aspx
Blackboard Support

Blackboard is used for all courses in the nursing program. Students are required to regularly access, navigate, and utilize e-mail communication and the online course site. Failure to access messages, announcements, or assignments sent or posted via these modalities may jeopardize the student's progress in the course and does not constitute a viable excuse for failing to meet course requirements and expectations. For Blackboard assistance, contact: Blackboard Support at: https://www.uhd.edu/computing/services-training/blackboard/Pages/UHDBlackboard.aspx

IT Help

For issues with UHD email, login, password, mobile devices, and other non-Blackboard technology issues, contact IT Service at: https://www.uhd.edu/computing/help/Pages/default.aspx available by phone 713-221-8031 if you need further assistance.
STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Student Professional Behavior

UHD nursing students are representatives of the University and the Nursing Program, and should recognize their behaviors may influence the opinions of the community regarding the UHD Nursing Program.

The UHD Nursing Program expects its students and graduates to represent the organization in a manner that reflects high standards of personal integrity, education, and service to patients. It is the expectation of all students within the Nursing Program to conduct themselves in accordance to the ethical standards as published in the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics. Please refer also to the Texas Nurse Practice Act and the American Nurses’ Association Scope and Standards for more details on the legal requirements for all nurses.

Students’ behavior in any setting to include practice learning sites, cyberspace, course learning management system (Blackboard), use of photos, regular interactions and all forms of communication. Students in the UHD Nursing Program:

1. Must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information.
2. Must observe ethically prescribed professional patient—nurse boundaries.
3. Should understand that patients, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.
4. Should take advantage of privacy settings and seek to separate personal and professional information online.
5. Should bring content that could harm a patient’s privacy, rights, or welfare to the attention of appropriate authorities.
6. Should participate in developing institutional policies governing online conduct.


UHD Policies governs the student disciplinary process. These policies describe prohibited behaviors, potential sanctions for violations of the policies, and the process for adjudicating alleged violations of the policies. All students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the UHD Policies listed below and the Student Handbook.
https://www.uhd.edu/academics/student-affairs/conduct/Pages/student-conduct-policies.aspx

- 01.A.05 Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy
- 01.A.09 Smoking Policy
- 01.A.14 Use of Alcoholic Beverages at University of Houston – Downtown
- 03.A.19 Academic Honesty Policy
- 04.A.01 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- 04.A.02 Student Use of Alcoholic Beverages at University of Houston-Downtown
- SAM 01.D.07 Anti Discrimination Policy
- SAM 01.D.08 Sexual Misconduct Policy
- SAM 01.D.09 Student Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids Policy

UHD Nursing Ethical Behavior Policy

This policy provides due process and resolution of student unprofessional behaviors such as student boundary issues, incivility, and malpractice as described in Texas Nurse Practice Act Subchapter 1, Sec.
Procedures

Refer to UHD Student Right and Responsibilities section of Student Manual in Section 4.2 Discipline in the Academic Environment.

Step 1 (4.2.1) Faculty members provide verbal guidance to the student and completes a Student Incident Report and submits the form to the Program Director and Natural Sciences Department Chair.
Step 2 (4.2.2) The Program Director and/or Department Chair will arrange a meeting to hear concerns of all parties.
Step 3 (4.2.5) If the incident requires disciplinary action beyond a warning, the Department Chair or designee will consult with the Assistant Dean.
Step 4 (4.2.7) If the student rejects the disciplinary action, the student may request a review by UHD Dean of Students.

UHD Nursing Program Grievance/Complaint Procedure

The UHD Nursing Program defines a formal complaint as a report from a student or other constituent that expresses a serious concern about the quality of any of our nursing programs or the conduct of a faculty member, staff member or student. A formal complaint should be initiated when all other appropriate departmental, college and/or university channels have failed to produce a satisfactory resolution from the point of view of the complainant.

For complaints regarding grades, course requirements and course procedures, follow the University of Houston Downtown Undergraduate or Graduate grievance policies.
If an issue cannot be resolved internally, you may file a complaint with your state. The Student Grievance Contact Information for Individual States provides phone number, email and/or links to state education agencies.

The University of Houston-Downtown is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The SACS site provides complaint procedures against the commission or its accredited institutions.

