



Penn Nursing

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA



Master of Professional Nursing (MPN) Student Handbook 2024-2025

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MPN Student Handbook serves as a guide to policies, procedures, facilities, and resources within Penn Nursing and across the University. This reference is helpful as you familiarize yourself in the program and introduces you to a variety of educational experiences and resources. If you have questions regarding the contents of this handbook, please contact the Office of Academic Affairs Advising Office at advisor@nursing.upenn.edu.

Students should read this document in full upon admission to the program and refer to the documents as they move through their curriculum. Along with policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, students are responsible for the policies and regulations listed in the University of Pennsylvania [Pennbook](#). As educational opportunities and policies are subject to periodic change, Penn Nursing and the University of Pennsylvania must reserve the right to make changes affecting policies, fees, curriculum, or any other matters announced in this publication.

Students with Disabilities

Consistent with its mission and philosophy, Penn Nursing is committed to providing educational opportunities to students with disabilities. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the School provides reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. However, the decision regarding appropriate accommodations will be based on the specifics of each case. Students who seek reasonable accommodations for disabilities must contact [Disabilities Services](#). This office is responsible for assessing documentation and determining reasonable accommodations. Questions concerning these standards can be directed to advisor@nursing.upenn.edu

Important School of Nursing Policies

All students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing are required to adhere to the following school-wide policies:

- [Statement of Personal Attributes and Capabilities](#)
- [Student Social Media Policy](#)
- [Student Substance Abuse Policy](#)

University of Pennsylvania Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Statement

Please see the University of Pennsylvania Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination Statement here in the Pennbook - <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/equal-opportunity-nondiscrimination-statement/>

Academic Calendar

The University Academic Calendar can be found here <https://almanac.upenn.edu/penn-academic-calendar>
Penn Nursing follows the University Academic Calendar in the Fall and Spring terms.
<https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/secular-religious-holidays/>

Summer Class Schedules

The MPN Summer Calendar can vary from the University Calendar. These dates will be relayed to the cohort prior to the Summer semester starting. Please consult the University [Academic Calendar](#) for the summer schedule for **non-nursing** courses.

Penn Nursing Mission, Values and Guiding Principles

At Penn Nursing, our mission is to make a significant impact on health by advancing science, promoting equity, demonstrating practice excellence, and preparing leaders in the discipline of nursing. Students are

expected to understand and carry out the [mission, values](#) and adhere to [guiding principles](#).

MPN Student Outcomes

At the completion of the MPN program a student will:

- Lead the delivery of high-quality, safe, cost effective, equitable and collaborative team-based care.
- Use equity-centered nursing interventions that promote population health.
- Lead policy and advocacy initiatives for socially just and ethically responsible health care.
- Drive sustainable evidence-based practice and quality improvement solutions.

These overarching student outcomes for the MPN program align and reflect the AACN Level 1 Essentials.

Completion of the MPN Program does not qualify the MPN graduate as an Advanced Practice Nurse (APRN) without an additional degree/certificate and successful completion of a certification examination. Teaching in a professional nursing program as stated in Section 21.72(c)(1-2) of the State Board of Nursing regulations addresses that the holder of a graduate degree in nursing must also have expertise in the area of instruction if the faculty candidate desires to teach in a nursing program.

Student Advising & Registration Holds

All MPN students meet with a faculty advisor prior to registering for courses each semester. Students will be assigned a faculty advisor at the start of the MPN program. Advisors generally post office hours and contact information for the week preceding and during the two-week Course Selection period. Any questions related to academic advising can be directed to advisor@nursing.upenn.edu

Course Registration Procedures

Students have online access to registration materials before the start of the Course Selection period. New or transfer students may register during the designated registration period that is held before the start of classes. All students **MUST** meet with their faculty advisor prior to registering for courses each semester. Advisors generally post-office hours and contact information for the week preceding and during the two-week Course Selection period.

Nursing Registration assists MPN students with Administrative Registration. This registration is completed prior to the University Advanced Registration period. Additional information, specific to the MPN cohort, will be sent by Nursing Registration prior to each semester. All holds (financial, student information, etc.) must be cleared from the student's account prior to registration. Students will be unable to be registered with holds on their account.

Nursing Email Account

All students at the School of Nursing must open and maintain a Nursing email account and list it as the primary email in the Penn Directory by the last day to add a course each semester, including summer sessions. Students who do not comply by the deadline will be put on registration hold and will be unable to make registration changes in Path@Penn.

Please visit the link below to set up your Nursing Account:

<http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/its/resources/student/>

Please visit the link below to make your Nursing email the primary email in the Penn Directory:

<http://www.upenn.edu/directories/>

Scheduling Classes and Clinical Courses

As of fall 2021, most rostered class times reflect instructional meeting time with pass time between classes factored in. However, clinical and lab courses do not meet on the same university patterns and students may need to schedule additional transit time to clinical sites. Clinical course times **do not** include transit time. Students are expected to spend the entire scheduled time in the clinical setting. Please note that travel time may vary depending upon the clinical site, and some sites may require travel by car or public transportation.

The Course Search and Schedule Planning tool is a resource to help you review and search through courses being offered for the upcoming term. As you locate interesting courses, you have the option to save them to a list and then preview them in sample weekly “mock” schedule. **WARNING: This system will NOT submit registration requests for your courses. You must still enter your course requests using [Path@Penn](#) during the registration period.**

Using Path@Penn

All Penn students must register for courses through Penn’s online registration system, Path@Penn, which can be accessed via the [PennPortal](#) using your [PennKey](#)/Password log-in.

Under “Academic Planning & Registration”, students can click on the “Search & Register for Classes” link. Students can use [Path@Penn](#) to confirm their schedule.

Technical questions related to registration should be directed to the School of Nursing, Office of Student Information, Suite M-24, CMFH, 215-898-4544, registration@nursing.upenn.edu. More information about Path@Penn can be found on the [Registration webpage](#).

Advising questions should be directed to the School of Nursing, Office of Academic Affairs, Suite M-18, CMFH, 215-898-6687 or advisor@nursing.upenn.edu

Grade Reports and Transcripts

At the end of each semester, students may access [Path@Penn](#) for a listing of final grades. Through Path@Penn, students can request to receive their grade report by mail from the Office of the [University Registrar](#).

Transcripts are maintained by the Office of the University Registrar, not by Penn Nursing. Students can request [transcripts](#) through Path@Penn.

Financial and Billing Related Policies

All MPN students are billed by the University Bursar in the Office of Student Registration and Financial Services as full-time continuing students. This means that student tuition bills are not based on course registration. Questions about billing should be directed to registration@nursing.upenn.edu.

