



**Virginia Highlands Community College**

**Practical Nursing Program**

**2025-2026 Student Handbook**

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook presents information and policies related to the Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) Practical Nursing Program. It is offered to you as part of the informational orientation to the program. You will be asked to sign a statement that verifies that you understand the contents and agree to comply with the conditions contained in the packet while you are a student in the VHCC Practical Nursing Program.

It is important you understand and accept that you are entering a career that requires discipline, mature behavior, a professional attitude, and responsible decision making. Personal flexibility is essential to meet the needs and demands of the nursing program. As an adult learner, you are responsible for your education. Be prepared for possible changes in class or clinical schedules that may necessitate adjusting your personal schedule.

Completion of the VHCC Practical Nursing Program lends itself to career opportunities and personal satisfaction. If you have problems meeting the expectations of the program, consult your faculty advisor or the instructor. Faculty members want to help you acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to be a practical nurse and with mutual respect, will work with you to accomplish your educational goals.

The office for the VHCC Practical Nursing Program is located in the Nursing Education Building (NEB) on the campus of VHCC.

Mailing address: VHCC Practical Nursing Program, PO Box 828, Abingdon, VA 24212

Phone: 276-739-2482

Fax: 276-739-2594

Website: [www.vhcc.edu](http://www.vhcc.edu)

### **Non-discrimination Statement**

It is the policy of the VHCC Practical Nursing Program and the Virginia Community College System (VCCS) to maintain and promote equal employment and educational opportunities without regard to race, color, sex or age (except where sex or age is a bona fide occupational qualification), religion, disability, national origin, marital status, veteran status, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or other non-merit factors. Inquiries concerning affirmative action and equal opportunity policies should be addressed to the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) officer at VHCC.

## APPROVAL

The Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing program located in Abingdon, Virginia is approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing (Perimeter Center, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 300, Henrico, VA 23233-1463, (804)367-4515, website: [www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing). The VHCC Practical Nursing Program is currently on Conditional Approval with Terms and Conditions. The last scheduled NCLEX site visit by Virginia Board of Nursing was in 2024.

## MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, VALUES VIRGINIA HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

The College Mission, Philosophy and Values statements are found in the VHCC Student Handbook. Located on VHCC website, [www.vhcc.edu](http://www.vhcc.edu).

## MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, VISION VHCC PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM

### **Mission**

The mission of the Practical Nursing Program is to provide affordable, community access to quality nursing education. The Practical Nursing Program will prepare qualified students to provide safe, competent, entry-level practical nursing care in twenty-first century healthcare environments. Upon successful completion of the program, students **will** be eligible to **apply** the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN) leading to licensure as a practical nurse (LPN) and employment in a variety of health services settings.

## **Philosophy**

The practical nursing faculty ascribe to the core competencies for nursing and nursing education.

- While firmly based in science and the arts, the essence of practical nursing is caring and compassionate patient centered care.
- Ethical standards, respect for individual dignity, and consideration of cultural context are implicit in the practice of patient centered care
- The LPN advocates for patients and families in ways that promote self-determination, integrity, and ongoing growth as human beings.
- Care provided by the LPN is in collaboration with the patient, the family, and members of the health care team, while under the supervision of a Physician or Registered Nurse.
- The Practical Nurse displays a spirit of inquiry by examining evidence to improve quality of care, promote safety, and improve patient outcomes.
- Information management essential to practical nursing care is communicated via a variety of technological and human means.

## **Vision**

The vision of the VHCC Practical Nursing program is to assist working adults, high school graduates, and other individuals to become licensed practical nurses with a foundation for lifelong growth, learning, and advancement to higher levels of practice. The program embraces the adult learner and supports the values, beliefs, philosophy, and mission of the College.

### **Practical Nursing Program Conceptual Framework**

The Practical Nursing Program of Virginia Highlands Community College uses the National League of Nursing Competencies Model (NLN 2010) as one of the guiding forces for nursing education. The program learner outcomes are centered on four concepts: human flourishing, nursing judgement, professional identity, and spirit of inquiry. “All essential program-specific core nursing practice competencies and course outcomes are subsumed within these four general aims.” (NLN, 2010, p.9).



### VHCC Practical Nursing Program Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes	Program Competencies
<b>Safety</b>	Perform basic nursing skills in a safe, legal, and ethical manner for patients across the lifespan in a variety of settings including health promotion and treatment of illness.
<b>Team/Collaboration</b>	Collaborate and communicate with all members of the healthcare team to ensure safe, quality patient care.
<b>Relationship-Centered Care</b>	Provide safe, holistic, culturally appropriate nursing care using evidence-based practice and the nursing process
<b>Quality</b>	Assume responsibility and accountability for the quality of nursing care provided to patients and their families in a variety of healthcare settings.
<b>Systems-Based Care</b>	Apply knowledge of the community, the healthcare system, and the needs of the individual/ family to ensure the delivery of cost-effective quality patient-centered care.
<b>Personal/Professional Development</b>	Function to the full scope of safe nursing practice specific to practical nursing, seeking assistance in situations beyond individual expertise to provide safe, quality care.

### **Occupational Objectives**

Employment opportunities for the LPN include, but are not limited to, staff positions in hospitals, long-term care facilities, physician's offices, clinics, home health agencies, public schools, day care centers, and other health related agencies under the direction of registered nurses and doctors.

### **General Program Information**

The Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Program is a 12 month (3 semester) certificate curriculum, designed to prepare selected students to qualify as contributing members of the health team providing safe and competent nursing care under the direction of registered nurses and doctors. Upon successful completion of the curriculum, students will be **eligible to apply for the National Council Licensure Examination PN** leading to licensure as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

Graduates from the VHCC Practical Nursing Program may continue their education here at Virginia Highlands Community College through opportunities in the VHCC LPN to RN Bridge Program.

### **Program of Instruction**

The course of instruction follows an organized pattern that provides for continuity of care. Reinforcement of classroom instruction is implemented with specific learning experiences in both the lab and clinical settings. Correlated learning experiences are provided in the clinical lab under the supervision of the clinical instructor and include direct patient care experiences of selected clients with common medical and surgical conditions, acute and chronic illnesses and mental and emotional problems. In addition to providing care for clients in the clinical setting, students are also required to prepare written assignments and to participate in pre and post conferences (as assigned).

### **Courses**

All courses each semester must be successfully completed in order for you to be allowed to proceed in the program. If you are having difficulty in a subject, it is **your responsibility** to

talk with the instructor and/or retention specialist. **Seek help early so that you will have ample time to meet the course objectives.**

### VHCC Practical Nursing Program Outcomes

<b>Expected Level of Achievement</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN First-time Pass Rate</b>
<b>The program's most recent annual licensure examination pass rate will be at or above 80% for all first time test-takers during the same 12 month period</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2018</b>	<b>No Test Takers</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2019</b>	<b>86.5%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2020</b>	<b>65%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2021</b>	<b>66.7%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2022</b>	<b>77.27%</b>
<b>Expected Level of Achievement</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Completion Rate</b>
<b>No less than 75% of students entering the PN Program will complete the program requirements within 200% of the time identified by the curriculum plan.</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2018</b>	<b>69%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2019</b>	<b>90%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2020</b>	<b>79%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2021</b>	<b>100%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2022</b>	<b>100%</b>

Expected Level of Achievement	Year	Employment Rate
<b>At least 80% of graduates seeking employment will indicate they are working as an LPN within 12 months after graduation</b>		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2018</b>	<b>No current data available</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2019</b>	<b>No current data available</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2020</b>	<b>78%</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2021</b>	<b>100% per survey data</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Same as above	<b>2022</b>	<b>89%</b>

### Practical Nursing (PN) Certificate

Course Number	Course Title	Total Credits
<b>Pre-Requisite Courses Needed Prior to Start of Fall Practical Nursing Cohort</b>		
BIO 145	Basic Human Anatomy & Physiology	4
HLT 143	Medical Terminology	3
		<b>Total 7</b>
<b>First Semester (Fall)</b>		
SDV 101	Orientation to College Success	1
PNE 143	Applied Nursing Skills	1
PNE 161	Nursing in Health Changes I	6
PNE 173	Pharmacology for Practical Nurses	2
HLT 105	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	1
NUR 135	Drug Dosage Calculations	2
		<b>Total 13</b>
<b>Second Semester (Spring)</b>		
PSY 230	Developmental Psychology	3
PNE 162	Nursing in Health Changes II	10
PNE 136	Care of Maternal, Newborn, & Pediatric Patients	4

		Total 17
<b>Third Semester (Summer)</b>		
ENG 111	College Composition I	3
PNE 163	Nursing in Health Changes III	9
PNE 145	Trends in Practical Nursing	1
PNE 158	Mental Health & Psychiatric Nursing	2
		Total 15
<b>TOTAL Program Credits</b>		<b>45</b>

\*BIO 141 and 142 are acceptable substitutes recommended for progression to the LPN to RN Program.

\*HLT 140 is an acceptable course substitution for SDV 101. Students may choose to take either HLT 140 or SDV 101 to satisfy the requirements for the Practice Nursing Program.

### Curriculum

The practical nursing certificate program offers an opportunity for recent high school graduates and other eligible adults to complete the program requirements after 12 months of full-time attendance (2 regular semesters [Fall and Spring] and one summer semester) with scheduled program completion in August of each year.

Students **must complete all general education courses required** by the practical nursing certificate curriculum before beginning nursing classes. Any exception to this policy would require approval of the Program Coordinator and Registrar.

In order to keep the nursing program current, and congruent with the College's general education requirements, it may be necessary to make curriculum changes on occasion. Faculty will keep students informed of changes as they occur, as well as the effects those changes will have on students currently enrolled in the nursing program. All syllabi are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor to more fully meet course objectives.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### **NUR 135 - Drug Dosage Calculations (2 credits)**

Focuses on apothecary, metric, household conversion in medication dosage calculation for adult and pediatric clients. Provides a practical approach to learning to calculate and prepare medications and solutions. Includes calculating intravenous flow rates.

Lecture 2 hours per week.

### **PNE 136 - Care of Maternal, Newborn, and Pediatric Patients (4 credits)**

Uses a family-centered approach; studies normal and common complications in pregnancy, childbirth, post-partum, the neonate, and children through adolescence. Covers milestones in all aspects of growth and development and common childhood disorders at various ages.

(4 Cr.) Lecture 4 hours per week.

### **PNE 143-Applied Nursing Skills (1 credit)**

Focuses on the nursing assessment including the nursing process and skills of physical assessment in the care of patients across the life-span. Lab/Lecture combined 1 hour per week.

### **PNE 145- Trends in Practical Nursing (1 credit)**

Studies the role of the Licensed Practical Nurse. Covers legal aspects, organization, and opportunities in practical nursing. Assists students in preparation for employment. Lecture 1 hour per week.

### **PNE 158 - Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing (2 credits)**

Recognizes emotional needs of patients. Provides knowledge of the role that emotions play. Enables students to understand their own behavior as well as patient behavior.

Lecture 2 hours per week.

### **PNE 161- Nursing in Health Changes I (6 credits)**

Focuses on nursing situations and procedures necessary to assist individuals in meeting special needs related to human functions. Lecture 4 hours per week. Laboratory 6 hours per week. Total 10 hours per week.

### **PNE 162- Nursing in Health Changes II (10 credits)**

Continues the focus on nursing situations and procedures necessary to assist individuals in meeting special needs related to human functions. Lecture 5 hours per week. Laboratory 12 hours per week. Total 17 hours per week.