For questions concerning the complaint process or the new U.S. DoE regulations affecting distance education, please contact UHD Distance Education at distanceed@uhd.edu or 713-237-5400.

In accordance with the Student Grievance Procedures at the UHD, it is the policy of the Nursing Program to receive, process, and resolve student grievances in a fair and prompt manner.
Any student with a concern or grievance should follow the applicable procedure in the UHD Student Handbook.

Professional Liability Insurance for RN-BSN Students

Nursing is a profession in which its members are accountable. The University provides liability insurance coverage for the RN-BSN student. Coverage obtained in your work setting does not cover you as a student.

General University policies and procedures are published online. University policies, as well as Nursing Program policies and procedures, extend to all sites where students are engaged in the role of nursing student.

Student Governance

Nursing student representatives have the opportunity to participate in the following Nursing Program
Faculty Program Association: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. One student representative will be selected. Students are recused during discussions such as individual student admission, progression, graduation, faculty, or other sensitive issues. The student representative will be invited monthly to attend the meeting and the representative may attend virtually or via teleconference. The representative provides student perspective and student concerns, but does not have voting privileges. The student representative may request attending a faculty PA meeting if there are student affairs issues they wish to place on the agenda.

STUDENT PRACTICE LEARNING EXPERIENCE (CLINICAL) REQUIREMENTS POLICY

**Purpose of CPE**
This capstone clinical focuses on collaborative care of patients, families, communities, and populations across the lifespan with complex health care needs. Students apply concepts from previous program courses by creating and implementing a clinical project that provides health promotion activities enabling direct and indirect care for a selected aggregate group. Two semester hours are outside clinical experiences culminating in an outcomes paper.

**Expected Competencies & Behaviors**

1. Identify care issues across practice settings in the community;
2. Provide quality safe direct and indirect care for the selected population aggregate;
3. Incorporate research, educational and change theories into care across practice settings to enable effective outcomes for the family, community and population;
4. Collaborate with community stakeholders to identify health care priorities and coordinate health services to be implemented for the identified needs;
5. Identify needed case and care management interventions for high-risk, complex diseases; and
6. Evaluate interventions used for health promotion activities in selected population aggregate.

**Requirements**

All CPE eligibility requirements will be obtained by nursing applicants prior to admission and submitted to a secure outside entity that has been contracted to provide collection, compilation, and tracking services for the Nursing Program. These requirements are mandated by the CPE/clinical agencies and set forth in the clinical affiliation agreements.

Students will be held accountable for complying with the CPE eligibility requirements prior to admission, prior to each semester of enrollment, and throughout their program of study. Failure to achieve and maintain compliance may result in delayed admission, course registration holds, academic penalty, course failure, and/or inability to progress. Each CPE/clinical agency will be provided with a report of all CPE/clinical requirement data for students who are scheduled to rotate in their facilities.


Students will accept additional vaccines during vaccine-preventable disease outbreaks.

Many CPE/clinical agencies require clinical readiness compliance to be current at the beginning of the CPE/clinical experience and to extend through the entire semester. Students cannot request CPE/clinical agency placements if they have not met these additional requirements.
Prior to receiving clearance to register, all students admitted to the Nursing Program are required to **submit evidence of compliance under each of the Nursing CPE Requirements.** The Nursing Program **will not** receive original documents. In addition, all students will be responsible for maintaining compliance with the Nursing Program CPE Requirements at the beginning of each semester of enrollment. In the event a student does not meet the requirements at any time during the program, delayed admission, course registration holds, academic penalty, course failure, and/or inability to progress may occur. Failure to remain compliant during the program is considered a breach of professional behavior.

RN-BSN students must have an unencumbered Texas RN license upon admission to participate in any CPE/clinical rotation.

Prior to participating in any CPE, students must submit the Student Authorization for Release of CPE Documentation of all immunizations, documents for required training, and RN license to be provided to the clinical agency with student verification of eligibility for clinical.

Students must provide access to their assigned CPE/clinical agency with affiliation agreements in place, which require direct access to background and drug screen reports and all other required CPE documentation. Students not providing authorization are subject to CPE/clinical agencies denying students access to their facilities.
Drug & Alcohol Screen

Upon application, and at their own expense, all students will be required to undergo a urine drug screen test through a company designated by the Nursing Program and the company will provide the drug screen results to the student, and the Nursing Program. All students must provide his/her drug screen test results to the CPE/clinical agency prior to participating in any CPE/clinical rotation.

