



NURSING

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING (MSN) STUDENT HANDBOOK

NOTICE: *The provisions described in this handbook are not to be regarded as an irrevocable contract between the student and the College. The College reserves the right to make changes and designate effective dates of changes in curricula, course offerings, requirements for graduation, and other regulations at any time as such changes are considered to be desirable or necessary. **This handbook is revised annually with the final version posted in August.***

**ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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SECTION I: UNIVERSITY & DEPARTMENTAL BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

This handbook is prepared for the students Albany State University's Department of Nursing, under the Darton College of Health Professions, to provide information related primarily to the master's program in nursing. Policies set forth in this handbook are reviewed and refined each year based on national standards, safety standards, curriculum review, clinical agencies policies, and input from constituents of interest. Policies are subject to review and revision by the faculty of the Department of Nursing at any time deemed advisable and appropriate for student success. The content within this handbook is considered supplementary to policies and procedures detailed in the [Albany State University Academic Catalog](#) and the [Student Code of Conduct](#), and students are expected to read, understand, comply with, and adhere to the contents contained within each of these documents. Reference to general University policies can be found across the [Albany State University website](#), in the *Albany State University Academic Catalog* and in the *Student Code of Conduct*.

The Department of Nursing in the Darton College of Health Professions offers an Associate of Science in Nursing (ASN) degree, a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, and a Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. The baccalaureate degree nursing program prepares students for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN) and to practice as registered professional nurses.

ACCREDITATION & APPROVAL OF NURSING PROGRAMS

Albany State University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as a Level IV institution.

The associate and baccalaureate nursing programs at Albany State University are approved by the Georgia Board of Nursing.

The associate, baccalaureate, master's, and post-master's certificate nursing programs at Albany State University at the West Campus located in Albany, Georgia, and the associate nursing program at Albany State University at the Cordele Campus located in Cordele, Georgia, are accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400, Atlanta, GA 30326, (404) 975-5000. The most recent accreditation decision made by the ACEN Board of Commissioners for the associate, baccalaureate, master's, and post-master's certificate nursing programs is **Continuing Accreditation**.

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)

3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400

Atlanta, GA 30326

(404) 975-5000

<https://www.acenursing.org/>

Georgia Board of Nursing

237 Coliseum Drive

Macon, Georgia 31217

(912) 207-1640

<https://sos.ga.gov/georgia-board-nursing>

ACEN is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the national accrediting body for all types of nursing education programs. ACEN supports the interests of nursing education, nursing practice, and the public by the functions of accreditation. Accreditation is a voluntary, self-regulatory process by which non-governmental associations recognize educational institutions or programs that have been found to

meet or exceed standards and criteria for educational quality. Accreditation also assists in the further improvement of the institutions or programs as related to resources invested, processes followed, and results achieved. The monitoring of certificate, diploma, and degree offerings is tied closely to state examination and licensing rules, and to the oversight of preparation for work in the profession.

NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Albany State University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, gender, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities, including admissions and employment, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and other applicable statutes, regulations, and East Georgia policies.

Albany State University prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence, in its programs and activities. Sexual harassment is the unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature such as sexual touching, sexual comments, jokes, or gestures, or distributing sexually explicit material. Sexual violence is a physical sexual act taken against a person's will, or when a person is incapable of consenting due to alcohol or drug use. Sexual violence includes rape, sexual battery, and sexual coercion.

The following person has been designated as the Title IX Coordinator to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies and to serve as the overall campus coordinator for purposes of Title IX compliance: Kimberly Carter, Title IX Coordinator/Equity & Compliance Director, Albany State University, 504 College Drive, Albany, Georgia 31705; telephone 229-500-3304; email TitleIX@asurams.edu. Albany State University complies with applicable laws regarding reasonable accommodation for disabled students and employees.

Applicants requiring a reasonable accommodation in order to participate in the application process, or to have access to a program, service, or activity of Albany State University are requested to contact the Department of Counseling and Student Accessibility Services at 229-500-2013 or email counselingservices@asurams.edu.

Albany State University also prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in its programs and activities, including admissions, employment, treatment, and access. The Student Accessibility Coordinator has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and related statutes, regulations, and Albany State policies.

MISSION STATEMENT OF ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY

Albany State University, a proud member institution of the University System of Georgia, elevates its community and region by offering a broad array of graduate, baccalaureate, associate, and certificate programs at its main campuses in Albany as well as at strategically-placed branch sites and online. Committed to excellence in teaching and learning, the University prepares students to be effective contributors to a globally diverse society, where knowledge and technology create opportunities for personal and professional success. ASU respects and builds on the historical roots of its institutional predecessors with its commitment to access and a strong liberal arts heritage that respects diversity in all its forms and gives all students the foundation they need to succeed. Through creative scholarship, research, and public service, the University's faculty, staff, students, and administrators form strategic alliances internally and externally to promote community and economic development, resulting in an improved quality of life for the citizens of southwest Georgia and beyond.

VISION STATEMENT OF ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY

Albany State University will be a world-class comprehensive university and a powerful catalyst for the economic growth and development of Southwest Georgia. ASU will be recognized for its innovative and creative delivery of excellent educational programs, broad-based community engagement and public service, and creative scholarship and applied research, all of which enrich the lives of the diverse constituencies served by the University.

CORE VALUES OF ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY

ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE

Albany State University will aspire toward excellence in teaching and learning, thus becoming the first-choice institution for students from southwest Georgia and garnering recognition as a premier southern regional university.

EMBRACE DIVERSITY

As a historically black institution and led by a highly-diverse faculty and staff, Albany State University will embrace diversity in all its forms – including age, gender identity, race and ethnicity, country of origin, religion, ability level, sexual orientation, and veteran status – and seek to foster a similar acceptance and celebration of that diversity.

EXPAND ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION

As an access institution, Albany State University will promote student success for all by welcoming students from varying levels of academic preparation, keeping costs low, offering flexible class times and instructional modalities, and pairing high student expectations with exceptional mentoring, advising, and tutoring.

ELEVATE HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Albany State University will recognize and address the many challenges that face African Americans and other students of color, adult learners, first generation students, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and others from underserved populations, and form strong partnerships with K-12, government agencies, and community outreach organizations to increase access and success rates.

PROMOTE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

As part of its commitment to teaching and learning, Albany State University will promote economic development in Albany and throughout southwest Georgia by engaging in applied research, aligning its resources in support of identified needs, developing and enhancing academic programs to meet evolving needs, forming broad strategic partnerships, supplying a trained workforce, and fostering a sense of entrepreneurship.

HISTORY OF ALBANY STATE UNIVERSITY'S DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

Following approval by the Georgia Board of Nursing (GBON) in July of 1961, Albany State College's Division of Nursing—under the leadership of Mrs. Rosa Storrs, BSN (Tuskegee Institute)—established its baccalaureate nursing program in September. This program was the third of its kind to be established in the state of Georgia, and its first class comprised 27 students.

Throughout the early 1960s, clinical agreements for student practice were established with hospitals in distant communities, including Atlanta, Georgia; Columbus, Georgia; Marietta, Georgia; Savannah, Georgia; Miami, Florida; and Tuskegee, Alabama. In 1967, an outstanding nurse educator recognized by the National League for Nursing (NLN), Mrs. Lillian Harvey (then-Dean of the Tuskegee Institute), served as curriculum consultant to the baccalaureate program. Following a brief affiliation with Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital under the direction of Mrs. Eleanor Winder, the College sought to establish a

course that would utilize local health facilities for its clinical experiences. Nursing leaders such as Mrs. Eleanor Winder (10 years) and Mrs. Mildred Pryse (3 years) were pivotal in this challenging effort.

In 1975, Mrs. Patricia L. Starck was appointed Chairperson of the Division of Nursing to address the educational needs for the Division of Nursing. Faculty qualifications and program enrollment improved under her leadership. Mrs. Starck (now Dr. Starck) was also successful in initiating a special project grant and securing the Division's first nursing capitation and Title III awards.

In September 1977, Dr. Lucille B. Wilson was appointed Chairperson of the Division of Nursing. During the 1977-78 period, all nursing faculty were prepared at the master's level with two (2) members having doctoral degrees.

In August 1980, the Division of Nursing moved from the Brown Hall to a larger facility, the L. Orene Hall Nursing Building. However, due to growing space needs for the nursing program, Orene Hall quickly became inadequate. (This facility, located next to the Flint River, was later irreparably damaged for use as an academic facility during the Flood of '94 due to Tropical Storm Alberto.)

In 1982, under the direction of Dr. Wilson, the Division of Nursing received Initial Eight Year Accreditation by the prestigious NLN's Council of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs, effective 1982-1991.

In 1985, the Division of Nursing was renamed the **School of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences**. Dr. Wilson served as Dean and Chairperson of both departments alongside two coordinators responsible for their respective departmental management functions: Ms. Jean Walker over Nursing and Mr. Richard Miller over Allied Health Sciences. In 1989, Mrs. Linda Grimsley (an Assistant Professor of Nursing within the Department) was named the BSN Program Coordinator following Ms. Walker's unexpected passing.

After the Graduate School became the fifth academic unit of the College, the Cooperative Education Specialist in Educational Administration and Supervision with the University of Georgia was offered. The newest programs, the Master of Public Administration and the Master of Science in Nursing Degrees, became effective Fall Quarters 1987 and 1988, respectively. In 1994, the School received approval to offer the Family Nurse Practitioner Master of Science in Nursing Degree. By 1995, the Master of Science in Nursing curriculum again refined its areas of concentration to Clinical Nurse Specialist, Family Nurse Practitioner, and Nursing Administration. (The Clinical Nurse Specialist and the Nurse Administrator concentrations were later suspended in 2005 due to low enrollment in these concentrations.)

On June 11, 1996, the College's name was officially changed to Albany State University. Then, in 1998, the School of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences was officially renamed to the **College of Health Professions** with two departments: The Department of Nursing and the Department of Allied Health. As the Department of Allied Health primarily focused on healthcare administration, this program would later be incorporated under and coordinated by the College of Business. In 1999, Ms. Grimsley (later Dr. Grimsley) became Chair of the Department of Nursing.

In July 2003, Dr. Wilson retired and Dr. Joyce Y. Johnson became the Dean of the College of Health Professions, whose name was later changed in 2006 to the **College of Sciences and Health Professions (CSHP)**.

In 2005 the Department of Nursing initiated the RN-to-MSN concentration to better facilitate the growing number of associate-prepared nurses returning to school in pursuit of an advanced degree. The program's first cohort began in Spring 2006 and graduated in Spring 2008.

Dr. Grimsley continued to serve as departmental chairperson until August 2011 when she was appointed as Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs. Following this transition, Dr. Cathy Williams—who had been serving as BSN Program Coordinator since 2007—became the first Fuller E. Callaway Endowed Professorial Chair of Nursing at Albany State University. Ms. Catherine Hall would assume the role of BSN Program Coordinator, a position she would hold until 2014 when she returned to school to further her nursing education within the field of mental health nursing. Dr. Wanda Allen (an Assistant Professor within the Department just completing her DNP program) would assume this position soon thereafter.

In May of 2016, the presidents of Albany State University and Darton State College announced the names of the five colleges that will make up the academic unit of the new Albany State University. Among these, the **Darton College of Health Professions (DCHP)** was established, comprising three departments: Health Sciences, Nursing, and Health and Human Performance. During this time, Dr. Joyce Johnson was named Interim Dean of the College of Sciences and Technology, and Dr. Kerri L. Johnson was named Interim Dean of the DCHP. As part of this transition, the Department of Nursing was relocated to the former Darton State College campus—now renamed **Albany State University's West Campus**—consolidating the Department with the former college's Nursing Division. In May 2017, Dr. Kerri L. Johnson was formally named Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions.

On July 1, 2017—the beginning of the fiscal year—the consolidation between Albany State University and the former Darton State College was finalized with the consolidation of the two institutions' budgets. Shortly thereafter, the Department of Nursing also finalized its physical transition to the West Campus's Nursing Building (L-Building), effective August 1, 2017. The former Darton State College had constructed this two-story, 25,600-square-foot academic building in 2011 with the intent to house its nursing programs. Its main office on the first floor includes a reception area, a workroom, an office for the Chair, two administrative assistant offices, and a conference room. The first floor also comprises one 150-seat lecture hall, one 75-seat classroom, one 40-seat computer classroom, and one 32-seat computer lab. There is also a student lounge area and additional seating throughout the first and second floors for students to socialize and study alone or in groups. In addition to its faculty offices, the second floor also comprises a 48-seat classroom; a multipurpose room (used as both a conference room or up-to-20-students classroom); a 998-square-foot, six-bed nursing skills lab; and a 910-square-foot simulation lab.

In August 2018, the University underwent another college leadership restructuring to better align itself with the ideals of the NEW Albany State University, appointing three new Interim Deans to lead the new academic colleges. Consequently, Dr. Sarah Brinson was appointed as Interim Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions. Dr. Brinson had previously served as the Interim Assistant Vice President of Academic Affairs and as the Chair of the Health Sciences Division. Additionally, since 2004, she had also served as the Clinical Coordinator and Program Director for the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Effective February 1, 2019, Dr. Sarah Brinson was formally named Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions.

After nearly 11 years as departmental chairperson, Dr. Cathy Williams resigned from her position on June 1, 2022. Dr. Andrea Dozier, who previously served as the Associate Nursing Programs Director, was named interim chairperson effective July 1, 2022, transitioning into the role permanently as of January 1, 2023. Dr. Dozier is an alumnus of both the former Darton State College and Albany State University with over 20 years of teaching experience and has been employed at the University since 2014.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

The mission of the Department of Nursing is to provide nursing education to a diverse student population consistent with the mission of the Albany State University (ASU). The ASU Department of Nursing offers ASN, BSN, and MSN degrees as well as Post-Master's Certifications. The Department of Nursing seeks to foster the growth and development of the region, state, and nation through teaching, research,

quality health care delivery, and public service. In collaboration with academic institutions, health care institutions, and state agencies, the Department of Nursing is committed to developing and enhancing programs and services to improve the health and quality of life of the citizens of southwest Georgia.

The Department of Nursing prepares safe, competent, effective, and efficient nurses to provide or facilitate health care to diverse populations and underserved communities. Integral to this mission is a supportive and diverse faculty delivering comprehensive and technologically enhanced didactic and experiential learning activities. These learning activities support the holistic development of students as learners, leaders, and contributing members of society who embody the ideals of professional nursing in a global society. The completion of these learning activities will prepare the students for success on the national licensing (NCLEX-RN) or certification examination(s), demonstrating competency in the delivery of evidence-based nursing care.

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

The Department of Nursing is committed to the overall mission of Albany State University. In addition to graduating a diverse student body in nursing, we are proud to offer the Associate, Bachelor, and Master of Science in Nursing degree programs. The associate and baccalaureate programs prepare the nurse generalist for entry into professional nursing practice. The master's degree prepares the graduate for advanced practice as a nurse practitioner or a leader in nursing education. The goal of our programs in general is to increase the number of nursing graduates who are adequately prepared to enter the healthcare workforce and provide holistic, culturally-competent care, thereby decreasing the shortage that the nation, in general, and the South, in particular, currently face.

The faculty of the Department of Nursing believes that the primary concern of nursing is meeting the health needs of people, families, and communities. Thus, education for nursing students should be centered around patient care, patient education, collaboration, professionalism, safety, and evidence-based practice. Therefore, the philosophy reflects the faculty conceptualization of the interrelatedness of person(s), health, environment, and nursing. The philosophy further explicates our beliefs regarding teaching-learning and nursing education on the associate, baccalaureate, and master's levels.

PERSON

A person is viewed as a unique, holistic being in a continuous state of becoming, who operates as an open system, behaves as an integrated whole, and utilizes adaptive mechanisms in responding to needs. These needs include both internal and external stressors, which result in behavioral and physiological changes throughout the life span.

A person exists within the context of culture and groups in local and global communities. Each person has the potential for management, self-direction, and self-fulfillment. This potential influences a person's growth process, individual communicative abilities, and self-care behavior. Nursing respects the rights and self-care abilities of the individual as an active participant in health care.

HEALTH

Health is a state of being and is viewed as a dynamic process, rather than an absolute state. This process ranges across the lifespan, from wellness to illness or death. The interactive behaviors, which the person utilizes in response to stressors in the internal and external environment, become major determinants of her/his level of wellness. The faculty's view of health incorporates the wellbeing of the individual, family, community, and society as a whole. Nursing has the responsibility to advocate for quality health care for all.

ENVIRONMENT

The environment is both internal and external, and involves all factors and/or influences surrounding the person. The internal environment consists of all forces or interactive influences contained solely within the person. The external environment consists of all forces or interactive influences existing outside the person including family, socio-cultural, political and community variables. Both the internal and external environments influence each other. Responses of the person originate from the internal environment. The internal environment is constantly challenged to meet environmental demands as well as maintain integrity and optimal health. We believe, as Florence Nightingale stated, that the purpose of nursing is to put the patient in the best condition for nature to restore or to preserve health (Nightingale, 1860).

NURSING

Nursing is a professional practice discipline that merges art and science for the purpose of assisting others in meeting their health needs. Nursing involves a process that promotes health and wellness and prevents illness. Nursing provides care by assisting individuals to meet health needs and/or experience a peaceful death.

Nurses operationalize their roles through the processes of communicating, providing care, decision making, problem solving, scientific inquiry, teaching, managing and acting as change agents and/or as patient advocates. The efficacy of nursing is enhanced by nurses acting as dynamic forces in influencing and shaping policies that affect the health care of diverse client systems and communities.

TEACHING-LEARNING

Teaching involves the use of innovative strategies and principles of andragogy to facilitate students in their acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The core curriculum provides a foundation for the study of nursing concepts. Global learning of the core nursing concepts of person, health, environment, and nursing is fostered through a broad-based curriculum, diverse University and community activities, and the expanding use of technology.

Education involves the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that assist individuals to improve themselves and society. Learning, the product of education, is a complex developmental process that results in a change in the behavior of the individual. Learning is affected by perception, motivation, experience, orientation, and educational environment. It varies in rate and style. Insightful, reflective learning is viewed as most valuable in assisting students to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to practice nursing effectively. Learning objectives go from simple to complex throughout the teaching and learning experience.

Learning is a lifelong process that reflects the individual's integration of physical, intellectual, emotional, and interpersonal experiences. The learner is an active, inquisitive being. Learning is a cooperative process whereby instructors facilitate and provide appropriate, varied theoretical, professional, pragmatic learning situations and applications. The learner has the opportunity to develop the ability needed to respond to diverse people and situations.

NURSING EDUCATION

Nursing education is that process which fosters acquisition of nursing knowledge, skills, values, and effective leadership. Professional nursing education enables graduates to synthesize knowledge, skill, and values needed to make responsible judgments in the management of varied and sometimes complex nursing problems. Nursing education strategies are reflective of evidenced based practice that encompasses the use of research, technology, critical thinking and the work-based paradigm. Efforts to promote students' retention through early socialization to the nursing role are addressed through academic advisement, counseling, dynamic, creative, and relevant curricula, and utilization of advanced technology.

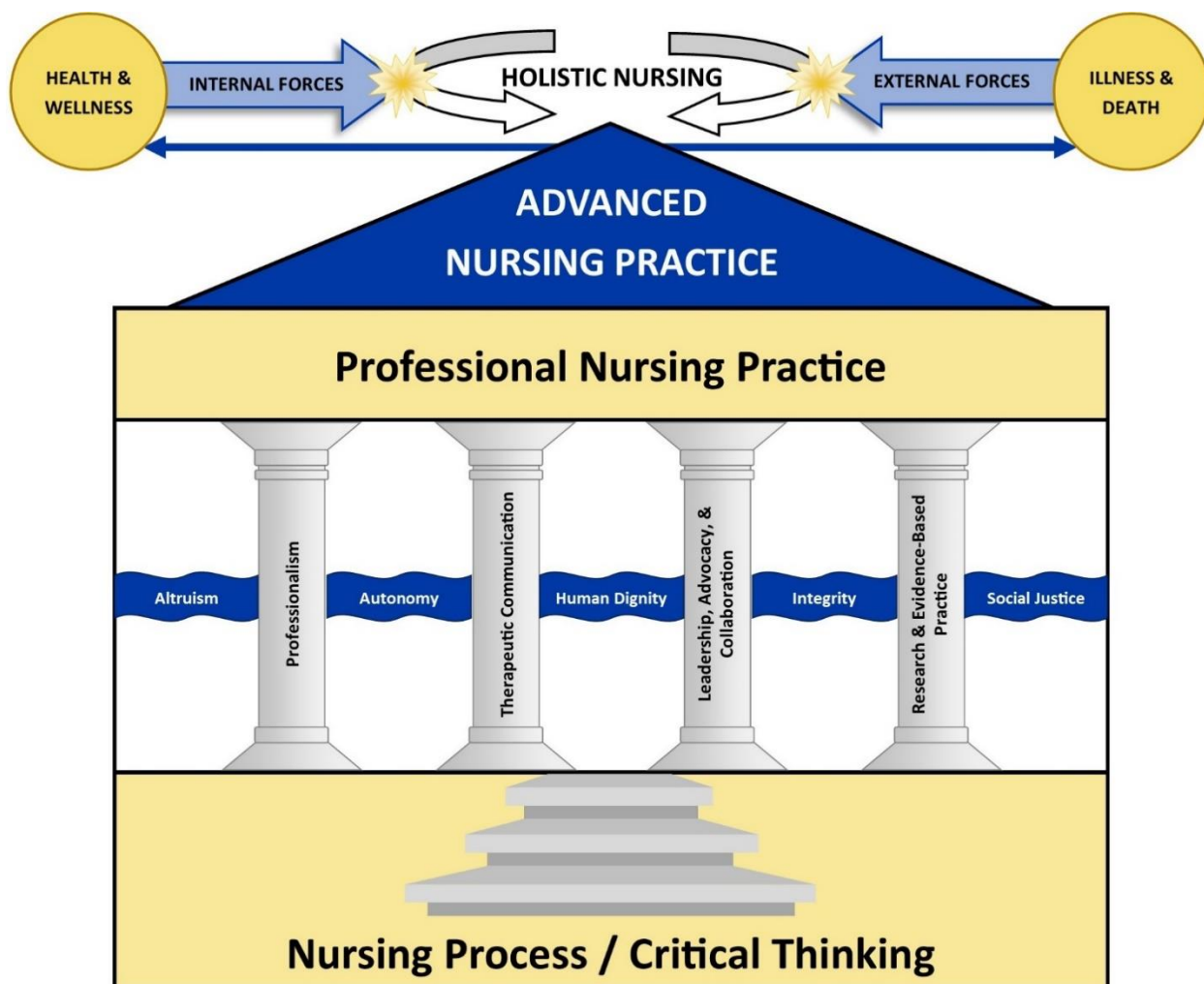
Faculty serve as facilitators of learning and role models of professionalism and scholarship. The faculty is entrusted with the development and implementation of curricula which includes the selection of educational experiences and teaching strategies that ensure the student opportunities to acquire knowledge and skills related to practice and professional growth. Patricia Benner principals of novice to expert are utilized throughout each program to ensure that the student provides the best care whether they are undergraduate students or graduate students. Students are prepared to practice with clients of diverse cultural, spiritual, socioeconomic and educational backgrounds across the life span. The adult learning theory (andragogy) is utilized in teaching our adult learners.

The basic preparation for professional nursing practice is the associate and baccalaureate level. Undergraduate nursing education prepares the nurse to function as a generalist utilizing the triad of evidenced based practice, teaching, and practice in providing nursing care in traditional and nontraditional settings. The professional nurse is broadly prepared to assume responsibilities as a leader, client advocate, change agent, health care provider, health educator, and consumer of research.

Master's education prepares a nurse for advanced nursing practice roles and is based on the creative application of knowledge, skills, and processes from the behavioral and natural sciences, nursing, and humanities. The master's program extends the theoretical foundations of nursing practice. It is designed to prepare an individual who is highly knowledgeable in advanced clinical nursing and who is able to make a significant contribution to health care. Nurses at the master's level are prepared to lead and manage collaborative efforts with physicians and other members of the health care team to conduct research and to improve practice environments. While the generalist functions as care giver, manager of client care, health care advocate, and change agent, the masters prepared nurse assumes advanced practice roles to the full extent of their education and training.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

The schema that follows reflects our philosophy and includes the nursing values we embrace. The revised schema is based on an overall systems theory. The framework is representative of synthesis of compatible beliefs about the person, environment, nursing, teaching and learning and nursing education. The foundation of the program (critical thinking and the nursing process form the bases of the educational process which represents the systematic process used in planning and providing care to clients at the associate & baccalaureate (generalist) and graduate (advance practice) level. The overriding principle is that nursing education prepares the learner to serve as a lever supporting the client or supporting the patient/client directly, in maintaining balance on the health-illness continuum as the patient/client responds to the internal and external forces across the life span. The program values are threads woven throughout the curriculum as illustrated in the framework.



END-OF-PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (EPSLO)

The nursing faculty concur with the practice competencies cited by AACN Essentials, NLN and the Institute of Medicine and revised the program outcomes in August of 2011, and recognize the need for students to gain the knowledge and skills to perform the role of the nurse as a provider of care, manager of care, and as a member within the discipline of nursing. The expected outcomes of the Department of Nursing are to prepare graduates who are able to practice nursing in changing and diverse health care settings.

MASTER'S STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the completion of the program, the MSN graduate will:

Professionalism and Evidence-Based Practice

- Engage in professional and scholarly activities that promote the profession of nursing and individual development in advance practice nursing through implementation of evidence-based practice for both direct and indirect patient care
- Apply knowledge from science, research, and related disciplines and incorporate principles of evidence-based practice to improve care delivery and health outcomes.

Nursing Process and Critical Thinking

- Apply clinical reasoning and relevant behavioral and natural sciences to provide patient-centered care and evaluate preventative interventions for diverse community population across the lifespan

Leadership, Collaboration and Advocacy

- Demonstrate technological literacy, interprofessional collaboration, and advance practice to improve clinical practice outcomes

Quality and Safety

- Contribute to decision-making and healthcare policy development at the individual, local, regional, or national healthcare system levels to ensure quality and safety of individuals

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of the graduate degree programs is to further develop qualified students to assume positions of leadership and responsibility within the Southwest Georgia community at- large, as well as within the individual's chosen career field. Toward this end, graduate degree programs are designed to enhance each student's ability to:

1. Reason creatively and analytically,
2. Communicate effectively theories and concepts of his/her chosen academic discipline,
3. Pursue knowledge at higher levels of study, and
4. Function efficiently and effectively as a professional in a complex and changing world.

SECTION II: ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RETENTION, & GRADUATION

RESIDENCE CLASSIFICATION

The student is responsible for registering under the proper residence classification. If there is a question about a student's right to be classified as a legal resident of Georgia, it is the student's obligation to get the matter clarified prior to registration. Individuals who are applying to the nursing graduate program that do not reside in the state of Georgia are required to submit a Release of Liability form to the Department of Nursing.

Residence status is not changed automatically, and the burden of proof rests with the student to provide documentation that he or she qualifies as a legal resident under the regulations of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. To ensure timely completion of required processing, a student/applicant requesting a change in residence classification for a specific semester should file the "Petition for Georgia Residence Classification" and all supporting documentation no later than three weeks (20 working days) prior to registration. Decisions prior to registration cannot be guaranteed when petitions and all supporting documentation are received after the specified deadline. A petition to be reclassified as a resident of Georgia can be obtained from the Office of the Registrar. If the petition is denied and the student wishes to petition for a later semester, a new Petition for Georgia Residence Classification must be submitted for that semester.

