



MISSOURI SOUTHERN
— STATE UNIVERSITY —[®]

McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing

Online RN to BSN Completion Program

Student Handbook

Academic year 2026-2027

Welcome to the Missouri Southern State University's Online RN to BSN program!

We are thrilled that you have chosen to continue your nursing education with us. Our program is designed to provide you with the advanced skills and knowledge you need to excel in your nursing career, all while offering the flexibility to balance your studies with your personal and professional commitments.

As an online student, you will have access to the same high-quality instruction, resources, and support services as our on-campus students. Our dedicated faculty and staff are committed to helping you succeed every step of the way.

Remember, this journey is not just about enhancing your professional credentials, but also about growing personally and making a difference in the lives of your patients. We believe that our program will not only enrich your nursing practice but also open new doors of opportunity.

We look forward to supporting you throughout your educational journey. Once again, welcome to the Lion family!

<https://www.mssu.edu/academics/education/nursing/>

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Purpose of the Department of Nursing Student Handbook

This handbook provides information about policies and procedures for students enrolled in the MSSU Online RN to BSN Completion program. It is essential that students understand the information presented in this handbook to facilitate their progression through the program. This handbook, faculty, staff, and other University officials serve as resources to facilitate this progression. The student handbook is designed for use in conjunction with other University and professional publications, including but not limited to the University Student Handbook, which may be found at <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/>, the University Catalog, and the current Schedule of Courses. The nursing profession in Missouri is governed by the Missouri State Board of Nursing and Missouri Nursing Practice Act. Information for the Missouri State Board of Nursing may be found at <https://pr.mo.gov/nursing.asp>, and information for the National Council of State Boards of Nursing may be found at <https://www.ncsbn.org/index.htm>. National professional standards, which include the American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretative Statements and Scope of Practice, guide the practice and ethical comportment of a professional nurse. Access to the Code of Ethics and Scope of Practice guide may be found at <https://www.nursingworld.org/>.

Approval and Accreditation

Missouri Southern State University and its programs are approved by the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) with continued accreditation and the next reaffirmation of accreditation in 2028-2029.

The MSSU Online RN to BSN program is approved by the Missouri Department of Higher Education and Workforce Development on July 1st, 2023.

The Bachelor's in Nursing program at Missouri Southern State University at the College of Health Sciences located in Joplin, Missouri 64801-1595 is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400 Atlanta, GA 30326 (404) 975-5000

The most recent accreditation decision made by the ACEN Board of Commissioners for the Bachelor's in Nursing program is continuing accreditation with the next review in 2028.

View the public information disclosed by the ACEN regarding this program at <http://www.acenursing.us/accreditedprograms/programSearch.htm>.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Missouri Southern State University emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all persons and adheres to a strict nondiscrimination policy regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, students, third parties on campus, and applicants for employment and admissions. In accord with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally-protected class, in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the University, including, but not limited to, athletics, instruction, grading, the awarding of student financial aid, recruitment, admissions, and housing. If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), need this publication in an alternative format, or accommodations as determined by the University Student Handbook and Student Disability Services policies, please reach out to the nursing department faculty or University Student Success Center as quickly as possible, and reasonable efforts will be made to accommodate your needs. Student Success Center contact information may be found at <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/student-success-center/index.php> and in the Student Resources section of this handbook.

HISTORY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

During the 1965 transition of Joplin Junior College into Missouri Southern State College, a survey conducted indicated that the need for registered nurses in health care facilities was so great that a nursing program should be given top priority in the newly created Missouri Southern State College curriculum. A program leading to an associate degree was, then, the most feasible approach for the College.

A director was employed on February 1, 1965. The proposal for the program was presented to the State Board of Nursing in June 1966 and was granted preliminary approval August 1, 1966.

The first class of students was admitted to the program in September 1966. The classrooms were located at the site of the present Missouri Southern State University campus. The first class of eight graduated in 1968.

A feasibility study conducted in 1982 revealed an overwhelming interest in the development of a Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program for Registered Nurses. Following development and approval, twenty students were admitted to the first class in the Fall of 1984. The BSN program received initial accreditation by the National League for Nursing in 1988.

Further research of the trends, issues, and future for BSN prepared Registered Nurses supported revision of the existing BSN program to include generic BSN student preparation, as well as BSN completion opportunities for Registered Nurses.

The revised BSN curriculum received unanimous approval from the College committees, administration, regents, Coordinating Board for Higher Education, and strong community support. Twenty-six students were admitted to the nursing major in the Fall semester of 1995. The Missouri State Board of Nursing granted maximum accreditation to the program.

Following graduation of the Associate Degree in Nursing class of 1996, that aspect of nursing education was closed. The graduating class of 1997 was awarded the Bachelor of Science Nursing (BSN) degree. All graduates from the Missouri Southern State University, Department of Nursing, now receive BSN degrees.

Governor Bill Holden signed Bill #55 on July 12, 2003, changing Missouri Southern State College to University status.

University Mission, Vision, and Values

Missouri Southern State University educates and graduates knowledgeable, responsible, and successful global citizens.

Vision

Missouri Southern State University will be a premier public comprehensive university that is the first-choice destination for students, faculty, and staff. The university will be recognized for its innovation and productive partnerships spanning from regional to global. We will be dedicated to educating and inspiring diverse learners, external engagement, and helping students and communities realize their greatest potential.

Values

We believe in:

- Academic Excellence
- A Student-Centered Culture
- Global Knowledge
- Community Engagement
- Integrity, Responsibility, and Accountability
- Caring, Respectful, and Supportive Community
- Fairness and Belonging

Goals

GOAL #1: ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND QUALITY PROGRAMS

Missouri Southern exemplifies academic excellence and offers quality academic programs that are in demand regionally and that are collaborative, innovative, and accessible.

GOAL #2: CULTURE OF CARING

Missouri Southern fosters a culture of caring that supports all students, creates quality relationships, and enables a work environment that is positive and rewarding.

GOAL #3: ENGAGEMENT

Missouri Southern strengthens university, community, regional, national, and global ties for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources.

GOAL #4: CAMPUS VIBRANCY

Missouri Southern embraces campus vibrancy that enhances quality of learning and life.

College of Health, Life Sciences, and Education

The mission of the College of Health Life Sciences and Education is to create an inclusive and equitable learning environment that promotes intellectual and personal growth through scholarship, research, and practical application. Innovative academic programs, supported by liberal arts and global perspectives, will foster student growth as a professional. The college is dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and skills with the integration of inter- professional and interdisciplinary education for the improvement of society and service to all its stakeholders.

McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing: Mission, Vision, Values/Curricular Threads, & Philosophy

Mission

The MSSU Department of Nursing offers an innovative baccalaureate education through an inclusive, respectful, and supportive environment in which faculty and students' partner in the learning process to serve clients within local and global communities.

(Approved by Faculty Council 12/2020)

Vision

Graduates of the MSSU Department of Nursing will be knowledgeable, adaptable professionals who recognize the uniqueness and value of each client, serve as a client advocate, and demonstrate visionary leadership.

Values/Curricular Threads

Servant Leadership

A student nurse who brings life experiences to the clinical/practicum situation. These life experiences enable the student nurse to notice and interpret the client's pattern of responses to health and illness, communicate compassionately, engage with the client's concerns, and collaborate with members of the health care team to respond appropriately. The student nurse leader is a systems thinker who puts people first and leads with foresight and moral authority.

Professional

A student nurse who is respectful of clients, accountable for own learning, and motivated by immediate application of knowledge to solve client problems and advocate for quality care.

Inclusive

A student nurse who notices each client's unique patterns of responses to health and illness and promotes acceptance, respect, and support within the clinical/practicum situation.

Adaptable

A student nurse who uses a variety of experiences, knowledge, reasoning patterns, and intuition to notice, interpret, and respond appropriately to dynamic clinical/practicum situations.

Visionary

A caring and competent student nurse who views nursing as an art and a science, linking nursing science to humanity in clinical/practicum situations.

Knowledgeable

A student nurse who is an independent, reflective learner utilizing information and skills obtained through experiences and education to deliver and improve nursing care.

Program Outcomes**Upon completion of the nursing program, the graduate will be able to:**

- Deliver quality professional nursing care based upon knowledge and skills obtained throughout the nursing educational experience.
- Practice in a variety of clinical/practicum situations using reasoning patterns and nursing intuition at the level of an advanced beginner.
- Recognize the importance of ongoing, reflective, and independent learning throughout the professional nursing career.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate leadership through client-centered care, teamwork, and collaboration.
- *Differentiate professional implications (behaviors, standards, regulations) with respect to safe, ethical, quality, and evidence-based care.*
- Provide inclusive holistic nursing care to promote health and prevent disease in all populations.
- Demonstrate adaptability by responding to client needs to manage care in a variety of clinical/practicum situations.
- Apply evidence-based practice in the delivery of quality, client-centered care.
- Integrate a variety of technology and information technology to communicate, manage, and support clinical/practicum situations.
- Prioritize clinical/practicum actions by noticing, interpreting, responding, & reflecting on clinical findings.

Philosophy

The faculty of the Missouri Southern State University Department of Nursing believe:

Person: The person is an autonomous, unique, and multidimensional being with inherent integrity and values, capable of caring, growing, and learning. A person can be expanded to include the family or community.

Health and Illness: A person's health and illness are influenced by emotional and physical factors, socioeconomic situation, geographical setting, culture, and acuity of care.

Clinical/practicum Situation: Nursing practice is an art and a science that occurs within a clinical/practicum situation. Engagement with the client allows the nurse to notice and interpret patterns of health and illness, allowing the nurse to respond with individualized nursing interventions.

Nursing Education: General education supports the development of the nurse as a global citizen with an appreciation of art, natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities. Baccalaureate nursing education prepares the graduate nurse through theoretical and clinical/practicum education in diverse settings and provides the basis for advanced practice.

Clinical/practicum Judgement: Clinical/practicum judgment requires the ability to recognize aspects of a clinical/practicum situation, interpret the meaning and respond appropriately.

Nurse: The nurse enters the clinical/practicum situation with life and educational experiences, which are foundational to clinical/practicum judgement and provision of inclusive client care. The nurse's vision of holistic care stems from knowing and recognizing the client's unique patterns of responses within the clinical/practicum situation.

(approved by Faculty council 12/2020; RN to BSN approval by Faculty Council 10/2022)

RN to BSN Nursing Curriculum

The following plan of study provides a logical sequence of courses, which upon completion meets the requirements for the Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in nursing. All core curriculum courses, and nursing support courses may be transferred and/or taken while a student at the University. Electives may be taken in the suggested order in the plan of study and upon advisement by the assigned nursing advisor. Course syllabi present the course descriptions, objectives, content, assessment methods, and evaluation grid for the attainment of programmatic student learning outcomes.

Students obtaining a Bachelor of Science Degree with a major in nursing meet the degree requirements when 120 credit hours and all required elements as indicated in the plan of study are completed. The primary purpose of the Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing Program is to develop a graduate who is generally prepared to practice nursing consistent with the program's philosophy. The graduate is capable of assuming the various roles of the professional nurse and is prepared as an advanced beginner, generalist capable of practicing in a variety of clinical/practicum situations using the knowledge and skills obtained throughout the educational experience.

The Bachelor of Science Degree Program RN to BSN completion degree, through the curriculum design, produces a professional nurse with definite knowledge, skills and attitude. The faculty has identified the graduate's specific knowledge and skills through program outcomes supported by the

curriculum. The student learning outcomes express the faculty's intentions of the competencies a nursing student must achieve as they progress through the curriculum.

A unique component of the RN to BSN completion degree is the awarding of up to 26 credit hours of nursing credit upon successful completion of NURS 431 Concepts of Professional Nursing: RN to BSN and NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts. This award for credit is based upon licensure as a Registered Nurse with an Associate or Diploma degree from a regionally or nationally accredited, fully state approved program. This prior learning assessment credit will be evaluated no later than the completion of NURS 493 during week 6 of the course and upon successful completion of any and all courses as required for the degree. A pathway fee will be assessed if the student is meeting degree requirements prior to graduation from the program.

A full-time or part-time plan of study is offered. Summer courses are offered in the 8-week term. Fall and Spring courses are offered in 8-week terms beginning with the 1st or 2nd (8-week) terms. All courses are offered as internet-based, digital learning/online learning with the exception of the NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts practicum hour requirements.

