

  
UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA



**Associate of Science, Registered Nurse (ASRN) Student Handbook  
2022-2023**

Revised January 2023

# Nightingale Pledge

I solemnly pledge myself here, in the presence of this assembly, to practice my profession with integrity.

I will not take or knowingly administer any harmful drug.

I will do all in my power to maintain and elevate the standard of my profession.

I will hold in confidence all personal matters committed to my keeping.

I will devote myself to the healing, protection, and welfare of those entrusted to my care.

I will act with compassion and equality in all ethical matters.

I will commit to interdisciplinary collaboration and lifelong learning.

I fully acknowledge the seriousness of the responsibility that I accept in my calling,

And I make these promises solemnly, freely and upon my honor.

1893

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Topic	Page
Mission and Vision Statements	5
Nursing Philosophy and Educational Competencies	5-7
Conceptual Framework	7
Student Learning Outcomes and Program Outcomes ASRN	7-8
<b>Admission Process</b>	<b>8-12</b>
Pre-Nursing and Transfer	8-9
Program Requirements: CPR, Health Screen, Immunizations, Background Checks	9-10
Progression in the Program	10-11
Challenging/ Repeating	11
Withdrawal/ Incomplete, Readmission	11-12
Program Completion Requirements /Graduation	12
<b>Nursing Program Standards &amp; Procedures</b>	<b>12-25</b>
Attendance and Advising	12-13
Clinical Information	13-15
Communication/ Chain of Command	15
Confidentiality /HIPAA	15
Electronic Devices	16
Governance	16
Grading Scale in Nursing	17
Grounds for Removal from class/clinical or Dismissal from Program	17-18
Health and Safety/ Pregnancy/ Working	18-19
Nursing Skills Lab and Simulation lab	19-20
Peer Mentorship Program	20
Professionalism/ Professional Behavior	21
Student Complaints/ Grievances	22
Substance Use by students	22
Testing Procedures, ATI	22-24

Transportation	24
Uniform and Dress Code	24-25
Written Assignments and APA Format	25
<b>Academic Policies and Structure at Helena College</b>	25-27
Academic and Student Conduct	25
Accessibility and Accommodations	26
Academic Dishonesty and Integrity	26
<b>Informational Links</b> American Nurses Association MT Board of Nursing	27
APPENDIX A: Signature Sheets	27
Latex Allergy Statement	28
Statement of Informed Consent of Communicable Diseases	29-30
Blood Borne Pathogen Student Policy	31
Student Exposure Incident Form	32-33
Statement of Functional Abilities	34
Acknowledgement of Personal Effort and Commitment for Success	35
Statement of Release	36
Employer Contact Release	36
Photography Release	37
Receipt of Handbook	38

To keep up with the rapidly changing healthcare delivery system, the Nursing Department posts the nursing student handbook on the web site and the Nursing Information page. The student is responsible to partner with the Nursing Department in staying abreast of changes. The Nursing Department will notify the students of changes that are made to the handbook.

# MISSION AND VISION OF HELENA COLLEGE

## Mission Statement

Helena College supports our diverse community by providing paths and tools necessary to assist learners in achieving their educational and career goals.

## Vision Statement

Helena College aspires to empower our students through impactful, affordable, life-long education that is responsive to the needs of our community, in ways that are enriching, collaborative, and equitable.

## Guiding Principles

Helena College identified the following guiding principles using campus wide open forums and listening sessions.

- Effectiveness
- Stewardship
- Impact
- Equity

# MISSION AND PHILOSOPHY OF HELENA COLLEGE NURSING PROGRAM

## Mission

To provide exceptional nursing education using innovative academic, simulated, and clinical experiences that prepare our graduates as safe, competent, direct-care nurses poised to meet the diverse healthcare needs of our community.

## Philosophy

The Helena College Nursing Department's educational philosophy supports the belief that professional nursing is best served by highly educated members who meet the ever-changing health care needs of the population in their care. The ASRN graduate is an entry level practitioner who is competent to practice as a direct caregiver in a variety of health care settings, which include diverse patient populations. The faculty of the ASRN program believe the following:

- **Communication** is an integral part of all nursing interactions and facilitates caring, compassionate, and culturally aware patient cares.
- **Professional behaviors** are important. Nurse graduates' function within the ethical and legal framework of nursing and are responsible for providing and maintaining high standards of nursing practice.
- Solid **assessment** skills and the ability to effectively apply the nursing process to identify actual and potential health care needs form the foundation for **clinical decision-making** and nursing judgments.

- **Managing care** is achieved using the nursing process, in **collaboration** with the client, their support persons, and interdisciplinary professionals.
- Nurses strive to provide **caring interventions** and to create supportive, caring environments that promote wellbeing for the patient.

In addition, the Nursing faculty consider nursing education is driven by the application of critical thinking and judgment and they incorporate teaching/learning strategies using innovative approaches and evidence-based research. To address learning style differences, curriculum experiences are structured from simple to complex and are delivered in varied methodologies to connect with all learning domains.

Nursing education is seen as a collaborative process that requires involvement of college administrators and staff, nursing faculty and nursing students. Every nursing student entering the nursing program brings unique experiences, capabilities, learning styles, and motivation for learning. The nursing faculty recognize the need for a holistic approach toward students who bring individual challenges as they enter the program. Faculty strive to connect students with all available resources on campus to facilitate student success.

Embracing this philosophy, the Nursing Faculty at Helena College address the Program Student Learning Outcomes by incorporating the Educational Competencies\* for graduates of Associate Degree Nursing programs identified by the National League for Nursing (2010). All of the course work and material covered in the program is intentional to prepare the student to function in the nursing role, and to facilitate the student's ability to pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) that is taken after graduation and is a requirement of licensure to practice as a Nurse.

### Educational Competencies\*

- ✚ **Human Flourishing-** Nurses must use their skills and knowledge to enhance human flourishing for their patients, communities, and themselves. This is achieved by the nurse serving as advocate for patients and families in ways that promote their self-determination, integrity, and ongoing growth as human beings.
- ✚ **Nursing Judgment-** Nurses must demonstrate sound nursing judgment by making judgements in practice, substantiated with evidence that integrate nursing science in the provision of safe, quality care and promote the health of patients within a family and community context.
- ✚ **Professional Identity-** Nurses should continue to develop their professional identity. Implement one's role as a nurse in ways that reflect integrity, responsibility, ethical practices, and an evolving identity as a nurse committed to evidence-based practice, caring, advocacy, and safe, quality care for diverse patients within a family and community context.
- ✚ **Spirit of Inquiry-** It is important that nurses approach all issues and problems within a spirit of inquiry. Examine the evidence that underlies clinical nursing practice to challenge the status quo, question underlying assumptions, and offer new insights to improve the quality of care for patients, families, and communities.

*The courses of the Helena College Nursing Programs are designed to meet the requirements of the Montana State Board of Nursing, Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN), and the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU).*

## Conceptual Framework:

In addition to applying the vision and guiding principles of the college, the purpose of the HC Nursing Department is to prepare qualified nurses for entry-level, direct-care positions to meet the workforce needs of our diverse healthcare community. To achieve this, the framework for the curriculum is an adaptation of Benner's Novice to Expert Theory and the principles of Adult Learning Theory. Benner's theory focuses on the construct of knowledge and skill development progressing over time, with proper educational information and experiences. This relates to the concepts of adult learning theory in that adults (1) need to understand why they are learning something, (2) learn best by doing, and (3) learn best when they are able to see the concept and apply it to real life situations.

