



**Certificate of Applied Science  
Practical Nurse  
2026 Student Handbook**



Updated January 8, 2026

# 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

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To keep up with the rapidly changing healthcare delivery system, the Nursing Department posts the Nursing Student handbook on the website and the Nursing Information page. The student is responsible for partnering 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 healthcare needs of the population in their care. The Certificate of Applied Science (CAS) Practical Nurse graduate is an entry-level practitioner who is competent to practice as a direct caregiver in a variety of healthcare settings, which include diverse patient populations. The faculty of the Nursing Program believe the following:

- **Communication** is an integral part of all nursing interactions and facilitates caring, compassionate, and culturally aware patient care.
- **Professional behaviors** are important. Graduates of nursing programs 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 healthcare needs form the foundation for clinical nursing judgments.

- **Managing care** is achieved through the use of 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 the well-being of the patient.

In addition, the Nursing Faculty believe nursing education is driven by the application of critical thinking and clinical judgment, and so, teaching/learning strategies using innovative approaches and evidence-based research are incorporated into nursing courses. To address varied learning styles, 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 the 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 recognizes 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 \*Competencies for Graduates of Nursing Programs identified by the National League for Nursing (2025). All of the coursework 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.

## **Competencies for Graduates of Nursing Programs**

- ⊕ **Human Flourishing**- Practical Nurses use their skills and knowledge to promote human dignity, integrity, self-determination, and personal growth of patients, themselves, and members of the health care team.
- ⊕ **Nursing Judgment**- Practical Nurses provide a rationale for judgments used in the provision of safe, quality care and for decisions that promote the health of patients within a family context.
- ⊕ **Professional Identity**- Practical Nurses assess how one's personal strengths and values affect one's identity as a nurse and one's contributions as a member of the healthcare team.
- ⊕ **Spirit of Inquiry**- It is important that nurses approach all issues and problems within a spirit of inquiry. Practical Nurses question the basis for nursing actions, considering research, evidence, tradition, and patient preferences.

The courses of the Helena College CAS Practical Nursing Program are designed to meet the requirements of the Montana State Board of Nursing 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 Helena College 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 Patricia Benner's (2021) Novice-to-Expert Theory and principles of the

Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 2014). 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 which states that adults 1) need to understand why they are learning something, 2) learn best by doing, and 3) learn best when they see the concept and apply it to real-life situations.

Learning is an active process that includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. Faculty facilitate the learning process by introducing concepts, and building upon 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 (2023), nursing instruction in the first semester will target "remembering", "understanding," and introduce "applying". The last semester builds on this foundational knowledge and moves on to "applying" and "analyzing" concepts and patient scenarios to help guide the student toward independent practice as an entry-level nurse.

The CAS PN graduate uses critical thinking, clinical judgment, and demonstrates clinical competence and accountability as an entry-level practical nurse who provides nursing care under the supervision of a licensed healthcare professional.

### **CAS Practical Nurse Program Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Use the Nursing Process to provide safe, effective, and individualized care, to address the assessed needs of the client within the Licensed Practical Nurse scope of practice.
2. Utilize communication skills to provide relationship-centered care.
3. Demonstrate teamwork in an inter-professional environment.
4. Provide inclusive care in a professional manner according to legal and ethical standards within the Licensed Practical Nurse scope of practice.
5. Safely and accurately perform all nursing skills under the pressure, distractions, and interruptions of an actual nursing experience.

### **Expected Program Outcomes for the CAS Practical Nurse Graduate**

1. Graduates will meet or exceed the national average for first-time takers for the NCLEX-PN (National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses).
2. Eighty percent (80%) of students admitted to the program will complete the program within one (1) academic year (two semesters).
3. Ninety percent (90%) of graduates will be employed as a Licensed Practical Nurse 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*, 12(05), 2023. Retrieved January 8, 2026, from <https://health.ucdavis.edu/mdprogram/curriculum/pdfs/blooms-taxonomy-vanderbilt.pdf>

Benner, P. (2021). Novice to mastery. *Teaching and Learning for Adult Skill Acquisition: Applying the Dreyfus and Dreyfus Model in Different Fields*, 215, 1-7.  
[https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Eq8zEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA215&dq=PBenner+Novice+to+Expert+Theory&ots=SJzS1UBAhl&sig=bMDk22106VlnUct7\\_VcaMKnNbU#v=onepage&q=PBenner%20Novice%20to%20Expert%20Theory&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=Eq8zEAAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA215&dq=PBenner+Novice+to+Expert+Theory&ots=SJzS1UBAhl&sig=bMDk22106VlnUct7_VcaMKnNbU#v=onepage&q=PBenner%20Novice%20to%20Expert%20Theory&f=false)

Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (2014). *The adult learner: The definitive classic in adult education and human resource development*. Routledge.

National League for Nursing. (2025). NLN Program Outcomes and Competencies for Outcomes and Competencies for Graduates of Practical/Vocational, Diploma, Associate Degree, Baccalaureate, Master's, Practice Doctorate, and Research Doctorate Programs in Nursing, <https://www.nln.org/education/nursing-education-competencies/competencies-for-graduates-of-nursing-programs>

## Nursing Program Handbook Statement

Please note that the Nursing Program Handbook is a dynamic document that evolves and changes along with the program. Additions and/or changes may be made to this handbook during your enrollment to keep up with the rapidly changing healthcare delivery system. The Nursing Department posts the Nursing Student Handbook on the Helena College website and the Nursing Information page in the Learning Management System (LMS). The student is responsible for partnering with the Nursing Department to stay informed of changes. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with this handbook and use it as a first reference when questions regarding policies and procedures arise. Students are strongly advised not to seek clarification from fellow students, as the information received may be incorrect. **Clarification of a policy or procedure should come directly from the college or program guidelines.**

For concerns, questions, or problems related to the program, the student should first discuss them with the individual course Faculty. If the concern is not resolved, the student may schedule an appointment with the Director of Nursing.