**PNE 163- Nursing in Health Changes III (9 credits)**

Continues the focus on nursing situations and procedures necessary to assist individuals in meeting special needs related to human functions. Lecture 4 hours per week. Laboratory 15 hours per week. Total 19 hours per week.

**PNE 173- Pharmacology for Practical Nurses (2 credits)**

Studies history, classification, sources, effects, uses, and legalities of drugs. Teaches problem solving skills used in medication administration. Emphasizes major drug classes and specific agents within each class. Lecture 2 hours per week.

**FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS**

In addition to the usual college tuition and fees, the VHCC PN Program requires preadmission testing and other expenses as identified below. Students are responsible for these costs as well as the cost of transportation to and from the college and health agencies used for clinical experiences. These include a digital device such as a laptop or tablet to use in classroom and lab, uniforms/shoes, watch, stethoscope, standardized program progressive products, textbooks, electronic technology, Viewpoint Criminal Background, drug screening, & document manager, ATI products, BLS CPR certification (American Heart), Physical exam and Immunizations, and Tuberculosis testing, and Health Insurance. Refund of cost of tuition is dependent on the academic calendar last day to drop and receive a refund. Refund of other costs such as health physical examination, immunizations, CPR, and Viewpoint are not refundable. Cost associated with textbooks, ATI, uniforms (and accessories) are contingent upon the individual vendor.

Pre-Admissions Testing (Test of Essential Academic Skills or TEAS)	\$70.00
Uniforms/Shoes/Watch/Stethoscope/Penlight	\$250.00
Standardized Progressive Testing Program (ATI)	\$1000.00/semester
Textbooks/Learning Resources	Range from \$500-750
Individual Health Insurance	Variable

Viewpoint Criminal Background Check, Drug Screen, Document Manager	\$85.00
Physical Examination, Immunizations, TB Testing	\$250.00
CPR-Must be American Heart Association BLS HCP	\$150.00
Estimated in-state Tuition and Fees, 47 Credit Hours @ \$160 per credit hour	\$7520
NCLEX-PN Application and Testing Fees	\$405
VHCC Practical Nursing Program Pin	Paid by Program
Transportation (to and from college and clinical agencies)	Variable
<b>All costs are the responsibility of the individual student. Products and/or costs are subject to change based on program and student needs. Product costs are estimates and are subject to change.</b>	

## VHCC PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM FACULTY

### School of Health Professions

**Dean-Brigitte Casteel, MSN, RN**  
[bcasteel@vhcc.edu](mailto:bcasteel@vhcc.edu) 276-739-2440

**Assistant Dean -Kim Felty, BSN, RN**  
[kfelty@vhcc.edu](mailto:kfelty@vhcc.edu) 276-739-2534

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**PN Program Chair & Professor-Teresa Wexler, EdD/ET, DNP, MSN, RN, CHSE, CNE**  
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**Simulation Laboratory Faculty**  
 Associate Professor, Bethaney Hilt, MSN, RN, CHSE  
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Assistant Professor, Kayla Mullins, MSN, RN  
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**Clinical Coordinator**  
 Debbie Aylor, AS  
[daylor@vhcc.edu](mailto:daylor@vhcc.edu) 276-739-2439

Road to Success in Virginia Program (RSVP) Grant Coordinator  
Linda Colley BSN, RN  
[lcolley@vhcc.edu](mailto:lcolley@vhcc.edu)  
276-739-2487

### **Current Adjunct Clinical Faculty (Part-Time)**

Donna Cluesman, MSN, RN

Other clinical faculty may vary based on course, semester or clinical rotation.

### **Faculty Office Hours**

Each faculty member has in-person and/or virtual office hours each semester. Faculty will share their office hours and availability with students. Appointments outside the regularly scheduled hours should be arranged with the instructor via email, phone, or in-person communication.

### **Academic Advising**

Each student will be assigned an advisor to assist with academic progress and student concerns. Course faculty members will be the advisors of the students enrolled in their courses. The advisor will authorize all course work the student plans to take and will provide guidance for future course requirements and career development.

### **Notification of United States Department of Education Regulation**

Pursuant to United States Department of Education (US DOE) regulation 34 CFR 668.43 (a) (5) (v), the Virginia Highlands Community College (VHCC) Practical Nursing program provides the following information for all prospective and current students:

The VHCC PN program meets all Virginia Board of Nursing requirements for pre-licensure nursing education programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Commonwealth of Virginia participates with 32 other states in the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) National Licensing Compact (NLC) to allow nurses licensed in one state to provide nursing care across state lines in other compact states. The Uniform Licensing Requirements (ULRs) are found at [https://www.ncsbn.org/NLC\\_ULRs.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/NLC_ULRs.pdf)  
States currently in the NLC are found at: <https://www.ncsbn.org/nlcmemberstates.pdf>.

Prospective and current students are strongly encouraged to evaluate all state requirements in jurisdictions where they intend to practice nursing. A list of all state requirements is found at: <https://www.ncsbn.org/14730.htm>

VHCC has not determined if the PN program meets the requirements of any other states.

This statement serves to meet the US DOE regulation until further notice.

## ENROLLMENT AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### Enrollment

Admission and enrollment in the VHCC Practical Nursing Program requires that the student register during the designated registration period and pay tuition prior to the published deadline. A student who fails to pay tuition before the deadline will be dropped from the class and must follow procedures for reenrollment.

Before enrolling in PNE courses, students must be compliant with **the following** clinical requirements: Criminal background check and Drug screen. Even if a student is cleared by VHCC on criminal background checks or drug screens, there may be a required clearance for clinical agencies. If a student is asked to clear at a clinical agency and the permission is not granted, then the student cannot progress in the program as required clinical hours and clinical types of placements must be met and the student may be dismissed from the program.

If suspicion of an occurrence after the initial enrollment background check takes place, VHCC and/or a clinical agency can request a current background check. Students are responsible for the cost of any random drug screen if their behavior warrants reasonable suspicion for testing such as: unusual or erratic behavior, observable physical signs of impairment, involvement in a classroom, lab, simulation, or clinical accident, or possession of drug paraphernalia. VHCC cannot guarantee that for any hits on background check(s) or drug screen(s) that the student will be eligible to take the state licensure exam as this is governed and reviewed by the Virginia Board of Nursing. Termination from a clinical agency may result in the agency banning a student from a clinical site(s). If this takes place, VHCC can try to advocate for other clinical sites withing reason but this is not guaranteed and if the student cannot meet the required clinical hours and clinical types of placements, the student may be dismissed from the program.

### Course Delivery

Practical Nursing courses are delivered face to face, online synchronous, hybrid or a combination of delivery methods. Extenuating circumstances may alter the method of course delivery.

### **Class and Clinical Attendance**

Regular class attendance is essential to student success and is required for all nursing courses. Frequent absences may result in administrative withdrawal from a class and possible dismissal from the nursing program with the additional consequences of termination or reduction of programs of financial assistance including veterans' benefits. Repayment of financial aid may be required if withdrawal occurs. When an absence is necessary, students are responsible for the content missed, regardless of the reason for the absence. Any coursework missed and not subsequently completed will affect the grade for the course. All clinical and lab absences must be made up per lab and clinical space availability and pursuant with Virginia Board of Nursing policies on number of clinical hours required for graduation as Practical Nurse.

\*The PN Program as a specific clinical hours attendance which is within each clinical-related syllabus.

\*The PN Program as a specific policy on class participation which is within each syllabus.

The VHCC Policy for class attendance may be found in the [VHCC Catalog and Student Handbook](#).

The VHCC Catalog and Student Handbook addresses Faculty Initiated Withdrawal process. This link provides access to the VHCC Catalog and Student Handbook. This content is located at the Withdrawal from a Course section. <https://www.vhcc.edu/home/showdocument?id=7393>)

## **VHCC PN GRADING**

### **General Grading Scale**

A = 100 - 92%

B = 91- 84%

C = 83 – 80%\*

D = 79 – 70%

F = 69% and below

U = Unsatisfactory

S = Satisfactory

A point system equivalent to the above percentage score and letter grade is used in all nursing courses. Please see the course syllabus for the point spreadsheet for that course.

1. A grade of “C” is required for passing in all nursing and required general education courses.
2. A clinical rating of "satisfactory" is required for passing and will result in a final grade that corresponds to the theory average.
3. A clinical rating of "unsatisfactory" will result in a final grade of “F” regardless of the theory average.

Nursing theory classes are graded on a letter grade basis. A letter grade “C” (80%) or above in theory is required for satisfactory completion of a nursing course. Failure to obtain a minimum grade of “C” (80%) in a PNE course will constitute failure and the entire course must be repeated. Students are limited on the number of courses that can be repeated before dismissal from program.

General education courses (ENG, PSY, SDV, ITE, BIO) must receive a grade of “C” or above based on the specific grading policy. If a grade of “C” or above is not received in General Education courses, then the student must retake the course. A clinical rating of “satisfactory” is required for passing and will result in a final grade that corresponds to the theory average. A clinical rating of “unsatisfactory” will result in a final grade of “F” regardless of the theory average.

## **Assessment of Student Learning**

### **Assessment of Student Learning**

#### **Faculty Prepared Tests and Standardized External Product testing:**

Tests/Quizzes will consist of multiple choice, short-answers, fill in the blank, or alternate item format with emphasis on critical thinking and application of knowledge. Alternate format questions can include multiple responses (multiple response items may require

selection of a single correct response, have more than one correct response, or require all responses to be correct regardless of the number of possible responses), Fill-in-the-blank items that require typing in number(s) in a calculation item, Hot spot items that ask for identification of one or more area(s) on a picture or graphic, Chart/exhibit format where a problem is presented and will information in the chart/exhibit will be read to answer the problem, Ordered Response items that require order ranking or moving options to provide the correct answer, Audio item format presents an audio clip and requires headphones to listen and select the option that applies or, Graphic Options that present graphics instead of text for the answer options and they will be required to select the appropriate graphic answer.

National Council of State Board of Nursing (NCSBN) has revised the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) to begin 2023. This is referred to as Next Generation NCLEX. Question types include Matrix: multiple response and multiple-choice; Drop-Down Cloze, and Bowtie. Faculty prepared tests and standardized external product testing may include these types of questions.

Collaborative testing is an active learning activity faculty may elect to use in specific courses. The purpose of collaborative test is to enhance student learning, collaboration, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills. Instructions for collaborative testing is provided in course syllabi and/or learning management system.

All final examinations will be comprehensive covering materials of the current semester and concepts from previous semester(s). The difficulty level of each test demonstrates the program's progression from simple to complex and the student's progression from the novice learner to the proficient learner.

Percent of questions on Tests by Level: Guideline.

Semester	Course	Proficiency Level
Fall Semester	PNE 161	Novice Learner K=20%; C=30% A=50%
	PNE 173	Novice Learner K=20%; C=30% A=50%

	NUR 135	Novice Learner K=20%; C=30% A=50%
	PNE 155	Novice Learner K=20%; C=30% A=50%
	PNE 143	Novice Learner K=20%; C=30% A=50%
Spring Semester	PNE 162	Competent Learner K=5%; C=15%; A=80%
	PNE 136	Competent Learner K=5%; C=15%; A=80%
Summer Semester	PNE 163	Proficient Learner A=100%
	PNE 145	Proficient Learner A=100%
	PNE 158	Competent Learner K=5%; C=15%; A=80%

Fall, PNE `161	Fall, PNE 162	Spring, PNE 173	Spring, PNE 145	Spring, PNE 163
Novice Learner	Advanced Beginner	Competent Learner	Competent Learner	Proficient Learner
K=20%; C=30%; A=50%	K=10%; C=30%; A=60%	K=5%; C=15%; A=80%	K=5%; C=15%; A=80%	A=100%

**KEY:**

K – Knowledge – This category may be called “Remembering” and is defined as recalling or retrieving previous learned information

C – Comprehension – This category may be referred to as Understanding and refers to comprehending the meaning, translation, interpolation, and interpretation of instructions and problems.