FULL-TIME Nursing RN to BSN Plan of Study

Pre-RN to BSN	Fall/Spring/Summer	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
Psy 320 or Math 310	Statistics	3
Pre-requisites		3-6
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
First Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring/Summer	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 431-1 st 8-week block	Concepts of Professional Nursing: RN to BSN	3##
NURS 437-2 nd 8-week block	Advanced Health Assessment	3
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
Second Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 444-1 st block	Applied Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for the Nursing Professional	4
NURS 451-1 st block	Innovation in Nursing and Healthcare	4
NURS 458-2 nd block	Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice	4
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
Third Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
NURS 479-1 st block	Population Health for Clinical Practice	4
NURS 486-2 nd block	Leadership, Management, and Nursing Practice	4
NURS 493-2 nd block	BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts (96 virtual and on-site precepted hours in a clinical, community or educational setting)	4##
HS 360 (Fall/Spring)	Health Policy	3
	Total Nursing Credit Hours: 33	Total Program Credit Hours: 120-121

PART-TIME Nursing RN to BSN Plan of Study

Pre-RN to BSN	Fall/Spring/Summer	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
Psy 320 or Math 310	Statistics	3
Pre-requisites		3-6
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
First Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring/Summer	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 431-1 st 8-week block	Concepts of Professional Nursing: RN to BSN	3##
NURS 437-2 nd 8-week block	Advanced Health Assessment	3
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
Second Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 444-1 st block	Applied Pathophysiology and Pharmacology for the Nursing Professional	4
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
Third Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 451-1 st block	Innovation in Nursing and Healthcare	4
NURS 458-2 nd block	Nursing Research and Evidence-Based Practice	4
Area 1A,1B,2A,3A,5B, or 5D		3-6
Fourth Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
Course #	Course Name	Credit Hours
NURS 479-1 st block	Population Health for Clinical Practice	4
HS 360 (Fall/Spring)	Health Policy	3
Fifth Semester, RN to BSN	Fall/Spring	
NURS 486-2 nd block	Leadership, Management, and Nursing Practice	4
NURS 493-2 nd block	BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts (96 virtual and on-site precepted hours in a clinical, community or educational setting)	4##
	Total Nursing Credit Hours: 33	Total Program Credit Hours: 120-121

(Approved by MSSU Department of Nursing 10.5.2022/Approved by MSSU Board of Governors 1.14.2023)

Admission and Clinical/practicum Compliance Verification

Admission to the Baccalaureate in Nursing Program begins with the application and acceptance to Missouri Southern State University. The Missouri Southern State University, McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing seeks individuals with a commitment and motivation to learning and visionary leadership in the nursing profession. The Nursing Department Admission Committee is interested in each individual and reviews academic records holistically, considering all aspects of the admission standards. Academic achievement, individual accomplishments, and character are important in admissions decisions. Pre-nursing and nursing are declared upon application to the University or at such a time that the student declares the major. Application to the Nursing Program is provided by the Department of Nursing to students meeting admission requirements for the Bachelor of Science Degree Nursing program at Missouri Southern State University. Admission decisions to the nursing program are based on the available documentation such as official transcripts from the MSSU Registrar's records.

Applicants who are offered acceptance can expect to receive notification by email and mail. Only letters sent directly to the MSSU Nursing Department may be considered official notification of acceptance to the program.

Please be sure to use your current email and mailing address within the application once submitted.

Applications may be submitted through the Department of Nursing Website located at <https://www.mssu.edu/academics/health-sciences/nursing/nursing-application-guidelines.php>

Admission Standards

- Continuous enrollment, readmission, or transfer student
- Cumulative grade point average of 2.8 minimum based on completion of first year and second year courses in suggested order of study.
- Completion of the following prerequisites with a grade of "C" or higher (may repeat required courses one time)
 - BIOL 121 Anatomy and Physiology I (4 credit hours)
 - BIOL 221 Anatomy and Physiology II (5 credit hours)
 - BIO General and Medical Microbiology (5 credit hours)
 - CHEM 121/122 Chemistry for Allied Health Sciences OR CHEM 140/141 General Chemistry I (4-5 credit hours)

- KINE 385 Nutrition for Human Development (3 credit hours)
- MATH 130 College Algebra (3 credit hours)
- PSY 100 General Psychology (3 credit hours)
- Statistics (3 credit Hours) **PSY 320 Applied Statistics OR MATH 310 Elementary Statistics OR GB 321 Business Statistics I OR SOC 405 Social Science Statistics
- ECON/SOC (3 credit hours) **ECON 101 Economics of Social Issues OR ECON 201 Principles of Economics (Macro) OR ECON 202 Principles of Economics (Micro) OR SOC 110 Introduction to Sociology

The application deadline for consideration of each Summer is April 1st, Fall is July 1st, and Spring is October 1st. Accepted students will be notified by email. The email address, as stated in the application, will be used as the method of correspondence of acceptance. All admission requirements are to be complete by the first day of classes for summer, fall, or spring entry.

- The applicant is responsible for verifying that the Missouri Southern State University transcript contains all transcribed courses from other colleges and universities prior to the application deadline. Submission of all transcripts to the University is the responsibility of the student/potential student. Applicants must be accepted to the University and a degree audit completed by the University prior to enrollment in the first RN to BSN course NURS 431: Concepts of Professional Nursing: RN to BSN
- Proof of current active, unencumbered RN license in the state of Missouri or Compact state must be submitted upon acceptance of the seat in the program.

At the beginning of the final NURS 493 Practicum course, students must have completed the following, successfully passed, and submitted to the Department of Nursing via the Learning Management System.

- Obtain and/or maintain current CPR from American Heart Association for Health Care Provider
- Obtain and maintain health insurance.
- Proof of professional liability insurance
- The clinical site, preceptor agreement (with wet signature) and clinical site affiliation agreement. The Department of Nursing has current clinical site affiliation agreements with several clinical sites. A listing of these sites is provided in the LMS for NURS 493 Practicum course.
- Criminal Record Check
- State of Missouri Care Giver Background Screening/Family Care Giver Registry
- Physical Exam with health requirements documented (immunizations, TB test, drug/alcohol screening)

**A full listing of health requirements may be found in the Safety and clinical/practicum/practicum compliance section. ** It is the student's responsibility to ensure all required documentation is submitted on time. Late submissions may impede the progress of the student in meeting program/student learning objectives and outcomes.

The Department of Nursing will provide students with instructions on how to submit their clinical/practicum compliance/practicum compliance documentation via the Learning Management System. Any questions or concerns regarding uploading documents should be directed to the course instructor and/or RN to BSN program coordinator.

Transfer Policy for Students from a Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program:

- All program admission criteria must be met.
- A letter of reference is required from the Dean or Director of the nursing program previously attended, stating the student left in good standing and is eligible for readmission.
- Transfer courses will be evaluated for course equivalence at Missouri Southern on an individual basis.
- Nursing courses with a clinical/practicum component must be fully met.
- Transfer is based on space availability.

Admission of Baccalaureate Degree Applicants

The University considers applicants holding a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution as having completed the General Education Requirements. Nursing applicants with a baccalaureate degree within another major must meet all stated admission requirements, including pre-requisite courses and any outstanding general education required course.

Readmission Prioritization

Readmission to the nursing program requires the student to comply with the following steps:

- Eligibility for non-probationary or readmission to the University.
- Have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.8.
- Submit a completed readmission application form with documentation of eligibility from the RN to BSN Coordinator and Department Chair.
- The RN to BSN Coordinator and/or department chair may request a virtual meeting with the candidate.
- Apply for readmission within one year from time of withdrawal.
- Submit all documentation 12 weeks prior to the semester of desired readmission.
- Meet all criteria for regular admission to the Nursing Program.
- Must be in satisfactory standing (non-failing) in any nursing major course or nursing elective.

Students under the Care of a Healthcare Provider

Any student enrolled in the nursing major courses must provide documentation from a healthcare provider, without restrictions, when participating in practicum experiences. Students who experience injury, illness, or conditions must provide notification of the event to the Department of Nursing in no less than 72 hours or sooner if possible. This is to ensure the student has begun the process of seeking care from a healthcare provider, is knowledgeable of the need to provide the required documentation prior to attending clinical/practicum experiences and is meeting the necessary requirements of clinical/practicum experiences. While this is meant to be non-punitive, the student must know that failure to attend clinical/practicum experiences or work with faculty for reasonable accommodations may result in an unsatisfactory grade assignment and/or progression issue.

Criminal Background Checks and Caregiver Background Screenings

Missouri House Bill 1362 prohibits a hospital from knowingly allowing those guilty of Class A and B felonies as defined in three chapters of state law to give care to clients in their agency. Results of the Criminal Record Check and Caregiver Background Screening must be on file by the end of the first week of the NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts course. Failure to comply will prevent students from attending clinical/practicum attendance.

Students who fail to provide full disclosure of their states of residence for the purposes of Criminal Background Checks or who fail to disclose any history of criminal arrests and/or charges, regardless of those arrests or charges resulting in a conviction, may be subject to dismissal from the nursing program. Current or admitted students must be aware that clinical/practicum facilities may restrict completion of assigned clinical/practicum due to incidents documented in the Fingerprint Criminal Background Check. All students must be in compliance with the clinical/practicum agency requirements prior to attending clinical/practicum at that given site.

The student is responsible for ensuring all clinical affiliation requirements and agreements are completed and submitted before completing any practicum experience for NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts course.

Criminal Record Check

RSMO 192.2495 prohibits a hospital, healthcare agency, or healthcare organization from knowingly allowing those guilty of Class A and B felonies as defined by state law to give care to clients in their agency. Students entering Missouri Southern State University are assigned to do clinical/practicum practice in cooperating healthcare agencies/organizations, and because they will be in contact with patients, they must additionally meet all clinical/practicum site requirements. A criminal record check is required prior to any clinical practicum experience in NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts course. Students who have been found guilty of Class A or B felonies will be ineligible to continue in the RN to BSN Nursing Program. The Nursing program reserves the right to deny acceptance or continuation in the program for the following circumstances:

- A student is found to have a criminal record or arrest record regardless of a charge and/or outcome of the arrest/charge.
- A student or applicant does not disclose history of criminal record or arrest record.

A criminal record check is required for admission to the Nursing Program. Students who have been found guilty of Class A and B felonies OR who have been placed on the Missouri Family Care Safety Registry disqualification list will be ineligible to enter or continue in the Nursing Program. Applicants must demonstrate evidence of personal characteristics and integrity that indicate a high probability of successful degree completion.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure all clinical affiliation requirements, agreements, and state board of nursing practice requirements are being met in the given state of the practicum. The Online RN to BSN program reserves the right to request a student comply with the approval of the program in respect of practicum site placement. The Online RN to BSN program reserves the right to deny any practicum site placement due to lack of clinical/practicum compliance requirements not met, concerns regarding clinical/practicum site meeting NURS 493 course objectives, or restrictions within a particular state due to the state board of nursing practice requirements.

All clinical/practicum documentation must be completed and submitted prior to the student beginning clinical/practicum hours within the chosen clinical site.

Notice of Arrest

If at any time while a student enrolled in a course with a NURS prefix is arrested for any violation (other than a moving violation or parking ticket) The nursing department must be notified of the arrest. Within 48 hours after the event, the student must provide the department chair with the date and a written description of the arrest, the student's involvement in the arrest, and/or any other particulars related to the situation. After the student has provided an all-inclusive written description of the event to the chair, the student must meet with the department chair to discuss the event. This requirement is not intended to be a declaration of innocence or admission of guilt related to the event. In no way is this process intended to have any judicial implications.

(Approved by Faculty Council 8-5-14, approved by Dean of Health Science and VPAA 8-7-14)

Any non-disclosure of an arrest as defined above may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program. (Reviewed/approved by Faculty Council 8/10/2022)

Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy

This Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy is being implemented as part of efforts to help promote a safe and appropriate working and learning environment for clients, students, the University, and clinical/practicum hospitals and agencies. Because the use of illegal drugs, alcohol and inappropriate use of legal drugs/controlled substances by nursing students may impair cognitive and physical function, critical thinking, and sound judgment and pose an unacceptable risk of injury or harm to clients and others, the Department of Nursing requires nursing students to submit to testing of blood, hair, urine, saliva and/or breath for the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, and inappropriate legal drugs/controlled substances at any time upon request by the Department of Nursing, with or without reasonable suspicion.

Offers of acceptance to the Department of Nursing are made as conditional offers. The conditions include satisfactory completion of pre-nursing courses. Students in the RN to BSN program may be required to complete a physical exam, satisfactory background checks, and a negative alcohol, drug, and controlled substance test prior to any clinical practicum experience. An applicant or current nursing student who refuses to authorize and pay for testing or who tests positive for alcohol, drugs or controlled substances may not receive a final offer of admission or may not be allowed to continue in the nursing program. The Department of Nursing may notify the conditionally admitted student that the offer of admission is withdrawn upon receipt of a positive alcohol, drug or controlled substances test, and the Department of Nursing may notify a current nursing student who tests positive for alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances of dismissal from the Nursing Program.

Individuals applying to or participating in the Nursing Program understand, consent, and agree, to the fullest extent allowed by applicable law, that such individuals may be tested:

1. As a condition of admission, readmission, or transfer to the Nursing Program,
2. At any time upon the request of the Department of Nursing, either with reasonable suspicion or, to the fullest extent allowed by applicable law, without reasonable suspicion; and
3. Post-accident or post-injury.

The nursing student assumes full costs of all testing. Any student who tests positive for drugs or controlled substances must be able to verify that the drugs or controlled substances were obtained legally and legitimately. If an initial drug, controlled substance, or alcohol test is positive, a second test on the same specimen may be performed to confirm the initial result. If an alcohol test is positive, a second test on the same specimen may be performed to confirm the initial result. Any confirmed alcohol result above 0% will be considered positive. A positive test result on the confirming test may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program. The University reserves all rights to deny admission or to dismiss a student from the Nursing Program without conducting a confirming second test if, in the sole discretion of the University, such denial of admission or such dismissal is prudent or appropriate under the circumstances. Any student dismissed following a positive alcohol, drug, or controlled substance test will be removed from all nursing courses. A grade of "W" for "withdrawal" will be transcribed if dismissal occurs before the University's deadline for withdrawal. A grade of "F" will be transcribed if dismissal occurs after the University withdrawal date.

If an initial drug, controlled substance, or alcohol urine drug test resulted as "dilute," a second test on a new sample will be required from the student within 24 hours of notification of the "dilute" results. If a second test resulted as "dilute," then a third test will be performed on a sample of blood, hair, or saliva will be required from the student within 24 hours of notification of the second "dilute" result.