Students who have unpaid financial balances at the time of Advance Registration will not be permitted to register. These students will have to pay their balance in full before registering at the beginning of the semester. Students who have questions regarding their grant or scholarship component of financial aid can speak to a nursing financial aid advisor either through Financial Aid “Walk-In” advising hours or can request an appointment by email financialaid@nursing.upenn.edu Normally appointments occur during normal business hours weekdays between 10am - 5pm. When emailing please include your Penn ID number, available times that are convenient for your schedule, and whether you prefer a phone

appointment or a virtual meeting. Please write 'FA Appointment Request' in the subject line of the message. For questions regarding the loan portions of financial aid, please contact graduateaid@pobox.upenn.edu

Tuition Refund Policy

In the case a refund is warranted, a full refund of tuition and fees is automatic only during the course selection period as indicated on the [Academic Calendar](#). Fifty percent of tuition and fees is refunded for courses dropped during the drop period and must be requested through the Penn Nursing Registrar. Requests for tuition refund must be emailed to registration@nursing.upenn.edu.

Transfer of Credit

There is no transfer of credit allowed for courses required for the MPN degree.

For the full list of contacts in the Office of Academic Affairs, see below:

Email	If you need assistance with...
FinancialAid@nursing.upenn.edu	Financial Aid Packages, Scholarships, Student Financial Concerns
Admissions@nursing.upenn.edu	Prospective Students, Application Inquires
Advisor@nursing.upenn.edu	Academic Policies & Procedures: Course Load, Course Selection, Academic Support & Resources, General Student Advising
Registration@nursing.upenn.edu	Course Registration Questions, Switching Clinical Sections
Compliance@nursing.upenn.edu	Clinical Compliance: Immunizations, Clearances
Sonedv@nursing.upenn.edu	Education Verification, Good Standing & Enrollment Letters, State Board & Certification Paperwork

Plan of Study

	CUs
Fall 1 (Semester 1)	
NURS 5070 Pathophysiologic Mechanisms & Pharmacologic Interventions in Caring for Individuals and Populations	2.0
NURS 5010 Ways of Knowing for Nursing Practice I: Assessment of Health	1.5
NURS 5020 Ways of Knowing for Nursing Practice II: Promoting Health & Health Equity	0.5
NURS 5100 Nurses Caring for Psychiatric Mental Health of Individuals: Theory & Behavioral Health Management	1.5
Total	5.5
Spring 1 (Semester 2)	
NURS 5140 Advancing Leaders in Health & Health Equity	0.5
NURS 5040 Nurses Caring for the Individual Adult and Across Populations	1.5
NURS 5050 Nurses Coordinating Care for Adults and Older Adults	1.5

NURS 5251 The Ethics of Patient Care and Decision-Making in Nursing	1.0
NURS 5471 Scientific Inquiry for Equity-Centered Evidence-Based Nursing Practice	1.0
Total	5.5
Summer 1 (Semester 3)	
NURS 5370 Systems Approach for Promoting Safe Nursing Practice	0.5
NURS 5190 Nurses Caring for Family I: Sexual and Reproductive Health	1.5
NURS 5200 Nurses Caring for Family II: Pediatric Health and Wellness	1.5
NURS 5300 Nurses Caring for and across Communities	1.5
Total	5.0
Fall 2 (Semester 4)	
Graduate Nursing Elective (NURS 5000 and above)	1.0
NURS 5780 Inquiry-based Innovation for Nursing Practice	1.0
NURS 5400 Current Issues in Health and Social Policy	1.0
NURS 5600 Nurses Leading in Complex Care	2.0
Total	5.0
TOTAL	21.0

Course Attendance

Policies regarding absence from classes are determined by the instructor(s) responsible for the course. Any special circumstances (including but not limited to religious holidays) must be discussed with the Course Director prior to the start of the semester.

Students are required to attend all lab and clinical components of their course work. Absences from the lab and clinical portions of a nursing course will not be excused except for severe illness of the student or death/critical illness of a family member. In rare cases, absences for other personal or academic reasons may be excused with the approval of the Course Director and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs or Assistant Dean for Admissions and Academic Affairs. These special circumstances must be brought to the attention of the Course Director, Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Assistant Dean within the first two weeks of the semester.

Excused absences from lab and/or clinical will be made up through a plan developed by the clinical/lab instructor, Course Director, and/or Associate Course Director. Students with excessive excused absences from clinical may be asked to share the cost of the make-up clinical hours with Penn Nursing. Excessive absences for any reason may necessitate repetition of the entire course.

More than one (1) unexcused absence from clinical or lab may result in a failing grade for the course based

on the discretion of the Course Director and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. If the Course Director allows a student to make up an unexcused absence from clinical, the student will be charged a Clinical Make-Up Fee described in the section below under Clinical Makeup.

Simulation Lab/Clinical Makeup Policy

Students are required to make up missed clinical and lab hours. Make-up clinical hours for unexcused absences (or in cases of excessive excused absence) will be charged at the following make-up rate:

Simulation Lab Session (typically 2-3 hours)	\$200 per incident
Simulation Lab/Clinical Session (typically 4-6 hours)	\$300 per incident
Clinical Session (typically 8-12 hours)	\$400 per incident

Please note: At the discretion of Course Director, students may be clustered with a clinical instructor during the make-up clinical section. The assigned instructor may not be the student's regularly assigned clinical instructor. In all cases (clustered or individual session), the clinical fee remains as indicated above.

Course Report Absence System

The purpose of the Course Action Notice (CAN) - Absence Report system is to provide a way for students to communicate with instructors when medical issues, family emergencies, or other extenuating circumstances necessitate missing class. The CAN system does not replace the clinical call-out procedure established by the course faculty; however, an Absence Report must be filed as part of the call-out procedure.

Students log into the CAN system via [Path@Penn](#) and send an Absence Report to the relevant course instructors indicating the days that will be missed and a reason for the absence(s). Students who submit a CAN are then responsible for following up with the instructor about missed coursework or content.

Please note:

- Absence Reports are a communication tool and do not constitute “excuses.”
- The clinical call out procedure remains in place and is expected *in addition* to the CAN system.
- The CAN system replaces instructor notifications that have been provided by the Office of Student Services in the past.
- The Office of Academic Affairs will no longer collect documentation or provide instructor notification for absences of 5 days or fewer.
- Students who will be absent for more than 5 days should contact an advisor in the Office of Academic Affairs and the course faculty to discuss the impact this longer absence may have on their schoolwork.
- Student Health will no longer provide documentation if you are not seen or treated by a practitioner at the time of a medical occurrence.

All religious absences should be discussed with the course instructor within the first week of the course. Students should consult the [Policy for Secular and Religious Holidays](#) in the Pennbook for further information.

Final Examinations

Students must adhere to [University Provost Rules governing final examinations](#) outlined in Pennbook. For all matters relating to final exams, students with questions should first consult with the Course Director. Further discussion can take place at the Assistant Dean for Admission and Academic Affairs or

Associate Dean for Academic Programs. It is at the discretion of the Course Director of the University final examination period will be used to administer final examinations.

Grading Policies

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is tabulated at the end of each semester. A **minimum of a C-** is needed to pass a **non-clinical graduate level course** (a grade lower than this will be reported as an F on the student's transcript). There is no grade of D in the MPN program. A **minimum grade of B-** is needed to pass a **clinical course** (a grade lower than this will be reported as an F on the student's transcript). All course grading policies are at the discretion of individual course instructors.

Pass / Fail

When a course is taken as Pass/Fail, the grade of P (pass) is not calculated into the grade point average. However, if an F (fail) is received in a Pass/Fail course, it is calculated into the GPA. The notation W indicates an approved withdrawal from a course.

