



# **Associate Degree Nursing Student Handbook SUMMER 2009**

The provisions in this handbook are subject to change by the ADN Program faculty and do not constitute an irrevocable contract between any applicant or student and the program. The ADN Program is not responsible for any misrepresentation of its requirements or provisions that might arise as a result of errors occurring in the preparation of this handbook.

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# Introduction/Welcome

The Austin Community College AD Nursing Program Student Handbook has been compiled by the faculty to provide information pertinent to students enrolled in the AD Nursing program.

The purpose of this handbook is to detail policies and procedures specific to this program. The handbook is constructed to be used as a supplement to the Austin Community College Student Handbook and serves to bridge the overriding policies of the College with the policies specific to this program. The policies and procedures set fourth in this handbook are designed to support the success of the student.

A copy of the Austin Community College Student Handbook is available at each campus's administrative offices. Or may be downloaded from the ACC website at:

<http://www.austincc.edu/handbook>.

The AD Nursing program is just one of the programs within the Division of Health Sciences. The Health Science Division is comprised of the following programs: Allied Health Sciences, Associate Degree Nursing, Licensed Vocational Nursing, Dental Hygiene, Diagnostic Medical Imaging, DMI-Radiology, Emergency Medical Services, Health and Kinesiology, Occupational Therapy Assistant, Physical Therapy Assistant, Medical Coding, Medical Laboratory Technology, Personal Fitness Trainer, Surgical Technology, Pharmacy Technician, and Sonography. The Division of Health Sciences is committed to providing quality educational programs for the purpose of developing successful health care professionals. Developing caring health care professionals requires interactions with patients and patient services, thereby resulting in an educational environment with unique characteristics and requirements.

Welcome to the AD Nursing Program. The faculty and staff wish you success in the pursuit of your educational goals.

**The Health Science programs prohibit discrimination. Access to its programs or activities shall not be limited on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or disability.**



# Program Mission, Philosophy and Conceptual Framework

## Program Mission

The Associate Degree Nursing faculty at Austin Community College is committed to implementing ACC's mission statement through: facilitating excellence in nursing education by preparing graduates for licensure in a rapidly changing profession in a technological age.

Respecting the individuality of students by recognizing and supporting each students' unique qualities, varying backgrounds, skills, and learning styles.

Providing a foundation for career and education mobility by fostering the development of decision making through the use of critical thinking and problem-solving.

Providing access to a quality education for a culturally diverse population including the at-risk student meeting community needs through alternative avenues for entry into Associate Degree Nursing.

Establishing a learning environment that promotes the development of traditional nursing values including care, compassion, and competence. Fostering student success through a variety of educational and financial resources.

## Program Philosophy

The Austin Community College Associate Degree Nursing Program operates within the philosophical framework of Austin Community College subscribing to the college values of communication, access, responsiveness, excellence and stewardship. The program exists to meet the community need for responsible, competent, and caring registered nurses. We are committed to contributing to the profession of nursing through providing a sound educational program based on the following philosophy.

### Nursing and Nursing Practice

We believe nursing is a dynamic caring profession that provides an essential service to society. That service is health promotion, health maintenance, and /or health restoration for individuals and their families within the context of the community. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client unrestricted by considerations of social and economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of the health problem.

Nursing utilizes a unique body of knowledge based upon theory, practice and research incorporating facts and concepts from biological, social, physical and behavioral sciences. From this body of knowledge, nurses provide nursing care through the three primary roles:

- Provider of Care – provides safe, competent nursing care for individuals and or families demonstrating caring, competence, confidence, and commitment through the use of interpersonal processes. Using problem solving and the critical thinking skills, the nurse assesses diagnoses, plans, implements, and evaluated the care provided.
- Coordinator of Care - Collaborates with other healthcare providers, coordinates care and delegates specific aspects of nursing care to others as appropriate. Implements nursing care in a cost-effective manner and assumes an advocate role for individuals and families effectively managing human and material resources.
- Member of the Profession - Practices within the ethical/legal framework of the profession and assumes responsibility and accountability for nursing practice and through promotion of excellence in nursing and a commitment to lifelong learning, projects a positive image of nursing.

These identified roles provide the context for nursing decisions and communication. These decisions require the use of critical thinking and the nursing process. Critical thinking and the nursing process provide the framework for decision-making. The nursing process is a systematic problem-solving process incorporating assessment, diagnosis, planning, and interventions to address individualized needs and evaluating the individual's response to care. Nursing is an interpersonal process characterized by the systematic use of problem solving and critical thinking, management of a rapidly changing environment, the need for clinical competency, effective use of communication, acceptance of personal accountability, and a commitment to the value of caring.

### **Individual**

We believe the individual is a unique being and has inherent dignity, worth and the capacity for growth. Each individual has a blend of physiological, psychosocial, spiritual needs that influence the perception of self, others, and the world. All individuals have human needs and possess the right to make choices that affect health. The individual or family is the recipient of nursing care and in the program are referred to as clients.

## **Learning**

We believe learning is an active process characterized by a change in behavior, insights, and perceptions whereby students acquire and apply knowledge. Learning is also an interactive process in which the faculty and the students share responsibility. The faculty has the responsibility for guiding learners to experiences that will assist them in meeting the outcomes of the nursing program. The student has the responsibility for acquiring the knowledge, values and skills necessary to meet the outcomes of the nursing program. The nursing faculty acts as facilitators and role models recognizing and supporting each student's unique qualities, varying backgrounds, skills, and learning styles.

Students participate in learning through course activities that integrate previously learned concepts with newly acquired content. Self-motivation and responsibility are essential elements in the learning process. Students develop critical thinking and nursing process skills to readily access and evaluate information, place it in context, and effectively apply it for making appropriate nursing decisions. Respect for differing viewpoints, opinions, beliefs and cultures are encouraged as students interact with clients, faculty, peers, and members of the community. Learning is enhanced when the student perceives knowledge as relevant with concurrent application.

## **Nursing Education**

We believe that the purpose of nursing education is to prepare graduates with the knowledge and skills for licensure in a rapidly changing profession in a technological age. This education is a stimulus for life long learning. The faculty is responsible for the design and implementation of a curriculum that includes relevant, innovative elements. In order to maintain currency and relevance, the faculty systematically evaluates and revises the nursing curriculum and its policies.

Faculty promotes an environment that provides students with opportunities to experience interactive learning incorporating knowledge from the biological, behavioral, and physical sciences to the acquisition of a unique body of nursing knowledge. Students apply this body of nursing knowledge through use of the nursing process and critical thinking when making nursing decisions in a variety of practice settings.

## **ADN Graduate**

We believe the ADN Graduate is prepared with the skills necessary for entry into nursing practice. The ADN graduate acts in a caring, professional manner within the ethical, legal and regulating frameworks of nursing and standards of professional practice in a variety of practice settings.

Beginning practice settings for the ADN graduate should provide direct access to more experienced practitioners with greater levels of clinical expertise. Settings for beginning practice of the ADN graduate should have clearly identified policies, procedures,

protocols and lines of communication to support the new graduate. Within this environment, the new graduate has the opportunity and resources for the continuation of personal and professional growth.

The faculty subscribes to the educational outcomes established by the Board of Nurse Examiners for the State of Texas (BNE) and the American Nurses' Association Standards of Practice.

The philosophy is reflected in the program educational outcomes.

## **Nursing Program Educational Outcomes**

### **Provider of Care**

1. Utilize critical thinking and the nursing process in decision making to provide safe, quality and comprehensive nursing care for multiple clients and their families.
2. Communicates therapeutically with multiple clients and their families in the provision of nursing care.
3. Integrates the teaching-learning process in the delivery of care to multiple clients and their families to meet their needs for health maintenance, promotion, and/or restoration.

### **Coordinator of Care**

1. Collaborates with members of the health care team to develop client focused, quality care for clients and their families. + \*
2. Manages material and human resources in an organized manner when providing care for multiple clients and their families. + \*
3. Communicates in an effective, professional manner with members of the healthcare team to resolve problems affecting clients and their families. + \*

### **Member of the Profession**

1. Assumes responsibility and accountability for the practice of professional nursing. + \*
2. Practices within the ethical/legal framework established by the nursing profession. + \*

