

# Nursing

# Student Handbook

## 2026-2027



Department of Nursing  
College of Professional Studies  
Westfield State University

Revised 12/13/2018, 05/31/2019, 10/15/2019, 11/12/2019, 1/2/2020, 5/5/2020, 12/31/21, 5/11/21,  
5/12/22, 5/11/23, 11/30/23, 7/1/24, 5/15/25, 3/06/2026

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## **WELCOME**

Dear Student,

It is with great enthusiasm that the Department of Nursing welcomes you to Westfield State University (WSU) as you begin your journey toward the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing (BSN). We believe that your educational path at WSU will be challenging and rewarding.

The purpose of this handbook is to define departmental policies, procedures, protocols, expectations of students, program of study details and services for students that facilitate learning experiences. Other publications that also contain essential information for you as a student is the online **2026-2027 Undergraduate Catalog/Student Handbook and the Student Handbook** which provides information about campus-wide resources, health care information, tutorial help, advising and counseling services. WSU's Student Handbook details students' rights and grievance procedures. The university's **2026-2027 Undergraduate Catalogs/Student Handbook** can be accessed online at <https://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/index.php>. If there are areas in the Department of Nursing Student Handbook that need further clarification or raise other questions for you, we welcome your concerns, comments and suggestions.

Each student is responsible for reading this Department of Nursing *Student Handbook*, understanding the content therein, and abiding by the policies and procedures established by the Department of Nursing. Failure to have adequate knowledge of this *Handbook* content is not an excuse for noncompliance with policy. The *Handbook* can be accessed online at the Department of Nursing website and available within the Department of Nursing. First year students will receive an electric copy of the handbook during the first-year orientation meeting or in the NURS0100: Introduction to Professional Nursing course; all other nursing students will have access to an updated handbook. Therefore, if you have further questions, please feel free to contact your nursing Advisor. You have our best wishes for a productive and successful year.

## **FORWARD**

The Department of Nursing Student Handbook is a supplement to WSU Undergraduate Catalog/Student Handbook. Students are responsible for acting in accordance with the University and the Department of Nursing regulations and policies set forth in these publications.

The Nursing Admissions and Academic Standards Committee reviews the Department of Nursing Student Handbook periodically to make sure that it is as accurate and current as possible. Should there be changes in *academic* policies, or procedures or curriculum, they will be communicated to you during an Open Forum meeting, as well as during your academic advising meeting. If you have a problem or concern that is not adequately answered in the *Handbook*, please contact the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing for the Undergraduate Program. Please visit the Department of Nursing website for the most up-to-date information at: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/academics/nursing-department>.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

**PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR:**

Jessica Holden, DNP, RN, NPD-BC  
Associate Dean of Nursing/Associate Professor

**ADDRESS:**

Department of Nursing  
Westfield State University  
577 Western Avenue  
Westfield, MA 01086

**TELEPHONE:**

413-572-8318

**APPROVED BY:**

Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN)

**ACCREDITED BY:**

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

*The baccalaureate degree in nursing at WSU is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791*

**MEMBERSHIP:**

The department is a member of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)

The department is a member of the Massachusetts Association of Colleges of Nursing (MACN)

The department is a member of the Western Mass Nursing Collaborative.

**DEGREE GRANTED:**

Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR THE NURSING PROGRAM**

The Technical Standards for Admission, Progression, and Graduation (Technical Standards) are an integral component of the Department of Nursing and at Westfield State University academic requirements that identify core professional nursing competencies in eight specific domains – critical thinking/cognitive competencies, professional relationships, communication, mobility, motor skills, hearing and visual skills, observation and tactile senses. Nursing students must meet all the requirements of the Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to successfully progress through and graduate from their program.

Individuals interested in applying for admission to the Department of Nursing are encouraged to review the Technical Standards to become familiar with the skills, abilities and behavioral characteristics required to complete the programs.

This list is not all-inclusive and all applicable skills cannot be listed. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to determine other relevant criteria in order to preserve the school's professional and academic standards. The table below is adapted from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Sample Core Professional Standards as developed by the SREB Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing Education.

If there are any questions regarding the requirements of the technical standards to the Westfield State University Nursing Program, please contact the department chair at 413-572-8414.

<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Example of Activities</b>
Critical Thinking and Cognitive Competencies	Critical thinking ability for clinical judgment	Identify cause/effect relationships in clinical situations. Use of the scientific method in the development of patient care plans/concepts maps. Evaluate the effectiveness of nursing interventions. Accurately follow course syllabi, assignments, directions, patient protocols, and any action plan(s) developed by the chair, faculty, administration, or health care agency staff.
Professional and Behavioral Relationships	Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interaction with a diverse population of individuals, families and groups	Establish rapport with patients/clients and colleagues. Capacity to engage in successful conflict resolution. Capacity to demonstrate ethical behavior, including adherence to the professional nursing and student honor codes, as well as applicable laws and regulations governing the nursing profession. Ability to relate to colleagues, staff and patients with honesty, integrity, and non-discrimination. Ability to work constructively in stressful and changing environments with the ability to modify their behavior in response to constructive criticism and to maintain a high level of functioning in demanding or stressful situations.

Communication	Communication adeptness sufficient for verbal and written professional interactions	Explanation of treatment, procedure, initiation of health teaching. Accurately obtain information from patients, family members/significant others, health team members, and/or faculty. Documentation and interpretation of nursing actions and patient/client responses. Communications include: oral, hearing, reading, writing, and computer literacy.
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient for movement from room to room and in small spaces	Movement about patient's room, workspaces, and treatment areas. Administer rescue procedures such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient for providing safe and effective nursing care	Calibration and use of equipment. Strength to carry out patient care procedures, such as assisting in the turning and lifting/transferring of patients. Perform and/or assist with expected nursing student procedures, treatments, and medication administration using appropriate sterile or clean techniques (for example, medication administration, CPR, insertion of catheters). Endurance sufficient to complete all required tasks during the assigned period of clinical practice, including a 12-hour clinical shift.
Hearing and Visual	Auditory and visual ability sufficient for observing, monitoring and assessing health needs	Ability to hear monitoring device alarm and other emergency signals. Ability to discern sounds and cries for help. Ability to observe patient's condition and responses to treatments.
Observation	Ability to make observations in connection with other identified professional nursing student competencies	Use and accurate interpretation of information obtained from digital, analog, and waveform diagnostic tools such as temperatures, blood pressures, and cardiac rhythms as well as diagnostic tools that monitor or obtain physiological phenomena. Observation and interpretation of the following: patient's heart and body sounds, body language; color of wounds, drainage, urine, feces, expectoration; sensitivity to heat, cold, pain and pressure; and signs and symptoms of disease, pain, and infection.

Tactile Sense	Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment	Ability to palpate in physical examinations and various therapeutic interventions.
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Source: <https://www.sreb.org/publication/americans-disabilities-act>

Westfield State University Department of Nursing is committed to ensuring equal access to a quality education for qualified students through the provision of reasonable academic accommodations that support our standards and academic integrity. Our policy provides for reasonable academic accommodations to be made for students with disabilities on an individualized and flexible basis as specified under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

Westfield State University provides reasonable academic accommodations to students on campus who request accommodations and who meet eligibility criteria. For more information or to request academic accommodations, individuals should contact the [Banacos Academic Center](#) located at Parenzo Hall, (413) 572-8772.

### **Full-Time Nursing Faculty**

Sherri Fitzgerald, DNP, RN  
Assistant Professor

Joan Kuhnly DNP, NNP-BC APRN IBCLC CNE  
Professor

Jennifer Pappas, DNP, RN-BC  
Associate Professor

Jamie B. Rivera, PhD, RN, CPN  
Associate Professor, Department Chair

Susan S. Scott, PhD, RN, CCRN  
Associate Professor

Marcia R. Scanlon, DNP, RN  
Professor

Julie Racicot, MSN, RN, NPD-BC, CCRN  
Professor

**Additional Nursing Department Personnel**

Jean Prast, MSN, RN  
Associate Director of Simulation

Alyssa LaFlamme, AS  
Clinical Placement Coordinator

Kate Crowley, M.Ed, BSN, RN  
Assistant Director, Practice Placements

Michelle Henrichon, MS  
Administrative Assistant

Emily Ciccolo, MS  
Healthcare Career Navigator

\*Multiple Adjunct Faculty for lab and clinical courses

**WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Nursing**

**Department Mission**

To prepare nursing graduates who are skilled in promoting or maintaining health by delivering skilled, compassionate, client-centered care to individuals, families and communities utilizing cultural and ethical understanding and demonstrating leadership and life-long inquiry.

**Department Vision**

To offer an accredited baccalaureate program within the context of a scientific foundation and breadth of a liberal education leading to a professional nursing degree. Excellence in teaching, productive scholarship, and contributions to the nursing profession and the community will be evidenced.

**Department Values**

- Creating a caring, nurturing, and diverse student-centered environment
- Encouraging critical thinking and ethical decision making
- Providing skilled care to clients across the life span with an emphasis on geriatrics
- Enhancing the discipline of nursing by utilizing the most current health care information or when appropriate creating new knowledge to further the nursing profession
- Recognizing the necessity of continuing professional and intellectual growth of the faculty

**Department of Nursing Philosophy**

Under the auspices of Westfield State University, the Department of Nursing derives its philosophy from the mission statement and values of the overall university. The Department holds the belief that a student-centered, caring, and stimulating learning environment will enable the students to acquire the knowledge and skills to enable them to practice professional nursing within a rapidly changing care environment. The department recognizes that nursing is an art and science as well as a practice discipline. The knowledge from the behavioral and natural sciences which require scientific investigation and critical thinking combine with the art of nursing which involves caring, intuition, and the therapeutic use of interpersonal communication and support. To work closely with clients to provide for a myriad of healthcare needs in a broad array of settings involves the utilization of the full range of the nursing process. Opportunities for laboratory and clinical practice and for utilizing state-of-the-art technology to further advance student learning are essential components of nursing education.

The Department of Nursing further believes that understanding the impact of diverse cultures and ethical decision making are critical in providing holistic care to clients of all ages and on the full spectrum of health, from optimum wellness to a compassionate death. With an aging population rapidly increasing, the Department supports the need to provide skilled delivery of compassionate health care to this often-under-served group of clients.

The concept of caring, which puts emphasis on individual human needs and permeates all aspects of client interactions, forms the foundation of professional performance. It underscores the belief in human dignity and the ability to continually refine clinical judgment. The department also recognizes that collaboration and consultation with other disciplines as well as the demonstration of leadership are critical components in meeting client needs.

The department recognizes that nursing is a discipline that must be committed to life-long inquiry to both maintain and advance knowledge. The rapid evolution of change within the healthcare field demands an ongoing and frequent re-examination of nursing practice based on the finding of new knowledge.

### **Program Goals**

The goals of the Westfield State University Nursing Program are to assist its students to:

1. Integrate knowledge from the humanities, physical and social sciences and to recognize and to support diversity in the practice of nursing.
2. Use evidence-based skilled nursing practice to promote, maintain and restore health across the lifespan to individuals, families and groups in a variety of health care settings.
3. Become beginning professional nurses who embody legal, cultural and ethical understanding to deliver patient centered care in a collaborative, caring, and safe manner.
4. Utilize critical thinking skills to formulate skillful, caring nursing interventions to effectively meet healthcare challenges for individuals, families, and/or communities.
5. Utilized current gerontological knowledge to maintain and restore health to aging clients or to support a peaceful end-of-life.
6. Value and confidently use appropriate healthcare technologies to enhance the care of patients.
7. Model an understanding of the role of the professional nurse as a leader who recognizes the importance of effective communication skills, the understanding of resource demands, the promotion of teamwork and the need to be flexible and delegate appropriately to achieve quality patient outcomes,
8. Demonstrate a spirit of inquiry, an understanding of self and a commitment to life-long learning.

### **Program Outcomes**

Upon completion of the Nursing Program at Westfield State University graduates will:

1. Provide safe, high quality, individual, empathic and family-centered care and interventions across the lifespan to promote health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities.
2. Exhibit a spirit of inquiry, use evidence as a basis for practice, and participate in life-long learning and self-development to support the identification of gaps in nursing knowledge and practice.
3. Collaborates using therapeutic communication with individuals, communities and inter-professional teams to design, manage, and evaluate care and maximize outcomes.
4. Advocate for ethical, and culturally relevant care for the populations served, incorporating changes in practice and policy, utilizing regulatory, legal and humanistic decision making.
5. Integrate technology and information management to promote safety and to evaluate outcome Utilize skilled, professional decision making by analyzing, synthesizing and evaluating the full range of client information in the delivery of nursing care.
6. Facilitate the transfer of both knowledge and skills to clients to achieve optimal health and higher quality care locally, nationally, and globally.
7. Provide evidence and theory-based nursing care to assure quality improvement.

### **Curriculum Overview**

One hundred and twenty credits are required for graduation. These credits are distributed among courses required for the nursing major as well as courses that satisfy the common core and electives for the university. A list of the required common core courses can be found here:

[http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/preview\\_program.php?catoid=24&poid=3131](http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=24&poid=3131)

Upon completion of major and university requirements, the student earns the Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The undergraduate baccalaureate nursing program at Westfield State University has been designed to meet the standards set forth by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing and incorporates the 2021 AACN Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice, and the 2016 Nursing Core Competencies for the Nurse of the Future.