Learning is active process that includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Faculty facilitates the learning process by introducing concepts and building on those concepts in each subsequent semester, implementing active learning techniques in class to meet the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and experiences. Learning occurs through participation in specified experiences and exercises designed to help the student learn to identify, understand, and apply nursing concepts and principles. Adhering to Benner's theory and including the revised Bloom's Taxonomy, nursing instruction in the first and second semester will target "remembering, understanding, and applying". The last two semesters build on this foundational knowledge and move on to "analyzing and evaluating" concepts and patient scenarios to help guide the student toward independent practice as an entry level nurse.

The ASRN graduate uses critical thinking and judgment and demonstrates clinical competence and accountability as a generalist nurse who is committed to caring for others and valuing the profession of nursing.

## ASRN Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Use the Nursing Process to provide safe, effective, and individualized care, to address the assessed needs of the client.
2. Demonstrate effective, therapeutic communication skills for delivering patient care, providing patient education, and to be an effective member of the healthcare team.
3. Practice collaboratively within legal and ethical frameworks and professional scope of practice when managing all aspects of client care.
4. Coordinate and prioritize care delivery to best meet the identified needs of the client, community, or group, embracing diversity while utilizing evidence-based practices and caring interventions.
5. Perform all nursing skills and techniques in a safe and accurate manner.

## Program Outcomes for the ASRN Graduate

1. The program's annual licensure examination pass rate will meet or exceed the national average for first time takers for the NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses).
2. Eighty percent (80%) of students who start on the first day of NRS232 in the traditional RN program will complete the program within two (2) academic years (four semesters).

3. Ninety percent (90%) of graduates actively seeking employment will be employed as an RN within six months of graduation.
4. Ninety (90%) of the surveys returned by graduates will indicate that they are satisfied with their education.
5. Ninety (90%) of the surveys returned by employers will indicate satisfaction with the graduate's performance.

Armstrong, P. (2010). Bloom's Taxonomy. Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching. Retrieved August 16, 2021 from <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/>.

Benner, P. (2001). *From Novice to Expert Excellence and Power in Clinical Nursing Practice*. Commemorative Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall Health.

National League for Nursing. (2010). Outcomes and Competencies for Graduates of Practical/Vocational, Diploma, Associate Degree, Baccalaureate, Master's, Practice Doctorate, and Research Doctorate Programs in Nursing (pp. 7-37). New York, New York: National League for Nursing.

## ADMISSION TO NURSING PROGRAM

The Associates of Science degree leading to Registered Nursing program prepares graduates to provide direct care to clients, individuals, or groups, in a variety of structured settings with clear policies and procedures. Due to limited clinical sites for client care and State Board of Nursing regulations regarding student to faculty ratio, Nursing department director and faculty and Academic Standards Committee for Nursing will determine acceptance into the program.

### Nursing Pre-requisite courses

Pre-requisite coursework must have been taken within the last fifteen years (within last 5 years for science courses) prior to admission to the Nursing Program to fulfill program requirements. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Nursing Program Director. This includes all general education requirements. Students may repeat TWO general education courses, to achieve a "C" grade or above, prior to the student's admission to the nursing program and courses. **Maximum of 2 prerequisite retakes allowed.** Written permission from the Director of Nursing is required before taking any pre-requisite course a third (3) time. If permission is not obtained, the second grade will be used to calculate GPA

### Transfer Students

Core Curriculum Transfer Students desiring to transfer into the nursing program must meet application requirements and progress through the regular application process.

Non-Core Curriculum Transfer Students will be required to have their transcripts evaluated by the admissions department. The Academic Standards Committee (ASC) for Nursing reviews any questionable transfers. Transferability and acceptance of non-core curriculum nursing credits into HC Nursing Program is not guaranteed.

## Nursing Program Requirements

### CPR Requirement

The student must have a current Basic Cardiac Life Support CPR certification for the healthcare provider prior to the start of the clinical experience. It is the student's responsibility to register, prepare for and pass the CPR course. Current CPR must be maintained, and a copy of the card is kept in the student's file.



### Basic Health Screening

- A current (within the last 3 months) physical examination by the student's health care provider is required prior to entrance into the clinical setting. The physical form is in the application packet.

### Immunizations/ Vaccinations

- Current immunization records, including diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, Hepatitis A & B vaccine, documentation of Varicella (chicken pox) vaccination or titer, MMR, and polio must be provided prior to the start of classes.
- Students must provide evidence of the year's current Influenza A (Flu) vaccine. Additionally, most health care facilities are now requiring full immunization for Covid-19. ***Covid Vaccine strongly encouraged.*** Waivers are at the discretion of the clinical facility.
  - Students must complete all clinical requirements and hours in order to progress forward to the next semester and to graduate. If a student is unable to complete clinicals, the nursing program is unable to progress the student forward.
- The student will upload their immunization records to Castlebranch compliance tracker, as a final step of the application process. **The cost associated with this Compliance Tracker is the responsibility of the student.**
- Proof of absence of active TB must be documented prior to starting clinicals in the second semester. This information (negative PPD or negative chest X-ray) will also be uploaded to your Castlebranch account.

### Criminal Background Checks

Clinical agencies utilized by the Nursing Department require criminal background checks prior to acceptance of the student into clinical facilities. Students who do not pass the criminal background check will be unable to attend clinical courses and therefore unable to complete their program of study. The student will complete the background check using their Castlebranch account. **Any fees or cost associated with background checks are the responsibility of the student.** Applicants who have been convicted of a felony will need to complete a background check and bring it to the Department chair to determine if they will be eligible to apply to the program. Acceptance to and graduation from the Nursing Program does not assure eligibility to sit for the nursing licensing examination. The Montana Board of Nursing makes all final decisions on issuances of licenses.

### Liability Insurance

Each student must have professional liability insurance while enrolled in the nursing program. The cost for this coverage is included in student fees. Students do not need to purchase their own liability insurance as it is provided through enrollment.

## PROGRAM PROGRESSION

Helena College Nursing follows the Montana Statewide Curriculum for registered nursing. The concepts taught in the theory classes are applied in the clinical setting. The curriculum is designed to allow sequential progression through the program. Continuation in the program is based upon successful scholastic achievement, satisfactory clinical/laboratory competence, and personal qualifications for the practice of nursing as cited in the Administrative Rules of Montana Program Standards and Program Evaluation (ARM

24.159.604; ARM 24.159.609). The following academic requirements **must** be met for progression in the nursing program.

1. The HC Registered Nursing Program requires a passing grade of "C" (not "C-") or higher in all courses to meet progression standards.
2. The HC Nursing Department grading scale is as follows: 93%-100% (A); 90-92% (B+); 87-89% (B); 85-86% (B-); 81-84% (C+); 78-80% (C); 77% or lower (F). Grades for all course assignments will be recorded as earned with no mathematical rounding. For example, a score of 77.9%= 77%.
3. A minimum grade of "C" (78%) is required in all nursing courses, including clinicals and embedded general education courses, to continue to the next semester. (Please refer to specific course or clinical syllabi for further guidelines).
4. A cumulative average of 77 percent or lower on exams/quizzes will result in failure of that course. The exam averages will be calculated by dividing the total points earned by the total exam points possible. The faculty will determine which exams and quizzes are included in this average, but the included exams/quizzes must be proctored (take-home, group tests or assignments, etc. will not be included in this exam average).
5. Students move through the nursing curriculum as a cohort. All nursing program courses in one semester must be successfully completed prior to the student starting the next semester of nursing course work. If a student needs to repeat a nursing course or takes an (I) incomplete, they will not progress to the next semester of nursing courses until the repeated course is successfully completed.
6. Students achieving lower than a "C" grade in any nursing course while admitted to the nursing program will be unable to progress in the program. Failure to achieve a minimum of 78% in the theory, skills labs, or clinical area will result in the student failing the nursing course. If a student fails a class with a didactic and clinical component, both must be repeated unless faculty recommends otherwise.
7. Students who have withdrawn, dropped or failed any courses required for the nursing curriculum must seek readmission to the program. **(See Readmission Procedure p.15)**
8. Students may repeat a nursing course in which they earn a "W" or a grade of less than a "C" only once. A total of only one nursing course may be repeated before dismissal from the program. A didactic and related clinical counts as one course.
9. If an enrolled nursing student is convicted of a felony the student will not be able to progress in the nursing program.
10. The ATI (Assessment Technologies Institute) comprehensive assessment and review program exams are required components of the Nursing program.