The Chair/administrator of the Department of Nursing must authorize testing on a student before any test is administered. In the absence or at the request or direction of the Chair/administrator, the Dean, or another designated administrator or official may authorize testing. While the University reserves the right to conduct testing without reasonable suspicion to the fullest extent allowed by applicable law, the University also may conduct tests based on reasonable suspicion. As used in this policy, "reasonable suspicion" shall include all facts, circumstances, behavior, conduct, or situations that would constitute or give rise to reasonable suspicion or probable cause under applicable law, and may include, as examples and not by way of limitation, the following: accidents and injuries caused by human error, unusual or serious violations of laws or rules, secured drug supply disappearance, irrational or extreme behavior, or inattention or unusual personal behavior, such as smelling of alcoholic beverages.

Students must report any arrest or charge, whether resulting in conviction, plea of guilty, finding of guilt, probation, suspended imposition of sentence, suspended execution of sentence, or plea of nolo contendere, under a criminal drug or alcohol statute for alleged behavior or violations whether occurring on or off university premises. Any such alleged behavior or violation must be reported within **five (5) days**. *Students with involvement in a criminal drug or alcohol offense may be dismissed from the Nursing Program.*

Dismissed students may be reconsidered for admission one time at the sole discretion of the University, but the University will not be obligated to offer such reconsideration. The University in its sole discretion may condition any request for reconsideration or readmission upon the student completing, successfully and to the satisfaction of the University, a proper course of treatment remedying the rationale for dismissal.

Students are subject to the policies of the University and the policies of the clinical/practicum hospital or agency where they practice as a student nurse.

This policy is subject to change at the sole discretion of the Department of Nursing and is meant to supplement other relevant University policies, including but not limited to, the "University Substance Abuse Policy."

This policy is subject to all applicable laws governing the University. If the University or a governmental authority of proper jurisdiction determines that any portion of this Policy may be interpreted in a manner which does not conform to such laws, the University or such authority may either disregard such portion or, if possible, shall interpret such portion to conform with such laws; in either event the remainder of this Policy shall remain in effect and will not be invalidated. Subject to the preceding sentences of this paragraph, this Policy shall be liberally construed to promote the health, safety, and educational purposes of this Policy.

Safety and Clinical/Practicum Requirements

The Department of Nursing has required submission of clinical compliance documentation to the Learning Management System to verify health requirements as appropriate for admission or continuation with the practicum experience in NURS 493 BSN Practicum: Application of Learned Concepts. Students are responsible for fees associated with health requirements and for completing the verification with the uploading of documentation for health verification.

Health Verification

During the nursing program, students will be required to demonstrate their physical and/or emotional fitness to meet the essential requirements of the program. Any appraisal measures used to determine such physical and/or emotional fitness would be in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Core performance standards for admission and progression comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

(Approved by Faculty Council 11.5.2002, 10.4.2005, Revised 9.3.2014, 5.12.2022)

Under no circumstances will a student engage in clinical/practicum or field-related experiences without a current record of health clearance on file with the Department of Nursing if required by the clinical practicum site.

Purpose:

The purpose of the required health clearance is to protect the student and client and to be in compliance with clinical/practicum affiliation agreements and/or requirements. Listed below are the RN to BSN minimum requirements.

Physical Health Evaluation

- ☐ A signed release of Information form
- ☐ A signed physical assessment record from a health care provider attesting that the student is cleared for full participation in clinical/practicum experiences.
- ☐ If disability accommodations are required, the student is responsible for obtaining an accommodation letter from the appropriate University Disability Services Department in accordance with university policies and procedures. The accommodation plan must be submitted to the RN to BSN Coordinator.
- ☐ A blank release of information and health care provider attestation form may be found at this end of this handbook.

Hepatitis B Immunization Policy

Each student must show proof of completed Hepatitis B vaccine series and/or a reactive titer. Additional recommendations will be made if the titer is non-reactive, inconclusive, or not completed in concert with immunization series. (Revised & Faculty council approved 4.14.21)

Varicella Immunization Policy

All students must demonstrate immunity to varicella. Evidence of immunity includes documentation of 2 doses of varicella vaccine given at least 28 days apart or laboratory evidence of immunity (positive titer). (Approved by Faculty Council May 2011)

Measles, Mumps and Rubella Immunization Policy

Students must provide evidence of MMR immunization. This may be a record of two doses of live vaccine on or after the first birthday; or serological evidence of immunity (positive titers). (Approved Faculty Council March 2009; Revised 2017)

Tdap (Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis) Vaccination Policy

Students must provide evidence of one-time Tdap (Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis). Students (after completing primary Tdap) will receive Td boosters every 10 years. (Approved by Faculty Council April 2011; Revised 2017; Reviewed and approved 2022)

Influenza Vaccination Policy

All students must receive one dose of available influenza vaccine annually, optimal time October to November, but no later than earliest mandated requirement of all clinical/practicum facilities. (Approved by Faculty Council March 2011; Reviewed and approved 4.14.21; 5.12.2022)

Tuberculin Annual Screening Policy

On admission to the nursing program students must have documentation of a negative tuberculin (TB) screening for healthcare providers. This may be met with completion of two (2), 2-step TB skin tests, OR completion of one (1) TB blood test within the last 12 months (IGRA) (T-Spot, QuantiFERON Gold) OR completion of a chest X-Ray with documentation of official report (only for positive results of TB skin test &/or TB blood test). A one (1), 2-step TB skin test, OR completion of one (1) TB blood test is then required annually. (Review/revised/approved by Faculty Council 4.14.21; 5.12.2022)

Health Insurance Policy

Health insurance is mandatory for all students while in the nursing program. In the event of illness or accidents during class or clinical/practicum hours neither the University nor the clinical/practicum site can assume financial responsibility. The student will submit a copy of their health insurance card to the Department of Nursing by the designated date prior to entering the nursing program. The student is responsible for submitting any changes to their health insurance while in the nursing program.

COVID Vaccination and Booster Recommendations

Students must be aware that the MSSU McCune-Brooks Healthcare Foundation Department of Nursing **recommends but does not require** COVID-19 vaccination and/or boosters as stated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/covid-19/index.html>.

Students must be aware that clinical/practicum sites and facilities **may require COVID vaccination and proof of vaccination/booster status when attending clinical/practicum at the facilities**. Declination of requirements is the responsibility of the student. Students choosing to not obtain required vaccinations may incur issues in attending clinical/practicum sites and thus meeting clinical/practicum objectives for given nursing courses. Students should be aware that such issues may lead to progression delay or failure to progress situations.

(Review/revised/approved by Faculty Council August 10, 2022)

Ongoing Program Requirements

With each subsequent semester and/or by the end of the 1st week of class for NURS 493 BSN Practicum, the student will confirm the following are up to date within the clinical compliance application:

- Tuberculosis Screening (yearly)
- Annual immunizations as required by healthcare agencies.
- CPR from American Heart Association for Health Care Providers
- Tdap/TD
- Proof of Health Insurance
- Proof of unencumbered Registered Nurse Licensure in the state of Missouri or compact state
- Proof of Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act training
- Proof of Foundational Infection Prevention Strategies such as Standard Precautions/Personal Protective Equipment as required through clinical practicum site or as exemplified at <https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/hcp/basics/index.html>
- Proof of Professional Liability Insurance
- Completed criminal background check and Missouri Family Care Safety Registry

CORE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR ADMISSION AND PROGRESSION

ISSUE	STANDARD	SOME EXAMPLES OF NECESSARY ACTIVITIES (Not All Inclusive)
Critical thinking	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical/practicum judgment.	Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical/practicum situations, develop nursing care plans. Interpreting variations in vital signs, lab values, etc.
Interpersonal and Emotional stamina	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social situations.	Establish rapport with patients/clients and colleagues. Work as a team member. Deal with unexpected crisis. Handle multiple tasks simultaneously. Handle strong emotions.
Communication	Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form.	Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, document and interpret nursing actions and patient/client responses.
Mobility	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in limited spaces.	Move around in client's rooms, workspaces, and treatment areas, administer cardiopulmonary procedures.
Motor skills	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care.	Calibrate and use equipment, position clients, insert catheters, administer injections.
Hearing	Auditory ability to monitor and assess health needs.	Hear monitor alarm (IV alarm, etc.), emergency signals, auscultatory sounds, cries for help.
Visual	Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary in nursing care.	Observe client responses. Read monitors (Blood Glucose Monitor, Pulse oximetry, electrocardiogram, computer)
Smell	Detect odors.	Detect smoke, client odors such as alcohol on breath, foul smelling excretions.
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment.	Perform palpation, functions of physical examination and/or those related to therapeutic interventions, starting IV.
Health stamina	Health status level which permits them to meet the classroom and clinical/practicum objectives with reasonable accommodations.	Stamina sufficient (i.e., diabetic allows for snacks) to participate in continuous clinical/practicum activities for length of time required by course (12-hour shifts).

(Adapted from Southern Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing and National Council of State Board of Nursing, Inc.– Guidelines for Using Results of Functional Abilities Studies)

General Education

General Education

Missouri Southern State University has implemented a general education program consistent with the State of Missouri's Core Curriculum Transfer or CORE 42. Information specific to CORE 42 may be found at this website: [Missouri Higher Education Core Transfer Curriculum \(CORE 42\)](#). In addition to the nursing major specific objectives established by the academic department, a student after completing the CORE 42 should demonstrate the following competencies:

Communicating:

- Analyze and evaluate their own and others' speaking and writing.
- Conceive of writing as a recursive process that involves many strategies, including generating material, evaluating sources when used, drafting, revising, and editing.
- Make formal written and oral presentations employing correct diction, syntax, usage, grammar, and mechanics.
- Focus on a purpose (e.g., explaining, problem solving, argument) and vary approaches to writing and speaking based on that purpose.
- Respond to the needs of different venues and audiences and choose words for appropriateness and effect.
- Communicate effectively in groups by listening, reflecting, and responding appropriately and in context.
- Use mathematical and statistical models, standard quantitative symbols, and various graphical tactics to present information with clarity, accuracy, and precision.

Communication:

Written:

- Demonstrate critical and analytical thinking for reading, writing, and speaking.
- Compose sound and effective sentences.
- Compose unified, coherent, and developed paragraphs.
- Understand and use a recursive writing process to develop strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading texts.
- Produce rhetorically effective discourse for subject, audience, and purpose.
- Demonstrate effective research and information literacy skills.

Oral:

- Use productive imagination for the discovery and evaluation of appropriate arguments relating to a chosen topic through effective research.
- Understand the basic process of audience analysis.
- Use, identify, and create speeches for different types of speaking purposes.
- Demonstrate effective preparation skills in the organization of speeches into three appropriate sections and prepare each section using the appropriate information and transitions between information and sections.
- Utilize and understand the patterns of organization to structure information for each specific type of speech. Students will use parallel ideas and information on different levels of abstraction in these patterns.
- Demonstrate effective skill at composing and developing arguments with appropriate support that is unified, coherent, and fully developed utilizing the tenets of good writing and research.
- Understand the complex issue of good delivery and show improved personal confidence and the ability to manage communication apprehension.

- Demonstrate effective listening skills as it relates to critical understanding of speech topics and critique of that speaking.
- Demonstrate that they understand and take part in ethical speaking and listening during presentations.
- Understand communication ethics for both speech preparation and critiquing of peer speeches by utilizing responsible research and citing sources and using emotional and logical appeals responsibly.
- Understand the role of public speaking in citizenry and how public speaking can contribute to success in the classroom and society.

Higher Order Thinking:

- Recognize the problematic elements of presentations of information and argument and formulate diagnostic questions for resolving issues and solving problems.
- Use linguistic, mathematical, or other symbolic approaches to describe problems, identify alternative solutions, and make reasoned choices among those solutions.
- Analyze and synthesize information from a variety of sources and apply the results to resolving complex situations and problems.
- Defend conclusions using relevant evidence and reasoned arguments.
- Reflect on and evaluate their critical-thinking processes.

Valuing:

- Develop and understand the moral and ethical values of a diverse society.
- Develop the ability to analyze the ethical implications of actions and decisions.
- Compare and contrast historical and cultural ethical perspectives and belief systems.
- Utilize cultural, behavioral, and historical knowledge to clarify and articulate a personal value system.
- Recognize the ramifications of one's value decisions on self and others.
- Recognize conflicts within and between value systems and recognize and analyze ethical issues as they arise in a variety of contexts.
- Consider multiple perspectives, recognize biases, deal with ambiguity, and take a reasonable position.

Managing Information:

- Locate, organize, store, retrieve, evaluate, synthesize, and annotate information from print, electronic, and other sources in preparation for solving problems and making informed decisions.
- Access and generate information from a variety of sources, including the most contemporary technological information services.
- Evaluate information for its currency, usefulness, truthfulness, and accuracy.
- Organize, store, and retrieve information efficiently.
- Reorganize information for an intended purpose, such as research projects.
- Present information clearly and concisely, using traditional and contemporary technologies.

Social and Behavioral Sciences:

- Explain social institutions, structures, and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
- Develop and communicate hypothetical explanations for individual human behavior within the large- scale historical and social context.
- Draw on history and the social sciences to evaluate contemporary problems.
- Describe and analytically compare social, cultural, and historical settings and processes other than one's own.
- Articulate the interconnectedness of people and places around the globe.
- Describe and explain the constitutions of the United States and Missouri.