Course Failure

If a required course is failed, it may be repeated one time. Any courses for which the failed course is a prerequisite may not be taken until the failed course is successfully completed. An "F" remains on the transcript and is always calculated into the grade point average, even after the course is retaken and passed. Students will be dismissed from the program if they fail a required course a second time.

Failure in Non-Clinical Nursing Courses

A **minimum of a C-** is needed to pass a **non-clinical graduate level course** (a grade lower than this will be reported as an F on the student's transcript). Students who fail required, non-clinical nursing courses will be reviewed by the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee. Remedial actions may be required at the discretion of the course director before the student can re-take the course. In addition, the student must meet with his or her advisor to revise the plan of study.

Failure in Clinical Nursing Courses

A **minimum grade of B-** is needed to pass a **graduate level clinical course**. Students must pass the theory, clinical, and lab portions of the clinical course in order to pass the entire course and progress into the following clinical course. Students who earn less than a B- in a required clinical course will receive an F and will be required to repeat the course. Students who receive an F in a clinical course must repeat and successfully pass that course in order to progress into other clinical courses. A remediation plan (including the Course Faculty and the Office of Academic Affairs) must occur before any course is repeated. *A second F in any clinical course will result in dismissal from the program.*

Failure Due to Unsafe Clinical Practice

Students will receive an F in a clinical course if, at any point, they fail to meet objectives for the clinical portion of the course or if they are removed from the clinical setting for unsafe practice during the course. Practice is determined to be unsafe if, due to student knowledge deficits, lack of effective clinical decision making, failure to appropriately monitor patient's condition and respond appropriately (clinician notification and direct care actions), or inappropriate communication, a patient is harmed or very likely to be at risk for harm. Unsafe practice is also related to the appropriate level of supervision that can be provided to support student learning and practice. Students in more advanced stages of their curriculum are expected to be able to practice safely with decreasing levels of direct faculty and preceptor supervision. Other factors contributing to an assessment of unsafe practice include falsified documentation, failure to communicate truthfully and aggressive/non-collaborative interpersonal communication patterns.

Students who receive an F for unsafe practice in a clinical course may not drop or withdraw from that clinical course. The Academic Standards and Progressions Committee will also define the conditions under which the student may be allowed to progress to further clinical courses. Please see the Grievance Policy for more information. *A second F in any clinical course will result in withdrawal from the program.*

Incomplete in Non-Clinical Courses

A student who fails to complete a course within the prescribed period and does not withdraw from the course will receive, at the instructor's discretion, either a grade of I (incomplete) or F (failure).

A grade of incomplete is assigned by the instructor only under the following conditions:

- The student has academic good standing in the course with a passing grade average.
- The student has no more than two outstanding course requirements unmet in the course.
- The student and instructor have completed a [Learning Plan to Achieve Complete Course Work](#).
- The student and instructor have an agreed date of submission for all outstanding course requirements. This date can be no later than the drop deadline of the upcoming semester.

These conditions must be emailed to and approved by the Assistant Dean for Admissions & Academic Affairs or designee before the grade of incomplete is assigned. Except in unusual and extreme situations, the "I" must be removed within the first 5 weeks of the following academic term.

Incomplete in Clinical (Theory and Practice) Courses

A student who fails to complete a clinical (theory or practice) course within the prescribed period and does not withdraw from the course, will receive at the instructor's discretion either a grade of I (incomplete) or F (failure).

A grade of incomplete is assigned by the instructor only under the following conditions:

- The student has academic good standing in the course with a passing grade average.
- The student has clinical good standing in the course with no record of clinical practice errors
- risking patient safety in the course.
- The student has no more than two outstanding course requirements unmet in the course.
- The student has completed the majority of any required clinical hours (e.g. more than 50% of clinical hours are completed) in the course.
- The student and instructor have completed a Learning Plan to Achieve Complete Course Work (see appendix).
- The student and instructor have an agreed date of submission for all outstanding course requirements and completion of any outstanding clinical hours. This date is no later than the end of the first 5 weeks of the academic term that follows the term in which the grade of incomplete is assigned.

These conditions must be emailed to and approved by the Assistant Dean for Admissions & Academic Affairs before the grade of incomplete is assigned. The grade of incomplete may be carried on the student's transcript only for the first 5 weeks of the following term. Carrying this grade beyond that time holds severe implications of failure to progress to next term with delay in the student's academic and clinical progression of an academic term or full academic year. Again, a grade must be submitted by the first 5 weeks of the academic term following the semester that the grade of incomplete was assigned. Any grade of incomplete for a clinical course after 5 weeks becomes a I* on the student's record.



Clinical Remediation (NURS 5XXX)

Students returning from a leave of absence are required to successfully complete NURS 5XXX clinical before re-entering a clinical course or continuing from physical assessment into a clinical course in order to demonstrate the expected competencies. This experience will be allotted no more than one credit unit and must be completed in a time frame that does not exceed one academic semester.

Procedural Steps:

1. If the course involves activities in the Helene Fuld Simulation Pavilion, the Director of the Pavilion must be involved in the planning of the remedial experience. Approval to register for the remedial experience must be obtained from the simulation lab faculty and program director.
2. The student, in collaboration with course/program faculty, will design an individual experience that addresses the areas of deficit/remediation and which affords the student sufficient time and clinical exposure so that expected course outcomes are achieved.
3. This experience will be detailed in a contract/independent study format that will be signed by both student and faculty.
4. Specific objectives that fully address the areas of deficit/remediation and which are congruent with the prior physical assessment/clinical course.
5. Additionally, the student will be held to the objectives that are detailed on the course clinical evaluation form that correlates with the specific course involved.
6. Course/program faculty must approve the plan for remediation before the student can proceed to the clinical area for practice.
7. The course/program faculty will determine the credit allotment for this remedial experience. 0.5-1.0 cu could be assigned.
8. The tuition will be determined based on this credit allotment and will apply to the costs associated with overseeing this experience.
9. Total hours completed during the remediation experience is not to exceed the number of hours originally assigned to the course.
10. Completion of NURS 5XXX may not be applied to program degree requirements.
11. A copy of all materials related to the completion of this course will be maintained in the student's file.

At the conclusion of the experience, the student will complete the evaluation tool as part of the self-evaluation process. Additionally, in narrative form, the student will evaluate his/her success in achieving the goals that were set for this individualized experience. All work must be accomplished with the grade of "S" for Satisfactory Performance (and not a letter grade) in order for the student to progress to the next level and for the successful completion of the course to be noted on the transcript.

Academic Standing

Good Standing

A student in good standing is defined as a student who:

- Maintains the proper GPA
- Maintains the proper course load (without incompletes)
- Is not on academic probation
- Does not have two consecutive semesters of non-enrollment
- Is on an approved leave of absence
- Is not on financial hold nor carrying past due balances
- Has completed the immunizations, background check, and drug screening processes with no identified problems

A student must maintain a **cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0** to remain in good academic standing and to graduate from the School of Nursing and the University.