### **Course Exemption**

The policy for course exemption is available for non-nursing courses. The Undergraduate Transfer Courses Taken at Other Institutions After Matriculation describes the process of academic credit or waiver of requirements based upon performance on the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and can be accessed online at

[http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Undergraduate\\_Transfer\\_Courses\\_Taken\\_at\\_Other\\_Institutions\\_After\\_Matriculation](http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Undergraduate_Transfer_Courses_Taken_at_Other_Institutions_After_Matriculation)

During their first two years, students will be introduced to the nursing profession but will mainly be acquiring a strong foundation in the humanities and the natural sciences. Courses in behavioral sciences, such as psychology, sociology and gerontology will also provide students with a strong understanding of human behavior. Math and statistics courses will strengthen the student's background in the area of informatics. The university's nursing laboratory will provide a learning environment to assist students in transferring theoretical knowledge to actual nursing practice. Students will also have access to simulation equipment to help them enhance their nursing knowledge and skills and practice their skills in a safe environment.

The majority of the nursing courses will be in the last three years of the program and will provide organized, sequential learning in the nursing major. Here, along with theoretical classroom work, students will be placed in a wide variety of clinical settings for experiences in the required nursing subjects. Qualified nursing faculty will work closely with small groups of students in a variety of clinical settings. Students will also have conference time with faculty and peers to reinforce clinical learning. During their senior year, students will have the opportunity to learn and practice leadership and management skills. Students will also be in a capstone course which requires a full-time internship placement under the auspices of a qualified preceptor. This course focuses on synthesizing advanced nursing concepts and utilizing complex decision making in an individualized clinical environment. The goal of this experience is to ease graduates' transition to the actual world of work.

Total Program Credits: 120

Total Nursing Credits: 57

**Curriculum Outline**

See WSU Nursing website for curricular flowsheets and course descriptions

<i>Required Nursing Courses in the Major (Total # courses required = 15). With the exception of NURS 0100, a grade of a "C" or better is required for all science and nursing courses.</i>		
<i>Course Number</i>	Course Title	Credit Hours
NURS 0100	Introduction to Professional Nursing	3
NURS 0201	Fundamentals of Professional Nursing Practice	6
NURS 0311	Community Health Nursing	4
NURS 0316	Psychiatric Nursing	4
NURS 0312	Nursing Care of the Adult and Older Adult I	5
NURS 0335	Pathophysiology and Pharmacology I	3
NURS 0313	Nursing Care of the Adult and Older Adult II	5
NURS 0336	Pathophysiology and Pharmacology II	3
NURS 0305	Nursing Research	3
NURS 0321	Nursing Care of Children and Families	4
NURS 0322	Nursing Care of Perinatal Women and Newborns	4
NURS 0355	Nursing Leadership	3
NURS 0360	Preparation for Professional Licensure	1
NURS 0397	Nursing Capstone Clinical Internship	6
NURS 0350	Advanced Principles of Professional Nursing	3
	<b><i>Sub Total Required Nursing Credits</i></b>	<b>57</b>

## POLICIES

### General Admission

#### *First Year Students*

Students pursuing the nursing major must be admitted to Westfield State University as a Nursing Major. The admission staff and Program Administrator/Department of Nursing Chair reviews the applications of students who wish to matriculate as an undergraduate student and pursue at least 12 credits of coursework per semester. A student applying for full-time admission as a first year directly from high school must supply the following information:

- The Day Division Admission Application and Fees
- College Board Scholastic Assessment Test Scores (SAT-I) (Optional)
- An official high school transcript, beginning with grade 9 and including grades from the first marking period of the senior year, or acceptable evidence of equivalent preparation. Final transcripts for incoming students are collected and maintained by the admissions office.
- Official transcripts of any college work attempted.
- First year applicants participating in a dual enrollment program as part of their high school experience also must submit a complete listing of college courses attempted. A final official transcript of the dual enrollment experience must be submitted immediately upon its completion.
- All students follow the general education and/or Westfield Integrative Student Experience requirements for university credit.
- All students are required to complete all coursework within 6 consecutive calendar years.

#### **Minimum entrance criteria:**

3.3 GPA (on a 4.0 scale)

3.3 GPA average in sciences (on a 4.0 scale)

\*\*\*Please note that these are minimum admissions standards and do not guarantee admission as nursing is a highly competitive field and often requires higher academic standards. These minimum standards are considered with the entire application process.

The University has a selective admission policy. In accordance with the guidelines established by the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education and with the approval of the University Board of Trustees, Westfield State University has reserved the right to set higher minimum standards than those published by the Department of Higher Education for the State Universities. The MA State Department of Higher Education has established 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) as the minimum standard for admission to state four-year universities.

Applicants who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are not guaranteed admission to the University. The successful applicant has achieved a solid academic record while maintaining a challenging academic program and will have demonstrated a willingness to contribute to the life of the community. The first-year filing deadline for fall admission is February 1. Admission decisions are made on an individual basis by the admission staff beginning on or near December 1 for both the fall and spring semesters, after all required documents are received. Accepted first year students attending Massachusetts public high schools must present evidence of passing the M.C.A.S. prior to enrollment. A final, official high school transcript conferring graduation will suffice for this purpose.

For students who have never attended college and have been out of high school for three or more years, exemptions from the unit requirements and Eligibility Index established by the Commonwealth may be granted. SAT scores should be submitted, if available. Admission decisions are made on an individual basis upon review of all required materials.

### **Additional Admission Criteria**

- Having “good moral character” is a requirement for NCLEX testing eligibility in addition to graduation from an accredited nursing program.
- Maintaining all immunization and health screenings for clinical placements is required. If a student is unvaccinated or under-vaccinated, they must become in compliance with required vaccinations before clinical placements.
- Students enrolled in the nursing program must be at least 18 years of age by the start of the sophomore semester when clinical placements begin. This requirement aligns with the healthcare industry standards set by our clinical placement partners.

In addition to meeting immunization and health requirements to ensure patient and student safety, students must also comply with age requirements established by our clinical sites. These regulations are in place to adhere to workplace safety policies, legal guidelines, and institutional expectations for individuals participating in direct patient care. Compliance with this policy is mandatory for program progression and clinical placement eligibility.

### **WSU Additional Nursing Fees**

There are additional fees associated with enrollment in the Westfield State University Nursing Program. Some items can be purchased through the WSU bookstore and may be covered by financial aid and other items may not be offered through the bookstore. Below is a summary of the fees:

1. WSU Nursing Program cost (per semester for all four years)
2. Technology requirements
  - a. Laptop computers are required for all nursing students. They must not be a tablet or chromebook and have a camera so they can be used for computerized testing. It is the students' responsibility to have a functioning computer for all in class or remote testing
  - b. Software resources and books which may be electronic such as safeMedicate and UWorld
3. Clinical Equipment: Uniform requirements identified in nursing handbook including WSU nursing scrubs, watch, black or white shoes, ID, stethoscope and lab supplies.
4. Clinical Requirements: As identified in the nursing handbook clinical requirements health insurance, clinical compliance tracking membership and fees for background checks, drug testing, fingerprinting, and clinical compliance requirements such as immunizations and testing. Transportation to clinical sites is the students' responsibility.

Additional details are identified in the nursing handbook and will be explained at the nursing orientation for nursing students.

This list is not inclusive of all fees and is subject to change although every effort is made to keep fees as low as feasible.

### **Advanced Placement**

Acceptance of Advanced Placement credit for general education classes based on course equivalencies is determined by the Westfield State University Registrar's Office.

### **Transfer**

Westfield State University's Nursing department accepts a limited number of transfer students into the program. Students with an Associate's Degree in Nursing and an RN license, should apply through the RN-to BSN program.

To transfer into nursing, applicants apply by February 1. Admission criteria include a cumulative GPA of 3.3 minimum of 45 college credits, completion of 4 science prerequisite courses with a grade of C or better or have completed 2 of the 4 and be currently enrolled in the remaining science courses. Applicants will need to submit their transcript, a personal statement, and list any healthcare employment experience. Meeting the minimum criteria does not guarantee admission. Acceptance will be contingent upon C or better completion grades if coursework in progress. Visit the transfer admission nursing webpage <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/admissions/transfers/nursing-transfer-applicants>

### **Veteran and Military Policy**

Veteran and Military Policy for Nursing:

The nursing program will only accept transfer of credits into the major for non-nursing courses.

Military credits will be accepted as free electives. Please see

<https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/veteran-and-military-services/transfer-military-credits> for a description of veterans and military transfer credits. The nursing program will waive the requirement for professional development hours.

### **Withdrawal**

The University's withdrawal policy is detailed and can be accessed online at:

[http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Course\\_Withdrawal\\_The\\_Notation\\_of\\_W](http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Course_Withdrawal_The_Notation_of_W) or by searching Course Withdrawal policy in My Westfield search bar.

### **Course Withdraw**

If a student withdraws from any nursing course, the student is expected to enroll in the course in the next course offering. The student must notify the Course Coordinator of their planned return no less than 6 weeks prior to the start of the semester. The student must complete the program within 6 years from the start of the first WSU nursing course.

If a student withdraws from a nursing course with less than a 74 (C) at the time of withdrawal, it will be considered an unsuccessful course attempt. Please see section on Progression.

When a student withdraws from a nursing course, an exit interview will be held with the student and the Course Coordinator. Documentation will be noted in the student's file for communication reasons.

### **Leave of Absence (LOA) Policy**

The Department of Nursing supports a continuous enrollment policy to promote prescribed progression of coursework, currency of academic knowledge and acquisition of clinical skills. Thus, leaves of absence are granted for up to two consecutive semesters. These restrictions do not include time spent in the Military.

There are two ways to request of leave of absence (LOA) for the program.

1. If a student is unable to enroll in a particular term but would like to continue in the nursing major, they must request a leave of absence (LOA) from nursing courses. A LOA request form (See appendix H) must be submitted to the Department Chair prior to the upcoming fall or spring semester.
2. The student may request LOA during the semester. The reasons for the LOA should be included in the LOA request form. Students who are passing at the time of request will be granted a withdrawal from the nursing course(s). If the student has a grade below 74 at the time of LOA request, (this will be considered an unsuccessful course attempt (please see course withdrawal and progression policy)).

Steps for requesting a LOA:

1. Meet with your advisor and/or chairperson to discuss your request and develop a new plan of study.
2. Submit the LOA request form to the department chairperson.
3. The Department Chair will review the request and send written notification of the decision. Decisions (approval or denials) may be dependent on space and resources in the nursing program.
4. Make connections with university departments applicable to you. (residential life, financial aid, etc).
5. After two semesters of non-enrollment, the student will be withdrawn permanently and will need to reapply to the nursing program.
6. Before a third semester of non-enrollment in the nursing program, please see "Petition Process for readmission to the nursing program" section of handbook for applying for readmission.
7. Students who are granted a LOA due to medical or behavioral health reasons, will need to submit medical provider's health clearance documentation for return to Class/Clinical/Lab/Simulation to the department chairperson. Clinical agency requirements may dictate further clearance limitations.
8. If lab remediation was required before returning from leave, the appropriate documentation from lab personnel will also be submitted to Department chairperson.

More than one LOA may not be granted. All students who take a leave of absence are required to complete all coursework within 6 consecutive calendar years from the start of the first WSU nursing course

## Progression

### **Progression for Science Courses:**

For direct out of high school admissions students, prerequisite science courses must be initially taken at WSU. Students must receive a grade of C or better in Human Anatomy I and II, Chemistry for the Life Sciences, and Medical Microbiology. Nursing students may repeat the science courses once if this grade is not obtained to remain in the nursing program. Course equivalencies taken at other institutions must be reviewed by the nursing department chairperson for approval prior to registration.

### **Progression for Nursing Courses:**

Nursing courses must be taken at WSU. Nursing students may only repeat one nursing course throughout the curriculum. A final grade less than C- or a withdrawal/leave of absence with a grade below a 74 at the time of leave is considered an unsuccessful course attempt and will be dismissed and may petition. The student must follow the Petition Process for Continuation in the Nursing Program. On the repeat attempt, a student must achieve a 74 (C) or above to progress. Students who have two unsuccessful course attempts will be dismissed from the nursing program and offered a change of major.

Nursing students must pass the clinical/lab/simulation components of the nursing courses.

Except for the first nursing course, "Introduction to Professional Nursing", students must obtain a C (74%) grade or better to be eligible to take subsequent nursing courses.

Clinical and laboratory components of all nursing courses are graded on a pass/fail basis. A passing grade in clinical and/or lab is required to receive a passing grade for the course. A clinical and/or lab failure means the course must be repeated in its' entirety.

Passing grades in both the classroom and clinical components of the program are required for progression from year to year. See "clinical failures" for further information.

### **Petition Process for Continuation in the Nursing Program**

When a student has an unsuccessful course attempt that impacts their graduation year and are interested in continuing in their nursing major; the student needs to petition for readmission to the nursing program by submitting a letter of petition to the Nursing Chair on February 15 for fall course unsuccessful attempt and October 15 for Spring course unsuccessful attempt. Continuation is dependent on the availability of clinical sites.

The petition letter should include:

1. A brief description of the events that led to the unsuccessful course attempt/dismissal.
2. A plan to address the reasons for the dismissal and what resources you plan to access.
3. Describe any actions you are engaging in that will prepare you for success upon potential readmission.
4. Resources that will be used to ensure success in the nursing program ***should the student be allowed to continue.***

The signed petition letter should be scanned as an attachment and emailed to the Department Chair by the due date noted above. Upon receipt of the letter, a confirmation email will be sent to the student.

The Chair will forward the petition to the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee meeting for processing.

A separate meeting of the Committee will convene and will not include student representation. The student's academic advisor and course coordinator may be consulted as part of this process. The Admissions and Academic Standards Committee will evaluate the student and their submitted materials in addition to the student's academic record to decide on the possibility of continuation. The Department Chair will notify the student of the decision no less than 30 days before the beginning of the semester to which the student is reapplying.

Should a student be allowed to continue in the program, they will be placed on probationary status. Their personalized plan for success may include lab remediation and testing preparation skills (See Appendix I). The student must then sign and agree to the conditions outlined for them and follow the individualized probationary guidelines. For those students who have either repeated a course or who score below level 1 on their comprehensive ATI exam, purchasing and using additional NCLEX support services will be required prior to taking the licensure exam.