Humanities and Fine Arts:

- Describe the scope and variety of works in the humanities and fine arts (e.g., fine and performing arts, literature, speculative thought).
- Explain the historical, cultural, and social contexts of the humanities and fine arts.
- Identify the aesthetic standards used to make critical judgments in various artistic fields.
- Develop a plausible understanding of the differences and relationships between formal and popular culture.
- Articulate a response based upon aesthetic standards to observance of works in the humanities and fine arts.

Mathematical Sciences:

- Describe contributions to society from the discipline of mathematics.
- Recognize and use connections within mathematics and between mathematics and other disciplines.
- Read, interpret, analyze, and synthesize quantitative data (e.g., graphs, tables, statistics, survey data) and make reasoned estimates.
- Formulate and use generalizations based upon pattern recognition.
- Apply and use mathematical models (e.g., algebraic, geometric, statistical) to solve problems.

Natural Sciences:

- Explain how to use the scientific method and how to develop and test hypotheses in order to draw defensible conclusions.
- Evaluate scientific evidence and argument.
- Describe the basic principles of the natural world.
- Describe concepts of the nature, organization, and evolution of living systems.
- Explain how human interaction(s) affect living systems and the environment.

International Cultural Studies:

- Use or interpret communication tools through which cultures develop and survive, such as language, arts, mathematics, science, and technology.
- Explain the development of and compare the distinctive social institutions or art forms of more than one region of the world.
- Identify some of the geographical, historical, political, economic, artistic, and environmental concerns of a culture other than their own as these concerns affect its social institutions.
- Identify the ways in which values of at least one culture other than their own are expressed.
- Identify the ways in which the values of a culture shape its responses to problems of international significance.
- Describe past and contemporary issues that transcend national boundaries.

Health and Wellness:

- Recognize and explain the value of physical activity, sound nutrition, and stress management for developing and maintaining a healthy body and mind.
- Explain the role of functional testing, medical examinations, and adequately prescribed health intervention programs in modifying or eliminating identified health risks, and in addressing epidemiological concerns.
- Describe the impact of preventative measures and appropriate responses to physical, spiritual, emotional, and mental challenges on the quality and length of life.
- Evaluate, synthesize, and access consumer-related health and wellness materials.

Academic, Progression, and Graduation Policies

General academic information

Each student is assigned to a nursing faculty member as an academic adviser. The nursing faculty advisor will serve as the student's mentor, assisting with tasks such as enrollment, academic issues, questions regarding courses/practicum, and graduation requirements. Students will receive an individual grade report at midterm for 16 week courses. The RN to BSN Coordinator and/or Department Chair and/or student advisor may be notified of the student's grade status.

Grading Scale

The department has the following grading scale:

- A 92-100**
- B 82-91**
- C 77-81**
- D 70-76**
- F 69 or below**

Grades will not be rounded. Grades will be reported to the hundredths of a percent. For example, 81.99% equates to a C. (Approved by Faculty Council 12/18/2019; Revised and approved by Faculty Council 8/5/2020; 8/26/2020)

Progression Policies

All nursing courses (NURS) must be taken in sequence according to the Nursing Major Plan of Study for the RN to BSN Completion degree. A grade of at least a "C" in all NURS designated or elective courses is required to progress to the next semester of the program. All electives taken while admitted to the Nursing Major, RN to BSN Completion Plan of Study must achieve a grade of a "C". A grade of less than a "C" will be counted within the total number of unsuccessful courses in the Nursing Major Plan of Study.

Progression Policies

- All nursing courses (NURS) must be taken in sequence according to the RN to BSN Nursing Major Plan of Study. A grade of at least a "C" in all NURS designated or elective courses is required to progress to the next semester of the program.
- All electives taken while admitted to the RN to BSN Nursing Major Plan of Study must achieve a grade of a "C". A grade of less than a "C" will be counted within the total number of unsuccessful courses in the RN to BSN Nursing Major Plan of Study.
- A student earning less than a "C" grade in any given semester while in the RN to BSN Nursing Major Plan of Study, will be eligible to repeat that same course in the immediate successive semester the course is offered, provided space is available.

- The total number of RN to BSN Nursing courses or elective courses with a grade below "C" while the student is within the RN to BSN Nursing Major Plan of Study may not be greater than two (2).
- A student who voluntarily withdraws for any medical or personal leave of absence from a required RN to BSN Nursing course in the given semester must withdraw from all RN to BSN Nursing courses in that given semester. A student who withdraws may repeat all RN to BSN Nursing courses in the given semester one time in the immediate successive semester the course is offered, provided space is available.
- The period of time between the unsuccessful semester and repeating of course work or voluntary withdraw may not exceed six (6) semesters or two (2) years. If the period of time will exceed more than six (6) semesters or two (2) years, the student must follow the procedure for readmission.

Incompletes

Students with incomplete grades will not be allowed to progress until course work is completed as stipulated in the University requirements for incomplete grades.

Withdrawal/Dismissals

Registration for a course makes the student responsible for attending the class until the course is completed or until the Registrar authorizes withdrawal from that course. A student who withdraws from the nursing curriculum must file an official withdrawal in the Registrar's Office to obtain the necessary clearance. Failure to comply will result in the recording of failing grades in all courses for which the student is registered.

- Following two opportunities to meet progression requirements, the student is then ineligible for reapplication and readmission to the nursing program. (Approved Faculty Council 4/14/2021)

Dropping Courses

The faculty adviser and Nursing Department Chair should be contacted prior to initiating the dropping of a course in the Office of the Registrar. Deadlines and grades cited in the University Calendar apply.

NURSING COURSES

A student who wishes to withdraw from a nursing course should contact the faculty advisor and follow the procedure outlined in the Missouri Southern State University Catalog, University, and Nursing Department Student Handbook. An exit conference with the RN to BSN Coordinator and/or Department Chair should be completed. The purpose of the exit conference is to discuss the student's withdrawal, next steps in the progression policy, readmission, or transfer.

UNIVERSITY

A student who wishes to withdraw from the University will initiate withdrawal in the Advising, Counseling & Testing Center. A student who completely withdraws from the University prior to the last week of classes in a regular or summer semester may receive a grade of "W" in all courses in which the student is enrolled.

Withdrawal from the University after the last week of classes in a regular or summer semester will result in a grade of "F" being recorded for all courses unless other arrangements are made through the Office of the Registrar. A student who leaves the University without officially withdrawing shall receive grades of "F" in all courses. Refer to current Missouri Southern State University Catalog for university withdrawal policies.

Completion of the NURS 493 BSN Practicum and course

The clinical/practicum experiences within the program are an important component of the RN to BSN Completion program and the education of the student. A clinical/practicum failure may result from a critical incident, attendance issues, failure to complete practicum documentation as found in the current MSSU RN to BSN Practicum Packet document or clinical affiliation requirements, or any incident that places the client/patient in jeopardy of physical, emotional, and psychological harm. Examples of a clinical/practicum failure from a critical incident include but are not limited to:

- Unsafe behavior that would place the client in physical, emotional, and psychological jeopardy.
- Violation of University policy and University Student Handbook code of conduct.
- Violation of clinical/practicum agency and/or healthcare organization policy and procedure.
- Violation of attendance policy related to improper communication of absence from a clinical/practicum experience.

Violation of the American Nurses Associate Code of Ethics, which is as follows:

Provision 1-The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Provision 2-The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3-The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

Provision 4-The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

Provision 5-The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6-The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality healthcare.

Provision 7- The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

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

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

American Nurses Association, (2015). *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

Graduation Policy

The responsibility for satisfying all requirements for a degree rests with the student. Advisers, faculty, and administrators offer help to the student in meeting this responsibility. The student is referred to the current MSSU Catalog for graduation requirements.

Time of Graduation

Formal announcement of graduation is made, and degrees are conferred at the close of the spring and fall semesters.

Placement Services

Each degree candidate must register in the Office of Career Services.

Degree Candidacy Application

Each student must make an application for degree candidacy during the semester **preceding** the last semester in attendance. The application process is initiated on the following webpage, <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/registrar/graduation.php>

Senior Assessment

Select graduating MSSU students are required to complete a Core Curriculum examination before the Baccalaureate Degree is awarded.

Assurance of Learning

Students are introduced to concepts through assigned readings, presentations, discussions, case studies, audiovisual methods, and computerized technologies. The classroom experience includes information in the required texts, audiovisual resources, voiceover presentation/lecture supplement, case studies, and preparatory assignments. Students are expected to prepare for weekly class assignments in advance utilizing the Learning Management System, Blackboard. There students find an outline of course activities to include assigned readings, case studies, audiovisual resources, quizzes, worksheets, voiceover presentation, and others content that may be assigned. Students are expected to participate in active learning experiences in the classroom such as group work, interactive projects, questioning, and case studies. Due to the rigors of the nursing program, students may expect 3 hours of work for every 1 hour of class time.

At minimum, the following regulations serve as a guide to college course work. In 34 CFR 600.2 of the final regulations, we defined a credit hour for Federal programs, including the Federal student financial assistance programs, as—An amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement that is an institutionally established equivalency that reasonably approximates not less than:

- One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester or trimester hour of credit, or ten to twelve weeks for one quarter hour of credit, or the equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time: or

- At least an equivalent amount of work as required in paragraph (1) of this definition for other academic activities as established by the institution, including laboratory work, internships, practicum, studio work, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours. For example, a student enrolled in a clinical/practicum course may incur clinical/practicum hours up to 12-24 hours per week within the NURS 493 BSN Practicum or asynchronous learning of up to 3 hours per week for each 1-credit hour within an 8-week course block. For example, a 4-credit hour course could incur up to 12 hours per week of equivalent amount of work. This in addition to expected student coursework to verify evidence of achievement (study time, assignments) may be necessary in the nursing program. Due to the rigor of the nursing education program and anticipated time constraints, the student's scheduled employment work hours should be factored into one's time management.

Academic and Athletic Impact: University policy

Sponsored Academic and Athletic Absences Students participating in university-sponsored academic and athletic events are considered representatives of the University, and scheduled activities/competitions resulting in a missed class may be considered excused absences. Missed classes qualify as excused absences if the student informs the instructor(s) in advance, is responsible for all information, tests, materials, and assignments, and completes assigned work prior to the departure, unless the instructor has agreed to other arrangements. Faculty are encouraged to work with students, whenever possible, to facilitate their participation in university sponsored academic and athletic events; however, in some cases, it is not possible to replicate missed course content. In these cases, students may need to attend class. Whenever possible, students participating in university sponsored academic and athletic events should work with their advisor to create a schedule that will avoid missed class time. Students should not be penalized if absent from a test, lecture, lab, or other activity because of an excused absence. Policies should be fair and equitable in application. For example, excused absences should not be penalized with point reductions or require students utilize the dropped grade option for a university sponsored activity or athletic event. Inclement weather and other factors may preclude a student's ability to provide notification in advance and/or to complete assigned work prior to departure or return to campus. It may be necessary to provide make-up opportunities in these cases. No class time shall be missed for practices or home events except for time required to prepare or warm- up before the activity/competition. Logistics necessary for home activities or competitions will vary by activity/sport so students and instructors should collaborate to handle this missed class time as part of the absence if possible. For away competitions students shall not miss class prior to 30 minutes before the scheduled time of departure.

Students who will miss class due to participation will identify themselves to their instructors at the beginning of each semester using the approved documentation and provide a schedule with departure times to identify class meetings in conflict with event dates. In addition, the student is responsible for reminding the instructor by e-mail and/or in person of each upcoming absence. The student who fails to properly communicate with her/his instructor in this regard may be penalized for an absence per the course syllabi. The amount of lead time for upcoming absences should be discussed by the instructor and student as this may vary with the situation. Sponsors and coaches are asked to confirm an accurate roster of students traveling for each event. Students who are unable to participate or have not been cleared to play should attend class.

Pregnancy and Parenting

Please refer to the Pregnancy and Parenting Statement under the section “Department Policies.”

Safety, Course and Clinical/practicum Policies

Safety and Exposure

Communicable Diseases

Students are admitted to Missouri Southern State University Nursing Program in accordance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Missouri Human Rights Act. In the event of a communicable disease, the students must meet the current Missouri Department of Health and/or CDC guidelines to participate in classroom or clinical/practicum activities. The student will be responsible for contacting the Willcoxon Health Center and/or their health care provider for instructions and release for when the student may return to class and/or clinical/practicum. (Revised & approved Faculty council 4.14.21)

COVID-19

Consistent with applicable law and privacy policies, students, faculty, and staff should follow the most current guidelines for face mask/covering and other COVID-19 related procedures posted by MSSU/MSSU Willcoxon Health Center.

- Clinical/practicum site-specific requirements for face mask/covering and COVID-19 related restrictions are provided in each clinical/practicum course and as required by the specific practicum clinical affiliation.
- Students must maintain current vaccination to attend clinical/practicum at clinical/practicum sites which require this. Students must also follow the policies of the clinical/practicum agency should the agency allow a declination opportunity
- Students must be aware that while reasonable accommodations will be attempted, exclusions from clinical/practicum agencies may significantly impair a student's ability to achieve student learning objectives related to clinical/practicum. This may result in difficulties including but not limited to progression and graduation.

Retention

Students will be retained in the program based on the following guidelines:

- Students must be able to practice standard precautions and comply with the guidelines described by state Policy Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases recommendations published by the CDC.
- Students must maintain a health status level that permits them to meet the coursework and clinical/practicum objectives with reasonable accommodations.
- Release from medical care without restriction [See “Student Under a Health Care Provider's Care” below].