\* Demonstrates DELC ADN competencies

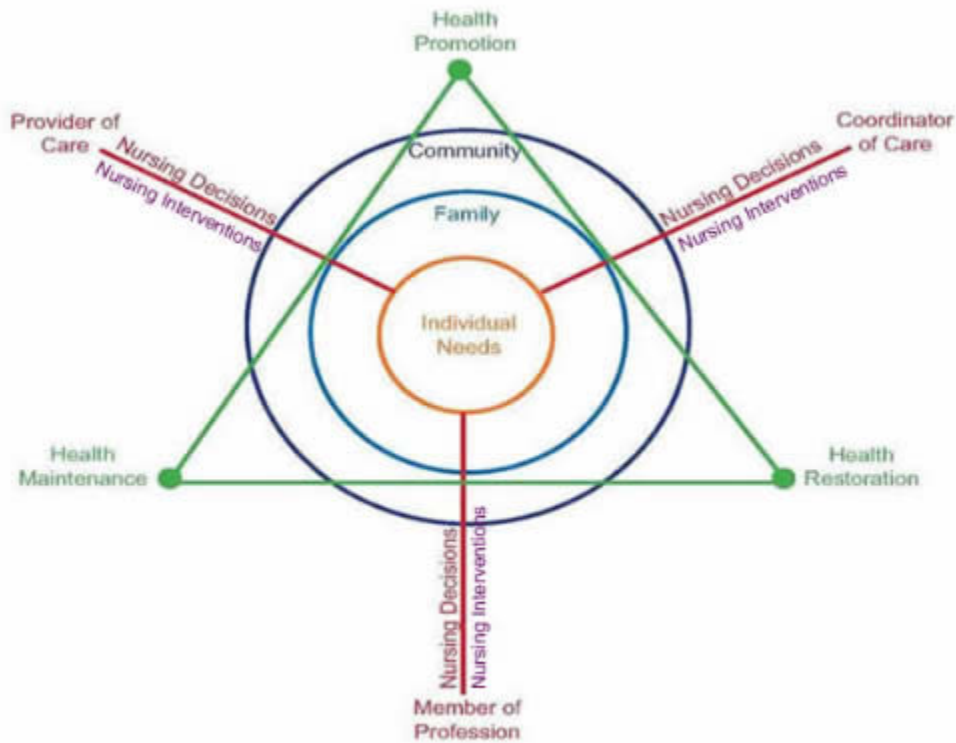
+ Demonstrates SCANS competencies

## Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework derived from the philosophy of the Nursing Program forms a basis for the organization and structure of the nursing program. The conceptual framework serves as a guide for the selection of nursing content and learning experiences.

Major concepts selected from the philosophy are emphasized throughout the curriculum. The framework consists of five major concepts: Individual's Needs, Roles of the Associate Degree Nurse (provider of care, coordinator of care, member of the profession), Nursing Decisions (nursing process and critical thinking), Nursing Goals (health promotion, maintenance, and restoration), and Nursing Interventions. The following illustration identifies the structure of the conceptual framework.

The individual who is part of a family and /or community is the center of the organizing framework. The individual has physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual needs. When an individual is unable to meet his or her own needs, nursing assists the individual to meet their needs.



Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations. (ANA, 2007)

Nurses engage in nursing care through three primary **nursing roles**:

**Provider of Care** – provides safe nursing care for individuals and or families demonstrating caring, competence, confidence, and commitment through the use of interpersonal processes using problem solving and critical thinking skills, the nurse assesses, diagnoses, plans, implements, and evaluates the care provided.

**Coordinator of Care** – Collaborates and communicates with other healthcare providers, coordinates care and delegates specific aspects of nursing care to others as appropriate. Implements nursing care in a cost effective manner and assumes an advocate role for individuals and families effectively managing human and material resources.

**Member of the Profession** – Practices within the ethical/legal framework of the profession and assumes responsibility and accountability for nursing practice. Promotes client advocacy and excellence in nursing with a commitment to lifelong learning.

These identified roles provide the context for nursing decisions. Nursing decisions require critical thinking and the nursing process. Critical thinking is the basis for the nurse's application of knowledge and experience in making clinical judgments. The nursing process provides the framework for assessing, diagnosing, planning, intervening to address individual needs, and evaluating the individual's response to care.

The **goal** of nursing is to assist the individual to meet their needs through:

- **Health Promotion** - the goal of advancement toward an optimal state of wellness through the prevention of illness and advancement of wellness for individuals and families in communities across a spectrum of health problems/life processes
- **Health Maintenance** - the goal to preserve, protect, and support the health of individuals and families in communities across a spectrum of health problems/life processes
- **Health Restoration** - the goal to return a client to a previous level of functional health, while maintaining the remaining areas of physical and mental functioning, and preventing further deterioration through acute and rehabilitative care.

**Nursing interventions** are nursing actions based on theoretical knowledge that are performed to promote, maintain, or restore health.

## Curriculum Definitions

Concept	Definition
Caring	Behaviors, thoughts and feelings that reflect a positive regard and concern for individuals, families, and groups which include promoting the client's dignity and self esteem.
Community	Any group that comes together because of common values, interests, needs, or locality (such as a group of pregnant teenagers); or is viewed as forming a distinct segment of society (such as residents in an Alzheimer's unit); also may refer to a physical location and the associated environment including the health of the environment and the available/accessible health care resources in that location.
Coordinator of Care	Collaborates with other healthcare providers. Coordinates care and delegates specific aspects of nursing care to others as appropriate. The graduate implements nursing care in a cost-effective manner and assumes an advocate role for individuals and families as needed.
Critical Thinking	A process of active, logical and creative thoughts leading to an analysis of information for differentiating fact from opinion, identifying assumptions and concepts, applying knowledge to new situations, and using reasoning skills to problem-solve and derive relevant conclusions.
Family	The people identified by the individual as being family.
Health Maintenance	the goal to preserve, protect, and support the health of individuals and families in communities across a spectrum of health problems/life processes
Health Promotion	The goal of advancement toward an optimal state of wellness through the prevention of illness and advancement of wellness for individuals and families in communities across a spectrum of health problems/life processes
Health Restoration	The goal to return a client to a previous level of functional health, while maintaining the remaining areas of physical and mental functioning, and preventing further deterioration through acute and rehabilitative care.
Individual	The person who is central to the goals of nursing care by being identified as having actual or potential health problems/life processes that can be assisted by nursing care.

Learning	Behaviors that reflect the integration of knowledge, insight, and skill
Member of the Profession	Practices within the ethical/legal framework of the profession and assumes responsibility for nursing practice, and through promotion of excellence in nursing and a commitment to lifelong learning, projects a positive image of nursing.
Needs	The individual's physiological, psychosocial, and spiritual requirements for health promotion, maintenance, or restoration.
Nursing Care	Activities that focus on health promotion, health maintenance and or health restoration to assist individuals and families in community to attain and maintain health
Nursing	The diagnosis and treatment of individual, family or community responses to actual or potential health problems/life processes. These responses may be physiological, psychosocial, or spiritual.
Nursing Process	A systematic method, using critical thinking, to identify and treat actual and/or potential health problems/life processes.
Problem Solving	A process of determining an effective solution/decision.
Provider of Care	Provides safe, competent nursing care to individuals and families, which reflects the value of caring. Using problem solving and critical thinking skills, the nurse assesses, diagnoses, plans, implements, and evaluates the care provided.
Teaching	Facilitating the acquisition of knowledge, insight and skills



## Program Information

### Criminal Background Checks

Successful completion of a criminal background check is required for admission and continuation of all Health Sciences Programs. Criminal background requirements are found at: <http://www.austincc.edu/health/>.

Background checks will be honored for the duration of the student's enrollment in the clinical program if the participating student has not had a break in the enrollment at the college/school. A break in enrollment is defined as nonattendance of one full semester or more.

Once accepted into the program, it is the student's responsibility to immediately notify the Dean of Health Science in writing of any subsequent changes in criminal history that occur after the admission background check has been completed. Failure to do so may result in immediate withdrawal from the program. Additionally, students enrolled in the two-year program will be required to sign an affidavit at the beginning of the second year of the program attesting that their criminal history has not changed. If a student is out of the program for greater than one semester before readmission, a criminal background check must be completed prior to readmission.

Additionally,

- Successful completion of the criminal background check for Health Sciences Programs does not ensure eligibility for licensure of future employment.
- Clinical agencies can establish more stringent standards, if they so desire, to meet regulatory requirements for their facility.
- Clinical agencies can conduct additional background checks at their discretion.

If a student is found to be ineligible for clinical placement any time during the program, the student is unable to meet clinical learning objectives and will be withdrawn pending resolution of the situation.

### Immunizations

Health Science students must comply with both Texas Law and Clinical facility requirements related to immunizations. A copy of your immunization records must be provided at the time of application. The required immunization form can be found at: <http://www.austincc.edu/health/documents/ImmunizationsForm.doc> .

## Program Length

The Traditional degree plan consists of 33 semester credit hours (SCH) of non-nursing course work and 36 SCH of nursing course work that includes classroom, laboratory and clinical learning experiences. The Mobility degree plan consists of 36 SCH in non-nursing coursework, and 26 SCH in nursing coursework.

## Degree Plan

A current degree plan can be found in the ACC College Catalog or online at the AD Nursing home page: <http://www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/>. Students must complete all prerequisite courses as described in the degree plan before enrolling in the next semester. Students who have not completed designated prerequisites prior to enrolling in the nursing course will not be allowed admission in to the nursing courses.

## Transfer of College Credit

The ADN Department Chair, program faculty and staff are not responsible for official transcript evaluation. Students are responsible for initiating an official transcript review at any Admissions office to ensure transfer courses are accepted at ACC.

Courses will be accepted for transfer if evaluated by the college Admissions office as equivalent to required courses in the ADN Program degree plan and meet requirements for date of completion (A & P II and microbiology must have been completed within the past 5 years, nursing courses within past year). Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult a college advisor concerning course transferability prior to enrolling in any course at another institution.