A – Application and Analysis. Applying refers to use of a concept in a new situation and applies what was learned in the classroom into novel situations in the work place. Analyzing refers to separating material or concepts into component parts so that its organization structure may be understood.

Tests will be administered online using learning management system and/or other external testing forum and rarely traditional paper-and-pencil. The only answers accepted on paper and pencil tests will be those on the Scantron (test answer sheets). Online tests are set to show one question at a time, with no back

tracking. All tests are timed. Online tests are administered via Respondus Lockdown Browser and Monitor if applicable. Students are expected to use the Webcam feature and Lockdown browser as indicated by faculty.

**Missed tests.** If a student misses a test, he/she must complete a makeup test. The format and date for makeup test is at the discretion of the instructor. If a student misses a module test, the student must communicate with faculty within 7 days of the missed test. To complete a make-up exam(test), email the instructor of the course with: name of course and the test name you have missed. This email needs to be submitted within one week (7days) of the missed test. For example: PNE 162 –Module 2 Test Safety. After your instructor receives your email, the instructor will email you with the due date for the make-up test; make up tests will be in the Testing Center for 7 days prior to due date. If you do not email your instructor, you will not be given the make-up test and a grade of zero will be recorded. Failure to take a makeup test/quiz as scheduled will result in a zero (0) grade for that test/quiz.

**Quizzes:** Module quizzes when utilized in a course are set for two attempts with the highest grade recorded. Quizzes will not be reset. Quizzes not attempted/completed by the due date will have a grade of zero (0) recorded. FA Davis Instructor Practice quiz assignments must be completed by the due date and cannot be reset.

Students may take self -created practice quizzes in their FA Davis Advantage products for practice prior to testing on assignment material. Practice quizzing created by the student is not used as substitute for instructor created assignments posted in Davis Advantage and thus, no points will be given if these assignments are missed even if the student creates their own practice quizzes after the assignment due dates.

**Test grades:** Test results will be given to students by course faculty and are posted on the learning management system (Canvas). Prior to posting test grades, the course faculty will review all scores for accuracy and make necessary revisions. Once a student receives a test grade, the students has two calendar weeks (10 working days) to review tests or to request that the faculty review the test items for scoring or accuracy. After two weeks, the test grade is final. Faculty may not be able to review tests and exams with individual students after two weeks from

notification of the test (or course) grade. No test scores or grades will be given over the telephone or email. Students are strongly encouraged to make appointment with course faculty and/or retention specialist to review tests and receive assistance with test taking strategies, study strategies, and other resources.

### **Testing Center Online Test**

1. Students are expected to be familiar with online testing. Please review VHCC Testing Center policies and hours. [Testing Center Policies](#)
2. Sharing of test content outside the test site and the printing of any test material constitutes a violation of the honor code and will result in disciplinary action. This can result in dismissal from the nursing program. Please refer to the Academic Integrity section in this handbook.

**Grades for course assignments.** Most courses include specific assignments that are graded as part of the total course grade. These activities are critical components of the final student evaluation/course grade and must be completed with a satisfactory grade. All written assignments must follow the American Psychological Association (APA) format unless otherwise specified by the instructor. A good source for APA style is the Purdue Online Writing Lab, <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

**Written assignments** are due to the instructor at the beginning of the class period on the due date or at another time as specified by the instructor. If the student anticipates that a written assignment will be late, the student must discuss this with the instructor prior to the due date. With a valid reason and at the discretion of the instructor, an alternate date may be agreed upon. All written work must be completed by the individual without collaboration with another student unless course assignments includes collaboration. Students should maintain copies of both the original ungraded assignment and the graded assignment.

**Grades for written assignments.** Written work as assigned per instructor is graded according to the Grading Rubric (guidelines) provided with the Learning Activity Instructions which will be posted in the learning management system. Written work must be submitted by the date and time specified by the faculty.

**Late assignments.** Assignments are due at the **beginning** of class or by the time designated in Canvas learning management system course calendar/syllabus/assignment instructions. An assignment turned in late will result in a deduction of 10% of the total grade per day including weekends, up to five days. *After five days, no assignments will be accepted and the grade will result in a zero.*

**Standardized progressive testing/ achievement tests.** Standardized progressive testing using ATI ([www.atitesting.com](http://www.atitesting.com)) is required throughout the program. These tests and resources assist you in determining areas of individual strengths and weaknesses before progressing to the next level or to the NCLEX-PN. A minimum score will be set for each test and a remediation plan will be developed for any student who does not achieve the minimum score. Documentation of completion of recommended/required remediation must be submitted to the instructor before progressing to the next course and before graduation. Costs of the progressive testing are the responsibility of the student.

## **LABORATORY AND CLINICAL POLICIES**

Students receive experience in a variety of settings outside the traditional classroom. These may include computer labs, nursing skills/ simulation labs, and the clinical agencies. Students are required to review and sign an Assumption of Risk document and upload the document to the student's Viewpoint document manager. This form is an acknowledgement of risks involved in the clinical setting.

Laboratory and Clinical settings include nursing skills lab, simulation lab and virtual simulation activities. Clinical settings include long term care, acute care, and community settings. All lab and clinical settings are critical to the student's acquisition of knowledge and nursing care experience.

In order to participate in the lab environment, the following guidelines must be followed:

### **Nursing Lab Safety Guidelines**

**General:**

1. The skills lab is a simulated healthcare environment and should be treated as an ACTUAL clinical experience. Approach all lab situations and simulated scenarios as if they are ACTUAL client interactions.
2. The lab is a safe learning environment and all HIPAA/ confidentiality rules apply. Student performance during lab simulations or simulated scenarios is not to be discussed outside of the lab setting. HIPAA Awareness training is required by the end of the first week of Fall semester classes and is uploaded to Viewpoint.
3. Food and beverages are only allowed in non-client care areas (designated tables in the room). In clinical facilities, food and beverages are allowed only in designated break or cafeteria areas pursuant with policies of the specific clinical facility.
4. Manikins shall only be touched with clean hands or gloves. Do not use povidone-iodine, surgical lubricant, ink, or markers on manikins. Only paper tape should be used (when possible).
5. Student IDs & uniforms or appropriate attire should be worn in the lab as directed by the course instructor. Professional appearance guideline should be followed as in the clinical setting.
6. Students will purchase a lab pack from the Bookstore containing supplies for lab practice. It is the student's responsibility to bring their lab pack to the nursing lab during designated lab dates/times. If a student does not bring their lab pack for a skills lab, the instructor cannot guarantee that supplies will be available for the student to utilize depending on the activities and amount of lab equipment available.
7. Notify faculty of any Latex Allergy.
8. Labs are closed when College is closed.
9. For safety reasons, no children, visitors, or pets are permitted in lab/classrooms.

**Ergonomics**

1. Adhere to the Principles of Body mechanics while lifting, moving or positioning mannequins or actual persons in the lab.
2. When lifting or moving mannequins, use safe patient handling devices to prevent injury to yourself when available or needed.

3. Lock wheels on beds, wheelchairs, and stretchers.

**Infection Control:**

There are no blood products, blood or bodily fluids used in the labs. All blood products, blood or bodily fluids used in the lab are simulated materials. Do not inject, infuse, apply or inhale into yourself, another person or animal.

1. Students shall perform proper hand hygiene before and after using manikins or equipment in the lab.
2. Maintain standard precautions similar to clinical settings.
3. Dispose of all gowns, gloves, masks properly after use.
4. Do not infuse any fluids into mannequins or training models unless directed by faculty.
5. Non-reusable supplies (open alcohol swabs, ear specula, tape, used gloves, etc.) and other waste material shall be disposed of in regular trash containers.
6. Any equipment or materials in the lab for which a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) exists will have the MSDS sheets available in a reference notebook in the lab.

**Physical Space:**

All lab resources are intended for educational/instructional use in the lab.

1. All beds should be returned to the flat, lowest position with linens straightened, manikins in bed, side rails up and overbed tables placed over beds.
2. Furnishings including chairs, tables, curtains, linens, supplies, and equipment are to be returned to their proper location when lab is complete.
3. Do not remove mannequins from beds unless directed by faculty.
4. Work spaces, floors, and beds will be left clean and orderly and ready for the next student. Report any spills or when additional cleaning supplies are needed.

**Electrical:**

All lab resources are intended for educational/instructional use in the lab.

1. No liquids should be on any computer work stations.
2. If you unplug a piece of equipment, plug back in when finished.
3. Frayed plugs or cords will be removed from service.

4. Any damage or malfunction of equipment shall be reported to the course instructor immediately.
5. No oxygen or electrical supply is in simulated head wall units.

### **Simulated Medications, IVs, Injections and Sharps:**

1. Dispose of all opened and used needles and syringes in the Sharps containers located in the lab. USE once, Do NOT recap needles.
2. Do not remove any medications, IVs, blood products, syringes, or needles from the lab.
3. Report any incidents, including glass or sharps injuries (whether clean or dirty needle or other sharp) to your course instructor and document an Injury/Incident Report Form.
3. Equipment in the lab is purchased for simulation of client care and cannot be guaranteed as sterile or safe for human use. It should not be used in or on an actual person.
4. Practice medication and IV fluids are for demonstration/ simulation use only. They should not be ingested, injected, or applied in any manner. Medications and their labels are for simulation only and should not be considered accurate for any substance actually in the container (vial, capsule, inhaler, tablet, etc.).
5. Some items in the lab, including manikins, may contain latex. It is the responsibility of the student to report to the course instructor if a latex sensitivity/ allergy exists or is suspected and to take appropriate precautions. Latex free gloves will be made available in the lab for those students with documented latex sensitivity/ allergy.
6. Follow all safety guidelines for medication administration and use of Sharps as demonstrated by your instructor.

### **Items in Lab That potentially could contain LATEX:**

- **Simulated veins in mannequins or training models**
- **Bags simulating lungs in mannequins**
- **Tubing in IV training arms**

### **Clinical Facility Guidelines**

1. Clinical facility health requirements must be met prior to first day of clinical rotation each semester. Lack of completion or submission of clinical requirements to Viewpoint

may result in student being unable to attend clinical and will result in administrative withdrawal from the particular PNE course.

2. Surgical masks are worn while at clinical facilities per agency policies.
3. Goggles must be worn when providing direct care to clients in the clinical facility based on current clinical facility guidelines (subject to change). Purchase of goggles/face shield are the responsibility of the student.
4. Students should self-monitor/self-screen for any signs/symptoms that would prevent them from attending clinical such as fever, cough, loss of taste/smell, etc. prior to arriving to clinical agency for every scheduled clinical day.
5. Students who have any illness symptoms or possible exposures of COVID-19 or other infectious illness should notify their instructor immediately. Students will be directed after the initial notification on the process to follow and will include discussion related to when student may return to campus and/or clinical.
6. All PN skills labs, clinical, and simulation lab experiences must be made up in person if missed. There will be no option for recorded nursing skills lab, clinical, or simulation lab in place of face to face instruction unless otherwise directed by course faculty.