ASU FACULTY AND STAFF APPLICANTS

When a full-time employee desires to enter a graduate program, the immediate supervisor and the Dean of the College must be notified by the employee. The employee and administrators must reach a common written understanding about job requirements and academic responsibilities.

Faculty, staff and administrative personnel are eligible to be enrolled in a graduate degree program of study either (1) within their own college or (2) in a college other than the one in which they are employed provided that there is neither conflict of interest nor a restriction established by the policies in this document. However, employees of Albany State University shall not be allowed to seek a graduate degree in a program in which they are in a position to alter graduate records. Faculty, staff and administrative personnel are limited to two master's degrees at Albany State University, from which nine (9) graduate hours can be transferred to the second master's degree.

Exceptions to this policy may be granted only by a majority vote of the Graduate Council or by the President of Albany State University or his/her designee.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICIES

The information presented within this section has been copied and adapted from the policies detailed with the [Albany State University Academic Catalog](#). Consequently, this information should be considered supplemental to the policies of the Graduate School.

OFFICIAL ACCEPTANCE

A letter from Albany State University's Graduate School verifies official acceptance or denial. The acceptance letter will state the category of admission. Application records for students who do not enroll are maintained for one (1) year. Falsifying admissions information and related documentation will result in immediate termination from Albany State University's Graduate School.

CATEGORIES OF ADMISSIONS

Grade Point Average (GPA), recommendation letters, previous graduate work and interviews are metrics used to determine the candidate's fit for a particular graduate program, the overall likelihood of success in

Albany State University's Graduate School, and eligibility for admission. Applicants accepted into the Albany State University's Graduate School will be classified in one of the following categories:

Regular Admission

Applicants may be granted regular admission to a graduate program if they have:

An undergraduate grade point average of at least **3.0**

Graduated official transcript(s)

Meet all requirements from the desired graduate program, as described in the "Admission Criteria" section of this handbook

Only students with regular admission status are eligible for graduate assistantships.

As it relates to the University's MSN programs, students who receive "regular admission" status have met all admission requirements and can be admitted to the graduate nursing program with full graduate status.

Provisional Admission

Applicants who do not fully meet the requirements for regular admission may be considered for provisional admission. The following criteria must be met in addition to admission requirements mentioned above:

- An undergraduate grade point average of at least **2.8**
- Program specific documents such as recommendation letters, writing samples, etc.
- Meet all requirements from the desired graduate program, as described in the "Admission Criteria" section of this handbook.

A student satisfying coursework in provisional status with no grade of less than "B" may be admitted to regular admission. Otherwise, the student's enrollment is terminated from Albany State University's Graduate School. Individuals must achieve regular admission status before they are allowed to graduate. Students may remain in provisional status longer than two academic semesters.

As it relates to the University's MSN programs, students who does not meet the requirements for "regular admission" may be referred to the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, & Retention Committee for recommendations pertaining to program acceptance. In some instances, the applicant may be required to fulfill certain conditions designated by the committee in coordination with the MSN Program Director. These conditions will be discussed with the student during the admission interview. Students with less than a 2.8 cumulative GPA **cannot** be considered for this category.

Under "provisional admission" status, no more than nine (9) semester hours of graduate-level coursework may be completed. The applicant is required to maintain a 3.00 GPA during their first nine (9) hours of graduate coursework prior to changing to "regular admission" status. Failure to maintain a 3.00 GPA will result in the immediate revocation of acceptance status and prevent further progression through the program. No more than nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework taken while under this status can be credited toward degree requirements at a later date.

Non-Degree Admission

Students who are not eligible for regular or provisional admission may be considered for non-degree admission. No student will be allowed to take more than **nine (9) hours** in non-degree status. If a student has not gained eligibility for provisional or regular status by the time the nine hours are completed, then the student will be automatically dropped from the program.

A student admitted as Non-Degree Admission **WILL NOT** be eligible to receive financial aid.

Senior Policy

Albany State University undergraduate students with senior standing may be admitted to non-degree status in Albany State University's Graduate School and register for graduate courses if each of the following conditions is met:

1. Seniors must apply and be formally accepted as **non-degree seeking** students in the desired graduate program; seniors can **only** be admitted as non-degree seeking students.
2. Seniors must be within twelve (12) hours of undergraduate graduation.
3. Admitted seniors are limited to a **maximum** course load of sixteen (16) credit hours (graduate and undergraduate) per semester.
4. Admitted seniors are permitted to take a **maximum** of six (6) graduate hours during any semester.
5. Admitted seniors enrolled in a graduate program must maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA.
6. Only nine (9) semester hours taken under non-degree status will be accepted to fulfill the requirements for a subsequent master's degree.
7. Admitted seniors are governed by the regulations for non-degree students in Albany State University's Graduate School.

As it relates to the University's MSN programs, students currently enrolled in the BSN or RN-to-BSN program with senior standing may seek non-degree admission into the Graduate School and register for graduate courses if ALL of the following conditions is met:

1. An undergraduate grade point average of at least **3.0**
2. The Vice President for Academic Affairs approves the academic department's recommendation for the student to apply to the Graduate School.
3. The student applies and is accepted as a non-degree student in the Graduate School.
4. The student follows the same regulations for all non-degree students in the Graduate School.

Under this program credits earned are for graduate credits, separate from the undergraduate credits earned for degree, and will not be calculated in the student's undergraduate credit and grade point total. Also, credits earned under this program constitute a permanent graduate-level record and can be transferred to other accredited institutions.

An undergraduate student from another institution is not allowed to enroll in graduate nursing courses at Albany State University. Admission under this status does not warrant or secure admission to the graduate-level nursing programs.

Continuous Graduate Certificate/Professional Program

Applicants interested in obtaining graduate certificates/professional certification in a particular graduate program may be admitted as graduate certificate/professional students. This admission category is available to candidates in professional areas who desire to enhance their capacity and increase their knowledge and acquire additional skills by taking a few courses in a particular graduate program. A student admitted in this program may earn more than nine credit hours; however, only nine hours will be accepted toward the master's degree if they choose seek a graduate degree in any of our graduate programs. They must maintain a B average and meet all program requirements if they wish to transition to a degree program.

A student admitted as Continuous Graduate Certificate/Professional Program **WILL NOT** be eligible to receive financial aid.

Transient Admission

A full-time graduate student in good academic standing at another institution may enroll for one semester as a transient student. The regular institution must provide written authorization for the student to enroll under this status. Copies of transcripts and standardized test scores are not required.

ADMISSIONS DEFERMENT

Students who do not enroll for the semester in which they were admitted must defer their admission if they desire to attend at a later date. A formal written request from the student indicating the semester in which they plan to enroll will satisfy their deferment. Only one deferment is allowed and cannot exceed one academic year in advance (e.g., students admitted for the Fall semester may defer their admission to the upcoming Spring, Summer, or Fall semester).

READMISSION

Students who have not been in attendance for one or more semesters must apply to Albany State University's Graduate School for readmission. Summer semester is not included as a semester of non-attendance.

APPEAL OF ADMISSION STATUS

Applicants denied admission to Albany State University's Graduate School may appeal the decision but only on the grounds that the denial was based on an inaccurate evaluation of minimum program requirements or a violation of Albany State University's Equal Opportunity Statement listed below. Meeting minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the graduate school.

Appeals of graduate school admission decisions must be in writing, state specifically the grounds for the appeal, be accompanied by supporting documentation, and be directed and delivered to Albany State University's Graduate School. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Graduate School will forward the applicant's file and appeal documents to the Appeals Committee of the Graduate Council, and, after the proceedings, communicate the decision to the applicant. Students who submit an appeal will not be considered for the semester in which they were denied; instead, they will be considered for the following semester.

CHANGE OF ADMISSION STATUS

A student admitted to the Graduate School remains in the original academic status until notified in writing by the Dean of the Graduate School of the approval of a change in status.

MSN PROGRAM ADMISSION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA

PHASE I: APPLICATION AND INTERVIEWS

1. Students must first apply to the Graduate School for admission, designating Nursing as their preferred major.
2. Following acceptance, the student will apply to the MSN program of their choice via the "Nursing Program Applications" link on the Department of Nursing's webpage.
3. Program review of applications will be conducted January through March of each year. Applications received earliest will be reviewed first and may receive priority in scheduling interviews.
4. Virtual interviews, offered to the most qualified applicants, will be scheduled beginning late March through April. During the interview day candidates will have the opportunity to meet faculty and staff. All invitations for interviews will be extended by the end of March. Applicants not interviewed will not be eligible for admission to the Albany State University Nurse Practitioner Program.

PHASE II: ACCEPTANCE

1. Notification of acceptance will occur after all candidates have been interviewed. All requirements for the graduate nursing program must be completed and verified prior to matriculation.

2. Following the interview and committee selection decision, interviewees will receive a letter assigning one of the following categories: Conditional Acceptance, Alternate Candidate, or Regret.
3. Interviewees who are selected as “conditional” or “alternate candidates” for the graduate program must submit the following:
 - Review the *Master of Science in Nursing Student Handbook*, then sign and return the “Acknowledgement: Receipt of MSN Student Handbook” page (found at the end of this handbook) to denote understanding and acceptance of the policies detailed within.
 - A copy of a government-issued photo identification.
 - Documentation of an active professional nursing license within the state in which you intend to complete your clinicals.
 - Documentation evidencing satisfaction (and/or maintenance) of the following requirements prior to the established pre-clinical deadline for each nursing course with a clinical/laboratory component:
 - Complete criminal background check and 10-panel drug screening (via [PreCheck](#))
 - Students are subjected to compulsory background checks per clinical agency requirements and may also be required to submit to random tests for illegal use of controlled substances as a provision by the law or regulations of the contracting agency. If the site refuses to allow a student to attend clinical experiences, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site, and the student will not be able to complete the nursing program at ASU. Therefore, it is important to conduct personal record checks prior to admission to the nursing program.
 - Active health insurance (or enrollment in the Student Health Insurance Plan)
 - Documentation of current malpractice insurance, which must meet the following coverage requirements:
 - **Medical Specialty:** Explicit reference to coverage as a “student” within your current program of study. Please note that having coverage as only a “Registered Nurse” or “Employed Nurse” will NOT satisfy this requirement.
 - **Professional Liability Amount:** Students must have a minimum coverage amount of \$1,000,000 each claim and \$6,000,000 aggregate.
 - Immunization record documenting the following: measles, mumps, rubella, tetanus, varicella, and any other immunization(s) deemed necessary by the University and/or the clinical site. Hepatitis B vaccination is also recommended for clinical settings but is not required.
 - **Hepatitis B:** Recommended for clinical settings, but NOT required. You may elect to either receive the three-series shot (plus titer) or refuse and provide a signed Hepatitis B Waiver Form (available from the department upon request).
 - **Measles (Rubeola), Mumps, and Rubella:** By a positive titer, physician’s diagnosis of disease, or two (2) doses of vaccine. Depending on your medical history, you may have had these vaccinations given individually or as part of an MMR series.
 - **Tetanus:** Required if you have not received a vaccination in the past 10 years. This can be taken individually or as part of the TDAP vaccination series. If your learning experience is in women’s services, neonate, pediatric, urgent care, or emergency department, you must be compliant with the Varicella information as noted below and have at least one dose of the TDAP (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) vaccine if your last TD (tetanus, diphtheria) vaccine was two or more years ago.
 - **Varicella:** By a positive titer, physician’s diagnosis of disease, or two (2) doses of vaccine. The school must notify the clinical site if you have no

immunity to Varicella, and any exposure to chicken pox or shingles must be reported immediately.

- **NOTE:** Declinations for any of the required vaccinations listed above will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and may affect clinical participation.
- Basic life support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers card (must be certified by the [American Heart Association](#))
 - AHA certification in Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) and/or Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS) may also be required depending on clinical site requirements.
 - Automated External Defibrillators (AED) courses and courses that are “consistent with” AHA standards (but do not explicitly specify AHA certification) will NOT satisfy this requirement.
- Tuberculosis screening via
 - **Purified Protein Derivative (PPD):** requires an intradermal injection; results are typically read within 48 to 72 hours after initial injection
 - **T-SPOT®.TB Test (T-spot):** requires a blood sample to be drawn from patient; results are typically available within 24 hours
 - **QuantiFERON® TB Gold In-Tube Test (QFT-GIT):** requires a blood sample to be drawn from patient; results are typically available within 24 hours
 - **Chest X-Ray:** utilizes chest radiography; result availability varies
 - **NOTE:** *Students with positive screening results and/or evidence of active tuberculosis may require additional testing (including chest x-rays) and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, which may affect clinical participation.*
- Annual health physical assessment, most frequently received from a student’s current employer or appropriate health facility, denoting that a student has no limitations that would prevent him/her from performing or completing his/her clinical duties and requirements.
 - Depending on the site from which the physical is given, the examination may be brief or thorough and can include any of the following: medical history; vital signs; general appearance; heart, lung, head/neck, vision, abdominal, neurological, dermatological, and extremities exams; and any gender-specific exams.
- Identify potential clinical sites in your geographic area.
 - As part of your admission process, ASU requires that you identify potential clinical sites appropriate to the course you will be taking, which you will contact in the future to arrange your required field experiences.

Failure to comply with the program requirements detailed above will result in the immediate revocation of acceptance status and prevent further progression through the program.

PHASE III: FINAL SELECTION

1. Applicants are given notice of final selection by mail once all requirements have been met.
2. New student orientation for the graduate nursing programs is typically held in the beginning of June. Registration of classes is addressed during the orientation session, NOT completed independently by applicant.
3. Class scheduling typically begins the third week of August. It is imperative that applicants have made financial and personal preparations to ensure readiness to begin the program.

MSN PROGRAM ADMISSION CRITERIA

*Admission to the nursing program is competitive, and the number of students is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal requirements does **NOT** guarantee acceptance. When faculty-to-student ratio limits the acceptance of all qualified students, students will be granted admission according to their qualifications and the completeness of their application packet.*

To enter the program leading to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree, the student must **first** meet the requirements established by and apply to Albany State University's Graduate School, which is the overarching school containing the various major-related concentrations and programs, and be accepted to the University in good standing. Please be aware that **admission to the Graduate School does not guarantee acceptance into its graduate nursing programs**. The prospective student should contact the Graduate Admissions Office or the Department of Nursing's Graduate Nursing Programs Director well in advance of the planned entry date.

Applicants must:

1. **FIRST**, submit an application to Albany State University's Graduate School and **be admitted** in good standing.
 - To enter the program leading to the Master of Science in Nursing Degree, the student must meet the requirements established for all graduate degree programs at Albany State University, as established by its Graduate School.
2. **AFTER being accepted as a graduate student** at Albany State University, submit the completed application and the \$20.00 application fee money order by the application deadline.
3. Possess a baccalaureate degree in nursing from an accredited nursing program.
 - Students applying to the Family Nursing Practitioner (FNP) graduate program must also possess **1 year of clinical experience** within a healthcare setting, preferably specialized in an adult medical-surgical area.
4. Have a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or 2.0 (on a 3.0 scale).
5. Complete the following undergraduate courses:
 - Assessment in Health Care/Health Assessment (NURS 3510/NURS 3640);
 - Pathophysiology/Pathophysiology for RN's (NURS 3320/NURS 3620);
 - Research/Research in Nursing (NURS 4131/NURS 4510); and
 - Introduction to Statistics (MATH 2411).
6. Have documentation of current Professional Nursing Licensure in their state of practice prior to entering the functional track.
 - Students intending to practice or satisfy clinical requirements within the state of Georgia must also provide documentation of current Professional Nursing Licensure in Georgia.
7. Arrange for a personal interview with the Graduate Nursing Programs Director.
8. Submit three (3) references regarding professional accomplishments and academic potential (if the references submitted to the Graduate School are not professional references).
9. Following admission to the nursing program, students must submit the following documentation prior to the course's established pre-clinical deadline: certificate of immunization, current basic life support (BLS) for healthcare providers, malpractice insurance, proof of active health insurance (or enrollment into the student health insurance plan), a complete criminal background check, a drug test, and an annual health physical at the expense of the student. The criminal background check will be completed utilizing PreCheck.com.
 - **Certificate of Immunization:** Must be on file in Student Health Services indicating that all immunizations are current based on his/her age. Immunizations include Hepatitis B (or waiver), MMR, tetanus, varicella, tuberculosis, and any other immunization(s) deemed necessary by the University and/or the clinical site.
 - **BLS Card:** A current CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) basic life support (BLS) for healthcare providers card. All students must be certified by the American Heart Association (AHA) in child and adult BLS for health care providers. This certification

must be maintained throughout the program (renewed every 2 years). An outdated CPR certification will prohibit the student from attending clinical practice experiences.

- Students are subjected to compulsory background checks per clinical agency requirements and may also be required to submit to random tests for illegal use of controlled substance as provided by the law or regulations of the contracting agency. If the site refuses to allow a student to attend clinical experiences, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site. The student may not be able to complete the nursing program at ASU. Therefore, it is important to conduct personal record checks prior to admission to the nursing program.

10. A student who has failed (“C,” “D,” “F,” “WF,” or “U”) two (2) graduate nursing courses—whether at ASU or another graduate-level program—will be ineligible for admission (or continuation) in the nursing program at ASU. Students who have been dismissed for two (2) nursing failures or for cause may request readmission after two (2) years of receiving notice of dismissal. For readmission policies, please refer to the appropriate section in the Graduate Nursing Student Handbook.

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA: POST-MASTER’S CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

In addition to the criteria listed above, students who have a Master’s Degree in Nursing and graduated with at least a 3.0 GPA may be admitted for a Post-Master’s certification in any of our MSN programs. The applicant must meet with the Graduate Nursing Programs Director, the Family Nurse Practitioner Program Director, and/or a graduate nursing faculty advisor to design a program of study to complete post-master’s requirements.

CHALLENGING PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

An applicant to the graduate-level nursing program may challenge the prerequisites of undergraduate Health Assessment and/or Pathophysiology. Evidence of related work experience with supporting documents must be provided. Failure to successfully complete the challenge exam on the first try will necessitate that the student take the course prior to program entry. A program syllabus (with course outline) and a list of the required textbooks for the course can be obtained from the Department.

CORE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Albany State University’s Department of Nursing will honor requests for reasonable accommodations made by individuals with disabilities. Students must disclose their disability to Counseling and Student Accessibility Services before academic accommodations can be implemented.

Albany State University’s Department of Nursing does not base admission, acceptance, or continued enrollment on the core performance standards detailed within this section. Instead, these standards are intended to assist applicants and students in the determination of a need for ADA-related accommodations and medications. The core performance standards detailed below are intended to constitute an objective measure of:

1. A qualified applicant’s ability—with or without accommodations—to meet the program performance requirements.
2. Accommodations required by a matriculated student who seeks accommodations under the ADA.

Core performance standards for Albany State University’s graduate-level nursing programs are:

1. **Observation**

- Students must have sufficient sensory capacity, with or without reasonable accommodation, to observe in the laboratory, the outpatient setting and at the patient’s

bedside. Sensory skills adequate to perform a physical examination are required including functional vision, hearing, smell, and tactile sensation. All these senses must be adequate to observe a patient's condition and to elicit information through procedures regularly required in a physical examination, such as inspection, auscultation and palpation.

2. Communication

- Students must be able to, with or without reasonable accommodation, communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and others in both academic and health care settings. They must be able to speak and hear clearly and show evidence of effective written and verbal communication skills including the ability to read. They must be able to describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive non-verbal communications.

3. Motor

- Students must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers, with or without reasonable accommodation. Students must have sufficient motor function to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency care to patients, including but not limited to cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Students must be able to, with or without reasonable accommodation, negotiate patient care environments and must be able to move between settings, such as clinic, classroom, building and hospital. Physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study is required. Long periods of sitting, standing, or moving are required in classroom, laboratory, and clinical experiences.

4. Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities

- Students must be able, with or without reasonable accommodation, to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize. Problem solving, one of the critical skills demanded of physician associates requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, students must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures. Students must be able to read, understand, and critically evaluate medical literature. In order to complete the Yale PA Online, students must be able to demonstrate mastery of these skills, and the ability to use them together in a timely fashion in medical problem solving and patient care.

5. Behavioral and Social Attributes

- Students must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities. The development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients and other members of the health care team are essential. The ability to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical practice, adaptability to changing environments, flexibility, compassion, integrity, motivation, interpersonal skills, and concern for others are all required.

TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY

Only nine (9) graduate credit hours may be transferred from another accredited institution to Albany State University for the purpose of partially fulfilling requirements for the master's degree.

Transfer credits are subject to the following requirements:

- Transfer credits must be approved in advance by the MSN Program Director.
- Transfer credits are limited to courses in which a grade of "B" or better was awarded.
- The approved transfer credits cannot be older than six (6) years by the date of graduation.

- Courses offered for transfer credit must not have been used in fulfillment of another degree.
- Courses offered for transfer credit must have the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs following the recommendations of the Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions.
- Acceptance of transfer credit does not reduce the residency requirement.
- A petition of acceptance of transfer credit must be filed with an official academic transcript and a copy of the catalog description of the transfer courses.
- The credit hours may not exceed the nine semester hours of graduate credit allowed by transfer credit.
- The course(s) must be taken in residence at an accredited institution and not by correspondence.
- The course(s) must be designated as graduate course(s) in an approved graduate program.
- The course(s) must be equated with course(s) in the curriculum of the graduate program or considered as an acceptable elective.
- The student should follow up on the application for transfer credits within one month of the application date, provided that no response has been received.

ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION

An academic advisor is assigned to each student at the time of acceptance into Albany State University's Graduate School. Students are expected to confer with their advisors on a regular basis. Each student is provided access to DegreeWorks, ASU's course planning system. Students are encouraged to access DegreeWorks and develop their plan of study. This plan should be reviewed with your advisor during advisement and updated at each subsequent advising session.

Students who have been accepted into a graduate-level nursing program will be assigned a faculty advisor within the Department of Nursing. Faculty advisors will work with students to develop a plan of study and lift student advising holds to allow students to register themselves at the appropriate time each term. Students may identify their advisor through the Banner web interface and schedule an appointment by emailing the faculty member.

Each semester, an Academic Advising Hold is placed on all students' accounts, which will prevent registration for the upcoming semester(s). In order to have this hold removed, students are required to meet with their Academic Success Coach, a Distance Learning Support Specialist, or their faculty advisor to review their program of study.

Students currently enrolled in the University may refer to the current semester's [Academic Calendar](#) for information regarding Priority and Regular Registration periods. The academic calendar also contains important dates for advisement- and registration-related processes, such as the dates for Schedule Adjustments (Add/Drop), change of major deadline, fee payments (and the date on which classes are dropped for nonpayment), and the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. Students should review this information regularly, as dates are subject to change without notification.

ADVISING STUDENTS WITH PROVISIONAL/NON-DEGREE ADMISSION STATUS

In addition to the regular advising processes listed above, graduate students admitted under "provisional admission" or "non-degree" status must also adhere to the following:

- If the student has any conditions tied to the removal of his/her provisional/non-degree admission status (including any missing prerequisite undergraduate coursework), this information will be listed at the top of the student's program of study.
- The student and his/her faculty advisor will develop a plan with an established timeframe by which all outstanding conditions must be completed. This plan of action must include a statement acknowledging the limitation of being permitted to only take up to nine (9) credit hours of

graduate-level coursework. This document will then be signed by the student, his/her faculty advisor, and the MSN Program Director for inclusion in the student's departmental folder.

- The student's faculty advisor and MSN Program Director will review the student's progress prior to final examinations each semester until all provisional admission criteria have been satisfied.
- Once all conditions/prerequisites have been satisfied, the MSN Program Director will compose a letter to the Department of Nursing's Chair after which the direction to notify him/her of this development.
- If all conditions have not been satisfied prior to the end of the semester in which nine (9) credit hours of graduate coursework have been completed, the student will be notified by the Department of Nursing's Chair (via letter) that he/she may not enroll in further coursework until he/she has attained "regular admission" status.

COURSE OVERLOAD

A graduate student is considered a "full-time student" for the Fall and Spring semesters when they are enrolled in nine (9) semester hours. For Summer semesters, a student is considered full-time with six (6) semester hours. A graduate student who wishes to overload (exceed 12 credit hours) must obtain the approval of the departmental chairperson and the Dean of the Graduate School. In no case shall overloads exceed 16 graduate hours.

SCHEDULE ADJUSTMENTS

Schedule adjustments (or a "change of schedule") is the process by which a student alters their schedule of classes.

During the first week of classes, in a designated period commonly known as the "Schedule Adjustments" ("Add/Drop") period, a student may freely add or drop classes from their schedule via BannerWeb. However, students must consult with their Academic Success Coach or nursing faculty advisor prior to making any changes to their schedule, as this may adversely impact program matriculation. Students who modify their schedules during this time period should provide their advisor with a copy of their new schedule. No courses may be added to a student's schedule following the conclusion of this period.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

A **course withdrawal** is a request by a student to cancel his or her enrollment in a particular CRN after the aforementioned schedule adjustment period for the term/semester. Students should review the current semester's [Academic Calendar](#) for the deadline to withdraw from courses without academic penalty, though, in general, this typically falls 1 to 2 business days following the publication of midterm grades. Upon submission and approval of the "[Course Withdrawal Form](#)" via the Office of the Registrar, the student is automatically assigned a grade of "W" to indicate a course withdrawal. The "W" will not be calculated in a student's GPA.

Additionally, students should be aware that a course withdrawal may or may not include a refund, depending on when the withdrawal is requested. Furthermore, withdrawals from courses may affect housing, graduation, athletics, financial aid, and membership in organizations or other opportunities.

SEMESTER WITHDRAWAL

A **semester withdrawal** is a request by a student to drop all classes and/or cease attendance in all classes for the term/semester. Failure to attend class is not equivalent to a withdrawal, and students will not receive an adjustment of charges or grades unless a formal withdrawal is filed with the Office of the Registrar and approved prior to midterms.

If a "[Semester Withdrawal Form](#)" is submitted to the Office of the Registrar prior to the end of the schedule adjustment period (as defined by the current semester's [Academic Calendar](#)), all courses will

be dropped from the student's schedule and charges reversed (if applicable). However, if submitted and approved after this period, the student is automatically assigned a grade of “W” to indicate course withdrawal. The “W” will not be calculated in a student’s GPA.

Additionally, students should be aware that a course withdrawal may or may not include a refund, depending on when the withdrawal is requested. Furthermore, withdrawals from courses may affect housing, graduation, athletics, financial aid, and membership in organizations or other opportunities.

HARDSHIP WITHDRAWAL

Per Albany State University’s Office of Student Support and Student Conduct, **hardship withdrawals** are designed for students who experience a non-academic emergency (e.g., medical, personal, financial) which prevents them from completing their coursework. Hardship withdrawals can help students focus on healing without harming their academic record. All hardship withdrawal requests received after final grades are entered will require a decision from the Provost.

As a general rule, students are not eligible for hardship withdrawals in courses in which they have completed the course requirements (e.g., sat for the final exam or submitted the final project/paper/portfolio). If applicable, the standardized examinations required by certain nursing courses are considered to be a component of those courses’ final exam requirements. Consequently, students who sit for (or forfeit) the first attempt on the standardized examination will be ineligible to receive a hardship withdrawal after this point. It is imperative that students submit a hardship withdrawal request prior to taking any component of a course’s final exam requirement(s).

Students may submit a “[Hardship Withdrawal Request Form](#)” through the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct. Submission of this form does not guarantee that the hardship withdrawal request will be approved.