### **Readmission to the University**

The Online Readmission Policy at:

<http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=1063#Readmission>, details the university's readmission policies.

### **Graduation**

To satisfactorily meet the requirements of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree, a student must complete a minimum of 120 credits, including 57 credits of Nursing course work. The student will be eligible for graduation and the conferring of the degree at the conclusion of the semester when all University requirements and completion of courses, as described in the online Undergraduate Catalog/Student Handbook which can be accessed at:

[http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=1070#Requirements\\_For\\_Graduation](http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=24&navoid=1070#Requirements_For_Graduation)

### **Education Mobility**

Educational mobility enables an individual to move from one educational level to another with acknowledgment of acquired competencies and minimal repetition of previous learning. Westfield State University policies and procedures for Advanced Placement are designed to recognize previous general education courses without regard to the basis of race, color, national origin, citizenship, alienage, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, disability or veteran status.

Westfield State University builds a solid foundation for future endeavors in professional development and educational mobility. Westfield State University provides the structure for entry into the nursing profession at the baccalaureate degree level from 2 programs, the traditional prelicensure program and the RN-BSN program which is offered on several campuses. All students are encouraged to consider advancing their education past the BSN level and faculty members advise students, assist

with the applicant process, and submit letters of recommendation as requested by students/alumni. Applicants who are Registered Nurses with an associate degree can apply for the RN-BSN program.

### **Attendance and Punctuality Policy**

Attendance is required for all nursing courses. Consistent attendance offers the most effective opportunity for students to understand concepts, materials, and expectations of the courses in which they are enrolled. Attendance will be taken during every nursing class, clinical or lab and is mandatory. Punctuality is expected of students. Tardiness will not be tolerated as it impacts adversely upon the student's educational experience, is disruptive to other students and faculty. If a student must be late or absent for an experience due to unforeseen circumstances, it is expected that the student is required to notify the faculty member before the beginning of the scheduled class, lab or clinical experience.

To enable the student to achieve a competent skills level in the clinical practice in Nursing, a standard number of hours of instruction is required. Students who anticipate extended absences for medical, personal, military leave, religious absences, or extenuating circumstances need to notify and determine a plan for make up with the faculty, course coordinator and department chairperson prior to the absence. **All absences or tardiness events are documented with a communication record.**

Students who are more than 10 minutes late without prior notification to the instructor for class or lab will be given a Communication Record. **A Communication Record (See Appendix A) will be completed for each incident of tardiness or absence, whether or not it is excused. A clinical, lab or classroom absence or tardiness without prior notification (no call, no show) will result in automatic progression to the progressive discipline process 1st written warning.** Per the Progressive Discipline Policy (See Appendix B), the student with 3 communication records within the same semester for the same issue (i.e. timeliness) will be placed on the progressive discipline process.

All missed clinical, skills lab, simulation lab experiences will be made up regardless of whether it was student initiated, clinical faculty initiated, healthcare organization initiated or inclement weather. When a student initiates a clinical/lab absence and misses 0-10% of clinical/lab time, clinical faculty will document the occurrence on the Communication Record and the student will be required to make it up. When a student initiates a clinical/lab absence and misses 15% clinical/lab time, the faculty will document the occurrence on the Communication Record and the case will be automatically reviewed by the Academic Standards Committee and the student will automatically be placed in the progressive discipline process/Performance Improvement Plan (See Appendix C). When a student initiates a clinical/lab absence and misses greater than 20%, the student will receive a failing grade for clinical/lab. Refer to leave of absence or withdrawal policy.

If a student misses 10% of the clinical/lab experience due to a non-student-initiated absence, such as inclement weather or faculty illness, either virtual simulation or case studies will be used. If a student misses greater than 10% of clinical/lab time due to non-student-initiated absence it will be made up at the clinical placement site, skills lab, or simulation lab. The Course Coordinator will notify the Department Chair of the make-up time so communication of the plan and scenario preparation can be made with the agency, lab personnel/lab coordinator and students as applicable.

**Westfield State University Academic Integrity Policy:**

The University *Academic Honesty Policy* can be found online at:

[http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Academic Freedom And Responsibility](http://catalog.westfield.ma.edu/content.php?catoid=8&navoid=356#Academic%20Freedom%20And%20Responsibility)

Students are expected to do their own work. Plagiarism and cheating are inexcusable. Students are responsible for understanding the principles of academic integrity and for the academic integrity of all work submitted for credit. All members of the academic community are expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the faculty member teaching the course or the department chair. Violations of the Academic Honesty Policy are unacceptable and are subject to academic penalties, including reduced grade, failure of the course, and suspension or dismissal from the University.

Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g. generative AI tools such as chatGPT, GPT04, Bing and others), to substantially complete an assignment or exam (eg by entering assignment or exam prompts) is not permitted except when the instructor allows or requires certain use of AI tools for research, writing or revising. While the rules for citing or paraphrasing generative AI output are similar to those for other sources, students have the additional responsibility of finding and citing reputable sources for claims made by generative AI.

**Professional Behavior/Good Moral Character**

Professional behavior is an integral part of each student's nursing education. The purpose of this section is to clarify behavioral expectations for nursing students and professional nurses enrolled in all nursing programs at WSU. Having "good moral character" is a requirement for NCLEX testing eligibility in addition to graduation from an accredited nursing program. Link added below:

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/good-moral-character-requirements-for-nursing-licensure>

Nursing is a profession that has earned the public's trust. The importance of student integrity, trustworthiness and honesty are very serious concerns due to the implications for patient safety. The Department of Nursing identifies unprofessional behavior as a cause for dismissal. A faculty member may refuse to have a student continue in their course, and the University may dismiss a student from the program, if the student's character does not uphold the professional standards of nursing.

The following professional guidelines serve as the basis for the Department of Nursing expectations of professional behavior in both the classroom and clinical settings:

- The American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses
- Public Health Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice
- The Scope of Practice for Academic Nurse Educators
- National Student Nurse Association Code of Ethics

**Classroom Professional Behaviors:**

Students are required to abide by the Department of Nursing policies and procedure as stated in the Department of Nursing Baccalaureate Program Student Handbook. Students are expected to exercise mature and responsible self-discipline, to behave with respect, civility, courtesy, and integrity.

Students who exhibit disruptive behavior in the classroom may be dismissed from the class. Behavior is considered disruptive when it interferes with the opportunities of others to learn and the instructor to teach. Examples of disruptive behavior include:

- Talking to others while the instructor is delivering a lecture, when other students are presenting, or students are working in groups thus preventing others from benefiting educationally from the class.
- Using profane or obscene language.
- Using inappropriate body language/signals that are offensive or create an atmosphere of hostility.
- Interrupting the educational process with inappropriate questions or comments in a way that interferes with other students' learning.
- Being disrespectful, offensive, or threatening.
- Becoming belligerent when asked about their behavior or to leave the classroom.
- Persistently calling, emailing, texting or interrupting faculty during class and outside of the classroom.
- Sending verbally or physically threatening emails, texts, voice mails or letters to faculty, staff, or other students.

Use of laptops, phones, or tablets in class will be for faculty approved learning activities only.

- Students who use a laptop computer for note taking during class (only) must abide by the rules of the instructor in terms of seating arrangement (e.g. at the instructor's direction the student may be asked to sit in front row or to show screen periodically).
- Laptops in class will not be used to send emails, shop, or use Facebook and other social networking sites.
- Failure to comply with this policy will affect students' class participation grade and final course grade.

Recording of any class activities on any device must be pre-approved by the instructor.

### **Virtual Learning Platform**

Professional behaviors are expected in all learning platforms, virtual or in person. Virtual classrooms, lectures, discussions, clinical, and post conferences may not be recorded, reproduced or distributed by students. Faculty may post recordings for student learning purposes only. Students will be notified if sessions are being recorded.

### **Consequences of Unprofessional Behavior in Clinical, Classroom or on Campus Clinical**

When unprofessional or problem behaviors are identified:

1. The involved faculty member will issue a verbal or written warning using the Communication Record that includes counseling the student regarding the deficit or unacceptable behavior, the changes that are expected, and the timeframe in which the change must be made.
2. The deficiency or problem and the specific counseling will be documented by the faculty member and placed in the student's file.
3. If the deficit or unacceptable behavior is a minor infraction that is not remediated within the given time frame, the faculty member will document all incidents and attempted interventions and prepare a formal written warning and progress to the Progressive discipline process or the performance improvement plan depending on the issue.
4. If the deficit or unacceptable behavior is a major infraction that may affect the safety of patients, the student will be asked to leave the clinical setting

5. If an unacceptable behavior in the classroom may affect the safety of the faculty member or other students, the student will be asked to leave the classroom and, if necessary, Campus Police will be called.
6. In all cases of major infraction, the involved faculty member must notify the Department Chair.

### **Student Social Media Policy**

The WSU Department of Nursing supports the use of social media to reach audiences important to the University such as students, prospective students, faculty and staff. The WSU presence or participation on social media sites is guided by university policy.

This policy applies to nursing students who engage in internet conversations for school related purposes or school-related activities such as interactions in or about clinical and didactic course activities. Distribution of sensitive and confidential information is protected under HIPAA and FERPA whether discussed through traditional communication channels or through social media.

### **General Information:**

Social media are defined as mechanisms for communication designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Social media is commonly thought of as a group of Internet-based applications that are built on the ideological and technological foundations of the web that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Examples include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Wikipedia, Second Life, Flickr, blogs, podcasts, RSS feeds, Instagram, Snapchat, Allnurses.com, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, and Myspace.

As students, you will want to represent the University and the School in a fair, accurate, and legal manner while protecting the brand and reputation of the institution.

When publishing information on social media sites remain cognizant that information may be public for anyone to see and can be traced back to you as an individual. Since social media typically enables two-way communications with your audience, you have less control over how materials you post will be used by others.

### **Policy:**

- Protect confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information: Do not post confidential or proprietary information about the university, staff, students, clinical facilities, patients/clients, or others with whom one has contact in the role of a Westfield State University nursing student.
- Respect copyright and fair use. When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others and of the university. For guidance, visit the University's Libraries site or seek consultation through the Copyright Office, Libraries.
- Do not use Westfield State University or Nursing Department marks, such as logos and graphics, on personal social media sites. Do not use Westfield State University's name to promote a product, cause, or political party or candidate.
- Use of the WSU Nursing marks (logos and graphics) for School sanctioned events must be approved (posters, flyers, postings) by administration.
- It is expected that during clinical, the use of cell phones, iPads, tablets etc. and other devices employed for social media will be used only as authorized by faculty. If a smart phone is being used, it

is expected that the cell phone aspect of the device is silenced.

- No personal phone conversations or texting are allowed at any time while in patient/client areas or in the classroom. If the student needs to respond to an emergency text or phone call during class/clinical, the student is asked to leave the area and respond as deemed necessary.
- Use of computers (iPads, Notebooks, etc.) during class shall be restricted to note taking and classroom activities. Use otherwise is distracting for not only the student involved in the activity but those in the immediate area/vicinity.
- No student shall videotape professors or fellow students for personal or social media use without the permission of the faculty or fellow student.
- At NO time shall patients/clients be videotaped or photographed.
- Be aware of your association with Westfield State University in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a student, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, clients, and potential employers. Identify your views as your own. When posting your point of view, you should neither claim nor imply you are speaking on Westfield State University's behalf, unless you are authorized to do so in writing.
- HIPPA guidelines must be followed at all times. Identifiable information concerning clients/clinical rotations must not be posted in any online forum or webpage.
- Ultimately, you have sole responsibility for what you post. Be smart about protecting yourself, your and others privacy, and confidential information.
- Students must not use social media during clinical hours or laboratory hours or at any time on the clinical agency's equipment or property.
- Students must promptly report any identifiable breach of confidentiality of privacy in regard to self or other students.

### **Consequences:**

- Violations of patient/client privacy with an electronic device will be subject to HIPAA procedures/guidelines and consequences.
- Students who share confidential or unprofessional information do so at the risk of disciplinary action including failure in a course and/or dismissal from the program.
- Each student is legally responsible for individual postings and may be subject to liability if individual postings are found defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law. Students may also be liable if individual postings include confidential or copyrighted information (music, videos, text, etc.
- Occurrences of inappropriate use of social and electronic media may be submitted to the State Board of Nursing, which may affect licensure or eligibility for licensure.

### **Artificial Intelligence, Academic Integrity, and Student Responsibility Statement**

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at Westfield State University is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and professional ethics. As future nursing professionals, students are expected to engage in responsible scholarship, critical thinking, and ethical decision-making while utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) and other digital tools in their academic work.

Students are responsible for thoroughly reading and understanding all course policies, including those outlined in the syllabus regarding academic integrity, plagiarism, and AI usage. Any uncertainty regarding these policies must be clarified with the instructor to ensure compliance with institutional and professional standards. Misuse of AI tools, failure to properly attribute sources, or

engaging in any form of academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary actions, including assignment penalties, course failure, or further institutional review.

To foster ethical academic practices, students are encouraged to utilize AI responsibly as a supplement to their learning while ensuring that all submitted work reflects their own knowledge, effort, and adherence to professional nursing standards. By enrolling in this program, students acknowledge their responsibility to maintain integrity, seek guidance when needed, and contribute to a culture of ethical scholarship in nursing education.

### **Progressive Discipline**

The Department of Nursing follows a progressive discipline policy that typically consists of four steps. Depending on the seriousness of any situation, however, any step may be skipped with the approval of the Chair of the Department. A student will enter progressive discipline whenever they fail to meet the expectations of the department. Typically, progressive discipline adheres to the following progression:

**Step One: Counseling** - student will be counseled regarding the need to improve in a specific area(s). Examples may include but are not limited to dress code violations, tardiness, absences, disruptive behavior, and non-professional behaviors. Counseling will be documented on a Communication Record form. Documented verbal counseling and outlined expectations will be agreed upon by faculty and the student.