## Application and Program Entry

The CAS Practical Nurse 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 experiences and State Board of Nursing regulations regarding student-to-faculty ratio, acceptance into the program will be determined based on Board of Nursing approved cohort size, availability of clinical sites, and additional criteria outlined in the Nursing application.

**Prerequisite coursework must have been taken within the last fifteen years and within the 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 Registrar and Director of Nursing. This includes all general education requirements. Students may repeat TWO general education prerequisite courses to achieve a "C" grade or above, prior to the student's admission to the nursing program and courses. A maximum of 2 retakes of a prerequisite will be allowed. Written permission from the Director of Nursing is required before taking any prerequisite course for a third time. If permission is not obtained, the second grade will be used to calculate GPA. Students must obtain a minimum of a GPA of 2.5 in the prerequisite courses to apply to the CAS Practical Nurse Program.

In addition to the prerequisite coursework, students must complete the TEAS test with a minimum score of 65%. The TEAS test may be taken up to four (4) times, and the student may submit their highest score.

## **Transfer Students**

Transfer Students will be required to have their transcripts evaluated by the Registrar's Office prior to applying to the Nursing Program. Transferability and acceptance of non-core curriculum nursing credits into the Helena College Nursing Program is not guaranteed.

## **Nursing Program Requirements**

### **BLS Requirement**

Each student must be certified in American Heart Association or American Red Cross Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (BLS), as part of the application process, and current certification must be maintained through the end of the program. Certification may include an online pre-test but must also include a hands-on skills test. Only online certifications will not be accepted. Students are responsible for seeking appropriate certification classes, maintaining current certification throughout the nursing program, and are responsible for paying all certification fees. **Failure to do so will result in the student not being able to continue their clinical rotations until such time as they have a current BLS card which may delay progression in the nursing program.**

### **Basic Health Screening**

A current physical examination within the last 12 months by the student's health care provider is required for application to the Nursing Program. The physical exam form is found in the application.

### **Criminal Background Checks**

To maintain a safe patient environment and to reduce facility liability, most clinical agencies require cleared criminal background checks before students are allowed into clinical facilities. Students who do not pass the criminal background check may be unable to attend clinical courses (determined by individual clinical institutions) and, therefore, unable to complete their program of study. Information about how to obtain the appropriate background check will be provided in the acceptance letter to the nursing program.

Students with background checks that reveal a finding will be evaluated individually to determine whether they will be eligible for clinical placement and state licensure for their respective degree program. Background check costs are the responsibility of the student.

### **Immunizations/Vaccinations**

Current immunization records, including Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (or documentation of Chicken Pox) vaccination or titer, MMR, and Polio, are required before the first day of class. Students unable to verify full vaccination schedules should obtain a titer.

Students must provide evidence of Influenza (Flu) vaccine for the current year or a signed Declination of Vaccination form. Declination approval is granted at the discretion of each clinical facility and may require additional documentation. The costs associated with immunizations, titers, or other vaccination requirements are the responsibility of the student.

## **Drug Screening**

Some clinical partners may also require students to provide a negative drug screen prior to being permitted in the clinical facility. Any drug screen that reveals a positive result will be evaluated individually to determine whether the student will be eligible for the clinical placement. Students will be given information on how to obtain the proper drug screen before their clinical rotations start. Drug screen test fees are the responsibility of the student.

## **Liability Insurance**

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

## **Nursing Program Progression**

### **Curriculum and Grades**

Helena College Department of Nursing follows the Montana Statewide Curriculum for Registered Nurses. 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 academic 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.

The HC Nursing Program grading scale is as follows:

93%-100% (A)  
90-92% (B+)  
87-89% (B)  
85-86% (B-)  
81-84% (C+)  
78-80% (C)  
<77% (F)

Grades for all course assignments will be recorded as earned with no mathematical rounding. For example, a score of 77.9% = 77% and is not a passing grade. A minimum grade of "C" (78%) is required in all nursing courses, including clinicals, and co-requisite general education courses, to advance to the next semester. Please refer to specific course syllabus for further guidelines.

Failure to achieve a minimum of a "C" grade or 78% in the course will result in the student failing the nursing course. If a student fails a class with a didactic and clinical component, both may need to be repeated unless the faculty recommend otherwise. Students may repeat a nursing course in which they earn a "W" or a grade of less than a "C" only once. Failure of **any two nursing courses** will result in dismissal from the Nursing Program, and the student must seek readmission to the program. (See Readmission Procedure, p.12.)

Penalty for late submission of clinical paperwork or assignments:

Up to 24 hours late = 10% deduction

24 – 48 hours late = 20% deduction  
48 – 72 hours late = 50% deduction

No assignments will be accepted after 72 hours, and a score of zero “0” will be assigned **unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.**

Students move through the curriculum as a cohort. All Nursing Program courses in one semester must be completed before the student starts the next semester of nursing coursework. If a student needs to repeat a nursing course or takes an Incomplete (I), they will not progress to the next semester of nursing courses until the repeated course is successfully completed.