CHANGE OF MAJOR

Graduate students who desire to change their major will not utilize the Office of the Registrar’s Change of Major Form. Rather, graduate students will need to satisfy the admission criteria for the desired program change and must submit another application with the appropriate documentation to the Graduate School. These students will **not** be required to pay another application fee.

GRADING POLICY

The following is the grading scale for all graduate-level nursing courses:

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89 (<i>minimum passing letter grade for graduate coursework</i>)
C	75 – 79
D	60 – 74
F	0 – 59

For certain courses within the graduate nursing program, the following final grade breakdown has been adopted: 70% examinations, 30% assignments/projects/etc. This policy is applicable to clinical courses within the MSN-FNP program, NURS 5100: Advanced Health Assessment, NURS 5210: Advanced Pathophysiology, and NURS 5910: Pharmacology in Advanced Nursing Practice. The breakdown also applies to any NURS 6000: Directed Study course tailored for any of the aforementioned courses.

GRADE ROUNDING

Grades of graduate-level nursing coursework are not rounded. For example, if a student earns a grade of 79.99, the grade entered will be “C,” in compliance with the grading scale detailed above. A grade of less than “B” is not accepted for any nursing course, and the course must be repeated if this is the student’s first nursing course failure. A second failure of a nursing course (whether a “C,” “D,” “F,” “WF,” or “U”) constitutes grounds for immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

CLINICAL FAILURE POLICY

At the completion of the semester, a student who receives an “Unsatisfactory” clinical performance rating in the final clinical evaluation on the Student Clinical Performance Evaluation tool is deemed unsafe or inadequate in the application of knowledge that is expected at the course level. This unsatisfactory rating will denote clinical failure and subsequent course failure, automatically earning a letter grade of “F.” The student must repeat both the theory and clinical portion of the course.

Additionally, absence from more than one (1) scheduled clinical session will also automatically result in a clinical failure for the course, resulting in a letter grade of “F.” Please review the attendance policies detailed within this handbook for more information regarding this topic.

Students who fail a clinical course will be required to repeat the entirety of the clinical experience. Assignments for repeat coursework will be scheduled at the site based on the specific learning experience needed by the student. Exceptions must be approved by the Chair of the Department of Nursing and the appropriate program director.

If a required nursing course is not successfully completed, academic progression in the nursing program will be affected, and the student may need to “sit out” for one (1) or more semesters based on the course offering schedule (nursing courses are offered during specific semesters). Please consult your program of study and/or curriculum pattern.

PROGRESSION POLICY

The student is responsible for adhering to all prerequisite and co-requisite requirements as stated in the *Master of Science in Nursing Student Handbook* and as described in the *Albany State University Academic Catalog*.

Satisfactory performance in both the course—including passing of all instructor-made and standardized test(s)—and in the clinical area (for courses with clinical components) is necessary for a passing grade and for progression in the nursing program. A student who receives an unsatisfactory grade in a nursing course (either clinical or non-clinical) will be allowed to repeat the nursing course one time during the semester in which the course is regularly offered at Albany State University. Unsatisfactory completion of a course (typically referring to course failures or withdrawals) will prevent progression in the nursing program until the course has been successfully repeated and any remediation required by the Department of Nursing completed.

Albany State University’s Graduate School is committed to offering high quality graduate programs. Graduate students are required to maintain a minimum 3.00 grade point average. No grade below “B” (3.00) will be accepted as part of a program of study for a graduate degree. For this reason, caution is exercised in retaining any student whose grades fall below acceptable academic standards. When a graduate course is repeated, the last grade received will be used in calculating the cumulative graduate average that is used for probation, dismissal, admission to candidacy, and graduation. All grades received for graduate courses taken at Albany State University will be used in the calculation of the cumulative grade point average.

PROGRAM LENGTH

In order to graduate on-time, students admitted to the **Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)** graduate nursing program under the full-time program pathway must graduate within 5 consecutive semesters, beginning from the semester of initial enrollment in any 5000-level graduate nursing course. However, students are only considered Family Nurse Practitioner students upon their enrollment in NURS 5410: Introduction to Family Primary Care.

In order to graduate on-time, students admitted to the **Nurse Educator (NE)** graduate nursing program under the full-time program pathway must graduate within 5 consecutive semesters, beginning from the semester of initial enrollment in any 5000-level graduate nursing course. However, students are only considered Nurse Educator students upon their enrollment in NURS 5950: Curriculum Development in Nursing.

In order to graduate on-time, students admitted to the **Nursing Informatics (NI)** graduate nursing program under the full-time program pathway must graduate within 6 consecutive semesters, beginning from the semester of initial enrollment in any 5000-level graduate nursing course. However, students are only considered Nursing Informatics students upon their enrollment in NURS 6500: Informatics in Nursing and Healthcare.

Regardless of the selected program of study or enrollment in the full- or part-time program pathway, all coursework must be completed within six (6) years from the date of program admission.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY

Any student requesting a “Leave of Absence” from a graduate-level nursing program must first submit a request in writing to the Graduate Nursing Programs Director and their program-specific director (if applicable). This letter must include the reason for requesting the leave, the semester in which he/she intends to return to the program, a plan of action for program completion upon return, and any supplemental documentation that may be beneficial when evaluating the request. Additionally, the student must be aware of the following:

1. Each request will be handled individually according to the specific need, academic standing, and clinical performance of the student;
2. No leave of absence will be granted for unsatisfactory academic performance or for a period longer than one (1) calendar year or two (2) non-summer semesters;
3. The director(s) will present the request (and any accompanying documentation) to the Department of Nursing’s Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee;
4. Upon evaluation of the request, the Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee will recommend the granting or denial of the leave of absence;
5. The Program Director(s) has the right to request a personal interview with the student requesting the leave before a final decision is made;
6. The student will be notified as to whether the leave request was granted or denied by a representative from the Department of Nursing;
7. If the leave request is granted, the student will be informed of any conditions that must be satisfied prior to or following his/her return to the program. The student must then notify the Office of the Registrar of his/her intention to withdraw and the reason for withdrawal, if the request was submitted during the middle of a semester.
8. At least one semester before returning the graduate-level nursing program, the student must notify the program director(s) in order to register for the appropriate coursework.

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Federal regulations, HEA Sec. 484(c) §668.16, 668.34, require institutions participating in Title IV federal financial aid programs to develop academic progress standards and review student records to ensure they are complying with these standards and making adequate progress toward their academic

goals. At Albany State University's (ASU) Office of Financial Aid (OFA), SAP is reviewed each semester. Students who do not meet the minimum SAP standards are not eligible for financial aid, unless they have been granted a WARNING, APPROVED APPEAL, or PROBATION status as described. **The Financial Aid SAP policy should not be confused with academic PROBATION or GOOD**

STANDING. Failure to maintain SAP will result in the loss of all federal and state aid, including:

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG)
- Iraq and Afghanistan Service Grant
- Federal Work-Study Program
- Federal Direct Subsidized Loan
- Federal Direct Unsubsidized Loan
- Federal Direct PLUS Loan (for parents and graduate students)
- State of Georgia Financial Aid Programs including the Georgia HOPE Scholarship Programs
- Other Grant and/or Scholarship programs which require Satisfactory Academic Progress verification

More information regarding SAP may be found at via the Office of Financial Aid's [Satisfactory Academic Progress \(SAP\) webpage](#).

SCHOLASTIC WARNING

A graduate student with regular status whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.00 or who fails to maintain the level of academic performance required by their degree program will be placed on scholastic warning. Failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative grade point average or meet the requirements of the degree program by the end of the next nine semester hours of enrollment will result in scholastic termination.

SCHOLASTIC TERMINATION

Students may be dismissed by their department at the end of any semester if they have not made sufficient academic progress or maintained the professional dispositions as defined in accreditation, ethical, or professional standards of practice to warrant continuance of study. Termination of students will follow policies and procedures adopted by the department and reported to the Graduate School. The department must immediately notify the Graduate School of a dismissal. The student will be prevented from enrollment in future terms.

Dismissal by an academic department may be appealed to the Dean of the Graduate School after all avenues of appeal have been exhausted at the departmental level. This should be completed within 30 calendar days of the decision resulting from an appeal to the department. When students are terminated by a department, but not simultaneously by the Graduate School, they may apply for admission to another graduate program; however, they may not apply for admission to the same department from which they were dismissed.

A graduate student is subject to scholastic termination for the following reasons:

1. Failure to achieve a 3.00 cumulative grade point average by the end of the next nine (9) semester hours of enrollment following scholastic warning.
2. Failure to maintain other academic performance standards required by the department offering the degree program of study.
3. Failure to maintain the professional dispositions required by the degree program offering the program of study.
4. Second failure on the comprehensive examination.
5. Violations of academic integrity.

Students with a cumulative grade point average below 3.00 in graduate courses for two consecutive terms are placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. They then must make a 3.00 or higher semester grade point average in graduate courses each succeeding semester that their overall cumulative grade point average in graduate courses is below 3.0. These students' probation ends when their cumulative graduate average is 3.00 or above. If, while on probation, a student's semester grade point average in graduate courses is below 3.00, the student is dismissed.

When students repeat a graduate course, the last grade will be utilized to calculate the cumulative graduate average that is used for probation, dismissal, admission to candidacy and graduation. Grades of "S," "U," "I," and "V" will not be used in calculating the cumulative graduate average. However, when a grade of "I" converts to "F," this may result in an action of probation or dismissal for the semester in which the conversion takes place, even if the student is not registered for the semester in which it converted. When students are dismissed under the terms of this policy, they may not apply for admission to another graduate program offered by the University.

Students who are dismissed by the Graduate School for academic reasons may appeal the dismissal to the Dean of the Graduate School. The appeal must be submitted to the dean within 30 calendar days following receipt of notice of dismissal. Information concerning the appeal process may be obtained in the Graduate School.

READMISSION/PROGRESSION AFTER INTERRUPTION

PROGRESSION INTERRUPTIONS

When a student's program of study is interrupted by more than one (1) non-summer semester, the student is subject to the policies and procedures of the department in place at the time of the student's return to the program. It is the **responsibility of the student** to be aware of changes in requirements or policies for both the University and the Department of Nursing during their absence.

Students who were enrolled under previous admission criteria must meet current admission requirements unless they continue through the program uninterrupted. Additionally, students who were enrolled under a previous curriculum pattern must adopt the most current curriculum pattern in use unless they continue through the program uninterrupted.

Progression Following Practicum Failure

This policy affects only graduate nursing students whose first **or** second nursing failure was in their enrolled program's practicum course, the latter of which would otherwise result in program dismissal (per the "Dismissal Policy" detailed within this handbook). This policy allows the impacted student the possibility of one (1) additional attempt to retake the failed practicum course and earn a passing grade. Please be aware that permission to repeat is **not** guaranteed and is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Only one (1) failure of a practicum course is permitted during a student's matriculation. Under no circumstances will a student be permitted a second retake (i.e., a third attempt) of a practicum course if they are unsuccessful on their initial retake.

To initiate the process, the student **must** submit a formal request for consideration to repeat the course to the Department's Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee. Upon receipt of this request, the following steps will occur:

1. The Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee will review the student's file to determine their eligibility for course repetition
2. If approved, the request will then proceed to the departmental chairperson for review and approval.

3. If approved, the departmental chairperson will convene a meeting with the dean of the academic college regarding this matter. Both parties must support approval in order for the decision to be finalized.
4. If approved, the student will be required to complete a directed study course (NURS 6000) during the semester that immediately follows their practicum failure. Following successful completion of this course, the student will be required to repeat the program-specific practicum course in its entirety during the semester that follows the directed study.

Students approved through this process should review the guidelines published in the “Readmission/Progression After Interruption,” “Progression Policy,” “Course Requirements,” “Clinical Course Requirements,” and any other appropriate sections of this handbook.

READMISSION

Students who were previously enrolled but—due to voluntary or involuntary reasons—have not been in attendance for one (1) or more semesters (excluding summer semesters) are required to file an “Application for Readmission” to the University by the deadline dates listed on the academic calendar for admission. Likewise, this classification also applies to those who were dismissed from the program via scholastic termination or dismissal procedures (for further clarification, see the appropriate sections in this handbook or the *Albany State University Academic Catalog*). Applications for readmission (and other related documentation) may be obtained from the Office of Admissions and Recruitment.

In addition to the Application for Readmission, students who experience any interruption in the progression process resulting in non-completion of one or more nursing courses but who wish to continue progression must submit a signed letter addressed to the Department of Nursing’s Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee within 10 business days of failure or withdrawal from the course(s) or program. This letter should detail the student’s intent to continue in the program, the circumstances around why the progression interruption occurred, and measures taken to mitigate potential future interruptions, if appropriate. It is recommended that the student also copy an Administrative Assistant, Technical/Administrative Assistant, or Administrative Specialist on this letter to maximize its visibility; please contact the department for the names and contact information of the appropriate individual(s).

Readmission is not guaranteed, and prior academic performance and professional conduct within the program(s) will be considered in determining a student’s eligibility for readmission. Upon readmission to the graduate program, the student must adhere to all nursing policies, follow the curriculum, and meet the degree requirements that are in effect at the time of readmission. As such, the student must maintain a 3.0 GPA to progress in the graduate program and must receive at least a “B” in each course taken.

REMEDiation

The academic program reserves the right to place specific conditions and contingencies on any offer of readmission to be determined on a case-by-case basis. Students who have been granted this type of conditional acceptance must satisfactorily complete their individualized remediation before progression through the baccalaureate program is possible. Failure to comply with or satisfactorily complete any portion of this remediation program will prevent the student from progressing any further within the baccalaureate nursing program at ASU.

The student must meet readmission requirements and complete any remediation deemed necessary by either the appropriate Program Director or Chair of the Department of Nursing. Currently, all graduate nursing students who experience any interruption in the progression process resulting in non-completion of one or more nursing courses will be required to retake the course during the semester it is regularly offered. In order to continue progression through the program, students must meet all of the course and

clinical objectives and requirements in order to pass any incomplete or unsatisfactorily passed nursing courses, including the end-of-course standardized comprehensive exam, if applicable.

PROGRESSION OF INTERRUPTED CLINICAL COURSEWORK

Once admitted in a graduate-level nursing program, it is strongly advised that less than two (2) years elapse between clinical courses. A graduate nursing student who has not enrolled in clinical graduate coursework for two (2) or more years will be required to take a directed study course (NURS 6000) and complete a standardized exam over any previously-taken clinical coursework. The student must satisfactorily pass both the exam and the directed study course with a “B” or better prior to progressing in the graduate nursing program.

DISMISSAL POLICY

The following criteria will constitute grounds for dismissal from the nursing program:

1. A second failure of any nursing course (whether a “C,” “D,” “F,” “WF,” or “U”) will result in program dismissal.
2. Substantiated violations of academic integrity constitute grounds for **immediate** dismissal from the nursing program and (if the incident occurs mid-progression) will prevent further course attendance/progression. For more information, see “Department Policy on Violations of Academic Integrity” within this handbook.
3. Gross misconduct, such as behaviors that endanger patient safety, patient confidentiality, or behaviors in direct opposition to the clinical instructor’s direction, constitute grounds for **immediate** dismissal from the nursing program and (if the incident occurs mid-progression) will prevent further course attendance/progression.

Additionally, substantiated violations of the *Student Code of Conduct* (including academic integrity) and/or gross professional misconduct will also result in ineligibility to pursue nursing at Albany State University **in perpetuity**, including all existing and future nursing program options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

To earn the Master of Science in Nursing degree, a student must meet the criteria identified below:

1. Admission to regular degree standing in an MSN program must be granted.
2. Attain a minimum 3.0 grade point average (GPA) calculated on all graduate work attempted, including any transfer credits approved in advance of enrollment in the program.
3. Complete a minimum of 34 (NE program), 35 (NI program), or 44 (FNP program) semester hours in a prescribed curriculum coursework with an overall grade point average of 3.0 or better.
4. Complete all coursework within six (6) years from the date of program admission.
5. Pass all departmental comprehensive examinations, and complete a thesis or major research project.

GRADUATION CLEARANCE

APPLICATION FOR DEGREE

All students are required to apply for graduation. The graduation application signals the student’s intent to graduate from Albany State University and begins the audit and commencement process for each student. An “Application for Graduation and Degree Evaluation” must be filed at least two (2) semesters prior to the term you expect to graduate. The application may be secured via the Office of the Registrar’s webpage. On this application, students must indicate intended date of graduation and their degree program. The Office of the Registrar, in conjunction with the student’s major department, will review the student’s course of study and determine if the student has or will meet the requirements to graduate by the date requested. If approved, the student will be mailed a copy of the audit and will be directed to begin

graduation clearance procedures. Any student who fails to graduate as indicated is required to complete another form. Students who complete all requirements for a degree at the close of the summer, fall, or spring semester will be given a statement, upon request, certifying requirements have been completed. Credits may be certified to the State Department of Education in order that the certificates to teach may be issued at any time during the school term. Degrees will be awarded pursuant to graduation.

POST-GRADUATION ACTIVITIES

Post-graduation, students are encouraged to participate in the following activities:

1. Become members of the Albany State University Alumni Association.
2. Keep up-to-date name and address information on file with both Albany State University, the Darton College of Health Professions, and the Department of Nursing
3. Report professional and educational advancement in the field of nursing or any other field directly (via email, telephone, or social media) or via our Alumni Survey submitted 12 months post-graduation
4. Complete alumni and employer surveys 1 year post-graduation (and as necessary).

SECTION III: ACADEMIC POLICIES

STUDENT COMMUNICATION POLICIES

FACULTY CONTACT

The graduate nursing student is encouraged to maintain close contact with the Graduate Nursing Programs Director and/or their assigned faculty advisor. Communication with faculty members is facilitated by scheduling appointments to discuss concerns via email. The student should notify the individual at least 1 hour in advance if he/she is unable to keep the appointment. Other mechanisms for communicating with faculty include the use of the faculty member's physical mailbox, located within the Department of Nursing's main office. Please contact a member of the Department of Nursing's administrative staff for any mail deliveries.

STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS POLICY

All nursing students must have a student email address assigned by Albany State University, which will end with the @students.asurams.edu identifier. All communication from the Department of Nursing is sent to this email address or via GeorgiaVIEW email; other email accounts (e.g., @gmail.com, @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com, @bellsouth.net, etc.) will not be used by the Department. Setup of your ASU student email address is typically done automatically upon acceptance into the institution. Rationale behind the policy is based on compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which can be fully reviewed in the *Albany State University Academic Catalog*.

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHT AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Albany State University is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, U.S. Public Law 93-380. FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational records. This Act prohibits University Officials from disclosing any records, including grade reports, academic standing, transcripts of records, or any other records, files, documents, and materials, in whatever medium, which may contain information directly related to the student and from which the student can be individually identified. For more information, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's [FERPA website](#) or contact the Office of the Registrar.

Albany State University must have a signed acknowledgement from the student before education information can be released to a person or entity other than the student. This written consent can be satisfied by completing the "Authorization to Release Information (FERPA Form)" (otherwise known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] Release Form") via the Office of the Registrar's [Forms webpage](#) and submitting it to the Department of Nursing (as well as the Office of the Registrar). This consent shall be valid through the student's enrollment at ASU and thereafter, but may be modified or rescinded by the student by written request or updated FERPA form.

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, OR PHONE NUMBER

In order to ensure communication with students is not affected by changes of name or contact information (e.g., mailing address, email address, phone numbers), students should ensure that this information is current and accurate. While some information can be changed by logging into Banner and updating the appropriate information under the "Personal Information" tab, other changes can only be made by the Office of the Registrar. Students who wish to notify the University that their name, address, or phone is either displaying incorrectly or has recently changed is responsible completing and submitting the "Notice of Change of Name, Address, or Phone" to the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Per University policy, students are expected to attend all of their scheduled classes, laboratories, and clinical experiences when reasonably possible. When students are absent for emergency reasons, the number of excused absences permitted should not exceed the number of credit hours awarded for the course except for the most extreme avoidable emergencies (e.g., death of family members, jury duty, etc.). The instructor will officially certify all excused absences.

Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to any supplementary statements related to attendance as noted in the course syllabus and the *Albany State University Academic Catalog*.

CLINICAL/LAB ATTENDANCE

Clinical attendance for students within the nursing program is compulsory. This policy applies to clinical experiences that take place on-site at an approved clinical facility; on-campus in the classroom, computer lab, simulation lab, and/or skills lab; on- and off-campus University-hosted events requiring nursing student participation; and online alternate/virtual clinical assignments. Absence from more than one (1) scheduled clinical session will also automatically result in a clinical failure for the course, resulting in a letter grade of “F.” If an absence is unavoidable, the student is responsible for notifying their clinical unit prior to the beginning of clinicals, and failure to do so will result in an unexcused absence and an “Unsatisfactory” grade in all areas for that clinical day. Other examples of unexcused clinical absences include, but are not limited to, inability to attain/maintain rotational clearance, tardiness of any length of time, clinical uniform noncompliance, and incidents of misconduct and/or unprofessionalism. While one (1) excused absence may be made up at the discretion of the course instructor, unexcused absences cannot be made up and will prevent the student from participating in clinical experiences for the remainder of that session, resulting in an “Unsatisfactory” grade in all areas of that clinical day.

ONLINE ATTENDANCE

Attendance in online classes is verified in terms of participation, time spent in a particular unit or other part of online courseware, time spent in chats and online discussion, quality and quantity of chat and online discussion content, quality and quantity of e-mail, quality and quantity of course work, test participation, and other considerations. Distance learning courses at Albany State University are instructor-led classes, not independent study or correspondence courses. Students are expected to engage actively in the course content, participate in student-teacher and student-student communications, and complete assignments and tests according to the requirements and schedule of the course instructor.

The GeorgiaVIEW course homepage will host a number of facilitated activities for the students, including the syllabus, required activities and assignments, course calendar, and a gradebook to track individual progress. Students are expected to visit the course homepage daily to check for emails and announcements, download appropriate course material, and post required assignments. Your timely responses to the weekly assignments and discussions will be used to validate your attendance. Failure to respond on-time weekly will be considered a missed class.

Failure to participate, communicate, or meet course requirements within the time frame required by the instructor may reduce the grade for the course or initiate faculty-withdrawal procedures as noted below. Divisions or departments may have class attendance policies of a more specific nature within this general policy statement. Each instructor shall provide detailed policies and procedures in writing to each student at the beginning of the course.

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES

LATE WORK AND INCOMPLETES

Assignment submissions are accepted up to 11:59 p.m. ET on the last day of the course. No assignments will be accepted after this deadline unless the student has received an “Incomplete” for the course (further

detailed below). Beyond this, the only other time assignments will be accepted after class ends is if an Incomplete is approved.

Under certain circumstances, students may be assigned a letter grade of “I,” indicating an “Incomplete” grade for the course. Per the University’s definition, assignment of an “I” grade **requires** that the student (1) “has completed the majority of work in the course and is making satisfactory progress towards passing the course (i.e., the student can reasonably make a passing grade in the course if missing assignment(s) are completed);” (2) “due to reasons judged by the instructor to be legitimate, and/or circumstances beyond their control where the student is unable to complete their coursework” (e.g., medical, personal, or financial reasons); and (3) the student’s coursework can be completed within a prescribed timeframe.”

All of the criteria noted here must be applicable **and** documented in order for the Department to award an “Incomplete” grade. The Department cannot provide exceptions to this policy without first receiving documented approval from the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. Consequently, any student requesting an “Incomplete” who does not satisfy these criteria must **first** request approval from the Office of Academic Affairs (after notifying the course instructor of their intent).

Per the University’s policies, an “Incomplete” grade must be removed no later than “one calendar year following the final day of the semester for which the incomplete was awarded.” The “I” may be changed by completing the incomplete work as prescribed by the instructor. Any “I” grade that is not satisfactorily removed prior to this deadline will automatically be changed to a letter grade of “F” by the Office of the Registrar and will be computed in the student’s GPA.

In order to initiate the “Incomplete” grade process, the student must first secure and complete the “Permit to Remove an Incomplete Grade” (also referred to as the “Green Sheet”) from the Office of the Registrar and submit it to the course instructor. The instructor will then complete the “Documentation for Submission of ‘I’ Grade,” which denotes the requirements necessary for the removal of the “I” grade and requires that the student, course instructor, and departmental chairperson. Following satisfaction of these requirements, the instructor will execute the “Request to Remove an Incomplete” and secure the approval of the departmental chairperson. The Chair will then forward this document alongside the original “Permit to Remove an Incomplete Grade” and “Documentation for Submission of ‘I’ Grade” forms to their Dean, who then approves and forwards the packet to the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. Following approval by the Office of Academic Affairs, the “I” grade is removed by the Office of the Registrar.

LATE DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS

Participation in the threaded discussions is a core aspect of Albany State University's learning environment. It is critical to the success of the classroom environment that students contribute to the threaded discussions in a timely manner. Therefore, students can only earn participation points during the current week. For example, students must actively participate during Week 2 in order to earn participation points for Week 2. Students will not receive participation points for Week 2 if they respond to classmates in the discussion threads after the week ends. If a student posts a discussion assignment after the week has ended, students can expect that the faculty member will give comments/ feedback only in Grades, not in the discussion thread.

LATE PENALTY CALCULATIONS

A student should contact his/her faculty member before the assignment due date to discuss options when circumstances beyond the student's control prevent him or her from completing the assignment by the deadline.

If a student does not make prior arrangements with the faculty member and fails to turn individual work in on time, the following deductions may be applied:

Calendar Days Late	Maximum Point Deduction
1 day	10%
2 days	20%
3 days	30%
4 days	40%
5 days	50%
6 days	60%
7 days	70%
8+ days	100% (<i>Assignment not accepted</i>)

When calculating the final grade for late assignments, the faculty member will first assess the late penalty as it relates to the assignment, grade the late submission, and then deduct the penalty from the earned score. Please be aware that the point deduction percentage is applied to the maximum point allotment for that assignment (rather than to the grade earned by the student).

For Example: A student submits an assignment worth 100 points three (3) days late and did not make any arrangements with the instructor prior to the assignment's initial due date. The maximum point penalty for an assignment that is three (3) days late is 30%, which would be 30 points in this scenario (100 maximum points \times 30% [0.30] lateness penalty = 30 point deduction). After grading the assignment via its grading rubric, the instructor notes that the student would have earned a 90/100 ("A") if the assignment was not late; however, with the added 30 point late penalty deduction, the student has now earned a 60/100 ("D").

IMPORTANT POINTS

- Without prior permission, faculty are not required to accept late work that is more than one full week late.
- Faculty will grade work submitted after the week ends by the next weekly grading deadline.
- Students should inform their faculty member via email when they submit any late assignment.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

All written work should adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) style unless otherwise indicated by the course instructor. Material should be presented concisely but completely and should be grammatically and editorially correct. All formal papers should include a title page in the accepted format. All papers are expected on the designated due date; however, requests for extensions made in advance of the due date may be granted for extenuating circumstances. Papers submitted to faculty for course requirements may not be returned but may be reviewed in the faculty office. The student should make copies of papers prior to submitting to faculty.

NETIQUETTE POLICY

It is important to recognize that the online classroom is still, in fact, a classroom, and certain behaviors are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

1. Security

Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm.