During each semester, course coordinators will identify students with 3 communication records for the same behavior- timeliness, professionalism, etc. and be referred to the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee for evaluation of warning or performance improvement plan process.

**Step Two: 1st Written Warning** - student will be counseled regarding the need to improve in a specific area and has failed to demonstrate improvement or performance from counseling in Step One. A performance improvement plan may be implemented to specifically describe to the student how the expectations may be met.

**Step Three: 2nd Written Warning** - occurs when the student has already received a 1st Written Warning and new issues arise or unresolved issues continue;

**Step Four: 3rd/Final Written Warning** - follows the 2nd Written Warning if new issues arise or unresolved issues continue;

**Final: Recommendation for Dismissal or Course Failure** - This recommendation may be made when the student has received a 3rd written warning, continues to fail to meet the standards of the department and does not demonstrate the ability, desire, or willingness to change the behavior. If the student requires additional discipline after the third warning, they will automatically fail the course and/or be dismissed from the program.

Although these steps usually follow a progressive pattern, **please note that at the discretion of the Department Chair and/or the Admissions and Academic Standards Committee, any step may be skipped depending on the seriousness of the situation.** Please refer to the following section, which describes specific criteria that constitute dismissal from the program.

### **Dismissal from the Program**

The decision to dismiss a student from the program may result from a combination of behaviors, listed below, that may have caused the student to enter the progressive discipline process.

Examples of such behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Failure to successfully complete science or nursing course required in the nursing curriculum, taken for the second time, with a grade of "C" or better
- Unauthorized possession, use, sale or distribution of alcoholic beverages or of any illegal or controlled substance
- Verbal, physical and/or psychological abuse, threat or harassment of any client, visitor, agency staff, student or faculty member
- Theft, abuse, misuse or destruction of another person's or agency's property
- Unauthorized disclosure, removal or misuse of confidential information about any client, student or agency staff
- Violation of Clinical Conduct policies as stated on specific pages of the Nursing Handbook
- Engaging in or prompting others to engage in conduct that threatens or endangers the health, safety or physical/psychological well-being of another person
- Leaving the clinical agency without authorization from clinical faculty
- Being on clinical agency property, in a student capacity, without proper authorization
- Failure to contact clinical faculty to give notice of lateness or absence from the agency
- Unsafe practice in the clinical area
- Inappropriate use of social networking, pertaining to the Nursing Department, clinical facilities, or patients

Violation of any professional nursing ethics and standards as listed by the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) Guidelines

### **Minimum GPA Policy**

Undergraduate nursing majors must maintain a 2.500 cumulative GPA from admission through graduation. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 2.500, they would consequently be dismissed from the nursing program. The only exception is first year students with less than a 2.500 cumulative GPA in their first semester at WSU are not dismissed but must raise their cumulative GPA to 2.500 or above at the end of their first year.

### **Diversity Statement in Nursing**

The Westfield State Nursing Department strives to be an inclusive community, learning from the many perspectives that come from having differing backgrounds and beliefs. As a community, we aim to be respectful to all. We reject all forms of prejudice and discrimination, including but not limited to those based on age, color, disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, and veteran status. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to commit to creating an environment that facilitates inquiry and self-expression, while also demonstrating diligence in understanding how others' viewpoints may be different from their own.

## **Student Rights and Grievance Policy**

### **Title IX and Equal Opportunity**

Equal Opportunity at Westfield State University is the effort to ensure that all employment and academic decisions, programs, and policies are formulated and conducted in a manner to ensure equal access for all people and to prevent discrimination.

Nursing students are directed to the Title IX and Grievance information found at <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/hr-titleix-eo/title-ix> which includes links to Affirmative Action, Bias Incident Response, Discrimination, Discriminatory Harassment, and Retaliation, Title IX and Sexual Violence, and Reporting, Complaint and Investigation Procedures.

Nursing students can also find information at the links below:

Westfield State Student Handbook: [2024-2025 Student Handbook](#)

Division of Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/justice-equity-diversity-inclusion>

### **Academic Grade Appeal**

The Nursing Department follows the University's policy for grade appeals. The process for appeals can be found: [Grade Appeal Policies](#)

The purpose of the Grade Appeal Policy is to provide the student with a safeguard against receiving an unfair final grade, while respecting the academic judgment of the instructor.

### **Formal Complaint Policy**

The current online WSU Undergraduate Catalog/Student Handbook details the policies for student conduct and the appeal process.

The appeal process begins in the Nursing Department. Students who feel they have been treated unjustly regarding their academic performance, or conduct are entitled to appeal for an impartial review and reconsideration of their achievement.

### **Grade Appeal Procedure**

1. The student should first send an email to the faculty member or members involved in the course.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution, they should then send an email to their assigned Advisor.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution, they should then send an email with the Chairperson of the Department of Nursing, and if necessary, the Dean of the college.
4. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution at the Department level, they should follow the Appeal Procedure as outlined in the link here: [Grade Appeal Policies](#)

### **Formal Complaints or grievances not associated with academic performance or grades**

The nursing department defines a Formal Complaint as a signed letter that specifically expresses concern from any member of the program's community of interest about issues related to a student's experience in the nursing program. The Formal Complaint should be made prior to the following semester in which the concern began. The formal complaint should include:

- Intention of the formal complaint
- Detailed description of the complaint, including the names of all persons involved
- The steps taken to resolve the complaint
- Any proposed/recommended solutions to the issue

When a student has a concern about a non-academic performance issue and would like to pursue complaint resolution, the following process will be followed:

1. Student would first approach the involved faculty, or advisor, or nursing department member to discuss the concern.
2. If there is no resolution at this level, the following steps should occur to proceed with a Formal Complaint.

The process for a complaint is as follows:

1. The Complainant will submit the letter to the Department Chair
2. The Department Chair will review the complaint and provide a response to the originator of the written formal complaint.
3. If there is no resolution or if the complaint involves the Department Chair, the Academic and Admissions Committee will meet and provide a response to the originator of the written formal complaint.
4. If there is no resolution, the Executive Director of Nursing will review the complaint and provide a response the originator of the written formal complaint.
5. If there is no resolution, the appropriate Dean(s) will review the complaint and provide a response the originator of the written formal complaint.

Formal Complaints are tracked via a Formal Complaint Log that includes:

- Tracking number designated by year and complaint # for that year (i.e. 2024-1)
- Date the letter was received by the department
- Reviewing committee or person(s) conducting review
- Date formal complaint was 'closed'

Source documentation for each formal complaint is kept on file in the Department of Nursing Administrative Office.

### **Advisement**

Students in the nursing major are assigned nursing faculty academic advisors prior to matriculation. The department's administrative staff coordinates this process. If extenuating circumstances exist, a student may request a change in advisor by submitting a written request to the chair and current faculty advisor.

Pre-Registration Process: Students are required to meet with their advisor prior to registration for the upcoming semester. The following is a description of the process.

- First year students are required to meet with peer advising prior to meeting with their nursing advisor.
- Schedule an appointment with advisor during the pre-registration period to facilitate registration for the upcoming semester.
- Review course progress, program offerings and plans for degree attainment.

## CLINICAL / ON CAMPUS CLINICAL

### **Clinical Performance**

The Massachusetts Nurse Practice Act regulates standards of practice for registered nurses in the state of Massachusetts. When providing clinical care, nursing students are expected to adhere to professional standards of practice and code of ethics that have been developed to guide the profession of nursing. A client and their family have a right to expect safe, competent nursing care consistent with knowledge of scientific principles and guided by the nursing process.

Westfield State University nursing students are held to the standards of practice, professional performance, and ethical behavior described in the Massachusetts's Nurse Practice Act and the National Student Nurses Association.

### **Clinical Professional Behaviors:** *(Pertains to on campus clinical and clinical agency settings)*

On campus clinical includes all skills laboratory and simulation settings. Clinical professional behavior must be respectful of all individuals (patients, patients' families, members of the health care team, faculty, and other students) according to the patients' Bill of Rights, the ANA standards of care, WSU standards for clinical performance, and the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses and the Simulation Lab Policy and Procedures Manual.

While students are in uniform, they are representatives of WSU, and the nursing program and professional behavior is expected. Students must adhere to the Department of Nursing dress code.

Students will comply with agency policies. Failure to adhere to clinical professional behaviors will be reflected on the clinical evaluation form.

Students must arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of their scheduled clinical time. Students must give prior notification in writing or voice mail to the faculty (and preceptor if appropriate) when they are unable to meet clinical or lab requirements. Students should contact their clinical instructor when feeling ill. Clinical Faculty and/or course coordinator will discuss and decide with the student how the clinical will be made up. Faculty members acknowledge that emergencies exist and will work with students in these situations if they arise.

Note: Emergencies do NOT include (but are not limited to):

- Scheduling work or vacation during class or clinical, or final exam times. (Missing class to work is not an excused absence.)
- Non-emergent doctor or dental appointments.
- Planning "special" events that interfere with class or clinical time.
- Being fatigued due to your own actions.

A Student who demonstrates unsafe clinical nursing practice may be dismissed at any time from the clinical area and therefore fail the course. Unsafe clinical practice is defined as any behavior that is actually or potentially detrimental to the client, family or health care agency. Behaviors may include but are not limited to: contributing to physical injury or mental distress, performing any acts outside of the nursing scope of practice and/or acts which the student has not demonstrated competency. Engaging in clinical activities while under the effects of alcohol, drugs or chemicals; lack of preparation to ensure effective clinical practice or deficits in problem solving skills. Refer to student impairment policy under

“health policies and requirements” for additional considerations.

### **Nursing Attire/Uniform**

Students are expected to always present in professional dress while representing WSU Nursing.

Students will maintain a clean, neat, and well-groomed and fragrance-free appearance.

Nonadherence may result in a student being asked to leave the clinical area. The first violation will result in a communication record and move onto the progressive discipline process as indicated. This will be reflected in the student’s clinical evaluation.

Incoming sophomore students will be provided information regarding the Nursing Department’s designated uniform company and all uniform requirements.

In general, the required official clinical uniform consists of:

- White lab jacket/scrub jacket with school emblem
- Navy blue scrub top with school emblem and scrub bottoms (Beginning with Class of 2027)
- Black or White stockings or socks
- Black or White uniform shoes with closed toes and heels or totally black or white sneakers. Clogs must be uniform clogs with no heel and a closed toe and heel (no strap).

### **Uniform Policy Considerations**

In some clinical and on campus clinical experiences students may be allowed variations from the above uniform. Instructors will provide students with specific information when appropriate.

- All attire must comply with the WSU policy and the standards of the clinical agency. If any student feels these policies violate a religious or cultural practice, they must communicate with their course coordinator prior to the start of the course.
- Identification badge must be always worn on the upper chest, in patient care settings.
- An undershirt worn under uniform top should not be seen.
- Jewelry should be limited. Earrings are limited to one small stud per ear. Flesh colored plugs may be permissible at the discretion of the Course Coordinator for tongue, nose and facial piercings. Other jewelry is limited to a non-internet capable watch and a single smooth band (without stones).
- Air buds or headphones are not to be worn in clinical.
- Artificial or gel nails are not allowed. Fingernails shall be no longer than ¼ inch beyond the tip of the finger. No nail polish or nail jewelry is permitted. Fingernails must be kept clean, smooth, and well-manicured.
- Hairstyles must be conservative and professional and above the collar so that it does not interfere with patient care. Hair color must be of natural color. Unacceptable colors include but are not limited to blue, green, pink, or purple. Headbands are permissible in the following solid colors only: white, royal blue, black, brown.
- Beards, sideburns, and mustaches must be short and well-groomed.
- Fragrance-free for all clinical placements (Fragrance is defined as a substance that emits a distinctly noticeable scent, which includes but is not limited to: perfume, cologne, aftershave, body spray, some air fresheners and cleaning products. Due to the risk of respiratory compromise to patients, students may not report to any clinical area with extremes in smell emissions to include, but not limited to cigarette smoke, perfume, cologne, or body odor.
- Make-up must be moderate in amount and tone. Bright colors may be distracting to the patient and may not be worn.
- Tattoos and body art must adhere to the dress codes at the clinical agency. Visible tattoos are not permitted if they are potentially offensive based on racial, sexual, religious, ethnic, or gender characteristics or attributes of a sensitive or legally protected nature. Lab jacket may be utilized for coverage. Dressing supplies may not be used for coverage.
- Required accessories for clinical:

- Stethoscope
- Pen light
- Watch with second hand- non-internet based
- Official WSU name badge (or student badge provided by clinical site) can reflect chosen name dependent on the agency policy.

### **Professional Attire**

At some events, professional dress may be allowed for the work to be performed in conformance with professional group standards. Examples of clothing that is not acceptable include sweatshirts/sweatpants; shorts; novelty tee shirts (those with printed writing, slogans or numbers); crop tops, tank or halter tops, blue denim jeans; spandex pants; form fitting leggings; leather attire. Any footwear that is a combination of open toe and open strapless back is not allowed; appropriate low heel-colored shoes are allowed; appropriate snow boots are allowed for community health settings during the winter.

### **Clinical/Lab Attendance**

You are expected to attend every clinical and lab. Evenings, nights and/or weekends may be used for clinical placements.

If you need to miss a clinical you must notify the clinical instructor at least 1 hour prior to the start of the clinical experience. Please utilize the numbers your instructor provides to you. Students must continue to call until they get a direct confirmation back from the Clinical Instructor. Students are responsible for obtaining the faculty's number for cancellations.

A student absent more than 2 clinical days, regardless of the reason or makeup schedule, may not meet the objectives and time requirement for the course and may receive a failure grade for clinical, which will result in a failure for the course. Refer to percentages.