### **Lab and Clinical Attendance**

Laboratory and clinical attendance is required. Any exception must be approved by the clinical or laboratory faculty. Excused absences may include a medical excuse from a healthcare provider or faculty approved excuse (for illness, death in the immediate family, hazardous weather conditions), however **every missed** laboratory or clinical day must be made up by the end of the semester prior to the last day of scheduled classes (exceptions must be approved by Dean of Health Programs and PN Program Coordinator)

**Missed lab time.** Individualized plans for make-up for missed laboratory time will be developed by the instructor based on available space and time. If the student is unable to complete the scheduled make-up, he/she may be dismissed from the program.

**Missed clinical time.** According to the Virginia Board of Nursing (2017), a nursing program preparing for licensure as a practical nurse shall provide a minimum of *400 hours* of direct client care supervised by qualified faculty. Clinical hours to meet this VABON

requirement are built into the VHCC Practical Nursing Program. Inability to meet this clinical hour requirement will result in non-completion of the PN program.

Students are expected to attend all scheduled clinical and lab experiences. Attendance consists of arriving on time, being dressed according to the VHCC Practical Nursing Program dress code (including Practical Nursing and/or facility name badge) and being prepared to work. Students are expected to wear a mask and goggles to clinical settings as directed by current clinical facility policy. Student are also expected to bring their stethoscope, pen light, ink pen, note paper, and other equipment/supplies needed for clinicals.

Any absence must be reported to the appropriate lab or clinical instructor within one hour prior to the time the student is expected to arrive. Specifics of this notification process will be supplied by the clinical or lab instructor. If clinical is canceled because of a college closure, clinical site closure or cancellation, or faculty absence, a make-up session will be scheduled for all students in the affected clinical group(s). The Practical Nursing program is required to offer the number of clinical hours listed for each clinical course. However, there may not be opportunity to schedule clinical or lab activities for individual student absences from assigned clinicals. In addition, clinicals are scheduled based on availability of clinical instructors and clinical resources. This may result in students doing clinicals during the weekend and/or having to do clinicals during the week different from their current clinical scheduled day. Absences could result in inability to complete course requirements if available clinical sites/instructors are not available. Communication regarding different clinical days and times will be attempted as soon as possible. However, it is the responsibility of the student to directly communicate with their Program coordinator to discuss arrangements of any make-up clinical or lab time.

Lab and clinical absences will be documented and the student will be held accountable to meet all lab and clinical attendance policy requirements. Adjunct clinical instructors will notify the course instructor within 24 hours of a student absence to determine the action to be taken. It is the responsibility of the VHCC Program Coordinator to work with the clinical faculty and student to determine circumstances related to absences and next course of action.

Arrangements for making up missed laboratory or clinical time will be determined by the course instructor and are based on availability of the laboratory or clinical site as well as the availability of faculty and specific learner needs. Clinical access is limited to a specific number of days and most clinical instructors are not contracted to teach more than the allocated time for clinicals. In addition, the number of students in each clinical group is limited by the VABON and/or the clinical agency. Making up missed clinical time may be difficult or impossible.

Students may be required to attend clinical activities at an alternative site or after all regularly scheduled clinical days are completed. Many clinical activities are only available one time each year; in this situation, the student may have to wait a year in order to complete the clinical requirement and progress to the next course or graduation.

#### **Action for missed lab or clinical activity**

1. When a clinical or lab absence is necessary, students must complete an activity or assignment related to the clinical or lab concept for the day missed and makeup the missed hours as directed by the course faculty. The specific nature of the make-up activity/assignment is at the discretion of the faculty member. Clinical assignment must be similar to the missed activity such as OB rotation clinical day missed so make-up clinical time must be in OB rotation area as well.
2. If students must miss more than one clinical day, the faculty will develop a remediation plan to address the clinical or lab absence issue. Depending on the number of hours missed and the total clinical hours for the course, students may be asked to withdraw from the course with the second absence.
3. If students miss more than 2 clinical days for any reason, students may be asked to withdraw from the course or will be administratively withdrawn. If the final withdrawal date has passed, the student will receive a failing grade in the course.
4. Failure to notify the clinical instructor of absence may result in an unsatisfactory clinical grade

#### **Lab or Clinical Tardiness.**

In the event the student anticipates clinical tardiness, the faculty must be notified prior to the beginning of the lab or clinical day.

1. If students are more than 1 hour late to clinical or lab, the incident will be counted as an absence, students may be sent home, and students must complete the requirements outlined above under “Action for missed clinical or lab activity”.
2. If a student is late for clinicals, simulation or lab without notifying the instructor, the student risks being dismissed for the activity and receiving an unsatisfactory grade. The clinical or lab instructor will determine whether the student should be sent home or allowed to complete the remaining clinical or lab time.
3. Refer to the course syllabus for information regarding two or more incidents of tardy arrivals without instructor notification.
4. If students demonstrate patterns of behavior that includes tardiness and absences, they are required to establish a remediation plan with the course faculty and may be required to meet with the Program Coordinator.

Clinical activities may be scheduled at times not specific to the curriculum track. For example, some specialty clinical activities are only available during the week or during evening or weekend schedules.

### **Clinical Performance and Functional Ability**

Students must be able to perform all essential job functions in clinical settings with reasonable accommodation. Faculty can refuse to permit students into the clinical setting if they are unable to perform essential job functions adequately or if there is evidence of practice that jeopardizes the safety of the patient(s). Essential job functions include, but are not limited to:

- Critical thinking: Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgement and delivery of safe patient care.
- Interpersonal abilities: Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with clients, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds.
- Communication: Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form.
- Mobility: Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces.

- Motor Skills: Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care.
- Physical demands: Physical demands in this program include duties that frequently require squatting, bending, kneeling, reaching, and stair climbing, lifting and carrying up to 50 pounds; frequent pushing and pulling up to 200 pounds with assistance; occasional lifting up to 200 pounds with assistance and occasional carrying up to 51-74 pounds.
- Hearing: Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.
- Visual: Visual ability sufficient for nursing observation and assessment.

These guidelines serve as essential elements basic to eligibility requirements for clinical participation in the VHCC PN Program

### **Clinical Pre-Requisites and Documentation**

The VHCC Practical Nursing Program has contracts with clinical agencies for both student and patient safety. Contracts for each agency are available in the nursing office at VHCC and may be reviewed by students upon request. If students cannot comply with these contractual requirements, attempts can sometimes be made to accommodate the students in another clinical agency. If no accommodation can be found, students will be asked to withdraw from the program.

General guidelines to follow:

1. Clinical agencies reserve the right to dismiss a student from their agency at any time with due cause. This will be done with advance notice except in an emergency.
2. Published policies of the clinical agency must be followed. Each student must successfully complete an orientation program prior to participating in activities at any clinical agency.
3. Clinical agencies require that all students have documentation of ability to perform the physical demands required in direct patient care activities.
4. Proper uniform with appropriate name tag must be worn when participating in clinical activities.

5. In order to participate in learning activities at the various clinical agencies, all students must provide documentation that they have completed the clinical agencies' requirements. Failure to maintain clinical requirements during the program will result in administrative withdrawal from the current clinical course. Documentation of the clinical agency requirements must be submitted by the stated deadlines. Document submission requirements, forms and instructions can be found in the Canvas site for each clinical course (PNE 161, PNE 162, and PNE 163)/Viewpoint account and are provided at PN student orientation.

### **Clinical Requirements**

In order to participate in learning activities at the various clinical agencies, all students must provide documentation that they have completed the clinical agencies' requirements. These documents must be submitted by **August 1**. Documents must be submitted through the students Viewpoint account. The following list of requirements has been established by clinical agencies:

- Physical and Student Statement of Health
- Current record of immunizations including Hepatitis B, MMR, Tdap, and Varicella; documentation of immunizations via blood titers may be accepted. Other immunizations such as flu vaccine may be required.
  - Tuberculosis (TB): Upon admission to the nursing program, a 2-step tuberculosis testing (Tuberculin Skin Test [TST] purified protein derivative [PPD]) must be completed. The 2 step tests involve the following:
    - Step 1: a first visit to a health care provider in which PPD is injected into the forearm. Reading of results must occur between 48-72 hours after the injection.
    - Results:
      - Positive — consider TB infected, no second TST needed; evaluate for TB disease. \*
      - Negative — a second TST is needed.

- Step 2: Retest in 1 to 3 weeks after first TST result is read.
  - Results:
    - Positive — consider TB infected, no second TST needed; evaluate for TB disease. \*
    - Negative — obtain documentation of results and download to Viewpoint.

\*If student has a positive TB test result, there must be a chest x-ray result along with a health provider clearance documented on the provider's letterhead.

- HIPAA Training/ Certification (to be completed by end of first week of class[Fall])
- American Heart Association, Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (CPR). CPR certification must remain current for the duration of the program.
- Student Statement of Criminal Background
- Standard of Safe Clinical Performance
  - Criminal Background Checks- **The purchase of Viewpoint Screening automatically initiates the CBC.** Appeals of results of criminal background checks must be completed by the student through Viewpoint. Students with convictions of barrier crimes see Joint Statement 90-55: [Joint statement of the Department of Health and the Department of Health Professions on Impact of Criminal Convictions on Nursing Licensure or Certification and Employment in Virginia, revised November 2015](#)

Students with convictions of barrier crimes (for a list of crimes under this category refer to BARRIER CRIMES, Code of Virginia 63.2-1726 ([www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/96/2016/07/Barrier-Crimes.pdf](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/content/uploads/sites/96/2016/07/Barrier-Crimes.pdf)) may not be able to participate in clinical experiences. In accordance with the Virginia Board of Nursing (2017), except for high school students, all applicants to a nursing education program shall be required to submit a criminal background check prior to admission. Practical Nursing students are required to present evidence of completed clinical documentation before enrolling in any nursing (PNE) course.

- Drug Screen- All students must submit a drug screen with no positive findings before enrolling in nursing (PNE) courses. Only drug screens compliant with Viewpoint

requirements will be accepted. Students with positive drug screens will be prohibited from clinical activities and therefore, may not be able to complete the program requirements.

- Other documents may include Student handbook disclaimer, Proof of Health Insurance, Fitness for Duty if applicable, Covid testing/results (may be required for specific clinical agencies). It is the expectation that students review, sign, and abide by requirements.

**Note: Clinical requirements are mandated by our clinical agencies and may change at any time. Students will be notified of new requirements as soon as possible.**

In addition to the preceding documentation requirements, each student must maintain a student clinical competency checklist. This checklist will be updated and maintained by the student throughout the program, beginning with skills learned in the first skills course. Each semester, student will upload the updated skills checklist to the applicable courses (PNE 161, PNE 162, PNE 163) with the final completed checklist in PNE 145.

Before enrolling in nursing clinical courses students must be compliant with all clinical requirements with a few exceptions:

- Hepatitis B (Hep B) 3-dose vaccination series or 2-dose series  
If the student does not have documentation of Hep B immunization or a lab report of positive hepatitis B surface antibody titer, the immunization process should start immediately. It is imperative to attend to this requirement **immediately** in order to meet clinical participation deadlines. Clinical activities are required for successful completion of clinical courses and progression in the curriculum. The Hep B 3-dose series requires 6 months to complete. The first dose must be administered one month before the second dose. The third and final dose must be administered five months after the second dose. The 2-dose series is given 1 month apart.
- Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) training must be completed and uploaded to Viewpoint by the stipulated deadline.
- Deadlines for flu vaccinations will be announced by faculty (usually in the month of October). Do not receive flu vaccine prior to October 1.