If an enrolled nursing student is convicted of a felony, they cannot progress in the Nursing Program.

### **Repeating Nursing Courses**

A student who fails a nursing (NRSG) course must meet with the Faculty and the Director of Nursing 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 any two nursing courses results in dismissal from the Nursing Program. A letter of intent to reapply must be submitted to the Director of Nursing.

### **Withdrawal/Incomplete**

Prior to decision to Withdraw (W) from a nursing course to protect academic integrity, the student must have a conversation with the Director of Nursing to discuss their academic plan and impact of withdrawal. Refer to the college catalog policy/procedure for withdrawals.

### **Readmission Procedure**

Students wishing to re-enroll after withdrawal from the Nursing Program must meet Helena College's re-enrollment policies and complete the steps below. Students may re-apply for admission to the Nursing Program **one time only.**

A student requesting nursing program readmission must:

1. Write a letter of intent to re-apply to the Director of Nursing.
2. Submit a new application for admission to the nursing program.
3. Update documentation of physical exam form, immunizations, and BLS certification as needed and pay associated fees.
4. Adhere to the most recent catalog requirements.
5. Meet with an Academic Advisor to develop a degree plan that meets all curricular and program requirements.
6. Validate competency in clinical skills.

### **Graduation**

Students preparing to graduate from the Nursing Program must complete all course requirements as outlined in the current catalog and follow the progression requirements listed above. It is important to note that the Nursing Program standards, grades, grading scale, and attendance requirements are

more rigorous than other college courses. The nursing rigor is designed to prepare the students for the NCLEX and to prepare them for their role as a professional nurse.

### **State Licensure**

To practice as a nurse, you must pass the NCLEX. The National Council of State Boards of Nursing online registration for the NCLEX exam is found at: <https://www.nclex.com/register.page> . Successful completion of the Nursing Program does not guarantee a graduate is allowed to take the NCLEX or obtain a Montana Nursing license. Contact the Montana Board of Nursing with any questions.

Applications for state licensure are available by contacting the [Montana State Board of Nursing](#) website ([www.nurse.mt.gov](http://www.nurse.mt.gov)) or at the following address:

Montana State Board of Nursing  
301 South Park / P.O. Box 200513  
Helena, MT 59620-0513  
Telephone: (406) 841-2340

## **Governance**

### **Academic Standards Committee for Nursing**

The Academic Standards Committee for Nursing is comprised of Nursing Faculty/Staff, Staff from the Admissions and Advising offices, and the General Education department. The Academic Standards Committee provides feedback on the application, application processes, nursing policies, and student grievances or complaints. General curriculum changes proposals may be discussed; however, approval for curriculum changes and course outcome changes will be reviewed and approved through the Helena College Academic Standards and Curriculum Review Committee.

### **Community Advisory Board**

The Community Advisory Board is made up of community members who provide expertise in nursing education, practice, members of the nursing faculty, general education faculty of Helena College, and a nursing student representative. The Community Advisory Board plays a key role in program assessment and development. The structure of the board and its members is designed to identify and accurately reflect changes, issues, needs, and trends in the nursing community. Shared information and discussions on student performance are encouraged.

### **Student Senate**

One student from each nursing program at Helena College may be elected as a senator to represent their program and the registered students of the college. The student body elects a president, vice-president, and business manager to the Executive Branch and to oversee the Senate. Meetings take place weekly or bi-weekly during the academic year. Student activity fees finance the running of the Senate. A faculty or staff advisor has a voice but not a vote within the Senate and provides guidance and support.

## Academic Policies and Structure

### Academic and Student Conduct

Academic and student conduct issues are addressed in the current Helena College catalog and Student Code of Conduct Handbook. 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.

### Student Conduct and Honor Code

Students must follow the rules, regulations, and policies as outlined in the HC Student Handbook and Nursing Program policies with respect to their conduct. Refer to [Helena College catalog](https://helenacollege.edu/catalog/) (<https://helenacollege.edu/catalog/>) and the nursing student handbook for expected standards of behavior. Disruptive behavior, unsafe actions, and/or academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and can lead to expulsion from class and/or clinicals. **Helena College and Helena College Nursing department have a zero-tolerance policy for behavior that can result in harm (physical or emotional).**

### Academic Accommodations/Disability Services

In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of a disability, please contact the Accessibility Services Office. The Accessibility Coordinator 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 Accessibility Office, please schedule an appointment with your instructor or provide copies of the accommodations so we can implement your accommodations. These accommodations need to be presented to the instructor at least a day in advance of any test or exam in which the accommodated services will be used to allow appropriate arrangements to be made.

Accessibility Services Office

(406) 447-6911

[hcdr@helenacollege.edu](mailto:hcdr@helenacollege.edu)

Office location: East End Advising-Donaldson Campus, room 119

**Only students registered with the Accessibility Office are permitted accommodations.** All information will be kept confidential. Students who receive accommodations must arrange times for tests with the Testing Center at [testingcenter@helenacollege.edu](mailto:testingcenter@helenacollege.edu) or by calling 406-447-6946.

### Academic Dishonesty Definition/Policy Statement

Helena College expects its students to adhere to a high standard of academic integrity. It is a violation of academic integrity standards and the student code of conduct to present the ideas, designs, works,

or words of another person as one's own efforts, or to permit another person to do so. The following guidelines are intended to clarify these issues for students, faculty, and administration.

