

ENROLLMENT AND PROGRESSION POLICIES

Southern Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (SCCEN) Core Performance Standards

The Mary Black College of Nursing requires all applicants and continuing students to meet core performance standards as defined by the Southern Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (SCCEN). These core performance standards are defined as follows:

Standard 1: Critical Thinking and Related Mental Abilities: Must have critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not an all inclusive list): ability to interpret, investigate, communicate, and comprehend complex situations; identify cause and effect relative to clinical situations; ability to make decisions and assess situations under varying degrees of stress; ability to read and comprehend detailed charts, reports, journal articles, books, etc; and capable of performing all arithmetic functions (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, ratios and simple algebraic equations).

Standard 2: Communication and Interpersonal Abilities: Must be able to read, write, speak and comprehend English with sufficient skill to communicate effectively verbally and non-verbally; must have interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): ability to establish rapport with clients and their families, peers, agency personnel and faculty, explain treatment procedures; initiate health teaching, and document and interpret nursing actions and client responses.

Standard 3: Physical activities. Must have physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces with gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive): move around a client's room, work spaces, treatment areas and administer CPR; calibrate and use equipment; position and transfer clients; capable of lifting up to 50 pounds independently; pushing up to 200 pounds independently; reaching 18 inches above head without the use of mechanical devices to elevate themselves; capable of sitting, standing, walking for extended periods of time; experience no limitation when bending, stooping, sitting, standing, walking (i.e. uses no mechanical devices to assist themselves which would impede the safety of a client); ability to move to and respond to an emergency situation in a timely manner and able to document in a clear, legible manner.

Standard 4: Hearing: Must have auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities associated with this standard include (not all inclusive) ability to hear auscultatory sounds, monitor alarms and emergency signals; ability to hear soft whispers of clients and families and able to tolerate loud noise for extended periods of time. Assistive devices must correct hearing to this degree and be worn at all times during clinical experiences.

Standard 5: Visual: Must have the visual ability sufficient for observation, assessment and intervention necessary for nursing care. Examples of necessary functional abilities include (not all inclusive): observe client responses; accurately read equipment, gauges and

monitors; vision correctable to 20/40, normal depth perception and ability to distinguish colors; ability to tolerate offensive visual situations.

Standard 6: Smell: Must have smelling ability to monitor and assess health needs. Examples of necessary functional abilities include (not all inclusive); ability to differentiate between various types of smells and odors and ability to tolerate offensive odors. Please note that students will be accommodated in accord with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Criminal Background Checks

Clinical agencies are requiring all students to have a criminal background check (CBC). The federal and state CBC policy for USC Upstate Mary Black College of Nursing has been developed based on DHEC Procedures for Conducting State and Federal Criminal Background Checks for Direct Caregivers. If a student has been found guilty or has plead no contest to substance abuse, child or adult abuse, sexual assault, assault with a deadly weapon, neglect or mistreatment of residents/patients/clients or misappropriation of resident/patient/clients property or felony, the facility cannot permit that student to work as a direct caregiver. The student assumes the cost of these requirements.

Drug Screens

Clinical agencies require students to submit to a drug screen prior to caring for patients. For obvious health and safety concerns, nurses must conduct health care and educational activities fully in control of their manual dexterity and skills, mental faculties, and judgment. The presence or use of drugs or alcohol, lawful or otherwise, which interferes or impairs the judgment or motor coordination of nursing students in a health care setting poses an unacceptable risk for patients, colleagues, the University, and affiliating clinical agencies. Preventing and/or detecting substance abuse, as defined below, is particularly critical in the Mary Black College of Nursing's Upper Division of the BSN program, where students spend a considerable amount of time learning patient care in a variety of clinical settings. The Mary Black College of Nursing recognizes its responsibility to endeavor to provide a safe, efficient academic environment for students and to cooperate with clinical agencies in providing for the safe and effective care of their patients during nursing students' clinical experiences in their facilities. Therefore, the following policy has been adopted to:

1. Proscribe substance abuse and/or activities or behaviors a) that are prohibited by the University's Drug-Free Policy, or b) which may subject the involved student, other individuals, and the University to legal penalties or consequences, or c) which may cause a deterioration of the atmosphere and circumstances under which the care of patients and the nursing educational programs are conducted;
2. Identify students in the upper division of the BSN program who may have a drug or alcohol-related impairment or conviction that may impact their ability to learn safe nursing care practices or that may create unacceptable risks for the University or clinical agencies in which students have clinical experiences;
3. Cooperate with affiliating clinical agencies by requiring nursing students reporting to such agencies to consent voluntarily a) to allow those agencies to drug test the student in accordance with their policies, and b) to disclose any drug testing results to appropriate Mary Black College of Nursing officials.

Drug testing means the scientific analysis of urine, blood, breath, saliva, hair, tissue, and other specimens of the human body for the purpose of detecting a drug or alcohol.