In the event you miss a clinical, it MUST be made up and scheduled in collaboration with both the Clinical Instructor and Course Coordinator.

**CONSEQUENCES:** Nonadherence to the clinical/Lab attendance will result in documentation on a Communication Record form and be placed in the student's file. Subsequent violations will result in a Discipline Record. This will be reflected in the student's clinical evaluation.

### **Clinical Tardiness**

Students are expected to arrive at the clinical at the time specified by your instructor during orientation on the first day of the clinical.

A student who arrives 5 minutes past the assigned start time will be considered "late". A student that has a repeated pattern (greater than one time) of tardiness will not be allowed to participate in clinical for the day and will receive an absence from clinical.

### **Clinical Evaluation**

The clinical learning outcomes pertinent to each clinical nursing course will be completed at midterm and at the end of the course. Students will be evaluated at midterm and at the conclusion of the semester. At midterm, the student will be awarded S (satisfactory) if objectives are being met or (NI) Needs Improvement or (U) unsatisfactory if they have not yet achieved the objectives. A performance

improvement plan will be given to the students with a timetable for bringing the outcome to an acceptable level if they receive a *Needs Improvement* or *unsatisfactory* in any objective at midterm.

The exception to this is Failing the math competency exam after a total of 3 attempts, which will result in an unsatisfactory clinical evaluation and an automatic clinical and course failure. Failing clinical will constitute failure of the course and will prevent advancement to the next nursing course.

### **Clinical Failure**

Students who are making a 2nd attempt at nursing courses related to failing the clinical portion will adhere to the following guidelines:

1. An attempt will be made to assign the student a clinical group which does not include any other students making a second attempt;
2. Student will be assigned a different clinical instructor from the first attempt if possible;
3. Student will be expected to meet the requirements set forth in the Performance Improvement Plan not met in the prior clinical experience;
4. This plan will be reviewed with the student at the start of the new semester;
5. Student will need to meet the identified expectations by the fourth (4th) clinical experience;
6. The clinical instructor will remain in weekly contact with the Course Coordinator;
7. If all requirements are not met, the student will fail clinically and be dismissed from the program, as they will have attempted the course twice.

### **Transportation**

Students in the Nursing major are responsible for arranging their own transportation and parking fees if any for clinical rotations. Students are required to follow all parking and carpooling regulations set forth by the health care organizations. If a student does not adhere to parking rules, they are in jeopardy of failing the clinical.

### **Legal Name/Chosen Name Statement**

The nursing department promotes an institutional culture of belonging in which identity and self-expression are celebrated. Accordingly, we will strive to use a student's chosen name whenever a legal name is not required for business, legal, or state reporting purposes. Toward this goal, the department of nursing will make efforts to update forms, documents and systems to allow for the capture and display of students' chosen names.

#### **Definition**

**Chosen Name:** The name of a person's choice that they would like to appear in the University's systems and have others use when addressing them instead of their legal name.

**Legal Name:** The name that an individual is given at birth and which appears on a birth certificate or other government-issued identification recognized by a legal entity.

To activate the use of a student's chosen name in the classroom and curricular process, students are encouraged to complete the "Preferred/Chosen First Name Request Form" via the registrar's webpage. There is a separate process for students to submit a legal name change also via the registrar's webpage. <https://www.westfield.ma.edu/offices/registrar/important-forms>

Students who wish to have their chosen name on their ID badge in the clinical agency can discuss this option with the Assistant Director of practice placements or their designee. This request can be accomplished dependent on clinical agency policy.

The department and university is obliged to use a student's legal name for legal reasons including, but not limited to the following:

- CORI
- Criminal background checks
- Health insurance records
- Agency incident reports
- Financial documents and reimbursements
- Documents or systems that require the use of one's legal name such as clinical documentation.

All students documenting in a non-electronic medical record will add "SN, WSU" (Student Nurse, Westfield State University) after their signature of their legal name.

### **Clinical Orientation/Annual Requirements**

*Clinical Orientation:* All students are required to complete the online clinical orientation through the Massachusetts Centralized Clinical Orientation. Students who have not completed the online orientation will not be allowed to go to clinical sites.

### **Clinical Compliance Requirements:**

Clinical sites require documentation prior to the start of clinical rotations. This includes submitting necessary documentation over the holiday breaks and summer at least 3 weeks prior to the start of the semester. The nursing program is not obligated to find alternative clinical sites if the health/CORI requirements are not met or accepted by the HCO. The lack of student compliance with the necessary documentation will require withdrawal from the course. Requirements ***must be current*** and include but are not limited to:

- Health/Immunizations forms not expired and current
- CPR American Heart Association Health Care Provider with AED
- Fingerprinting (if applicable)
- CORI
- Drug screening (if applicable)
- CCP
- CastleBranch

### **Inclement Weather Prelicensure and RN to BSN Policy**

The Nursing department follows the University weather policy which is listed below with additional information added for off-site classes and clinical.

The decision to delay or close the University due to inclement weather is made by the Vice President for Academic Affairs in consultation with senior University officials.

### **Closings and delays are announced using the following methods:**

Emergency/Weather closing hotline at (413) 572-5411

University website home page ([www.westfield.ma.edu](http://www.westfield.ma.edu))

Email notification to faculty, staff and students

Local radio and television stations

Do not come to campus or clinical area when a weather-related closing is announced.

*Additional information for off-site classes and clinical:*

- If WSU is closed for day classes, daytime clinical will be cancelled
- If WSU is closed for evening classes, evening clinical will be cancelled
- If WSU is closed for day classes, evening clinical attendance will be at the discretion of the instructor
- In cases of a precepted clinical, cancellations or delays will be at the discretion of the student and the student will notify preceptor and/or facility as appropriate.
- In the event of weekend, labs or clinicals, instructors will determine if clinical is cancelled and will notify students and agency

*Under no circumstances should a student put themselves at risk while driving in inclement weather.*

### **Professional Development**

As a public institution for higher education, Westfield State University recognizes its duty to the community. Engagement is a cornerstone, where students actively participate in organized service that serves both community needs and professional development. These endeavors instill civic responsibility and foster professional growth.

Oversight of this process lies with the Interprofessional and Innovation Committee, ensuring all activities are pre-approved or supported by the nursing department. **Starting with the Class of 2027, ALL 20 HOURS must be completed by the end of Fall semester senior year.**

The specified mandatory minimum hours for each class:

- 10 hours total for the class of '26
- 20 hours total for the class of '27 and beyond, 10 hours for the first two years (recommended) and 10 hours for the final two years (recommended).
- 15 hours total for **transfer** students

The learning objectives include:

- To foster civil and professional responsibility
- To enhance student learning experiences
- To address health, social, and civic needs within the community and profession

Nursing Domains are broad distinguishable areas of competence that, when considered in the aggregate, constitute a descriptive framework for the practice of nursing. For each professional development opportunity please indicate which domain is achieved. You can choose more than one. For a complete detailed description of the AACN Domains please see:

<https://www.aacnnursing.org/essentials>

### **Domains include:**

- Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice
- Domain 2: Person-Centered Care
- Domain 3: Population Health
- Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Practice
- Domain 5: Quality and Safety
- Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships
- Domain 7: Systems-Based
- Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
- Domain 9: Professionalism
- Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development

All hours must be logged onto the Professional Development hours sheets.

See APPENDIX D: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT HOURS SHEET

### **Global Health Service Learning (optional):**

This healthcare service learning gives nursing students opportunities to learn and grow as nurses while immersing themselves in another culture. As a result of this experience, students will:

- Develop nursing competencies with greater awareness of global health issues.
- Incorporate knowledge and clinical skills into providing culturally responsive care.
- Foster a sense of civic responsibility and growth toward cultural humility.
- Strengthen nursing students' role in promoting global health.
- Build self-confidence toward developing leadership potential.

### **Requirements for International Health Service Learning**

Applications will be made based on international office guidelines. If the program is over enrolled, additional application materials will be requested and evaluated using the following rubric:

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| • Essay double spaced, 12-point font, 3 pages or fewer.   | 3 points |
| • Essay includes three to four AACN Domains.  | 4 points |
| • Essay includes an example of a clinical experience that shows actions as self-directed and reflective of an engaged, active learner included. | 3 points |
| • Other experiences traveling abroad.   | 1 point  |
| • Language of destination fluency.  | 1 point  |
| • If applicable, prior academic or clinical warnings/probation indicated and how rectified/ addressed.  | 2 points |
| • Self-affirmation of ability to pay fees.  | 3 points |
| • GPA.  | 3 points |

The WSU students who apply to a Go Global opportunity must comply with the requirements set forth by the Office of International Programs and submit a completed application form prior to deadline with payment and a letter of reference.

## **COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Formal Papers**

Formal papers in Nursing courses will be graded according to guidelines developed by course faculty.

The Department of Nursing has adopted the "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (APA Manual) as the standard for writing style and format. The APA Manual is a required text for the first nursing course and shall be followed in all written assignments.

## **TESTING in the NURSING DEPARTMENT**

### **Absences from Examinations**

Students are expected to take examinations at the scheduled time. If an emergency or illness occurs, the student must contact the course instructor before the examination is given. Failure to notify faculty will result in a reduction of 10% of their earned grade for the examination. Subsequent failure to notify faculty prior to an exam absence will be incremental e.g. 20% for 2nd exam, 3rd absence 30% for 3rd exam, etc. See course syllabi.

Laptop computers are required for all nursing students. They MUST NOT be a tablet or chromebook and have a camera so they can be used for computerized testing. It is the students' responsibility to have a functioning computer for all in class or remote testing.

### **Electronic Testing Policy**

1. Testing in the Westfield State University Department of Nursing prepares students in a similar testing environment to current licensure testing (NCLEX), which is a strategy for the students' success.
2. According to the Nursing Student Handbook, students shall be equipped with the proper electronic device for testing.
3. Testing accommodations should be presented to the instructor at the beginning of the semester.
4. The proctor will decide where to seat people and may assign seats. To guarantee a punctual start, it is advisable that you arrive at the testing room fifteen minutes beforehand. Upon the start of an exam, students could not be permitted to reenter the room.
5. Testing device should be fully charged and have Respondus Lockdown downloaded onto the computer before arriving. Students should restart their computers and be connected to Eduroam before beginning their test. Students are not permitted to have any programs open on their testing device besides Respondus.
6. All bags and belongings are to be placed either at the front of the room or away from the testing environment. No other items may be present on the desk, including pens/pencils, or blank paper. No hats, headphones, or electronic ear buds are allowed. Items such as phones or other electronic devices should be turned off and stored away from the testing environment.
7. Keyboards, cases, and covers are permitted if they are attached to the device. These must be free of any writing or notes and available to the proctor to check.
8. Backward navigation (the ability to return to a previous question once it has been submitted) is disabled on all exams.
9. Once complete, students should exit out of the exam and show the proctor before leaving the testing area.
10. Smartwatches are not permitted to be worn during the exam.
11. Disposable ear plugs for noise canceling purposes are allowed.
12. Students will be provided the exam password at the beginning of the exam period. Once the password is entered, the exam must be started within 3 minutes. The following are prohibited:
  - a. Attempting to take the exam before the exam period
  - b. Attempting to take the exam outside of the testing area
  - c. Continuing to take the exam after the exam period has concluded
  - d. During exam review, note taking, for example on paper or recording of any kind, including photography.
13. Students must follow University Policy regarding the [Academic Honesty Policy](#).
14. Passwords may not be shared with other students.
15. Excused or make-up exam arrangements must be made with the instructor before the scheduled exam time.
16. In the event of an issue with the student's device, the student should immediately bring their testing device to the proctor for assistance.
17. Additional testing time will not be granted for a bathroom or other break.

### **Dosage Calculations Competency Tests**

Competency in drug dosage calculation will be evaluated as a clinical component in designated clinical courses.

Dosage calculation test process will begin with NURS 201 semester. This is to evaluate math and dose calculation competency progressively throughout the curriculum. The initial dosage calculation test will be administered by week 3 and the process will be completed by week 7. In each semester thereafter, the dosage calculation test process will start week 1 and be completed by week 4 of the semester for each clinical course. The students will not administer medications in the clinical setting until successfully passing the dosage calculation test with 90% Specific criteria below:

- A practice exam will be distributed by the course coordinator to the students prior to the start of the semester.
- All dosage calculation tests will consist of at least 20 questions.
- Calculators are permitted; however, cell phones are not permitted in the testing area.
- Students must achieve a passing grade of 90% in order to administer medication at the clinical site.
- A first examination failure (less than 90%) requires mandatory remediation and a tutoring plan before subsequent examination scheduled with faculty.
- If the student fails the second test (less than 90%), a performance improvement plan is initiated with mandatory remediation, identifying that this could result in clinical failure, and a third exam is scheduled.
- A third examination failure (less than 90%) will result in an “unsatisfactory” grade in the midterm clinical competency evaluation tool, which automatically results in a clinical failure because they are unable to meet all objectives on the clinical evaluation tool. And would be removed from clinical (See clinical Evaluation section).
- Failing of all three dosage calculation tests in one semester results in a clinical failure and results in the course earned grade being a maximum of a C-.

Philosophy for above policy: Medication administration is an integral component of safe nursing care provided to patients. Students must demonstrate the ability to administer medication safely, including accurate medication calculation. The theoretical underpinning and clinical application related to medication administration are incorporated throughout the nursing curriculum and builds from simple to complex knowledge and skills. Introduction of math calculation skills will be done in the students' first year.