Student Under a Health Care Provider's Care

Any student enrolled in the nursing major courses must provide documentation from a healthcare provider with no restrictions when participating in clinical/practicum. Students who experience injury, illness, or conditions must provide notification of the event to the Department of Nursing in no less than 72 hours or sooner if possible. This is to ensure the student has begun the process of seeking care from a healthcare provider, is knowledgeable of the need to provide the required documentation prior to attending clinical/practicum experiences and is meeting the necessary requirements of clinical/practicum experiences. While this is meant to be non-punitive, the student must be aware that failure to attend clinical/practicum experiences or to work with faculty for reasonable accommodations may result in an unsatisfactory grade assignment and/or progression issue.

If a student has been or is currently under the care of a primary health care provider or specialist health care provider (s), the written release from all providers must state that the student is sufficiently recovered or is able to resume full participation in clinical/practicum. *A full written release with no restrictions from the health care provider is required for all students under a health care provider's care.*

At the discretion of the Department of Nursing, the student may be required to schedule an appointment with a healthcare provider to repeat the physical exam upon release without restrictions from the student's health care provider. This is to ensure the student's physical and emotional fitness is determined by a healthcare provider and to ensure the meeting of requirements for clinical/practicum sites prior to returning to any clinical/practicum activity involving patient care.

Student Illnesses or Injuries Occurring During Clinical/practicum

Students experiencing illness or injury requiring medical treatment during clinical/practicum must receive treatment at the closest, appropriate treatment facility. Faculty will not be responsible to transport any ill or injured nursing student, except in the case of post-accident or post-injury testing for illegal drugs, alcohol, and inappropriate use of legal drugs/controlled substances. The student is responsible for any costs incurred by the medical treatment received.

HIV/HBV POSITION STATEMENT

The nursing faculty of Missouri Southern State University has adopted and adheres to the position statement from the Missouri State Board of Nursing regarding HIV and HBV infection. The position statement follows:

Missouri State Board of Nursing Position Statement: HIV or HBV Infection

As mandated by Section 191.694 RSMo, 1992 all licensed nurses and nursing students shall immediately implement and adhere to the universal precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control in the care of all clients.

All licensed nurses and nursing students who discriminate against a client on the basis of HIV or HBV infection or makes HIV or HBV testing a condition of treatment shall be subject to the denial of licensure or the disciplinary processes of the Missouri State Board of Nursing.

All licensed nurses and nursing students with HIV or HBV who perform invasive procedures are encouraged by the Missouri State Board of Nursing to voluntarily participate in the Department of Health's evaluation process.

All licensed nurses and nursing students who violate a restriction or limitation placed on their practice by the Department of Health shall be subject to denial of licensure or the disciplinary processes of the Missouri State Board of Nursing.

It is the position of the Missouri State Board of Nursing that all licensed nurses and nursing students with HIV or HBV are entitled to the same reasonable accommodation guaranteed by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

References:

North Carolina Board of Nursing (1991). Policy regarding HIV/AIDS infection. Raleigh: Author.

State of Missouri, 86th General Assembly, Second Regular Session [Truly agreed to and finally passed] Senate Committee Substitute for Senate Bills Nos. 511 & 556. (1992). Jefferson City: Author.

State of Missouri Revised Statutes (1992). Section 191.694 to 191.700 RSMo Supp. 1992. In Chapter 191: Health and Welfare. Jefferson City: Committee on Legislative Research.

Links:

<https://pr.mo.gov/nursing-focus-position.asp>

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=191.694>

<https://revisor.mo.gov/main/ViewChapter.aspx?chapter=191>

Standard Precautions, Infection Control, and Patient Privacy

RN to BSN students is expected to complete training related to Standard Precautions, Infection Control, and Patient Privacy annually or prior to the NURS 493 BSN Practicum. RN to BSN Students must abide by their clinical affiliation agreement as set by the clinical/practicum site. Evidence of completion of training must be uploaded to the American Databank/Complio software application annually and/or prior to the NURS 493 BSN Practicum.

Standard Precautions as identified by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at

<https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/hcp/basics/standard-precautions.html> and

<https://www.cdc.gov/infection-control/hcp/basics/index.html>

Nursing students must complete all assigned training (program and clinical/practicum site) prior to providing care at any clinical/practicum agency.

Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogen Policy

An exposure includes: All needle sticks or other penetrating sharps and related events; exposure to blood, fluid containing visible blood, other potentially infectious fluid (semen; vaginal secretions; cerebrospinal, synovial, pleural, peritoneal, pericardial, and amniotic fluids); contact with a mucus membrane.

In the event of body substance exposure, the students will proceed with the steps outlined below.

Following an exposure, it will be the student's responsibility to take IMMEDIATE ACTION:

1. Wash wounds and skin with soap and water.
2. Flush mucous membranes with water.
3. Report the incident immediately to the faculty member in charge of the clinical/practicum rotation.
4. If clothing contaminated, change to scrubs.
5. Complete the facility's incident report and the MSSU Nursing Department Incident Report Form under supervision of the approved preceptor and/or RN to BSN Coordinator.
6. Students may be directed for further medical follow-up as indicated.

Exposure To Latex

The advent of universal precautions in 1987 and the increased demand for protective gloves has been accompanied by increased reports of allergic reactions to natural rubber latex among health care personnel. Avoiding latex products remains the cornerstone of preventing sensitization and reactions.

Students with known latex allergy are expected to take certain steps to avoid contact with these products.

Management Of Latex Allergic Reaction

Symptoms of latex allergy may include skin rashes; hives; flushing; itching; nasal, eye, or sinus symptoms; asthma; and shock. In the event a reaction or suspected reaction to latex occurs:

Stop treatment and remove the irritating agent, if possible. The student should notify the instructor immediately. The student should notify the agency where the incident occurred and follow the agency policy for latex allergic reaction. The student shall complete the MSSU Nursing Department Incident Report form. The instructor shall refer the student to a medical treatment facility as indicated. The student will be responsible for avoiding latex exposure in the future, as advised in the Latex Allergy information.

Latex Allergy Information

Latex is found in many products. You may suspect you have or are known to have an allergy to latex. At this time, there is no treatment or cure for the allergy to latex. Therefore, the best way to prevent a serious reaction to these products is to avoid contact or exposure. (Approved Jan.28, 2004; Revised 2017, 2021; Reviewed/Revised/Approved by Faculty Council 5/2022)

How to Avoid the Exposure to Natural Rubber

- Avoid contact with latex containing products as much as possible. In the health care setting, latex is found in many products. Gloves and catheters are a possible source of contact. The powder in latex gloves can carry allergenic proteins into the air, which can make some people wheeze or have hay fever.
- Products that contain latex include rubber gloves, catheters, rubber bands, erasers, condoms, rubber tubing, rubber stoppers in glass vials and balloons.
- Latex paint does not contain any natural rubber and does not need to be avoided.

Steps to protect yourself from latex exposure and allergy in the clinical/practicum setting.

- Use non-latex gloves for activities that are not likely to involve contact with infectious materials (food preparation, routine housekeeping, maintenance, et cetera).
- Appropriate barrier protection is necessary when handling infectious materials. If you choose latex gloves, use powder-free gloves with reduced protein content. Such gloves reduce exposures to latex protein and thus reduce the risk of latex allergy (though symptoms may still occur in some workers). So- called hypoallergenic latex gloves do not reduce the risk of latex allergy. However, they may reduce reactions to chemical additives in the latex (allergic contact dermatitis).
- Use appropriate work practices to reduce the chance of reactions to latex. When wearing latex gloves, do not use oil-based hand creams or lotions (which can cause glove deterioration) unless they have been shown to reduce latex-related problems and maintain glove barrier protection. After removing latex gloves, wash hands with a mild soap and dry thoroughly. Use good housekeeping practices to remove latex- containing dust from the workplace. Take advantage of all latex allergy education and training provided.
- Get a Medic-Alert bracelet that says you are "allergic to latex". Wear the bracelet at all times. Carry prescribed epinephrine pen.
- Notify your doctors, dentists, nurses, and other health care providers of your allergy. This allows them to plan ahead when providing care.

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act

RN to BSN students must complete HIPAA training annually and/or prior to attending the clinical/practicum in NURS 493 BSN Practicum course. Evidence of completion must be submitted to the Learning Management System. This training and evidence of completion is mandatory for all students. Patient information is confidential and must be protected. Students are allowed to have access only to information that is appropriate to their participation in patient care. The following information MAY NOT be present in any coursework or clinical/practicum documentation submitted as an assignment or used to complete an assignment. Such a violation of this could also result in a violation of HIPAA law.

Approved and Disapproved Identifiers

- Names (including initials) = Use only patient A, B, C or 1, 2, 3.....
- All geographic subdivisions other than a city or state = Kansas City, Missouri; Joplin, Missouri. (Do not use address)
- References to specific dates = Students may use dates such as Week 1, Week 2....
- Telephone numbers, Fax numbers, Email addresses, Social Security Numbers, Health plan or medical record numbers, account numbers, certificate or license numbers, vehicle identifiers, device identifiers, URLs and IP address numbers, Biometric identifiers, full-face photography images, or any other unique identifying number, characteristics, or code.
- Videotaping, audiotaping, or other types of recording are not allowed in clinical/practicum settings or where patient information is shared.

Video or audio written release related to specific assignments in the program such as but not limited to physical assessment recording may be found within the course syllabus and/or course assignment instructions. RN to BSN students should immediately contact the RN to BSN Coordinator and/or Department Chair for questions regarding HIPAA guidelines.

Attendance

Classroom is defined as any instructional environment where information is delivered either face-to-face, in a hybrid environment, or virtually delivered.

Laboratory is defined as an instructional environment where information and activities are completed in a face- to-face, in a hybrid environment, or virtually. The focus of the instruction is skills based.

Clinical/practicum is defined as an instructional environment focused upon instructor or precepted guided client care in an approved agency, simulation experience in varying levels of fidelity, or focused skills-based instruction which involves either simulated or standardized clients.

Students are expected to participate in all coursework and clinical/practicum for nursing courses they are enrolled in. The student is responsible for notifying the course lead, RN to BSN Coordinator, and clinical/practicum site regarding a scheduled clinical/practicum absence **at least one hour prior** to the event unless an unforeseen emergency prevents contact within the designated time frame. In the event of an emergency, students are expected to notify the course lead, RN to BSN Coordinator, and clinical/practicum site as soon as possible.

Students are expected to notify the course lead regarding participation related to course attendance in asynchronous or synchronous digital learning. Participation requirements are provided within each RN to BSN course syllabus to include but not limited to Week One Introductory Video and weekly discussion with reply to instructor.

The preferred method of communication for clinical/practicum or course absence is via email to the course lead with a copy sent to the RN to BSN Coordinator. Please refer to your course syllabi or course lead for guidance on the use of any communication applications.

Students are responsible for their own transportation to clinical/practicum sites.

If the MSSU campus is closed for inclement weather, digital platforms or servers are impaired so that coursework delivery methods are inoperable on the campus; the student will expect communication from the course lead or RN to BSN Coordinator.

Clinical/practicum evidence of attendance and absences

RN to BSN students are responsible for adhering to the clinical/practicum schedule as set between the NURS 493 BSN Practicum course lead, RN to BSN Coordinator, RN to BSN student, and preceptor.

All clinical/practicum hours must be completed within and by the end of the 8-week term for the NURS 493 BSN Practicum course for a student to receive a grade in the course. There are no make-up hours offered in the course. Practicum hours may not be completed in advance of the NURS 493 course.

Documentation of evidence of completion is required as is a clinical affiliation agreement (if needed), preceptor agreement, student evaluation of the preceptor and preceptor evaluation of the student. All required documentation is outlined in the NURS 493 BSN Practicum syllabus, coursework, and practicum packet.

Should a student be unable to attend all practicum hours as scheduled, the student may receive an incomplete or be advised to withdraw from the course until such time that the student is able to complete the requirements.

Students are responsible for securing an appropriate clinical/practicum site and preceptor under the guidance of the NURS 493 BSN Practicum course lead and RN to BSN Coordinator. Both the site and preceptor must be approved prior to any practicum hours are completed.

All NURS 493 BSN Practicum documentation related to the practicum hours must be physically signed by the appropriate parties (student, preceptor, course lead, RN to BSN Coordinator). This is known as a "wet signature" or a signature on a physical document. Submission of all documentation is provided in the NURS 493 BSN Practicum Course syllabus and/or learning management system.

Clinical/practicum Experiences

Smoking

Students will be caring for clients in a variety of clinical/practicum settings and with varying degrees in severity of illnesses. Due to the fact that it is not always possible to predict a client's reaction to the smoke on a student's clothing, hair, or person, all forms of tobacco use including, but not excluded to, smoking, e- cigarettes, and smokeless tobacco will not be permitted immediately before and during clinical/practicum hours. This policy reflects the Department of Nursing concern for the welfare of the clients that the students serve. If any student needs assistance with smoking cessation or has questions regarding this policy, please contact the clinical/practicum instructor for the course or the Director of the Department. (Approved by Senior Vice President 2/6/01; Approved by Faculty Council 2/7/01, revised 12/9/14)

Clinical/practicum Dress Policy

The manner of dress when in a clinical/practicum student role or representing the nursing program must be neat and sufficiently conservative to be professional (including undergarments). Additionally, the student's safety and that of the client have been given consideration in the development of the following policies. The faculty reserves the right to require any student participating in clinical/practicum or activity to which the student is representing the university/program to modify their garments if distracting or unprofessional.