For transfer of general education (non-nursing) courses the applicant must:

- Submit an official transcript from the transferring college with a request for transcript evaluation to the Admissions office.
- Submit a copy of the official transcript from the transferring college to the ADN Program.
- If the applicant has a "W" on their transcript, they must submit a letter from their previous program coordinator stating the student was in good academic standing at the time of withdrawal.

(Deft. of "good academic standing" is defined in the ACC-ADN Polices: and states: "Good academic standing is defined as an academic average of 75 or above in the theory course.)

For transfer of nursing courses contained in the Workforce Education manual (WECM), the applicant must:

- Submit an official transcript from the transferring college with a request for transcript evaluation to the Admissions office.
- Submit a copy of the official transcript from the transferring college to the ADN Program.

For transfer of nursing courses not contained in the WECM, the applicant must:

- Submit an official transcript from the transferring college with a request for transcript evaluation to the Admissions office.
- Submit a copy of the official transcript from the transferring college to the ADN Program.
- Submit copies of course descriptions, objectives and documentation of number of class and clinical contact hours to the ADN Program Coordinator for evaluation.

## **Proficiency Review**

After the transfer student completes the transfer checklist items, the student must demonstrate proficiency at the desired level of entry by achieving the following:

- 1. Pass a dosage calculation exam.
- 2. Pass a comprehensive mastery skills check-off appropriate to the level of entry.
- 3. Write a satisfactory Nursing Process on an assigned case study scenario.

## **Financial Responsibility**

The ADN Program assumes no responsibility for the personal financial arrangements of the student. Extensive financial aid and counseling is available at the College. Refer to "Financial Assistance" in the ACC Student Handbook and Academic Planner.

## **Licensure Eligibility**

The Board of Nurse Examiners determines eligibility requirements for applicants for the initial licensure by examination. Getting a clear on the Criminal Background Checks does not ensure eligibility for nursing licensure.

To be eligible for licensure, the applicant must read and sign an affidavit that certifies the truth of the following statements:

I, the applicant, understand the requirements for licensure and I:

1. have never been convicted of or received a deferred order, with or without adjudication of guilt, for any crime other than a minor traffic violation.
2. am able to conform my conduct to the requirements of 22 Texas Administrative Code §§ 213.27, 217.11, and 217.13.
3. have not within the past five (5) years become addicted to or been treated for the use of alcohol or any other drug.
4. have not within the last five (5) years been diagnosed with, treated, or hospitalized for schizophrenia and/or other psychotic disorder, bipolar disorder, paranoid personality disorder, antisocial personality disorder, or borderline personality disorder.
5. have never been denied licensure/certification or had disciplinary action taken against me by any governmental agency.
6. have never received any Order from the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners regarding my eligibility.

I am able to attest to the truth of all statements listed in the affidavit above.

SIGNATURE OF PERSON SEEKING LICENSURE BY EXAMINATION.

If the applicant is unable to attest to the truth of the statements, the applicant must contact the Board of Nurse Examiners for guidance in the steps to take to determine eligibility for licensure by examination. The BNE can be contacted at:

Board of Nurse Examiners for the State of Texas

P.O Box 430

Austin, Texas 78767-0430

512-305-6818

<http://www.bne.state.tx.us/>

(go to "Forms" and then choose "Declaratory Order")

## Scholarships and Loans

Information regarding nursing scholarships and loans for students is available in the ADN program office. Refer to financial aid information in the ACC College Catalog.

<http://www.austincc.edu/costs>

<http://www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/RNscholarships.php>

## Smoking

Smoking is permitted on the Eastview Campus in designated areas only and smoking is not permitted within 15 feet of the entrance to any campus building. While assigned in the clinical area, students may smoke only during breaks and at meals in designated areas.

## Technical Standards

**Minimum abilities expected include but are not limited to:** The following technical standards and essential functions outline reasonable expectations of a student in the Associate Degree Nursing Program for the performance of common nursing functions. The Associate Degree Nursing student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a variety of classroom, lab and/or clinical situations while providing the essential competencies of the Associate Degree Nursing Program.

The student must be able to meet the following requirements to apply for admission and continuation in the program:

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard
Observation	Ability to participate actively in all demonstrations, laboratory exercise, and clinical experiences in the professional program component and to assess and comprehend the condition of all clients assigned to him/her for examination, diagnosis, and treatment. Such observation and information usually requires functional use of visual, auditory, and somatic sensations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visually discriminating incremental readings on syringes, sphygmomanometers and other various medical equipment</li> <li>▪ Visually discriminating between different colored objects</li> <li>▪ Discriminating between auditory stimuli</li> <li>▪ Perform a comprehensive assessment on patients</li> </ul>
Communication	<p>Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, non-verbal and written formats with faculty, other students, clients, families and all members of the healthcare team.</p> <p>Ability to read English and interpret without assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Patient teaching</li> <li>▪ End of shift reports</li> <li>▪ Documentation in legal records/charts</li> <li>▪ Medication records</li> <li>▪ Transcribe doctors orders from chart, interpret, and implement</li> <li>▪ Testing within the ADN program without assistance to read</li> <li>▪ Collaborates with members of healthcare team</li> </ul>

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard
Motor	Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective care and emergency treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standing for long periods of time (8-10 hrs/day)</li> <li>▪ Lifting up to 30 lbs.</li> <li>▪ Performing one person and two person transfers</li> <li>▪ Turning, log rolling and ambulating another person</li>   <li>▪ Manipulating equipment</li> <li>▪ Performing patient care procedures with finger and manual dexterity (i.e., starting IVs, phlebotomy, dressing changes, catheterization)</li> </ul>
Intellectual	<p>Ability to collect, interpret and integrate information and make decisions.</p> <p>Ability to read and interpret the English language without assistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Transcribe orders from chart, interpret the orders and intervene</li> <li>▪ Display critical thinking abilities in planning patient care – analyze data, formulate nursing diagnosis, and prioritize care</li> </ul>
Behavioral and Social Attributes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❑ Possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of the student’s intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with clients and other members of the healthcare team.</li> <li>❑ Possess the ability to tolerate taxing workloads, function effectively under stress, adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical settings with patients.</li> <li>❑ Possess compassion, integrity, concern for others, and motivation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Utilize intellectual abilities</li> <li>▪ Exercise good judgment and complete tasks within required time limits</li> <li>▪ Demonstrate the emotional health required for full utilization of intellectual abilities and exercise of good judgment</li> <li>▪ Show integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation</li> </ul>

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Possess the ability to demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic.</li> </ul>	

In general, successful applicants possess qualities such as:

- Interest and aptitude for math and science
- A strong motivation to learn
- Well-developed study skills
- Good problem-solving and decision-making skills
- An ability to work with people with diverse backgrounds

***After acceptance into the program, students must:***

- **Complete process for Criminal Background Check:** Please note that to be compliant with clinical facility requirements, a mandatory criminal background check will be required prior to admission. Go to the website: [www.austincc.edu/health/background.php](http://www.austincc.edu/health/background.php) for more information.
- Submit the completed physical examination form
- Provide evidence of current CPR training for healthcare providers (adult, child and infant)
- Complete non-nursing (co-requisite) courses prior to or during the semester indicated in the degree plan ([www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/degrees.php](http://www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/degrees.php)). Successful completion of these courses with a minimum grade of "C" is required for progression to the next level of the Program.

Qualified applicants with disabilities are encouraged to apply to the program. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) if they feel they cannot meet one or more of the technical standards listed. Students can obtain complete information from the OSD website at [www.austincc.edu/support/osd/index.php](http://www.austincc.edu/support/osd/index.php) or through the Office for Students with Disabilities on the campus where they expect to take the majority of their classes; for locations see [www.austincc.edu/support/osd/contact.php](http://www.austincc.edu/support/osd/contact.php).

## **Medical Clearance for Safe Clinical Practice**

In the event that a student is unable to attend clinical due to medical reasons, the student will contact the clinical instructor prior to the clinical day(s). Upon return the student must present a completed form by his/her Primary Care Provider. This form, entitled Medical Clearance for Safe Clinical Practice, can be downloaded from the ADN home page website via the Student Resources link.

## **Textbooks and Supplies**

Austin Community College bookstores provide services to students under contract with the College. Nursing course materials, textbooks and some supplies are available at the Eastview Campus Bookstore. Students are responsible for ordering their own lab packs for use in designated laboratory courses. Materials in the lab pack are not to be used on human subjects. Information regarding the ordering of lab packs is included in Acceptance Information.



# Program Policies

## Alternate Learning Experiences

A variety of experiences may be utilized by faculty to meet course objectives. Such experiences may include, but are not limited to, independent learning projects and alternative time schedules. Students should be prepared to accommodate assigned alternate learning experiences and possible evening experiences if deemed necessary by the faculty. Appropriate notification will be given.

## Attendance

Students are expected to attend all learning experiences in order to successfully attain the course objectives. Each course syllabus explains attendance policies unique to that specific nursing course. (See "Attendance" in the ACC Student Handbook.)

<http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/accguid2.php#course>

## Auditing Courses

Students may request permission to audit nursing courses by submitting a letter of intent to the ADN Department Chair. Upon recommendation from the faculty, applicants will be admitted on a space available basis to the requested nursing courses. See "Auditing" in the ACC Student Handbook.