### **Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI)**

#### **What does ATI offer?**

- Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) offers an assessment driven comprehensive review program designed to enhance student NCLEX® success.
- The comprehensive ATI review program offers multiple assessment and remediation hard copy text and online activities. These include assessment indicators for academic success, critical thinking, and learning styles and virtual case studies. Additionally, online tutorials, online practice tests, and proctored tests are provided and span major content areas in nursing. These ATI tools, in combination with the nursing program content, assist students to prepare effectively, helping to increase their confidence and familiarity with nursing content.
- In addition to being a testing preparation platform, learning materials such as video case studies are available to students and used by faculty throughout the program.
- ATI information and orientation resources can be accessed from your student home page. **It is highly recommended that you spend time navigating through these orientation materials.**

**Modular Study:**

ATI provides Review Modules in print and eBook formats that include written and video materials in key content areas. Students are encouraged to use these modules to supplement course work. Instructors may assign these ATI resources either during a given course and/or as part of active learning/remediation following assessments.

**Tutorials:**

ATI offers unique Tutorials that are designed to teach nursing students how to think like a nurse, how to take a nursing assessment, and how to make sound clinical decisions. **Nurse Logic** is an excellent way to learn the basics of how nurses think and make decisions. **Learning System** offers practice tests in specific nursing content areas that allow students to apply the valuable learning tools from Nurse Logic. Features such as a Hint Button, a Talking Glossary, and a Critical Thinking Guide are embedded throughout the Learning System tests to help students gain an understanding of the content.

**Assessments:**

Standardized assessments will help the student to identify what they know as well as areas requiring active learning/remediation. There are practice assessments available for students as well as standardized proctored assessments that may be scheduled during courses.

**Active Learning/Remediation:**

Active Learning/Remediation is a process of reviewing content in an area that was not learned or not fully understood (as determined on an ATI assessment). Remediation tools are intended to help the student review important information to be successful in courses and on the NCLEX®. The student's individual performance profile will contain a listing of the topics to review. The student will remediate using the Focused Review, which contains links to ATI books, media clips, and active learning templates. The mantra is test, remediate, retest!

The instructor has online access to detailed information about the timing and duration of time spent in assessments, focused reviews, and tutorials by each student. Students will provide documentation of required ATI work that was completed using the "My Transcript" feature under "My Results" of the ATI Student Home Page and by submitting written Remediation Templates as required.

**Specific WSU ATI protocol:**

1. By testing, students acknowledge WSU and the RN Program's Academic Integrity Policy and agree to uphold it.
2. ATI Help line is 1-800-667-7531
3. The faculty will post rubrics and deadlines in the syllabus. In general, the ATI component of each course will be worth 10% of your final grade. Several rubrics are available for instructor to use (see policy). The grade will include a combination of practice testing, remediation and proctored testing. The syllabus will identify deadlines. Students are required to complete the practice tests. Initial practice tests may have rationales on, but at least on one practice test, Rationales will be turned off until after the practice test is completed with remediation. The remediation is intended to help students learn the content so the strength of your note taking is important to your learning. To improve your test taking strategy, re-take of practice assessments with rationales on as needed is recommended to achieve the suggested proficiency level (level 2 or 3). Doing so allows the student to review missed concepts.

4. Remediation is required and rewarded. This involves:
  - a. Spend time completing the **Focused Review/Performance Profile Outline** that can be accessed after completion of an assessment.
  - b. Students are required to submit in their **“transcript” of their grade with topics missed.**
  - c. **Focused review must be completed with demonstration of remediation on each topic missed submitted per syllabus or no additional points will be awarded.**
5. Proficiency Level Definitions:
  - a. **Below Proficiency Level One:** *Not currently meeting* NCLEX standards in this content area.
  - b. **Proficiency Level One:** *Likely to just meet* NCLEX standards in this content area.
  - c. **Proficiency Level Two:** *Fairly certain* to meet NCLEX standards in this content area.
  - d. **Proficiency Level Three:** *Very likely* to exceed NCLEX standards in this content area. Only Content Mastery Series® tests (Medical- Surgical, Pharmacology, etc.) have proficiency levels assigned to them. The RN Comprehensive Predictor® will assign an “expected probability of passing NCLEX-RN®”.
6. For courses that use custom-built ATI exams, they don't have leveling ability. Therefore, the instructor will assign levels to grades as appropriate.
7. The applicable Content Mastery Series Grading Rubric will be cited in the course syllabus. In general, all applicable courses will use the CMS grading rubric and the Capstone course will use the grading rubric for the comprehensive predictor exams.
8. The NCLEX preparation course will include a 3-day live review course (mandatory attendance) after the first comprehensive proctored assessment in approximately week 7 of the semester. The retake will be conducted about Week 14.

See Also, APPENDIX E: ATI RUBRICS

### **BACKGROUND SCREENING AND COMPLIANCE TRACKING**

The Department of Nursing maintains a contract with CastleBranch\* for the purpose of organizing student and faculty background screening and compliance tracking. Students will be required to utilize CastleBranch to maintain clinical compliance. Students will log into the Westfield State Portal via this link <https://portal.castlebranch.com/WN90>. There is a one-time cost to cover the cost of this service. An additional cost will be necessary if the student requires drug testing for clinical placement; drug testing will be scheduled through CastleBranch. All student compliance records will be uploaded and reviewed at this secure site. CastleBranch will contact the student directly for incomplete information and reminders when updates are required.

\*Starting with Class of '28, the clinical compliance tracking will be done by “Viewpoint”. The above requirements are followed using their website. [www.viewpointscreening.com](http://www.viewpointscreening.com)

### **HEALTH POLICIES & REQUIREMENTS**

All nursing students are required to be in compliance with health assessment data. No student will be allowed in the clinical area without complete health assessment data on file in CastleBranch having obtained clearance by the Department of Nursing.

#### Routine Compliance:

1. Students will create a CastleBranch or Viewpoint account by May 1.
2. Students must submit required clinical documentation by July 1 for Fall clinical placements
3. Students must submit required clinical documentation by Dec 1 for Spring clinical placements
4. Students will acknowledge any compliance notifications and resolve the issue or communicate next steps with the Clinical Placement Coordinator.

#### Clinical Onboarding Specific Deadlines:

1. Clinical onboarding deadlines established by the department must be completed and adhered to, including over summer and winter breaks.
2. It is the students' responsibility to continually check for emails throughout the calendar year.
3. Students must communicate to the Clinical Placement Coordinator any issues with meeting the established deadlines.

#### Consequence for noncompliance with routine or onboarding requirements:

Failure to submit any clinical placement documentation or assignments by the established deadlines will result in an automatic placement on step 2 of the progressive discipline process. It may result in immediate removal from the clinical assignment. Removal will count as a clinical absence; please refer to clinical absence policy.

#### A. Health Examination

All students entering the nursing program are required to submit the following required documentation for clinical health requirements. It is the student's responsibility to provide updated documentation to remain compliant for all clinical courses. It is not the responsibility of the nursing program to find alternative clinical sites if health or CORI is not accepted by the HCO.

#### *Requirements include documentation of the following:*

- Physical Exam: Updated every 2 years
- Tuberculosis Screening\*: Proof of yearly screening (PPD or IGRA blood test or negative chest x-ray)
- Hepatitis B Vaccine: Proof of 3 Doses AND positive titer
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap): within 10 years
- Varicella: Proof of 2 vaccines OR positive titer
- MMR: Proof of 2 vaccines OR positive titer
- Flu: Yearly vaccination or signed declination
- Covid: Vaccination and Booster

Students unable to receive vaccines due to medical exemptions must submit an application for medical exemption prior to when all clinical requirements are due.

Clinical placements on religious exemptions may not be possible and therefore impact enrollment in nursing classes.

Other evaluation testing may be necessary, at the student's expense, to meet specific requirements of clinical agencies.

## B. CPR Certification

All students must be prepared to provide a current CPR card from the American Heart Association (Basic Life Support [BLS] Provider). Certification must be maintained throughout the duration of the program.

## C. Proof of Individual Health Insurance Coverage

## D. Criminal Background Checks

Due to licensure eligibility requirements for Massachusetts, all students in WSU Nursing Program must submit to a Criminal Offenders Record Investigation (CORI) upon admission to the Program. The CORI may be repeated at intervals during the program, as clinical agency contracts require.

Any student whose **CORI** reflects conviction of certain offenses will be ineligible for placement at a clinical agency and furthermore, may exclude an individual from nurse licensure in Massachusetts, in accordance with Board Licensure Policy. Therefore, if there is a finding of an offense when the CORI is completed, the student may be unable to participate in a clinical assignment. Participation in planned clinical experiences throughout the curriculum is required.

See more information under the section, "Good Moral Character."

## E. Drug testing

All students are required to have a negative 10 panel urine drug screen on file prior to their first clinical course. Prior drug testing results from other facilities that are more than 6 months old will not be accepted. Students must submit written proof of a prescription of medication prior to screening. If a student fails a drug screen and does not have written proof of prescription, retesting must occur within 24 hours of notification of results. Failure to pass a drug screen or refusal to submit to screening will make the student ineligible for clinical placement, resulting in a clinical failure. All screening will be at the student's own expense.

## F. Impairment Policy

A drug test is required to ensure the safety and well-being of patients. In addition, student drug tests are mandatory to meet accreditation standards, licensure issues, contractual obligations, and liability issues.

If the nursing department faculty has reasonable suspicion that a student is using illegal drugs or is improperly under the influence of drugs or alcohol while engaged in university-related clinical activities, the program may immediately require the student to report for testing at a designated vendor at the cost of the university. The program is responsible for identifying and providing safe travel to and from the designated vendor for the testing. If a student refuses to submit to a reasonable suspicion alcohol or drug test, the refusal may be considered a presumptive positive.

Illegal Drugs: For purposes of this policy, 'illegal drugs' means illegal use of controlled or illegal (i.e. prohibited) substances. It does not mean prescription drugs that are lawfully being taken by a student prescribed by a licensed health care professional; the student must be under the direct medical care of the licensed health care professional. If student impairment is suspected, the student will be removed

from the clinical agency. Reasonable suspicion of impairment may include, but not exclusive to the following list:

- The physical symptoms or manifestations of drugs or alcohol use and impairment such as altered or slurred speech or repeated incoherent statements, dilated or constricted pupils, flushed skin, excessive sweating, excessive drowsiness or loss of consciousness;
- Unexplained, abrupt or radical changes in behavior such as violent outbursts, hyperactivity, extreme suspiciousness, frequent and/or extreme fluctuations of mood swings without explanation;
- Inability to walk steadily or in a straight line, or perform normal manual functions essential to clinical treatment without reasonable explanation;
- Accident or “near misses” in a clinical environment that appear related to unexplained sensory or
- Motor skill malfunctions;
- Perceived odor of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs;
- The direct observation of drug or alcohol use; or,
- A report of reasonable suspicion provided by a reliable and credible source.

Students who have a medical condition, are injured, or are taking any substance that impairs judgment may not be able to meet the technical standards and therefore may not be suitable for the clinical environment where patient safety is the utmost concern. Potential medications that should be avoided while in clinical or lab include but are not limited to: medical marijuana, amphetamines, barbiturates, methadone, or opiates.

#### Positive Drug Test Results/Sanctions

All students must satisfactorily pass any required drug test at the time of admission as well as when requested by program for cause “reasonable suspicion”. A refusal to undergo a drug test will be considered a presumptive positive. A student whose test results in a “negative dilute” or an insufficient sample will be required to be re-tested immediately. Multiple retests resulting in a negative dilute may be considered a presumptive positive and handled as such.

Any fees required by any additional testing are the responsibility of the student.

Students who do not pass a required drug test may face disciplinary action, including rescinding of their admission, administrative withdrawal from courses, placement on a leave of absence, or dismissal from the academic program. Students may also be referred to student health services for evaluation and treatment. Any fees incurred or required as part of a treatment program or ongoing monitoring are the responsibility of the student.

Documentation of medical clearance and negative results to return to clinical is required and to be given to the clinical coordinator and/or department chairperson.

Despite recreational legalization of marijuana in Massachusetts, federal law still prohibits consumption and therefore, nursing students cannot consume marijuana.

G. Department of Public Health Nurse Aide Registry

All students must clear the Nurse Aide Registry program screening process through the Department of Public Health.

### **Incident Reporting**

Whenever an incident involving a student occurs (for example, but not limited to a needlestick, infectious exposure, or injury), students notify the clinical instructor immediately who will initiate any applicable treatment and then notify the course coordinator who will complete the Nursing Department Incident Report Form.

Whenever an incident involving a student occurs (for example, but not limited to a needlestick, infectious exposure, or injury), students notify the clinical instructor immediately who will initiate any applicable treatment and then notify the course coordinator who will complete the Nursing Department Incident Report Form.

### **Infection Control Policy**

The following policy refers specifically to Westfield State University. Other policies may exist at clinical sites and if so, will take precedence over WSU policy if incident occurs at the clinical site.

#### **A. Exposure Determination**

Westfield State University Nursing Program faculty and students in the course of their teaching or learning may be involved in exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials through skin, eye, mucus membrane or parenteral contact. Exposure includes activities involving the administration of first aid to injured persons but does not include incidental exposures that may take place at the school and that are neither reasonably nor routinely expected to incur in the normal school duties.

#### **B. Precautions to Prevent Transmission of HIV, HBV, and Other Blood Borne Pathogens**

Universal Precautions Blood and body fluid precautions should be consistently used in all instances when blood or other bodily fluids are present. "Universal blood and bodily fluid precautions" or "universal precautions", should be used whenever there is a presence of blood or other body fluids.

1. The individuals should routinely use appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucus membrane exposure when contact with blood or other body fluids of any subject is anticipated. Gloves should be worn for touching blood and body fluids, mucus membranes, or other non-intact skin of all subjects, for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids, and for performing venipuncture and other vascular access procedures. Gloves should be changed after contact with each subject. Masks and protective eye wear or face shield should be worn during procedures that are likely to generate droplets of blood or fluids to prevent exposure of mucus membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes.

2. Hands and other skin surfaces should be washed immediately and thoroughly if contaminated with blood or other body fluids. Hands should be washed immediately after gloves are removed.

