SouthernUnion

State Community College
Health Sciences Division

Nursing Program
Student Handbook

2023-2024

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THE CONTENT IN THIS HANDBOOK SUPERSEDES THE COLLEGE CATALOG AND STUDENT HANDBOOK,

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Nursing Program at Southern Union! You join a very select group of students who have attended Southern Union's nursing program since 1977. A distinguished group of men and women have graduated from the Nursing Programs at Southern Union, passed the licensure examination, and entered the employment setting with clinical skills second to none. Southern Union has an excellent reputation, primarily because of the graduates' performance and attitude following graduation. The graduates who preceded you significantly shaped this nursing program by offering valuable observations, opinions, suggestions, criticisms, and insight from a student's perspective. Your input as a student, and later as a graduate, is equally important to this nursing program, college, andcommunity.

Southern Union values every student who attends the College and respects every student's rights and privileges. This *Student Handbook* has been prepared to allow you to carefully review the opportunities, rights, responsibilities, and policies that apply to you as a nursing student. Unless otherwise designated in a nursing course syllabus, these policies apply to each nursing course in which you enroll. If, for any reason, routine progression through the program is interrupted, policies in the *Student Handbook* and *College Catalog* at the time of *readmission/reinstatement* will apply. After you have read this handbook, you will be asked to provide a digital signature indicating that you have read and understand the policies outlined in this handbook.

Each person at the College is committed to your success – as a student, a professional, and most importantly, as an individual. If you need additional assistance, our doors are always open to you. Again, welcome to Southern Union.

Rhonda Davis MSN, RN
Dean of Health Sciences

Lisa Shiver DNP, RN
Nursing Department Chair

PROGRAM INFORMATION

STATE APPROVAL & NATIONAL ACCREDITATION STATUS

Southern Union State Community College's **Associate Degree Nursing** program is approved by the Alabama State Board of Nursing and accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The last self-study and on-site visit from the Alabama Board of Nursing was in Fall 2019 and from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing in the Spring of 2021.

Southern Union State Community College's **Practical Nursing** program is approved by the Alabama State Board of Nursing and accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The last self-study and on-site visit from the Alabama Board of Nursing was in Fall 2019 and from the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing in the Spring of 2021.

Comments or complaints can be directed to:

Alabama Board of Nursing
RSA Plaza, Suite 250
770 Washington Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130-3900
(334) 242-4060

Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing
3343 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 850
Atlanta, Georgia 30326
(404)975-5000
www.acenursing.com

NURSING PROGRAM MISSION & PHILOSOPHY

MISSION

Our mission is to prepare students to practice safe, competent, patient-centered care in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing health care system. We seek to provide full and equal access to opportunities for educational success to meet the community needs.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe that nursing is a dynamic profession, blending science with the use of evidence-based practice and clinical reasoning and the art of caring and compassion to provide quality, patient-centered care.

We believe learning is an interactive process in which faculty and students share responsibility to meet program outcomes. We believe in using educational methods that are current and supportive of students in the teaching and learning environment. Learning is enhanced by the presentation of information from simple to complex.
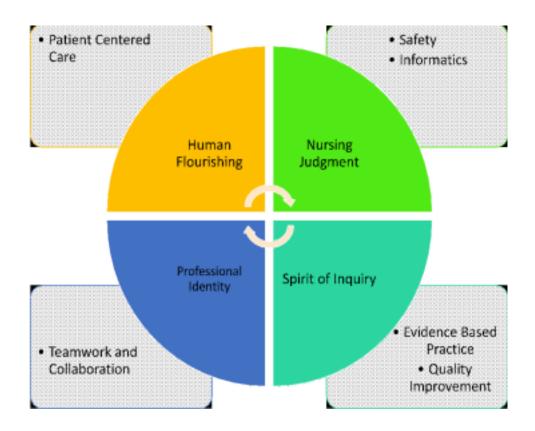
Nursing is guided by standards of practice and standards of professional performance. Standards reflect the values and priorities of the nursing profession. Therefore, we have integrated standards from the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) and National League of Nursing (NLN) into our philosophy as part of our core values.