- Failure to maintain clinical requirements will result in administrative withdrawal from the nursing program. Please see details under the heading, **Clinical Prerequisites and Documentation.**

### **Required clinical documentation for readmitted students.**

Students who have NOT maintained continuous enrollment in a clinical course will be required to re-submit clinical documentation. Students readmitted into the fall semester must submit clinical documentation by August 1. Students readmitted into the spring semester must submit paperwork by January 2. Students who have not been continually enrolled in the PN program must complete the same documentation as a new PN student. A recheck of criminal background/drug screen can be purchased at a lower rate.

### **Assumption of Risk**

Students will be asked to sign an *Assumption of Risk* form before they participate in clinicals. By signing this form, students acknowledge: 1.) responsibility for their actions and 2.) assumption of risks involved with the nursing program in the clinical setting. Students must also indicate an emergency contact person and phone number on this form.

### **Clinical Evaluation**

Student performance in the clinical area will be formally evaluated at the end of each clinical rotation. A student may be denied continued enrollment in a clinical nursing course if, after reasonable accommodation, the clinical faculty concludes he/she is unable to perform safe clinical practice. Virtual simulations and simulation lab experiences are included in the clinical evaluation and count as clinical time. A final grade of “satisfactory” in the clinical area is required to pass the nursing course.

### **At Risk Clinical Performance**

Student performance in the client area will be evaluated throughout the semester for any behaviors, actions, and attitudes that will put a student at risk for unsatisfactory clinical performance. The clinical faculty will complete the Documentation of At-Risk Clinical Performance form and will have formal meeting with the student to review the remediation plan.

Faculty and student will sign the completed remediation plan and it will be in effect for the designate time indicated in the remediation plan. A copy of the remediation plan will be provided to the student and to the Program coordinator. Clinical faculty will evaluate student using course clinical evaluation and will evaluate progress related to the clinical remediation plan prior to the end of the semester. Copy of the Documentation of At-Risk Clinical Performance form is included at the end of this document. Students who do not meet the course clinical objectives or receive unsatisfactory clinical evaluation even after completion of remediation plan will receive failure in the related course.

### **Fitness for Duty**

Clinical agencies require that all students provide evidence that they meet fitness for duty or physical requirements of their agency. Prior to returning to the classroom or clinical setting after experiencing an illness, injury, hospitalization, or other circumstance that results in either a physical or psychological limitation(s) or an absence from the program, the student is required to submit to the course instructor a *completed Fitness for Duty- Return to Classroom and Clinical Courses* form (available from the course instructor) from the appropriate health care provider. In the event that a health care provider places limitations on the student's ability to perform direct patient-care activities, the student will be restricted accordingly. In addition, the rules and regulations of participating clinical agencies will prevail in determining whether a student who has limitations imposed by their health care provider can participate in the clinical experience.

### **Employment**

A students' employment should not interfere with assigned class or clinical. We discourage working night shifts prior to class. For safety reasons, students cannot work a night shift prior to a clinical. Students should arrange their work schedule so that it in no way interferes with class or clinical time. Please be aware that students may be asked to attend a variety of workshops, labs, and other educational experiences that are not in the VHCC schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to work with their instructor and employer to attend required educational experiences.

**Health Insurance**

The College assumes no responsibility for medical expenses, and does not provide health insurance for students. Any costs related to injury or illness due to your role as a student will be at your own expense. As a requirement for the program enrollment including clinical placements, all students must upload proof of health insurance coverage in Viewpoint.

**Liability Insurance**

Each student has the option to acquire student liability insurance through a company of their choice. At this time, each student within the Practical Nursing program is covered under a blanket state sponsored liability policy. It is encouraged for students to carry individual liability insurance per student's choice and option.

**Clinical Agency Assignments and Clinical Orientation**

Requests for assignments to specific agencies cannot be honored. Students may be assigned to clinical agencies by faculty at the beginning of the semester regardless of sections signed up for. Students who fail to complete the clinical requirements will NOT be allowed to attend clinicals until the clinical documentation has been completed and successfully submitted through Viewpoint ([www.viewpointscreening.com](http://www.viewpointscreening.com)). Inability to complete clinical activities by required date will result in failure of the course, regardless of other course grades.

Clinical agencies require students to complete an orientation to the clinical agency. There is no exception to this requirement; students must complete the agency required orientation. Each instructor will distribute information regarding directions to the health care agency designated parking areas. Clinical assignments will be made by the clinical instructor; changes to assigned clinical times can only be made by the clinical instructor.

**COVID-19 Clinical Policies:**

Due to the recent pandemic of COVID-19, clinical agencies may have policies in place regarding PPE and clinical participation. At this time, students will be required to self- screen prior to entering the clinical facility. If you are experiencing fever, cough, headache, or other flu-like symptoms, you should NOT attend the clinical session for that day and should notify your clinical/lab/classroom instructor immediately. Students and faculty will be given PPE from the facility (in most cases) to be used during that specific day's clinical experience. It should be worn in all clinical areas and only removed to eat or drink in designated locations (cafeteria or break areas) pursuant with clinical facility policy. Students should have goggles/face shield for direct care situations. Currently, most long-term care clinical experiences may be limited. COVID-19 related clinical policies are subject to change.

### **Inclement Weather**

Information about College delays/closings will be available through the local media, on the College's web site, [www.vhcc.edu](http://www.vhcc.edu), and on the College's main telephone line (276) 739-2400. Students may also sign up for text messaging to receive any schedule changes or other notifications via text messaging.

Sign up at <https://member.everbridge.net/index/892807736726252#/signup>. The Practical Nursing program strives to follow the snow schedule as closely as possible.

During inclement weather, Canvas and email will be utilized to make up any missed work. It is the student's responsibility to check their email, Canvas inbox, and Canvas sites often for announcements. Work will be submitted online via Canvas inbox to the primary instructor within one (1) week of the class absence.

Clinical days missed will be made up hour for hour. Every effort will be made to notify students of changes as early as possible.

### **Transportation**

Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to all educational areas. Please be aware of parking information provided in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. Carpooling is encouraged; but must be arranged between students. Neither the instructors nor college are responsible for carpooling arrangements or issues with carpooling in any way.

## **Practical Nursing Program Dress Code**

Revised 9\_8\_25

Students should present a professional and positive image in the clinical. High standards of conduct and appearance reflect the practical nursing program, the profession, and the facility in which practice occurs. The VHCC Practical Nursing approved uniform will be the official dress for the VHCC Practical Nursing Pinning Ceremony.

The approved uniform or agency dress code attire and photo ID must be worn in all clinical settings including clinical simulation and clinical orientation activities. Clinical faculty will dismiss students from the clinical area who are not in compliance with the clinical dress code. The student will receive a “U” for the clinical day and will be considered absent for the clinical day. When a student is required to return to campus during or after clinical, the scrub jacket may be worn over the uniform or professional attire. Students wear their approved uniform in the nursing skills lab for PNE 161.

**Photo ID.** The student ID is considered part of the uniform and is to be fastened above the waist in clear view in all clinical settings preferred on left side of shirt or jacket. The photo ID should not be worn in settings other than the clinical or laboratory facility.

**VHCC Practical Nursing Uniform.** The Practical Nursing Program uniform consists of navy pants or skirt, ceil blue top, and a navy scrub jacket. Only the designated Practical Nursing Program uniform can be worn while participating in clinical either on or off campus. “Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Student” must be monogrammed by the uniform provider on the front pocket of the shirt and the lab coat consistent with guidelines provided by the Practical Nursing Program. Uniforms may be purchased from a local uniform shop identified by the Practical Nursing Program (see Handout provided).

Uniforms are to be cleaned and pressed at all times. Uniforms must fit properly. Skin toned full-length non-sheer stockings/hosiery must be worn when a skirt is preferred. No sweaters or hoodies may be worn with the uniform in clinical setting. Undergarments and/or cleavage must not show when leaning or bending over. Appropriate undergarments are navy, ceil blue, white, or neutral colored and fit appropriately. Navy scrub jackets are required and are the only acceptable garment to be worn with the uniform while not engaged in direct patient care. Shoes are to be white, black, or navy leather or rubber, closed toe, clean and in good repair. Shoes must be made of material that will not absorb biohazardous materials and can be cleaned.

Shoe laces must be white or navy and clean. Navy knee highs/ socks (that come above the ankle) are required. High top sneakers, canvas shoes or shoes with sport logos (unless logo is same color as shoe i.e. navy or white) are not permitted.

A watch with a second hand, wedding rings, small white or yellow metal earrings (one stud per earlobe) may be worn. Necklaces are not permitted unless Medic Alert. No body piercing jewelry (no exceptions) other than earlobes.

Hair is to be clean, neat and well groomed. Hair must clear the uniform collar and be controlled in such a way that it will not cause contamination or become contaminated. Shoulder length hair or longer must be pulled back behind the ears and off the neck when in the clinical setting. Males are expected to be clean shaven or facial hair/ mustache and beards no longer than ½ “and neatly trimmed. Hair must not be of an extreme color or style (no pink, blue, etc.). It may be at the discretion of the instructor and/or the facility as to what hair color or style falls under extreme.

Fingernails are to be clean, groomed, and manicured to the tips of the finger. No dark nail polish, artificial nails, tips, or fingernail jewelry are allowed in the clinical setting. Makeup must be minimal. No perfume, cologne, aftershave, or scented lotions are to be worn. Noxious or unpleasant body odors and poor dental hygiene are unacceptable. Showering/ bathing and the use of deodorant/ antiperspirant are expected.

The clinical instructor has final judgement on the appropriateness of student attire and corrective action for dress code infractions. Unprofessional attire may result in dismissal from the clinical activity. Any missed clinical time must be made up in order to progress in the program.

**Uniform accessories:** Each student is expected to have the following accessories when participating in clinical activities:

- Bandage scissors
- Black pen
- Penlight
- Stethoscope
- Watch with a second hand
- Calculator (optional)

**Personal appearance and behavior.**

- Eating, drinking, and gum chewing are not allowed in the clinical setting.
- Tattoos should/must be covered by clothing or bandage and not visible. If a long sleeve undergarment is needed to cover the tattoos, white, navy, or neutral (skin tone) should be worn.
- Personal phone calls and visitors in the clinical or lab setting are not permitted except in an emergency. Cell phones must be on silent and calls should not be accepted or personal contacts made, including text messages, during clinical or lab times. Some clinical facilities will require that cell phones be left in your car and not brought into the facility.
- Cell phones may be used as personal handheld devices for access to nursing references only if approved by the clinical faculty and the clinical agency. This approval must be received in advance of use for each clinical assignment. Students who use their cell phone for personal purposes or without prior permission may be dismissed from clinical agency and clinical activities and will be required to make-up missed time.
- Students are asked to follow the clinical site policy regarding smoking. Most clinical agencies do not allow smoking on the premises.

### **Clinical agency Professional Attire**

Some agencies prefer students to wear professional attire instead of the VHCC Practical Nursing student uniforms. The instructor will inform students when this is the case and what attire the agency will approve.