## Challenging a Course

Students may not challenge nursing courses.

## Repeating Nursing Courses

A student who fails a nursing course should meet with the appropriate instructor(s) and the Program Director to develop an educational plan for success to enhance future chances of success. Copies of the written plan for success will be placed in the student's file. Failure of nursing courses prohibits progression. A student who fails a nursing course is responsible to reapply for continuing with the program. A letter of intent to reapply must be submitted by the application deadline. **Failure of any two nursing courses results in dismissal from the program.**

## Withdrawal/Incomplete

Withdrawal from a nursing course to protect academic integrity has the same impact as an F. Refer to the college catalog policy/procedure.

## Readmission Procedure

Students wishing to re-enroll after withdrawal from the Nursing program must meet HC re-enrollment policies and re-apply to the Nursing program. Students in the 'withdrawn' or 'failed' category may apply for readmission to the nursing program *one time only*.

A returning student must:

1. Re-apply for admission to the nursing program to ensure program placement. If there is an opening due to attrition, a student may write a letter to the Nursing department asking for readmission to that semester.
2. Adhere to the most recent catalog requirements.
3. Plan with a nursing advisor to develop a degree plan which meets all curricular and program requirements.
4. Submit a new physical examination form and current CPR certification and current immunizations.
5. Validate competency in clinical skills.
6. If the absence was due to a major health problem, a physician's clearance must be submitted to return to classes and clinical.

## Program Completion Requirements

Students must complete the nursing program within the allotted time from the date of their initial admission to the nursing major. Students who do not complete the program within this timeframe must apply for readmission, meet current criteria for admission, and have their previous credits evaluated. All college core requirements must be met before the student may enroll in the nursing courses.

## Graduation

Student preparing to graduate from the Nursing Program must complete all course requirements as outlined in the current catalogue and following the progression requirements listed above. It is important to note that the Nursing Program standards, grades and grading scale, and attendance requirements are more rigorous than other college courses. The nursing rigor is designed to prepare the students for the National Licensure Exam (NCLEX) and also to prepare them for their role as a professional nurse.

## NURSING PROGRAM STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES

### Attendance

Attendance at each scheduled class or lab is expected as excessive absences can negatively impact the student's ability to meet course learning outcomes.

Students are expected to adhere to the course policies related to attendance and are responsible for all activities associated with each class. Students are responsible for specific course syllabi content regarding attendance.

All non-emergent appointments for self or family members should be scheduled for days off or after class hours. Possible exceptions or lenience regarding this policy may be made related to a pandemic response, especially if displaying illness signs and symptoms. In such situations, faculty will be advised to make accommodations for students who are quarantined or on restrictions due to illness or exposure. Helena College has robots for student use when absence is unavoidable. Faculty will not automatically schedule class via TEAMS to accommodate student absences.

The Nursing Faculty may establish variations of attendance expectations within their course to meet the educational learning outcomes of their specific course. Students are expected to notify faculty prior to class if not attending and are responsible for any material covered in class during their absence.

Students with frequent absences and/or tardiness will lose professional behavior points (see professional behaviors rubric).

### Advising

Each student is assigned a faculty member to guide and facilitate learning needs. The student is responsible to facilitate meeting that faculty member. The advisor's role is to facilitate the student's learning and to assist in the identification of resources.

**Each student is ultimately responsible and accountable for his or her progression through the nursing program and for meeting all academic requirements for graduation. The faculty's professional responsibility is to offer the student verbal and written feedback to guide student learning and progression.**

## Clinical Information

### Clinical Attendance

Clinical is an essential component of nursing education, therefore, students are expected to attend every scheduled clinical. If the student has an emergency or severe illness, they must notify the clinical instructor or preceptor prior to the beginning of the clinical session from which they will be absent. *An unexcused absence (no-call-no-show) from the clinical setting may result in dismissal from the program.*

The clinical experiences in each course have been designed by the faculty to meet course outcomes. Failure by the student to meet the clinical objectives due to absenteeism will result in a "Does not meet expectations" evaluation for the semester and a Fail for the clinical course.

All clinical orientations are part of the clinical experience and attendance is **mandatory**.

Time missed during the clinical experience will be made up at the discretion of clinical instructor and course faculty. Clinical make-up may include a makeup day in the clinical setting, a written virtual clinical assignment worth 8 hours, and/or attendance in a clinical make up simulation in the Sim Lab. Clinical Makeup days will be arranged by the faculty and instructor. The student will be responsible to modify personal schedules to complete the makeup or may not be able to complete the clinical and progress in the program.

**Missing more than one clinical may result in student failure of the course.**

### Clinical Grades

If the course has a clinical, the clinical grade is on a Pass/Fail basis. Pass grades will be given a "A" while fail grades will be given an "F". While there are no graded assignments in the clinical courses, pass/fail is determined by the course faculty based on observations/documentated feedback of the clinical instructor, assessed student learning, and student's ability to improve across the semester. The Clinical Assessment Tool and the Out-rotation Summary Evaluation will be used to assess student performance midway through the rotation and at the end of the clinical rotation. The student will receive written documentation of the reasons for the clinical failure.

If the clinical is failed, the student receives a failure in the course (both the didactic and clinical portion) and will be required to retake the course and clinical.

The Nursing program standards and requirements related to grading and attendance are more stringent than the general requirements at Helena College. These rigorous expectations are designed to prepare students for the NCLEX exam, as well as, to make sure our graduates are prepared as responsible professionals after graduation.

Demonstration of professional behaviors across all courses in the nursing programs is essential to satisfactory achievement of nursing courses. **Where there is failure on the part of the student to meet reasonable standards of performance or behavior, or when in the judgment of the faculty member, the amount of supervision necessary to ensure client safety is unreasonable, the**

faculty member has the authority to deny the student access to clients and to remove the student from the clinical setting.

### Clinical Access Denial

The criteria which will be considered in denying the student access to clients are:

1. Actions and/or events that demonstrate emotional instability
2. Threatened bodily harm to clients, staff, faculty, or peers
3. Harassment of clients, staff, faculty, or peers
4. Under the influence of alcohol or drugs
5. Indifference or insensitivity to client safety, comfort or right to privacy
6. Lack of professional judgment
7. Disregard for professional ethics
8. Unsatisfactory or incomplete preparatory work
9. Any health condition which makes it impossible for students to carry out their work without jeopardizing client or student safety and comfort
10. Any other condition or circumstance which constitutes an unreasonable risk to the safety and well-being of the client and/or the student
11. Failure to comply with Healthcare facility Vaccination/Immunization policy.
12. Arrest and conviction of a crime as per Montana State Board of Nursing
13. Failure to abide by HC Nursing dress code and appearance policies

### Clinical Requirements

In addition to attendance at clinical orientation and all schedule clinical days, students are expected to comply with the requirements of our clinical healthcare partners. Masks and other forms of personal protective equipment may be required by the facility. Students must comply with these facility regulations to remain in clinicals. Each facility may also have varied requirements related to immunizations and waivers. ***Students who do are not in compliance with the facility immunization requirement will not be able to complete the clinical portion of the course. This may impact or delay progression in the nursing program.*** Students who do not provide proof of current CPR and immunizations/appropriate waivers will not be allowed into the clinical area.