Academic Warning

A student who has a cumulative GPA or single semester term GPA between 2.5 and 3.0 will be given a warning notice.

Academic Probation

A student will be placed on probation if they:

- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.5 at the end of any semester
- Has a term GPA below 2.5 at the end of any semester
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 for two consecutive semesters
- Has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 in Nursing core, theory, and clinical courses (required courses)
- Has failed a required Nursing core, theory, or clinical course (required course)
- A student on probation may not take classes pass/fail.

Dismissal

A student will be withdrawn from Penn Nursing for failing a required Nursing course twice.

A student who has been on academic probation for at least one semester and who has a cumulative GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters may be withdrawn from the School of Nursing.

Course Attempts

Students may only attempt to take a course two times. A course dropped within the drop period at the beginning of the semester does not count as an attempt. A course withdrawal that occurs after the drop period has concluded does count as an attempt. Students that withdraw from a course after initially failing the same course may be dismissed from Penn Nursing. Additionally, students who fail a course after initially withdrawing from the same course will be dismissed from Penn Nursing.

Academic Standards and Progressions Committee

All matters of academic discipline are acted upon through the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee (ASPC) of Penn Nursing. The ASPC meets three times a year at the close of the fall, spring, and summer semesters, and as needed, to rule on specific academic problems. The cases of students with academic concerns are presented to the ASPC for action. Committee deliberations may result in issuing a warning, placing the student on probation, or withdrawing the student from Penn Nursing. Students will receive a letter informing them of the Committee's decision and outlining the required course of action. A copy will be sent to the student's faculty advisor.

Other academic problems may be brought to the ASPC for action. A student must petition the Committee in writing, describing the situation, and may be asked to present their case at the Committee meeting. The petition should be submitted to the Director of Advising and Student Affairs.

The ASPC is the highest ruling body in Penn Nursing and reserves the right to make decisions in the best interest of the student and Penn Nursing.

Grievance

This policy exists for the resolution of disagreements between students and instructors for academic matters. A student must first have submitted a written appeal regarding the academic matter in question to the appropriate instructor or instructors. Email appeals are permitted. After a decision is made by the instructor(s), the issue, if unresolved, may be appealed to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will consult with the instructor(s) and attempt to resolve any process disputes, but the faculty retains the final decision about the grade for the assignment or the course. If the matter continues to be unresolved to the satisfaction of the student and the instructor(s), the issue will be referred to the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee (ASPC). The ASPC will review the situation to determine if grading processes have been applied fairly and will provide recommendations to the instructor(s) about process improvements. All grade grievances must be initiated before the end of the semester following the one in which the course was completed. Grievances brought forward after this time period will not be considered.

Types of Grievance

Commonly, grievances fall into 2 categories:

1. Re-evaluation of a [grade](#) given on an individual assignment or for a course.
2. Appeal of the decision to dismiss the [student](#) from the school, usually for unsafe practice, significant failure to perform academically, failure to correspond with the Office of Academic Affairs (advisor@nursing.upenn.edu) according to stipulations in Leave of Absence letters.

Grade Disagreement

The role of the ASPC in matters of grade disagreement is to investigate the processes used by faculty in determining the grade and advise the faculty member in handling any perceived problems with applying grading processes outlined in the syllabus or any other apparent violations of fairness. The faculty member ultimately determines the grade that is awarded.

The ASPC is the only body in Penn Nursing that can dismiss a student for severely poor academic performance, failure to return from a leave of absence/ failure to correspond with the school, unsafe clinical practice or other serious problems.

Determining that clinical practice is unsafe: clinical practice that is considered unsafe must be evaluated as such by more than one faculty member involved in the course, usually the faculty member serving as the student's clinical instructor and the Course Director or Program Director. The faculty will then consult the Associate Dean for Academic Programs who may choose to meet with the student and will consult with the faculty about potential processes to improve student performance. If it is determined that the student's clinical practice is so unsafe that she/he must be removed from clinical, the faculty will determine if the student has failed the course. The ASPC will be consulted and will review documentation leading to the determination of unsafe practice and course failure. In collaboration with the faculty, the ASPC will determine if the student will be permitted to re-take the course or if the student is to be dismissed from the School.

Options Following Dismissal from Penn Nursing Review Process

In the event that the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee (ASPC) dismisses a student, that student may request a meeting with the Committee. The Committee has the option to reconsider the decision or to uphold it. The ASPC must defer to faculty and teaching staff on all academic decisions related to the dismissal.

Appeals Process

The only ASPC decision a student may petition is that of dismissal from Penn Nursing.

The Appeals Process is as follows:

1. The student must submit a written petition to appeal the dismissal within 30 days of notification of the decision. The petition must include the grounds for appeal, which are limited to a) procedural error, b) bias on the part of the ASPC or any of its members, or c) dismissal that was arbitrary or capricious and without any reasonable basis. The petition should be sent to the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Academic Affairs.
2. Written petitions for appeal of dismissal are evaluated by an ad hoc Appeals Committee appointed by the Dean of Penn Nursing. The Appeals Committee shall be comprised of three members of the Standing Faculty, one of whom will be designated Chair.
3. The student may request, in the written petition, the opportunity to address the membership of the Appeals Committee.
4. The Appeals Committee will review relevant background materials, including relevant academic history and any supporting materials submitted by the student. The Appeals Committee may seek additional information or consultation from School or University officials as its members deem appropriate.
5. The Appeals Committee must defer to faculty and teaching staff on all academic decisions related to the dismissal.
6. The Appeals Committee deliberates and votes in private. In voting, the Appeals Committee may consider the following among the possible options: a) uphold the dismissal, or b) return the dismissal decision to the ASPC for further consideration.
7. The Appeals Committee reports the results of the vote and any supporting rationale to the Dean.
8. The Appeals Committee is advisory to the Dean. The Dean holds the final decision.

In the case that the Dean decides to ask the ASPC to further consider a decision to dismiss in light of such an Appeal's Committee review, ASPC's decision to uphold dismissal after such further consideration cannot be appealed.

The [Office of the Ombuds](#) offers a confidential, accessible and safe place to resolve differences, explore matters of concern, improve communication, and generate and evaluate options for faculty, staff, and students. Its purpose is to assist with the management of conflicts, resolution of disputes, avoidance of preventable escalation, and problem solving in relation to obstacles hindering a person's full and successful participation as a member of the Penn community.

Penn's Office of the Ombuds does not accept formal complaints or notice for the University. If a visitor wishes to make a record or put the Institution "on notice," that is, to make the University formally aware of a problem, the office will provide information on how to do so.

Students may contact the Dean of Penn Nursing at any time in the grievance process. The Dean may communicate with relevant faculty or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs about process issues. The Dean will not over-rule a faculty member's decision about grading or safety of clinical practice.

Completion of the MPN

The conferral of the MPN degree requires successful completion of all coursework specified in the student's plan of study. MPN students are required to maintain full-time status, enrolling as full-time matriculated students from the start of the program until completion. According to University policy, full-time status is defined as enrollment in three or more course units (CUs) per semester.