- Don't share your password with anyone
- Change your password if you think someone else might know it
- Always logout when you are finished using the system

2. General Guidelines

When communicating online, you should always:

- Treat instructor with respect, even in email or in any other online communication
- Always use your professors' proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you in doubt use Mr. or Ms.
- Unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name.
- Use clear and concise language
- Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar
- Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you"
- Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 pt. font
- Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING
- Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or –
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously or offensive
- Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's)
- Do not send confidential patient information via e-mail

3. Email Netiquette

When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should:

- Use a descriptive subject line
- Be brief
- Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them
- Avoid HTML in favor of plain text
- Sign your message with your name and return e-mail address
- Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message?
- Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all"
- Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "forward" button

4. Message Board Netiquette and Guidelines

When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should:

- Make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material
- Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending
- Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment
- Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source
- Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying
- Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it
- Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point
- Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own
- When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way
- Do not make personal or insulting remarks
- Be open-minded

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

As the graduate-level nursing programs available at Albany State University are fully online, students should be able to perform the following basic computer operations:

- Downloading and installing new software;
- Starting and closing various computer programs;
- Copying, saving, moving, and deleting files on your computer;

- Navigating web browsers, such as Google Chrome (*preferred browser for Albany State University, required for many of its applications*), Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, and/or Safari;
- Familiarity with word processing software such as Microsoft Word
- Copying and pasting between various programs; and
- Utilizing email for communication and to exchange files.

Students must have access to a reliable computer and stable internet access and should be comfortable using technology to perform tasks such as downloading, uploading, and emailing files; working with email; and joining webinar sessions (such as WebEx), which may require access to a microphone, speakers, and webcam.

Please be aware that computers (laptop and desktop setups) more than 3- to 4-years of age may not be able to satisfactorily run some software required by courses. Please inform your instructor prior to the beginning of the semester if you suspect that your computer may not have the specifications/requirements necessary to run any specialized software required by the course.

THESIS/SCHOLARLY PROJECT

The thesis/scholarly project positively affects nursing practice or advances nursing as a science, and is completed in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the master's degree. A thesis is a written scholarly report derived from the investigation of a nursing problem. Based upon the research proposal developed in NURS 5120: Advanced Nursing Research, the thesis expands the skills of scientific inquiry through the implementation, analysis and discussion of findings. The thesis is conducted by one student with the guidance of his/her thesis committee.

The project is a researched-based scholarly activity that may have a variety of forms, such as investigation of a problem, initiation or evaluation of a program, or assessment of health needs of a community group. In addition, other creative projects may be appropriate for meeting the scholarly project requirements. These alternatives may include such nursing scholarly activities as development of a video presentation, an in-service program, an evaluation instrument, a teaching game, or a business plan. Other options could include preparation of a grant for submission or plan and implement a health project for the community. Students may choose to work on the scholarly project individually or in pairs. All scholarly activities and nursing theses are based on current, evidence-based nursing research.

COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

1. The committee will be developed after the end of the term in which the student is enrolled in NURS 5120: Advanced Nursing Research.
2. The **thesis committee** shall consist of no less than two (2) members, all of whom hold advanced nursing degrees. The chair of the committee must hold a terminal degree and should be a member of the graduate nursing faculty. If a second member has faculty status in another College he/she must have graduate faculty status at ASU. Professionals other than faculty at ASU may be selected to serve on the committee but must be currently licensed nurses or health professionals. These individuals must submit credentials/curricula vitae to the Graduate Nursing Programs Director for approval prior to appointment on the committee. At least one (1) of the two (2) committee members should be chosen from the student's program specialty area.
3. The **scholarly project committee** shall consist of no less than two (2) members. The chair of the committee must be a graduate nursing faculty member. One (1) other nursing faculty member with expertise or interest in the subject matter related to the project must be selected. At least one (1) of the two (2) committee members should be chosen from the student's program specialty area.
4. The chair of the committee can assist the student in identifying other potential committee members who have compatible research interests/expertise. When all committee members have

agreed to serve, the student will be provided with the names and email addresses of the ASU faculty. The student will submit a copy of his/her proposal to all committee members.

SEQUENCE/TIMING OF THESIS/SCHOLARLY PROJECT

Selection of a topic

1. The selected topic must be relevant to nursing, contribute to the body of nursing knowledge, and be of the depth and breadth reflective of graduate level work. Current nursing research must be the foundation of the thesis/scholarly work.
2. The Graduate Nursing Programs Director will assist in determining that the topic and the planned approach are realistic and conform to the resources likely to be available to the student.

Preparation and approval of a proposal

1. The student will prepare a research proposal in compliance with the guidelines presented in NURS 5120 (Advanced Nursing Research).
2. The NURS 5120 faculty will share the research topics with nursing faculty members. A faculty member will be identified as the committee chair. The committee chair will review the proposal and provide recommendations for modification. After the revised proposal meets with the approval of the committee chair, the student shall provide a copy to each committee member.
3. After the student has made modifications based on the input of all committee members, the student will provide committee members with a revised proposal. The committee chair will meet with the committee members and the student (if possible). The process for review of thesis/project draft will be agreed upon at the first scheduled committee meeting. The committee will meet with the student as often as necessary to help delineate the nature and scope of the problem, and the conduct of the study. The student or the committee members may request an individual or scheduled full committee meeting. These meeting may be virtual or face-to-face. Documentation of the meeting will be kept by the student and the Chair of the committee. Student and faculty must meet as a committee at least once during the proposal phase and at least once prior to defense.
4. Following the final approval of the proposal, the student is responsible for obtaining the signature of the committee chair on the Proposal Approval Form (see appendices). The approved proposal will be presented to the ASU Institutional Review Board (IRB) by the Graduate Nursing Programs Director at the next scheduled IRB meeting (Appendices). The student is responsible for obtaining IRB and/or site approval for research-- that will be conducted at any other site other than ASU (and include a copy in the final paper).

Data collection and analysis

1. Data collection may not begin until the proposal has been approved by the IRB at Albany State University and/or research site prior to data collection. The IRB Approval Form (appendices) is a mandatory component of the final thesis/scholarly project. Data analysis/collection and completion of the thesis/scholarly project must adhere to the timeline provided in this handbook.
2. Submission of final documents are subject to submission to plagiarism review.
3. No student may purchase or submit a thesis or scholarly project and submit to faculty for scoring or review.

Presentation and oral defense

1. The student must correspond with all committee members prior to the scheduled oral defense to address issue of relevance to the defense of the completed thesis/project.
2. The student will present the completed research to the committee, faculty, students, and invited guests. The Committee Chairperson will moderate the defense discussion. The defense must be

held at least three weeks prior to the date of final exams for graduating students. Following the oral defense, the committee members may make final suggestions for modification/revision of the thesis/scholarly project.

3. The Committee Chair is responsible for ensuring that the student has incorporated the suggestions offered by the committee members. Once the committee chair has approved the final product, it will be given to the Graduate Nursing Program Director. This director must have the final approved product by the last day of the graduating student's final exams. The Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions makes the final recommendation for graduation.

THESIS/SCHOLARLY PROJECT HOUSING/LIBRARY REPOSITORY

At thesis defense, the student will receive written information about housing their thesis permanently within the Albany State University Library. This repository form contains directions for completing repository processes and information needed to create a computer/web link where student may have access to their final thesis for posterity. Repository forms may be obtained from the Librarian but must be signed by student and faculty to complete the process. This option is entirely optional to the student but is recommended. Students are reminded that this process may take up to 3 months.

CITI

Each graduate student and all thesis Chairs must complete the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) program prior to conducting thesis work or scholarly activities. The assignment is located within the Advanced Research Course. Students are reminded to keep up to date certificates and present these within the thesis documents.

For more information regarding the CITI Program, please see the [CITI's website](#).

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) AND IRB.NET

It is strongly recommended that students review all modules related to IRB process for ASU at this site. Log in and preliminary information about IRB.Net are assigned in Advanced Research. However, before a proposal is completed, the graduate student must again review the IRB.Net requirements and submit all plans for collecting data to the site. The ASU IRB will review documents submitted to IRB.net and recommend or NOT RECOMMEND approval of the planned nursing research. When ASU IRB approves of the nursing research plan, a letter is sent to the Chair and the student. It is then and only then that the student may begin data collection or research. The student may not begin research or data collection or administer surveys to participants until written IRB approval is received by the Chair and the student.

For more information regarding the IRB, please see the [Office of Research and Sponsored Program's Institutional Review Board webpage](#).

TESTING POLICIES

Graduate nursing students are required to take their midterm, final, and comprehensive exit examinations as a proctored exam, defined here as an exam monitored by an approved third party. This policy is applicable to clinical courses within the MSN-FNP program, NURS 5100: Advanced Health Assessment, NURS 5210: Advanced Pathophysiology, and NURS 5910: Pharmacology in Advanced Nursing Practice. This also applies to any NURS 6000: Directed Study course tailored for any of the aforementioned courses.

The following options have been approved for completing proctored examinations:

- Albany State University's West Campus Testing Center
- ProctorU Online
- Instructor-Approved Off-Campus Proctor Location

Midterm, final, and comprehensive exit examinations may **not** be made up if missed. Only one (1) make-up quiz exam may be offered to a student, which will be administered during the last week of scheduled course classes at the faculty's discretion. Students who miss a quiz exam due to an excused absence must formally request (in writing) the faculty member's permission to make up the quiz/exam and provide acceptable supporting documentation (e.g., an approved medical excuse from an MD, NP, or PA). No exams will be allowed to make up due to personal work schedules.

Examination grades must average a minimum of 75 prior to assignment grades being averaged into the final course grade. If less than a 75 average on course examinations is earned, the student will receive a final letter grade of "C" or less and must repeat the course (if eligible).

GUIDELINES FOR TESTING ON BRIGHTSPACE

At the beginning of your first class within the graduate program, we recommend you contact Albany State University's [Information Technology Services \(ITS\) HelpDesk](#) to determine whether your computer meets the requirements for testing. Once you have done this, you will not need to do it again for every class. In addition, the [Brightspace self-service system check](#) can be completed instead of calling the HelpDesk. **Failure to conduct computer requirement check prior to quiz/final exam may forfeit potential reset.**

Prior to beginning an exam, students **must** check their browser to confirm [minimum requirements](#) are met. While there is no official requirement from Brightspace regarding the type or speed of the internet connection a student should have, it is recommended that the student uses a **DSL or cable connection** and minimizes potential connection interferences during the time of the test (e.g., disconnect devices that utilize Wi-Fi and limit internet streaming activities). It is also recommended that a student access the internet using **Google Chrome** or **Mozilla Firefox**. Do not use Internet Explorer. Additionally, it is recommended that students [clear their browser cache/cookies](#) prior to beginning an assessment.

Avoid taking an assessment at work, unless you have checked the firewalls and can take the assignment in a private area with no distractions. Please remember that testing is an individual activity. **Do not open the assessment until you are ready to test** as, once it has been opened, you are unable to close the quiz/exam and then reopen it. Students who have not assessed whether their computers meet the minimum testing requirements either through contacting IT or the self-check through Brightspace **may be unable to have their quiz/final exam reset.**

Should an issue arise during the administration of the assessment (e.g., the quiz/exam freezes or the "Submit" button appears before the assessment has been completed), the student must contact the ITS HelpDesk **immediately** in order to troubleshoot the issue in real-time. In addition to the name of the course and the assessment they are attempting to take, ITS may ask questions such as the following:

- What type of computer or device are you using? (e.g., a laptop running Windows 7)
- What browser are you using? (e.g., Google Chrome)
- Have you tried a different browser? (e.g., Mozilla Firefox over Google Chrome)
- What kind of internet connection are you running? (e.g., Wi-Fi, DSL, cable, dial-up)
- Can you navigate to other websites? (e.g., Google, YouTube)
- On what question did this issue begin?
- Have you done any troubleshooting such as clearing cache/cookies?

ITS will document the above information in a HelpDesk ticket, copy the instructor on the ticket, and detail the outcome of the situation, such as if the issue was resolved via their troubleshooting or if the student needs to follow-up with their instructor.

The student must contact the instructor **within 24 hours** of encountering the testing issue and request a review of the impacted assessment. Requests presented later than 24 hours after the testing date will **not be accepted**. Each request for resetting a quiz/final exam will be evaluated by the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention committee on a case-by-case basis, and the course instructor will be notified of the decision by nursing administration.

TESTING BEHAVIOR

All assessment questions (and associated answer keys) are the property of Albany State University and, by extension, its Department of Nursing. Within this context, "assessment" refers to any assignment completed by a student that impacts the calculation of their course grade. As a general rule, students should avoid any actions or behaviors that may be reasonably construed as a violation academic integrity or an attempt to compromise the security of the assessment. Consequently, in addition to this handbook, it is imperative that students also review and understand the policies detailed within the *Student Code of Conduct*.

In order to ensure the security of the Department of Nursing's testing materials, the following policies and procedures related to testing behaviors have been implemented:

- Throughout the duration of the test administration, students must keep their eyes on their own testing materials, regardless of whether the assessment is being administered in physical or electronic format.
- Students are not allowed to communicate with any other individual during the assessment by verbal (written/oral) or nonverbal (body language/gestures) means, and the consequences for violating this action may be extended to all involved parties based on the witnessed interaction(s).
- If a student has a question or encounters an issue to problem during the test administration, they must raise their hand to alert the proctor and should avoid looking around the testing area while their hand is raised.
- No student should have any unauthorized materials on or around their desk/testing area. Examples of approved testing materials include the testing device (and related hardware), physical exam copies, answer forms (e.g., Scantrons), writing utensils, and separate erasers. If scratch paper is allowed, students may only use the scratch paper providing by the proctor, and the scratch paper must be turned in to the proctor before leaving.
 - If remote proctoring is being utilized for an assessment, the student must clearly show all materials in their testing area in their entirety in-frame of their approved webcam, being mindful of potential framerate drops or decreases in video quality.
- During computerized testing (including test review), students are not allowed to have any other screen open besides the assessment screen and/or the test review screen. Accessing or attempting to access other websites (included other screens within GeorgiaVIEW) or program software is strictly prohibited.
- Use of unauthorized electronic/photographic devices is strictly prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: desktop computers; mobile computers (e.g., laptops, tablets, netbooks, handheld PCs, mobile Internet devices/MIDs, personal digital assistants/PDAs); mobile phones (e.g., smartphones, camera phones, phablets); intelligent virtual assistants (e.g., Alexa, Bixby, Cortana, Google Assistant/Now, Siri, Viv); wearable computers (e.g., smartwatches, calculator watches); headsets (e.g., telephone, computer, mobile, wireless); scientific or graphing calculators; digital cameras; pagers; and other devices with internet, mobile broadband, WiFi, or Bluetooth connectivity.
- Unauthorized use of textbooks, study guides, flash cards, course notes, cheat/crib sheets, and other supplementary course materials (including, but not limited to, case studies, articles, brochures/pamphlets) is strictly prohibited.

- Attempting to copy or plagiarize another student's assessment is strictly prohibited, and the consequences for violating this action may be extended to all involved parties based on the witnessed interaction(s).
- Attempting to take an assessment for another student is strictly prohibited, and the consequences for violating this action will be extended to all involved parties.
- Obtaining unauthorized or improper access to an assessment, in whole or in part, or information about an assessment is strictly prohibited.
- Removing or attempting to remove questions or other assessment material from the testing site is strictly prohibited. It is forbidden to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or disclose these assessment questions by any means, in whole or in part.

Students found violating the policies and procedures detailed above are subject to the following actions:

- Inability to complete the assessment;
- Immediate removal from the testing site;
- Invalidation of scores received on the assessment, resulting in an automatic grade of zero (0);
- Inability to make-up the impacted assessment;
- A mandatory academic integrity review meeting with the course instructor(s), program director/coordinator, and/or departmental chairperson;
- Disciplinary actions sanctioned by the Department of Nursing and commensurate with the nature of the violation, including failure of the course (with a letter grade of "F") and dismissal from the nursing program in perpetuity; and
- At the discretion of nursing administration, referral to the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct to initiate a formal student conduct investigation and disciplinary proceeding.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to:

- a) evaluate the student's theoretical and analytical knowledge of nursing, research, and other critical scientific concepts, issues, and processes presented in advanced core courses; and
- b) evaluate the student's ability to apply critical nursing and other scientific theory in clinical decision making at the advanced level of nursing practice.

To be eligible to take the departmental comprehensive examinations, the student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or greater. This examination is administered by graduate faculty members representing the student's area of clinical concentration or specialization at the completion of clinical coursework and prior or the same semester the student will be completing the course requirement of NURS 6920: Thesis/Research Project.

A student must be registered during the semester in which the comprehensive examination is taken. The comprehensive examination will be administered no later than the scheduled final exam period, as publicized by the University. A letter of intent to write the examination must be filed with the Graduate Nursing Programs Director at least one (1) month prior to first comprehensive examination administration. The student will be notified in writing of the date, time, and place of the exam. Examination objectives will be given to the student prior to the scheduled testing.

Students are permitted a maximum of **two** attempts on the comprehensive examination. If a student is unsuccessful on their first attempt at this exam, they must present evidence of satisfactory remediation, as determined by the course instructor and the Graduate Nursing Programs Director or appropriate program director. All remediation must be reviewed and approved by **both** the course instructor and the Graduate Nursing Programs Director/appropriate program director prior to the administration of a retest. Failure to successfully complete the required remediation or submit evidence of completion will result in an

inability to take the exam and forfeiture of that attempt. A student who does not pass the examination on the second attempt is not permitted to continue in the program. Grades received on the comprehensive examination are **not** appealable, and no more than two (2) attempts on this assessment will be permitted under any circumstances.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT POLICY

All students enrolled within Albany State University's nursing programs must adhere to the conduct expectations outlined in the Georgia Board of Nursing's *Standards of Practice for Registered Professional Nurses*, the American Nurses Association's *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, Albany State University's *Student Code of Conduct*, and the behaviors outlined in this handbook. Nursing students are expected to be responsible for their actions and behave in a professional manner toward all University and clinical administrators, faculty, staff, students, and clients while on-campus, online, and in clinical settings. Professional behavior is that which demonstrates respect for others, personal integrity, and responsibility. This includes courtesy, honesty, ethical actions, and responsible communication skills. Students should always be mindful that their conduct and behavior are a reflection of the Department of Nursing, the Darton College of Health Professions, Albany State University, and the nursing profession as a whole.

VIOLATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Depending on the nature and severity of the unprofessional conduct, the clinical/course instructor(s) reserves the right to immediately dismiss the student from the classroom, lab, or clinical setting for the remainder of the course meeting, which will automatically result in an unexcused absence and, if the violation occurred during clinical experiences, an "Unsatisfactory" in all areas for the clinical day. Students should refer to the appropriate attendance policies detailed within this handbook for more information.

Unless the nature and severity of the unprofessional conduct constitutes gross professional misconduct, violations of professional conduct will follow the process detailed below:

- An **initial violation** of professional conduct will result in a written warning from the clinical/course instructor(s) that will remain in the student's file within the Department of Nursing.
- A **second violation** will result in a referral to the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct via completion of the "Student Misconduct Incident Report Form" by the clinical/course instructor(s). Additionally, the student will be required to meet with the appropriate program director/coordinator to discuss the incident, after which the program director/coordinator may additionally elect to notify the Division of Enrollment Management and Student Success and the Division of Student Affairs.
- A **third violation** will result in a mandatory meeting with the departmental chairperson, the program director/coordinator, and the clinical/course instructor(s), and the student may be subject to further disciplinary measures. If, in the opinion of this panel, the student's character, knowledge, and/or mental or physical capacity cast doubt on the student's potential to function as a professional nurse, the student will be dismissed from the program and may be deemed ineligible to pursue nursing at Albany State University in perpetuity, including all existing and future nursing program options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

As noted previously, gross professional misconduct is grounds for immediate dismissal from the nursing program. Behaviors that endanger patient safety, patient confidentiality, or behaviors in direct opposition to the clinical instructor's direction will result in immediate referral to the departmental chairperson and may initiate a formal student conduct investigation via the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct. Students dismissed from the nursing program due to gross professional misconduct are

ineligible to pursue nursing at Albany State University in perpetuity, including all existing and future nursing program options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

Per the Georgia Board of Nursing's Rule 410-10-.03, unprofessional conduct includes "conduct failing to meet the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing nursing practice, which could jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of the public." This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. using inappropriate or unsafe judgment, technical skill or interpersonal behaviors in providing nursing care;
2. performing any nursing technique or procedure for which the nursing student is unprepared by education or experience;
3. disregarding a patient/client's dignity, right to privacy or right to confidentiality;
4. failing to provide nursing care because of diagnosis, age, sex, race, creed or color;
5. abusing a patient/client verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually;
6. falsifying, omitting or destroying documentation of nursing actions on the official patient/client record;
7. abandoning or knowingly neglecting patients/clients requiring nursing care;
8. delegating nursing care, functions, tasks or responsibility to others when the nursing student knows or should know that such delegation is to the detriment of patient safety;
9. providing one's license/temporary permit to another individual for any reason (if applicable);
10. failing to practice nursing in accordance with prevailing nursing standards due to physical or psychological impairment;
11. diverting prescription drugs for own or another person's use;
12. misappropriating money or property from a patient/client or employee;
13. failing to notify the appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct which may jeopardize patient/client safety

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: GEORGIA BOARD OF NURSING

STANDARDS OF REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSING PRACTICE

1. For purposes of O.C.G.A. Secs. [43-26-4](#) (a)(6)(B)(v) and 43-1-29(6), the Georgia Board of Nursing defines the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing nursing practice as including, but not limited to the following enumerated standards of competent practice.
2. The Georgia Board of Nursing recognizes that assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, intervention, evaluation, teaching, and supervision are the major responsibilities of the registered nurse in the practice of nursing. The Standards of Registered Professional Nursing Practice delineate the quality of nursing care which a patient/client should receive regardless of whether it is provided solely by a registered nurse or by a registered nurse in collaboration with other licensed or unlicensed personnel. The Standards are based on the premise that the registered nurse is responsible for and accountable to the patient/client for the quality of nursing care rendered. The Standards of Registered Professional Nursing Practice shall establish a baseline for quality nursing care; be derived from the law governing nursing; apply to the registered nurse practicing in any setting; govern the practice of the licensee at all levels of competency.
 - A. Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibility to apply the nursing process (adapted from American Nurses' Association *Code for Nurses and Standards of Practice, 1994*). The registered nurse shall:
 1. assess the patient/client in a systematic, organized manner;
 2. formulate a nursing diagnosis based on accessible, communicable and recorded data (which is collected in a systematic and continuous manner);

3. plan care which includes goals and prioritized nursing approaches or measures derived from the nursing diagnoses;
 4. implement strategies to provide for patient/client participation in health promotion, maintenance and restoration;
 5. initiate nursing actions to assist the patient/client to maximize her/his health capabilities;
 6. evaluate with the patient/client the status of goal achievement as a basis for reassessment, reordering of priorities, new goal-setting and revision of the plan of nursing care;
 7. seek educational resources and create learning experiences to enhance and maintain current knowledge and skills appropriate to her/his area of practice.
- B.** Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibilities as a member of the nursing profession. The registered nurse shall:
1. function within the legal boundaries of nursing practice based upon knowledge of statutes and regulations governing nursing;
 2. accept responsibility for individual nursing actions and continued competence;
 3. communicate, collaborate and function with other members of the health team to provide optimum care;
 4. seek education and supervision as necessary when implementing nursing practice techniques;
 5. respect the dignity and rights of the patient/client regardless of socioeconomic status, personal attributes or nature of health problems;
 6. maintain each patient/client's right to privacy by protecting confidential information unless obligated, by law, to disclose the information;
 7. provide nursing care without discrimination on the basis of diagnosis, age, sex, race, creed or color;
 8. delegate and supervise only those nursing measures which the nurse knows, or should know, that another person is prepared, qualified, or licensed to perform;
 9. retain professional accountability for nursing care when delegating nursing intervention;
 10. respect and safeguard the property of clients, family, significant others and the employer;
 11. notify the appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct which may jeopardize patient/client safety;
 12. Participate in the periodic review and evaluation of the quality and appropriateness of nursing care.
- C.** Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibilities in assignment of patient activities to unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP). The registered nurse shall:
1. Determine that the care and/or activity to be performed would be based upon orders or directions of a licensed physician, licensed dentist, licensed podiatrist or person licensed to practice nursing as a registered professional nurse.
 2. Assign only care and activities that do not require the skills and knowledge of a person practicing nursing as a registered professional nurse or licensure of another health care professional. The care and activities to be assigned must meet all of the following criteria:
 - a. The care and/or activities do not require complex observations or critical decisions.
 - b. The care and/or activities can be safely performed according to exact, unchanging directions.
 - c. The outcome and/or results of the activities are reasonably predictable.
 3. Verify that the UAP has the necessary knowledge and skills to accept the assignment.
 4. Periodically evaluate and review the quality and appropriateness of the care provided by the UAP.
 5. Not assign activities which require licensure to an unlicensed assistive personnel.

ETHICAL STANDARDS

The student who is preparing to enter the profession of nursing is expected to follow the Code of Ethics for Nurses. Each person, upon entering the profession, inherits a measure of responsibility and trust of the profession and the corresponding obligation to adhere to standards of ethical practice and conduct set by the profession. The Code was adopted by the American Nurses' Association (ANA).

ANA CODE OF ETHICS

1. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse safeguards the clients' right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature.
3. The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person.
4. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions.
5. The nurse maintains competence in nursing.
6. The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities, and delegating nursing activities to others.
7. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the on-going development of the profession's body of knowledge.
8. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.
9. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care.
10. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing.
11. The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public. (1999, American Nurses Association)

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The Office of Student Conduct supports Albany State University's educational mission by enforcing regulations designed to promote an environment in which students can develop intellectually, morally and socially while exercising a balance of partnership and autonomy within the campus community. The mission of the Office of Student Conduct is to promote concepts of fairness and due process in conduct settings.

The Office of Student Conduct serves as a resource to the entire University community. Essential in the student conduct process is the commitment to serve all involved parties, equally, in an unbiased and fair manner while striking a balance between upholding our community standards and fostering educational opportunities for each individual student.

The Office of Student Conduct is commissioned with the task of detailing the rights and responsibilities of students, adjudicating matters when necessary, imposing sanctions for violations in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct*.

STUDENT ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

The Albany State University *Student Code of Conduct* and the Academic Honor Pledge establish standards of conduct designed to foster the development of well-educated, mature, ethical, and responsible citizens. As a student of Albany State University, you are responsible for upholding these standards of conduct and living up to the principles of the Academic Honor Code.

Academic Honor Pledge

As a student of Albany State University, I solemnly pledge to uphold the Academic Honor Code at all times. It is my responsibility to know and understand these rules of conduct. Lack of awareness is not a legitimate reason for failure to abide by the *Student Code of Conduct*. If I fail to uphold the principles of this Academic Honor Code, I will accept any penalty that may be imposed upon me following due process.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All students are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the Academic Honor Code Policy.
- B. If a student sees, knows, or hears of an act of dishonesty, he or she is encouraged to report this suspected violation to the instructor concerned, the course division dean, the Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs or the University Judicial Officer.
- C. To remind student of their responsibility to uphold the Academic Honor Code, the following statement will be included in each course syllabus – “It is understood that all students are required to abide by the Albany State University Academic Honor Code as stated in the *Student Code of Conduct*.”
- D. In all fields of study the Academic Honor Code policy will be strictly enforced as per the *Student Code of Conduct*.