### Communication /Chain of Command

If questions or concerns arise regarding any part of the nursing program, the student is reminded to follow the proper channels of communication. It is important to first speak with the person directly related to your question or issue. For example, inquiries about a course concept should be initially directed to the course instructor or clinical instructor. If that does not result in satisfaction, then the student should make an appointment with the program director. Most issues and concerns can be resolved within the Nursing Department. However, for matters that are still unresolved, the student may contact the Academic Dean.

### Confidentiality / Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA)

Nursing students are frequently exposed to protected health information during their clinical experiences. Helena College Nursing students are expected to always observe and comply with HIPAA privacy rules. Failure to comply with or breach of confidentiality on the part of the student may result in the student's removal from the clinical setting.

- ***Confidentiality of patient records and situations will always be maintained.*** No patient chart is to be copied by any technological process. Patient information is not to be removed from any health care agency. Charts may not be left open for public view; report sheets may not be left in areas other than the nursing student pocket. **Students violating this code will be subject to the facility's dismissal protocol and earn an unsatisfactory grade for the clinical experience.**
- Students are responsible for always maintaining patient privacy and dignity. Professional behavior will be continued into the clinical environments. Courteous professional behavior toward faculty, peers, patient /client, staff, and hospital personnel is always expected. The first time a violation comes to the attention of the faculty, the student will be reprimanded, and the event noted. **Any subsequent times may result in dismissal from the program.**
- It is a HIPAA violation to post pictures or any identifying information of patients on social media sites. No photography at any clinical site.

## Electronic devices

### Cell phones and I-watches

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be in the silent mode during class, or lab activities, and turned off during tests/exams. Cell phones may be used in the clinical setting for clinical related research (looking up a medication, diagnosis, or treatment). HOWEVER, unapproved use of cell phone (texting, messaging, gaming, Facebooking, etc.) will not be tolerated in the class or clinicals and are subject to loss of professional behavior points. ***NO PHOTOGRAPHY AT THE CLINICAL SITE!***

Refer to course syllabi and college student handbook for acceptable use of electronic resources policy.

### Calculators

The use of calculators during tests is permitted upon direction by the instructor of the course. However, the calculator must be a simple four function calculator (not a cell phone calculator). ATI proctored exams have a built-in calculator and therefore on ATI exams, use of an outside calculator is prohibited.

### Laptop

Nursing students are required to have a laptop during their time in the nursing program. Recommendations for hardware requirements can be obtained from the nursing office, but minimum requirements are a camera and mic. Students are responsible for bringing their laptop to class and power cord if needed. ATI tests are not compatible with smart phones or tablets. Laptops will be used for ATI testing.

## Governance

### Academic Standards Committee for Nursing

The Academic Standards Committee for Nursing is comprised of nursing faculty/staff and staff from the registration and admissions offices and the General Education department. The Academic Standards Committee reviews and updates the application and application process. Policies regarding the nursing program and student grievances/complaints are also reviewed by this committee.

### Student/Faculty Forum

The student-faculty forum is composed of nursing faculty, director, and assistant and two elected students from each nursing cohort. The forum provides a way for the faculty and students to communicate regarding

concerns, suggestions, and questions in relation to the nursing programs, the curriculum, and other relevant issues. Meetings are scheduled once a month during the school year. This also provides a means for the students to participate in program assessment. The minutes of these meetings will be used to provide valuable data for program assessment, input, and development.

### *Responsibility of Faculty*

1. Increasing student awareness regarding program direction and faculty concerns
2. Providing information and guidance regarding student concerns and participating in follow-up activities as indicated
3. Fostering student/faculty interaction during joint meetings
4. Notifying student representatives of changes to nursing program(s), policy or handbook

### *Responsibility of Student Representatives*

1. Increasing class awareness regarding committee activities
2. Soliciting information from peers for committee agendas
3. Assisting in problem solving to address agenda items
4. Implementing committee/faculty suggestions and reporting outcomes to peers
5. Contributing to program policy and curriculum development

### **Community Advisory Committee**

The Community Advisory Committee is made up of community members that provide expertise in the areas of nursing discipline and nursing education. The community advisory committee plays a critical role in program assessment and program development. The structure of the committee and its members is designed to identify and accurately reflect needs, trends and issues rising in the nursing community.

### **Grading Scale in Nursing**

The HC Nursing Department grading scale is as follows:

A	100-93
B+	92-90
B	89-87
B-	86-85
C+	84-81
C	80-78
F	$\leq 77$

Faculty retains the final decision-making authority regarding grades earned in each course. Grades for all course assignments will be recorded as earned *with no mathematical rounding*. This policy allows the faculty of the Department of Nursing to remove uncertainty and ensure integrity in the grading process for all students. **Numerical averages will not be rounded (for example 77.9 is a 77 %)**. Refer to the College Student Handbook Policies for appealing a grade.



## Grounds for Removal from Class/Clinical or Dismissal from the Nursing Program

It is the intent of the Nursing Program director, faculty, and clinical resource instructors to facilitate the student's progression toward becoming a registered nurse. However, the student has personal responsibility for proper conduct and actions within the nursing program. The following list is representative, but not inclusive of non-professional behaviors that may lead to removal from the classroom, lab, or clinical, and/ or dismissal from the Nursing Program.

1. Failing grade in Nursing Courses, Lab, or in clinicals.
2. Failure/ refusal to accomplish clinical assignments or unsatisfactory clinical progress.
3. Repeated inability to demonstrate safe patient care and/or accurate dosage and IV calculations.
4. Failure to display appropriate workplace principles (poor attitude, inappropriate unprofessional behavior, not following facility policy and procedures.
5. Not following established guidelines for notification of absence or tardy at clinical (No call no show).
6. Breach of confidentiality. (includes but not limited to copying information from clinical setting or photography of any kind at clinicals.
7. Unprofessional behavior that violates individual clinical facility or college expectations (theft, misconduct, refusal to participate in group activities or projects).
8. Conviction, possession, or distribution of illegal substances.
9. Any evidence of /or suspected use of drugs or alcohol in the classroom, clinical, or lab settings. Presents to class or clinical under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
10. Actions and/or events that demonstrate emotional instability
11. Threatened bodily harm to clients, staff, faculty, or peers
12. Harassment of clients, staff, faculty, or peers
13. Indifference or insensitivity to client safety, comfort or right to privacy
14. Lack of professional judgment
15. Disregard for professional ethics
16. Unsatisfactory or incomplete preparatory work
17. Any health condition which makes it impossible for students to carry out their work without jeopardizing client or student safety and comfort
18. Any other condition or circumstance which constitutes an unreasonable risk to the safety and well-being of the client and/or the student
19. Arrest and conviction of a crime as per Montana State Board of Nursing
20. Failure to abide by HC Nursing dress code and appearance policies

## Health and Safety Processes for the Student

### Safety and Safe Practices

Safety is our priority in the educational and nursing practice setting. Compliance with safety standards is expected of students in all educational settings. If a student breaches safety standards, they will be removed from the learning setting and remediation of the safety standard will be required before returning to the lab or clinical. Continued unsafe practice may result in clinical failure.

The student will be taught the principles and methods for Standard Precautions to prevent exposure to blood borne pathogens. Health care workers are especially at risk for developing certain diseases due to exposure to

needle-sticks and splashed blood/body fluids. Hepatitis B, which infects thousands of health care workers, is preventable by immunization. Hepatitis B and HIV + status can be prevented through the consistent use of Standard Precautions. Therefore, it is mandatory that efforts be taken to prevent exposure to these diseases. Standard Precautions must be followed by students and faculty in the clinical settings. Students must show immunization against Hepatitis B or must sign a waiver accepting responsibility for potential consequences of not being immunized. **Students are required to report any exposures to their clinical instructor immediately.**

### **Pregnancy**

Students who are pregnant or suspect that they may be pregnant should inform the program director, their didactic instructors, and their clinical instructors so that appropriate adjustments and precautions can be made regarding the student's assignment of clients.