Students are to wear appropriate attire as designated by the clinical affiliation agreement and/or clinical/practicum site.

Name badges:

Missouri Southern State University Identification Badges are made to be worn as the student's name badge and should be worn with any badges issued by clinical/practicum facilities on the left front of the clinical/practicum attire. University Badges may be obtained by contacting the University bookstore at <https://www.mssu.edu/business-affairs/lion-card/issuance.php>. It is important to understand that while in the clinical/practicum site, the RN to BSN is not functioning as an employee of the clinical site but a representative student of the RN to BSN program. Therefore, the RN to BSN student must wear the university approved identification badge.

Personal Appearance

The manner of personal appearance in the clinical/practicum site is dependent upon clinical site affiliation agreements and clinical/practicum policies. As a representative of the MSSU RN to BSN program, RN to BSN students is to adhere to these policies in regarding to the following:

- Hair and Beards
- Attire and Shoes
- Personal hygiene
- Hands/fingernails
- Jewelry
- Use of Smartwatch or electronic devices
- Tattoos and body piercings/appliances
- Business attire
- Procedure or surgical scrub attire

Dress Code for Professional Meetings and Presentations

Students will be expected to wear professional dress at all class presentations, conferences, or other professional meetings. Business casual attire may consist of but not limited to the following:

- Slacks, skirt, suit, sport coat, Blouse, collared shirt, hosiery, tie, dress shoes, and clinical/practicum lab coat
- Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.

Professional Liability Insurance

Students in the RN to BSN program are responsible for providing professional liability insurance upon admission or at a minimum before the 1st week of the NURS 493 BSN Practicum course.

Nursing Skills Laboratory

The nursing skills laboratory (Health Science Building Room 337 & 339) may be used to practice procedures at any time a laboratory class is not in session **by appointment with faculty supervising student use of the laboratory and by signing up for open skills lab days.** The nursing skills laboratory is locked when not in use. Policies for maintaining the nursing skills lab inventory and equipment as well as the use of the laboratory are available upon request. Nursing skill supplies/equipment must remain in the skills laboratory unless the student has documented permission by the course lead. Any student found not complying with the requirements will be subject to disciplinary actions up to and include dismissal from the program.

Following use of the nursing skills laboratory, please check to make sure the laboratory is left clean, neat, and that equipment is turned off and secured. Leave the laboratory locked. All equipment should remain in the designated area. Damaged or malfunctioning equipment should be reported immediately to an instructor or to the secretary of the department. (Approved by Faculty Council 8- 17-07)

Department Policies

Being a member of the Missouri Southern State University and Nursing Department is an honor and a privilege which carries with it an obligation on the part of each individual to respect the rights of others, to protect the University as a forum for the free expression of ideas, and to obey the law. Students are required to know and abide by the Core Values of Student Conduct at Missouri Southern State University as located in the MSSU Student Handbook which may be found at <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/>. Students are required to know and abide by the principles, policies, and procedures as identified in the Missouri Southern State University Student Handbook in addition to those identified in the McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing Student Handbook. Faculty and staff are required to know and abide by the principles, policies, and procedures as identified by the Missouri Southern State University Employee policies and Faculty Handbook.

Digital Learning

Internet classes are not recommended for students with only dial-up or cellular Internet connections. Online students should not expect to complete all Internet course activities on a cellular phone or other mobile device.

Students interested in completing Internet classes at MSSU must have access to a reliable laptop or desktop computer with highspeed (DSL, cable, fiber-optic) Internet access. A small number of courses require a Windows computer (PC). Be sure to pay close attention to course descriptions.

Internet courses are instructor-led, not self-paced, and students are expected to actively participate on a weekly basis from the very first day of classes until the course ends. A student runs the risk of being dropped from any online course for lack of participation (submitting an assignment, posting to a discussion board, etc.) during the first seven days of the class. This drop could lead to the loss of Financial Aid. Missouri Southern's primary learning management system (LMS) for distance course delivery is Blackboard™. MSSU's Blackboard™ can be found on the landing page of the "Students" section of the University website: <https://www.mssu.edu/student.php>. A student having trouble meeting assignment deadlines should contact the course instructor or program coordinator for guidance.

Student login credentials are provided by the Information Technology department. For assistance with login credentials contact the I.T. Helpdesk at (417) 659-4444 or email helpdesk@mssu.edu

Learning Management System (LMS) Course Availability: LMS sites for all courses will appear two days prior to the official start date of classes. This extra time should be used by students to review important course documents in the "Announcements" area of each course.

New Online Student Orientation: First-time distance students are automatically enrolled in the Department of Digital Learning's "Chalk Talk Blackboard Prep for Students" Blackboard Organization. Activities in this course are optional, providing Missouri Southern's new distance learners with information relevant to being a distance student, including the use of various Blackboard functions used by MSSU online instructors. The "Chalk Talk Blackboard Prep for Students" Blackboard Organization should automatically appear in new online students' Blackboard Organizations section shortly after registration and no sooner than two weeks prior to the semester start date. For access to the organization, please contact Scott Snell, Director of Digital Learning at (417) 625-9651 or Snell-s@mssu.edu.

Minimum Technical Requirements for online classes may be found within the individual course syllabi. At minimum, technical requirements include a PC or MAC configuration with reliable access to the internet, audiovisual capabilities, access to Microsoft applications as offered by the university and a supported browser. Supported browsers include Google Chrome, Firefox, or Apple Safari. It is recommended to have multiple browsers so as if something online does not work in one browser, students have the ability to access it in a different browser.

Students taking courses at MSSU Online should be mindful of the following “not recommended” listing:

- Dial up internet connection-many of the courses are designed with multi-media rich content such as videos that will not display properly on a dial up connection.
- Cellular connections are not a reliable means to complete learning activities such as completing assignments in the Learning Management System, discussion boards, viewing grades, or audiovisual materials/assignments.
- Students should not expect to take courses entirely on a cellular connection to the internet.
- iPads and other tablets are a great supplement but may make completing assignments and participation activities challenging.

Communication

The MSSU McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing uses a variety of methods to communicate information to faculty, staff, and students. These communication methods include postings on the MSSU website, Department website, communication via email, Learning Management System (LMS) announcements, electronic applications such as social media. The responsibility of reviewing all communication methods is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and the RN to BSN student.

Topics and methods of communication include but are not limited to the following:

- Policy changes—A copy of the new department, course, or clinical/practicum policy will be sent to students via email and will be posted on the course announcements in the LMS.
- Grades, evaluations, or written feedback both summative and formative will be submitted in the LMS which is secured via individual student login and access. Grades, evaluations, or assignments will not be submitted via email or unapproved methods of electronic communication.
- Updates or revisions to the student handbook will be communicated each academic year at the beginning of the respective semester. This communication will occur by either email, or course announcement.
- A signed and dated acknowledgement form that the Nursing Student Handbook information has been reviewed must be completed at the beginning of each academic year in designated courses.
- Communication of changes in a student’s address, permanent address, a name change and/or telephone number must be updated by contacting the Nursing Department administrative assistant and University Registrar’s office. University forms may be found at <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/registrar/forms.php>
- University communication may occur on the university website at <https://www.mssu.edu/>, Learning Management System, university email, or university text messaging service.

Social Networking

Nurses must recognize that it is paramount that they always maintain patient privacy and confidentiality, regardless of the mechanism that is being used to transmit the message, be it social networking or a simple conversation. As professionals we are legally bound to maintain the appropriate boundaries and treat patients with dignity and respect. The following information provides the student nurse with Missouri Southern State University's Department of Nursing principles and tips regarding activities linked to social networking. These principles are directly taken from the ANA Principles for Social Networking for the Registered Nurse guidance statements.

Principles

- Nurses must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information. Nurses must know their legal and ethical responsibilities, as well as their own organization's policies, regarding their responsibility to protect patient privacy, whether online or offline. Merely removing someone's name (or face, in the instance of images) from a communication does not necessarily protect that person's identity. Under federal law (HIPAA), protected "individually identifiable information" includes health information that identifies the individual or can reasonably be used to identify the individual, in any form (oral, written, or otherwise) that relates to the past, present, or future physical or mental health of an individual.
- Nurses who interact with patients on social media must observe ethically prescribed patient- nurse professional boundaries. The precepts guiding nurses in these matters are no different online than in person.
- Nurses should evaluate all their postings with the understanding that a patient, colleague, educational institution, or employer could potentially view those postings. Online content and behavior have the potential to either enhance or undermine not only the individual nurse's career, but also the nursing profession.
- Nurses should take advantage of privacy settings available on many social networking sites in their personal online activities and seek to separate their online personal and professional sites and information.
- Use of privacy settings and separation of personal and professional information online does not guarantee, however, that information will not be repeated in less protected forums.
- As the patient's advocate, nurses have an ethical obligation to take appropriate action regarding instances of questionable healthcare delivery at an individual or systems level that reflect incompetent, unethical, illegal, or impaired practice. Nurses who view social media content posted by a colleague that violates ethical or legal standards should first bring the questionable content to the attention of the colleague so that the individual can take appropriate action. If the posting could threaten a patient's health, welfare, or right to privacy regarding health information, the nurse has the obligation to report the matter to a supervisor or designated person within the institution or entity for follow-up. If the questionable practice is not addressed in the employment setting and seriously jeopardizes the patient's safety and well-being, the nurse may need to report the problem to external authorities. Accurate reporting and factual documentation—not merely opinion—should always support such responsible actions.

- Nurses are encouraged to participate in the development of policies and procedures in their institutions and organizations for handling reports of online conduct that may raise legal concerns or be professionally unethical. Such official channels can protect the rights of those participating and can offer remedial action for the patient, while offering fairness, support, and nonpunitive correction and training for a nurse's inadvertent mistakes.

American Nurses Association. (2011). Principles for social networking and the Nurse. Nursesbooks.org

TIPS TO AVOID PROBLEMS

- Remember that standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance.
- Do not share or post information or photos gained through the nurse-patient relationship.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.
- Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, employers, or coworkers, even if they are not identified.
- Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.
- Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

Sexual Harassment/Title IX

Missouri Southern State University (MSSU) is committed to fostering an environment where all individuals are treated fairly and with complete respect. It is and continues to be, University policy that harassment is unacceptable conduct, which will not be tolerated. **Harassment is conduct that is unwanted or unreciprocated and affects your self-respect and well-being during classroom or clinical/practicum experiences in addition to university community.** The sexual misconduct/Title IX policy statement provides the definitive outline of information within the University student handbook, Faculty handbook, and employee policies.

Behavior can be harassment if:

- It is unwanted, unreasonable, and offensive.
- It creates a hostile or ineffective environment in the classroom or clinical/practicum setting. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:
 - Repeated events or a single serious incident
 - Physical abuse such as unwanted physical contact
 - Verbal abuse such as name-calling, use of offensive language or innuendo, telling offensive jokes.
 - Covert abuse such as non-cooperation, implicit threats
 - Abuse that stems from a problem that began in the university or clinical/practicum setting, and continues outside of them (i.e., stalking)

Intimidating and disruptive behaviors include overt actions such as verbal outbursts and physical threats, as well as passive activities such as refusing to perform assigned tasks or quietly exhibiting uncooperative attitudes during routine activities. Intimidating and disruptive behaviors are often manifested by health care professionals in positions of power. Such behaviors include reluctance or refusal to answer questions, return phone calls or pages; condescending language or voice intonations; and impatience with questions. Overt and passive behaviors undermine team effectiveness and can compromise the safety of patients. All intimidating and disruptive behaviors

are unprofessional and should not be tolerated.

The most appropriate approach for a student to take depends on the student's level of comfort and circumstances. Persistent harassment may make the student feel that it is her/his fault making it difficult to act.

Steps that a student can take to clarify the situation are:

1. Talk to other people who are trusted.
2. Keep a written record of incidents. Keep notes simple and include date, time of incident, location, nature of the incident, your response, your feelings at the time, any action taken at the time and what it was and the names of any witnesses.
3. Decide to act. Students may be reluctant to complain even though policies are in place. Unless action is taken, it is unlikely that the unacceptable behavior will stop.

Students are to follow the MSSU policy to file a formal complaint according to the steps identified in the Department of Nursing Student Handbook. There are situations in which a student is confronted with harassment that require immediate action.

When harassment occurs, the student should proceed with the following actions:

- Respond with courteous language and a calm, quiet manner*
- ***If in immediate physical danger, the student should move to protect self and others.**
- Acknowledge that the other person seems upset or frustrated.
- State that you would like to assist the person in resolving concerns/frustrations.
- Courteously remind the other person to speak quietly and respectfully in the hospital setting.
- Ask that the exchange be moved to a quiet place to continue problem-solving, out of public view/hearing.

If the steps are not effective, the student should:

- Request the assistance of the nursing instructor, nurse preceptor and/or nurse manager in dealing with the individual's concerns and disruptive behavior.
- Tell the person that you are sorry that you are not able to assist them to their satisfaction at this time, and you will need to refer the issue to your nursing instructor.

Non-Discrimination and Title IX Statement

Missouri Southern State University emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all persons and adheres to a strict non-discrimination policy regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, students, third parties on campus, and applicants for employment and admissions. In accord with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected class, in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the University, including, but not limited to, athletics, instruction, grading, the awarding of student financial aid, recruitment, admissions, and housing. Questions, concerns, and reports about Title IX, including sexual harassment or pregnancy educational planning, should be directed to the Dean of Students/Title IX Coordinator in the Dean of Students Office at 417.625.3032 / titleix@mssu.edu.