BEHAVIORAL REGULATIONS

The following list of violations of the *Student Code of Conduct* is an example of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action:

- Violations of **Worth of the Individual**
 - Abduction and/or Kidnapping
 - Assault
 - Attempted Offenses
 - Dangerous Threatening and/or Unsafe Behavior or Gang Activity
 - Harassment (Verbal or Physical) and/or Bullying
 - Hazing
 - Retaliation
 - Representation without Consent
 - False Complaints/Statements
 - Dating Violence
 - Domestic Violence
 - Nonconsensual Sexual Contact
 - Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration
 - Sexual Exploitation
 - Sexual Harassment (Student on Student)
 - Sexual Harassment (Other than Student on Student)
 - Sexual Misconduct
 - Stalking
- Violations of **Self-Discipline**
 - Alcohol Possession or Use
 - Disorderly Conduct/Obstruction and/or Unlawful Gathering
 - Drugs (illegal) and/or Drug Paraphernalia
 - Gambling
 - Student Identification Card Violations
 - Misuse of Electronic or Social Media
 - Violation of Confidentiality

- Classroom Disruption
- Deception
- Violations of **Academic Integrity**
 - Academic Dishonesty
 - Forgery, Dishonesty, Fraudulent Acts and/or Misrepresentation
 - Cooperative or Collaborative Effort in Coursework
 - Abuse of Academic Materials
 - Submitting Work for Multiple Purposes
 - Theft
- Violations of **Property and the Environment**
 - Animals (Pets)
 - Arson/Fire Setting
 - Damage to Property/Destruction of Property and/or Vandalism
 - Weapons and Firearms
 - Possession Using Fireworks and/or Explosives on Campus
 - Tampering or Destroying of Safety Devices/Safety Procedures
 - Theft/Misappropriation
 - Trespassing
 - Unauthorized Use of University Facilities
 - Unauthorized Entry
 - Unauthorized Use of Computer or Electronic Resources
- Violations of **Community Authority**
 - Aiding and/or Inciting
 - Violation of Sanction
 - Distribution of Printed Materials
 - Failure to Comply
 - Guest Behavior
 - Motor Vehicle, Traffic, and Parking Violations
 - Nuisance with Noise
 - Repeat Violations
 - Solicitation
 - Unlawful Conduct
 - Tobacco
 - Tampering/Destroying of Fire Safety Devices/Safety Procedures
 - Student Organization Misconduct

This list is not to be regarded as all inclusive. In the event ambiguity, inconsistency, or a need for further clarification arises regarding what constitutes a violation of the *Student Code of Conduct*, the Director for Student Conduct shall make the final determination. Any student or student organization found responsible for misconduct is subject to sanctions.

EXCEPTIONS: HOUSE BILL 280

Beginning on July 1, 2017, House Bill 280 (which amends O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1) allows anyone who is properly licensed in the State of Georgia to carry a handgun in a concealed manner on property owned or leased by public colleges and universities, with some exceptions. It will not allow any other type of gun to be carried around campus; nor will it allow handguns to be carried openly. (House Bill 280 does not apply, however, to institution-sponsored events or excursions away from campus on property not owned or leased by a University System institution. See Part III, Section VII. pg. 66.)

STUDENT MISCONDUCT WITHDRAWAL POLICY (SUSPENSION & EXPULSION)

In the case of suspension or expulsion, a student will receive a “W” for each course in which he or she is enrolled**. A student will also forfeit the right to a refund of any fees (i.e. tuition, mandatory fees, housing, etc.). This also includes any zero tolerance infractions.

A student may not voluntarily withdraw from the University without penalty if a decision of suspension or expulsion is rendered against the student. In addition, all students who are suspended or expelled from the university may have their name reported in the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia’s Student Disciplinary Actions Reporting System.

The University may, in its sole discretion, place a hold on the student’s academic records at the time of the incident, which will affect access to transcripts, re-entry to the University and/or other educational records until the disciplinary process is complete. Financial aid is not guaranteed for students who are involved in disciplinary proceedings.

*** If a student is suspended or expelled from the university and receives financial aid, it is imperative that the student contact the Office of Financial Aid. Students who receive financial aid funds should consult with the Office of Financial Aid regarding any required return or repayments of grant or loan assistance received for that academic term or payment period. If a recipient of student financial aid funds withdraws from the institution during an academic term or a payment period, the amount of grant or loan assistance received may be subject to return and/or repayment provisions.*

VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Albany State University values a campus community that encourages personal growth and academic development in an atmosphere of positive influence. We affirm the necessity of academic standards of conduct that allow students, staff and faculty to study together. We value the fair and efficient administration of these standards of conduct.

Violations of academic integrity include academic dishonesty; forgery, dishonesty, fraudulent acts, and/or misrepresentation; cooperative or collaborative effort in coursework; abuse of academic materials; submitting work for multiple purposes; and theft.

DEPARTMENT POLICY ON VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

If there is substantiated evidence that a student has violated academic integrity on any exam or course assignment in the nursing program, they will receive a **zero (0)** on the exam or assignment (without the possibility of a retake), **fail** the course with a letter grade of “F,” and be immediately **dismissed** from the program. Additionally, students found violating academic integrity will be ineligible to pursue nursing at Albany State University in perpetuity, including all existing and future nursing program options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

The intentional misrepresentation of one’s work to deceive for personal gain, when in fact said work is not that person’s or assisting another to do the same. When the instructor has sufficient evidence of cheating or plagiarism, he or she may impose disciplinary actions such as assigning a failing grade to the student’s assignment, quiz, paper, or test. If the plagiarism or cheating involves major course work such as plagiarizing a research paper or cheating on a final exam, the instructor may fail the student in the course. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication.

- Definition of **cheating**: Cheating can be, but is not limited to, a student using electronic technology, notes, or other written materials not permitted by the instructor; looking at other students’ papers / computers without the instructor’s permission; requesting answers from other students, alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or

credit; or working with other students when independent work is required. Situations where cheating may occur are during tests, exams, quizzes, or other similar methods of evaluation.

- Definition of **plagiarism**: Plagiarism is the appropriation of language, thoughts, or ideas of another author and claiming that as one's own. Plagiarism is work not produced by the student, or work that does not credit borrowings from the original source(s). Plagiarism can also be viewed as submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement.
- Definition of **fabrication**: Fabrication is the falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise. This includes making up citations to back up arguments or inventing quotations. Some other examples of fabrication would include making up data, changing data to support your hypothesis, claiming to have consulted sources that one really did not use.

University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are non-academic grounds for expulsion from Albany State University. No student shall give or receive any assistance not authorized by the professor in the preparation of any assignment, report, project, or examination to be submitted as a requirement for academic credit. Online courses at Albany State University utilize plagiarism software tools such as TurnItIn as a positive instructional tool and to promote academic integrity.

FORGERY, DISHONESTY, FRAUDULENT ACTS, AND/OR MISREPRESENTATION

1. Forgery of names, signatures, documents (personal, public, and/or private) will not be tolerated.
2. Forgery, deceptive acts, misrepresentation and/or dishonest acts include, but are not limited to materials, alteration, misuse of University documents, records, or student identification cards, or documents and records belonging to another, cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty; tampering with the election of any University recognized student organization; malfeasance of misuse of elective or appointive office student organization, its members, or the welfare of the University community.
3. Representing one's self as a member of a fraternity or sorority through the use of letters, paraphernalia, gestures, etc. without being a nationally initiated member who is acknowledged as an official member by documents from the national organization, including a membership card and certificate/shingle; and fraudulently issuing worthless checks to the University. Lying, knowingly furnishing false information to the University or its officials, other forms of dishonesty in University-related affairs is also prohibited.
4. The scope includes but is not limited to the following: lying, fraudulently obtaining, altering, falsifying, transferring, loaning, selling or misusing or attempting intended misuse of ID card, validation sticker, or any University document or service, misuse of university computer systems, laboratories, equipment, or software in violation of university computer use policies.
5. Unauthorized access, distribution, alteration, or use of electronic materials including, but not limited to, information, images, text, or software; recklessly or maliciously interfering with or damaging computer or network resources or computer data, files, or other information; engaging in or attempting to engage in a denial of service; failing to comply with laws, license agreements, and contracts governing network, software and hardware use.
6. Using University computing resources for unauthorized commercial purposes or personal gain.
7. Proving use of your personal account or password to another person; using another owner's account or password with or without authorization; accessing or causing to be accessed, downloading or causing to be downloaded, pornographic or obscene materials.

COOPERATIVE OR COLLABORATIVE EFFORT IN COURSEWORK

Without acknowledgement or explicit permission of the instructor (including digital media); knowingly helping or attempting to help another violate any provision of the Honor Code. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Working together on a take-home exam;
2. Working together on assignments without instructor permission.

ABUSE OF ACADEMIC MATERIALS

Intentionally or knowingly destroying, stealing, or making inaccessible any resource material. Examples include, but are not limited to:

1. Stealing, destroying, or hiding any reference materials needed for common academic requirements.
2. Stealing exams, grade books, books, papers, computer equipment and data, and laboratory materials.
3. Destroying computer files or programs needed for academic works
4. Damaging computer equipment (including removable media such as disks, CDs, flash drives, etc.) or laboratory equipment in order to alter or prevent evaluation of academic work, unauthorized use of another's computer password, disrupting the content or accessibility of an internet site, or impersonating another to obtain computer resources.
5. Purchasing and/or using an instructor edition of any textbook in place of the student edition for any course.
6. Purchasing and/or using the test bank for any course.

SUBMITTING WORK FOR MULTIPLE PURPOSES

Submitting without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement. This includes work first produced in connection with classes at either Albany State University or other institutions attended by the student.

THEFT

Stealing, taking or obtaining in any unauthorized manner information related to any academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to: stealing exams, grade books, books, papers, computer equipment and data, and laboratory materials.

DRUG POLICY

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all students currently matriculating through one of the programs offered by Albany State University's Department of Nursing. As defined in this policy, **substance abuse** is defined as follows:

- The manufacture, use, sale, purchase, distribution, transfer, or possession of an illegal drug by any nursing student while on university or affiliated clinical site premises or while participating in any university or affiliated clinical site-sponsored or related activity (including any nurse-related course or clinical training activity).
- The consumption, possession, or distribution of alcohol—unless approved by the university or clinical agency—by any nursing student while on university or affiliated clinical site premises or while participating in any university or affiliated clinical site-sponsored or related activity (including any nurse-related course or clinical training activity).
- The use of alcohol or any drug in such a way that the student's performance in any nursing course, including activities at any clinical site, is impaired.

Substance abuse, as defined here, is strictly prohibited. Under no circumstance should nursing students participate in nursing-related course of clinical activities while they are impaired. All students enrolled in Albany State University's nursing courses or programs are required to abide by the rules and guidelines detailed below when reporting to nursing-related courses, clinical experiences, and while at affiliating clinical agencies (including parking lots and grounds). A violation of this policy may constitute removal from clinical participation and/or cause for termination from the nursing program. Students must comply with all local, state, and/or federal laws and regulations controlled the possession, manufacture, use, or distribution of controlled or illegal substances and alcohol. Students are also responsible for adhering to the "Policy on Drug Use" as defined in *Student Code of Conduct*.

Failure or refusal to comply with the policies detailed herein may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any testing or to alter the results of testing will be considered a refusal to comply with this policy. In addition, failure or refusal to comply with any aspect of the substance abuse policy may be reported to the University's Office of Student Conduct for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the university's Student Conduct Policy.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

- A. It is prohibited for anyone to have alcohol on campus;
- B. It is illegal for anyone under the age of 21 to drink;
- C. It is illegal for anyone to buy or provide alcohol for someone under 21;
- D. It is illegal for anyone to be intoxicated in public or to drive while intoxicated, on or off campus;
- E. It is illegal for anyone to sell alcohol beverages without a license. By law, the sale of alcoholic beverages includes any situation in which there is a charge for entertainment or service and alcohol is freely available (including through common source or selling in a cup);
- F. It is a violation of University policy for a student to disturb someone else's ability to study, sleep, or live peacefully. (This means that other people's inappropriate behavior should not disturb your study, sleep, or ability to live peacefully);
- G. It is a violation of University policy for a student to hurt or endanger another student through drinking alcohol;
- H. Unlawful sale of alcoholic beverages to, and unlawful purchase and possession, of alcoholic beverages by any person under 21 years of age.
- I. The use, consumption, possession, sale, and/or distribution of alcoholic beverages on University property, in cars or other vehicles, or at any of the University activities (whether on or off campus) are prohibited.

ALCOHOLIC/DRUG INTOXICATION

Appearing in public on the University premises while intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs is strictly prohibited. This includes any disorderly conduct regardless of whether such conduct results in injury to person or property, as a result of intoxication shall be considered a violation.

DRUGS (ILLEGAL) AND/OR DRUG PARAPHERNALIA

The consumption, sale, distribution, manufacturing, purchase, passing of, or being in the presence of or the vicinity of illegal drugs, narcotics, the accessory to, or aiding and abetting or any controlled substances, are strictly prohibited from all locations of the University, and beyond the premises according to all local state and federal laws. Illegal drugs also include all prescription drugs without a valid medical prescription.

Drug paraphernalia is strictly prohibited from the University. Paraphernalia is defined as all equipment, products, and material of any kind used to facilitate planting, propagating, cultivating, growing, manufacturing, converting, processing, preparing, packaging, storing, concealing, playing with injecting,

ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a controlled substance into the body. Scope includes being on the person or in the possession of a student on property owned or controlled by the university and/or at events and activities sponsored by the University, and involves related incidents that are subject to prosecution under local, state, and federal laws.

The illegal possession of and/or use of drugs, or drug paraphernalia, includes, but is not limited to roach clips, bongs, masks, scales, balances, sandwich bags or plastic bags and their corners, sifters, syringes, spoons, chamber pipes, homemade pipes, film canisters, diluents, spray cans, carburetor pipes, paint, pipes, using screens, water pipes, hollowed cigars, rolling papers and any other equipment, products and materials that can be directly linked to the usage of controlled substances. Improper behavior or conduct on the campus which is a result of the use of illegal drugs which means that one who, having consumed or used drugs, experiences a restriction or a loss of the normal use of their mental and/or physical faculties.

RULES AND GUIDELINES

1. All students involved in clinical practice settings, whether for clinical education purposes or for the recruitment of research subjects and/or the collection of research data, must undergo drug testing prior to clinical placement.
2. For all affiliating clinical agencies which require nursing students to be subject to the agency's drug/alcohol testing policies (including, but not limited to, pre-employment placement testing, pre-clinical placement testing, or when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that a student may be impaired or is/has been engaged in substance abuse as defined herein), the student may be tested in accordance with the affiliating agency's policies.
 - As defined by this policy, "reasonable suspicion" includes evidence which forms a reasonable basis for concluding that it is more likely than not that a person has engaged in substance abuse.
3. During enrollment in the Department of Nursing, a student may also be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing for cause when there is reasonable suspicion that the student is impaired due to illegal drug/alcohol use or misuse of prescribed/over-the-counter medications.
 - University employees within the Department of Nursing able to make this determination are the Department Chairperson, appropriate Program Directors, Course Instructors, and Clinical Instructors.
4. The cost of all drug/alcohol testing required by the university, the Department of Nursing, or affiliating clinical agencies shall be the responsibility of the student or affiliating clinical agency, as determined by the agency. Neither the university nor the Department of Nursing—including any of its officers or employees—shall be required to absorb drug/alcohol testing costs arising out of any nursing student's placement at an affiliating clinical agency.
5. A positive substance abuse test shall result in dismissal from the program on the basis that the student is not able to meet the course objectives for classroom and/or clinical experiences. Please review the "Professional Behavior" and "Dismissal Policy" sections detailed within the handbook for further definitions and applicability.
6. If a student tests positive for a prescribed drug, the person must obtain a written statement from a qualified physician stating that the drug level is within prescribed limits and the level does not indicate abuse. The physician must indicate that the drug will not interfere with safe practice in the clinical area.
 - Students requiring the use of over-the-counter or prescribed medications that have the potential to impair performance or personal behavior are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have. Additionally, they must notify the Program Director, Course Instructor, or Clinical Instructor within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or drug testing about the use of medications that could impair performance or that has the potential to influence a drug screening.

Facts which could give rise to reasonable suspicion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unusual or aberrant behavior or patterns of abnormal or erratic behavior;
- Physical symptoms of impairment;
- Arrest or conviction for a drug or alcohol related offense;
- Evidence of drug tampering, drug diversion, or misappropriation;
- Direct observation of drug use or discrepant drug counts;
- Alterations in student clinical and/or didactic performance that may not be attributed to other causes;
- Following a work-related injury or illness, with evidence that it may have been related to use of a controlled substance;
- Observation of poor judgment or careless acts which caused or had the potential to cause patient injury, jeopardize the safety of self or others, or resulted in damage to equipment

SCREENING PROCEDURE

Drug and alcohol testing required by the Department of Nursing will be conducted utilizing the following measures:

1. Pre-placement drug screenings may occur at any facility capable and qualified to perform a 10-panel drug screening, which is the minimum required for clinical pre-placement; drug screenings requested by the university or affiliated clinical facilities must be done at university- or site-approved facilities.
2. The student must fully comply with the testing facility's methods and procedures for collecting samples.
3. Urine, serum, hair, and saliva analysis, or a combination of these, may be tested.
4. The test shall screen for the use of the controlled substances or any other controlled substances, including (but not limited to) amphetamines (AMP), barbiturates (BAR), benzodiazepines (BZO), cocaine (COC), methadone (MTD), oxycodone/OxyContin (OXY), phencyclidine (PCP), marijuana (THC), methamphetamine (Mamp), opiates (OPI), Ecstasy (MDMA), propoxyphene (PPX), and/or nicotine (NIC).
5. The student must notify the Program Director, Course Instructor, or Clinical Instructor within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or drug testing about the use of prescribed or over-the-counter medications, as well as any dietary habits, that could impair performance or that has the potential to influence a drug screening.
6. If the accuracy of a positive test is disputed by the student, the student may request a retesting of samples by the original facility.
7. Substance abuse is considered "verified" if either a positive test result is not disputed, or if the student-requested retest is positive.
8. If the test is inconclusive, the screening will be treated as positive until definitive analysis by alternate testing is accomplished. During this time, the student will not be permitted to participate in clinical activities but may be allowed to attend classes, pending the approval by the Department Chairperson.
9. For pre-clinical placement screenings, the student will be responsible for providing the Department of Nursing with the final results of the drug screening (positive, negative, or inconclusive); for additional screenings required by the university or clinical site, the testing facility will be responsible for providing the Department of Nursing with the final results of the drug screening (positive, negative, or inconclusive).

TREATMENT AND COUNSELING RESOURCES

As noted in the "Policy on Drug Use" section of the *Student Code of Conduct*,

Drug use and abuse is a major concern across college campuses in today's time. Albany State University continuously promotes and requires a drug free campus. The University actively

encourages students and employees who feel they have a substance abuse problem to seek counseling and treatment. The Student Counseling Department will help students, faculty, and staff seeking assistance with a substance abuse related problem. Those seeking such assistance are assured that professional standards of confidentiality will be upheld.

Additionally, the following websites are available as resources for students:

- [American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Peer Assistance](#)
- [Alcoholics Anonymous](#)
- [American Society of Addictive Medicine](#)
- [Narcotics Anonymous](#)
- [National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Social Media Policy provides students of Albany State University's Department of Nursing with rules to participate in social media, including ASU's Department of Nursing social media and in non-ASU Department of Nursing social media.

Definition: "Social media" is a conventional term of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, email, or video hosting sites.

First and foremost, all nursing students must recognize their ethical and legal obligation to maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times. As a nursing student it is important to represent Albany State University and its Department of Nursing in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the University's reputation.

1. Students may be held personally liable for proprietary, defamatory or libelous material posted on any form of social media.
2. Students will face sanctions for posting of materials that is defamatory, profane, threatening, harassing, hateful or humiliating to patient, students, hospital staff, preceptors, nurses, Albany State University faculty and staff, employers and coworkers included. Sanction will be determined by the University Office of Academic Affairs, the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee, and/or the appropriate Department of Nursing academic administrator.
3. Improper use of social media may result in being sued for defamation, invasion of privacy or harassment.
4. Occurrences of inappropriate use of social and electronic media may be submitted to the State Board of Nursing, which may affect licensure or eligibility for licensure.
5. The use of pseudonymous email addresses or online identities can be investigated and traced, so their use does not protect the student from responsibility and any liabilities related to posting online materials and or social media.
6. Students must promptly report any identifiable breach of confidentiality of privacy in regard to self, other nurses, and /or other nursing students.
7. Students must be knowledgeable of hospital and healthcare institution policies, relevant state and federal laws, and professional standards regarding patient privacy and confidentiality, as well as their application to social and electronic media.
8. The Department of Nursing may take action to dismiss any student from the nursing program who violates the social media statement.
9. Students may not transmit any electronic media of any patient-related information or image that violates patient rights to confidentiality or privacy or to otherwise degrade or embarrass the patient and/or families.

10. Students must not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information (including images) about a patient or information gained in the nurse-patient relationship with anyone, unless there is care-related need to disclose the information or other legal obligation to do so.
11. Students must not use social media during clinical hours or at any time on the clinical agency's equipment or property.

MISUSE OF ELECTRONICS OR SOCIAL MEDIA

Engaging in inappropriate or irresponsible conduct using any ASU affiliated webpage, email, and/or social media resource is strictly prohibited. The use of social media sites (Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Snapchat, etc.) to harass, cause bodily and/or mental harm or used to violate the law is also prohibited. Students who are alleged to be in violation of misuse of electronic or social media sites will be subject to criminal or civil penalties, as well as university disciplinary actions. Some examples include but are not limited to the following:

- Derogatory language or demeaning statements about or threats to any third party;
- Inappropriate or incriminating images depicting hazing, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, vandalism, fighting, stalking, underage drinking, illegal drug use, pornography or any other inappropriate behavior; or inappropriate language;
- Content that violates state or federal law;
- Information or images that could be considered obscene or untrue;
- Content that harasses third parties.

SECTION IV: CLINICAL POLICIES

CLINICAL POLICIES AS STUDENTS

All students in the nursing program will be required to complete clinical learning experiences to fulfill the requirements of the appropriate degree. Please be advised that the following policies are applicable to all students, and failure to meet any clinical requirements will impact progression and timely completion of the program. Policies may represent requirements of the clinical facilities, the Department of Nursing and/or the University.

1. Students are required to attend all laboratory/clinical experiences. If a student is ill and unable to attend lab, they must notify the assigned clinical unit before the day of the laboratory experience. If the laboratory/clinical experience will occur on campus, the instructor should be notified by telephone immediately prior to the scheduled experience. It is understandable that illnesses can and do occur during the semester; however, failure to notify your lab instructor prior to the missed experience is a serious matter and is unacceptable in nursing. A grade of unsatisfactory for the day will, therefore, be given to students who do not provide appropriate notification of absences.
2. Students are expected to arrive to clinical well rested. Therefore, students are not allowed to work for at least 8 hours immediately preceding their clinical shift. Students who do not adhere to this policy will not be allowed to attend clinical and/or will be sent home from clinical and assigned a clinical unsatisfactory for the day.
3. Students will not be allowed to receive personal telephone calls while in clinical areas. If an emergency should arise and the student needs to be notified, calls will be handled by the instructor who will relay the message to the student. This will necessitate informing family members the name of your instructor as well as the procedure to be followed for contacting students (see the attendance policies detailed within this handbook).
4. Each student will be assigned to a specific unit. They will not leave this area except at the request of the instructor or nurses on the unit until time for post-conference. Students are expected to seek learning opportunities. It is not acceptable to loiter in the hallways, nursing stations, or break rooms. Noise in the clinical setting should be kept to a minimum.
5. Students are not allowed to eat on any of the units.
6. Parking will be at the discretion of each clinical agency, and students will adhere accordingly.
7. If drug abuse is suspected, the student will be dismissed from clinical and be required to be tested at the student's expense. Students must obtain drug screening immediately after the request. Failure to complete testing immediately may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.
8. Additional requirements may be mandated by a clinical agency and will be adhered to by ASU nursing students.

STUDENTS PRECLUDED FROM CLINICAL INSTITUTION

All students will be expected to comply with all requirements set forth by the clinical institution, including their code of conduct. The institution reserves the right to prevent entry or request withdrawal from the clinical site any student the institution believes constitutes a risk of harm to patients, visitors, or employees or who fails to follow the institution's policies and procedures. If students are precluded from a clinical site by an institution, the Department of Nursing has no obligation to find an alternative clinical site for the student, and this may prevent the student from progressing in the nursing program.

If, in the judgment of the instructor or supervisory person in a contracted clinical facility, there is reason to question the emotional or physical condition of a student or the safety or the quality of nursing care provided, the instructor has the responsibility to dismiss the student from the clinical or university laboratory. The plan for dismissal is as follows:

- When an incident first occurs, the faculty will request the student to leave the clinical site/laboratory immediately.
- The faculty will communicate to appropriate hospital/supervisory personnel regarding the problem.
- The faculty will refer the student for appropriate professional for follow-up.
- The faculty will provide written documentation of the incident to the departmental chair and the student within 24 hours of the incident.
 - The student has the right to appeal in writing to the Chair (and then the Dean) if the decision is unacceptable to him/her, in accordance to university policy.
 - Upon receipt of written appeal, the Chair (or Dean) will notify the student in writing of subsequent steps to take for redress of the decision, according to University policy. A clinical failure earns a grade of “F.”

PROFESSIONAL DRESS GUIDELINES

Failure to comply with the clinical uniform regulations detailed below will result in the student being dismissed from clinicals and receiving an unsatisfactory clinical day.

GRADUATE NURSING STUDENT UNIFORM

The uniform for our graduate nursing students is “business casual” with a white lab coat, dark trousers or slacks (jeans are not permitted), and either the university-assigned student identification or the department-created student name badge (made upon request). The uniform must be clean, neat, and properly fitted. Additional requirements may be mandated by the clinical agency and will be adhered to by ASU nursing students.

HAIR AND NAILS

Note: *These requirements are applicable to both clinical and classroom/simulation lab uniforms.*

- Hair should be a single, natural color.
- All students should have their hair neat and trim and off the collar.
- Long hair and braided hair must be pinned up.
- False eyelashes are not permitted in the clinical setting.
- Mustaches and beards should be neat and well-maintained.
 - Students without well-established beards and/or mustaches are expected to shave before reporting to the clinical unit. Those with beards and/or mustaches are expected to keep them neatly trimmed to a length that can be fitted under an N-95 mask.
- Nail polish is not permitted in the clinical setting.
- Nails should be trimmed to the tip of the fingers.
- For hygiene reasons, artificial nails (including gel, acrylic, and silk-wrapped nails) are not allowed in the health care settings.

JEWELRY AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Note: *These requirements are applicable to both clinical and classroom/simulation lab uniforms.*

- Students may wear one ring or wedding set if married or engaged.
- Bracelets of any type are not allowed.
- Neck chains may be worn concealed under the uniform.
- Students are permitted to wear one small ear stud (pierced) in each ear; no dangling earrings or ear charms may be worn.
- Nose piercings or other visible body piercings (excluding ear piercings as dictated above) are not allowed.
- Visible tattoos are not allowed.

- A watch with second hand must be worn while in clinical attire.
- Perfume, cologne, body sprays, and other fragranced oils/sprays are not permitted to be worn.
- Deodorants and antiperspirants with strong odors may be subject to removal.
- Chewing gum is not permitted.

Additional requirements may be mandated by a clinical agency and will be adhered to by ASU nursing students.

TYPHON

Initially, all students will receive a username and password for Typhon. Typhon is clinical software that is utilized by ASU Graduate Program for tracking of students' clinical documentation and students' clinical experiences. The students are required to submit/ upload all "mandatory" clinical documents to Typhon. In addition, the student will input data of patient encounters in the Typhon system each clinical day. The student will maintain a record of patient encounters on patients seen in the clinical setting. At the end of each month, students will download their clinical experience summaries to the Typhon site.