Any exceptions to the full-time plan of study require approval from the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee and the Office of Academic Affairs. Additional considerations for students who take a leave of absence, need to repeat a course, or encounter any delays that impacts a plan of study requires further discussion with the Office of Academic Affairs. Students should note that dropping below the required CU load may impact financial aid.

Leave of Absence

Students take time away from their studies for a wide variety of reasons including:

- work on a political campaign
- manage a medical concern
- fulfill a family obligation
- pursue career-related opportunities
- complete military service
- take a break

While interrupting your studies to take time away may seem intimidating, a leave is a means to the successful completion of a degree, not a barrier to graduating. The first step to considering a leave should be speaking with an academic advisor. It is important to take time to think carefully about goals for time away and when expected to return. It is recommended that students taking time away in order to manage a medical condition should discuss the leave with their healthcare provider. Advisors at Penn Nursing help students to connect with other campus resources as to prepare to take a leave of absence, such as Student Financial Services, Housing, and International Student and Scholar Services.

Students on leave should remain in contact with their advisor and update them about changes in plans. The return from leave process supports students in a successful re-entry to academic life at Penn. When preparing to return, students must consult an advisor at Penn Nursing to develop a plan that includes connection with appropriate resources.

A leave of absence for a period of up to one academic year may be granted when circumstances necessitate the interruption of academic work. In unusual circumstances, and at the written request of the student, such leaves may be extended for no longer than one additional year. This period may include either consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

A leave of absence does not automatically change the time limit (5 years) for completion of the program. Students who are on leave for more than two years in total may be withdrawn from the program and asked to re-apply. These restrictions do not include time spent in the military.

MPN students who wish to take a leave from their studies must request a leave of absence using the [Leave of Absence Request Form](#). All leaves must be approved by Penn Nursing in advance. Students who are not in good standing or who have disciplinary action pending against them require special approval. Discontinuance of study without permission from the University does not constitute a leave of absence. Students who are requesting a leave of absence due to medical reasons will be required to provide supporting documentation and will be asked to consult with Student Health and Counseling Services as needed. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs at nursenet@nursing.upenn.edu for any questions related to leaves of absence.

Once the leave of absence is approved and takes effect, the student's PennCard will be deactivated, and access to University services and facilities will be restricted. Students who are not in good academic standing at the time of the leave of absence will return to the same academic standing status they held (for example, probation) when they left. Financial reimbursement or credit may be issued when a leave

is approved early in a semester. Consideration for a tuition refund or credit is based on the number of the weeks completed in a semester.

Students who leave within the	Percentage Reduction in Tuition and Fees
Course selection period	100%
Drop period	50%
Thereafter	0%

For information on refunds/credits for non-tuition charges (such as housing and dining), students should contact those offices directly.

Leave of Absence Deadlines

Students considering a leave of absence are strongly encouraged to request a leave prior to the start of the semester in question. If a student has been granted a leave after the semester has started, the following deadlines apply:

- Students who request a leave of absence after the drop deadline but prior to the withdrawal deadline will be withdrawn from their courses, with a permanent notation of “W” on their transcript for those courses.
- Requests to take a leave of absence after the withdrawal deadline will be considered only in extremely extenuating circumstances and only with the proper supporting documentation.

Requesting a Leave of Absence

To request a leave of absence:

1. Meet with an advisor in the Office of Academic Affairs to discuss your request and to develop a revised plan of study.
2. Complete the Leave of Absence Request Form, and be sure to include a detailed description regarding the reasons for your request and how you plan to use your time away from the University.
3. Contact the Office of Academic Affairs, Suite M-18, Fagin Hall or nursenet@nursing.upenn.edu if you have any questions.

The leave request will be evaluated by the Office of Academic Affairs. If the request is approved, students will receive a confirmation letter outlining the terms of the leave and any conditions that must be met prior to making a request to return. Once approved, students should consult with the Office of Student Information (Suite M-24, Fagin Hall, compliance@nursing.upenn.edu) regarding any clinical compliance requirements that will need to be maintained while on leave, depending on the desired semester of return and the revised plan of study.

The Student Registration and Financial Services website will provide a list of other offices (including housing, dining, financial aid, etc.) students may need to contact as they prepare to take a leave of absence. Students are required to review this information and follow up as necessary.

International students should also contact the International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) office to discuss any immigration considerations and paperwork related to the leave, 215-898-4661, isss@pobox.upenn.edu.

Returning from a Leave of Absence

MPN students who are on an approved leave of absence and who wish to resume their studies must

complete the [return from leave form](#). Students should refer to their leave of absence letter for information on their return, including deadline dates and conditions. It is important to take note of these dates in advance and to plan ahead. Penn Nursing may deny any requests to return that come in after the specified deadlines.

Students who wish to participate in advance registration for the semester in which they are planning to return should submit their request *at least two weeks prior to the advance registration period* in cases where this occurs before the specified deadline to request a return. Students who have holds on their record must have these holds cleared before their return can be approved. Holds may be placed by Student Health and Counseling Services, the Center for Community Standards and Accountability, and Student Financial Services, among other offices, and students are responsible for contacting the respective offices directly.

Students who were not in good academic standing at the time of the leave of absence request will return to the same academic standing status they held (for example, probation) when they left.

Students cannot receive Penn transfer credit for courses taken at another institution while on leave of absence.

A leave of absence does not automatically change the time limit (5 years) for completion of the program. Students who are on leave for more than two years in total may be withdrawn from the program and asked to re-apply. These restrictions do not include time spent in the military.

To request a return from leave of absence:

1. Complete the [Leave of Absence Return Form](#). Please be sure to include detailed information addressing how you have used your time on leave, why you feel ready to resume your studies at this time, and your plans for reintegrating into the academic community.
2. Students returning from leave taken due to medical reasons will be required to submit documentation they are ready to resume their studies and rejoin the campus community. Such evidence includes documentation from the student's health care provider as well as consultation with Student Health and Counseling Services as needed. Detailed information regarding the necessary documentation and conditions of the leave that must be met prior to returning are noted in the student's leave of absence confirmation letter.
3. Submit these materials to the Office of Academic Affairs, Suite M-18, Fagin Hall or nursenet@nursing.upenn.edu.

The return from leave request will be evaluated by the Office of Academic Affairs. If the request is approved, students will receive a confirmation letter outlining the terms of the return and any steps that must be taken. Once approved, students should consult with the student compliance team (Suite M-24, Fagin Hall, compliance@nursing.upenn.edu regarding any clinical compliance requirements that need to be fulfilled, depending on the student's semester of return and revised plan of study.

The [Student Registration and Financial Services website](#) will provide a list of other offices (including housing, dining, financial aid, etc.) students may need to contact as they prepare to return from leave of absence. Students are required to review this information and follow up as necessary.

International students should also contact the [International Student & Scholar Services \(ISSS\)](#) office to discuss any immigration considerations and paperwork related to the leave, 215-898-4661, iss@pobox.upenn.edu.

Withdrawing from the University

Students who wish to withdraw from Penn Nursing should send a notification in writing to registration@nursing.upenn.edu

Clinical Compliance

Immunization/CPR/Background Check Policies

All Students at Penn Nursing must meet the requirements of the compliance policy. These requirements include immunizations as well as CPR certification, drug screen and background checks, as well as any other site-specific requirements. Records are to be submitted to and held by our compliance vendor, American DataBank.