3. Individuals should take precautions to prevent injuries caused by needles, scalpels, and other sharp instruments or devices during procedures, when cleaning used instruments, during disposal of used needles, and when handling sharp instruments after procedures. To prevent needle stick injuries, needles should not be recapped, purposely bent or broken by hand. After they are no longer to be used, disposable syringes and needles, scalpel blades, and other sharp items should be placed in puncture resistant containers for disposal. The puncture resistant containers should be located as close as practical to the use area. Individuals who have exudative lesions or weeping dermatitis should refrain from all direct contact with equipment until the condition resolves.

4. Pregnant individuals are not known to be at greater risk of contracting HIV infection than other individuals. However, if a pregnant individual develops HIV infection, the fetus is at risk for infection. Because of this risk, pregnant individuals should be especially familiar with and strictly adhere to precautions to minimize the risk of HIV transmission.

C. Precautions for Laboratories Blood and other body fluids from all subjects should be considered infective. To supplement the universal blood and body fluids precautions listed above, the following precautions are recommended for individuals in clinical laboratories.

1. All specimens of blood and body fluids should be put in a well-constructed container with a secure lid to prevent leaking during transport. Care should be taken when collecting each specimen to avoid contaminating the outside of the container.

2. All people processing blood and body fluid specimens (e.g. removing tops from vacuum tubes) should wear gloves, masks and protective eye wear. Gloves should be changed, and hands washed after completion of the process.

3. All people should wash their hands after completing laboratory activities and should remove protective clothing before leaving the laboratory. Implementation of universal blood and body fluids precautions for all subjects eliminates the need for warning labels on specimens since blood and body fluids from all individuals should be considered infective.

### **Post Exposure Follow-up**

Should any individual exposed to blood or other potentially infectious materials by means of a specific eye, mouth or other mucous membrane, non-intact skin or parenteral contact, they must report the incident to the Nursing Program and complete the incident report form. A copy of the report shall be immediately furnished to the appropriate administrative personnel at the agency.

Following the exposure, or incident, the faculty should contact the Nursing Program course coordinator and potentially the clinical coordinator immediately and document using the incident report form.

See also, APPENDIX F: Incident Report Form

### **Miscellaneous Requirements**

Students are to notify the Department of Nursing of any changes in their health status which may impact on their ability to function in the clinical setting. Faculty has the right to direct a student to leave the clinical setting if they believe that a student is not physically or mentally competent to function safely in the clinical area. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to require an updated physical examination or a psychiatric evaluation if there is evidence that the student may not be physically or mentally competent to function in a clinical setting.

### **DEPARTMENT OF NURSING MEETINGS**

#### **Standing Department of Nursing Committee**

Standing Department of Nursing Committees are: Faculty Department Committee, Admissions and Academic Standards, Curriculum, Systematic Evaluation Committee, and Interprofessional and Innovation Committee.

#### **A. Admissions and Academic Standards Committee**

1. to develop and evaluate policies for admission, continuance, dismissal and appeal for nursing students
2. to act as an advisory group to the Chair regarding progressive discipline
3. to review and update the Nursing Student Handbook
4. to complete the tasks assigned to the Committee in the Systematic Evaluation Plan (SEP)

#### **B. Curriculum Committee**

1. to coordinate planning, development, and implementation of the curriculum for the major
2. to evaluate the curriculum to ensure the design of the curriculum is maintained and is consistent with the philosophy and organizing framework of the program
3. to identify present and future forces influencing nursing practice and education
4. to make curricular recommendations to the faculty and to university governance, approval and regulatory bodies
5. to improve upon and coordinate instructional resources including the library, audiovisual media, computer
6. to complete the tasks assigned to the Committee in the SEP

#### **C. Program Evaluation/Bylaws**

1. to solicit written suggestions annually for the first four years and thereafter every 2 years for amendments and/or revisions to the Bylaws from all faculty members
2. to review the Bylaws annually for the first four years and thereafter every 2 years
3. to recommend amendments to and/or revisions of the Bylaws annually for the first four years and thereafter every 2 years
4. to evaluate and revise the SEP as necessary
5. to monitor and coordinate the implementation of the SEP
6. to monitor and report the implementation of faculty decisions regarding Program improvement
7. to complete the tasks assigned to the Committee in the SEP

#### **D. Interprofessional and Innovation Committee**

1. to explore and suggest appropriate and current technology for use in the nursing classroom
2. to explore and suggest appropriate and current simulation technology for use in the nursing laboratory
3. to arrange for product demonstrations by potential vendors of technological equipment such as Manikin simulation
4. to coordinate demonstrations by vendors of “total testing programs”
5. update and maintain the department website
6. review and maintain the Simulation Lab Policy and Procedure manual

The Nursing Club executive board members are invited to participate in the Nursing Faculty meetings. Additional nursing students participate in other Department of Nursing committee. Nursing Student are notified of vacancy at the beginning of each academic year, as well as the dates of the committee meetings.

#### **OPEN FORUMS**

Open Forum meetings are conducted for all nursing students and led by the department chair to increase communication, share updates, respond to questions, and discuss issues and concerns.

#### **PINNING CEREMONY**

The Department of Nursing Pinning Ceremony is a meaningful occasion at which the academic community will be called together to recognize and honor the achievements of the nursing students and faculty. All senior students will be eligible to participate in the pinning ceremony when all requirements of the nursing program are satisfied. Class representatives participate in the planning of the ceremony.

#### **NURSING CLUB**

The Nursing Club is the governance body for nursing students. Student elections are held annually for the Nursing Club executive board, and one nursing faculty representative serves as the advisor.

Nursing Student Club: is designed to perpetuate the ideals and aspirations of the profession of nursing.

Members participate in a variety of activities. Involvement in the local community activities, fund raising. Meetings are held monthly, and all students are encouraged to join for their own benefit and for the benefit of collaboration, community engagement, volunteerism, and professionalism.

#### **ELIGIBILITY FOR LICENSURE**

Students need to consider the following in anticipation of licensure at the completion of the nursing program:

In the Commonwealth, Massachusetts Laws (MGL) Chapter 13, section 13, 14, 14a, 15 and 15D and Chapter 112, section 74 through 81 C authorize the Board of Registration in Nursing to regulate nursing practice and education.

According to the Massachusetts General Laws, eligibility to take the NCLEX-RN examination necessitates compliance with the “Good Moral Character (GMC)” requirement. The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) evaluates all misdemeanor and felony convictions by a licensing body.

Individuals convicted of certain crimes are permanently excluded from nurse licensure in Massachusetts.

For more information regarding the GMC and/or the CORI requirements, please refer to the following websites: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/good-moral-character-requirements-for-nursing-licensure>

Required Documentation: Only for those applicants answering "Yes" to any of the GMC questions.

Upon successful completion of the Nursing Program, students are eligible to take the NCLEX-RN and must pass to become a registered nurse. These examinations are offered throughout the year and administered through the State Board of Nursing in conjunction with educational testing service.

Registration for the NCLEX-RN exam is completed after successful completion of the senior semester. There is a cost for registering for the NCLEX-RN exam. Registration information will be distributed during the last semester of the Program. Examination results are mailed directly to the candidate.

### **NATIONAL STUDENT NURSES’ ASSOCIATION, INC.** **CODE OF ACADEMIC AND CLINICAL CONDUCT**

#### **PREAMBLE**

Students of nursing have a responsibility to society in learning the academic theory and clinical skills needed to provide nursing care. The clinical setting presents unique challenges and responsibilities while caring for human beings in a variety of health care environments. The Code of Academic and Clinical Conduct is based on an understanding that to practice nursing as a student is an agreement to uphold the trust with which society has placed in us. The statements of the Code provide guidance for the nursing student in the personal development of an ethical foundation and need not be limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment but can assist in the holistic development of the person.

#### **A CODE FOR NURSING STUDENTS**

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

1. Advocate for the rights of all clients.
2. Maintain client confidentiality.
3. Take appropriate action to ensure the safety of clients, self, and others.
4. Provide care for the client in a timely, compassionate and professional manner.
5. Communicate client care in a truthful, timely and accurate manner.

6. Actively promote the highest level of moral and ethical principles and accept responsibility for our actions.
7. Promote excellence in nursing by encouraging lifelong learning and professional development.
8. Treat others with respect and promote an environment that respects human rights, values and choice of cultural and spiritual beliefs.
9. Collaborate in every reasonable manner with the academic faculty and clinical staff to ensure the highest quality of client care.
10. Use every opportunity to improve faculty and clinical staff understanding of the learning needs of nursing students.
11. Encourage faculty, clinical staff, and peers to mentor nursing students.
12. Refrain from performing any technique or procedure for which the student has not been adequately trained.
13. Refrain from any deliberate action or omission of care in the academic or clinical setting that creates unnecessary risk of injury to the client, self, or others.
14. Assist the staff nurse or preceptor in ensuring that there is full disclosure and that proper authorizations are obtained from clients regarding any form of treatment or research.
15. Abstain from the use of alcoholic beverages or any substances in academic and clinical settings that impair judgment.
16. Strive to achieve and maintain an optimal level of personal health.
17. Support access to treatment and rehabilitation for students who are experiencing impairments related to substance abuse and mental or physical health issues.
18. Uphold school policies and regulations related to academic and clinical performance, reserving the right to challenge and critique rules and regulations as per school grievance policy.
19. Adopted by the NSNA House of Delegates, Nashville, TN, on April 6, 2001.

### **Pandemic Guidelines**

The Westfield State Nursing Program is dedicated to an on ground, face to face teaching and learning modality. There are many documented benefits to traditional learning that directly correlate to successful outcomes in the nursing profession. The Nursing Program recognizes that the pandemic has changed the landscape of learning. However, the program and faculty are fully committed to on ground learning with safeguards in place by the University. In addition to compliance with the Student and Lab Handbook, please adhere to university policies and clinical agency requirements regarding infection control practices.

***\*This handbook will be reviewed and updated annually and as needed. Your feedback is important!***

**APPENDIX A: COMMUNICATION RECORD****Westfield State University**

Department of Nursing

Communication Record

**Step One: Counseling** - Student will be counseled regarding the need to improve in a specific area(s). Examples may include but are not limited to dress code violations, tardiness, absences, disruptive behavior, and non-professional behaviors. Counseling will be documented on a Communication Record form. Documented verbal counseling and outlined expectations will be agreed upon by faculty and the student.

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

This tool is completed to address the need to improve in a specific area(s). Outlined expectations will be agreed upon by faculty and the student.

**Reason for Counseling:****EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

Follow up Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional Student Comments:**

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

## APPENDIX B: PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE TOOL

**Westfield State University**  
 Department of Nursing  
PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINE TOOL

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

This tool is completed to address any behaviors regarding attendance and performance, which are considered unacceptable to Westfield State University's Department of Nursing. It is progressive in nature, but faculty member can place a student on any warning level, skipping a warning step in the process if the seriousness of the offense warrants such a decision.

	FACULTY SIGNATURE	REASON	DATE GIVEN	STUDENT SIGNATURE
<b>1<sup>ST</sup> WRITTEN WARNING</b>				
<b>2<sup>ND</sup> WRITTEN WARNING</b>				
<b>3<sup>RD</sup> WRITTEN WARNING</b>				
<b>DISMISSAL RECOMMENDATION</b>				

**1<sup>st</sup> Warning**

**DESCRIPTION of INCIDENT:**

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

**Follow-up Meeting Date(s):**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Warning**

**DESCRIPTION of INCIDENT:**

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

**Follow-up Meeting Date(s):**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Warning**

**DESCRIPTION of INCIDENT:**

**EXPECTED OUTCOMES:**

**Follow-up Meeting Date(s):**

**Dismissal Recommendation Narrative:**

**Student Optional Comments:**

**Student Signature/Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Faculty Signature/Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX C: PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

### PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT PLAN

**This tool is completed at any time during the semester when a situation arises in which immediate improvement is indicated for successful completion of the program. A performance improvement plan may constitute a written warning in the progressive discipline process or advances the student in progressive discipline process as needed. This decision is made by the Department Chair and the Academic Policy Committee members. This is a sample with content, but instructors can adapt it based on the applicable course or clinical outcomes.**

Area of Concern	Specific Plan for Improvement	Date for Achieving Goals
<b><u>Teamwork and Collaboration</u></b>		
Communicate effectively with the patient and inter-professional team to acquire and convey information about the patient		
Collaborate with members of intra and inter-professional team to identify patient needs and deliver care		
Collaborate with fellow students to establish team approach that delivers timely administration of care		
Function competently within own scope of practice as a member of the intra and inter- professional team		
Initiate requests for help when appropriate to situation		
<b><u>Patient Centered Care</u></b>		
Provides priority-based nursing care to individuals, and families through independent and collaborative application of the nursing process		
Deliver care and initiate treatment based on knowledge of pathophysiology and pharmacotherapy with respect for individual values, preferences, needs, and diversity		

<p><b><u>Tech standards</u></b></p> <p>Critical thinking ability for clinical judgement</p>	<p>Identify cause/effect relationships in clinical situations. Use of the scientific method in the development of patient care plans/concepts maps. Evaluate effectiveness of nursing interventions.</p> <p>Accurately follow course syllabi, assignments, directions, patient protocols, and any actions plan(s) developed by the chair, faculty, administration, or health care agency staff.</p>	
<p>Professional and Behavioral Relationships. Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interaction with a diverse population of individuals, families and groups</p>	<p>Establish rapport with patients/clients and colleagues. Capacity to engage in successful conflict resolution. Capacity to demonstrate ethical behavior, including adherence to the professional nursing and student honor codes, as well as applicable laws and regulations governing the nursing profession. Ability to relate to colleagues, staff and patients with honesty, integrity, and non-discrimination. Ability to work constructively in stressful and changing environments with the ability to modify their behavior in response to constructive criticism and to maintain a high level of functioning in demanding or stressful situations.</p>	
<p>Communication adeptness sufficient for verbal and written professional interactions</p>	<p>Explanation of treatment, procedure, initiation of health teaching. Accurately obtain information from patients, family members/significant others, health team members, and/or faculty.</p> <p>Documentation and interpretation of nursing actions and patient/client responses.</p> <p>Communications include: oral, hearing, reading, writing, and computer literacy.</p>	

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D - Professional Development Hours Sheet

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Class of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Event:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

This time sheet signifies that the above-named student has completed \_\_\_\_\_ hrs. towards their required Professional Development hours necessary for completion of the Westfield State University Nursing Program. This hour's sheet signifies that the above individual completed these hours as volunteer hours and was in *no way* compensated for their completion.