The Instructor of each course will follow students' clinical progress in Typhon and observe for delinquent clinical documents. Graduate Department Administrative Assistant will provide each student with a username and password for Typhon.

PLANNING THE CLINICAL YEAR

Planning for the clinical semester is a complex process. The following topics must be addressed in the preparation for the clinical semester:

1. Student credentials
 - Academic prerequisites
 - Health and safety requirements
2. Preceptor credentials
3. Facility contractual agreements

Additionally, three forms are required prior to beginning clinical rotation and a clinical course:

1. Clinical Site Placement Request Form
 - **Related:** Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Affiliation of Students for Clinical Training; Memorandum of Understanding for an Applied Learning Experience; or Clinical Affiliation Agreement
2. Preceptor Agreement Form; and
3. Preceptor Qualification Record

Any clinical-related forms must be submitted at least 45 days before the semester in which the clinical experience will be completed, and late clinical packets will not be accepted. Failure to complete any required form accurately and in its entirety can slow the involved processes and may prevent the student from beginning the clinical experience. If the student does not have an approved clinical site and preceptor in place by the first day of his/her clinical course, the student may not be allowed to take the clinical course for that semester. If these deadlines are not met, the student will be administratively dropped from the clinical course(s) in which he/she is currently enrolled. Further, if a graduate nursing student requests (or is required) to be placed by the Graduate Clinical Coordinator and a site is secured, the student must accept the clinical location (regardless of travel distance). If the student refuses this clinical site, the student will be administratively dropped from the clinical course(s) in which he/she is currently enrolled.

The graduate nursing student should complete a majority of his/her clinical experiences with preceptors working within the field of practice relevant to the student's chosen education track. Some helpful suggests for securing a clinical site and preceptor include the following:

Suggestion for securing a Clinical Site and Preceptor

- **Start early!** Clinical-related forms are due 45 days prior to the beginning of the semester.
- Determine if a facility with which ASU already has an affiliation agreement would be a suitable site for the student's needs and course requirements.
- Other avenues for identifying potential clinical sites and preceptors:
 - Network through a local nurse practitioner association that accepts students as members
 - Ask friends or colleagues for suggestions
 - Search the internet or Yellow Pages for local practice sites.
- When contacting the preceptor or clinical site manager, students should present themselves in a professional manner both in dress and speech.

CLINICAL PLACEMENT

Students enrolled in graduate coursework requiring the completion of clinical experiences must be self-motivated and an active learner. Individuality, self-expression, self-reflection, evaluation, and critical thinking are all essential skills for a student in a preceptorship. These traits are also essential features to the role of an advanced practice registered nurse.

Students are responsible for finding an acceptable site and preceptor for their clinical experience. The Department of Nursing's Graduate Clinical Coordinator has a list of clinical facilities with which Albany State University already has an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which may be utilized by graduate nursing students for reference. However, the student is responsible for initiating the local contact with a potential preceptor and completing the required forms, made available by the Graduate Clinical Coordinator. Clinical experiences must be completed with a preceptor at a clinical site, both of which must be approved by the Department of Nursing's graduate nursing program. The learning objectives for the students enrolled in graduate-level clinical coursework are found in the syllabi of each applicable course and are also to be individualized by the student in collaboration with the approved preceptor and the faculty member.

Due to the high demand from health science and nursing programs both within and outside of Georgia, if a graduate nursing student requests (or is required) to be placed by the Graduate Clinical Coordinator, students may have to travel up to four (4) hours from their home in order to complete clinical experiences. Students seeking clinical opportunities in other states are responsible for locating their own clinical sites.

Final verification of clinical clearance (i.e., approval that a student may begin clinical work) must come from the Graduate Clinical Coordinator prior to the initiation of any clinical experiences. Any clinical hours completed prior to formal approval will not count towards the required semester clinical hours and may result in disciplinary action from the Department of Nursing.

Once all clinical-related documentation has been submitted, accepted, and approved **and** the student has been cleared to begin their clinical experiences, the student will provide his/her preceptor(s) with a preceptor packet, available from the Graduate Clinical Coordinator.

MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a legally binding agreement between Albany State University and the clinical site and must formally processed and approved by both the University's Office of Legal Affairs and the clinical site before the student can begin any clinical experiences. The student should verify with the Graduate Clinical Coordinator whether an affiliation agreement already exists between the requested clinical site and the University. Students must have an established, approved MOU in place for **every** site at which the student has requested to perform clinical rotation. For example, if a student is working with a preceptor at one site and the preceptor requests that the student accompany them to another site (e.g., office or hospital), the student will need a different Clinical Site Placement

Request Form and MOU in place for all locations where the preceptor will be working, if the location is a different entity from that which the requested affiliation agreement covers.

While the Department of Nursing does have a list of existing MOUs between Albany State University and various clinical sites across the state of Georgia, students are permitted (and, in some instances, required) to request a site without an establish MOU. Students electing for this option should be aware that the establishment of a new MOU is a time-consuming process and does not necessarily guarantee that an agreement can/will be reached prior to the beginning of the semester. In this instance, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site. The student may not be able to complete the nursing program at ASU. Therefore, it is important that the student have potential backup option available.

If a student is requesting a new affiliation agreement with a new clinical site, he/she will need to contact the Graduate Clinical Coordinator. The coordinator will then compose and email the student three (3) copies of the MOU, which the student will submit to the facility for signature(s). Upon receipt of the necessary signature(s), the student will then either hand-deliver or physically mail the three (3) original documents back to the University; scanned copies are not sufficient for this process. The Department of Nursing will then provide the documents to the Office of Legal Affairs, where the Chief Legal Affairs Officer will review, sign, and approve the MOU. One original will be mailed to the facility, one will remain in the Office of the President, and the final one will be returned to the Department of Nursing.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR PRECEPTORSHIPS

The Department of Nursing sets criteria, coordinates and evaluates preceptorship experiences in relationship to selected course and program objectives for selected student experience in clinical nursing courses for students.

Criteria for Participating Agencies

The participating agency must

1. Be exemplary of the policies and philosophy necessary to achieve the optimal goals of the Department of Nursing.
2. Assume an active role in providing realistic learning experiences and supportive supervision of students.

Criteria for Preceptor Selection

The clinical preceptor must

1. Be selected by the participating clinical agency as qualifying to serve as a clinical preceptor, if applicable.
2. Be a registered nurse currently licensed according to the Law of Georgia.
3. Have at least a baccalaureate degree in nursing. When a preceptor does not have a baccalaureate degree in nursing, clinical expertise may be considered in making the selection.
4. Have at least one (1) year of experience in their current position or in a position commensurate with the goals and objectives of the student.
5. Have prior experience in supervising professional nursing staff and/or nursing students in higher educational programs.
6. Provide evidence of continuing professional education in the area of clinical practice and/or in the area of an “expanded nursing role.”
7. Complete the Georgia Board of Nursing’s **Preceptor Qualification Record**.
8. Complete the Department of Nursing’s **Preceptor Agreement Form**.
9. Complete the Department of Nursing’s **Preceptor Orientation Packet** for the purpose of reviewing the Department of Nursing’s philosophy, conceptual framework, program objectives and evaluation process.

Student Selection of a Preceptor

When participating in an approved clinical preceptorship, students must

1. Receive approval from the clinical preceptor to participate in an approved preceptorship.
2. Discuss the course requirements, objectives, and clinical goals with the clinical preceptor.
3. Notify the clinical preceptor of the documentation required by the Department of Nursing, as listed above.
4. Request the clinical preceptor to notify their course instructor(s) and Clinical Coordinator of their agreement to serve as a preceptor.

Following this, the course instructor(s) will

1. Provide the student with the documentation required of the clinical preceptor for completion and submission to the Department of Nursing.
2. Upon return of the necessary document, receive final approval for the clinical preceptor via the Clinical Coordinator.
3. Collaborate with the Clinical Coordinator and the participating clinical agency's nursing administration regarding the terms of the preceptorship agreement.

Preceptorship Roles and Responsibilities

The **student** will

1. Coordinate with the assigned clinical preceptor to determine the day(s), hours, and clinical environment in which the preceptor experience is set to occur.
2. Submit a copy of the clinical objectives for the learning experience.
3. Produce written plans for implementation of clinical objectives.
4. Maintain an accurate log detailing the learning activities and/or nursing practice.
5. Conduct selective pre- and post-experience conferences with the clinical preceptor.
6. Submit a summary of clinical experiences.
7. Maintain all clinical documentation required for attainment of full rotational clearance throughout the entirety of their clinical preceptorship.

The **course instructor(s)** will

1. Review course and clinical objectives as they relate to the expected learning experiences with student and clinical preceptor.
2. Approve the student's clinical objectives and implementation plan.
3. Review the student's log on a weekly basis and provide feedback.
4. Be available via telephone during clinical hours for student and preceptor consultations and to review the progress of the preceptorship.
5. Meet with the clinical preceptor at selected times during the semester to discuss the student's progress.
6. At the conclusion of the preceptorship, collaborate with the clinical preceptor for the final clinical evaluation.

The **preceptor** will

1. Enter into a written agreement with the Department of Nursing and the participating clinical agency to serve as a clinical preceptor.
2. Be assigned to **no more than** two (2) students at any given time.
3. Provide supervision for the student in the selected clinical.
4. Meet with the students and faculty at selected times during the semester to discuss the student's progress.
5. Collaborate with the faculty for final evaluation of the student's performance, using the clinical evaluation of Albany State University.

6. Submit a short summary of strengths and summary of the preceptor's role and offer suggestions for improvements.
7. Review the clinical objectives

CLINICAL CALENDARS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

At the beginning of each semester, the student will develop individual clinical objectives for self-directed learning, which should be based around the learning experiences the student plans to attain and experience throughout the semester. These objectives must be in alignment with both the course objectives listed on the syllabus and the AACN's Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing. These objectives must be typed and submitted to the course instructor and the student's preceptor by the first week of classes.

During the initial meeting with the preceptor, the student and preceptor should develop a tentative clinical rotation schedule. By the first week of class, the student will submit a clinical calendar for the semester, which will provide the date and time for the completion of clinical hours. For example, "Monday, June 21, 2021: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM." Lunch times must be noted, if applicable. Additionally, the preceptor's name and the name, address, and telephone number of the clinical site should also be noted on the calendar.

Please be aware that students cannot begin their clinical rotation until both the clinical objectives and the clinical calendar has been approved by both the course instructor and the Graduate Clinical Coordinator. Any clinical hours completed prior to formal approval will not count towards the required semester clinical hours and may result in disciplinary action from the Department of Nursing.

CLINICAL ROTATION REQUIREMENTS

Students must arrange for the completion of clinical hours to take place during the academic semester; these hours cannot be completed prior to the beginning of the semester or between semesters. Clinical hours must occur on a weekday (Monday through Friday) between the business hours of 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM. Lunch times must be documented on the clinical calendar, if applicable. Clinical experiences are designed to be distributed throughout the entirety of the semester in order to coincide with didactic instruction. Consequently, no more than 50% of the total required clinical hours may be completed prior to midterm.

Students may utilize the same preceptor for a maximum of two (2) semesters during their matriculation through the program, and the same clinical site may be utilized up to three (3) times during the program. Exception to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the course instructor, the Graduate Nursing Programs Director, and the Graduate Clinical Coordinator.

For the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) program, students are not permitted to utilize the same preceptor for NURS 5410: Introduction to Family Primary Care and NURS 6211: Primary Care of Adults. Students within this program must spend at least 50% of their time with a nurse practitioner. Unless otherwise permitted, Convenient/Urgent Care facilities may not be utilized during the first two semesters within the program, and students may not use specialty clinics **except** during their final semester within the program (Practicum).

CLINICAL SITE VISITS

During the semesters in which clinical experiences are being completed, a clinical faculty member will arrange a clinical site visit to ensure the graduate nursing student is demonstrating competency. The course instructor will provide the student with the name and contact information of the individual who will be completing the site visit. The student will then provide this individual with a copy of his/her clinical calendar along with the contact information of the clinical site. Utilizing this information, the

clinical faculty member will coordinate a time for the visit with input from the student and the preceptor. These scheduled visitation days/times are shared with the course instructor.

During the site visitation, the clinical faculty member will observe the student during patient encounters, including any oral presentations to the preceptor. Following the observational period, the clinical faculty member privately discusses the student's performance with the preceptor identifying both strengths and areas for improvement. This information is then also discussed privately with the student. After the site visit has conclude, the clinical faculty member then submits a report for the student's file and shares the report with the course instructor.

Specific behaviors/attitudes that demonstrate student competency:

- Performs at an appropriate level (with increasing independence and level of complexity)
- Organized approach to patient assessment
- Evidence of reasoned clinical decision-making process
- Formulates sound evidence-based management plan
- Utilizes resources appropriately
- Articulates oral presentation skills
- Is professionally attired

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR NURSING STUDENTS

The student is required to submit evidence of a physical examination to the Director of Student Health Services upon admission to the University. A tuberculosis screening is also required and must be performed **after** program acceptance but **before** the first clinical experience. Should there be special requirements (such as throat cultures) for specialized areas, students must comply before clinical assignments begin. Hepatitis B vaccine is available for purchase through Student Health Services. Affiliating hospitals strongly recommend that students have the Hepatitis B series.

The student is responsible for ensuring that Student Health Services receive immunization records. Beginning Fall 2005, students who do not have immunizations on file will be dropped from their classes. Failure to have current immunizations on file may also result in denial of clinical experiences and result in a failing grade for a clinical course.

The student is responsible for securing and submitting copies of any/all Student Health Services records to the Department of Nursing.

NOTIFICATION OF RESTRICTIONS (POLICE RECORDS/BACKGROUND CHECKS)

The nursing student should be eligible to receive approval for taking the graduate program's certification exam at the time of admission to the program. The Georgia Board of Nursing asks the following questions of students at the time of application for nursing licensure:

1. Have you ever been arrested, convicted, sentenced, plead guilty, plead nolo contendere or given first offender status which is (a) a misdemeanor, (b) a felony; (c) a crime involving moral turpitude; (d) a crime violating a federal law involving controlled substances, dangerous drugs or a DUI or DWI, or (e) any offense other than a minor traffic violation? **Note: Even if probation completed or first offender status granted.**
2. Has any licensing board or agency in Georgia or any other state ever: (a) denied your license application, renewal or reinstatement? (b) revoked, suspended, restricted, or probated your license? (c) requested or accepted surrender of your license? (d) reprimanded, fined or disciplined you?

The authority of licensure rests with the Georgia Board of Nursing. For further information, contact the Georgia Board of Nursing or [visit their website](#).

Given this requirement and these questions by the Georgia Board of Nursing, Albany State University Department of Nursing requires that students undergo a personal (criminal) background check during the first semester of enrollment in the nursing program using the company designated by the Department of Nursing. Additionally, a student who is not enrolled in a nursing course for 1 or more non-summer semester must undergo another criminal background check. While the Department of Nursing cannot legally ascertain the results of this background check, a clean check increases the chance that the student will not be prohibited from writing the National Licensing Examination because of serious judicial violations.

Additionally, students may be subjected to background checks for agency clinical requirements, which are compulsory. If the agency refuses to allow a student to attend clinical experiences at the designated site, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site. The student may not be able to complete the nursing program at ASU. Therefore, it is important to conduct personal record checks prior to admission to the nursing program.

PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY (MALPRACTICE) INSURANCE

The student is required to carry professional liability (malpractice) insurance at a minimum coverage amount of \$1,000,000 each claim and \$6,000,000 aggregate. Explicit reference to coverage as a “student” within your current program of study must be present on documentation. For example, for undergraduates, this may appear as “Registered Nurse Student.” Please note that having coverage as only a “Registered Nurse” or “Employed Nurse” will NOT satisfy this requirement. The student must carry health insurance prior to attending clinical rotations in clinical agencies, and it must be maintained throughout the student’s duration in the program.

MANDATORY STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE

Beginning Fall Semester 2014, all new students accepted into any of the programs under the Darton College of Health Professions at ASU will be required to show proof of active Medical Insurance coverage. This is a new Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia mandate and not an ASU mandate. Proof of coverage must be submitted during the fall and spring semesters (as coverage for the Spring semester extends through the Summer). Submission is done via [Albany State University’s UnitedHealthcare Student Resources](#) page.

Proof of coverage must be provided in one of the following ways:

1. Through a currently active parent plan.
2. Through a currently active individual or family plan.
3. Through a currently active Employer-Sponsored plan.
4. Through a currently active Darton College of Health Professions Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP).
5. Through a currently active Government-Sponsored Plan.

If a student fails to provide appropriate proof of coverage during the dates stated above, the student will be automatically enrolled (via the Business Office) into plan #4 above. Rates are subject to change without notice.

Additionally, Health insurance coverage must be maintained by the student throughout the entire time that they remain enrolled and is actively progressing through their respective Health Sciences or Nursing Program. If a student fails to maintain Health Insurance coverage, then they will be immediately dismissed from their respective Health Sciences or Nursing Program for failure to maintain the mandatory coverage as required by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please contact your respective Program Director, the Nursing Division Office, or the Health Sciences Division Office. If a student does not take any action, they will still be charged.

TUBERCULOSIS SCREENINGS

(Information provided by the [Center for Disease Control and Prevention](#))

Tuberculosis (TB) screening and testing of health care personnel is recommended as part of a TB Infection Control Plan and might be required by state regulations. For TB regulations in your area, please contact your state or local TB control program.

TB screening programs should include anyone working or volunteering in healthcare settings, including:

- inpatient settings,
- outpatient settings,
- laboratories,
- emergency medical services,
- medical settings in correctional facilities,
- home-based health care and outreach settings,
- long-term care facilities, and
- clinics in homeless shelters.

FREQUENCY OF TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING AND TESTING

Baseline Screening and Testing

All U.S. health care personnel should be screened for TB upon hire (i.e., preplacement). TB screening is a process that includes:

- A baseline individual TB risk assessment,
- TB symptom evaluation,
- A TB test (e.g., TB blood test or a TB skin test), and
- Additional evaluation for TB disease as needed.

Information from the baseline individual TB risk assessment should be used to interpret the results of a TB blood test or TB skin test given upon hire (i.e., preplacement). Health care personnel with a positive TB test result should receive a symptom evaluation and a chest x-ray to rule out TB disease. Additional workup may be needed based on those results.

Health care personnel with a documented history of a prior positive TB test should receive a baseline individual TB risk assessment and TB symptom screen upon hire (i.e., preplacement). A repeat TB test (e.g., TB blood test or a TB skin test) is not required.

Annual Screening, Testing, and Education

Annual TB testing of health care personnel is **not** recommended unless there is a known exposure or ongoing transmission at a healthcare facility. Health care personnel with untreated latent TB infection should receive an annual TB symptom screen. Symptoms for TB disease include any of the following: a cough lasting longer than three weeks, unexplained weight loss, night sweats or a fever, and loss of appetite.

Healthcare facilities might consider using annual TB screening for certain groups at increased occupational risk for TB exposure (e.g., pulmonologists or respiratory therapists) or in certain settings if transmission has occurred in the past (e.g., emergency departments). Facilities should work with their state and local health departments to help make these decisions.

All health care personnel should receive TB education annually. TB education should include information on TB risk factors, the signs and symptoms of TB disease, and TB infection control policies and

procedures. TB education materials can be found through CDC, the TB Centers of Excellence for Training, Education, and Medical Consultation, NTCA, State TB Programs, and the Find TB Resources website.

Post-Exposure Screening and Testing

All health care personnel with a known exposure to TB disease should receive a TB symptom screen and timely testing, if indicated.

- Health care personnel with a previous negative TB test result should be tested immediately and re-tested 8 to 10 weeks after the last known exposure. For consistency, the same type of TB test (e.g., TB blood test or TB skin test) should be used upon hire (i.e., preplacement) and for any follow-up testing.
- Health care personnel with a documented history of a positive TB test result do not need to be re-tested after exposure to TB. They should receive a TB symptom screen and if they have symptoms of TB, they should be evaluated for TB disease.

TUBERCULOSIS BLOOD TEST

Baseline Testing

The process for baseline testing using a TB blood test is as follows:

1. Administer TB blood test following proper protocol
2. Review result
 - **Negative** — consider not infected
 - **Positive** — consider TB infected and evaluate for TB disease¹
3. Document result
4. Using a TB blood test for baseline testing does not require two-step testing. Additionally, TB blood tests are not affected by the BCG vaccine.

¹ **Note:** An individual TB risk assessment should be used to help interpret test results and determine whether health care personnel are at increased risk for TB. Low-risk health care personnel who test positive for TB infection should have a second TB test to confirm the result. For example, health care personnel who do not have any TB symptoms, are unlikely to be infected, and are at low risk for progression to TB disease should receive a second TB test if their first test is positive. If the second test is also positive, the health care personnel is considered to have TB infection and they should be evaluated with a chest x-ray and TB symptom screen.

TUBERCULOSIS SKIN TEST: TWO-STEP TESTING

Baseline Testing: Two-Step Test

If the Mantoux tuberculin skin test (TST) is used to test health care personnel upon hire (preplacement), two-step testing should be used. This is because some people with latent TB infection have a negative reaction when tested years after being infected. The first TST may stimulate or boost a reaction. Positive reactions to subsequent TSTs could be misinterpreted as a recent infection.

Step 1

1. Administer first TST following proper protocol
2. Review result
 - **Positive** — consider TB infected, no second TST needed; evaluate for TB disease.¹
 - **Negative** — a second TST is needed. Retest in 1 to 3 weeks after first TST result is read.
3. Document result

Step 2

1. Administer second TST 1 to 3 weeks after first test
2. Review results
 - **Positive** — consider TB infected and evaluate for TB disease.
 - **Negative** — consider person not infected.
3. Document result

¹ **Note:** *An individual TB risk assessment should be used to help interpret test results and determine whether health care personnel are at increased risk for TB. Low-risk health care personnel who test positive for TB infection should have a second TB test to confirm the result. For example, health care personnel who do not have any TB symptoms, are unlikely to be infected, and are at low risk for progression to TB disease should receive a second TB test if their first test is positive. If the second test is also positive, the health care personnel is considered to have TB infection and they should be evaluated with a chest x-ray and TB symptom screen.*

ON-CAMPUS SIMULATION AND SKILLS LABS

The purpose of the on-campus simulation skills lab is to allow students to demonstrate certain required skills. A student can only attend the scheduled lab at the date and time assigned. A student will not receive credit for attending a lab at another time or date unless prior written authorization is obtained from the course instructor. This written authorization should be submitted to the clinical lab instructor by the course faculty prior to lab time.

Because the scheduled laboratory is for student demonstration, students are expected to be prepared and on-time. Students will not be allowed to stay in the lab if they are late or noted to be unprepared for the lab experience.

In order to satisfactorily demonstrate the assigned skills during the scheduled campus time students may be required to watch videos, read pertinent material and practice in the laboratory outside of the scheduled lab hours. Available practice hours will be posted on the campus lab doors. During unscheduled lab hours, faculty/staff may be available to answer questions and practice assistance. Therefore, sign up for lab at least one day prior to the assistance being needed.

All students are expected to maintain a lab log sheet. This record must be maintained neatly in a soft-back folder and turned into the course instructor upon request. This log should note the following:

1. Each date that you attend the scheduled lab.
2. Each date you attend an unscheduled lab with instructor assistance. (Note: Any unscheduled lab hours spent without instructor assistance should not be documented.)
3. The date you viewed the required videotapes. Videotapes may not be taken from the Department of Nursing.
4. A faculty/staff member should initial each of the above log notations at that time. Staff members can only sign that videotapes were secured and returned and cannot sign for skill demonstration or skill assistance.

Requirements for nursing lab skills must be completed before the student will be allowed to perform these skills in the clinical setting. If lab assignments are not completed by the dates posted, the student may be terminated from the course. The student must demonstrate in the college laboratory, the hospital, and other practice settings the ability to give safe, effective nursing care in the assigned areas. The student must attend all assigned clinical experiences, either in the hospital or other practice setting. Make-ups may not be possible. Successful completion of these assignments is required in the course. If safe, effective nursing care and/or attendance cannot be achieved, the student will fail clinically and receive an "F" as a final course grade. If a student is going to be absent from a clinical experience, the student must

call on the day of absence prior to the start time and notify faculty at the clinical area. Depending upon why a student received a clinical failure, they may not be able to return to the program (if violation involves safety).

EMPLOYMENT AS AN UNLICENSED STUDENT

As required by the Georgia Board of Nursing, “unlicensed students shall be employed only as unlicensed nursing personnel. They shall not represent themselves, or practice, as nursing students except as part of a learning activity in a practice setting which is integral to the curriculum.” Please refer to GBN Rule 410.-3-.07(4)

PATIENT CARE

The student nurse will not discriminate while providing nursing services on the basis of age, marital status, sex, sexual preference, race, religion, diagnosis, socioeconomic status or disability. This is in accordance with Georgia Board of Nursing Rule 410-10-.01 Standards of Practice for Registered Professional Nurses.

CLINICAL SAFETY POLICY

When health issues (physical or psychological) are involved, both student and patient safety will be considered.

- Student is advised to consult with the nursing faculty member or adviser regarding health related issues that may put either student or patient in danger
- All requirements of the clinical institution will be followed. Clinical institutions may require the student to provide evidence from their health care provider that the student may participate without restriction in all clinical activities, and that the student’s health concerns will not negatively impact students and patients
 - The student may need to withdraw from nursing courses in order to allow time to receive treatment and improve their health condition and to maintain the safety of patients.
- Students are required to perform any patient procedure and/or invasive skill such as venipuncture, establishing intravenous access, administering medications (including, but not limited to: orally, parenterally, enterally, topically, intramuscularly, intravenously, subcutaneously, otically, ophthalmically, nasally, rectally, sublingually, or transdermally) under the direction and supervision of the clinical instructor, preceptor, or other designated licensed individual (such as patient’s assigned registered nurse). The clinical instructor, preceptor, or specified designee must be notified prior to student undertaking a patient procedure/skill.
- Specific policies related to health follow:

HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT (HIPAA)

The nursing student must keep in confidence all knowledge about any patient. Such matters are not to be discussed with friends, roommates, or other lay persons. The patient’s complete name or other identifying information (such as social security number) should **NOT** appear on care plans or other written work to be turned in to the instructor. Discussion of confidential information about a patient other than in clinical conference or with other members of the health team in inappropriate settings is a serious breach of ethics and is grounds for dismissal from the program.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND SECURITY AGREEMENT

In accordance with the Law (Official Code of Georgia, Annotated, Sections 37-3, 37-4, 37-7) every patient’s right to confidential treatment must be protected. As a student and/or provider of care, the patient’s right to privacy must be protected and treatment must remain confidential. students and/or providers of care must keep patient information confidential and safeguard the privacy and security of the patient information including electronic health information. While providing care, students and/or providers of care may become knowledgeable of certain patient related information. This information

may include patient identity, information related to a patient's treatment, diagnosis, or to other services received. Students and/or providers of care understand that they are restricted from discussing any information pertaining to their patient with anyone including other students (outside of post conference) other than Albany State University Nursing faculty, clinical instructors, or hospital personnel directly responsible for the patient's care, for any reason. Personally identifying information is any information which is readily used to identify a particular patient including but not limited to: name, address, social security number, physical description, names of family members, and photographs. Students and/or providers of care further understand that if they do discuss patient information, they subject themselves to civil liability and may be subject to dismissal from Albany State University's Nursing Program.