## Children on Campus

As per ACC policy, unattended children are not allowed at any college location at any time. Children may not be taken to classes or testing centers. (See "Unattended Children" in the ACC Student Handbook.)

<http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/health4.php>

## Committee Representation

Student representation is requested for the three standing faculty committees:

- Curriculum Committee: At least one student volunteer.
- Admissions Committee: At least one student volunteer.
- Educational Resources Committee: At least one student volunteer.

## Computer Lab

Networked student computers are available in the computer lab. Nursing software is available for classroom and open lab use. Knowledge of computers is NOT a requirement to use the lab. Lab staff is available to assist students.

Software packages include:

- Computer assisted instruction (CAI) covering a wide range of topics
- Internet access
- Office productivity suites (word processing, spreadsheet, presentation software)

## Failure to Safely Perform a Critical Skill Performance Mastery

- First unsuccessful demonstration -
  - The student meets with the instructor in a formal **remediation conference** to review written criteria for meeting the requirements for performance mastery.
  - The student repeats the skill demonstration at a specified time\* after the opportunity for remediation.
- Second unsuccessful demonstration -
  - The student meets with the instructor in a formal probation conference to review written criteria for continued participation in the course.
  - The student repeats the skill demonstration at a specified time\* after the opportunity for remediation.
- Third unsuccessful demonstration -
  - The student meets with the instructor and/or other faculty members to discuss educational options.
  - The instructor withdraws the student from the course. (If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from a course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F.")

\*Failure to keep an appointment for a repeat skill demonstration is the same as an unsuccessful demonstration.

## Grading and Grading System

The following grading system will be utilized in the ADN Program for all nursing courses:

Letter Grade	Numeric* Grade	Grade Points	Interpretation
A	91 – 100	4.0	Excellent
B	83 – 90	3.0	Good
C	75 – 82	2.0	Satisfactory
D	66 – 74	1.0	Unable to progress
F	65 – and below	0	Failing
AU	N/A	N/A	Audit
CR	N/A	N/A	Credit
X	N/A	N/A	Unreported

\*0.5 will round up to the next numerical grade and 0.4 will round down to the next lower numerical grade. For example, 91.5 will round to 92 and 91.4 will round down to 91.

## Graduation

In addition to the graduation requirements contained in the ACC College Catalog (See "Graduation"), the prospective nursing graduate must:

1. Complete all courses listed in the official degree plan with a minimum grade of "C."
2. Complete all nursing courses in sequence, with a minimum of the last 18 nursing hours completed in residence in the ADN program.
3. Have transcripts from all other colleges sent to ACC Admissions and Records for evaluation, if student has taken courses at other colleges that apply to the degree plan.

## Course/Faculty Evaluation

Students are given opportunities to evaluate specific courses, theory and clinical instructors and the nursing program as a whole. Constructive student feedback is important in improving the curriculum and instruction. Evaluation forms and directions for completion are provided in each course.

## Dosage Calculations Proficiency

Students must demonstrate continued proficiency in dosage calculations by passing a dosage calculations quiz with a minimum score of 90% in each clinical course prior to medication administration. Each clinical course syllabus explains how failure to demonstrate proficiency affects performance in the clinical setting. Students will have four (4) opportunities to demonstrate proficiency as indicated by the following guidelines:

- First unsuccessful demonstration - (quiz score < 90%)
  - The student retests within one week after opportunity for remediation.
- Second unsuccessful demonstration - (quiz score < 90%)
  - The student meets with the clinical instructor in a formal performance conference where criteria for meeting the requirements for proficiency are documented in writing.
  - The student retests within a specified time\* period.
- Third unsuccessful demonstration - (quiz score < 90%)
  - The student meets with the clinical instructor in a formal probation conference.
  - The student retests within a specified time\* period.
- Fourth unsuccessful demonstration - (quiz score < 90%)
  - The student meets with the instructor and/or other faculty members to discuss educational options.
  - The instructor withdraws the student from the course. (If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from a course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F.")

\*Failure to keep an appointment for a repeat skill demonstration is the same as an unsuccessful demonstration.

## Dress Code

The following are guidelines for student dress in the Associate Degree Nursing program:

Nursing Skills Lab – Students must wear closed toed shoes in the Nursing Skills Lab at all times, for practice, check-offs, and simulations.

Clinical Dress Code – All students will wear the ADN Program designated uniform and school patch in all clinical settings unless otherwise specified by the clinical instructor.

#### Accessories:

- Knee high stockings or white socks may be worn with the uniform.
- Solid white or teal tee shirts may be worn under the uniform.
- White lab coats or designated solid teal scrub jackets may also be worn.
- Shoes must be white and clean.
- Photo ID badges are required in all clinical settings.
- Waist packs must be conservative, logo free, white or a solid dark color, clean and neat in appearance.

#### Hygiene and body grooming:

- All students are representatives of ACC and the ADN Program at all times. Each student should be mindful of his/her appearance while on duty.
- Uniforms and lab coats will be freshly laundered, neat, and fit properly.
- Shoes and socks/hose will be clean and neat.
- Excessive make-up or strong smelling perfumes/colognes will not be permitted.
- Extreme shades of lipstick and nail polish such as bright colors, purple, gold, blue, white or combination colors/designs will not be worn.
- To the extent possible, body tattoos will be covered at all times in the clinical setting.
- Hair will be neat, clean, and freshly combed in a conservative style. No fad designs or colors will be accepted. Hair will not fall in front of the shoulders while in the clinical setting.
- Mustaches, beards, and/or sideburns will be neatly trimmed.
- Finger nails must meet the following criteria:
  - No longer than 1/4 inch
  - Clean
  - No artificial nails, nail wraps, decorations, nail jewelry or other artificial additions to natural nails
  - No chipped nail polish

#### Jewelry:

- Any visible jewelry will be conservative and in good taste.
- Rings without raised stones or designs will be allowed in moderation.
- Earrings will meet these specifications: 6 mm or 1/4 in. in diameter or smaller; gold, silver, white pearl, or diamond; unadorned and spherical; fit snugly against the ear lobe; maximum of two earrings per lobe.
- No other jewelry or body piercing materials will be visible while in any clinical setting.
- Fad devices, vogue medallions, personal talismans, or amulets will not be worn.
- A watch with a second hand will be worn at all times.

## HESI Achievement Test

HESI tests are administered at appropriate times throughout the nursing program. These tests are required and assist in determining areas of individual strength and weakness. There is a fee for each test.

During the semester in which a Traditional Track student completes the courses for the second level or when a Mobility Track student is enrolled in RNSG 1517, he or she must take a HESI Midcurricular Custom Exam. It is recommended that a student who scores below 850 will formulate an individualized study plan that may include but is not limited to materials within the Evolve Reach Remediation Learning Management System and NCLEX-RN preparation materials. It is suggested that the student complete the remediation prior to the end of Level II for Mobility Track students and to the end of Level III for Traditional Track students to prevent the need for remediation concurrent with the final level. A HESI Specialty Test will be administered in RNSG 1412 over OB and Pediatric content. The same recommendations for remediation apply to those students who score below 850 on the Specialty Test.

## HESI Exit Exam Policy

Students are required to take the HESI exit exam 6-8 weeks prior to completion of ADN program. Those who score below 850 are required to take a second HESI exit exam prior to graduation.

### **HESI Exit Exam Remediation Policy:**

All students scoring below 850 are **required** to use the EVOLVE ACCESS online and complete the suggested remediation before retaking the exam.

In addition, recommended actions for Level 4 students who fall below the established benchmark on the HESI exit exam on the first attempt include:

1. Purchasing a recommended review book.
2. Participating in a formal NCLEX review course prior to taking the NCLEX.

## Hospital Visitation

Students are permitted in the hospital in the role of "Nursing Student" only during the designated clinical rotation and clinical preparation times. Additional time on the nursing unit must be arranged with the clinical instructor. When not in the role of "Nursing Student," students assume the role of visitor and abide by hospital regulations. Uniforms, lab coats, or name tags should not be worn while the student is in the role of visitor.

## **Electronic Communication Devices**

The use of electronic communication devices, such as pagers and telephones, is limited to emergency situations only in any learning setting. The devices must be set to silent mode at all times in the classroom. If it is necessary to respond to a call or page, the student should leave the classroom with minimal disruption, and may reenter the classroom at the next break. Students may not use a cellular telephone in the computer laboratory. If a cellular phone is used during any testing situation or during test review, it will be considered an act of academic dishonesty. Electronic communication devices may be used in the clinical setting for appropriate purposes only. These purposes will be determined by the clinical instructor.

Tape recorders, PDAs, cameras and other recording devices are not to be used in the clinical setting for recording identifiable client data. Additionally, recording devices are not permitted in pre-conference, post conference, or other client care conferences.

## **E-Mail Access**

All students must be accessible via an electronic mail address. Students may utilize the computers on campus to create and check their e-mail accounts. E-mail accounts should be checked for new messages at least once each week. See the lab manager for assistance in setting up a free e-mail account.