I will seek to keep information private to the greatest extent possible. However, as an instructor, I have a mandatory reporting responsibility. I am required to share information regarding sexual

harassment or information about a crime that may have occurred related to Title IX. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Counseling Services 417.625.6559 / counselingservices@mssu.edu or the Willcox Health Center at 417.625.9323 / willcoxhealthcenter@mssu.edu. Crime reports to law enforcement can be made at 417.623.3131.

Plagiarism Detection/Academic Integrity Guide

All course and clinical/practicum assignments will be submitted through Safe Assign or designated anti-plagiarism application. Students are required to have **no more than overall 30% similarity and 15% individual/University similarity**. If the student has a percentage greater than these, they are required to revise and re-submit one additional time. Student assignments not adhering to the stated similarity percentages are subject to policies as determined in the Academic Integrity section of this handbook and the university student handbook.

Students are allowed to use Generative AI in some ways but are prohibited from using it in other ways. Keep in mind that any content produced by generative AI can “hallucinate” (produce false information), so students are responsible for ensuring the accuracy of any AI-generated content. For information on citing AI, please see MSSU Library’s citation tools website (URL: <https://www.mssu.edu/academics/library/citation-tools.php>). Students should not use generative AI in any way that would violate the Student Code of Conduct (URL: <https://www.mssu.edu/student-affairs/student-life/student-activities/Final-Student-Handbook-2022-2023.pdf>).

Students are permitted to use generative AI in the following ways:

- **Brainstorming:** Generative AI may be used to stimulate creativity, generate ideas, or brainstorm topics for papers, presentations, and discussions. The generated content must serve as a steppingstone, **not a final product**.
- **Citation Assistance:** AI tools may be used to manage, format, and organize citations and references, promoting adherence to academic writing standards and specific style guides required for individual assignments.
- **Grammar and Style Checking:** AI-powered writing enhancement tools may be used to help with spelling, grammar, syntax, and stylistic errors.
- **Concept Understanding:** Generative AI may be used to explain or simulate concepts taught in class, aiding in a deeper understanding.
- **Research Assistance:** AI may be used to conduct initial research, compile data, and summarize articles, books, or papers. It should not replace traditional research methods but rather enhance them.

Student may **not use** generative AI in coursework in the following ways:

- **Plagiarism:** Using AI-generated content as your original work without attribution. This includes essays, papers, presentations, and exam answers.
- **Data Manipulation:** Using AI tools to alter data or create misleading information.
- **Misrepresentation of Skills:** Using generative AI to complete tasks that are meant to assess your knowledge and skills.
- **Confidentiality Breach:** Using AI tools that might violate university policies or laws related to data privacy and confidentiality.

See individual assignment instructions for more details.

In addition to a proper citation, the student should include the following statement with any assignment where generative AI is used for assistance. The following is an example of the statement that would be included at the end of a reference list:

“I used generative AI platform [INSERT NAME OF PLATFORM, SUCH AS CHAT GPT] for assistance in the following ways on this assignment: [INSERT WAYS USED, such as brainstorming, citation assistance, grammar and style checking, concept understanding, and research assistance, etc.]”

Use of and course policies regarding Artificial Intelligence (AI) vary by instructor and class. Failure to comply with instructor AI instructions constitutes academic misconduct and will be handled accordingly of the Academic Integrity section of the Nursing Student Handbook and University Student Handbook.

Academic Integrity Statement

Missouri Southern State University is committed to academic integrity and expects all members of the university community to accept shared responsibility for maintaining academic integrity. Academic work is evaluated on the assumption that the work presented is the student's own, unless designated otherwise. Submitting work that is not one's own is unacceptable and is considered a serious violation of university policy. Cheating is a serious offense that invalidates the purpose of a university education. Any student who takes credit for the work of another person, offers, or accepts assistance beyond that allowed by an instructor, or uses unauthorized sources for a test or assignment is cheating. Students must be conscious of their responsibilities as scholars, to learn to discern what is included in plagiarism as well as in other breaches of the Student Handbook and must know and practice the specifications for citations in scholarly work. When dealing with cases of academic dishonesty, the course instructor may choose to use the campus judicial system; this includes filing an incident report with the Dean of Students, who may act on the report by issuing a written warning or by recommending disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Penalties for academic dishonesty may include a failing grade on the assignment, a failing grade in the course, or any other course-related sanction the instructor determines to be appropriate.

The Department of Nursing faculty adheres to the ethical principles as determined by the nursing profession and academic policies of the University. Nursing students are also expected to uphold these policies as developing professionals.

Dishonesty is used in the MSSU Student Handbook synonymously with cheating and plagiarism.

A. **CHEATING** includes but is not limited to..."

- use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing assignments.
- the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material before such material is revealed or distributed by the instructor.
- the misrepresentation of papers, reports, assignments, or other materials as the product of a student's sole independent effort, for the purpose of affecting the student's grade, credit, or status in the University.
- failing to abide by the instructions of the proctor concerning test-taking procedures; examples include, but are not limited to, talking, laughing, failing to take a seat assignment, failing to adhere to starting and stopping times, or other disruptive activity.
- influencing, or attempting to influence, any University official, faculty member, or employee responsible for processing grades, evaluating students, or for maintaining academic records through the use of bribery, threats, or any other means of coercion in order to affect a student's grade or evaluation any forgery, alteration, unauthorized possession, or misuse of university documents pertaining to academic records.
- pertaining to academic records by means of computer resources or other equipment also is included within this definition of **"cheating."**

- B. The Department of Nursing faculty explicitly defines **CHEATING** to include:
- Copying examination answers from another student or providing examination answers to another student.
 - Use of unauthorized resources during testing or test review.
 - Copying another student's homework partially or in total.
 - Fabrication of resources.
- C. PLAGIARISM as defined by the Department of Nursing faculty is consistent with the American Psychological Association ethical principles as defined in sections 1.11 to 1.25 includes but is not limited to:
- Copying another's work and presenting it as one's own.
 - Using more than two or three words from a source without using quotes.
 - Paraphrasing by simply rearranging another's words.
 - Presenting a purchased or stolen paper in part or in entirety, as one's own work.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

The Department of Nursing procedure for responding to student **DISHONESTY**, as defined above, is as follows:

- A. Respond by one or more of the following faculty actions:
- Instructor responds to dishonesty in an advisory non-punitive manner.
 - Instructor responds to dishonesty by assigning reduced or failure grade of exam, project, paper, or course grade.
 - Instructor responds to dishonesty by using the Academic Integrity Statement as outlined in the [MSSU Student Handbook](#) and course syllabi.
 - Instructor reports student dishonesty to the Department of Nursing Chairperson and to the Dean of Students.

(Approved by Department of Nursing Faculty Council 4/5/99; revised by Faculty Council 4/7/04; reviewed and revised by Faculty Council 6/28/2021)

Disability Accommodation Statement

If you are an individual with a disability and require an accommodation for this class, please notify the instructor or the Coordinator of Student Disability Services, at the Student Success Center (417-659- 3725). Non- Discrimination and Title IX Statement Missouri Southern State University emphasizes the dignity and equality common to all persons and adheres to a strict non-discrimination policy regarding the treatment of individual faculty, staff, students, third parties on campus, and applicants for employment and admissions. In accord with federal law and applicable Missouri statutes, the University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, ancestry, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected class, in employment or in any program or activity offered or sponsored by the University, including, but not limited to, athletics, instruction, grading, the awarding of student financial aid, recruitment, admissions, and housing. Questions, concerns, and reports about Title IX, including sexual misconduct or pregnancy educational planning, should be directed to the Title IX Coordinator in the Student Affairs Office at (417) 625-9532.

Faculty will seek to keep information private to the greatest extent possible. However, as an instructor, faculty have a mandatory reporting responsibility. Faculty are required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred related to Title IX.

Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting a counselor in the Advising, Counseling, and Testing Services Office (ACTS) at (417) 625-9324. Crime reports to law enforcement can be made at (417) 623-3131.

Basic Needs Statement Students experiencing personal or academic distress, food insecurity, and/or difficulty navigating campus resources are encouraged to contact the Office of Student Affairs (417.625.9392/studentaffairs@mssu.edu) for support. If you are uncomfortable making this contact, please notify your instructor so they can assist you in locating the needed resources.

University Pregnancy and Parenting

Education Plan Title IX Office Statement

Students who are experiencing pregnancy and/or parenting are provided protections under the Federal Civil Rights Amendment, Title IX. These students may experience barriers to their full and meaningful participation in the college setting as a result of their status as a student who is pregnant and parenting. It is important to note the student should be held to the same academic standards as other students. The Title IX Office is available as a resource to help you navigate these situations.

The first step is the disclosure of the pregnancy or parenting circumstance (as defined by the Title XI Office/Statement) to the Title XI coordinator and/or nursing faculty advisor. The second step is development of an education plan with the nursing faculty advisor in coordination with all course lead instructors in a given semester. The education plan will be kept on record in the nursing student's permanent file. Reasonable accommodation will be included in this plan. Additional accommodations that are not stipulated within the education plan may be approved through the seeking of the accommodation by contacting the ACTS office with the assistance of the Title IX office. Please see the accommodations section for this information. Access to the ACTS and Title IX office is listed under the Student Resources section.

Accommodations

The University will provide students with reasonable accommodation that has been approved through the accommodation process as determined by the Coordinator of Student Disability Services. This Policy applies to all University approved reasonable accommodations for students.

The Department of Nursing abides by the policies as set forth in the University Student Handbook as it pertains to accommodation. The University policy expressly outlines the process of requesting and receiving accommodation. Students considering an accommodation need must contact the Student Success Center and complete all forms as required by the University. After the Coordinator of Student Disability Services (the "Coordinator") approves a reasonable accommodation for a student, the student and the coordinator will work together to develop an Accommodation Plan (the "Plan") however, the student is ultimately responsible for notifying and working with faculty members, or other appropriate staff, to coordinate implementation of approved reasonable accommodations.

The Plan will remain in effect until either:

1. The Plan's expiration date passes or
2. The student requests an adjustment to the approved accommodation Plan or additional accommodation.
3. If reasonable accommodations listed in Plan are not provided or effective in accommodating the student's condition, the student should follow procedures for filing an accommodation grievance.

Academic Evaluation and Grade Appeals

The University and Department of Nursing are committed to ensuring students are evaluated and graded in a fair and consistent manner and that evaluations and grades accurately reflect the work performed by the students.

From time-to-time, students may be compelled to seek clarification and confirmation that the grade they earned in a course, on a test, quiz, or assignment, accurately reflects the work product of the student. The University Student Handbook policy sets forth the process for academic evaluation and grade appeals. This Policy applies to all University students. The process for grade appeals or any other issue with a nursing faculty member teaching the course or clinical/practicum experience is outlined in order by the following steps.

1. The student must submit, in writing, the matter to the instructor involved to include the intent of the appeal and evidence of the situation of concern within three (3) business days from the date the disputed event occurred. The instructor involved will respond to the student regarding the matter within three (3) business days.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the student will submit, in writing, the appeal to the Faculty Council via their faculty advisor within three (3) business days from the instructor's response. The submission must include copies of the original appeal, including the instructor's official decision. The Faculty Council will respond to the student within three (3) business days of receiving the appeal.

3. If the matter remains unresolved, the student and/or instructor and/or faculty council will submit the appeal, in writing, to the Department of Nursing Chair within three (3) business days after receiving Faculty Council's response. The submission must include copies of all appeals and official decisions. The Department of Nursing Chair will respond to the student within three (3) business days of receiving the appeal.

4. If the matter remains unresolved, the student and/or instructor and/or faculty council will submit, in writing, the appeal to the Dean of the College of Health, Life-Sciences, and Education within three (3) business days from the date of the Chair's response. The submission must include copies of all appeals and official decisions. The final disposition of the matter rests with the Dean of the College of Health, Life-Sciences, and Education.

If the matter remains unresolved, the student will refer to the University appeals process, at which point the nursing department and/or nursing faculty will have no jurisdiction over the student's appeal.

If the student wishes to make the formal grievance, the student must describe the issue and desired resolution in writing to the Dean. Should the person to whom the student would bring the appeal in this process as outlined above also be the faculty member in whose course the grade is being questioned, that faculty member will have no jurisdiction over the student's appeal. In such a case, the Vice President for Academic Affairs will call on an appropriate faculty member from the department or a related department to review the circumstances and make a recommendation to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will be the final arbitrator in any appeal. A written notice of all decisions regarding a student's grievance shall be provided to the student. The Department of Nursing Due Process and Appeals Policy ends when the disputed matter is turned over to the campus judicial system.

(Reviewed and updated by Nursing Department Faculty Council 1.18.2023)

Nursing Department Physical Space

Students are welcome to visit the Nursing Department faculty and staff during normal business hours Monday through Friday 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Any variation in department hours will be communicated to students.

Summer hours may vary, and the campus is closed on Fridays from mid-May until mid-August. Faculty office hours are posted on the Communication Board in the forum outside of the Nursing Department, outside of individual faculty offices, and within course syllabi. Faculty and staff prefer appointments to be made at least 48 hours in advance but will address drop-in visits on a first-come, first-serve basis. Guests, visitors, and students should check in with the administrative assistant or designated front desk located within the Department of Nursing. Guests, visitors, and students should respect the physical space in the nursing department, College of Health Science Building, and University offices by not entering any office or non-public space without permission.