The College will regard the following acts as violations of academic integrity, constituting academic dishonesty. Although the list and descriptions are not intended to be exhaustive of all types or instances of academic dishonesty, they are presented as examples of behavior to avoid. It is explicitly the student's responsibility to avoid academic dishonesty of all kinds, and each student is required to seek guidance in advance of taking any questionable action, including but not limited to those enumerated below.

### **Plagiarism**

A student will be considered in violation of standards for academic integrity if they submit an assignment in any form (written, oral, graphic, or computer-generated, etc.) that consists wholly or partially of the words, work, or ideas of another individual without giving the original author proper credit. A similar violation would occur in cases where a student submits a paper or other project/assignment for one course that was originally created for another course, even if that student was the originator of the paper/project/assignment in the first instance. Similarly, using facts, figures, graphs, charts, or information without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism, which may occur verbally, in written form, through computer programs and files, research methods, designs, particular distinctive words or phrases, ideas, and images or any other information that was created by another person without acknowledgment of that person's role in its creation. Inadvertent or unintentional misuse or appropriation of another's work (such as relying heavily on source material that is not expressly acknowledged) is still considered plagiarism.

### **Copying/Cheating**

A student will be considered in violation of academic integrity standards if they gain, or attempt to gain, credit for work by dishonest or deceptive means. Examples include the use of crib notes, cheat sheets, books, or any other material or electronic device as aids in an examination or any other graded exercise, unless the instructor of the class has given explicit permission to use such materials.

Collaboration with another student on an examination or other graded exercise, unless the instructor has given permission, also constitutes copying. It is the policy of the College to prohibit phones, smart watches, and other similar devices during examinations. Prior to administering an examination, instructors will require that all such devices be turned off and stored in an inaccessible place. Failure to comply with this policy will constitute a violation of the academic integrity policy. If a student is found in possession of such a device during an examination, they will be assigned a score of 0 for the examination. Further examples include: copying assignments from another source (classmate, etc.); working with others on exams or homework that is not explicitly permitted by the instructor to be collaborative; looking at another student's paper or screen during an exam or assignment; disclosing exam content to others during an exam, or after completion of an exam, including allowing such information to be disclosed to you; and/or attempting to or allowing another person to complete assignments for another person (such as in an online course). The above examples are meant to illustrate violations of the principle of academic integrity and are not intended to be all-inclusive. Additional instances of dishonesty that are not explicitly identified in the above list will nevertheless be treated as violations.

## **Contributing to Academic Dishonesty**

A student will be considered in violation of academic integrity standards if they willfully assist another student in an act of academic dishonesty.

## **Nursing Department Acceptable Use Policy for AI**

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in healthcare is rapidly expanding, influencing clinical practice, decision-making, and client care. To ensure students are prepared for these evolving expectations, this program will support the development of AI literacy by allowing appropriate, guided use of AI within selected coursework. Limited and purposeful engagement with AI tools will help students build critical thinking skills, understand responsible application, and recognize the role of AI in professional nursing environments. To clearly communicate expectations, the nursing program will utilize a Stoplight Model that designates whether AI use is permitted for each assignment:

Stoplight Model for AI Use:

- **Red Light:** Use of AI is not permitted for this assignment.
- **Yellow Light:** Limited and guided use of AI is allowed. Instructors will provide explicit directions outlining acceptable use.
- **Green Light:** Ethical and responsible AI use is permitted to support idea generation and learning. All work must maintain academic integrity and reflect the student's own understanding

**Acknowledge and Cite:** Transparency is an important part of scientific writing. When using AI for an approved assignment, citing your resource is required so that readers can understand, verify and/or replicate your work.

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Generated Work and Non-Adherence to Policy**

If the faculty suspects that the submitted work was not your own or that AI tools were extensively utilized without approval to do so, the student will be asked to explain the work in detail. If the student cannot display a reasonable understanding of the submitted work, it will violate academic integrity.

Ethical use of AI may be used as a tool to complement and enhance knowledge acquisition; however, it is not a replacement for reflection on learning and critical thinking. It is important that students in the Helena College Nursing Program understand the relevance of their work as a student to their future employment in healthcare. Students should be able to discuss details and elaborate on ideas within their assignment when prompted. Students who are unable to do so, or who are suspected of using AI for a Yellow-Light or Red-Light assignment beyond prescribed guidelines will be required to complete the assignment again. The assignment will be handwritten and/or completed under supervision to ensure that academic integrity is maintained. Students will receive a score based on the assignment's re-attempt, which may include deductions for use of AI beyond the acceptable use model for AI use as determined by the course instructor and assignment rubric.

**Academic Dishonesty Violations:** 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 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. A 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.

### **APA Formatting of Nursing Assignments**

Written work will conform to the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual, 7<sup>th</sup> edition format, as APA is the format most widely accepted within nursing academia. This includes electronic references. Refer to the course syllabi for specific grading requirements. The APA Publication Manual is in the library. A recommended online APA resource is the Purdue Online Writing Lab (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)

### **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 student learning outcomes for each course and program outcomes.

Nursing course syllabi will be distributed to students on the first day of class and are available online.