Appearance must be clean and neat. Generally, jeans, sweatshirts, sport clothing, underwear-type shirts, see-through clothing, shorts, sleeveless shirts or any clothing which exposes a bare midriff, back, chest or underwear are prohibited. Skirts must be knee length or longer, pants must be ankle length and fit properly, be clean and pressed, and representative of conservative attire. A student entering a clinical agency in street clothing for any activity as a nursing student (e.g. orientation) must dress professionally and wear the program's scrub jacket and photo ID required by agency.

## PROGRAM PROGRESSION, REAPPLICATION/ READMISSION

### Program Progression

All courses in the curriculum, both general education and nursing, must be completed in sequence prior to progressing to the next semester. Students must earn a minimum grade of “C” (80%) in all practical nursing courses, a minimum grade of “C” in all non-nursing courses and maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 to remain eligible for continued enrollment in the nursing program. In addition, during the PNE 161 course, a comprehensive drug calculation and medication administration exam will be administered to verify skills. Students must achieve at least a 90 percent of maximum score with no more than three attempts on the CDCE in order to achieve a passing grade in the course. Any student who earns a final grade lower than a “C” in a required course (either general education or nursing courses) must repeat the course and earn a final grade of “C” or better before taking the next course in the sequence.

Clinical performance is graded as Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory. A student who does not meet the clinical learning outcomes will fail the course.

The following are program progression policies of the VHCC Practical Nursing Program:

- A student who has two academic failures in nursing (PNE) courses will be ineligible for readmission to the program. An academic failure constitutes a final course grade below “C”, unsatisfactory clinical performance evaluation, or withdrawal from course (whether passing or failing at time of withdrawal). The two academic failures would be in separate semesters and not that the student failed two classes in the same semester.
- Any student who drops or withdraws from PNE 161 may continue in NUR 135, PNE 155, and/or NUR 135. However, this will result in delay of completion of the students’ program.
- A student cannot take PNE 145 unless also enrolled in PNE 163 without permission from the PN Program Coordinator.
- Students who are not successful in any first semester nursing (PNE) course must reapply to the nursing program. Re-admission must occur no later than three years from

successful completion of PNE 161, otherwise the student will have to repeat all nursing courses

- A student who wishes to reenter the nursing curriculum at any other level (e.g., PNE 163, 145, 162, 136, or 158) must write a letter to the Program Coordinator requesting readmission in the semester prior to the semester of enrollment. Each student's application for readmission will be considered by the nursing faculty and the decision to readmit will be based on additional requested data, prior performance in the nursing program, and space availability. Based on the course(s) that must be repeated, the student who is readmitted may be required to complete a skills competency course or demonstrate competency in critical nursing skills before beginning the repeated course.
- According to the VCCS Policy 5.7.4, "A student will normally be limited to two enrollments in the same credit course." Any exception to this policy must be approved by the program Dean and the vice president of instruction and student services.

A student must obtain permission from the Dean of Nursing Division and Program Coordinator to continue in the Practical Nursing Program under the following conditions:

1. Repeating a course with a grade below a "C"
2. Withdrawal from a nursing course
3. Cumulative GPA below 2.0

### **Reapplication/ Readmission Requirements**

Students who are not successful in the first practical nursing course, PNE 161, must reapply to the program. A new practical nursing application must be submitted by the deadline.

A student who wishes to reenter the practical nursing curriculum at any other level must write a letter to the Program coordinator and the Dean of Health Programs requesting readmission in the semester prior to semester of enrollment. Re-enrollment must occur no later than three years from successful completion of PNE 161 or the student will have to repeat all practical nursing courses.

The student may be required to enroll in and satisfactorily complete specific courses before readmission. Additional data may be required including a new criminal background check and medical records.

The decision to readmit will be based on additional data, prior performance in the practical nursing program, and space availability.

Based on the course(s) that must be repeated, the student who is readmitted may be required to complete a skills competency course or demonstrate competency in critical nursing skills before progressing to the next level.

A student who has two academic failures or withdrawals in separate semesters will be ineligible for reenrollment in the program. Such a student may not be readmitted if the cumulative grade point average is less than 2.0, including all course attempted other than practical nursing courses.

According to VCCS Policy 5.6.3 and VHCC Policy 5.7.4 “A student will normally be limited to two enrollments in the same credit course.” Any exception to this policy must be approved by the program dean and the vice president of instruction and student services.

Any student who is not enrolled in a clinical course for one semester or longer must meet clinical agency requirements including a new criminal background check and drug screen; documentation of current CPR and health insurance, statement of health, and physical prior to returning to reenrolling in nursing courses. A student who is not enrolled in a clinical course for one semester or longer, will be required to demonstrate competency in critical nursing skills including head-to-toe assessments, before reenrolling in the program. Failure to demonstrate skills/assessment competencies before the course begins will result in the student not being allowed to reenroll in the program. If competency is not demonstrated the student may be required to repeat PNE 161.

### **Guidelines for Requesting Readmission**

Students requesting readmission must follow these guidelines:

1. Indicate in writing to the VHCC Practical Nursing Program Coordinator the desire to be readmitted including the specific course needed. The letter must address what steps have been taken to correct previous deficiencies. State in the letter what steps have been taken to ensure success if reenrollment is approved. This letter is the student’s request for readmission and will be presented to the faculty for the final decision. Appropriate formatting, correct grammar and

spelling are important factors to consider in preparing the letter. Students may be asked to attend a meeting with faculty to discuss readmission.

2. For reenrollment in fall and spring, letters must be received at the end of the applicable semester. Requests after these deadlines will not be considered until the following year. Requests may be sent via email or by US Mail to the Practical Nursing Program Coordinator at Virginia Highlands Community College, PO Box 828, Abingdon, VA 24212.
3. It is the student's responsibility to confirm that readmission requests have been received by the VHCC Practical Nursing Program office.

Readmissions are reviewed and approved by faculty. The student's letter requesting return, GPA, and availability of clinical and classroom space are considered. Students will be notified of the decision concerning the re-admission request by phone call, letter, or email prior to the first day of the requested class. Students returning are required to agree to readmission conditions. Failure to follow the agreed upon conditions **may** result in administrative withdrawal.

**Priority of readmission.** Students are allowed readmission in the program based on space availability and ranked by cumulative GPA in the following order of priority:

1. VHCC Practical Nursing Program returning students who have dropped out of the practical nursing curriculum with a passing grade prior to taking the courses for which they have applied and are still eligible to continue in the program.
2. VHCC Practical Nursing Program returning students who have been unsuccessful in the course for which they are applying and are still eligible to continue in the program.
3. Transfer students per VHCC PN (Health Programs) Transfer Policy

## **PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **Professional Integrity**

Stress is a reality for nursing students and professional nurses. How individuals respond during highly stressful situations is paramount to effectiveness as professionals and nurses. During difficult situations in the classroom or in a clinical situation, students must be mindful of communication with peers, the staff, faculty patients, and other healthcare providers.

**Nursing students must function as professionals** in the academic and health care settings. This professionalism includes exhibiting sensitivity and concern, maintaining therapeutic relationships and patient confidentiality. Unprofessional behavior may result in academic or legal consequences. Students should take a moment to reflect on what they are about to say, particularly in difficult situations. Profanity and threats will not be tolerated and will be managed according to college policy, as well as the policies of the healthcare agency when applicable. This includes e-mail and/or letter written by students.

Nursing students must demonstrate accountability for nursing practice by functioning within legally and ethically prescribed limits determined by the [Commonwealth of Virginia Board of Nursing Statutes and Regulations](#) and the [American Nurses Association Code for Ethics](#). Failure to comply with these limits will result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

## **Laws Governing the Practice of Nursing and Health Professions in General**

### **(Excerpts)**

#### **Chapter 30 or Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia**

##### **54.1-3007. Refusal, revocation or suspension, censure or probation.**

The Board may refuse to admit a candidate to any examination, refuse to issue a license, certificate, or registration to any applicant and may suspend any license, certificate, registration, or multistate licensure privilege for a stated period or indefinitely, or revoke any license, certificate, registration, or multistate licensure privilege, or censure or reprimand any licensee, certificate holder, registrant, or multistate licensure privilege holder, or place him on probation for such time as it may designate for any of the following causes:

1. Fraud or deceit in procuring or attempting to procure a license, certificate, or registration;
2. Unprofessional conduct;
3. Willful or repeated violation of any of the provisions of this chapter;
4. Conviction of any felony or any misdemeanor involving moral turpitude;

5. Practicing in a manner contrary to the standards of ethics or in such a manner as to make his practice a danger to the health and welfare of patients or to the public;
  6. Use of alcohol or drugs to the extent that such use renders him unsafe to practice, or any mental or physical illness rendering him unsafe to practice;
  7. The denial, revocation, suspension or restriction of a license, certificate, registration, or multistate licensure privilege to practice in another state, the District of Columbia or a United States possession or territory; or
  8. Abuse, negligent practice, or misappropriation of a patient's or resident's property.
- Code 1950, 54-353; 1970, c. 116; 1979, c. 5, § 54-367.32; 1982, c. 598; 1988, c. 765; 1989, c. 278; 2003, c. [249](#); 2005, cc. [610](#), [924](#).

**Virginia Board of Nursing Guidance Document 90-55 and VHCC Policy Acknowledgement Form**

**Section II: VHCC School of Health Professions policy on cognitive altering substances:**

Policy on Impairment and Drug Screening

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to ensure patient and student safety, uphold professional standards, and meet the requirements of our clinical and laboratory partners. Medical program students must be able to perform their duties without impairment from cognitive-altering substances.

1. Prohibition of Impairment

- Students are strictly prohibited from reporting to any lab, clinical rotation, or academic activity while under the influence of any substance—prescription or non-prescription—that impairs cognitive function, motor skills, or judgment.
- This includes, but is not limited to, illegal drugs, misused prescription medications, misused over-the-counter drugs, and alcohol.
- Students who are prescribed medication with the potential to cause impairment must inform the Program Director or a designated program official. The student must provide a physician's note confirming their ability to perform all program-related duties safely while on the medication. Accommodations will be handled on a case-by-case basis in a confidential manner.
- Reasonable Suspicion Testing: A student may be required to submit to a drug and alcohol screening if a faculty member or preceptor has reasonable suspicion that the student is under the influence of an impairing substance. Reasonable suspicion factors include:

- Unusual or erratic behavior
  - Observable physical signs of impairment
  - Involvement in a clinical or lab accident
  - Possession of drug paraphernalia
- Random Drug Screening: All students are subject to unannounced, random drug testing at any time throughout their enrollment in the program. The selection process is impartial, and students chosen for testing will be notified and provided instructions for completing the screen within a specified timeframe.
  - Cost: The student is responsible for the cost of all drug and alcohol screenings and any subsequent medical reviews.
  - Refusal to Test: The failure or refusal to submit to a drug screen, including failure to provide an adequate specimen within the designated timeframe, is considered a major violation of this policy. A refusal to test will be treated as a positive result.
  - Immediate Suspension: A student who refuses a drug screen, or tests positive for an unauthorized substance, will be immediately suspended from all clinical and lab activities pending a review by the Program Director or relevant disciplinary committee.
  - Program Dismissal: Violation of this policy, including a positive drug test or refusal to comply with a random drug screen, can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.
  - Legal Consequences: Violations of this policy may also be subject to legal penalties under federal, state, and local laws, and may be reported to law enforcement where appropriate.