RN to BSN students complete the majority of the program requirements in a digital space, asynchronously. Online teaching faculty post available office hours the first week of each course. While students are welcome to meet with department faculty or visit the campus, all faculty/advisor meetings may be conducted using the virtual meeting platform, Microsoft TEAMS or Learning Management System application. Meetings via telephone will also be offered. Please be aware that assignment or course grades will not be communicated by email, nor will assignments be submitted by email.

Computer Acceptable Use Policy

All RN to BSN students and nursing department faculty are subject to certain responsibilities and ethical behavior related to computer use. The policies and statements within the University Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook must be complied with regarding computer acceptable use. As stated in the Student Handbook policy:

- The University's academic and administrative/employee computing facilities are provided in order to promote and support academic pursuits. Academic computing facilities are therefore to be used only for instruction, coursework, and research activities. Administrative/employee computing facilities are to be used in support of the University's mission. This Policy applies to all University students.
- This Policy is a dynamic document that will change as new issues arise, or further clarification of topics is required. If questions on acceptable use arise that are not directly answered by this Policy, the students should be conservative and consider it unacceptable use until clarification, amendment or exception to policies can be made by the appropriate University representative. The guidelines presented in this Policy reflect U.S. Copyright Law, laws of the State of Missouri and additional specific rules applicable to the University. It is the intent of the University to adhere to the provisions of copyright laws relative to software and to comply with license.
- agreements and/or policy statements contained in the software packages used on campus."

U.S. Copyright Law and Software Licensing

1. All computer software is protected by the federal copyright law. It is illegal to make or distribute copies of copyrighted material without authorization.
2. The copyright owner may grant copying privileges for certain software. These special provisions will be specified in the documentation, license agreement, or in the software package. The user does not have the right to make a backup copy for archival purposes, screenshot or take picture of copyright images, or violate any copyright materials without the expressed and documented permission of the copyright owner. This includes but is not limited to information located within course learning management system, electronic resources, and/or electronic software/quizzing applications.
3. Under no circumstances should copyrighted software be distributed outside the University through any mechanism, electronic or otherwise.
4. You are responsible for being aware of the licensing restrictions for the software you use on any system. Lack of knowledge does not justify a violation of the law or this Policy.
5. When in doubt, do not copy. Violation of copyright law of licensing agreements may result in university disciplinary action and/or may result in legal action against you.
6. To receive user support from the University's Computer Center, from microcomputer lab assistants, or from vendors, you may be asked to produce the manuals, serial numbers, or original diskettes as proof of proper software licensing.

Pursuant to Missouri Law, RSMo. 569.099, unauthorized access and interference with computer systems and computer data are illegal. Unauthorized use of passwords and the breach of security of any computer system are illegal. Pursuant to Missouri Law, RSMo. 573.010-573.065, it is illegal to publicly display explicit sexual material and to promote, view, or possess child pornography. It is a violation of school policy to send/display defamatory, harassing, pornographic, obscene, or patently offensive sexual materials to anyone. Additionally, this conduct can subject you to criminal and civil penalties. Do not participate in such conduct.

Misuse of campus computing facilities shall be reported to university officials. These administrators will impose restrictions on the offender's computer access and report the incident to the Dean of Students, the Senior Vice President, or the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or whomever is appropriate.

Violation of U.S. or MO laws may result in legal and/or civil action. Students may be referred to the Student/Faculty Hearing Committee Board if found in violation of MSSU rules and regulations outlined in the Student Handbook. Prosecution under applicable laws will also be pursue.

Pinning Ceremony

Missouri Southern State University Department of Nursing sponsors a pinning ceremony prior to graduation. Pinning is a dignified ceremony celebrating entry into the profession as a Baccalaureate-prepared Registered Nurse.

Students in the RN to BSN program are welcome to attend the pinning ceremony and/or graduation ceremony. RN to BSN students who are unable to attend the pinning ceremony will be mailed the MSSU BSN pin to the primary address listed on the university directory.

It is traditional that the pin bearing the school's name and nursing degree as shown in the pin design which signifies each school of nursing.

Listing of Student Resources

University Police Public Safety Annex

Non-emergencies: 417-623-3131

Service Calls: 417-626-2222

Emergencies: 911

MSSU Current Academic Year University Catalog and Academic Calendar

<https://catalog.mssu.edu/>

Student Health Center Services

A variety of non-emergent health services are available through Willcoxon Health Center, Billingsley Student Center, Room 242, telephone (417) 625-9323. Open 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Appointments are preferred.

Student Affairs

- ✓ Vice President for Student Affairs Billingsly Student Center 347, 417-625- 9392
- ✓ Associate Vice President for Student Affairs/Dean of Students Billingsly Student Center 347, 417-625- 9392
- ✓ Director of Student Conduct Billingsly Student Center 347, 417-625-9392
- ✓ Title IX Coordinator Billingsly Student Center 347, 417-625-9392
- ✓ Career Services Spiva Library 207, 417-625-9343
- ✓ Recreational Services Billingsly Student Center 241, 417-625-9760
- ✓ Student Activities Billingsly Student Center 210, 417-625-9320
- ✓ Residence Life Mayes Student Life Center 102, 417-625-9522 (Director of Residence Life) Blaine Hall 106, 417-659-4261 (Resident Directors)
- ✓ Advising, Counseling, & Testing Services (ACTS) Hearnes Hall 314, 417-625-9324
- ✓ Financial Aid Hearnes Hall 109, 417-625-9367
- ✓ Student Success Center Hearnes Hall 301, 417-659-3725
- ✓ Disability Services Hearnes Hall Room 301, 417-659-3725
- ✓ Registrar Hearnes Hall 101, 417-625-9389
- ✓ Family Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) Upward Bound Anderson Criminal Justice 19, 417- 625-9880
- ✓ Project STAY Hearnes Hall 308, 417-625-9830
- ✓ Spiva Library 417-625-9362

**Missouri Southern State University McCune-Brooks Foundation Department of Nursing
Code of Conduct**

As an RN to BSN student, you assume responsibility for your personal conduct compatible with the University's function as an educational institution. Misconduct for which you are responsible is subject to discipline and includes, but is not excluded to:

- Use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations.
- Dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor.
- The acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material before such material is revealed by the instructor.
- Jeopardizing the physical, emotional, and psychological safety of patients, families, communities, and populations while under my care as a student nurse
- Violating the Code of Conduct as defined by the University Student Handbook
- Failing to complete required clinical/practicum training prior to entering the clinical/practicum experience, submission of current clinical/practicum required information, and/or adhering to the ANA Nurses Code of Ethics and professional behavior expected of the profession of nursing.

I understand this statement. This statement remains in effect for the current summer/fall/spring semester.

Signature

Date

**Missouri Southern State University
Department of Nursing**

Student acknowledgement/consent form
Carefully read each statement, initial and date in the blank area as confirmation.

Initial/date	I acknowledge receipt of the Department of Nursing's Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy and the University's Drug and Alcohol Prevention Program. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about these policies and this Student Acknowledgement and Consent Form. I have carefully read and understood these policies. By my signature below, I represent that I am at least eighteen (18) years old, and I agree to comply with all aspects of these policies.
	I am not currently under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or using inappropriately legal drugs or controlled substances.
	I understand that, as a RN to BSN student, I am expected to adhere to the RN practice standards governed by the state in which I am licensed and including but not limited to, clinical/practicum settings. I understand that I must be fully in control of my judgment, mental faculties, and physical and motor abilities while in the Nursing Program, and that it is of the utmost importance that I perform my duties without the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate legal drugs or controlled substances in my system. I understand that performing my duties with the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or legal drugs or controlled substances in my system poses an unacceptable risk of danger to patients, students, the University, and clinical/practicum hospitals and agencies. I agree that the University has a special need—public safety—to test me for illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or legal drugs or controlled substances.
	I knowingly and voluntarily agree to submit to a physical assessment by a licensed healthcare provider, laboratory testing of my blood, hair, urine, saliva and/or breath for the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, and the improper or abusive use of legal drugs prior to admission and at any and all times thereafter upon request by the University during my enrollment in the Nursing Program. I knowingly and voluntarily agree to submit as required by the Department of Nursing and/or clinical compliance application my health records for purposes of determining compliance to policies as set by the clinical/practicum site. I agree that the University in its sole discretion, with or without reasonable suspicion, may require me to submit to such tests. I agree to pay the full costs of such tests. To the fullest extent allowed by applicable law, I hereby irrevocably and unconditionally consent to all such testing, and to all actions which the University may take based upon the results of such testing, and I hereby irrevocably and unconditionally waive any rights I otherwise may have to refuse or object to any such testing. I understand that admission to and participation in the Nursing Program is a privilege, and I am signing this Consent form and making the foregoing agreements, consents, and waivers voluntarily.
	I understand that I may be denied admission to the Nursing Program if I test positive for the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate legal drugs. If I have already been accepted to the Nursing Program, I understand that I will be dismissed from the Nursing Program if I refuse to submit to testing upon request by the University or test positive for the presence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or inappropriate legal drugs. I will provide evidence of prescription medications at the request of MSSU nursing faculty.
	I consent to the release of test results to the Department of Nursing for appropriate review and action, including but not limited to, for use in determining my eligibility to enroll or continue in the nursing program.

	To the fullest extent allowed by applicable law, I hereby <u>release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue and agree to indemnify and hold harmless</u> the drug testing facility and its physicians, employees and representatives that conducted the drug testing and every other person, firm or institution (including the University, its governors, officers, and employees) (hereinafter referred to as the "Releasee(s)") from and against any and all costs, liabilities, claims, demands, causes of action, judgments, and damages (including court costs and attorney's fees and expenses) (hereinafter referred to as "Losses"), whether known or unknown, foreseen or unforeseen, arising out of or relating to the administration of drug and/or alcohol tests, the analysis of test results and the use and disclosure of said results, <u>whether or not such losses are caused by the carelessness or negligence of the releasees</u>, or otherwise. To the extent required by applicable law, this waiver does not apply to any particular Releasee to the extent such Losses are caused by the intentional or grossly negligent conduct of such Releasee.
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By my signature below, I agree to the terms of this *Student Acknowledgement and Consent Form*:

_____ Student Full Name (please print)

_____ Student Signature

_____ Date

Confidentiality Statement

I understand that during my clinical/practicum rotations I may have access to confidential information about clients, patients, their families, and clinical/practicum facilities. I understand I must maintain the confidentiality of all verbal, written or electronic information and in some instances the information may be protected by law, such as the State of Missouri Nursing Practice Act. In addition, the client's right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature is part of the American Nurses' Association's Code for Nurses.

Through this understanding and its relationship to professional trust, I agree to discuss confidential information only in the clinical/practicum setting as it pertains to patient care and not where it may be overheard by visitors and/or other patients. During each clinical/practicum rotation in the nursing program, I agree to follow each agency's established procedures on maintaining confidentiality.

Printed Name

Date

Signature

School

Receipt of Department of Nursing Student Handbook

I hereby acknowledge that I have received the Department of Nursing Student Handbook and that I am responsible for the contents and information in the manual. I am responsible for providing health documentation as required by the Department of Nursing.

I understand and acknowledge that I am additionally responsible for the information provided in the University Student Handbook and Code of Conduct as defined by the University.

Student Signature

Date

The Department of Nursing will exclusively use the MSSU email and contact information provided in the University directory for personal and emergency contact. Please contact the appropriate University department for any name changes or contact information changes in a timely manner.



MISSOURI SOUTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Health Verification Form

_____ University Student #
_____ Last Name _____ First Name _____ Middle Initial
_____ Date of Birth _____ Program (RN to BSN, pre-licensure BSN, LPN to BSN)

Provider Verification

1. After evaluating this student's health history and performing a physical examination, I certify that the student displays adequate health to participate in all aspects of the nursing education program.
Yes/No
2. After evaluating this student's health history and performing a physical examination, I am recommending further evaluation by a professional prior to the student participating in all aspects of the nursing education program.
Yes/No

Follow-up appointment scheduled for _____

Healthcare Provider Signature: _____

Healthcare Provider Credentials: _____ **Date:** _____

****Please note only a "wet signature" is allowed on health verification documents.**

Declination and Acknowledgement Form

I, _____
(student full name and S#) decline to obtain the following vaccination/immunization
as required for clinical/practicum attendance at clinical/practicum sites.

- ☐ Annual influenza immunization
- ☐ Full series and/or booster for COVID

- ☐ Significant personal issue/belief
- ☐ Religious belief (requires signature)
- ☐ Medical issue (I.e., documented allergic reaction and/or medical condition(s)
Requires signature)

Signature of Religious authority _____

Signature of Healthcare Provider _____

I, _____
(student full name and S#) acknowledge that reasonable accommodations will be made
related to this declination. I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to seek accommodation
with the healthcare facility following the given clinical site policy and required due dates. I
understand that my attainment of student learning objectives may be impaired due to lack of
access to clinical/practicum sites related to this accommodation. I understand that this may
impact my progression in the program and attainment of my nursing degree.

Student Signature

Date

Completion of this form is required annually and/or if at any time required throughout the program.

****Please note only a "wet signature" is allowed on health verification documents.****

All the information contained herein is subject to change. Notice of change will be provided via email or communication through the university learning management system. Students and faculty are held responsible for policies of MSSU, the University Student Handbook, the Department of Nursing Online RN to BSN Student Handbook, and the facility in which they are practicing.

Approval dates for selected sections are noted in parenthesis. This handbook was last reviewed on July 2025.