## **Employment**

Students are advised against full-time employment while enrolled in the ADN Program. If employment is necessary, students must determine how many hours they can work and continue to meet the requirements of the nursing program. No special consideration will be afforded students with regard to their employment. Upon completion of the first semester nursing course(s) in the traditional track, students are eligible to apply to the Texas Department of Health to become certified nurse aides/medication aides. Students completing the first year of the ADN program are often hired in area health care facilities. (See also, "GAIN Program")

## **Ethical Behavior**

Students are expected to demonstrate ethical behavior as specified in the ANA Code for Nurses described below. The Code for Nurses adopted by the American Nurses' Association in 1950 and revised in 1960, 1968, 1976, 1985, 1995 and 2001 is intended to serve the individual practitioner as a guide to the ethical principles that should govern his or her nursing practice, conduct, and relationships.

1. The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, or community.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.
4. The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse's obligation to provide optimum patient care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence, and to continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining, and improving healthcare environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality health care and consistent with the values of the profession through individual and collective action.
7. The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs.
9. The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy.

American Nurses Association, Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, Washington, D.C.: American Nurses Publishing, 2001

## **Medication Administration**

Students may administer medications to assigned patients ONLY under the supervision of the clinical instructor or the instructor's designee. Failure to do so may result in conference or probation. Refer to the clinical instructor for unit specific and/or instructor specific procedures.

## **Medication Errors**

A medication error is defined as: Any situation in which one or more of the six "rights" of medication administration is violated or could be violated without the intervention of faculty and/or staff. The six rights are:

1. Right patient
2. Right drug

3. Right dosage
4. Right route
5. Right time
6. Right documentation

Any student making a medication error may:

1. meet in conference with the instructor, or
2. be placed directly on probation, or
3. be withdrawn from the program

Procedure:

1. The medication error (as defined above) will be documented by the clinical instructor.
2. The instructor and student will meet to discuss the incident and establish plans for necessary remediation.
3. The instructor will document the discussion with the student on the appropriate form: Conference and/or probation forms will be placed in the student file and the incident will be recorded in the clinical evaluation tool.
4. Failure to meet stipulations of a probation will result in instructor initiated withdrawal from the program. (If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from a course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F" for failure or "U" for unsatisfactory.

## **Noncompliance with Program Policies**

Noncompliance with the policies and procedures of the ADN Program or clinical affiliates may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

## **Policy and Procedure Changes**

All policies are subject to change by the ADN Program faculty as deemed necessary. Students will be notified of changes in writing and will sign the notification, which will be kept in the student file.

## **Probation**

Students are placed on probation (and may be withdrawn from the program) for unsafe or unprofessional clinical practice that is grossly negligent or has failed to improve after verbal and/or written notification of unsatisfactory performance.

"Probation action is implemented for students who are not meeting clinical objectives, have unsatisfactory/unsafe performance in the clinical experience, and/or violate college

policies listed in the ACC Student Handbook and/or program policies found in the ADN Student Handbook.” See Progressive Discipline on page 33 for specific information.

## Re-Admission Requirements

A student who withdraws from the program or fails to achieve the minimum course grade for progression may be re-admitted **one time only** to the ADN Program on a SPACE AVAILABLE BASIS upon the recommendation of the Admissions Committee. The student must meet the current admission criteria. The student reenters the level of the program at which s/he exited, unless otherwise stipulated by the Admissions Committee. Space available for re-entering students will be filled in the following sequence:

- Former students who are first priority for readmission.
- Successful advanced placement / transfer students.
- Former students beginning with 2nd priority and progressing through 3rd priority readmission ranking (See “Re-admission Priority”).

Students who have been out of the nursing program for more than one year must re-apply as new applicants into the first nursing course and meet current admission requirements.

If a transfer student fails a semester, the student will not be eligible for readmission. (The admission to the ACC ADN program for transfer students is considered a readmission, and policy is one-time only readmission to the ADN program on a space available basis.)

Students who are unsuccessful during their second admission to the program and those students who are withdrawn for unsafe clinical practice are ineligible for readmission and may not reapply to the ADN Program.

Procedure:

1. Go online to the ADN web page [www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/resources.php](http://www.austincc.edu/health/rnsg/resources.php) and complete the “Readmission Form” and Submit. This request will go directly to the Chairperson of the ADN Admissions committee for review.

The student must complete this process on or before the appropriate deadlines:

- Spring re-entry ..... December 17<sup>th</sup>
- Summer re-entry ..... May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Fall re-entry ..... June 5<sup>th</sup>

2. The student should receive notification of approval or denial of request from the ADN Program Admissions Committee.

## **Re-admission/Re-Entry/LVN Alternate Entry//Transfer to Upper Levels Priorities**

The Admissions Committee will review the files of all students requesting re-admission to the nursing program. The following priority guidelines will determine placement on a waiting list for a space available opening.

### Priority 1A – ADN returning students:

- Re-entry students
- Students who withdrew for personal/health reasons, had a minimum theory course grade of "C," and had a passing clinical course grade (ranked by numeric course grade at the time of withdrawal).

### Priority 1B – LVN Alternate Entry applicants:

- GPA in LVN curriculum at A or B level and had never been readmitted to the LVN program (ranked by GPA).

### Priority 1C – Transfer students:

- GPA for nursing curriculum at A or B level and had never needed readmission to the nursing program (ranked by GPA).

### Priority 2A – ADN returning students:

- Students who withdrew on or before the last day to withdraw who were not currently in good academic standing but had a passing clinical grade and students who did not earn a minimum theory course grade of "C", but earned a passing clinical grade at the end of the semester (ranked by numeric course grade at the time of withdrawal).

### Priority 2B – LVN Alternate Entry applicants:

- GPA in LVN curriculum at C level OR were readmitted to the LVN program (ranked by GPA).

### Priority 2C – Transfer students:

- GPA for nursing curriculum at less than B level OR needed readmission to the nursing program (ranked by GPA).

### Priority 3 – ADN returning students:

- Students who are in good academic standing in theory but withdrew or were withdrawn from clinical for any reason other than unsafe clinical behavior as defined in the clinical evaluation tool.
- Students who did not earn a minimum theory course grade of "C" and withdrew or were withdrawn from clinical for any reason other than unsafe clinical behaviors as defined in the clinical evaluation tool. (Ranked by numeric course grade at the time of withdrawal.)

### Unsafe Clinical Practice and Readmission:

A student who has been withdrawn for unsafe clinical behavior or a student who withdrew while on probation for unsafe clinical behavior will not be considered for readmission.

## Re-Entry Policy

If a student withdraws from an RNSG course before the ACC withdrawal deadline, but remains enrolled in another RNSG course, the student must retake the course from which he/she withdrew in the following Fall or Spring semester.

This not the same as a program withdrawal, which requires readmission. However, failure to remain continuously enrolled will result in program withdrawal.

Deadlines for requesting re-entry are:

- Spring re-entry ..... December 17<sup>th</sup>
- Summer re-entry ..... May 17<sup>th</sup>
- Fall re-entry ..... June 5<sup>th</sup>

## Re-Entry or Readmission Limits

An ADN student may re-take a total of 9 semester hours, but may not take the same course more than twice.

## Records

Academic and health information pertinent to each nursing student is maintained by the ADN Program in separate files for three years after the student graduates or withdraws from the program. At that time transcripts and pertinent information will be sent to Institutional Records and stored according to college policy.

Students can access their academic and health files by arranging an appointment with the nursing faculty advisor to review these records. Students are expected to keep their file information current in case emergency notification becomes necessary. Student files are stored to protect the file and the information contained in the file. Any public inquiries concerning a student will be referred to the Program Coordinator.

Academic records may include:

- Application(s) / Transcripts
- HIPAA
- TASP or COMPASS test scores
- CPR training documentation
- Correspondence to and from the student
- Clinical evaluation tools
- Conference forms
- Confidentiality form
- Licensure/certification for LVN or paramedic
- Probation forms

- Student information sheet
- Documentation of Safe Environment of Care and/or Mandatory Education

Health records may include:

- Physical examination form
- Immunization records
- Correspondence to and from the student or health care provider(s)
- Medical releases

## Test Review

Students are permitted to review unit tests at times specified by the course instructors. (Note: Final exam can only be reviewed at the discretion of the level coordinator by submitting a written request.)

Procedure:

1. All personal belongings will be placed at the front of the classroom upon entering.
2. Appeals regarding scoring of specific test items must be submitted in writing within two (2) weeks of the test date to the faculty member having taught the content with one (1) supporting source quoted.
3. Any test not returned to faculty by the end of the test review session will result in immediate student probation.
4. Note taking or tape recording during the test review is not permitted.

\* Following completion of some computerized level tests, the student may view their missed questions directly following completion of the exam while on the computer. The same policy regarding no note taking applies to this situation.

## Testing

Students must adhere to the following testing guidelines in order to ensure a quiet testing environment free from distraction and to limit the opportunity for or appearance of academic dishonesty.

Written Examinations:

1. All personal belongings will be placed at the front of classroom upon entering.
2. To the extent possible, students will be seated throughout the room.