IMPAIRED NURSING STUDENT POLICY

POLICY

The intent of this Policy is to offer assistance to those who are in need, while sending a clear message that all students enrolled in the Department of Nursing ("Department of Nursing") at Albany State University ("The University") are strictly prohibited from possessing or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while engaged in any Clinical Activities.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE AND INTENTION

- A. Students enrolled in the Department of Nursing at the graduate level engage in clinical rotations and training at various types of health care facilities, including, but not limited to, University skills or simulation laboratories, hospitals, private practice offices, long-term care facilities, clinics, schools and community agencies.
- B. Drug and alcohol use may adversely affect the educational process and the quality of care provided by students in the clinical setting. Drug and alcohol use may also pose serious safety and health risks to the student, patients and others.
- C. The University and the Department of Nursing require all nursing students engaged in Clinical Activities be free from the influence of drugs and alcohol.
- D. This Policy is enacted in accordance with a position statement on the subject of substance abuse in nursing education published by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, and the standards set forth in Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act (§ 43-26-53).
- E. This policy is not intended to apply to the use or possession of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs and/or drug paraphernalia, if legally obtained, used for the purpose for which it was prescribed or manufactured, and if taken at the prescribed or authorized dosage; provided that use of the drug and/or drug paraphernalia does not interfere with the safe and efficient performance of the Student's Clinical Activities.

DEFINITIONS

- A. "Alcohol" means beer, wine and all forms of distilled liquor containing ethyl alcohol.
- B. "Clinical Activities" shall refer to those duties or activities required of Department of Nursing students, whether on the campus of Albany State University or at an outside Host Facility, which involve direct patient care or interaction with a patient or research subject for purposes of medical care, treatment, or testing, and/or as part of a Clinical Program.
- C. "Clinical Program" shall refer to the assignment of Department of Nursing students to health care facilities, University skills or simulation laboratories, etc., for the purpose of gaining practical experience and/or engaging in patient care, in fulfillment of degree or course requirements.
- D. "Drug" means hallucinogenic or narcotic drugs or other drugs/substances which tend to impair judgment or coordination including, but not limited to, substances controlled by State or Federal laws.

- E. “Drug Paraphernalia” means all equipment, products, and materials of any kind, which are used for injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing a drug into the human body. This includes, but is not limited to, all equipment, products and materials prohibited or controlled by State or Federal laws.
- F. “Host Facility” shall mean any place other than a campus of Albany State University where a student is engaged in Clinical Activities in fulfillment of degree or course requirements, including but not limited to health care facilities, hospitals, physician offices, long-term care facilities, clinics, schools and community agencies.
- G. “Student” is an graduate student enrolled in the Department of Nursing.
- H. “Clinical Instructor/Supervisor” is the person the Department of Nursing assigned to oversee a student while engaged in performance of a Clinical Program and/or while engaged in Clinical Activities. Clinical Instructors are faculty employed by Albany State University Department of Nursing. Supervisors are employees of the facility at which a Clinical Program takes place.

Note: *Defined terms are capitalized herein.*

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POSSESSION AND USE

- A. Prohibitions. Except as provided in paragraph C below:
 - 1. No Student engaged in Clinical Activities shall use, consume, transport, possess or sell Alcohol, Drugs or Drug Paraphernalia while on the site of a Clinical Program, or while engaged in Clinical Activities.
 - 2. No Student may report to the premises of a Clinical Program or remain on duty, or engage in any Clinical Activities, while under the influence of or impaired by Alcohol or Drugs, to any degree. This is a **zero** tolerance policy.
 - 3. This policy is not directly applicable to Students who are in traditional classroom/ lecture situation; however, all Students of the University are prohibited from being under the influence of Alcohol or Drugs while taking part in on-campus activities and violations of this nature may be subject to sanctions under the *Student Code of Conduct* and/or other University or Department of Nursing rules and regulations.
- B. Exceptions. The following circumstances may constitute exceptions to this Policy:
 - 1. Prescribed and over-the-counter drugs. The use or possession of prescribed or over-the-counter drugs and/or drug paraphernalia is not prohibited by this Policy, if legally obtained, used for the purpose for which it was prescribed or manufactured, and if taken at the prescribed or authorized dosage; provided that use of the drug and/or drug paraphernalia does not interfere with the safe and efficient performance of the Student’s Clinical Activities.
 - 2. Legitimate distribution of medications. The prohibitions set forth in this Policy do not apply to legitimate distribution of medication as may be an assigned duty in a clinical program.
- C. Students who participate in Clinical Programs at outside facilities are subject to the rules and regulations of the Host Facility and Albany State Department of Nursing. This may include drug and/or alcohol testing. Testing for illegal drugs or alcohol may be required by the Host Facility prior to commencement of a clinical program, on a random basis, following an accident, or upon observation of conduct which may be indicative of drug or alcohol use. Neither the University nor the Department of Nursing has control over the manner in which testing is carried out by a Host Facility. If a test indicates the presence of illegal drugs or alcohol, and if the test results are provided to the Department of Nursing, this information will be utilized in the manner set forth herein.

PROCEDURES

- A. Failure to cooperate with the procedures set forth herein may result in termination of a Student’s clinical program, which will carry with it serious consequences for the Student’s ability to complete his or her course of study in the Department of Nursing.

- B.** In order to assure compliance with this Policy and as a condition of continuing to participate in Clinical Activities and/or a Clinical Program, Students are required to cooperate with the procedures outlined herein, including Drug and Alcohol testing. Such tests may be administered upon a finding of reasonable suspicion that a Student has used Drugs or Alcohol while engaged in Clinical Activities. Reasonable suspicion shall be determined by the Clinical Instructor/Supervisor, based upon various factors, including but not limited to observation of signs or symptoms commonly associated with intoxication, such as: impaired mental ability, inability to maintain balance, odor of alcohol, boisterous or slurred speech, drowsiness, dilated pupils, staggering, awkward movements or erratic behavior. In making a determination of reasonable suspicion, the Clinical Instructor/Supervisor may take into account observations of lay persons, other staff or faculty of the Department of Nursing and/or health care professionals.
- C.** When finding of reasonable suspicion is made, the following steps will be implemented by the Department of Nursing.
1. If the student appears to be medically unstable (i.e. is obtunded, falling down, lashing out at people, etc.), the student will be sent to the nearest emergency room. If no emergency room is in the clinical site, an ambulance will be called.
 2. If the student appears medically stable, the Clinical Instructor/Supervisor shall instruct the student to leave the clinical area and will address the student in private to discuss the behavior(s) observed. If the supervisor is a non-ASU preceptor or supervisor, contact the course or clinical instructor assigned to the student.
 3. If at any time during this process, the Clinical Instructor is not able to adequately manage other students in the clinical group, they should be sent home, citing an emergency situation that requires the Clinical Instructor attention.
 4. The Clinical Instructor will specifically inquire about whether the student has used drugs or alcohol and if so, the details of such use.
 5. The Clinical Instructor shall consult with the BSN Program Director, as practicable, and shall make a determination as to whether to refer the Student for Drug and Alcohol testing. If the program director is not available, the Clinical Instructor will consult with another nursing administrative person or faculty member at the Department of Nursing or campus. The decision to send the student for testing will preferably be made with consultation of at least one other administrative person who has assessed the student face to face or has consulted via phone. In the event that another person is not available, the clinical instructor will make the decision independently.
 6. If the decision is made to send the Student for testing, the Student shall be notified that he or she will be tested for the presence of Drugs and/or Alcohol. The student will incur costs associated with the initial testing. A student who refuses to undergo testing shall be presumed to have violated this policy. Transportation for both the student and the faculty person to and from the location for testing will be arranged by the Department of Nursing. The Student will be accompanied by a Department of Nursing representative at all times during transportation to the testing site.
 7. Each location will determine appropriate safe travel arrangements keeping in mind that the Department of Nursing representative must be in the vehicle with the student.
 8. After testing is completed, the Department of Nursing will arrange for the student to be transported home or to the home of a family member or friend. The student will be counseled against driving and encouraged to arrange to be accompanied by a family member or friend. If the student is unable or unwilling to call a family member or friend to transport them home, transportation will be arranged by the Department of Nursing at the student's expense. The ASU representative will remain with the student until transportation is obtained.
 9. Tests shall be accomplished via urine sample, or other reliable method. The testing process will be carried out pursuant to the testing protocols of the clinical agency or the testing site. Samples shall be collected by the clinical agency or the designated testing site. A split sample

- shall be collected. Test results for the presence of Drugs or Alcohol will be interpreted by the testing site. A negative result on a test will not necessitate further testing and no further action shall be taken. In the case of a positive test, the Student shall be contacted by the testing site to determine whether there is any legitimate explanation for the positive test. If no legitimate explanation can be verified by the testing site, the Student shall be given the option of having the second sample tested, at the expense of the Student. If testing of the second sample yields a negative result, no further action shall be taken. The testing site shall advise the Chair of the Department of Nursing of testing results. NOTE: If testing is necessary during a time that the screening clinic is closed, testing will be done at the Clinical agency, if possible, and results will be obtained by the Chair of the Department of Nursing.
10. The University will make reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality in the administrative handling of matters relating to Student Drug and Alcohol testing.
 11. The Clinical Instructor/Supervisor will prepare a written report documenting the observed Student behavior(s) and submit same to the Chair of the Department of Nursing.
 12. A Student who has been sent for a Drug and Alcohol test shall be suspended from participation in Clinical Activities until the results are returned. Based on the test results, the Chair of the Department of Nursing will report to the Clinical Instructor whether the Student will be permitted to resume Clinical Activities. If the results are negative, the Student shall be permitted to resume his or her regular Clinical Activities immediately. If the test results are positive for the presence of Drugs or Alcohol, or if the Student refused to submit to testing, the following steps shall be followed.
 13. A positive substance abuse test shall result in dismissal from the program on the basis that the student is not able to meet the course objectives for classroom and/or clinical experiences. Please review the “Professional Behavior” and “Dismissal Policy” sections detailed within the handbook for further definitions and applicability.
 14. If a student tests positive for a prescribed drug, the person must obtain a written statement from a qualified physician stating that the drug level is within prescribed limits and the level does not indicate abuse. The physician must indicate that the drug will not interfere with safe practice in the clinical area.
 15. Students requiring the use of over-the-counter or prescribed medications that the potential to impair performance or personal behavior are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have. Additionally, they must notify the Program Director, Course Instructor, or Clinical Instructor within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or drug testing about the use of medications that could impair performance or that has the potential to influence a drug screening.
 16. The fact of a positive test result shall be conveyed by the Department of Nursing to the Office of Student Conduct for evaluation of whether the behavior has violated the *Student Code of Conduct*. The Office of Student Conduct will investigate and process the matter in accordance with standard University procedures and the *Student Code of Conduct*. The Designee or staff from the Office of Student Conduct will investigate the allegation and when it appears that a violation may have occurred, the Student will be subject to the University’s disciplinary process. The Department of Nursing will be notified of the outcome of this process.

APPEALS

- A. Student may appeal sanctions by sending a written statement of the basis for the appeal to the Chair of the Department of Nursing, within ten (10) days after the action which is being appealed. The Student’s written appeal shall succinctly set forth the basis for the appeal, with supporting documentation, as appropriate.
- B. Within a reasonable period of time after the filing of an appeal, the Chair of the Department of Nursing shall convene a meeting with the Student in an attempt to amicably resolve the matter. If

no resolution can be reached, the Chair of the Department of Nursing shall convene a hearing committee, consisting of three (3) faculty members from the Department of Nursing, one of whom shall serve as committee chair. The hearing shall be convened as soon as practicable. The following rules shall apply to the hearing:

1. The purpose of the hearing is one of fact finding.
2. The committee shall have full authority to conduct the hearing in a manner that is fair, efficient, and respectful.
3. Formal rules of evidence do not apply, but irrelevant, immaterial or unduly repetitious evidence may be excluded at the discretion of the committee.
4. In light of the nature and spirit of the proceeding, representation by legal counsel is prohibited.
5. The hearing shall be closed, meaning that no one beyond the persons involved in the hearing will be admitted.
6. Participants shall include the Student and the Clinical Instructor who observed or was involved in the incident in question. Others with knowledge of the circumstances in question may be permitted to participate, with the permission of the chair of the committee.
7. The Clinical Instructor will address the committee first, followed by the Student. The committee may ask questions of the Clinical Instructor and the Student. The Clinical Instructor or faculty member and the Student may also ask questions of each other, in a polite and respectful manner.
8. Requests for additional information may be made by the committee to the faculty member and the Student.
9. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee shall dismiss the participants and deliberate in private. The committee members shall then vote on the outcome of the hearing, with each member having one vote. The chair of the committee will inform the Student of committee's decision within one business day after the hearing.
10. The decision of the committee shall be final.

REINSTATEMENT TO CLINICAL PROGRAM/ACTIVITIES

- A. As a condition for being considered for reinstatement to a Clinical Program and/or participation in Clinical Activities, Students must consent to release to the Department of Nursing the findings, reports and/or recommendations of any drug and alcohol counselors, physicians, psychiatrists, psychologist, etc. as well as the outcome of any actions undertaken by the Office of Student Conduct.
- B. A Student who has been removed from a Clinical Program for a violation of this Policy shall be permitted to return to the Clinical Program upon fulfillment of the following conditions:
 1. Expiration of any academic suspension or disciplinary suspension.
 2. Written documentation of successful completion of all drug and alcohol services recommended or any recommendations by the Office of Student Conduct.
 3. Agreement to voluntarily participate in random Drug or Alcohol screening, the cost of which must be paid by the Student.
- C. A Student's return to any Clinical Program at a Host Facility will be contingent upon re-acceptance by the Host Facility.

ASSISTANCE TO STUDENTS WITH DRUG OR ALCOHOL PROBLEMS

Students with drug or alcohol problems, whether or not engaged in Clinical Activities, are encouraged to voluntarily seek assistance through University's Student Counseling Department. Professors, instructors and advisers in the Department of Nursing will assist Students with referrals, as requested.

NOTE: Any situation that may arise that does not fall within the policy guidelines will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Department of Nursing, University Student Health Center and University Risk Management.

PROCEDURE FOR INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONAL STANDARDS AND CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

A. Identification

1. Faculty or on-site clinical supervisors who determine there is a potential or clear concern that the student is unable to maintain the provision of safe care to patients, or that the student's actions or behaviors are detrimental to the functioning of the healthcare environment, shall remove the student from the clinical area.
2. Depending on the reason for removal, appropriate university resources will be consulted. If an immediate concern is identified, the student shall be transported to the appropriate emergency department for evaluation/treatment or returned to the Department of Nursing for an immediate meeting with the Program Director and/or Chair of Nursing. If the Program Director and/or Chair of Nursing is unavailable, a meeting will be held within one (1) business day with an appropriate administrative representative of Department of Nursing.
3. Transportation of the student from the clinical site to the Department of Nursing or healthcare facility shall be determined by the resources available to the specific Department of Nursing campus policy and resources. Possible resources may include transportation by ambulance, public transportation, or family. Faculty will consult with Department of Nursing administrator to evaluate the safest mode of transportation for the student in light of student behavior and condition.
4. Written evidence of the student's inability to complete the essential functions will be reviewed with the student, and the student will be given an opportunity to respond to the information.
5. A student's unwillingness to follow the Essential Functional Standards policy may be cause for dismissal from the nursing program.
6. Upon satisfactory resolution of the observed functional impairment demonstrated during the clinical experience, the student may be given consideration to return to the clinical site, if mutually agreed upon by the faculty and clinical site.

B. Evaluation Referral and Treatment

1. Documentation of the student's ability and appropriateness for clinical work may be necessary prior to the student's return to clinical experiences. The Department of Nursing Chair, Dean, or Clinical Facility may request an evaluation conducted by the appropriate professional or agency (e.g., Physical or Mental Health Professional, Student Disability Resources, Office of Student Conduct, etc.) to document the student's ability to return to the clinical site and enact the required essential functions. The cost of the evaluation will be the responsibility of the student.
2. The student must sign a release of information to enable the evaluator to inform the Chair of the student's ability to return to the clinical site and render safe care to patients. The Department of Nursing will provide a copy of this policy and expectations of the student in the clinical site to the identified provider in order to facilitate an appropriate evaluation of the student.
3. Students in need of treatment beyond the initial evaluation may be referred to an appropriate psychological and counseling campus resource, an outside mental or physical health provider, or appropriate agency or office. Costs for treatment services are the responsibility of the student.
4. Failure to comply with the requested assessment, recommended treatment and/or monitoring may result in dismissal from the nursing program.

C. Return to Clinical Practice

1. In the event that the student has been referred for assessment and/or treatment, a written evaluation by the service provider, which includes an endorsement of the student's ability to enact the essential functions, must be received by the appropriate Department of Nursing Chair prior to the student's return.
2. All medical information will be treated as confidential and maintained according to Albany State University policy and relevant State and Federal regulations. It is only with the student's expressed written consent that information will be shared between the Department of Nursing and service provider. No information shall be shared with the Department of Nursing faculty or personnel unless there is a clear need to know.
3. The student and Department of Nursing representative(s) will review and sign a return to clinical practice agreement, which is reflective of the student's individual needs.
4. The Department of Nursing and/or clinical facility have the right to place conditions on the student's return to clinical experiences.
5. The Department of Nursing faculty will provide direct, on-going supervision of the student's ability to meet the expected essential functions upon the student's return to practice. Appropriate oversight will be maintained by the Department of Nursing.
6. Additional behaviors indicative of unsafe clinical practice may be cause for dismissal from the nursing program.
7. Certain behaviors such as taking and/or being under the influence of certain medications (such as narcotic or antianxiety medications) and/or alcohol during clinical may result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

D. Appeals

1. Student may appeal any aspect of the application of this policy by sending a written statement of the basis for the appeal to the Chair of the Department of Nursing, within ten (10) business days after the action that is being appealed. The student's written appeal shall succinctly set forth the basis for the appeal, with supporting documentation, as appropriate.
2. Within a reasonable period of time after the filing of an appeal, the Chair of the Department of Nursing shall convene a meeting with the student in an attempt to amicably resolve the matter. If no resolution can be reached, the Chair of the Department of Nursing shall convene a hearing committee, consisting of three (3) faculty members from the Department of Nursing, one of whom shall serve as committee chair. The hearing shall be convened as soon as practicable. The following rules shall apply to the hearing:
 - a. The purpose of the hearing is one of fact finding.
 - b. The committee shall have full authority to conduct the hearing in a manner that is fair, efficient, and respectful.
 - c. Formal rules of evidence do not apply, but irrelevant, immaterial or unduly repetitious evidence may be excluded at the discretion of the committee.
 - d. In light of the nature and spirit of the proceeding, representation by legal counsel is prohibited.
 - e. The hearing shall be closed, meaning that no one beyond the persons involved in the hearing will be admitted.
 - f. Participants shall include the student and the supervisor who observed or was involved in the incident in question. Others with knowledge of the circumstances in question may be permitted to participate, with the permission of the chair of the committee.
 - g. The supervisor will address the committee first, followed by the student.
 - h. The committee may ask questions of the supervisor and the student. The supervisor or faculty member and the student may also ask questions of each other, in a polite and respectful manner.
 - i. Requests for additional information may be made by the committee to the faculty member and the Student.

- j. At the conclusion of the hearing, the committee shall dismiss the participants and deliberate in private. The committee members shall then vote on the outcome of the hearing, with each member having one vote.
- k. The chair of the committee will inform the student of committee's decision within one business day after the hearing.
- l. The decision of the committee shall be final.

STANDARD PRECAUTIONS

The use of standard precautions is the best way to prevent exposure to any type of infection. Students and faculty in the clinical setting must follow Universal Precautions. Students are required to review Standard precautions and hospital policy orientation power point and take an exam prior to starting their clinical experiences and annually.

BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS EXPOSURE POLICY

Exposure Definition: Significant exposure includes contamination by blood or other body fluids or high titers of cell-associated or free virus via 1) percutaneous, e.g., needle stick; 2) permucosal, e.g., splash in eye or mouth; or 3) cutaneous exposure, e.g., non-intact skin, or involving large amounts of blood or prolonged contact with blood, especially when exposed skin is chapped, abraded, or afflicted with dermatitis.

BARRIER PRECAUTIONS (PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT)

- a. All Darton College of Health Professions nursing faculty and students must routinely use appropriate barrier precautions to prevent skin and mucous membrane exposure when contact with any blood or other body fluids is anticipated.
- b. Gloves must be worn for touching blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, or non-intact skin of all patients, for handling items or surfaces soiled with blood and body fluids, and for performing venipuncture and other vascular access procedures.
- c. Masks and protective eyewear or face shields must be worn to prevent exposure of mucous membranes of the mouth, nose, and eyes during procedures that are likely to generate splashes or splatters of blood or other body fluids.
- d. Appropriate protective gowns or aprons must be worn during procedures that are likely to generate splashes of blood or other body fluids. For procedures during which you anticipate your clothing will be soaked, fluid resistant aprons or gowns must be worn.
- e. Surgical caps or hoods, shoe covers or boots must be worn in instances where gross contamination with blood/body fluids is reasonably anticipated (i.e. surgery, trauma).

POST-EXPOSURE EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

- a. Faculty and/or students who experience a needle stick or other occupational exposure are to do the following:
- b. Immediately report all blood or body fluid exposures via needle sticks, punctures, or broken skin or mucous membrane contact
 - Students: to the instructor;
 - Faculty: to the Chair of Nursing.
- c. Clean the area involved thoroughly with soap and water. For splash to eyes, mouth or nose, flush with copious amounts of water.
- d. Report to the nearest Emergency Department for further treatment. Students are responsible for any cost incurred in the treatment and/or follow-up of an exposure. Faculty expenses will be covered by Worker's Compensation; however, faculty must follow the University of Georgia Policy on Worker's Compensation Benefits and Return-To-Work found online at the [Georgia Department of Administrative Services \(DOAS\) Insurance Services](#) webpage.

- e. Faculty should alert the charge nurse, nurse manager, and/or unit director of bloodborne exposure (if Emergency Department does not) and request they enact their facility protocol regarding testing of the source.
- f. Faculty will complete post exposure documentation to include: the route of exposure and circumstances related to the incident; and HBV/HIV antibody status of the source (if known).
 - If the source person can be determined and permission is obtained, collection and testing of the source person's blood will be done to determine the presence of HIV or HBV (per facility protocol). Students may incur additional expense for testing of the source. These results will be forwarded to the Emergency Department.
- g. Documentation of each incident and associated records will be kept in the faculty member/student's file with limited access and strict confidentiality maintained.
- h. During all phases of the follow-up, confidentiality of the faculty member/student will be protected.

RETURN TO CLINICAL

Students enrolled in clinical courses who require surgery, hospitalization, under the care of a physician post-accident, or sick for an extended period of time (5 or more days) must provide verification from a physician that the student may return to clinical activities without restrictions. In addition, any student with limitations or the use of an assisted device will be required to follow the clinical institution's policy.

STUDENT PREGNANCY CLINICAL POLICY

For the safety of the pregnant student, she should be aware of potential risks related to some learning experiences such as, but not limited to, communicable disease(s), strenuous activity, toxic substances including radiation, and the potential for bodily harm. The student should consult with her faculty member prior to the clinical experience to be made aware of any clinical agency policies related to pregnant individuals such as not entering where radiation therapy is being administered. Neither Albany State University nor its affiliating clinical agencies assume responsibility for any harm that might occur to a fetus or a pregnant student.

USE OF ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLINICAL POLICY

This policy is to establish guidelines for appropriate and professional use of electronic devices (e.g., cell phones, smart phones, tablets, computers) during clinicals by nursing students. "Clinical" is defined as the various settings utilized in any clinical nursing course (for example, skills laboratory, acute care facilities, sub-acute care and rehabilitation facilities, long-term care facilities, clinics and physician offices, and community settings). Students **must first adhere to the policies of the clinical facility**, as well as this Department of Nursing policy, regarding the use of electronic devices in clinical settings.

If electronic devices are approved for use according to clinical facility policy, the following restrictions apply:

- Electronic devices may only be used for clinically-related reasons as approved by each clinical instructor and/or course coordinator.
- All devices must be kept on "silent" or "vibrate" mode in the clinical setting.
- Use of electronic devices for personal communication (e.g. email, text, social media) or other personal reasons unrelated to clinical is strictly prohibited.
- Taking any voice recordings, photographs, or videos during clinical is strictly prohibited.
- Students are responsible for adhering to the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) regulations regarding protected health information. Students may not download or store any confidential patient data on a personal electronic device.

Violations of this policy and/or the policy of the clinical facility may result in clinical remediation or failure.

CLINICAL CANCELLATION GUIDELINES

(Includes: inclement weather, natural disasters, campus emergencies, and other events)

1. Albany State University's decision to delay or cancel classes is almost always because of hazardous travel conditions. If bad weather requires the University to cancel classes, the local radio and television stations are informed.
2. Decisions are campus-specific (e.g., cancellation of classes at the Albany campuses but not the Cordele satellite campus). Distance learning students will need to use their best judgement and communicate about clinical attendance with their clinical preceptors.
3. If your campus cancels the next day's classes the day or night before clinical, then clinical is cancelled. For example, if on Thursday the University cancels classes for Friday, then Friday clinical is cancelled.
4. If faculty and students are already at the clinical facility when the campus classes are cancelled, then the instructor will decide, based on current and anticipated weather/travel conditions, whether clinical should be cancelled.
5. If the campus has not cancelled classes, clinical may still be cancelled if hazardous travel conditions exist. In this instance, the faculty will evaluate the weather and travel situation of their specific clinical facility/location and notify students according to an established student notification process previously communicated with the class.
6. Students must additionally use their own best judgment in traveling when clinical is not cancelled. Faculty cannot know all weather/travel conditions if the student is traveling from outside the immediate area.
7. Bottom line: **SAFETY FIRST!**

SECTION V: STUDENT RESOURCES

APPEAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

CHAIN OF COMMAND

Students seeking an appeal of any nature should **always** utilize the following chain of command:

1. Course Faculty/Instructor. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
2. Program Director/Academic Advisor. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
3. Department Committee. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
4. Department Chairperson. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
5. Dean of the College. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
6. Provost for Academic Affairs/Vice President for Student Affairs. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
7. President of the University. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the
8. Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia.

Students are expected to adhere to the published chain of command. Rare exceptions to this chain of command can be made but must be determined on a case-by-case basis. It is the responsibility of both the student and the members within each level to ensure compliance with the chain of command.

GRADE APPEAL POLICY

A Per University policy, any student who believes that they have been assigned a final course grade that is miscalculated, unfair, biased, or based on an unwarranted deviation from the established grading procedures may appeal their grade. Please be aware that grade appeals are **only applicable for final course grades** and thus cannot be submitted until **after** the formal publication of final grades by the University. Additionally, appeals based on ATI and/or Math Medication Administration/Dosage Calculation exam performance are **NOT** accepted, as these grades are non-appealable. As each step of the grade appeal process may take up to 10 business days to complete, grade appeals may be submitted no later than **10 business days** following the formal publication of final grades. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to automatically deny appeals submitted after this point.

In order to ensure adherence to the chain of command and timely process of grade appeals, students wishing to submit an appeal of their final course grade must follow this process:

Step 1: Instructor Level

- Prior to the formal publication of final grades by the University (and preferably before the last day of classes), every effort should be made to resolve any questions or concerns that the student may have regarding their course performance. Students are encouraged to utilize their instructor's scheduled office hours and/or counseling sessions to discuss these matters.
- Following the formal publication of final grades by the University, if the student is dissatisfied with their final course grade, they must first arrange a meeting with their course instructor no later than **10 business days** following its publication.
- If no satisfactory resolution can be made, following this meeting, the course instructor will provide the student with some form of documentation detailing the outcome of this grade review.