**Each student is responsible for the material contained within the syllabus.**

### **Nursing Course Grades**

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	0-77

Grades for all course assignments will be recorded as earned with no mathematical rounding. For example, a score of 77.9% = 77% and is not a passing grade. A minimum grade of "C" (78%) is required in all nursing courses, including clinicals, and co-requisite general education courses, to advance to the next semester. Please refer to specific course syllabus for further guidelines.

### **Attendance**

Attendance at each scheduled class or lab is expected since the learning process involves group interaction. Students are expected to notify faculty prior to class if not attending and are responsible for any material during the absence.

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.

## **Advising**

Each student is assigned to a Helena College academic advisor. Students may find information about their assigned advisor on MyHC > [Student Support Center](#). The advisor's role, in part, is to facilitate student's course registration and to assist in the identification of resources available to support student success. Students are encouraged to use all resources Helena College UM provides to help their success in the Nursing Program.

**Each student is responsible and accountable for their progression through the Nursing Program and for meeting all academic requirements for graduation.**

## **Nursing Clinical**

### **Clinical Grades**

Clinical grades are determined by the course faculty based on observations and may include required reflection journals, documented feedback of the clinical instructor, assessed student learning, and the student's ability to improve across the semester. The Clinical Evaluation Tool and patient/client assignments will be used to assess student performance in the clinical setting and to determine the clinical grade.

Nursing students **will be held accountable** for all components of the clinical. Clinical paperwork (clinical journals, evaluation forms, verification of hours forms, etc.) is part of the clinical experience evaluation process and must be submitted promptly to the faculty for grading. These forms must be completed and signed by the student and submitted by the due date.

Demonstration of professional behaviors across all courses in the nursing programs is essential to the 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 Requirements**

In addition to attendance at clinical orientation and all scheduled clinical days, students must comply with our clinical healthcare partners' requirements. Students who do not comply with immunization and BLS requirements cannot complete clinical days. Additional dress code, ID badge, masks, etc. may also be required by the facility. Students **must comply** with all facility requirements to attend clinicals.

Students attend clinicals at the VA Hospital and must provide a government-issued ID (passport or Real ID) and fingerprints for identification purposes. Students must arrange to obtain these items early as it can take some time to get a fingerprint appointment, receive your documents, and process this information through the Veteran's Affairs systems. **Failure to complete these requirements in a timely manner will result in the inability of the student to complete this nursing course.**

## **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 HIPAA or a breach of confidentiality on the part of the student may result in the student's removal from the clinical setting.

1. **Confidentiality of patient records and situations must be maintained.** No patient chart is to be copied by any technological process. Patient information is not to be removed from any healthcare agency. Charts may not be left open for public view; report sheets may not be left in areas other than the nursing student's pocket. **Students violating this code will be subject to the facility's dismissal protocol and earn an unsatisfactory grade for the clinical experience.**
2. Students are responsible for maintaining patient privacy and dignity in all situations. Professional behavior will be displayed in the clinical environment. Courteous professional behavior toward faculty, peers, patients/clients, staff, and hospital personnel is expected. A first violation will result in a verbal warning to the student, and the event will be noted. **Second or subsequent violations may result in dismissal from the program.**
3. It is a HIPAA violation to post pictures or any identifying information of clients on social media sites. **No photography is allowed at any clinical site.**

## **Cell Phones and Smart Watches**

Cell phones and other electronic devices must be in silent mode during clinicals, class, or lab activities, and turned off and put away during tests/exams. Cell phones may be used in the clinical setting for clinical-related research such as looking up a medication, diagnosis, or treatment. Inappropriate use of cell phones (texting, messaging, gaming, social media, etc.) will not be tolerated in clinicals and are subject to loss of professional behavior points. **Use of cell phones for any photography in the clinical site is prohibited.**

Refer to the course syllabi and the Helena College Student Handbook for acceptable use of electronic resources policy.

## **Nursing Skills Lab**

### **Skills Lab Purpose**

The nursing skills lab gives students hands-on experience with nursing skills, experiences, and simulations. The skills lab is a safe learning environment where students can practice newly learned skills and make mistakes without the risk of actual patient injury. Students are expected to learn how to perform nursing skills and provide return demonstrations of those skills individually or as a team in a simulated scenario. Students are encouraged to practice the skills repeatedly to gain 'muscle memory' and confidence prior to the return demonstration. Students are expected to perform skills accurately, efficiently, and in a timely fashion under pressure, as timing can be critical in actual patient care settings. Skills labs prepare the student to deal with stressors, distractions, and interruptions while completing skills common in the nursing setting. The lab instructors and simulation manager are available to help the student, per the student's request. Attendance and participation in all scheduled lab hours are expected.

## **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. Skills labs allow plenty of time to practice and develop new skills. All skills required for a nursing course must be successfully demonstrated to earn a passing grade for the course.

### **Penalty for late submission of clinical paperwork or assignments:**

- Up to 24hours late = 10% deduction
- 24 – 48hours late = 20% deduction
- 48 – 72hours late = 50% deduction
- No assignments will be accepted after 72hours, and score of zero “0” will be assigned **unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.**

## **Skills Lab Failure**

A student has two attempts to successfully demonstrate the critical elements of a skill. Some scheduled laboratory sessions may include more than one skill. Each skill is considered on an individual basis. The student will receive written documentation of the reasons for a skill failure. This will be reflected in the Laboratory Assessment tool provided to the student by the instructor.

## **Open Lab Sessions**

Open lab sessions will be available on a weekly basis for student use. Open lab sessions are provided to allow students to practice and master skills that are required for the 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.