### **Student Employment**

It is strongly recommended that nursing students take into consideration the time commitments for classes, study time, labs and clinicals, family responsibilities, leisure time and any other responsibilities, prior to scheduling work while in the nursing program. If employment is unavoidable, it is important the student ***not schedule work the eight hours before clinicals. Students who work shift before attending clinical experience and appear too fatigued to safely give care will be sent home from clinical.***

Program requirements are the same for all students whether they chose to work or not. Students are expected to arrive at class, lab or clinicals prepared. It is recommended that students work less than 20 hours per week, for best outcomes.

### **Nursing Course Syllabi**

Each course syllabus will contain specific requirements for grading, assignments, and other methods of evaluating classroom, laboratory, and clinical components. The syllabus will include goals and student learning outcomes for each course.

Nursing course syllabi will be distributed to students on the first day of class and are posted on the course learning management system (Moodle). Each student is responsible for the information contained within the syllabus. ***Please use this resource prior to contacting the instructor with questions.***

### **Nursing Skills Lab**

#### **Attire in labs**

Students are expected to wear their school scrubs and follow the uniform /dress code expectations outlined in this handbook. In addition, most of our clinical partners are requiring surgical masks in the clinical setting and to provide an experience that mimics what you will find in clinicals, students are expected to wear a surgical mask in the lab and simulation settings on campus. Masks are provided.

#### **Skill Competence**

Students will not be allowed to perform a skill in the clinical area until they have received instruction and/or demonstrated competence in that skill in the skills lab setting. All skills required for a nursing course must be successfully demonstrated to earn a passing grade for the course.

#### **Skills Lab Failure**

A laboratory failure is earned when a student does not successfully demonstrate the critical elements of a skill in two attempts. Some scheduled laboratory sessions may include more than one skill; however, each skill is

considered on an individual basis. The student will receive written documentation of the reasons for a laboratory failure. This will be reflected on the Laboratory Assessment tool that is provided to the student by the clinical instructor.

### **Open Lab Sessions**

Open lab sessions will be available on a weekly basis for student use. Open lab sessions are provided to give students an opportunity to practice and master skills that are required for successful completion of nursing courses.

*If a student demonstrates difficulty with a specific skill in the clinical area, a didactic or clinical instructor may require that a student attend an open lab session for remediation.*

### **Peer Mentorship Program**

The Peer Mentorship Program at Helena College coordinates working relationships between nursing student cohorts.

The purpose of this program is to build collegiality among student cohorts, encourage and reinforce teambuilding, enhance leadership skills, and build leadership skills among student nurses through teaching and learning. In addition, the student mentee/mentor relationship simulates the workplace in the nursing profession. The program prepares Helena College Nursing graduates to provide excellent patient care in a variety of healthcare settings and excel in teambuilding and communication.

Peer Mentor teams work together in skills labs, clinical settings, and outside classroom mentorship.

Benefits to Student Mentee:

- Feel welcomed as Helena College nursing student
- Build confidence/reduce anxiety
- Gain Knowledge
- Increased understanding of scope & role of nurse
- Establish supportive relationship
- Practice communication skills

Benefits to Student Mentor:

- Develop leadership abilities/skills
- Enhance & reinforce knowledge base & clinical skill set
- Build confidence/experience pride
- Opportunity to teach
- Increased understanding of scope & role of the nurse
- Practice communication skills

### **Professionalism/ Professional Conduct**

Nursing in the State of Montana is regulated by the Montana State Board of Nursing (BON) in accord with the Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and Rules derived thereof. It is reasonable that student nurses develop behaviors based on those deemed appropriate to the nursing profession and be disciplined based upon the grounds for unprofessional conduct as indicated in the current Montana Nurse practice Act (BON

24.159.23). A copy of the current Statutes and Rules-Relating to unprofessional conduct may be found on the BON website <https://rules.mt.gov/gateway/Subchapterhome.asp?scn=24.159.23>.

- The student is expected to treat all relationships with faculty, staff members, classmates, patients, and their families with professional behavior.
- Support and promote the activities of fellow students and of health care professionals. Promotion of peers helps furnish a team approach to learning, task completion, problem solving, and patient care.
- Be honest, compassionate, ethical, and responsible. The student must be forthright about errors or uncertainty. The students must be able to critically evaluate her or his own performance, accept and act on constructive feedback, and look for ways to improve (i.e.) participate in enriched educational activities.
- Exercise independent judgment and accept responsibility for one's own work.
- Show respect for individuals of different age, ethnic background, religion, gender, and/or sexual orientation.
- In addition, the student must follow all established policies and procedures of the program and clinical affiliate sites.
- Professional conduct is nursing behavior including acts, knowledge, and practices which through professional experience, has become established by practicing nurses as conduct which is reasonably necessary for the protection of public interests and placing patient welfare first.
- Nursing behavior (acts, knowledge, and practices) which fails to conform to the accepted standards of the nursing profession, and which could jeopardize the health and welfare of the people shall constitute unprofessional conduct, i.e. attire/dress, comments, and / or behavior.
- Unprofessional conduct may include being chronically tardy or absent (tardiness and absenteeism may negatively affect the student's grade; refer to course instructor's syllabi.), failing to make appropriate arrangements if unable to be at class, lab, or clinical experiences, or displaying hostility (argumentative, disruptive, abusive, emotional outbursts, inability to problem-solve, anger mismanagement).
- Professional conduct will be evaluated in each course, clinical/lab experience via the specific course assessment tool.
- Students are expected to be prepared for all class/lab/clinical assignments.
- Points may be deducted from a student's grade in any nursing course due to unprofessional behavior. Please refer to the Professional Behavior Rubric for more information.

**\*Refer to college student handbook for more information on professionalism.**

## Student Complaints/Grievances

It is expected that students will first discuss all concerns and complaints regarding academic issues with the course instructor. **Open communication and the use of appropriate channels to resolve complaints are key to student's academic and professional success.** If, after discussing a concern or complaint with the instructor the student feels that the issue is unresolved, the student may bring the issue to the Program Director. If the complaint or appeal is not resolved at the Program level the student should refer to the student complaint process in the Helena College student handbook and/or the Helena College catalogue for timelines and additional information. The complaints may be a general complaint, a course complaint, which includes a final course grade appeal or an assignment grade dispute. Grade appeals

follow the Helena College catalogue. General complaints follow the Helena College student policies located in the Helena College Student Handbook.

## Substance Use/Abuse by Nursing Students

In addition to the college policies regarding use of alcoholic beverages and drugs, the Department of Nursing has adopted the following protocol for nursing students:

- The use of drugs or alcohol is prohibited in the classroom, lab, and clinical setting.
- Any evidence or suspicion by faculty or instructors of drug or alcohol use is grounds for immediate removal from the classroom, skills lab, or clinical setting, and may result in dismissal from the Nursing Program.
  - If the student denies being impaired, the student has the option of having a drug/alcohol screen done at their own expense and must release the results to the nursing department.
- Documentation of the incident will be added to the student's file.
- Suspected use of drugs or alcohol, or any other condition or situation that creates an unreasonable risk to the safety or wellbeing of a patient, may result in student dismissal from the Nursing Program.

## Testing

Tests and exams in nursing courses are designed to determine student comprehension of the material presented, assess the student's ability to understand concepts, and to apply those to clinical situations. In all nursing courses the exams should represent at least 60% of the course total. This may be higher in some courses.