Please Note: Requirements are subject to change due to the demands of our clinical agencies. Comprehensive information and timelines regarding compliance can be found at: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/students/clinical-compliance/>

Penalties for Non-Compliance

Students who do not submit complete records of their background checks, drug screen, certifications and immunization records by their deadline will be charged a Non-Compliance fine per the fee schedule below will not be onboarded to their clinical site until they become fully compliant. Students who are kept out of clinical due to non-compliance are charged a clinical make-up fee for each clinical day missed. (That fee schedule can be found in Class Attendance and Absences.) Additionally, non-compliant students may be subject to other penalties outlined by the course faculty.

Non-Compliance Fine Schedule: \$300 per semester

Please note: It is the student's responsibility to keep track of their immunizations, to update immunizations, CPR and other certifications, record checks, and licensure as necessary, and to submit documentation before any deadlines. Students will be notified one time per year via email about their compliance renewal, so it is imperative that students check their email on a regular basis, including over the summer.

Immunization Requirements

To participate in all clinical experiences (including observations), students must have completed the following immunizations listed on our compliance website:

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella Hepatitis B (3 series immunization and positive titer)
- Varicella (Chicken Pox) Tetanus-Diphtheria-Pertussis Tuberculosis
- Flu Vaccine
- COVID vaccine (primary series plus booster)

Clearances

Students must complete yearly background checks via the American DataBank system, including an FBI background Check (with fingerprinting), Pennsylvania Childline (Child Abuse) clearance, Nationwide

Sex Offender Search, Pennsylvania Criminal Record Check, Office of the Inspector General clearance (insurance fraud), and a 10-panel drug screen. Students are responsible for submitting the results of their child abuse clearance and FBI background check.

Required Training

All students are required to complete the Penn Nursing - Pre-Clinical Compliance Curriculum. This includes five modules including HIPAA, Bloodborne Pathogens and Safety training. These modules must be completed by the deadline, or you will be considered non-compliant. Students will also be required to complete orientation packet for EMR training for Simulation lab.

CPR Certification

All students must be certified in CPR in order to enter the clinical setting. Students must be certified in **ONE** of the following classifications of CPR:

- CPR for the Health Care Provider (BLS), American Heart Association **OR**
- CPR for the Professional Rescuer, American Red Cross **OR**
- BLS CPR, advancedmedicalcertification.com (the only online certification we accept)

CPR certification must be updated in the summer prior to the school year when it will expire. To find a course that is offered in your area, refer to the web pages of the American Heart Association (www.americanheart.org) or the American Red Cross (www.redcross.org). It is the students' responsibility to find an acceptable course.

Substance Abuse/Drug Testing

Recognizing that substance abuse is both a disease and a professional hazard, Penn Nursing has incorporated substance abuse topical content areas into its curriculum. Penn Nursing has likewise established a substance abuse and drug testing policy.

Please review the policy available online [here](#).

Physical Evaluation

All students must submit documentation of a recent physical signed by your provider or SHS. Please note that all full-time students can receive this evaluation at SHS at no additional charge as it is covered under the University Clinical Fee, which appears on your bill. If you are getting this done at SHS, let them know you are a nursing student as they have a form on file.

A health examination is required for all students entering the University of Pennsylvania. This includes a medical history, screening tests, and an immunization record, including the required immunizations as listed in this handbook and as outlined by Student Health and Counseling Services.

Additional Requirements

Individual sites may have additional requirements (including but not limited to HIPAA education, resumes, or other in-service trainings or paperwork). You will be contacted by your course faculty, clinical instructor, or Compliance Office if you are required to complete anything prior to beginning clinical.

American DataBank and Submitting Documentation

To streamline our compliance program, we have arranged to process immunizations, background checks and drug screenings through a third party, American DataBank. They utilize a web-based software called Complio where you will submit your documentation.

In order to maintain updated records and to ensure everyone is eligible to enter the clinical setting, all

students must submit official documentation to American DataBank as per the timeline and instructions that will be distributed to students via email and web posting. Students who submit documentation to any other source (e.g. clinical instructor, course coordinator) will still be considered non-compliant until American DataBank has the necessary documentation. All compliance materials must be submitted through the American DataBank system. Students must supply their own copy and keep the original documentation for their records. The Office of Student Information will **NOT** copy immunizations or CPR cards or re-furnish immunization or clearance documentation to students for their own records, American DataBank, or for third parties (e.g. employers). This documentation is collected for the sole purpose of monitoring immunization compliance. Students should contact their healthcare providers or Student Health Services to obtain this documentation.

**Please note that this policy is subject to change as clinical sites and agencies modify their requirements.*

- Make sure your immunization documentation is “official” (e.g. signed by your health care provider).
- Keep copies of all of your immunization records and clearances in your files.
- Pay attention to the American DataBank timeline you receive. The dates may vary based on your clinical placement; do not assume you can utilize another students’ timeline.

To streamline our compliance program, we have arranged to process immunizations, background checks and drug screenings through a third party, American DataBank. They utilize a web-based software called Complio where you will submit your documentation. This allows us to meet the increasing requirements of the clinical agencies while maintaining the highest level of customer service.

Uniform and Clinical Supplies

Information on uniforms is distributed to students prior to enrollment. MPN students must order prior to arrival for the start of the program, the first fall semester.

The student uniform consists of:

- Navy blue scrub top w/ embroidered Penn Nursing seal, Nursing Student, and full name
- Navy blue scrub pants (or navy-blue scrub skirt)
- Clean, non-porous shoes (in a color that matches your uniform, e.g. navy, black, white) must be worn. Dansko clogs with a back-strap or closed back are permitted (open back clogs are NOT allowed). You may choose to buy approved shoes from a vendor of your choice. You may also consider the Penn approved shoe vendor, **Clove**.
- When room temperatures necessitate extra warmth, students may wear an approved navy scrub jacket with the embroidered Penn Nursing seal or the lab coat.
- Penn Nursing name badge/pin and arm patch/Penn Nursing seal must be visible during activities related to client care.
- Optional: Lab coat w/Penn Nursing patch

Penn Nursing uses uniform suppliers that work with the school and contact information is found on the website: [Uniform and Clinical Supplies](#) Students may select the style of the top, pants, and lab coat from the approved styles. Both companies are familiar with Penn Nursing shoe and uniform requirements and will be able to help if there are questions.

Additional Considerations for Clinical Dress Code

After each clinical, all students are required to wash their uniforms. The lab coat must be worn over neat street clothing (“business casual”) when entering the hospital or other agency, even at times when the student is not involved in direct patient care. Penn Nursing name badge/pin should be visible. Jeans, overalls, and painter’s pants are not suitable attire to be worn under the lab coat. Dangling earrings and rings with raised stones are not acceptable. A thin, gold or silver chain necklace may be worn. Hair

should be neat and combed, not falling in the face to impair vision or interfere with clinical activity. In addition, students in clinical settings are not permitted to wear artificial nails, including acrylic nails, or facial piercing (e.g. tongue, nose, eyebrow, etc).