## **Program Standards and Requirements**

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 and to become competent, capable, and responsible nursing professionals after graduation.

Critical professional behaviors across all courses in the nursing programs are essential to the 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.

The criteria that 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 or other condition or circumstance that constitutes an unreasonable risk to the safety and well-being of the client and/or the student
10. Arrest and conviction of a crime as per Montana State Board of Nursing
11. Failure to abide by the Helena College Nursing dress code

## **Nursing Program Policies**

Children cannot be left unattended on campus during class hours, nor are they allowed to have access to the Nursing Labs. Children are never allowed in clinical areas. Children are only allowed in classrooms with the instructor's discretion for special circumstances and must be approved before class.

### **Laptop**

Student ownership of and/or permanent access to a computer is required at Helena College. Students benefit from the ability to work and access online information and services at any time and from any place. For specific program requirements and additional information, please visit the Helena College website <http://www.helenacollege.edu/it/comprecommendations.aspx>

### **Calculators**

Calculators during tests are permitted upon direction by the course instructor. The calculator must be a simple four-function calculator (not a cell phone calculator).

### **Pregnancy**

Students who are pregnant or suspect that they may be pregnant should inform their faculty and their clinical instructors so that appropriate adjustments and precautions can be made regarding the student's assignment of clients. Students are also encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator, Valerie Curtin, at [Valerie.Curtin@HelenaCollege.edu](mailto:Valerie.Curtin@HelenaCollege.edu), 406-447-6913.

### **Testing/ Exams and Assessments**

Cell phones, smart phones, and smart watches must be turned off and put away during tests/exams. There will be no make-up exams (quiz or exam) without PRIOR approval of the instructor. The course exams are scheduled at the beginning of the semester. Students are expected to make arrangements early so they 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 a reduction of the overall possible points on that exam (see below).

### **Exam Makeup Policy**

**Make-up exams (quiz, exam, or ATI) in nursing courses are not allowed without 24-hour notice and PRIOR approval of the instructor.**

- Authorized makeup exams will be placed in the Testing Center. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Testing Center and schedule their makeup 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 makeup testing] are located on the Canvas dashboard.

## **Remediation Policy**

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

- Review the questions/content you missed to understand the missed material. There are test analysis forms available, which can help students identify patterns in missed questions.
- Please contact the instructor for remediation scheduling, which must be completed within one week of the test score release. Failure to complete remediation within one week will result in a score of zero for the test. **Points for remediation work are at the discretion of the instructor.**
- Request a meeting with the instructor to discuss ways to improve your testing ability (optional but recommended).

## **Student Complaints/Grievances**

Open communication and the use of appropriate channels to resolve complaints are key to the student's academic and professional success. Complaints may include general concerns, a course complaint, an assignment grade dispute, or a course final grade appeal. Students are expected to first discuss all concerns and complaints about academic issues with the course instructor. 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 Director of Nursing. If the complaint or appeal is not resolved at the nursing program level, the student should refer to the [Helena College student handbook](#) for the student complaint process and/or the Helena College catalog for grade appeals timelines and additional information.

## **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 a safety standard, 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 bloodborne pathogens such as Hepatitis B and HIV. Healthcare workers are especially at risk for developing certain diseases due to exposure to needle sticks and splashed blood/body fluids. Standard precautions must be followed by students and faculty in the clinical settings. **Students are required to report any exposures to their clinical instructor immediately.**

## Professionalism

### Student Responsibilities Relating to Professional Conduct

Nursing in the State of Montana is regulated by the Montana State Board of Nursing (BON) in accordance 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 on 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 healthcare 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 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 ages, ethnic backgrounds, religions, genders, and/or sexual orientations.
- 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 that, through professional experience, have become established by practicing nurses as conduct that is reasonably necessary for the protection of public interests and placing patient welfare first.
- Nursing behavior (acts, knowledge, and practices) that 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 see the Professional Behavior Rubric for more information.

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

## **Substance Use**

The use of drugs or alcohol is prohibited in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting. Use, possession, or distribution of alcoholic beverages on college premises or at college-sponsored activities is prohibited by Helena College Policy 600.6 Alcohol Sale, Possession, and/or Consumption on College Property. Nursing students must adhere to Helena College Policy 600.6, Policy 400.4 (Drug-Free Schools & Communities), and MT Board of Regents Policy 503.1, which prohibits the consumption of alcoholic beverages on Montana University properties. The Nursing department identifies that all designated clinical locations are an extension of the college, so students must also comply with these policies in the clinical setting. **Violations of any of these policies will result in disciplinary actions as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.**

## **Transportation**

Students are responsible for their own transportation and related expenses for all clinical experiences. Students **must not** provide transportation for any client.

## **Dress Code for Clinical Settings, Clinical Simulation, and Labs**

The student dress code ensures an acceptable level of grooming and safety for the student and client and projects a professional image. Credibility as a nurse is influenced by appearance, attitude, and behavior. Standards for dress are in accordance with the policies of our clinical settings, in which we are invited to learn, as guests. These standards also comply with national guidelines to safeguard the health and well-being of patients and healthcare workers. The faculty reserves the right to interpret the dress code standards and make decisions regarding professional dress and conduct. **Students out of compliance with the dress code will be sent home to correct it before being allowed in the clinical or lab setting.**

## **Nametag**

The Helena College Nursing student nametag is always worn as part of the uniform and shall be clearly visible on the upper chest area. The student fees cover one name tag only. If the name tag is lost or stolen, the student is responsible for the cost of replacement (\$12.00). Some healthcare facilities also provide student identification badges which must be worn at that location. These badges must be managed responsibly, and if lost, the clinical instructor must be notified immediately. Replacement fees may apply per facility.