**54.1-3008. Particular violations; prosecution.**

A. It shall be a Class 1 misdemeanor for any person to:

1. Practice nursing under the authority of a license or record illegally or fraudulently obtained or signed or issued unlawfully or under fraudulent representation;
2. Practice nursing unless licensed to do so under the provisions of this chapter;
3. Knowingly employ an unlicensed person as a professional or practical nurse or knowingly permit an unlicensed person to represent himself as a professional or practical nurse;
4. Use in connection with his name any designation tending to imply that he is a professional nurse or a practical nurse unless duly licensed to practice under the provisions of this chapter;
5. Practice professional nursing or practical nursing during the time his license is suspended or revoked;
6. Conduct a nursing education program for the preparation of professional or practical nurses unless the program has been approved by the Board; or
7. Engage in the practice of massage therapy or hold himself out as practicing massage therapy unless he holds a license as a massage therapist issued by the Board.

B. The provisions of this section shall apply, mutatis mutandis, to persons holding a multistate licensure privilege to practice nursing.

Code 1950, § 54-359; 1970, c. 116; 1982, c. 598, § 54-367.35; 1988, c. 765; 1996, c. [166](#); 2004, c. [49](#); 2016, c. [324](#).

Virginia Board of Nursing (2018). Laws governing the practice of nursing, §§ 54.1-3000 and chapter 30 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. Retrieved from [http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_laws\\_regs.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_laws_regs.htm).

## **Regulations Governing the Practice of Nursing, Virginia Board of Nursing**

### **54.1-2400 and Chapter 30 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia**

#### **18VAC90-19-230. Disciplinary provisions.**

A. The board has the authority to deny, revoke, or suspend a license or multistate licensure privilege issued, or to otherwise discipline a licensee or holder of a multistate licensure privilege upon proof that the licensee or holder of a multistate licensure privilege has violated any of the

provisions of § 54.1-3007 of the Code of Virginia. For the purpose of establishing allegations to be included in the notice of hearing, the board has adopted the following definitions:

1. Fraud or deceit in procuring or maintaining a license means, but shall not be limited to:

- a. Filing false credentials;
- b. Falsely representing facts on an application for initial license, reinstatement, or renewal of a license; or
- c. Giving or receiving assistance in the taking of the licensing examination.

2. Unprofessional conduct means, but shall not be limited to:

- a. Performing acts beyond the limits of the practice of professional or practical nursing as defined in Chapter 30 (54.1-3000 et seq.) of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia, or as provided by 54.1-2901 and 54.1-2957 of the Code of Virginia;
- b. Assuming duties and responsibilities within the practice of nursing without adequate training or when competency has not been maintained;
- c. Obtaining supplies, equipment, or drugs for personal or other unauthorized use;
- d. Employing or assigning unqualified persons to perform functions that require a licensed practitioner of nursing;
- e. Falsifying or otherwise altering patient, employer, student, or educational program records, including falsely representing facts on a job application or other employment-related documents;
- f. Abusing, neglecting, or abandoning patients or clients;
- g. Practice of a clinical nurse specialist beyond that defined in 18VAC90-19-220 and § 54.1-3000 of the Code of Virginia;
- h. Representing oneself as or performing acts constituting the practice of a clinical nurse specialist unless so registered by the board;
- i. Delegating nursing tasks to an unlicensed person in violation of the provisions of Part VI (18VAC90-19-240 et seq.) of this chapter;
- j. Giving to or accepting from a patient or client property or money for any reason other than fee for service or a nominal token of appreciation;
- k. Obtaining money or property of a patient or client by fraud, misrepresentation, or duress;

l. Entering into a relationship with a patient or client that constitutes a professional boundary violation in which the nurse uses his professional position to take advantage of the vulnerability of a patient, a client, or his family, to include actions that result in personal gain at the expense of the patient or client, or a nontherapeutic personal involvement or sexual conduct with a patient or client;

m. Violating state laws relating to the privacy of patient information, including § 32.1-127.1:03 the Code of Virginia;

n. Providing false information to staff or board members in the course of an investigation or proceeding;

o. Failing to report evidence of child abuse or neglect as required in § 63.2-1509 of the Code of Virginia or elder abuse or neglect as required in § 63.2-1606 of the Code of Virginia; or

p. Violating any provision of this chapter.

B. Any sanction imposed on the registered nurse license of a clinical nurse specialist shall have the same effect on the clinical nurse specialist registration.

Virginia Board of Nursing (2017). Regulations governing the practice of nursing, §§ 54.1-2400 and chapter 30 of Title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia. Retrieved from [http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_laws\\_regs.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_laws_regs.htm).

### **American Nurses Association, Code of Ethics for Nurses**

**(Approved January, 2015)**

- Provision 1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and unique attributes of every person.
- Provision 2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
- Provision 3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
- Provision 4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
- Provision 5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
- Provision 6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality healthcare.
- Provision 7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

Provision 8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to promote human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Provision 9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

(American Nursing Association (2015) American Nurses Association, Code of ethics for nurses. Retrieved from <http://nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Ethics-1/Code-of-Ethics-for-Nurses.html>

### **Academic Integrity**

All forms of dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, knowingly furnishing false information to the College, and the forgery, alteration, or use of College documents or instruments of identification with the intent to defraud.

1. Plagiarism is the appropriation of passages, either word for word or in substance, from the writings of another and the incorporation of those passages as one's own in written work offered for credit. VHCC assumes that the written work offered for credit is the student's own unless proper credit is given the original author by the use of quotation marks and footnotes or other explanatory inserts.

2. Collaboration with another person in the preparation or editing of notes, themes, reports, or other written work offered for credit is prohibited unless such collaboration has been specifically approved in advance by the instructor. Examples of collaboration include extensive use of another's ideas for preparing a creative assignment and receiving undue assistance in the preparation or editing of written materials.

3. Giving or receiving, offering or soliciting information on any quiz, test, or examination is prohibited; this includes the following:

- a) Copying from another student's document/work and/or submitting a purchased document/work.
- b) Use of prepared materials during the examination
- c) Collaboration with another student during the examination
- d) Buying, selling, stealing, soliciting, or transmitting the contents of an examination
- e) Substituting for another person during an examination or allowing such a substitution for one's self.

f) Bribery of any person to obtain examination information.

In addition, **unauthorized testing/examination behaviors** will be addressed. Examples of unauthorized testing examination behavior include but are not limited to conversing with another person, passing or receiving information/material to or from another person, or temporarily leaving an examination site to visit an unauthorized site; having a cell phone, tablet, smartwatch or earbuds; having food or drinks in the testing area; wearing hats, caps, hoodies or other head coverings/garments that cover the head or face. Online testing behavior is monitored and reviewed. Any questionable behavior will be investigated and the VHCC sanction policy will be followed. When testing is administered in a proctored environment, either by the faculty, faculty designee, or by testing center staff, the student will not violate testing rules as established in the syllabus, handbooks or in testing center policies. If a test proctor finds reason to suspect testing center irregularities, including cheating, the assessment will be immediately stopped, and the test closed down. A formal report will be made to the course faculty. The incident will be discussed with the student by faculty.

**Unauthorized test review behavior.** Test reviews can be good opportunities for learning, but students must behave in a manner that protects test security. Unless the faculty conducting the review says it is ok, students should not be having side conversations during the review. Examples of unauthorized test review behavior include but are not limited to leaving the site of the review with the test or notes regarding the test unless approved by the instructor, leaving the site of the review prior to turning in test, having a cell phone, tablet, smartwatch or earbuds; having food or drinks in the review area; wearing hats, caps, hoodies or other head coverings/garments that cover the head or face.

**Failing to report acts of academic dishonesty.** Students who witness or hear about any forms of academic dishonesty are expected to report this to faculty. If faculty discover a student has failed to report any form of academic dishonesty the student will be dismissed from the program.

VHCC and the VHCC Practical Nursing Program identify academic dishonesty as misconduct subject to disciplinary action. The following sanctions may be imposed:

A. Admonition: An oral or written statement to a student that he/she is violating or have violated College rules and may be subject to more severe disciplinary action.

B. Disciplinary Probation: Exclusion from participation in extracurricular activities of the College, including the holding of any student office, for a period of time not exceeding one academic year.

C. Restitution: Required reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. This may take the form of appropriate services or other compensation.

D. Suspension: Exclusion from attending the College as a student for a definite period of time not to exceed one academic year.

E. Dismissal: Termination of student status for an indefinite period. The conditions of readmission, if any, will be stated in the letter of dismissal.

F. Interim Suspension: If, in the opinion of the Vice President of Instruction and Student Services the continued presence of any student on the campus may reasonably pose a threat to, or interfere with, the College's mission and/or the rights of others, a student may be suspended from the College pending the right to a hearing. The Vice President shall first make a reasonable effort to advise the student orally of the reasons for the suspension, and give the student opportunity for explanation or rebuttal. The informal opportunity does not give the student the right to present witnesses, to cross examine adverse witnesses, or to require the presence of counsel. As soon as possible after the suspension, the student will have the right to call for a hearing. At such hearing, the affected student shall have all the rights described under section 6.7.3 of the VHCC Faculty/Staff Manual.

Cheating on any exam, quiz, lab practical, lab test, homework or any other type of examination, as well as plagiarism of thoughts, words, or ideas is prohibited. Students are expected to maintain a high level of integrity in their academic pursuits. Academic honesty is essential for maintaining the relationship of trust that is fundamental to the educational process and to the healthcare delivery system. Academic dishonesty is a violation of one of the most basic ethical principles of an

academic community. Students who cheat in any way will be dismissed from class session and the course and receive an “F” for the course and risk dismissal from the program and the college. This policy is consistent with conduct requirements for VHCC.

### **Illegal Substance Policy**

Students are expected to follow the VHCC Student Handbook policy regarding illegal substances and VHCC Controlled Substance and Alcohol Policy. ([VHCC Catalog Illegal Substance Policy](#), [VHCC Controlled Substance and Alcohol Policy](#).)

This policy applies to all clinical and classroom settings. Clinical agencies reserve the right to ask for a random drug screen at any time a student is in a clinical agency; the cost of random drug screening is the responsibility of the student. The student is to follow the directions of the agency and if the student chooses not to comply, dismissal from the program will occur.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS**

### **Traditional Face to Face Courses and Online/ Blended Courses**

The Learning Management System, CANVAS, is utilized for each course. Each student must obtain a VHCC Login user name and password. Students should be prepared to access CANVAS and email daily. Once a user name and password are established, the student may log into CANVAS and locate tutorials for using the learning management system.

### **Technology Requirements and Recommendations**

- All students must purchase a laptop to use in classroom and lab. This device will be utilized for downloading eBooks, completing assignments and testing throughout the PN program. Tablets and Chromebooks are not recommended due to inability of these working with some of the technology applications. Students will also need Microphone: Any microphone, either internal or external and a Webcam: 320x240 VGA resolution (minimum) internal or external.

The following are **General Technology requirements:**

- Use a computer 5 years old or newer when possible

- Screen size- Canvas is best viewed at a minimum resolution of 800x600 or higher. If you want to view Canvas and other services on a device with a smaller screen, use the appropriate mobile app.
- Operating Systems
  - Windows 7 and newer
  - Mac OSX 10.15 and newer
  - Linux – Chrome OS
  - Mobile Operating System Native App Support - There are free Apple and Android mobile apps for Canvas, Zoom, and Respondus (Respondus only supports Apple iPad)

**Web Browser:** Google Chrome v. 30+ (Highly Recommended) [Google Chrome is recommended](#)

- Windows: IE 11+, Edge 12+, Chrome 30+
- Mac: Safari 7+, Firefox 27+, Chrome 30+
- Linux: Firefox 27+, Chrome 30+
- Up-to-date [Java](#) and [Flash](#) software will be needed to access multimedia content.
- Internet Speed - Broadband recommended for any class using Zoom.
  - Minimum bandwidth requirement of 800kbps.