Clinical Supplies and Equipment

Students should carry with them their own pens, notepaper, scissors, and stethoscope. Stethoscopes may be purchased from any vendor. Penn Nursing recommends the *Littman Classic III SE* for students. Students are also required to have a watch with a second hand.

Please note: Only minimal cash or other valuables should be taken to an agency. These items should be carried on the person rather than in a coat pocket unless locked storage space is provided by the agency.

Transportation to and from Clinicals

MPN students are responsible for their own transportation to and from affiliating clinical agencies. This may require driving, taking public transit or securing alternate means of transportation. When the University is closed for snow or weather-related emergencies, clinicals are canceled.

The School of Nursing utilizes a variety of clinical sites, some of which are at area hospitals such as HUP and CHOP, and some of which may require travel to the site via car or public transportation. Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to and from the clinical site and for covering the cost of travel. The only exceptions are for selected labor and delivery sites (NURS 5190 Nursing Caring for Family I: Sexual and Reproductive Health), selected psychiatric sites (NURS 5100 Nurses Caring for Psychiatric Mental Health of Individuals: Theory & Behavioral Health Management), and home visits for Nurses Caring for and across Communities (NURS 5300 Nurses Caring for and across Communities).

For these sites, students may be eligible to use their personal car or have the School of Nursing subsidize the price of Lyft. An eligible site is either one that is inaccessible by public transportation and/or sites where additional caution is advised by Penn Public Safety. If students will be using their personal car, the School of Nursing will reimburse the student for the mileage driven at the rate specified by the Penn Travel Office. Students are responsible for keeping an accurate log of all miles traveled. Falsifying travel mileage logs is grounds for a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Students utilizing Lyft will be added to the Penn Nursing Lyft account and will receive a reduced rate. Students must travel in at least groups of two. Improper use of the Penn Nursing Lyft account is also a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.

Please note: When the University is closed for snow or weather emergencies, clinicals are canceled.

Malpractice Insurance

Nursing students do not have to obtain malpractice insurance before entering the first clinical, as the University insurance policy covers them during all course-related clinical experiences. However, students contemplating clinical employment must obtain their own malpractice coverage, as the University's policy does not cover students in employment related situations.

In the Case of Blood/Body Fluid Exposure

If you experience a Body Fluid Exposure while on a clinical rotation, immediately:

1. Wash the area.
2. Notify your clinical supervisor. A "clinical supervisor" is the resource staff member who is most readily available to the student in the clinical setting. Depending on the program and setting, it can be an intern, attending physician, primary care unit group leader, clinical instructor, preceptor, etc.

3. Report immediately to the facility's Occupational Medicine department, if open, or Emergency Department, if not, for evaluation of the exposure unless you are at HUP. If you are HUP, report to the Student Health Service immediately, unless it is after hours. If it is after hours, report to HUP's Emergency Department.
4. The goal is to be evaluated quickly so that you can be started on HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) promptly, if necessary.
5. If the facility does not have an Occupational Medicine or Emergency Department, report immediately to SHS.
6. Request a copy of treatment plan and source patient results, when available, for your primary care provider (SHS).
7. Call SHS on the day of BFE to schedule a non-urgent evaluation at SHS within 1 week (this is not necessary if initial evaluation was performed at SHS).
8. Bring treatment plan from initial evaluation, including baseline lab work and medications ordered, and source patient results to SHS.

What to Expect from the Clinical Supervisor Related to BFE:

In the event of a BFE of a student, the clinical supervisor will:

1. Encourage the student to wash the area and report for immediate evaluation of the exposure
2. Educate the student that prompt evaluation is important in HIV post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).
3. Direct the student to the facility's Occupational Medicine department, if open, or Emergency Department, if not, or SHS, if the facility does not have an Occupational Medicine department. If at HUP, report to the Student Health Service immediately, unless it is after hours. If it is after hours, report to HUP's Emergency Department.
4. Note the name and second identifier of the source patient and give it to the exposed student to take to his/her evaluation.
5. Arrange for source patient testing. There are complicated processes surrounding source patient testing that can cause unnecessary anxiety in students. Support from the clinical supervisor helps in obtaining prompt source patient testing and is an invaluable service to the student.
6. Contact the treating physician/provider of the source patient to explain the exposure and request testing for HIV, HBV and HCV.
7. Arrange to get the results to the student as quickly as possible.
8. The clinical instructor is to inform:
 - a. Office of Student Information compliance@nursing.upenn.edu
 - b. Office of Academic Affairs (nursenet@nursing.upenn.edu) by e-mail of the incident, including the time, date and location of an exposure, please send in a second email the contact information of the student. Notification should occur as soon as possible.

Penn Nursing Expectations for Home Visits

Home visiting, as part of community health nursing care to patients in their own home, is an integral part of the curriculum of Penn Nursing. Current trends in health care provision reflect increased delivery of services outside the hospital. Students derive significant benefit from making home visits: enhanced interaction with patients and their families; opportunities to develop increasing independence in implementing nursing roles; and understanding of the role of the community in providing social and health services. Both the School and the students have important roles in providing safe experiences for nursing students in making home visits in Philadelphia and surrounding areas.

Students learn important skills from simulation lab experiences and possibly a home visit clinical rotation. Orientation to the home care environment offers education about safe conduct in making home

visits, discussion of the leaflet “Suggestions for Safe Conduct,” and clarification of the student nursing role in the community. During the community health nursing course, students will participate in an extended orientation to their particular service neighborhood in order to familiarize themselves with that area and its resources.

School faculty will have regular communication with the clinical agencies to identify and minimize/eliminate potential sources of problems. Clinical instructors supervising home visiting experiences will encourage feedback and discussion concerning potential safety problems with students in their clinical groups. Clinical experiences will be planned to enable students to make independent home visits with a student partner.

Role of the Student in Achieving a Positive Clinical Experiences

Students will participate in class and clinical discussions about safe conduct in making home visits. Written material will also be provided to them about safety practices, and students will seek clarification of any questions they have about applying any of the recommended practices. Students will be accountable to the faculty and each other in implementing safe-conduct practices while making home visits in the community. The concrete application of practices that facilitate safety while making home visits is considered an ongoing process involving both faculty and students. This process will be assisted by clear, open, and continuing communication between students and faculty about safety issues.

Standards for Professional Behavior in the Clinical Learning Environment

Preamble

Clinical experiences present crucial opportunities for students to apply classroom learning and develop proficiency in caring for patients. Various aspects of clinical settings present myriad opportunities for learning that appear unexpectedly, but also pitfalls when students are unaware of expectations. Clinical work is also an area of the program where patient safety and well-being takes precedence over most other considerations.

The role of the clinical instructor, working intensively with small groups of students, is to facilitate sound educational experience. This work is to ensure positive experiences for the entire group of students, the community, and various stakeholders including regulatory and accrediting bodies. We are bound to specific time in the clinical settings to ensure that we are meeting course objectives/student learning outcomes. Therefore, it is essential that all students behave in a professional manner and conduct themselves in such a way to promote Penn Nursing core values and align with our guiding principles that support a conducive learning experience for all. Professional conduct by all students and faculty members facilitates students’ learning opportunities and fosters a strong working relationship between Penn Nursing and the various clinical agencies.