Step 2: Program Director/Coordinator Level

- If the issue remains unresolved at the instructor level, the student may then complete the "Student Grade Appeal Form" included within this handbook. This form must be completed and submitted no later than **10 business days** following the formal publication of final grades. **No appeals will be accepted after this point.**

- In preparing this document, the student should collect all supplemental documentation that supports their assertion that their final course grade that was miscalculated, unfair, biased, or based on an unwarranted deviation from the established grading procedures. This may include documented exchanges with the course instructor, program director, and/or departmental chairperson; documented troubleshooting with representatives from GeorgiaVIEW, Distance Learning, and/or Information Technology Services (ITS); ITS HelpDesk ticket submissions/resolutions; excerpts from course syllabi, student handbooks, and/or academic catalogs; course and/or academic calendar(s); course announcements; grading rubrics; assignment feedback; and documentation related to excused absence(s). The student must also include the documentation from the original resolution attempt.
- Upon completion, the student will submit this form and all supporting documentation to the appropriate Program Director/Coordinator and must arrange a meeting within **10 business days** following their meeting with the course instructor. The student must also Cc their course instructor on the Student Grade Appeal Form.
- If no satisfactory resolution can be made during this meeting, the Program Director/Coordinator will provide the student with some form of documentation detailing the outcome of this secondary review, which must be included with the Student Grade Appeal Form.

Step 3: Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee Level

- If the issue remains unsatisfactorily resolved with the instructor and the Program Director/Coordinator, the student must then submit the appeal form and all supporting documentation to the chairperson of the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee. The student may also Cc the departmental chairperson for reference. *(Students may contact the Department of Nursing at (229) 500-2330 to acquire the contact information for these individuals.)*
- Within **10 business days** following receipt of the Student Grade Appeal Form, the Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee will convene a review panel comprising at least two (2) faculty members (excluding the student's instructor), one of whom may be the chairperson of the committee itself.
- This committee will then independently investigate the issue utilizing the information and documentation provided by the student and the course instructor. Following the conclusion of this investigation, the Committee will prepare a document detailing the recommended course of action and the rationale behind this decision. Based on this recommendation, the following will occur:
 - If the Committee recommends a grade change **should not** be made, the chairperson of the Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee will present their recommendation to the Chair of the Department of Nursing. The Committee chairperson will then contact the student via their student email address to inform them of this decision, providing them with the aforementioned rationale document and returning their grade appeal packet in its entirety, should the student desire the further pursue the appeal.
 - If the Committee recommends a grade change **should** be made, the chairperson of the Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee will present their recommendation to the Chair of the Department of Nursing. If the departmental chairperson agrees with this decision, the course instructor will be requested to initiate a Request to Change a Grade with the Office of the Registrar. The Committee chairperson will then notify the student once the grade change process has been initiated.

Step 4: Chair Level

- If the issue remains unsatisfactorily resolved following notification by the chairperson of the Admission, Progression, and Retention committee, the student must then arrange to meet with the

Chair of the Department of Nursing within **10 business days** following notification of the panel results.

- Prior to this meeting, the Chair will review the grade appeal form, all supporting documentation, and the recommendation made by the Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee.
- If no satisfactory resolution can be made during this meeting, the Chair will provide the student with some form of documentation detailing the outcome of this review. With the additional input provided by the Chair, the grade appeal packet is considered as complete as possible at the department level.

Step 5: Post-Department Level

- If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved at the Chair level, the student may appeal their grade to members of upper administration as detailed by the Chain of Command, beginning with the Dean of the Darton College of Health Professions.

APPEAL OF ADMISSION/DISMISSAL STATUS

Decisions regarding the student's admission or dismissal status may be appealed. If the student is denied admission to the desired graduate program or has been dismissed for the reasons detailed in the "Dismissal Policy" of this handbook, the student may appeal the decision to the Department of Nursing. This appeal must be made in writing to the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee and submitted within **10 business days** of either the denial of application for admission or notification of dismissal from the nursing program for cause. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student has the right of further appeal this decision at the post-committee levels published in the chain of command.

APPEAL OF IMPAIRED STUDENT POLICY

Student may appeal sanctions by sending a written statement of the basis for the appeal to the Chair of the Department of Nursing, within ten (10) days after the action which is being appealed. The student's written appeal shall succinctly set forth the basis for the appeal, with supporting documentation, as appropriate.

Please refer to the "Impaired Student Policy" within the Clinical Policies section for a detailed breakdown of this appeal.

APPEAL OF INTERVENTIONS RELATED TO ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONAL STANDARDS AND CLINICAL PERFORMANCE

Student may appeal any aspect of the application of this policy by sending a written statement of the basis for the appeal to the Chair of the Department of Nursing, within **10 business days** after the action that is being appealed. The student's written appeal shall succinctly set forth the basis for the appeal, with supporting documentation, as appropriate.

Please refer to the "Procedure for Interventions Related to Essential Functional Standards and Clinical Performance" within the Clinical Policies section for a detailed breakdown of this appeal process.

THE RIGHT TO SHARE IN POLICY MAKING

UNIVERSITY POLICY

The Albany State University students have a collective right to an appropriate voice in the making of institutional policy generally affecting their social or academic affairs; however, this right is subject to the supervening responsibility of the institution to assure adequate protection for essential interests and policies of the institution. This collective right is recognized by the inclusion of student representation

with full voting privileges on all standing institutional committees. To the extent that students are foreclosed from sharing in the making of particular decisions, or kinds of decisions, the institutional policy or interest deemed to require the foreclosure will be explicitly stated. Students will always share in the formulation of standards of student conduct. The status of the University as a fully accredited member of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) requires that caution be exercised in retaining any student who falls below the accepted academic standards. Students are reviewed each year to determine their academic status. Students are notified of extended probation and suspensions.

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING POLICY

The student in the Department of Nursing is first and foremost a member of the Albany State University student body which entitles the student to be a member of the Student Government Association (SGA) of Albany State University, and each enjoys all of the rights and privileges of the SGA and the Student Body of Nursing. The student is eligible to be a member of Georgia Association of Nursing Students (GANS) or/and ASU student nursing organization and is also encouraged to participate in University functions in order to achieve appropriate representation on committees. Students are encouraged to serve on committees in the department of nursing.

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES FOR DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES

OBJECTIVES

- To serve as the official structure to handle student grievances.
- To plan and implement social and professional programs of the department.
- To monitor a body of resource materials for students in the clinical and computer labs.
- To participate on library facilities and services committee.
- To promote and implement continuing education programs and workshops (including Advisory Committee meeting) within the department.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Annually reviews existing student policies and makes recommendations for change to the Faculty Governing Board.
2. Assists student(s) with grievance by
 - searching out all facts
 - gathering correct information
 - making recommendations to Faculty Governing Board
3. Serves as advisory committee for professional ceremonies and student organization each year according to the wishes of the class and protocol of the University
4. Provides leadership for identifying and recognizing honor students and outstanding students at appropriate ceremonies.
5. Makes recommendations for new acquisitions in clinical and computer lab in conjunction with coordinators and based on student and faculty needs.

NOTICE OF CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, OR PHONE

Students who wish to notify the university that their name, address, or phone is either displaying incorrectly (due to clerical error) or has recently changed is responsible for having this information corrected as soon as possible. Please utilize the following procedure to ensure the correctness of this information:

PROCEDURE

1. Navigate to the Office of the Registrar's page (either via direct link navigation or by utilizing the "Search" feature in the upper right corner of the home page)
2. Select the "Forms & Waivers" button in the navigation pane
3. Download the "Change of Name, Address, or Phone Number" form and submit to the Office of the Registrar
4. Alternatively, some information can also be changed by logging in to your Banner account and updating the appropriate information under the "Personal Information" tab.

OFFICE OF FINANCIAL AID

Albany State University's [Office of Financial Aid](#) will provide financial assistance to students and parents for the purpose of financing their education. The Office of Financial Aid will serve its customers (actual and potential) by providing proper customer service, adequate consumer information and also by providing adequate financial aid packages to meet their financial needs based on their individual eligibility to meet their cost of attendance (direct and indirect).

Students' financial aid application materials will be used to determine eligibility for both federal, state and institutional aid. There are four basic types of financial aid available: Grants, Scholarships, Employment, and Loans. Financial aid is subject to enrollment and attendance in an eligible program at ASU. All financial aid award letters will reflect awards based on full-time enrollment. As a result, students not enrolling as a full-time student (12 credits or more for an undergraduate, 9 credits or more for a graduate student) may need their packages revised and/or may receive less aid disbursed than awarded. Both undergraduate and graduate students must be enrolled in and attending at least 6 hours and have not met any federal loan borrowing limits to be eligible for loan funding.

Please be aware that the Albany State University Office of Financial Aid reserves the right to adjust your awards due to changes in your enrollment status, satisfactory academic progress status, availability of funds, or the receiving of conflicting information. ASU accepts no responsibility to replace any funds denied due to tardiness or failure to comply with regulatory guidelines. Any balance owed as a result of cancellation or adjustment of awards is the student's responsibility to pay. The student will be notified of any changes in federal, state, or institutional funds via ASU email.

DIVISION OF STUDENT AFFAIRS AND SERVICES

The [Division of Student Affairs](#) is a mission-driven team that aims to enrich the Golden Ram experience for all students in the Albany State University tradition. Student learning and success is the cornerstone of all we do for you, OUR students. It is our goal to enhance the quality of campus life for all students, employees, parents, and community members, and we do this by incorporating excellence and innovation in the delivery of programs, services, and facilities.

Please refer to their webpage for a comprehensive list and description of services available to students, including the following:

- Civic Engagement
- Department of Counseling and Student Accessibility Services
- General Student Complaints
- Housing and Residence Life
- Office of Career Services
- Office of Greek Life & Diversity Engagement
- Office of Student Support and Student Conduct
- Office of Student Engagement
- Student Health Services
- Student Support Resources
- Student Wellness Resources

COUNSELING AND STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

The [Department of Counseling and Student Accessibility Services](#) collaborates with other university divisions and community liaisons to provide a wide range of services for students. The scope of services that this department provides includes individual, couple, and group counseling; crisis intervention; outreach workshops; referrals to off-campus resources when appropriate; and reasonable academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Their office's contact information is as follows:

Counseling and Student Accessibility Services
504 College Drive
Billy C. Black Building, Room 170
Albany, GA 31705
(229) 500-2013 (phone)
(229) 878-3030 (fax)
counselingservices@asurams.edu

Students requesting accommodations should submit the appropriate form(s) and requested documentation found via the Department of Counseling and Student Accessibility Services [Forms webpage](#). This will include:

- Completed voluntary disclosure of disability form,
- Completed authorization for release of information,
- Documentation of disability—current statement from medical doctor or evaluation from psychiatrist/psychologist,
- Copy of detailed course schedule (schedule with names of instructors) for current semester—print from BANNER

Note: *Each semester students need accommodations, they must provide the Student Disability Center with a copy of their detailed course schedule.*

ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESOURCES

WRITING CENTER AND MATH CENTER

- The Writing Center is located in room C-102 on the West Campus and in the Fine Arts Building, Room 206 on the East Campus. The Albany State University Writing Center is designed to help students, free of charge, develop the writing skills necessary to achieve success not only in college courses at ASU, but also in their careers after graduation. Writing proficiently ensures success academically and in the workplace. The Writing Center staff is committed to providing constructive feedback throughout the writing process at all ability levels, utilizing an active learning approach that allows students to take complete responsibility for their success. The Writing Center will assist in all writing assignments for all academic disciplines, not just English writing courses, and is committed to providing a site where students can complete their writing assignments in a supportive environment free from distraction and disruption. There is full-time online assistance available in the writing center for all online and distance education students.
- The Math Center is located in I-110 on the West Campus and in Simmons Hall Rooms 319 and 327 on the East Campus. The Math Center provides support for any math class on campus, from the earliest remedial class up through the upper level math courses. The highly skilled staff consists of a coordinator, an assistant coordinator, and several student workers. The Math Center is open for students who want to “drop-in” for homework help and/or need clarification on a mathematical topic. The center is also open to online math students who may find it difficult to grasp a topic and need assistance. Support is provided in a number of ways.

Students can receive one-on-one tutoring from any staff member. In addition to individualized assistance, different technologies are available. Students have the choice of working on a computer with different software packages or they can watch videos (either from the Internet or on DVD). Several links are provided to helpful web sites that offer lessons, quizzes, and additional instruction in several areas of mathematics. For the online math center, hours are Monday and Wednesday, 6:00pm – 11:00 pm EST. The Online Math Center uses Blackboard Collaborate to connect tutors with students.

TUTORING

Online tutoring resources for ASU students are available 24/7. These resources provide tutoring in a variety of subjects including writing assistance, essay review, mathematics, nursing, and IT support for Microsoft Office. To access these resources, simply click the icon on the toolbar from within your online course and follow the prompts.

Additionally, Albany State offers on-campus tutoring in the [Centers for Academic Excellence](#), as well as Tutoring on Demand (TOD) during hours of operation. You can also access TOD from the Study Aids tab to join online tutoring via WebEx.

To connect with additional resources in classroom skills, major exploration, and degree planning, please schedule an appointment with your academic advisor by going to [EAB](#) or contact ASU Student Success at studentsuccess@asaurams.edu or (229) 500-2927.

PEER TUTORS

For nursing students, peer tutors are available upon request. In addition, students taking courses online have access to library resources and technical support 24/7, disability services, and both on-site and electronic proctored testing.

GEORGIAVIEW ORIENTATION

GeorgiaVIEW orientation is now mandatory for all students prior to accessing scheduled courses. The Online/GeorgiaVIEW Orientation provides students with information on accessing academic and student support services from a distance, as well as, providing helpful tutorials for learning in the GeorgiaVIEW learning management system environment.

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

Please refer to the “Student Affairs and Services” section in the *Albany State University Academic Catalog* for a comprehensive list and description of services available to students via Student Health Services, and Campus Life.

LOCAL LIBRARIES

Albany State University cooperates with other colleges and universities in the Georgia University System in the inner-library loan program providing students access to all available materials in the total system of the thirty-five (35) institutions.

The Dougherty County Library has useful research facilities and it is open to all Albany residents. The Phoebe Putney Hospital is also open to our students and faculty. It stocks many medical and nursing specialty books and journal.

The James Pendergrast Memorial Library, the central University Library, has available appropriate books, periodicals, films, other references and electronic services to adequately support the learning, teaching and research to meet the needs of students and faculty. References are comprehensive and current. The Library also makes available curriculum materials, Census materials and selected government documents.

CD-ROM service gives users access to Electronic Indexes (Medline, Infotrac, Ethnic Newswatch, ERIC Newsbank, Business Newbank Plus and JSTOR). Audiovisual materials (video cassettes, audio cassettes, films), automatic public catalog with 10 terminals are available.

Students can now find out the passwords each semester online via the following process:

1. Log onto your GeorgiaVIEW
2. Go to your home page and click on "Galileo"

GENERAL USE COMPUTER LABS

USER POLICIES

- No food or drink are allowed in the computer lab
- No cell phone use in the computer lab
- Keep noise level to a minimum
- No viewing of pornography in the labs
- Be responsible for your own possessions
- Save your data to a USB flash drive often
- Since the lab can fill to capacity, allow for ample time between assignment due dates to ensure adequate computer time
- Be organized and prepared for your time spent in the lab
- Printing and copying are available; please ensure there are funds available on your account for printing and copying
- Log onto computers using your Network ID and Password
- Do not forget to remove the USB from computer and log off your account
- For paper and ink replacement, contact the ITS Helpdesk or Department Secretaries
- If you are unsure about lab policies, contact the ITS Helpdesk at 229-500-4357
- If you are having trouble logging in the computer, contact the ITS Helpdesk at 229-500-4357

NOTE: Any documents saved on the computers are not guaranteed to be available after logging off. Please save your documents to a USB drive or send yourself an email to store any documents before logging off of your session.

LAB LOCATIONS

The following computer labs are accessible to all registered students:

- **East Campus**
 - Billy C. Black Building, Room 182
 - Catherine Hartnett Criminal Justice Building, Room 106
 - HPER Gym, Room 242
 - James Pendergrast Library, Room 108
 - James Pendergrast Library, Room 224
 - James Pendergrast Library, Second Floor
 - James Pendergrast Library, Third Floor
 - Peace Hall, Room 122
 - Peace Hall, Room 228
 - Student Center Lobby
- **West Campus**
 - "A" Administrative Technology/Computer Lab, A-183
 - "E" Physical Education (Cavalier Arena) Lobby, E Building
 - "C" Student Center Lobby
 - "G" Harold B. Wetherbee Library, First Floor

NURSING STUDENT ORGANIZATION (NSO)

The Darton College of Health Professions Nursing Student Organization (DCHP-NSO) is an organization open to all nursing students at Albany State University that provides opportunities to broaden the student's awareness of professional and service experiences in the community. The NSO organizes and encourages student participation in interdisciplinary activities, represents Albany State University at the national and state student nursing conventions, and provides a great chance to get involved socially with others within the major.

NSO is the local chapter of GANS (Georgia Association of Nursing Students) and is composed of students who are enrolled in the nursing program and hold membership in the State Student Nurses' Association. Nursing students participate in local, state, and national activities and conventions where they have an opportunity to observe and participate in their professional organizations. Students are encouraged to join NSO to enhance professional development.

The Department of Nursing's faculty strongly encourages attendance at NSO events. Students may request pre-approval from faculty for other NSO-related events. When a scheduled NSO event occurs at the same time as a previously scheduled clinical, the following rules apply:

1. Approval must be obtained in advance for a missed clinical.
2. Faculty discretion is used based upon course grade, previous attendance in clinical, remediation in any course, and/or general academic standing. Faculty determines if make-up is required.
3. Attendance at an approved NSO event may allow a student to be excused from a maximum of one (1) clinical day per nursing course, for a maximum of two (2) nursing courses.
4. Students may be required to do the following for the clinical instructor:
 - Write a short one- to two-page report on the activity
 - Provide a brief 10-minute verbal report post-conference
5. Course syllabus attendance policy overrides this option. Students should be aware that their grades could be adversely impacted and should communicate with their instructor about their course grade in advance.

OTHER NURSING ORGANIZATIONS

AMERICAN NURSES ASSOCIATION (ANA)

The American Nurses Association is a full-service professional organization representing the nation's 2.6 million Registered Nurses through its 50 constituent states associations and 13 organizational affiliate members. ANA advances the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the economic and general welfare of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Congress and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public. (Courtesy: [American Nurses Association's website](#))

GEORGIA STUDENT NURSES ASSOCIATION (GANS)

The nursing student is encouraged to participate in the GANS organization. Students participate in health screenings, health education programs, and community service activities. Student can exercise their rights and assume responsibility to discuss, inquire, and express opinions relative to areas of concern. The student also has an opportunity to express personal views through the open door policy maintained by the Dean and assigned faculty advisors. Active participation in this organization varies, depending upon student interest. Many students are active in fraternal, sororal, and student government activities and organizations.

NATIONAL STUDENT NURSES' ASSOCIATION

Nursing student may be interested in becoming involved with professional associations, which can enhance their career development. At a national level, students can become involved with the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA). Some of the benefits with NSNA may include:

1. Leadership Opportunities
2. Nursing Journal Subscription Discounts
3. Convention and Conference Discounts
4. Financial Services
5. Scholarship Program
6. Malpractice/Liability Insurance
7. Publication Resources

SIGMA THETA TAU INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY OF NURSING

Sigma Theta Tau, International is dedicated to improving the health of people worldwide. Vision: to create a global community of nurses who lead in using scholarship, knowledge and technology to improve the health of the world's people. Mission: Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society of Nursing provides leadership and scholarship in practice, education and research to enhance the health of all people. We support the learning and professional development of our members, who strive to improve nursing care worldwide. (Courtesy: [Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing website](#))

SUPPLEMENTAL FORM LOCATIONS

Physical Documentation (Available On-Site)

- Program Admission Criteria (also available on website)
- Programs of Study (also available on website)
- Curriculum Patterns (also available on website)
- Curriculum Guides (also available on website)
- West Campus Map (also available on website)
- East Campus Map (also available on website)
- Ram Rush Map (also available on website)

Office of the Registrar's Forms (Available on Website)

- Academic Renewal
- Application and Certification of Fee Waiver Under Amendment 23
- Application for Graduation and Degree Evaluation
- Authorization to Release Information (FERPA Form)
- Change of Name, Address, or Phone Number
- Enrollment Verification Request Form
- Reinstatement Form
- Request for a Change of Major/Minor/Concentration
- Request to Audit a Course
- Request to Participate in Commencement Without Having Met Degree Requirements
- Withdrawal Forms

Counseling and Student Accessibility Forms (Available on Website)

- Client Information and Consent Form
- Voluntary Disclosure of Disability Form
- SDS Authorization for Release of Information
- Disability Services Nondiscrimination Notice
- Request Accommodation Letters
- Students with a Previously Diagnosed Disability

- Request for Housing/Dining Accommodation
- Student Disability Services Office Information Request Form
- Student Test Request Form

APPENDIX A: RELEASE OF LIABILITY FORMS



To whom it concerns:

Albany State University is a part of the National Council of State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA). NC-SARA is a voluntary agreement among member states, districts and territories that establishes comparable national standards for interstate offering of postsecondary distance education courses and programs and is designed to reduce the burdens of state authorization. Currently, ASU is authorized to offer distance learning to students receiving instruction in the state of Missouri; however, please note that this program will lead to certification in the state of (state name) under the current (state name) Nursing Board regulations.

In addition, while this agreement allows for institutions to provide distance education across state lines, there may be additional permissions, costs, and application processes associated with your chosen degree program. Because of the potential for out-of-state certification, licensing, and or accrediting bodies to require advance permissions and to assess additional fees before an individual is allowed to sit for certification, each non- resident must submit a release of liability to the Graduate Nursing Program. This agreement states that in the event, the student incurs additional fees as a result of enrollment in distance education courses, the payment of those fees imposed by the home University, state board or any other entity is the student's sole responsibility. If you are in agreeance with this decision, please sign and return the attached release of liability form to the appropriate distance learning graduate admissions counselor and the director of graduate nursing programs.

Thank you for choosing Albany State University. Our faculty and staff are excited about assisting you in obtaining your graduate degree.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

As a student in the Graduate Nursing Program at Albany State University located at 2400 Gillionville Road, Albany, Georgia, 31721, I agree to the following:

ASSUMPTION OF THE RISKS AND RELEASE. I recognize that there may be certain costs and advanced permissions that are associated with the aforementioned activity. Therefore, I assume full responsibility for any additional costs related to certification, licensure, and clinical rotations; and further release and discharge Albany State University and the Graduate Nursing Program from any accrual of fees, loss, or damage arising out of my enrollment within the program. I also bear full responsibility to obtain written permission from my home state governing body to complete clinical rotations within my home state and to obtain a degree from Albany State University.

1. **APPLICABLE LAW.** Any legal or equitable claim that may arise from participation in the above shall be resolved under Georgia law.
2. **NO DURESS.** I agree and acknowledge that I am under no pressure or duress to sign this Agreement and that I have been given a reasonable opportunity to review before signing.
3. **NOTIFICATION.** I acknowledge that I have been notified that the Family Nurse Practitioner program for which I am applying will lead to certification in the state of Missouri under current Missouri Board of Nursing regulations.

I HAVE READ THIS DOCUMENT AND UNDERSTAND IT. I FURTHER UNDERSTAND THAT BY SIGNING THIS RELEASE, I VOLUNTARILY SURRENDER CERTAIN LEGAL RIGHTS.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

APPENDIX B: PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM



PROPOSAL APPROVAL FORM

The proposal for this study was approved by the student's thesis committee of the Department of Nursing, part of Albany State University's Darton College of Health Professions, on the following date: _____.

APPENDIX C: THESIS APPROVAL FORM



THESIS APPROVAL FORM

Accepted by the FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING, Albany State University,
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing Degree.

CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF NURSING/*or*

GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Date

Thesis Title:

Research Committee:

Committee Chair

Committee Member

Committee Member (*if applicable*)

APPENDIX D: GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT



REQUEST FOR GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT

Name _____

Date _____

The following persons have agreed to serve on my graduate committee:

_____, Chairperson

My thesis research focus: *(Summarize Below)*

--

My research project concern:

--

Student's Signature

APPENDIX E: INFORMED CONSENT FORM TEMPLATE



INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Name of project and statement that the project involves research.

Purpose and duration of the research.

Procedures to be used that will affect subjects (including any laboratory procedures). Identify which procedures are experimental, and explain any appropriate alternative procedures that may be available to the subject.

Possible risks of harm or discomfort associated with research procedures. If the risk of physical injury is greater than minimal, include statements regarding whether compensation and/or medical treatment is available in the event of physical injury arising from the research, and, if so, what it consists of or where further information may be obtained. Include the name and number of an individual the participant may contact in the event of a research-related injury. If the participant will be billed for research-related injuries, include an appropriate statement.

Any benefits to the subject or to others that may reasonably be expected from the research.

I, the undersigned, have read the above statements explaining the purpose of this study; the procedures that will be used; and any benefits, discomforts, or potential risks that could result from my participation in this project. The researcher has reviewed this information with me, and I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I may have regarding the project or the research procedures. If I have questions or concerns later, I can contact the researcher at [telephone number].

I understand that my participation is completely voluntary, that I am not obligated to participate in the study, and that I reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any point. If I refuse to participate now or withdraw from the study at a later point, it will have no effect on any regular services or benefits available to me at the facility.

I also understand that any personal information used in this study will be treated confidentially. Personally identified information, if collected, will not be released to anyone for purposes that are not directly related to this research study without my explicit, separate consent. (If this is a drug study, include a statement that the Food and Drug Administration may review the records).

If the subject is placed at greater than minimal risk, the legal statement and, if appropriate, the subject billing statement must also be included.

APPENDIX F: AGENCY CONSENT FORM TEMPLATE



MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT CONCERNING NURSING STUDY

Title of Study:

Name of Institution, Agency, or Private Practice Setting

Study discussed with and explained to _____
(Name of Representative)

- a. Description of Study
- b. Description of activities the Representative will do:
- c. Description of safeguards taken to protect identity of agency:
- d. Description of concurrent or later review procedure within the agency:
- e. Description of how the agency will be informed of ongoing research process and results of the study.

Signature of Representative (*if written consent indicated*)

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date

Note to Student: Complete this form in duplicate. The signature from the agency representative indicates written consent. Use additional space or a separate page as needed to cover pertinent comments concerning agreement. The agency representative will retain one copy and send one copy to the investigator. Please be aware that Phoebe Putney Memorial Hospital has its own consent and IRB processes.

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE THESIS TITLE PAGE & TABLE OF CONTENTS

THE TITLE OF YOUR THESIS IS CENTERED AT ABOUT THIS LEVEL
AND IS CAPITALIZED
(Inverted Pyramid)

By
Your Full Name Centered Here

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Master of Science in Nursing Degree in the
Darton College of Health Professions
Albany State University
Month Year

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APPENDIX H: COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS



COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION RESULTS

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

RAM ID: _____

EXAMINATION RESULTS

Pass

Fail

CONFERENCE REQUIRED

Yes

No

If no conference is required, the student may still request an appointment to discuss this exam or other questions with his/her faculty or program advisor.

Signature – Graduate Nursing Program Director

Date



**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:
RECEIPT OF MSN STUDENT HANDBOOK**

By signing below, I, _____, acknowledge that I have received the *Master of Science in Nursing Student Handbook* and understand that I am responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the contents described therein. Additionally, I understand that I am also responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to the contents described in the *Albany State University Academic Catalog* and the *Student Code of Conduct*.

Student's Signature

Date