On-Line Testing:

1. All personal belongings will be placed either in the classroom prior to entering the computer lab or at the front of the computer lab.
2. Students may access a test only during the authorized testing session.
3. Scratch paper will be provided for use during the testing session and will be turned in to the proctor before leaving the computer lab.
4. In the event of a technologic problem that results in lost time during LXR testing:

- Students are responsible for raising their hands immediately if their computer locks up during testing. Faculty will document the start and end of lock up time on the white board in the testing center. Timing begins when the first student reports the problem and concludes when all student are back on-line. Faculty timing is official. If the student does not report the problem to faculty during the testing session, no accommodations will be made.
  - If lost testing time is <5 minutes, no accommodations will be made.
  - If lost testing time is >5 minutes but <15 minutes:
    - Students who complete the test despite the lost testing time may voluntarily choose to exit the test and leave the testing area. Once the student leaves the testing center, no accommodations will be made.
    - Students who do not complete the test or want to make up the lost testing time will remain sequestered in the testing center at the end of the testing time. At the conclusion of the testing period, additional testing time to equal, but not to exceed, the amount of time lost will be given.
  - If lost testing time is > 15 minutes, faculty should have a hard copy the test ready for administration. All students who have not completed the test will be given a paper copy of the test, and the full testing time will be given to complete the paper copy of the test in its entirety immediately following the decision to go to a paper test.
5. At the conclusion of any LXR testing period, the student will raise his/her hand; faculty will record the student's raw score and computer number. If the electronic data in LXR is irretrievable for any reason, the faculty's written record of the student's score will be the official test score.
  6. Scores displayed at the completion of a test are considered tentative until the exam results have been reviewed by the faculty.
  7. Distribution of final scores will be determined by the faculty teams.

## Transportation

Transportation to clinical facilities and community agencies is the sole responsibility of the student. Clinical facilities can include learning experiences in cities located in adjacent towns (e.g., San Marcos, Round Rock, Georgetown). Students should be prepared to accommodate travel to any facility deemed applicable to meeting course objectives.



# Academic Program Policies

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential component of professional behavior in health sciences programs. Health science students are expected to possess a sense of responsible professional behavior and accountability for their actions.

## Academic Dishonesty

ACC Health science programs follow the college's Discipline Policies as set forth in the **ACC Student Handbook**. A copy of the student handbook is available at each campus's administrative offices, or may be downloaded from the ACC website at: <http://www.austincc.edu>

Academic work submitted by students shall be the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. For purposes of these regulations, academic work is defined as, but not limited to: exams and quizzes, whether taken electronically or on paper; projects, either individual or group; papers; classroom presentations; and homework. When students borrow ideas, wording or organization from another source, they shall reference that information in an appropriate manner.

### Definition:

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to the following:

- Cheating on an exam or quiz by bringing information to the testing area (no use of cell phones or PDA's for calculation); talking to another student during the test, or looking at another student's test during the examination; and removal of a privacy screen from a computer, or dividers between computers
- Plagiarizing – borrowing ideas, wording or organization from another source, without appropriate referencing of that information
- Unauthorized collaboration / collusion with another in preparing outside work for fulfillment of course requirements
- Unauthorized entry (hacking) into test banks or examinations
- Falsifying data in a patient health record
- Assisting others in academic dishonesty
- Discussing any assessment tools such as examinations or mastery check-offs with students who have not taken the exam or completed the check-off
- Having a copy of the examination outside the time and place of test administration or test review

- Lying about or misrepresenting care given, clinical errors, or any action related to clinical experience
- Recording, taping, or taking pictures without consent from instructor

Since dishonesty harms the individual, fellow students, and the integrity of the program, policies on academic dishonesty must be strictly enforced. Any documented incidences of academic dishonesty will result in probation or withdrawal from the program. If the withdrawal is for academic dishonesty, the student will not be eligible for readmission into the program.

## Program Progression

In order to successfully progress through Health Science programs, the student must:

- Complete pre-requisite courses before progressing in the program
- Be enrolled in co-requisite courses at the same time
  - Withdrawal from any nursing co-requisite course prior to the college official withdrawal date will result in withdrawal from all other nursing co-requisite courses regardless of the current grade in the course
  - Students who fail a nursing co-requisite course are required to retake all nursing co-requisite courses
  - Student who withdraws from a general education co-requisite course during the semester is not eligible for progression to the next semester until that course is completed
- Achieve a minimum grade of "C" in all health science courses in the degree plan
- Satisfactorily meet course objectives

## Progressive Discipline

Faculty is committed to assisting students to be successful in the program. Therefore, Health Science students who are not meeting course objectives in theory, lab, clinical, or practicum will be apprised of their performance status using the progressive discipline process.

- Step 1: **Warning**  
The instructor provides the student with a verbal warning or written feedback as to their status. The instructor counsels the students regarding criteria for successful completion of the course and makes recommendations for improvement. Recommendations may include, but are not limited to: utilization of peer study groups, tutors, computer-assisted instruction, and assistance from ACC counselors.

At the discretion of the instructor and depending on the situation, the instructor may defer the conference and proceed to probation or immediate withdrawal.

- Step 2: **Conference**

The student meets with the instructor in a formal conference to review the performance deficit. A written Health Science Conference Report will identify specific course or program objectives not met. A remediation contract including deadlines for completion will be developed to correct the deficit so the student can successfully progress through the program.

If at any time the student does not comply with all terms outlined in the conference report, the student may be placed on probation or withdrawn from the program, if applicable.

- Step 3: **Probation**

Probation is a specified trial period in which the student must improve or be withdrawn from the program. The student meets with the instructor and department chair. An ACC counselor may be asked to assist in representing the student. The student and faculty will complete a Health Sciences Probation Report in which a contract will be formulated. The contract explicitly states the expectations that must be followed during the probationary period and is signed by all parties.

Probation may be implemented for, but not limited to the following behaviors:

- Unsatisfactory clinical or practicum performance
- Unsatisfactory clinical attendance and punctuality
- Refusal to participate in a procedure
- Behavior which compromises clinical or practicum affiliations.

Permanent probation may be implemented for:

- Unsafe clinical or practicum practice
- Unethical or unprofessional clinical behavior
- Academic dishonesty.

A student may only be placed on permanent probation once while in the Associate Degree Nursing Program. Permanent probation continues until the student successfully completes all program requirements. A student, who is on permanent probation and is withdrawn from the program for a subsequent infraction of the contract, is not eligible for readmission. A student who is on permanent probation and is

withdrawn from the program for a problem that is outside the scope of the permanent probation contract, may apply for readmission, but if readmitted, will continue on permanent probation.

- Step 4: **Withdrawal**

If at any time during the probation period, the student fails to meet any of the conditions of the probation contract, the student may be withdrawn from the program. Accordingly, if at the end of the probation period the student has not met the criteria for satisfactory performance outlined in the probation contract, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

A student who is placed on probation for unsafe or unprofessional conduct will be withdrawn from the program for subsequent safety or professional conduct violations at any time during the program. (If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from the course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F" for failure or "U" for unsatisfactory).

Some situations do not allow for the progressive discipline process due to the severity of nature or the timing of their occurrence. Incidents of this nature may require the student to be immediately placed on probation or withdrawn from the program. Examples of these include, but are not limited to:

- Violations of patient confidentiality
- Academic dishonesty
- Falsification of documentation
- Unprofessional behavior that seriously jeopardizes patient, student, staff, or preceptor safety.

Note: If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from the course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F" for failure or "U" for unsatisfactory.

The withdrawing student must meet with the course instructor and/or department chair to complete all exit forms and have an **Exit Meeting** within two weeks of the withdrawal. The student is required to turn in their program student ID and any equipment or items that belong to the department. Failure to do so may compromise their standing at ACC.

## Student Complaint Procedure

Health science programs follow the college's general policies for student complaints as set forth in the **ACC Student Handbook**. A copy of the student handbook is available at each campus's administrative offices, or may be downloaded from the ACC website at: <http://www.austincc.edu>.

The purpose of the student complaint procedure is to ensure due process in the resolution of a complaint. Student complaints may include, but are not limited to, issues regarding classroom instruction or other college services and offices, as well as discrimination based on race, color, gender, religion, age, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. This procedure does not apply to student disputes about course grades, which are resolved under the supervision of the appropriate instructors and instructional administrators. The program will not retaliate against the student as a result of filing a complaint.

## Sexual and Racial Harassment Complaints

If a Health Science student has a complaint regarding sexual or racial harassment, then the student should refer to the **ACC Student Handbook** for the policy and procedure related to sexual and racial harassment.

<http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/policies3.htm#sexual>

## Assignment of Grades

The instructor teaching the course shall assign grades. The instructor will provide information to the students at the beginning of the semester regarding the course, including the guidelines for grading. If the student has questions about or objections to the grading policy in a course, those must be brought up during the semester. Such questions or objections should first be addressed to the instructor and then, if the student believes it is appropriate, to the instructor's supervisor.

## Grade Change Appeal

If a student believes that an error has been made in the assignment of a grade, he or she should follow the "Procedure for Determination of Error of a Performance Grade" found in the **ACC Student Handbook** at <http://www.austincc.edu>.



# Safety and Health Information

## Professional Risks

Interactions with patients in the health care system have inherent risks to both the patient and caregiver, including, but not limited to, communicable diseases. The program provides information regarding known risks for various diseases and the training to appropriately address those risks.

All students are expected to provide appropriate care to all patients assigned to them in any setting. These assignments may include patients with medical diagnoses of tuberculosis, hepatitis A, B, or C, or AIDS. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the student to implement standard precautions in the care of all assigned patients.