Illegal drug means any drug which is not legally obtainable; any drug which is legally obtainable but has not been legally obtained; any prescribed drug not legally obtained; any prescribed drug not being used for the prescribed purpose or by the person for whom it was prescribed; any over-the-counter drug being used at a dosage level other than that recommended by the manufacturer, or being used for a purpose other than the purpose intended by the manufacturer; and any drug being used for a purpose or by a person not in accordance with bona fide medical therapy. Examples of illegal drugs include, but are not limited to, stimulants, depressants, narcotic or hallucinogenic drugs, cannabis substances, such as marijuana, CBD oil, and hashish, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, phencyclidine (PCP), and so-called designer drugs and look-alike drugs.

Impaired means that a person's mental or physical capabilities are reduced below their normal levels (with or without any reasonable accommodation for a disability). An impaired student manifests deterioration in the level of function as compared to that previously observed, or the student does not function at a level normally expected under the prevailing circumstances. Impairment may exist in one or more multiple domains, including psychomotor activity and skills, conceptual or factual recall, integrative or synthetic thought processes, judgment, attentiveness, demeanor and attitudes as manifested in speech or actions. Impairment will include addiction to and/or physical dependence upon chemical substances.

Nursing student means any individual formally enrolled in the Mary Black College of Nursing in pursuit of the BSN degree, including registered nurses (RN) and students taking courses via distance education, special students, either alone or in combination with any other degree, regardless of the specific location of the student.

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

Students in the upper division of the BSN program will be required to indicate any legal convictions pertaining to the manufacture, use, possession, sale or other distribution of illegal or legally controlled substances; pertaining to or related to the abuse of alcohol or any other chemical substance; and the consequences of any such conviction(s). Failure to provide the above-required information, past legal convictions for activities related to illegal or legally controlled substances, and/or information or evidence that reasonably establishes a past pattern of chemical substance abuse will be grounds for dismissal from the program. However, prior legal convictions related to chemical substances will be considered along with all other information pertaining to the individual, and will not produce automatic dismissal from the program. Discovery that false or fraudulent or misleading information was provided prior to matriculation will be grounds for dismissal from the program. Students who engage in substance abuse while currently

enrolled in the program will be subject to dismissal from the College of Nursing.

Physical Examinations

Each nursing student must have a physical examination by a physician or a certified nurse practitioner. You may choose to have your physical examination through your personal health care provider or through the USC Upstate Health Service Office (864-503-5191). Reports of this examination must be submitted on forms provided from the Mary Black College of Nursing and must be received by the College of Nursing by published deadlines. Individual clinical agencies may require additional documentation for specific health requirements which must be met by each student attending that agency.

Immunizations and Titers

To comply with clinical agency contracts, each student must provide proof of a series of immunizations and/or titers. Some of this same information **must** also be sent to Health Services on the form sent to you by the USC Upstate Admissions Office. We highly recommend that nursing students receive the Hepatitis B Vaccine to develop immunity to this form of viral hepatitis. A series of three doses is required to achieve immunity. Students who do not take the Hepatitis B Vaccine are required to sign a waiver stating such refusal. The USC Upstate Health Service Office can administer the vaccine for the published fee. Students must submit proof of the following immunizations:

- Tetanus, Diphtheria, & Pertussis Booster (within last 10 years)
- Varicella vaccine or positive titer
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (Immunization or positive titer)
- Tuberculosis (negative), TST
- Hepatitis B vaccine (see above)
- Annual Flu vaccine

Nursing students will be caring for clients whose HIV status is unknown and all students and faculty use universal precautions when caring for any client. Nursing students who believe themselves to be at risk for transmission of HIV/AIDS are urged to voluntarily inform the University Office of Disability Services who will collaborate with faculty to determine if modifications in clinical courses can be reasonably accommodated.

Health Insurance: Clinical agencies require students to possess health insurance. Hospitals and health agencies provide emergency treatment to students for injuries or illness occurring in the course of the program requirements in their agencies. Treatment for illness will be at the expense of the students. Treatment for injuries will be covered through Workman's Compensation. The University pays all fees for enrollment in Workman's compensation emergency treatment to students for injuries or illness occurring in the course of the program requirements in their agencies.

Cardio-pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR): To be in compliance with clinical agency contractual agreements, all students must be certified in CPR (Adult and Child/Infant) through the American Heart Association. This certification must be active for the entire time you are enrolled in nursing courses at USC Upstate. Please check requirements, some CPR certifications require annual recertification and some programs require recertification every two years. A CPR course is offered at USC Upstate Health Services for a nominal fee.

Liability Insurance: Each student is covered for malpractice liability under the auspices of the University of South Carolina Upstate. It is strongly

suggested that registered nurses continue to maintain their own liability policy.

Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA): Students must be current with the standard OSHA requirements of infection control, fire safety, management of hazardous materials, and back safety. Annual testing of this information is required for enrollment progression.

Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA): Each student must successfully complete the HIPAA program and test in order to assure compliance with HIPAA regulations. Some clinical agencies may require students to complete agency specific HIPAA programs and tests also.

Progression Policies

1. Nursing courses are sequential, and any student who fails to take nursing courses in sequence cannot progress in the program.
2. Students are allowed two attempts to complete nursing courses. Withdrawal from a nursing course in which a grade is assigned, including (W) or (WF), will count as one attempt in the course. A second attempt to take the same course will exhaust the student's repeat option.
3. Students who earn a grade less than a "C" in any nursing course or receive a W or WF will be required to repeat that course earning a C or better before enrolling in any subsequent course.
 - a) Students can enroll in or continue in courses on the same level if the course that needs to be repeated is not a prerequisite or co-requisite.
 - b) Students will be required to repeat the course before enrolling in any subsequent course. Students who do not successfully complete the course in their second attempt will be permanently dismissed from the program.
4. Students who earn less than a "C" in two nursing courses, including lower-division nursing courses, will be dismissed from the program.
5. Students must complete the program of required nursing courses within four years of initial entry into the program. Students who exceed the four year time limit will be dismissed from the program.

Graduation Requirements: Students must meet all requirements for graduation as stated in this academic catalog. Students graduating with a degree in nursing must have a minimum GPA of 2.0 in all required nursing courses.

Transfer of Credit: Students wishing to transfer to the baccalaureate program from other institutions will have their transcripts evaluated to determine the comparability with courses at USC Upstate and applicable to the nursing program of study.

Auditing of Nursing Courses: USC Upstate guidelines are followed related to auditing of courses. After admission to the nursing program, the following courses may be audited: NURS U301 Nutrition, NURS U306 Introduction to Professional Nursing, NURS U420 Current Topics in Nursing, NURS U375 Pharmacology, NURS U430 Leadership in Nursing Practice, NURS U425 Evidence-Based Practice, and NURS U497 Professional Nursing Issues. Students may not audit a nursing course with a corequisite practicum. No nursing practica may be audited.

Credit by Examination: Some general education and supporting courses may be exempted by having successfully passed Advanced Placement (AP) tests in high school, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) tests, Defense Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES) tests or challenge examinations prepared at USC Upstate (see Credit by Examination section of this catalog). More specific information may be

obtained from the Counseling and Career Development Center. Licensed practical nurses may obtain credit for NURS U301 Nutrition, NURS U310 Health Assessment, NURS U320 Fundamentals of Nursing and NURS U320P Fundamentals of Nursing Practicum by successfully completing the required validation examination.

College Level Examination Program (CLEP or the Defense Activity for Nontraditional Education Support (DANTES): Following general university policy, a combination of CLEP and/or DANTES examinations may be taken to obtain up to 30 hours of credit. Junior and senior level nursing courses cannot be validated by CLEP or DANTES. CLEP or DANTES examinations are not acceptable for physiology, anatomy, chemistry or microbiology.

Professional and Pre-professional Organizations

Student Nurses Association (SNA)

The Student Nurses' Association of the Mary Black College of Nursing welcomes pre-nursing and nursing students who are enrolled in the four-year track and the RN to BSN track. Through their participation in various activities, students develop awareness of professional accountability and ethical standards mandated by the nursing profession. Planned, organized monthly meetings that focus on the provision of quality health care and advances in nursing education contribute to the student's knowledge base. By participation in SNA the students develop a leadership potential that will enable them to be future leaders in the nursing profession.

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society, Mu Rho Chapter

Sigma Theta Tau International, Honor Society of Nursing provides leadership and scholarship in practice, education and research to enhance the health of all people. They support the learning and professional development of members, who strive to improve nursing care worldwide. The Mu Rho chapter of Sigma Theta Tau was chartered in March 1992. Membership is open to those students in the top 35 percent of the senior class who have attained a minimum nursing GPA of 3.0. Graduate students may also be invited to join per Mu Rho Sigma Theta Tau criteria. The specific purposes of the Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International membership are to:

- Recognize superior achievement;
- Recognize the development of leadership qualities;
- Foster high professional standards;
- Encourage creative work; and
- Strengthen commitment to the ideals & purposes of the profession.

Upstate Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association (Upstate BNA), and Student of Upstate Black Nurses (SUBA)

The Upstate Chapter of the National Black Nurses Association (UpstateBNA), and the Student of Upstate Black Nurses (SUBA), welcomes pre-licensed and registered nurses to become members of a dynamic organization that is the professional voice for over 200,000 African American registered nurses, licensed vocational/practical nurses, nursing students and retired nurses in 100 chapters in 33 states, Africa and the Caribbean. UpstateBNA provide leadership opportunities to advance nursing practice, improve health care for all Americans, particularly the un-served and the underserved and shape health policy for the access and delivery of health care services. We are actively engaged in the many issues currently challenging the profession of nursing. Issues that cross ethnic and racial barriers, influencing the health outcome of all Americans. There is no better time than now for us to work together to reform our health care system.