## **Uniforms**

The student must wear **light** gray colored scrub top and pants with the Helena College nursing logo embroidered on left chest. A matching lab jacket is optional. Lightweight, long-sleeved shirts in neutral colors such as dark gray, black or white and plain with no design or logo may be worn under your scrub top if desired for warmth. No hoodies or other non-uniform jackets are to be worn over uniform in clinicals.

Uniforms should be well-fitting, hemmed, and clean/unwrinkled. **The nursing scrubs/uniform will be worn anytime the student is representing Helena College Nursing in the community or clinical location and for every skills lab or simulation.**

## **Shoes**

Shoe requirements follow our healthcare facility policies. Per OSHA standards and infection control guidelines, socks must be worn, and no open-toed shoes or sandals are permitted. No Crocs. Shoes should be comfortable and non-skid. There is no shoe color restriction. You will be on your feet a lot. Please pick shoes that you will be able to wear in your nursing career.

## **Hair**

Hair must be clean, neat, and well-groomed. Hair that is shoulder-length or longer must be pulled back or put up. Hair must be kept out of the face, regardless of the length. Hair coloring/dye should be natural hair colors only, and hair accessories must be limited and neutral in color.

## **Facial Hair**

Facial hair must be clean and trimmed or shaved. Full mustache and beard styles may interfere with mask protections required for some isolation patients.

## **Personal Grooming**

Students will maintain their personal hygiene, bathe, and use deodorant. No excessive make-up. No perfume, cologne, or aftershave is permitted. Offensive body odor and/or cigarette smell are not permissible. **No smoking in your school uniform. No gum, smokeless tobacco, mints, food, or drink is allowed in patient care areas.** The use of tobacco products is prohibited on campus and all healthcare campuses.

## **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***. This is an infection control issue. This will be strictly enforced by the faculty and clinical instructors.

## **Jewelry**

All piercings must be studs/posts. Chains/necklaces must not be visible. No arm/ankle bracelets. A simple ring or wedding band may be worn. Excessive jewelry should be avoided. A watch may be worn and can be digital or analog. Any jewelry with sharp edges or accessories that pose a safety hazard to students or patients are not allowed to be worn in the lab or clinical setting.

## **Tattoos**

Tattoos are allowed and are not required to be covered in the lab. However, tattoos may need to be covered in accordance with the clinical facility policy. If a tattoo is considered offensive (expletives, sexually explicit, hate language, gang affiliation, promotes discrimination, illegal drugs, or similar depictions), the student will be required to cover the tattoo in the clinical setting.

# Appendix A Professional Behavior Rubric

## Professional Behavior Rubric

Professionalism within the role of the student nurse is an expectation of the Helena College Nursing Program in classroom, labs, and clinicals. All students are expected to communicate and behave in a professional manner. This includes respect for your instructor, your peers, patients, and yourself. Attendance, preparation, and participation in all areas including classroom, labs, and clinicals, are also expected behaviors.

Helena College Nursing Department professional behavior is evaluated in each course each semester. Elements evaluated are reflected in the criteria below. A percentage is deducted for each of five categories, for a total potential percentage loss of 15% per course for the final grade. A professional behavior rubric will be filled out by an instructor if behavior continues to be problematic even after initial conversation with Faculty/Instructor.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Professional Behaviors	0 Percent Deduction	1 Percent Deduction	2 - 3 Percent Deduction	Percentage Deducted by Instructor	Comments
Attendance	No more than one (1) excused absence or tardiness.	Two to three (2-3) excused, or one (1) unexcused absence and/or tardiness.	More than three (3) excused or two (2) unexcused absence and/or tardiness.		
Preparation	Consistently demonstrates preparation through active participation in all discussions. All course work turned in on time.	Usually demonstrates preparation; sometimes needs encouragement to participate in discussion. No more than one (1) unexcused late assignment.	Fails to demonstrate consistent preparation. More than one (1) unexcused late assignment.		
Communication & Respect	Demonstrates respect to fellow students and faculty. Attentive in all areas.	Usually respectful and attentive. Usually able to accept constructive feedback and provides feedback in a constructive manner. Rare inappropriate use of, or failure to turn off electronic devices.	Often inattentive, displays negative attitudes and behaviors. Difficulty accepting constructive feedback. Offers feedback in a negative and/or disrespectful manner. Uses electronic devices inappropriately.		
Following Policy/Procedure	Follows all applicable HC and Nursing Program policies and procedures.	One or two (1-2) times did not follow HC and/or Nursing Program policies and procedures.	Often times did not follow HC and/or Nursing Program policies and procedures.		
Ensures clean & sanitary patient and/or Skills Lab environment	Maintains patient room/lab cleanliness, proper hand hygiene, sets patient items so that they're easy to reach or use per patient needs.	One or two (1-2) times patient/mannikin was found disheveled, patient/mannikin room not cleaned up, or improper hand hygiene followed.	Often times did not maintain patient or mannikin cleanliness, restore patient room or lab order, consistently fails to use proper hand hygiene.		