See ATI Technology Requirements at [www.atitesting.com](http://www.atitesting.com) to identify if you are using a compatible device with the appropriate technology requirements.

**Word Processing Experience:** Minimally proficient word processing skills, including basic keyboarding skills.

**Email Access and Experience:** Students must have sufficient email and Internet access to do all class activities on schedule. Students are responsible for finding alternative resources

when necessary. Note: Student college emails must be used. Faculty have been instructed to only respond to students using college email addresses.

- Check CANVAS course sites and email daily.
- Students **must** be able to perform the following email functions:
  - Check for and access new email
  - Save copies of all incoming mail for your records
  - Send email and save a copy of all outgoing mail
  - Send, receive, read, and save attachments to email.
  - Print email messages and file attachments.
  - Scan documents and save to pdf files.

**Virus Scanning Software:** Obtain up-to-date virus scanning software such as Norton Anti-Virus or McAfee on computer, and keep virus data files current. Antivirus software can be downloaded from the Help Desk support web page. If a document infected with a computer virus is sent to an instructor, the instructor will have to delete the document and will be unable to grade work submitted.

**Software programs:** The following software can be downloaded from the Help Desk support web page. Software programs used include but are not limited to the following:

- Microsoft PowerPoint
- Microsoft Word
- Adobe Reader
- Microsoft Excel

**Frequently Used Websites:**

- <https://app.shadowhealth.com>
- <https://www.kaptest.com/login>

- myVHCC
- [www.Youtube.com](http://www.Youtube.com)
- [Hoonuit](#)
- Kahoot
- Brainfuse
- CDC
- NCSBN
- VA Board of Nursing

### **Use of Technology in the Classroom and Lab/ Clinical Areas**

- **Cell phone and electronic device usage in the classroom and college laboratory setting:** All cell phone and other electronic device usage will be prohibited during class and college laboratory experience, unless authorized by the instructor for classroom/ lab activities. During testing and test review/remediation, all personal belongings including cell phones, electronic devices, book bags, and purses will be placed in a secure area of the classroom. These items may be retrieved after all testing or review is complete. Laptops are welcome for note-taking or research, but should be kept in sleep mode when the class is involved in interactive activities. You are expected to participate in interactive discussions and a laptop or texting on a mobile device can come between you and participating in the classroom. Any student using a cell phone or other electronic device during a test or exam will receive a grade of zero for that specific test/exam and will receive an “F” for the course. Please refer to the Academic Integrity policy section of this handbook.

### **Social Networking**

VHCC encourages networking among students. However, the nature of our clinical and classroom activities involves sensitive patient information. Therefore, HIPAA must be following in every aspect of communication including verbal, texting, internet social networks, etc. Violation of HIPAA will result in immediate dismissal from the practical nursing program.

## EMAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Students must use extreme caution and carefully review any information distributed by email or posted to websites accessible to the public. As a student of Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Program, students represent themselves, their peers, their college, and others in the nursing profession.

### VHCC PN Email Policy

Electronic mail or “email” is an official method of communication at the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). All official email communication is distributed to VCCS email accounts only. Students are expected to regularly check their campus email accounts. Faculty members, administration and staff will only respond to messages sent from VCCS email addresses.

**Students who choose to have their VCCS email forwarded to a private (unofficial) email address outside the official college network address, do so at their own risk.**

It is important to remember appropriate etiquette when emailing correspondence (including those sent via electronic devices) related to your academic/ professional matters. Emails are more formal and should be written in a professional manner. Provide the reason for the email, the specific course identification, and your student ID number. Email etiquette should always be used (R. Nordquist (2017). 10 Tips on how to write a professional email. Retrieved from <https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-write-a-professional-email-1690524>). Allow 24-48 business hours for faculty responses.

### Social Networking

VHCC Nursing supports the use of social media to reach audiences such as students, prospective students, faculty and staff. This policy applies to School of Nursing students who engage in internet conversations for school related purposes or school related activities such as interactions in or about clinical and didactic course activities. Distribution of sensitive and confidential information is protected under HIPAA and FERPA (Family Education Rights and Privacy Acts) whether discussed

through traditional communication channels or through social media. **Violation of HIPAA will result in immediate dismissal from the nursing program.** A violation of HIPAA may result in legal actions by the patient, the healthcare facility, and the federal government. A student will be subject to liability if individual postings are found defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law.

### **General information**

Social media are defined as mechanisms for communication designed to be disseminated through social interaction, created using highly accessible and scalable publishing techniques. Examples include but are not limited to Wikipedia, Second Life, Flickr, blogs, podcasts, Twitter, Facebook and related, YouTube, Snapchat, Topix, TIKTOK, and Instagram.

While this policy may need to be modified as new technologies and social networking tools emerge, the spirit of the policy will remain the protection of sensitive and confidential information. Students should always represent the VHCC Nursing Program and the community college in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the reputation of the program and the college. Students may also be liable if individual postings include confidential or copyrighted information (music, videos, text, etc.).

Information posted on social media sites may be public for anyone to see and can be traced back to the original origin or individual posting the information. Since social media typically enables two-way communications, there is less control about how posted materials will be used by others. Once information is posted on the internet, it becomes available to the whole world.

**Consequences of inappropriate use of social media.** Violations of patient/client privacy with an electronic device will be subject to HIPAA procedures/ guidelines and consequences. Students who share confidential or unprofessional information do so at the risk of disciplinary action including failure in a course and/or dismissal from the program,

A student will be subject to liability if individual postings are found defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law. Students may also be liable if individual postings include confidential or copyrighted information (music, videos, text, etc.)

The VHCC Practical Nursing Program adheres to the guidelines provided by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing regarding use of social media. Students are advised to review this information **National Council of State Boards of Nursing: Guidelines for using social media (NCSBN, 2018)**. Refer to National Council of State Boards of Nursing (2011). White paper: A nurse's guide to the use of social media. Retrieved from [http://www.ncsbn.org/11\\_ncsbn\\_nurses\\_guide\\_social\\_media.pdf](http://www.ncsbn.org/11_ncsbn_nurses_guide_social_media.pdf)

### LICENSURE APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Each student should review the 2020 NCLEX-PN Detailed Candidate Test Plan for a review of the major content areas included on the Practical Nursing Licensure Examination. This document is available through National Council State Boards of Nursing website, [www.ncsbn.org](http://www.ncsbn.org).

#### Application for NCLEX-PN Examination

The Virginia Board of Nursing (VABON) provides instruction for online applications for the NCLEX-PN Examination for VHCC's Practical Nursing Program graduates, whose legal residence is in Virginia, prior to graduation at [https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_forms.htm#LPN](https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_forms.htm#LPN)

Completing the NCLEX and state licensure application process is the responsibility of the student. Students from states other than Virginia should contact their state's Board of Nursing for detailed instructions for applying in that state.

#### 54.1-3020. Qualifications of applicant for practical nurse's license.

A. An applicant for a license to practice as a practical nurse shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

1. Has completed two years of high school or its equivalent;
2. Has received a diploma from an approved practical nursing program;
3. Has passed a written examination as required by the Board; and
4. Has committed no acts which are grounds for disciplinary action as set forth in this chapter.

B. The Board shall consider and may accept relevant practical experience and didactic and clinical components of education and training completed by an applicant for licensure as a practical nurse during his service as a member of any branch of the armed forces of the United States as evidence of the satisfaction of the educational requirements for licensure.

(Code 1950, 54-348; 1970, c. 116; 1979, c. 5, § 54-367.19; 1982, c. 598; 1988, c. 765; 2011, c. 390.)

Virginia Board of Nursing (2018). Laws governing nursing. Chapter 30 and title 54.1 of the Code of Virginia, Retrieved from [http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_laws\\_regs.htm](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_laws_regs.htm)

## **STUDENT CONDUCT AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

Forms of Student conduct that are subject to Disciplinary action are outlined in the VHCC College Student Handbook. Violations or potential violations will follow the Conduct Resolution and Appeal Procedures.

All grievances should be handled in accordance with the grievance policy as set forth in the [VHCC College Student Handbook Grievance Procedure](#). The purpose of the VHCC student grievance procedure is to provide an equitable and orderly process to resolve grievances at Virginia Highlands Community College.

Students may also request a final grade appeal. The procedure for this is located in the VHCC College Student Catalog Grade Appeal Procedure.

## **MISCELLANEOUS COLLEGE POLICIES**

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students admitted to the Virginia Highlands Community College Practical Nursing Program can be expected to complete course requirements that prepare them to perform essential

job functions as a licensed practical nurse. Those functions or skills that are essential to the profession must be performed with or without accommodations. Any student who thinks he/she does not possess one or more of these functions should contact the Office of Disability Services. Provisions for accommodations will be made in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

### **Financial Aid**

Please see the Financial Aid Offices for financial assistance and scholarships.

### **Graduation**

An application for graduation must be submitted to the enrollment services office according to deadline dates as announced by the college. It is the student's responsibility to file the application before the deadline date and to make sure that all current program requirements are met. Competency testing during the final semester and prior to graduation may be required.

Graduates do not have to request transcripts to be sent to VA Board of Nursing. If you are a resident of another state other than Virginia, you may need to request transcripts to that specific Board of Nursing. See your PN faculty for direction in the NCLEX application process.

The practical nursing faculty believes that college graduation ceremonies mark the recognition of the achievement of academic success. All practical nursing graduates are encouraged to participate in the commencement exercises to signify accomplishment of a goal and the beginning of a promising career.

### **PINNING CEREMONY**

A traditional pinning ceremony will take place at the end of the program as symbolic welcoming of newly graduated nurses into the nursing profession. This is an honor and all students completing the Practical Nursing Program are encouraged to attend. Purchase of VHCC PN nursing pins will be provided by the Practical Nursing program.



### **International Nurses Pledge**

Revised 9\_8\_25

In full knowledge of the obligation I am undertaking, I promise to care for the sick with all the skill and understanding I possess, without regard to race, creed, color, policies, or social status, sparing no effort to conserve life, to alleviate suffering and to promote health.

I will respect at all times the dignity and religious beliefs of the patient under my care, holding in confidence all personal information entrusted to me and refraining from any action which might endanger life or health.

I will endeavor to keep my professional knowledge and skill at the highest level and to give loyal support and cooperation to all members of the health team.

I will do my utmost to honor the international code of ethics applied to nursing and to uphold the integrity of the nurse.

### **VHCC PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER**

This VHCC Practical Nursing Program Student Handbook is provided to you as a guide to ensure you understand the academic and conduct expectations that the College has for you during your enrollment in the program. There is no mutuality between you and the College concerning it, and thus your reliance upon the information contained within it when making academic decisions does not constitute, and should not be construed as, a contract with the college. Furthermore, the College reserves the right to make changes to this handbook at any time, unilaterally, and without notice; however, students will not be held responsible for associated conduct expectations contained in such changes until notified of them. You are responsible for regularly reviewing the terms of this policy.

**VHCC PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM  
HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER SIGNATURE PAGE**

Your signature on this page is simply your acknowledgement that you have received, understand, and agreed to read the VHCC Practical Nursing Program 2025-2026 Student Handbook.

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Printed Name

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Signature

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Date