The course exams and ATI exams are scheduled at the beginning of the semester. Plan early so you are available on the scheduled date and time. Avoid scheduling work or personal appointments on the test dates. Missing an exam day may result in reduction of overall possible points on that exam, at the discretion of the faculty (As outlined in the course syllabus). If you do not attend the ATI test(s) on the scheduled day, you will be scheduled to take it on the ATI Retake day.

To maximize class time, exams will not be reviewed during class time. If a student wants to review their exam in more detail, they should make an appointment with the course faculty during their scheduled office hours.

Cell phones, smart phones, smart watches must be turned off and put away during tests/exams.

## ATI Guidelines

- ATI Content Mastery exams are built into courses and incorporated across the curriculum. All ATI proctored exams must be taken in person on campus. There are no exceptions as ATI requires these proctored exams be taken face to face.
- **A Level 2 proficiency on all ATI exams is required.** Students scoring below Proficiency Level 2 are required to study and retake the exam. If a student scores below Proficiency Level 2 on the retake, they must complete the remediation process and submit the review material as evidence of understanding the missed concepts. The student will earn points as listed in the syllabus for remediation.

- All ATI tests listed in any of the course syllabi, are requirements of the specific course and the Nursing program. If any of the ATI tests are not completed, the student will receive an incomplete as a final grade in the course. This will impact student progression in the program.
- Students are required to pay all fees associated with the ATI process by the beginning of the first semester.
- **ATI Content Mastery exams are course requirement.** Failure to take the examinations for a specific course will result in failure in the course and dismissal from the program.
- Graduating students are required to take a Comprehensive Predictor ATI exam. Remediation is required if a student does not meet the recommended benchmark as this exam reflects the student's probability of passing the NCLEX exam.

### Test Make-Up Procedure

Make-up exams (quiz, exam, or ATI) in nursing courses are not allowed without PRIOR approval of the instructor.

- Authorized make-up exams will be placed in the testing center. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Testing Center and schedule their make-up within the timeframe specified by the instructor
- Authorized make-up exams are modified versions of the class exam.
- Testing center procedures [includes both accommodated and make-up testing] are located on the Moodle dashboard.
- The ATI exams are scheduled at the beginning of the semester. It is the student's responsibility to be available on the scheduled testing date and time. Students who do not attend the ATI test on the scheduled day, will be scheduled to take it on the ATI Retake day.

### Test Remediation Policy

All students who score below 78% on a course exam or below the ATI course benchmark (Level 2 Proficiency) are expected to:

1. The instructor will bring exams to the next class after the exam to allow a short review.
2. Students wishing to review the test longer, will need to come to nursing office during the instructor's office hours.
3. Review the questions/ content that you missed to gain understanding of the missed material. You will likely see it again. There are test analysis forms available, which can help identifying patterns in missed questions.
4. Complete any remediation as directed by the course instructor
5. Request a meeting with instructor to discuss ways to improve your testing ability (optional).

### Transportation

Students are responsible for their own transportation for all clinical experiences. Students must not provide transportation for clients.

### Uniform/ Dress code for Clinical Settings, Clinical Simulation and Labs

The purpose of the student uniform standards and dress code is to ensure an acceptable level of grooming and safety for the student and patient, and to project a professional image. Credibility as a nurse is influenced by appearance, attitude, and behavior. *These guidelines are in accordance with the policies of our clinical settings, in which we are invited to learn, as guests.* These standards are also in compliance

with national standards safeguarding the health and well-being of patients and the health care worker. **The faculty reserves the right to interpret the uniform standards and make decisions regarding professional dress and conduct.**

*\*A student violating any of the established guidelines may be dismissed from the lab or clinical setting.*

### **Nametag**

The HC Nursing student nametag is always worn as part of the uniform. Student fees cover one name tag only. If the name tag is lost or stolen, the student is responsible to replace it.

### **Uniforms**

It is required the student be dressed in a school uniform—Dark Gray scrub top and bottoms with HC nursing logo embroidered on left chest. Dark grey lab jackets are optional. Both are available for purchase at the Campus store. Full coverage undergarments should be neutral color, not visible through clothing. Lightweight, long-sleeved shirts may be worn under your scrub top, if desired for warmth. These shirts should be matching dark gray, black or white—plain with no design or logo. No hoodies or other non-uniform jackets to be worn over uniform in clinicals or lab.

Uniforms should be well fitting, hemmed and clean.

**\*The nursing scrubs/uniform will be worn anytime the student is representing Helena College Nursing in the community or clinical location.**

### **Shoes**

Nursing/athletic shoes are required. Neutral color and non-fabric so they may be cleaned. No **open-toed** or **open-heeled shoes** are permitted.

### **Hair**

Hair must be clean, neat, and present a well-groomed appearance. Hair shoulder-length or longer must be pulled back or put up. Hair accessories must be limited and neutral in color. **Hair must be kept out of the face regardless of the length.** Hair that is dyed must be a naturally occurring hair color.

### **Facial Hair**

Facial hair must be clean and trimmed or shaved.

### **Personal Grooming**

Students will maintain their personal hygiene. Students will bathe and use deodorant. Offensive body odor and/or cigarette smell is not permissible.

No excessive make-up. No perfume/cologne/aftershave. A clean unwrinkled uniform must be worn daily. **No gum, smokeless tobacco, mints, food, or drink is allowed in patient care areas.** Use of tobacco products is prohibited on campus and on all healthcare campuses. ***No smoking in your school uniform.***

### **Nails**

Nails should be neatly trimmed short (not visible over the top of the fingertips). Per CDC recommendations for hospitals **no nail polish or artificial nails.**

### **Jewelry**

One pair of small post earrings, only one earring per ear is permitted. Body piercing jewelry in visible areas other than ears is not permitted. Tongue rings and studs are not permitted. Chains/necklaces must not be visible. No arm and ankle bracelets. Plain wedding bands only.

### **Tattoos**

Tattoos must be covered in accordance with clinical facility policy.

### **Written Assignments and APA format**

Written work will conform to the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual format, as APA is the format most widely accepted within nursing academia. This includes electronic references. Refer to course syllabi for specific grading requirements. The **APA PUBLICATION MANUAL** is in the library. A recommended online APA resource is [Purdue Online Writing Lab](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html) (OWL)  
([https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/general\\_format.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html))



# ACADEMIC POLICIES AND STRUCTURE AT HELENA COLLEGE

## Academic and Student Conduct

Academic and student conduct issues are addressed in the current Helena College catalog and [Student Handbook](#) ([https://helenacollege.edu/student\\_services/handbook.aspx](https://helenacollege.edu/student_services/handbook.aspx)). Topics discussed include but are not limited to:

- Orientation
- Student Conduct
- Academic Dishonesty
- Student Due Process
- Confidentiality
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Fees/financial aid policies and procedures

Please review these and other academic policies in the college student handbook.

## Accessibility and Accommodations

In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact the Disability Resources Office. The coordinator in the Disability Resources Office can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. If you have already been approved for accommodations through the Disability Resources Office, please schedule an appointment so we can implement your accommodations.

Disability Resources Office  
(406) 447-6965  
[disabilityresources@helenacollege.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@helenacollege.edu)  
Office location: DON 139C

**Only students registered with the Disability Resources Office are permitted accommodations.** All information will be kept confidential. Students who receive accommodations must arrange times for tests with the [testing center](#) ([testingcenter@helenacollege.edu](mailto:testingcenter@helenacollege.edu)) or by calling 406-447-6939.

## Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic sanctions for a first violation are at the discretion of the instructor and range from a failing grade for the assignment to a failing grade in the course in which the academic dishonesty occurs. When a faculty member assigns a failing grade based on academic dishonesty, they shall notify the affected student(s) and the appropriate Division Director in writing of the violation and provide all supporting documentation to the Division Director. Record of the infraction will be kept on file in the office of the Division Director, although no further official action will be taken unless/until a second infraction is reported. In cases of repeated offenses, the Executive Director of Compliance and Financial Aid will be notified and will administer a range of disciplinary sanctions up to and including expulsion from the

College. Students retain their right to due process and may refer to the Student Handbook or the Executive Director of Compliance and Financial Aid regarding any disciplinary sanctions.

### **Academic Integrity**

The nursing faculty at Helena College along with the nursing community recognize that honesty is a vital nursing value. It is important that all Helena College nursing students adopt the core values of honesty and integrity. See the [HC Student Handbook Academic Integrity](https://helenacollege.edu/student_services/handbook.aspx) (https://helenacollege.edu/student\_services/handbook.aspx) pages 36-37. Ensuring the values of honesty and integrity carry over from the classroom to the clinical setting. Acts of dishonesty include making erroneous entries in client records, documenting tasks that were not done, copying another student's work, cheating on exams or quizzes, and making false statements to a faculty or director.

## **INFORMATIONAL LINKS**

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

The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses with interpretive guidelines can be found at <https://www.nursingworld.org/coe-view-only>

### **Montana State Board of Nursing**

The MT State Board of Nursing website can be found at <https://boards.bsd.dli.mt.gov/nursing/>

This website has information on Montana Statutes, Administrative Rules and Regulations, Scope of practice and information about licensure.

## APPENDIX A

### Signature Sheets

These signature sheets must be read, signed, and returned to the Nursing Program Director by the end of the first week of the semester.

The following forms are included in the handbook and given to the students during Nursing Orientation. Students are given a hard copy of the handbook at orientation. Electronic copies of the handbook are posted on the Nursing Information page of Moodle and posted on the Nursing Program website

# LATEX ALLERGY STATEMENT

## HELENA COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Today, many health care facilities minimize the use of latex as much as possible. At HC we make every attempt to avoid latex in the clinical lab, as well. However, inadvertent exposure to latex may still be encountered in products such as stethoscope tubing, injectable medications, and vials on site, and in your clinical rotation.

For your protection during the nursing program, as well as during your healthcare career, better understanding of your potential for latex allergy is recommended. Additionally, you may already have some form of latex allergy if you react after eating certain foods (avocados, bananas, tomatoes, etc.) or after exposure to latex containing products (poinsettia, balloons, band aids/tape, spandex, elastic bandages, etc.).

If you have any concern about your allergic status regarding latex, we advise you to speak with your primary care doctor/provider about a blood test called a Latex RAST. This test is available to determine if you have a type I allergy to latex. The result of this blood test, along with the assessment by your health care provider, can help you determine what, if any, risk your exposure to latex carries.

Please initial

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the above document regarding latex allergy. I am aware that I may obtain additional blood testing and evaluation by my health care provider if I have any concerns.

Please select one of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ I elect to have additional follow up regarding potential latex allergy and will provide the Nursing Program with this information for my protection in clinical and lab settings.

\_\_\_\_\_ I elect not to have additional testing or evaluation regarding potential latex allergy. I understand that not having this information may be detrimental to my health.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# STATEMENT OF INFORMED CONSENT FOR PREVENTION OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Helena College University of Montana

Please place an "X" by each statement you agree to:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that HC Nursing programs involve the study and care of people throughout the life span and that these people may be well or ill. By participating in care giving activities, I may be exposed to infectious diseases, such as Hepatitis B, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Influenza, COVID19, and other infectious and/or communicable diseases.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to participate in HBV/HIV education experiences as required by HC Nursing Programs and CDC and OSHA guidelines. I understand that testing, diagnosis, and treatment of any infectious and/or communicable disease, including those contracted while acting as a caregiver in my clinical experiences with HC, will be my financial responsibility. I understand that health insurance is required.

\_\_\_\_\_ I will receive Hepatitis B vaccine and /or demonstrate proof of immunity prior to beginning my clinical experience with direct client/patient care. Should I refuse to be immunized, I will sign a refusal to consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_ In the event I am exposed to blood while giving client care, I agree to follow the HC Accidental Exposure Policy and Protocol established by the institution and in accordance with the healthcare facility's Exposure Control Plan. I understand that this generally involved one year of blood testing and professional counseling for myself and/or significant others. I understand and acknowledge that there is no known cure for AIDS currently. I will receive referral to community health resources for free blood testing to detect HIV upon request.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am aware that the Privacy Act provides for confidentiality on any issue related to my health status. All information will be kept in strict confidence by the School of Nursing and used to provide counseling, health information, and referral.

\_\_\_\_\_ If I am uncomfortable with the idea of caring for patients with infectious and/or communicable diseases. I will discuss my concerns with nursing faculty at Helena College. I understand that Rules 24.159.1005 (n) of the Statutes and Rules of the Montana State Board of Nursing state that "...as a member of the nursing profession, the registered nurse and practical nurse shall...conduct practice without discrimination on the basis of age, race, sex, sexual preference, national origin or handicap. (The Americans with Disabilities Act, 1992, establishes communicable disease, including AIDS as a handicap /disability).

\_\_\_\_\_ It is recommended that I inform faculty of changes in my health status, such as pregnancy or contraction of a communicable and/or infectious disease. I have been informed and understand that an altered state of my health, such as being infected with HIV, may increase my health risk in relation to care giving activities for patients with bacterial and viral diseases. I understand that I should seek sound medical advice for changes in my health status, as discussed in this paragraph.

**I have read this document. I fully understand the learning opportunities, potential risks and safeguard options, which are involved in my role as a nursing student at HC. I consent to follow policies and procedures as explained herein.**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# BLOOD BORNE PATHOGEN STUDENT POLICY

## Helena College University of Montana

### Purpose

Students in any academic, research, or occupational program at HC who are at risk for blood borne pathogen exposure are required to present documentation of serologic evidence of immunity to Hepatitis B (HBV), either by vaccination or previous infection. Students who cannot meet this requirement for legitimate religious or medical reasons must sign a waiver prior to the student's first potential exposure to human blood or other potentially infectious materials. Records of the waiver shall be kept in the students' files within the department that is requiring the immunization.

### Procedure

Students who are unable to meet the requirements of documentation of immunity for religious or medical reasons must provide written documentation of the reasons which preclude immunization.

Effective June 1999, students are required to present the following information prior to admittance into the nursing program prior to their first potential exposure to human blood or other potentially infectious materials. Students will not be allowed in areas or settings which may present their first potential exposure to human blood or other potentially infectious materials without this documentation.

1. Documentation of serologic immunity; or
2. Documentation of immunization series; or
3. Signed waiver of exemption from immunization requirements.

### Exposures

1. If a student has an exposure (i.e. eye, mouth, mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or potentially infectious materials) in a setting sponsored by HC, **the student must follow the policy of the facility where they are exposed.** The student is responsible for the cost of post-exposure testing. Students can go to the County Health Department or a private physician for testing and counseling. Records of the exposure and follow-up shall be kept in a confidential file in the appropriate program.
2. If a student has an exposure, the student **must report it immediately** to the instructor or supervisor. A Student Exposure Incident Form must be completed by the student, signed by the student and instructor or supervisor, and sent to the HR Office.

### Training

Student training shall be done prior to the student's first potential exposure to blood borne pathogens. The training shall include the requirements of the Blood borne Pathogen Standard, universal precautions, and the HC policy. The training may be incorporated into class materials in NRS 232 Foundations of Nursing.

**Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the "Blood Borne Pathogen Student Policy" and will adhere to it as outlined above.**

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## STUDENT EXPOSURE INCIDENT FORM

### HELENA COLLEGE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

Student Name:	
Student ID:	Date of Incident:
Department/Building:	Date Reported:
Type of Exposure:	
<input type="checkbox"/> Human bite <input type="checkbox"/> Blood/Body fluid splash <input type="checkbox"/> Open wound, scratch, or abrasion contaminated with blood/body fluid/urine/stool <input type="checkbox"/> Puncture or cut from instrument set, lancet, or other sharp object <input type="checkbox"/> Needle stick following venipuncture <input type="checkbox"/> Needle stick from IVP or VIPB <input type="checkbox"/> Needle stick following injection <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Describe)	
Describe exposure incident in detail:	



What actions were taken immediately following the incident?	
What precautions were in use at the time of incident? Check all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> Gloves <input type="checkbox"/> Gown/Apron <input type="checkbox"/> Mask <input type="checkbox"/> Eyewear <input type="checkbox"/> CPR shield <input type="checkbox"/> None <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify):	
Date(s) of HBV vaccination(s):	
Student Signature:	Date:
Instructor/Supervisor Signature:	Date:
Signature of person preparing report (if other than student):	
<b>FOLLOW-UP</b>	<b>DATE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Student referred to physician of choice <input type="checkbox"/> Seen by Physician: <input type="checkbox"/> Office <input type="checkbox"/> ER <input type="checkbox"/> County Health <input type="checkbox"/> Declined to be seen by physician  Other comments:	

# STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES

HC Nursing Department requires each student to be able to regularly perform the following activities:

1. Stand for long periods of time
2. Work at a fast pace for long periods of time
3. Lift heavy objects (25 pounds or more) three or more times a day
4. Speak clearly and distinctly
5. Respond appropriately to stressful situations (physically, emotionally and mentally)
6. Communicate effectively with patients, patients' families, physicians and staff
7. Hear vital signs with stethoscope to assess blood pressure, heart rate, and lung, vascular and abdominal sounds; hear the telephone
8. Hear the patient calling for help
9. Hear beepers, alarms, etc., requiring quick responses
10. Read very fine or small print on medication containers, read physician's orders
11. See nurse call/emergency light
12. Visually assess the patient appropriately
13. Read monitors and other equipment
14. Demonstrate manual dexterity to don sterile gloves and gown
15. Demonstrate manual dexterity to prepare medications aseptically (i.e.: IV, PO, and IM)
16. Demonstrate manual dexterity using sterile technique (i.e.: insert catheters, IV needles, etc)
17. Demonstrate the ability to utilize equipment needed to carryout patient care
18. Demonstrate the ability to move in small spaces in an emergency situation

If you are unable to perform any of these activities, *please circle the number of the ones which you cannot perform.* The Academic Standards for Nursing Committee will review and consult with you.

Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the "Functional Abilities" requirements and can perform them unless otherwise indicated.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR PERSONAL EFFORT AND COMMITMENT FOR SUCCESS

Helena College's Nursing Program, like most nursing programs, require a substantial time commitment to complete the rigorous program requirements in the classroom, nursing skills lab, and clinical settings. Student success is dependent upon a collaborative partnership between students and faculty. The Nursing faculty view learning as an interactive student-centered process with faculty facilitating learning. The faculty are committed to assisting you to succeed in this program. However, student learners must assume responsibility for their own learning and be actively engaged in shaping their learning. It is important that students understand program expectations:

1. Students are expected to devote a minimum study time of 2 hours per week for each credit enrolled. For example, a didactic course worth 3 credits would require minimum of 6 hours study time each week and a 1 credit lab, 2 hours each week minimum. It is important to note that most students spend more than the minimal study expectation.
2. While we understand your possible need to work to support yourself or family, most students find it extremely difficult to work full time while in the nursing program. Clinical practicums are scheduled when facilities have available space and on days that HC has clinicals. **These are subject to change with short notice.** Students are expected to be available for the scheduled clinical hours. We strive to have clinicals on day shift, but clinical time may include evenings, weekends, or nights.
3. It is expected that students attend all classes and clinicals. Missed clinical time may result in failure of courses and dismissal from the program. Please do not make vacation plans, family events, or appointments that affect class, lab or clinical attendance. **Absences are nearly impossible to make up due to the fast pace of material presented in class and the limited availability of clinical experiences.**
4. Nursing school is different. In general, students find that even with the same effort, they may not achieve the grades they did in non-nursing courses. In the beginning it is like learning a new language and being presented with comprehensive nursing concepts and principles, which may require more effort or a new way of studying on your part, to learn and understand. While grades may have been the primary focus of prior courses, in Nursing, the focus is on learning and understanding the information to allow you to then apply what you learned to a patient situation. This focus provides the student with a foundation that helps them deliver safe and competent care to patients.
5. You are expected to arrive prepared to class, lab or clinicals. This will include extensive reading, pre-clinical preparation, and other assignments prior to arriving to class/clinical.
6. Nursing exams are frequently structured like the nurse licensing exam (NCLEX). This will include questions that are designed to assess your ability to apply and analyze the material rather than simple knowledge and recall. These test questions require a higher order of thinking to answer correctly.
7. The Faculty will provide you with examples of learning and test taking strategies that may assist you in developing critical thinking skills needed for success in the course exams and the NCLEX licensure exam.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the above statements and I agree to organize my time and personal affairs to meet the commitment necessary to succeed.

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Printed Name

Signature

Date



## STUDENT STATEMENT OF RELEASE

I hereby authorize Helena College University of Montana and the Montana University System its agents, to release a copy of any/all of my required clinical documents, including, but not limited to immunization records, criminal background checks, and CPR certification to clinical site agencies from this time forward while I am in the clinical nursing program.

I understand that I must submit all required documentation prior to participating in any clinical experiences. I understand that I have the right to refuse to share my health information and background status with clinical agencies, and that my refusal will make me ineligible for clinical placement.

Please print your name here: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign your name here: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### *Employer Contact Release Form*

I hereby allow Helena College Department of Nursing to contact my employee for the purpose of assessing employee program satisfaction with graduates of Helena College Nursing for entry-level positions.

Please print your name here: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign your name here: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## PHOTOGRAPHY RELEASE

To promote the successful nursing programs at Helena College UM, and to improve outside communications with potential students, healthcare partners and other interested parties, the college uses photographs, video footage, and statements made of/by the student named below in presentation about our Nursing program. All photos and video footage shall remain the sole property of the College.

I authorize Helena College UM, full and free use of photographs containing my image/likeness. I understand these images may be used for promotional, news, research and/or educational purposes. I hereby release, discharge, and hold harmless Helena College and its agents from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action that I may hereafter have by reason of anything contained in the photographs.

I understand that no compensation will be made to me for this use. Helena College UM assumes no liability of any nature in connection with photography, filming and/or interviewing.

I do further certify that I am either of legal age or possess full legal capacity to execute the foregoing authorization and release.

Please print your name here: \_\_\_\_\_

Please sign your name here: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## Receipt of Handbook

It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in the Nursing Program to read and adhere to all the information contained in this handbook, with special attention to:

- Academic and Student Conduct
- Academic Accommodations
- Nursing Course and Clinical Grades
- Attendance
- Student Responsibilities Relating to Professional Conduct
- Confidentiality
- Uniform Standards for Clinical Settings
- Latex Allergy Statement
- Statement of Informed Consent for Prevention of Communicable Diseases
- Blood Borne Pathogen Student Policy
- Student Exposure Incident Form
- Statement of Functional Abilities
- Professional Behavior Rubric
- Photo Release Form
- Student Statement of Release
- Employer Release Form

I have received the Registered Nursing Student Handbook and I am familiar with ***ALL*** the information contained in the Handbook from Helena College Nursing Program. ***I agree to adhere to all policies and processes outlined in these pages.***

Student initials \_\_\_\_\_

Student signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_