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

Faculty Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ v5.2025

## **APPENDIX B – Signature Sheets**

Latex Allergy Statement

Statement of Informed Consent for Prevention of Communicable Diseases

Bloodborne Pathogen Student Policy

Student Exposure Incident Form

Statement of Functional Abilities

Acknowledgment of Required Personal Effort

Photo Release Form

Employer Release Form

Receipt of Handbook

## **Helena College University of Montana**

### **Latex Allergy Statement**

Today, many healthcare 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, a 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 concerns 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 latex allergy. The result of this blood test, along with the assessment by your healthcare 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 healthcare provider if I have any concerns.

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

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

## Helena College University of Montana

### Statement of Informed Consent for Prevention of Communicable Diseases

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

I understand that HC Nursing programs involve the study and care of people throughout their lifespan and that these people may be well or ill. By participating in caregiving activities, I may be exposed to infectious diseases, such as Hepatitis B, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Influenza, COVID-19, 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 the 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 (see the agency's Exposure Control Plan). I understand that this generally involves 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 at this time. I will receive a 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 referrals.

If I am uncomfortable with the idea of caring for patients with infectious and/or communicable diseases. I will discuss my concerns with the nursing faculty at the College.

It is recommended that I inform the 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 caregiving 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 that are involved in my role as a nursing student at HC. I consent to follow the policies and procedures as explained herein.***

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

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

## **Helena College**

### **Bloodborne Pathogen Student Policy**

Students in any academic, research, or occupational program at Helena College who are at risk for bloodborne 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 student's files within the department that requires 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 that preclude immunization.

Effective June 1999, students are required to present the following information prior to admittance into the nursing program before their first potential exposure to human blood or other potentially infectious materials. Students will not be allowed in areas or settings that 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**

- 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 Helena College, 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.
- 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 Human Resources Office.
- The faculty or clinical instructor must also complete a general accident/incident report in Maxient <https://cm.maxient.com/reporting.php?HelenaCollege>

#### **Training**

Student training shall be done prior to the student's first potential exposure to bloodborne pathogens. The training shall include the requirements of the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, universal precautions, and the Helena College policy. The training may be incorporated into class materials in NRSG 232 Foundations of Nursing.

*Your signature below indicates that you have read and understand the "Bloodborne 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 an 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 the exposure incident in detail:	
What actions were taken immediately following the incident?	
What precautions were in use at the time of the 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>	
<input type="checkbox"/> The student referred to the 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 a physician	
Other comments:	

## **Helena College** **Statement of Functional Abilities**

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

1. Stand for extended periods of time
2. Work at a fast pace for extended 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), including the ability to perform activities in the presence of distractions.
6. Communicate effectively with patients, patients' families, physicians, and staff
7. Hear vital signs with a 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 fine or small print on medication containers, and 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 emergency situations
19. Ability to obtain and maintain BLS certification for the program's duration.

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

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Acknowledgement of Requirements for Personal Effort and Commitment for Success

Helena College's Nursing Program, like most nursing programs, requires 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 in this program. However, student learners must assume responsibility for their own success and be actively engaged in shaping their learning. It is important that students understand program expectations:

- 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 a minimum of 6 hours of study time each week and a 1 credit lab, at least 2 hours of study time per week.
- While we understand your need to work to support yourself or your family, most students find it extremely difficult to work full time while in the nursing program. Clinicals are scheduled when facilities have available space and on days that Helena College has clinicals. These days and times are subject to change with short notice. Students are expected to be available for the scheduled clinical hours. Most clinicals occur on day shift, but clinical time may include evenings, weekends, or nights.
- It is expected that students will attend all classes and clinical rotations. Missed clinical time may result in failure of courses. Please do not schedule vacation plans, family events, or appointments that affect class, lab, or clinical attendance. Absences are challenging to make up due to the fast pace of material presented in class and the limited availability of clinical experiences.
- Nursing schools are rigorous. 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.
- You are expected to arrive prepared for class, lab, or clinicals. This will include extensive reading, pre-clinical preparation, and other assignments prior to arriving at class/clinical.
- Nursing exams are frequently structured like the nurse licensing exam (NCLEX). This will include questions 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.
- 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.*

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## **Professional Behavior Rubric (see Appendix A)**

Professionalism within the role of the student nurse is an **expectation** of the Helena College Nursing Program **in both didactics, lab, and clinicals**. All students are expected to communicate and behave in a professional manner. This includes respect for your instructor, your peers, and yourself. Attendance, preparation, and participation in all areas, including classroom, lab, and clinical settings, are also expected behaviors.

Helena College Nursing Department's professional behavior is evaluated in each course and each semester. 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.

***Student's signature indicates you have read and understand professional behavior expectations.***

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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



## Photograph Release Form

I hereby grant permission to the Helena College University of Montana and the Montana University System, its agents, and others working under its authority, for 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 do further certify that I am either of legal age or possess full legal capacity to execute the foregoing authorization and release.

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Employer Contact Release Form

I hereby allow Helena College Department of Nursing to contact my employer to assess the employer's program satisfaction with graduates of Helena College Nursing for entry-level positions.

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_

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

## Helena College University of Montana

### Receipt of Handbook

It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in the Nursing Program to read and adhere to all of 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
- Bloodborne Pathogen Student Policy
- Student Exposure Incident Form
- Statement of Functional Abilities
- Professional Behavior Rubric
- Photo Release Form
- Employer Release Form
- Receipt of Handbook

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

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student initials \_\_\_\_\_

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

Director of Nursing Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_