Guidelines for Clinical Learning

1. Expectations

In addition to being thoroughly familiar with this statement, students are expected to abide by course-specific policies that are detailed in the syllabi for each clinical course. In all matters, students are expected to conduct themselves as engaged, respectful visitors to clinical settings, and developing professionals. It is important to comport oneself in ways that elicit confidence and respect of staff members, patients, and families. Casual talk, loud speaking, and group socializing are a few examples of behaviors that reflect poorly on individual students, as well as on Penn Nursing.

Students are reminded that social relationships with patients, families or staff are not acceptable while in

the clinical learning environment. Please strive to have positive, professional interactions with both staff members and patients/families.

Students are expected to adhere to **all** standards and guidelines of the institutions or agencies where they are assigned for clinical learning. Instructors will point out important rules/standards, especially ones that are unusual or unique to a particular setting, at the beginning of placements, but students are expected to use common sense and to ask about use of resources and scope of acts allowed to students before acting. When Penn Nursing and agency policies are in conflict, whichever is more stringent/restrictive will apply.

The list of issues that appears below is not exhaustive. Students are strongly encouraged to speak with their instructor whenever in doubt about proper conduct.

2. Professional Attire

Penn Nursing's uniform policy for students applies at all times. The student uniform not only assists students in presenting a professional image, but also enables students to be easily identified by instructors, fellow students, staff, and patients/caregivers.

3. Notification of Faculty Regarding Absences

In the event that the student is not able to start the clinical day because of illness, contact with the clinical faculty member must be accomplished via cellphone or text at the earliest possible moment. At minimum a message must be left at the number the instructor specifies at the beginning of the experience. E-mail notification regarding absences is never acceptable.

If a student starts the clinical day but becomes sick and/or incapacitated during the experience, the clinical instructor will assist the student to arrange for safely going home, or to Student Health or the Emergency Department for necessary health care. If a pattern of early departure for illness develops, the student may be required to present documentation from a health care provider that the student is able to safely resume clinical experiences.

4. Use/possession of electronic equipment in the clinical setting

Students are strongly encouraged to bring an absolute minimum of personal possessions to clinical settings. Clinical agencies are not responsible for loss or theft of personal possessions. Cell phone use for personal purposes during clinical hours is prohibited. If a student must have a cell phone with them to receive emergency calls, it is to be turned to vibrate mode and specific permission must be obtained by the student from the instructor to make or receive calls. Under these exceptional circumstances, cell phones may only be used outside areas where patients are treated.

Use of the Internet in the clinical area is restricted to those purposes necessary for patient care and permitted by agency policy. Use of the Internet for e-mail, entertainment or other purposes while in the clinical learning environment is expressly prohibited.

Use of personal computers and other technological tools while in the clinical learning environment is only permitted for accessing information needed to provide patient care or to facilitate learning. Particular care must be taken to ensure that patient privacy and confidentiality are completely safeguarded. Names, or other identifying data, must NEVER be entered or downloaded onto personal electronic devices.

5. Use of clinical time

While in the clinical learning environment, students are expected to pursue, either with faculty direction or independently, activities that will enhance their clinical knowledge. If the patient(s) that students have been assigned to do not appear, or if there is a lull in activity with assigned patients (students are encouraged to check with their instructors and staff before concluding this), it is expected that students will seek out their instructor for alternate assignments. They may also use their time to consult electronic or paper resources related to the care of patients in their setting.

Students should NEVER use clinical time for the following:

- Homework/assignments for other courses.
- Reading non-health care related newspapers, magazines, etc.
- Non-patient care related use of the Internet.
- Socializing in groups.

These types of activities do not advance students' clinical learning and can reflect negatively on the student and Penn Nursing when observed by staff and visitors.

Poor Performance in the Clinical Setting

Failure to appear at the clinical placement site on time, appropriately attired, and prepared to deliver safe patient care will lead to dismissal from the clinical setting. The clinical day will be made up, with the student paying the current rate of reimbursement for a clinical faculty member. In addition, the student's advisor will be notified, and documentation of the event will be placed in the student's file.

In other cases of problematic student conduct, at the discretion of the Course Director, and potentially the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, a warning may be given to the student regarding the behavior in question, the behavior will be documented and potentially lead to a decrement in the student's course grade and the student's advisor will be notified for consultation. A second incidence of behavior of the same type may lead to removal from the clinical placement with a requirement that the placement time be rescheduled at the student's expense.

In the event of significant problematic student behavior, as determined by the Clinical Instructor or Course Director, the student may be immediately removed from the clinical setting. The observed problematic behavior will be discussed with the Course Director and documented in the student's academic record. The Office of Academic Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs may be included in discussions of how to address the problematic behavior, and what further action is necessary. In some instances, the student may not be allowed to return to the clinical setting.

Simulation Policies

As members of the professional community of learners, it is understood that clinical learning using simulation-based activities is a pedagogical approach to reach common goals of effective decision making, advancement of critical thinking skills, and competency in psychomotor execution of skills. Simulation-based activities are an extension of clinical experiences and contribute to students' preparation for clinical practice and professional role performance. The Helene Fuld Pavilion for Innovative Learning and Simulation provides students with state-of-the-art technologies to perform clinical simulation. Simulation requirements are integrated into each of the clinical nursing courses and will contribute to the overall course grade.

[Policies and procedures governing activities in the lab are documented on their webpage.](#) Course specific simulation lab requirements are included in each course syllabus or via a Simulation Overview Document specific to each course.

Penn Nursing Student Governance

Penn Nursing Bylaws include a list of standing committees that require student representation. Representatives are selected by the student organizations of Penn Nursing. For more information and interest in serving as student representative, students can refer to the [Sharepoint site for Student Organizations](#). For more information students may also contact the Office of Academic Affairs Advising Office at advisor@nursing.upenn.edu.

Graduation Requirements

A student must have 21 course units to earn the MPN degree. If a required course is failed (F), it must be re-taken for a passing grade. All Incompletes (I), No Reports (NR), and No Grade Records (GR) must be cleared by the University deadline or the student's name will be removed from that term's graduation list. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required.

Penn Nursing holds one graduation ceremony in May. All students graduating from the MPN in December are encouraged to attend the University and Penn Nursing May Commencement exercises.

Sigma Theta Tau

Membership in the Honor Society *Sigma Theta Tau* implies outstanding leadership and achievement in nursing. Some of the purposes of this society include the fostering of high professional standards, encouraging creative work, promoting the maximum development of the individual, and developing interest in the advancement of nursing. In accomplishing these goals, Sigma Theta Tau increases one's capacity to serve the profession and, through it, society. Membership in the University of Pennsylvania's XI Chapter is by invitation from the chapter.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/sttixi/>

Penn Nursing Awards

Students are encouraged to nominate themselves or others for [Penn Nursing Student Awards](#). More information about the nomination process will be disseminated to students during the academic year.