At the discretion of any Nursing Program faculty member or CPE/clinical agency employee, based upon suspected drug use of a student, a student may be required to submit to a subsequent drug screen test through a company designated by the Nursing Program. The company will provide the drug screen results directly to the student and the Nursing Program. The student who is required to submit to a subsequent drug screen test must provide his/her drug screen test results to the CPE/clinical agency prior to being allowed to continued participation in the CPE/clinical rotation.

Positive drug screen results will result in not being eligible to participate in CPE/clinical rotations, which could result in failing to complete the Nursing Program.

Registered Nurse (RN) Licensure

RN-BSN students are required to maintain an unencumbered RN Texas License throughout the program which is required for any CPE activity. Students may not participate in CPE at any location without an active unencumbered Texas RN license. A change of RN license status (loss, probation, etc.) must be reported to the Program Director in writing and may result in the student's dismissal from the program.

Confidentiality

The UHD Nursing Program has distinct expectations of students regarding the confidentiality of patient/client/agency related information, including classroom content, practice learning experiences (CPE) and student's individual acquisition of information.

Students receive information about patients/clients/agencies in written form and verbal discussions with faculty and agency staff. All UHD RN-BSN Nursing Program students must agree to abide by Federal HIPPA guidelines and individual agency policies related to the sharing of patient/client/agency information. It is understood students are to hold all information in strict confidence and will consult a Nursing Program faculty member before sharing any part of clinical or classroom content related to patients. Students will not send or receive patient information via electronic means unless instructed to do so by a Nursing faculty member. RN-BSN Nursing Program students understand they will not share any patient related information from class or CPE with individuals who are not a part of that class or CPE, including family and friends. Violation of confidentiality laws/policies may result in immediate dismissal from the Nursing Program.

DO NOT audio tape, video record or photograph in clinical settings.

Blood, Body Fluid, and Hazardous Exposure Policy

It is the policy of UHD, any student engaging in a university sponsored program sustaining a skin injury from needle stick/sharps or mucous membrane splash from potentially contaminated person's blood or bodily fluids, receive prompt medical attention, counseling, advisement and follow-up testing, if indicated.

Exposure to another person's blood or body fluids by needle stick, splash or other exposure may place the student at risk for exposure to HIV, Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C or other infectious agents. Students are expected to follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations
for Standard Precautions to reduce the risk of exposure
http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/bbp/default.html.
Student Financial Responsibility

Neither the CPE/clinical agency nor the University is responsible for the cost of the care involved in the treatment, management or surveillance of exposure to blood or body fluids. UHD students are financially responsible for all medical visits, lab tests and prescriptions ordered for treatment of an exposure. Students who need health insurance should go to: https://www.uhd.edu/student-life/health/Pages/health-insurance.aspx

CLINICAL AGENCY POLICY AND PROCEDURE:

As a guest of the CPE/clinical agency, student is responsible for following policies and procedures in all matters pertaining to client contact and other learning activities. Individual agencies may have unique CPE/clinical requirements such as completion of learning modules or course related to restraints, blood glucose monitoring, etc. Select hospitals have a mandatory random drug testing policy that includes nursing students. The course faculty will inform students of these miscellaneous requirements.

Clinical Agency Access

Official clinical agencies for CPE as well as agency approved student practice schedules are mandatory prior to student attendance in the CPE environment.

No student shall enter a public or private facility where healthcare is being delivered and represent themselves as a UHD nursing student fulfilling CPE requirements without the express permission of a Nursing Program faculty member.

Failure to comply may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program.

Attendance

The clinical practice experience (CPE), also known as “clinical” is defined by the AACN as experiential learning in any setting where health care is provided or influenced that allows for and require the student to integrate new practice related knowledge and skills. Absences may prohibit a student from meeting the objectives. It is the student's responsibility to contact course faculty and the CPE/clinical agency regarding an absence prior to the scheduled time. All CPE hours must be made up. Depending upon the nature and extent of the absence(s), a course faculty member may require an alternative make up assignment. If family difficulties, financial concerns, work obligations, or life stressors are barriers to CPE attendance, the student should seek assistance from UHD Counseling, Health and Wellness. When repeated absences or failure to make up absences occur and prohibit achievement of course objectives, refer to the UHD class attendance policy: "A student whose absences are determined by the instructor to be excessive shall be dropped prior to the last day to drop a course or withdraw from UHD with a grade of "W" or "F." It is the student's responsibility to communicate concerns regarding CPE hours with their course faculty as soon as possible. The student may request a course incomplete due to extreme circumstances prior to receiving a grade of "W", "F", or "D", which are reviewed on a case by case basis.
In the event of an impending CPE/clinical absence, the student will:

1. Call the specific assigned area in the CPE/clinical agency or follow the policy set by the agency for notification of absence.
2. Notify the CPE/clinical agency at least one (1) hour prior to the scheduled CPE experience.
3. Notify the course faculty according to written instructions in course syllabi.
4. Leave a telephone number where the student can be reached during the absence.
5. Contact the course faculty immediately upon returning to the CPE/clinical agency for clearance and further directions.

Clinical Practice Learning Experience Attendance and Fitness Policy

It is the policy of the UHD Nursing Program to require all students to report for CPE able/fit to perform their expected roles and free from the influence of drugs or alcohol throughout all hours assigned to CPE/clinical agencies. Students may not work 12 hours before attending CPE. Students may not use their work hours, receive any financial compensation or employee assignment for CPE hours.

A student suspected of being under the influence will be required to submit to alcohol and/or drug testing at the student’s expense using a designated facility.

Faculty has the authority to remove a student from a CPE setting for suspicion of lack of fitness for duty. The removed student will not be allowed to operate a motor vehicle and must have alternate transportation when leaving the CPE setting.

Reference

CPE Conduct-Rules of Unprofessional Conduct

The Rules of Unprofessional Conduct are to protect clients and the public from incompetent, unethical, and illegal conduct by identifying unprofessional or dishonorable behaviors of the student nurse. These behaviors have been established in the Texas Administrative Code 217.12. Students are required to comply with these behaviors accessible at: [https://www.bon.texas.gov/rr_current/217-12.asp](https://www.bon.texas.gov/rr_current/217-12.asp)

Grades

Program CPE hours are integrated into NURS 4595. Specific CPE/clinical grading criteria and weights are described in the course syllabus.

Withdrawal

Students who cannot participate in CPE for any reason, are considered unable to fulfill the requirements of the program and must withdraw from the course and/or program dependent upon the circumstances.
Dress Code

All RN-BSN students will wear a white lab coat with UHD embroidered decal with business casual attire or scrubs with a UHD photo ID. Students may not wear the name tag, lab coat, or ID for their place of employment when in the student role.

1. Attire will be clean, wrinkle free and well fitted.
2. The UHD Nursing student photo ID will be visible on the right chest of the scrubs or lab coat at all times, as directed by faculty.
3. Business casual attire must be neat and professional. Jeans are not permitted.
4. Students must adhere to any specific CPE/clinical agency dress code.

Evaluation of Clinical, Course, Assigned Clinical Agency, and Faculty

All course evaluations will be done online. You will receive notification, via email from UHD Course Evals that courses are open for evaluations.
If you have questions about the instrument, ask your instructor - you may want to ask if it will be administered during regular class time.
Be sure to complete the evaluations by deadlines.
Course evaluations can be filled out online using any mobile device. Your faculty member may ask you to bring your phone, tablet, or laptop to class in order to complete your evaluations.
All students will complete evaluations of the assigned agency and clinical faculty by the end of the CPE Semester.

HIPAA STATEMENT

The Federal Regulations of the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requires individual identifiable patient information be disclosed on a need to know basis only. Care must be taken to minimize incidental disclosures and must disclose only minimal amounts of information necessary to accomplish the task. The minimum disclosure standard, however, does not apply to requests for information by a healthcare provider for treatment purposes.

In order to protect patient/client privacy, all personally identifying information must be removed from student papers, such as care plans and case studies. Information to be removed includes, the individual's name, initials, address, phone number, fax number and social security number. Student papers may not be copied for careless circulation and handling. These written documents containing private health information must be carefully stored or shredded to prevent the circulation of confidential patient information. Confidentiality and privacy also extends to oral communications which extend beyond the need to know for treatment and/or educational purposes.

HIPAA is a Federal law. Penalties for wrongful disclosure range from fine and/or imprisonment.