## Health Insurance

The College does not provide personal health insurance coverage for students. All Health Sciences students are encouraged to carry some type of personal health insurance. Information about health insurance is available at:

<http://www.austincc.edu/ehs/insurance.html>.

## Accident/Exposure

### Medical Professional Liability Insurance

Medical professional liability insurance is required for each Health Science student enrolled in a clinical course with patient contact. This insurance is purchased automatically through Austin Community College registration fees collected each semester.

### Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance coverage is required for student participating in certain college sponsored laboratory/clinical activities. The maximum medical benefit is \$10,000 per student with a \$25 deductible. The student is responsible for the \$25 deductible. Payment for insurance coverage is assessed at registration.

The student medical accident policy provides insurance coverage only while participating in specified laboratory/clinical classes. It does not extend to accidents involving automobiles and incidents outside the laboratory/clinical/classroom.

## Accident Procedures

1. Provide first aid for the student sufficient to get the situation under control.
2. If the accident occurs on campus, campus police must be notified.
3. If the accident occurs in the clinical area, faculty responsible for the course in which the student is injured must be notified immediately of the incident.
4. If it appears that a physician should see the student, he or she may choose to see his/her own physician, go to a minor emergency center, or be transported to a hospital. The student can pay the bill at the time of treatment or assign benefits and request reimbursement from ACC's insurance company.
5. The injured student will use the designated claim form. All components of the claim form must be completed. The completed form must contain the signatures of (1) the faculty/supervisor and (2) the student/claimant, and an itemized medical bill before reimbursement will be made. Reimbursement requests along with completed claim form should be sent to:

**Austin Community College**  
**Risk Management Department**  
9101 Tuscany Way  
Austin, TX 78754  
Phone: 223-1015 FAX: 223-1035

6. The student submits a copy of the completed insurance form and HIPAA release form to the Assistant Dean of Health Sciences immediately after the incident.
7. The Faculty submit TWO copies of the Supervisor's Injury and Illness Analysis and Prevention Report; one copy to the Department Chair and one copy to the Assistant Dean of Health Sciences within 48 hours of the event.
8. The Assistant Dean of Health Sciences will communicate the official notification of the claim to the Risk Management Department who confirm insurance coverage with a carrier & medical provider.

Forms are available in published course materials and on the web at:

- <http://accweb.austincc.edu/accforms/forms/HZCM004studentaccidentclaim.pdf>.
- <http://accweb.austincc.edu/accforms/forms/HZCM003injuryrep.pdf>

## Infectious Disease Exposure Response

Students who experience an exposure to any potentially infectious materials (needle stick, mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or airborne inhalation) require specific follow-up. It is the responsibility of the individual to initiate certain actions, to report the incident as soon as possible (preferably within one hour) to their instructor, and to follow the instructor's recommendations. It is the responsibility of the clinical instructor or supervisor to take the appropriate steps to ensure the safety and well-being of the student. Faculty will ensure that copies of the exposure procedure and appropriate forms will be made available to the student as needed.

## Environment of Care

Austin Community College Health Science Students and faculty will complete the modules Seton Safe Environment of Care (EOC) and the St. David's Mandatory Education Module. All of the Seton and St. David's facilities have agreed to the use of these modules in order to educate students prior to their clinical rotation.

The modules require completion of tests demonstrating mastery of the concepts presented in the Seton Safe EOC Manual and St. David's Mandatory Education Module. The scope of these tests includes general safety, hazardous materials and waste, medical equipment, security, emergency preparedness, utility systems and social environment.

These exams are available at: <http://www.austincc.edu/health> or on departmental home pages. Specific instructions about how to access the test will be given to student by their instructor. When students have completed the test, they will be required to make a copy for themselves and another to be placed on file.

## Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA)

The Health Insurance Portability Accountability Act (HIPAA) requires that all protected health information be kept private and secure by all persons that handle , or have access to, that information. Since health sciences students, faculty, instructors, and staff use protected health information as part of the educational process (i.e. access assignments such as case studies and care plans), all health science students must complete an online HIPAA Training Module on an annual basis to remain in compliance with HIPAA regulations. Students are not allowed to enter the clinical settings/fieldwork until this training has been completed. Any violations of HIPAA regulations will result in disciplinary actions up to and including withdrawal from the program depending on the severity of the violation.

## Workplace Violence

Student who are assigned a clinical or practicum experience in a Seton Healthcare facility are required to complete the **Safety Module for Non-Employees: Workplace Violence Module**.

## Substance Abuse Policy

The well being of patients cared for by ACC students is of primary concern in all Health Science programs. A carefully designed and administered drug and alcohol misuse procedure can reduce accidents. Therefore, the Health Sciences Department has adopted a substance abuse testing program wherein a student who is participating in clinical classes will be tested for drugs when there is reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of alcohol and or illegal drugs, i.e., drugs which are controlled substances under federal law which are not being used under the supervision of a licensed health care professional, or otherwise in accordance with the law.

Students will be asked to submit to drug screening by their ACC clinical instructor at the expense of the college in the following circumstances:

1. Observable indication of actual use of impairment such as slurred speech, lack of co-ordination, incoherency, marijuana, alcohol odors.
2. Possession of drugs, apparent paraphernalia or alcoholic beverages.
3. Detailed, factual and persistent reports of misuse by multiple colleagues.
4. Abnormal or erratic behaviors such as sudden outburst, mood swings, hostility or unusual anxiety that suggests possible drug use or alcohol misuse.
5. Involvement in suspicious accidents.
6. Apparent lapses in judgment or memory
7. Unusual lethargy

### Testing Procedure

1. Document student's behavior, confer with department chair. If a department chair is the faculty member concerned about the student's behavior or if the department chair is unavailable, the conference will be with the dean or dean's designee.
2. If a student denies being under the influence of unauthorized substances a request for a drug screen will be initiated.
  - The student will sign a consent to undergo drug screening.\*
  - If the student refuses to consent to drug screening, the student will be immediately dismissed from the program.
3. Institute a Request for Drug Screen. Provide verbal and written instructions for the testing procedure, including time frames for the test.
4. Arrange for transportation directly to the designated testing center by taxi accompanied by a Health Sciences representative.
5. After the drug screen specimen has been obtained and student will be transported by taxi to their home.
6. Student is excluded from all clinical activities pending results of the drug screen.
7. Drug screen findings will be interpreted by the designated testing center within 24-48 hours.

8. Results will be sent to the Dean of Health Sciences where they will be kept in a confidential, locked file. Results of the drug screen will be released to the department chair on a need to know basis only. Records may be released only to the student or the decision-maker in a lawsuit, grievance or other legal proceeding against the College or its agents arising out of the positive drug test.
9. All positive drug screens will be reviewed by an independent Medical Review Officer. During the review process the student will have the opportunity to:
  - A. Explain the case of the positive drug screen.
  - B. Provide the name of the physician authorizing any prescription medications. The Medical Review Officer will contact the attending physician for verification. If verification is obtained, the student will be placed on probation. Any subsequent evidence of substance abuse will result in a recommendation that they students be dismissed from the program. The student may appeal the recommendation using the Student Compliant Procedure in the ACC Student Handbook.
10. If drug screen is positive and unexplained, unverified via the Medical Review Officer, the student will be:
  - A. Dismissed from the program and
  - B. Reported to the state licensing agency, if applicable.
11. A student who tests positive will be referred to a community resource for evaluation by the ACC counselor at the student's expense.
12. If the drug screen is negative, the student will be immediately reinstated in clinical by the department chair and will be provided an opportunity to make up assignments. The student will be subject to all other objectives related to safe behavior and care of clients.
13. Readmission to the program is based on program admission policies.  
\*Please refer to the Consent for Drug Screening form located in the Appendices section at the end of this handbook.  
NOTE: Some clinical affiliates may require a preliminary drug screening prior to actual clinical practice in their facility.



# Clinical/Practicum Policies

## Clinical Requirements

At the end of each semester, every student will receive a triplicate form delineating the requirements for continuation in the program. All items on the list must be completed by the **beginning** of the next clinical course. These items consist of all clinical requirements that will expire during the upcoming semester. All documentation of completion must be submitted by the given deadline date or the student will be withdrawn from the program.

## Professional Behavior

Austin Community College and the Health Sciences Programs have certain expectations of behavior. Health Science students while on campus or while representing Austin Community College at any clinical agency, must conduct themselves in a professional manner as to reflect favorably upon themselves and the Program they represent. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their actions and will be held accountable for them. If at any time a student behaves in a manner which is inappropriate, unprofessional, disrespectful, argumentative, or endangers the health or safety of fellow students, instructors, patients, or health care team members, they will be referred to the "Student Discipline Policy and Procedure" as outlined in the ACC Student Handbook and administered through the office of Student Services. Students will abide by clinical agency policies during each clinical experience.

Students will also be disciplined for academic dishonesty and unprofessional conduct. Unprofessional conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Verbal or non-verbal language, actions, or voice inflections, or insubordination which compromises rapport or working relations with peers, faculty, patients, and their family or healthcare team members.
- Any behavior that may compromise contractual agreements and/or working relations with clinical affiliates, or constitute violations of legal or ethical standards.
- Using or being under the influence of any drug (OTC, prescription, and/or illegal) or alcohol that may alter judgment and/or interfere with safe performance.