The learning objectives include:

- fostering civil and professional responsibility
  - enhancing student learning experiences
  - addressing health, social, and civic needs within the community and profession
- 
- Domain 1: Knowledge for Nursing Practice
  - Domain 2: Person-Centered Care
  - Domain 3: Population Health
  - Domain 4: Scholarship for Nursing Practice
  - Domain 5: Quality and Safety
  - Domain 6: Interprofessional Partnerships
  - Domain 7: Systems-Based
  - Domain 8: Informatics and Healthcare Technologies
  - Domain 9: Professionalism
  - Domain 10: Personal, Professional, and Leadership Development

**VALIDATOR COMPLETES:**

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E: ATI RUBRICS

## Content Mastery Series (CMS)| Grading Rubric

Using CMS 2 practice and 2 proctored assessments for 10% of the course grade

Practice Assessment	
<p>Complete Practice Assessment A Rationales will be on Retake it as many times as you need until you get 85%</p>	<p>Complete Practice Assessment B (rationales will be off until remediation is handed in - retakes are recommended with rationales on) <i>Remediation:</i> * Print your score and in the “learn tab” Conduct a “Focused Review” * For each “topic to review” missed, identify three critical points to remember for remediation. Handwritten or typed notes are acceptable <b>NO CUT AND PASTE</b> Scholarly sources as well as ATI books or e-books allowed</p>
0 or 1 point	0, 1 or 3 points (test with decent remediation)



Standardized Proctored Assessment			
Level 3 4 points	Level 2 3 points	Level 1 1 point	Below Level 1 0 points
<i>Remediation:</i> • Focused Review as above	<i>Remediation:</i> • Focused Review as above	<i>Remediation:</i> • Focused Review as above	<i>Remediation:</i> • Focused Review as above
2 points	2 points	2 points	2 points
Proctored Assessment Retake**			
Retake is optional at faculty's discretion	Retake is optional at faculty's discretion	Retake recommended at faculty discretion	Retake recommended at faculty discretion
10/10 points	9/10 points	7/10 points	6/10 points

\*NOTE Focused reviews will take more time to do if the student scores lower, so either students put in time prior to prepare and learn or put in time after on remediation- YOUR CHOICE... not doing your work and improving your test scores only impacts your likelihood of passing NCLEX in the end.

\*\*If the student retakes a proctored assessment, that student can earn an additional percentage point per level they improve. (For example, a level 2 student can now earn 10 points, a level 1 student can now earn 8 or 9 points and a below level 1 student can now earn 7, 8 or 9 points)

*You are required to submit both the transcript and the remediation on dates per syllabus.*

**Content Mastery Series (CMS)| Grading Rubric**  
**(2 practice and 1 proctored exam\*\*)**  
**Using CMS practice and proctored assessments for 10% of the course grade**

<b>Practice Assessment</b>	
<b>Complete Practice Assessment A</b> <b>Rationales will be on</b> <b>Retake it as many times as you need until you get 85%</b>	<b>Complete Practice Assessment B (rationales will be off until remediation is handed in - retakes are recommended with rationales on)</b> <b>Remediation:</b> <b>* Print your “Individual Performance Profile” and in the “learn tab” Conduct a “Focused Review”</b> <b>* For each “topic to review” missed, identify three critical points to remember for remediation. Handwritten or typed notes are acceptable</b> <b>NO CUT AND PASTE</b> <b>Scholarly sources as well as ATI books or e-books allowed</b>
<b>0 or 1 point</b>	<b>0, 1 or 3 points (test with decent remediation)</b>



<b>Standardized Proctored Assessment **</b>			
Level 3 4 points	Level 2 2.5 points	Level 1 1.5 points	Below Level 1 0.5 points
<b>Remediation:</b> *Focused Review as above	<b>Remediation:</b> *Focused Review as above	<b>Remediation:</b> *Focused Review as above	<b>Remediation:</b> *Focused Review as above
2 points	2 points	2 points	2 points

\*\* Occasionally, in semesters where there is lots of ATI testing, professors may do 2 practice and 1 proctored exam with no retake

## Content Mastery Series (CMS)| Grading Rubric

(1 practice and 1 proctored exam\*\*)

Using CMS practice and proctored assessments for 10% of the course grade

Practice Assessment
<p><b>Complete Practice Assessment A (rationales will be off until remediation is handed in - retakes are recommended with rationales on)</b></p> <p><b><i>Remediation:</i></b></p> <p><b>* Print your “Individual Performance Profile” and in the “learn tab” Conduct a “Focused Review”</b></p> <p><b>* For each “topic to review” missed, identify three critical points to remember for remediation. Handwritten or typed notes are acceptable</b></p> <p><b>NO CUT AND PASTE</b></p> <p><b>Scholarly sources as well as ATI books or e-books allowed</b></p>
<b>0 or 2 points (test with decent remediation)</b>



Standardized Proctored Assessment **			
Level 3 6 points	Level 2 4.5 points	Level 1 3.5 points	Below Level 1 2.5 points
<b><i>Remediation:</i></b> *Focused Review as above	<b><i>Remediation:</i></b> *Focused Review as above	<b><i>Remediation:</i></b> *Focused Review as above	<b><i>Remediation:</i></b> *Focused Review as above
2 points	2 points	2 points	2 points

\*\* Occasionally, in semesters where there is lots of ATI testing, professors may do 1 practice and 1 proctored exam with no retake.

**Comprehensive Predictor | Grading Rubric**  
**NURS 0397 Using CMS practice and proctored assessments for 10% of the course grade**

**Practice Assessment- 4 points**

<p><b>Practice assessment A Week 1-2 (rationales will be off until remediation is handed in - retakes are recommended with rationales on)</b></p> <p><b>*Remediation:</b></p> <p>* Print your “Individual Performance profile” and in the “learn tab” Conduct a “Focused Review”</p> <p>* For each “topic to review” missed, identify three critical points to remember for remediation.</p> <p>Handwritten or typed notes are acceptable          NO CUT AND PASTE          Scholarly sources as well as ATI books or e-books allowed</p>	<p><b>Practice assessment B Week 6-7 (rationales will be off until remediation is handed in - retakes are recommended with rationales on)</b></p> <p><b>*Remediation:</b></p> <p>* Print your “Individual Performance Profile” and in the “learn tab” Conduct a “Focused Review”</p> <p>* For each “topic to review” missed, identify three critical points to remember for remediation.</p> <p>Handwritten or typed notes are acceptable          NO CUT AND PASTE          Scholarly sources as well as ATI books or e-books allowed</p>
<b>0 or 2 points</b>	<b>0 or 2 points</b>

↓ **Standardized Proctored Assessment Week 10-11 \*\* criteria below**

<b>Level 3 – 4 points</b>	<b>Level 2- 3 points</b>	<b>Level 1- 1 point</b>	<b>Below Level 1- 0 points</b>
Remediation = 2 points	<b>Remediation = 2 points</b>	<b>Remediation = 2 points</b>	<b>Remediation = 2 points</b>
* <b>Focused Review as above</b>	* Focused Review as above	*Focused Review as above	* Focused Review as above

↓ **Proctored Assessment Retake\*\* (Week 14-15) - (LIVE REVIEW- WEEK 12-13)**

<b>Retake is optional at faculty’s discretion</b>	<b>Retake is optional at faculty’s discretion</b>	<b>Retake recommended at faculty discretion</b>	<b>Retake recommended at faculty discretion</b>
<b>10/10 points</b>	<b>9/10 points</b>	<b>7/10 points</b>	<b>6/10 points</b>

*You are required to submit both the transcript and the remediation on dates per syllabus.*

SINCE THE COMPREHENSIVE PREDICTOR EXAM DOESN’T PROVIDE LEVELS, BUT USES PROBABILITY OF PASSING THE NCLEX INSTEAD, THE FOLLOWING CUT OFFS WILL BE USED:

- level 3 – student earns an 93% chance of passing the nclex (72.7% on comprehensive predictor) this would give them 6 points including remediation and no requirement to retake, (10/10 points for ATI-10% of NURS 0397 grade)
- level 2 anyone who earns an 85% chance of passing the nclex (69.3% on predictor) this would give them 5 points including remediation and retake is optional. Students could earn an additional point for improving 1 level, (9/10 with potential for 10 points for ATI-10% of NURS 0397 grade)
- level 1 anyone who earns an 73% chance of passing the nclex (65.3% on predictor) this would give them 1 point for this exam plus 2 points for remediation, with a potential to earn 1 point per level improved on retake, (7 or 8 or 9/10 points for ATI-10% of NURS 0397 grade)
- below level 1 anyone who earns an 70% or below chance of passing (64.7% on predictor) this would give them 0 points for this exam, 2 points for remediation plus 1 point per level improved on retake. (6 or 7 or 8 or 9/10 points for ATI-10% of NURS 0397 grade)

## APPENDIX F: INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Incident Communication Report Nursing Department

Incident Location:

Incident Date:

Incident Time:

Report Writer's Name(s):

Report Writer Position:

Date and time of report:

Signature of Report Writer: \_\_\_\_\_

Persons' Involved	ID Number (if student)	Address & Phone Number:

Incident description and action taken at time of incident:

Other Staff Involved

Name/Position/Contact Information

Outcome (Disposition, plan, follow up):

**APPENDIX G: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM****WESTFIELD STATE UNIVERSITY**

Department of Nursing

**STUDENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM - SUBMIT via CastleBranch or Viewpoint once signed.**

I have been informed about the \_\_\_\_\_ (AY) *Student Handbook* and am aware that I can access it electronically via the Nursing Department Website or ask for a hard copy from the nursing department.

Further, I am aware that it is my responsibility to read the Department of Nursing *Student Handbook* and be aware of all the Department of Nursing policies and procedures included therein.

Additional Information:

Student Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



**Westfield State University  
Department of Nursing**

**Submission Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Requesting leave for what semester(s)/year(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix H: Leave of Absence Form**

Student Name:
Nursing Program: <input type="checkbox"/> RNBSN <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate <input type="checkbox"/> Graduate
Student E-mail:
Student Address:
Student Cell Phone #:
Student A#:
Reason for Leave of Absence:  <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/>Medical      <input type="checkbox"/>Personal      <input type="checkbox"/>Financial      <input type="checkbox"/>Disciplinary  <input type="checkbox"/>Academic      <input type="checkbox"/>Military      <input type="checkbox"/>Other:</div>
Description (What led up to this leave request?):          
Describe your plan for current semester, plan to continue non-nursing courses for gap semester(s) (if applicable?): <div style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/>Full Time              <input type="checkbox"/>Part Time</div>
Did you complete any courses this semester?:          

Permanent Address:
Personal Email:
Alternate Contact Information:

### Approval Documentation

Leave Request Outcome:	<input type="checkbox"/> Approve	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Approve
Comments:		
Nursing Chairperson Signature: _____		
Name: _____	Date: _____	
Associate Dean Signature: _____		
Name: _____	Date: _____	
Registrar Signature: _____		
Name: _____	Date: _____	
Student Signature: _____		
Name: _____	Date: _____	

## Appendix I: WSU Nursing Program Readmission Lab Form

### Lab Competency Validation Form for Returning Students

Readmission to the Westfield State University Nursing Program is contingent upon the successful demonstration of essential nursing competencies. Competency validation must be arranged through the Simulation Lab Director and completed either during the final two weeks of the semester in which the petition for readmission is submitted, or within the first two weeks of the student's return to the program. This process ensures that returning students possess the necessary clinical judgment, psychomotor skills, and foundational knowledge to re-engage in nursing practice and coursework safely and effectively.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student ID:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructor/Evaluator Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Semester of Readmission:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### Instructions for Instructor

Mark each competency as **Competent (C)** or **Not Competent (NC)** based on the student's performance. Use the comment section to note specific strengths or areas for improvement. Students must demonstrate all competencies satisfactorily for readmission eligibility.

**Core Clinical Competencies; AAS Committee or Course Coordinator: Please check (✓) each competency to be included in this student's evaluation.**

<i>Include (✓)</i>	<i>Competency Area</i>	<i>Skill/Performance Criteria</i>	<i>Competent (C) / Not Competent (NC)</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	<b>Vital Signs</b>	Measures and interprets vitals		
		Identifies and reports abnormalities		
	<b>Physical Assessment</b>	Performs head-to-toe assessment		
		Neuro, cardiac, respiratory systems		
		GI, skin, musculoskeletal		
		Uses proper techniques (inspect, auscultate, etc.)		
	<b>Aseptic Technique</b>	Hand hygiene and PPE		
		Sterile technique		

	<b>Medication Administration</b>	Follows 6 rights		
		Safe oral/injection technique		
		Safe IV technique (junior/senior level)		
		Allergy and interaction check		
	<b>Clinical Judgment &amp; Communication</b>	Prioritizes care, uses SBAR		
		Therapeutic communication		
	<b>Documentation</b>	Accurate, timely charting		
	<b>Other</b>			

**Instructor Summary****Overall Assessment:**

- All competencies demonstrated satisfactorily  
 Remediation required before readmission

**Comments/Recommendations:**

**Instructor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Simulation Lab Director Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

Optional Student Comments:

**Student Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_