Violations of the professional behavior standards can result in immediate removal from the clinical site, probation, or withdrawal from the program.

## Safe/Unsafe Clinical Behaviors

The Health Sciences Programs identify safety as a basic human need. A safety need can be identified as physical, biological, and/or emotional in nature. Safe practices are an academic requirement of each program.

Unsafe clinical practice shall be deemed to be behavior demonstrated by the student which threatens or violates the physical, biological, or emotional safety of the patients, caregivers, students, faculty, staff or self. Unsafe or unprofessional clinical practice may result in:

- A performance conference & written report
- A probation conference & written report
- Immediate withdrawal from the program. (If the occurrence is past the official college date for withdrawal from a course, the student will receive a performance grade of "F" for failure or "U" for unsatisfactory.)

The following examples serve as guides to these unsafe behaviors, but are not to be considered all-inclusive.

**Physical Safety:** Unsafe behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Inappropriate use of side rails, wheelchairs, other equipment
- Lack of proper protection of the patient which potentates falls, lacerations, burns, new or further injury
- Failure to correctly identify patient(s) prior to initiating care
- Failure to perform pre-procedure safety checks of equipment, invasive devices or patient status

**Biological Safety:** Unsafe behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Failure to recognize the correct violations in aseptic technique
- Improper medication administration techniques/choices
- Performing actions without appropriate supervision
- Failure to seek help when needed
- Attending clinical while ill
- Failure to properly identify patient (s) prior to treatment

**Emotional Safety:** Unsafe behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Threatening or making a patient, caregiver, faculty, staff or bystander fearful
- Providing inappropriate or incorrect information
- Performing actions without appropriate supervision
- Failure to seek help when needed, unstable emotional behaviors

**Unprofessional Practice:** Unprofessional behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Verbal or non-verbal language, action, or voice inflections which compromise rapport and working relations with patients, family members, staff, or physicians, may potentially compromise contractual agreements and/or working relations with clinical affiliates, or constitute violations of legal/ethical standards
- Behavior which interferes with or disrupts teaching/learning experiences
- Using or being under the influence of any drug or alcohol that may alter judgment and interfere with safe performance in the clinical or classroom setting
- Breach of confidentiality in any form

# Appendices

## GAIN Program

### The Program -

The Get Ahead In Nursing (GAIN) Program is a new innovative work-study program offered through a partnership with St. David's HealthCare Partnership, the SETON Healthcare Network, the University of Texas School of Nursing, the Austin Community College Associate Degree Nursing Program and the Austin Community College Vocational Nursing Program.

### The Goals -

- To establish a supportive "pipeline" within local healthcare organizations
- To provide an environment in which students and potential nursing students can learn about the nursing profession firsthand
- To foster development of skills and competencies required for today's clinical positions
- To assist students in establishing themselves as valued employees

### The Advantages -

Gain valuable clinical experience while getting paid.  
Gain exposure to healthcare to validate career choice  
Gain seniority in a healthcare agency  
Gain opportunity for being hired after graduation  
Gain opportunity for selecting preferred unit and shift upon graduation  
Gain preparation for employment in specialty areas  
Gain access to healthcare facility benefit plans  
Gain credit for UT and ACC nursing course requirements

Eligibility -Nursing students and pre-nursing students who have completed required basic skills are eligible to apply. Basic skills required for most levels of unlicensed assistive personnel positions can be acquired through completion of the following courses:

- ACC Nursing Skills Courses (RNSG 1105 or VNSG 1423)
- UT Clinical Nursing Skills I (N127P)

Contract information: (Go to – <http://www.austincc.edu/health/vng/gain.php>)

## DELC Competencies

In April of 2002, the Board of Nurse Examiners adopted the Differentiated Entry Level Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs to replace the Essential Competencies of Texas Graduates of Education Programs in Nursing. The DELC competencies are written for nursing programs to meet the approval criteria established by the BNE and are consistent with the BNE "Standards for Professional Nursing Practice." The competencies describe the expected outcomes for students at the time of graduation. Objectives for the theory, skills lab and clinical components of the Austin Community College Associate Degree Nursing program are written to incorporate the DELC competencies and are indicated in the Program Outcomes. The differentiated competency statements for Associate Degree graduates are outlined as follows:

### Provider of Care

1. Determine the health status and health needs of clients and their families based upon interpretation of health data and preventive health practices in collaboration with clients and interdisciplinary health care team members.
2. Formulate goals and plan of care for clients and their families based on nursing diagnoses in collaboration with clients and interdisciplinary health care team members.
3. Implement the plan of care within legal and ethical parameters including scope of practice, in collaboration with interdisciplinary health care team members to assist clients in meeting health care needs.
4. Develop and implement teaching plans for clients concerning promotion, maintenance, and restoration of health.
5. Evaluate client's responses and outcomes to therapeutic interventions.
6. Provide for the care of multiple clients either through direct care or assignment and/or delegation of care to other members of the health care team.
7. Use a critical thinking approach to analyze clinical data and current literature as a basis for decision making in nursing practice.

### Coordinator of Care

1. Coordinate human and material resources for the provision of care for clients.
2. Collaborate with clients and the interdisciplinary health care team for the planning and delivery of care.
3. Refer clients to resources and facilitate continuity of care.
4. Function within the organizational framework of various structured health care settings.

### Member of the Profession

1. Assume accountability and responsibility for the quality of nursing care provided to clients.
2. Act as an advocate to promote the provision of quality health care for clients.
3. Participate in activities that promote the provision of quality health care for clients.

## Professional Nursing Organizations

### **Austin Community College Associate Degree Nursing Student Association**

This association is the pre-professional nursing student organization, in which all students are encouraged to participate. The purpose of this organization is to aid in the growth and development of the associate degree nursing student as an individual, as a professional and as a provider of quality health care to all people. ADNSA meetings are held monthly throughout the academic year. All students are encouraged to attend and participate. A faculty sponsor is appointed by the ADN Department Chair.

### **National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (NOADN)**

N-OADN is the leading advocate for associate degree nursing education and practice, and promotes collaboration in charting the future of health care education and delivery.

N-OADN strives to:

- Maintain eligibility for registered nurse licensure for graduates of associate degree nursing programs.
- Educate students and promote AD nursing programs at community colleges nationwide.
- Provide a forum for discussion of issues impacting AD education and practice.
- Develop partnerships and increase communication with other professional organizations.
- Increase public understanding of the role of the associate degree nurse.
- Participate at national and state levels in the formation of healthcare policy.
- Facilitate legislative action supportive of the goals of N-OADN.

### **Texas Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (TOADN)**

The Texas Organization for Associate Degree Nursing was established to advance the status of the Associate Degree Nurse in education and in practice.

TOADN is affiliated with the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (NOADN).

The Texas Organization for Associate Degree Nursing strives to:

- Maintain eligibility for Registered Nurse Licensure for graduates of Associate Degree Nursing programs.
- Solicit the support of other associations to assist in promoting the goals of this association.
- Disseminate information relevant to the status of Associate Degree Nursing.
- Promote and maintain open channels of communications among interested parties.
- Facilitate legislative action supportive of the goals of this organization.

- Maintain currency with the contemporary scope of practice for the Associate Degree Nurse.
- Provide opportunities for Continuing Education for Registered Nurses

### **Texas Nurses Association**

The Texas Nurses Association (TNA) welcomes all nursing students to attend its professional meetings at the district level. All students are encouraged to take full opportunity of these learning experiences. Student privileges through Austin's District 5 TNA include:

- Participation in the educational programs of TNA
- Appointment as members to standing and special committees
- Eligibility for placement by request on state mailing list for publications.

NOTE: Students are not dues paying members and have no voting privileges in the organization.

## Student Signature Sheet SUMMER 09

Please read each statement below. Initial each statement in the space indicated and provide your name, signature, and date below.

1. \_\_\_\_ I have read and agree to, and will comply with the student policies as outlined in the Student Handbook. Furthermore, I will agree to and will comply with the course requirements as listed in the Syllabus and Student Policies of (program).
  
2. \_\_\_\_ I understand that while performing my regularly assigned duties, I may be exposed to blood, body fluids, or tissues. I will use the appropriate personal protective equipment required when there is an inherent potential for mucous membrane or skin contact with blood, body fluids or tissues, or a potential for spills or splashes of them. Appropriate protection may include the use of gloves, gowns, masks, face shields, eye protection, mouthpieces, resuscitation bags, and other protective equipment. I understand that if I fail to use available personal protective equipment, I may be subject to disciplinary action.
  
3. \_\_\_\_ I have been informed regarding the inherent health/safety hazards in the health care field and release ACC from any liability for such hazards.
  
4. \_\_\_\_ I have read and agree to the "Substance Abuse Administrative Policy."
  
5. \_\_\_\_ I agree to criminal background checks and agree to immediately notify the Dean of Health Sciences in writing of any subsequent changes in criminal history that occur after the admission background check has been completed.
  
6. \_\_\_\_ I will complete all clinical educational training modules and submit signed documentation to the Program as required.

Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_