Practical Nursing End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes/Graduate Competencies (Semester 3)	Associate Degree Nursing End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes/Graduate Competencies (Semester 5)
Human Flourishing Promote the human dignity, integrity, self-determination, and personal growth of diverse patients, their families, and oneself to provide individualized, culturally appropriate, relationship centered nursing care (NLN, 2014).	**Human Flourishing** Advocate for patients and families in ways that promote their self-determination, integrity, and ongoing growth as human beings (NLN, 2010).
Patient-Centered Care Advocate for the patient and family in the provision of compassionate and coordinated care to support the health, safety, and well-being of patients and families (QSEN, 2012).	**Patient-Centered Care** Recognize the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for the patient's preferences, values, and needs (QSEN, 2012).
Nursing Judgment Make judgments in practice, substantiated with evidence, that integrate nursing science in the provision of safe, quality care for diverse patients and their families in collaboration with the health care team (NLN, 2014).	**Nursing Judgment** Make judgments 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 (NLN, 2010).
Informatics Incorporate information and technology within own scope of practice to support safe processes of care (QSEN, 2012).	**Informatics** Use information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making (QSEN, 2012).
Safety Demonstrate the effective use of strategies to reduce risk of harm to self or others (QSEN, 2012).	**Safety** Minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance (QSEN, 2012).
Professional identity Articulate a unique role as a member of the healthcare team, committed to evidence-based practice, caring, advocacy, and safe quality care, to provide optimal health care for diverse patients and their families (NLN, 2014).	**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 (NLN, 2010).
Teamwork and Collaboration Function competently within own scope of practice as a member of the health care team (QSEN, 2012).	**Teamwork and Collaboration** Function effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision making to achieve quality patient care (QSEN, 2012).
Spirit of Inquiry Collaborate with healthcare team members, utilize evidence, tradition, and patient preferences in predictable patient care situations to promote optimal health status (NLN, 2014).	**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 (NLN, 2010).
Quality Improvement Utilize various sources of information to review outcomes of care identifying potential areas for improvement of the quality and safety of care (QSEN, 2012).	**Quality Improvement** Use data to monitor the outcomes of care processes and use improvement methods to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems (QSEN, 2012).
Evidence-Based Practice Implement evidence-based practice in the provision of individualized health care (QSEN, 2012)	**Evidence-Based Practice** Integrate best evidence-based practice with clinical expertise, patient/family preferences, and values for delivery of optimal health care (QSEN, 2012).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework derived from the philosophy forms a basis for the organization and structure of the nursing curriculum. This framework serves as a guide for nursing instruction in the attainment of student learning outcomes.

The framework consists of concepts that encompass the qualities of a successful graduate nurse. NLN competencies were chosen because they specifically define the competencies of the graduate Associate Degree Nurse. QSEN competencies reflect current contemporary practice. Concepts interlace NLN and QSEN competencies to achieve the goal of providing graduate nurses with the tools needed to provide holistic care in an ever-changing health care delivery system. Each competency includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes to serve as a basis for consistent performance expectations across academic and practice settings.

SUSCC NURSING PROGRAM OUTCOMES

1. Performance on Licensure Exam
   The annual licensure exam pass rate will be at least 80% for all first-time test-takers during the same 12-month period.

2. Program Completion
   50% of the students admitted will graduate within 100% of the time of the stated program length beginning with the first required nursing course.

3. Job Placement
   90% of the graduates seeking employment will be employed one year after graduation in a position for which the program prepared them.

4. Program Satisfaction
   90% of graduates responding to the graduate survey distributed within one year after graduation will indicate satisfaction with the program.

5. Continuing Education in Field
   60% of responding graduates will indicate they are continuing their education in the healthcare field.

ADN DEGREE / PN CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

1. Earn a minimum of 25% of all credits applied to the degree at Southern Union.

2. Complete at least 18 semester hours in discipline-specific courses required in the program of study at Southern Union.

3. Successfully complete a program of assessment.

4. Earn total credit hours (including transfer and native) equal to the minimum number of credit hours required in the program at the time the degree/certificate is granted.

5. Complete all requirements for graduation at Southern Union within one calendar year from the last term of attendance.

6. Comply with all formal procedures for graduation in accordance with College policy. See College Catalog.

ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM (ACCS)
STANDARDIZED NURSING CURRICULUM

	Theory Credit Hours	Weekly Theory Contact Hours	Lab Credit Hours	Weekly Lab Contact Hours	Clinical Credit Hours	Weekly Clinical Contact Hours	Total Credit Hours	Weekly Total Contact Hours
First Semester*								
NUR 112 – Fundamentals Concepts of Nursing	4	4	2	6	1	3	7	13
MTH 100 (or Higher)	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
BIO 201 – A & P I	3	3	1	2	0	0	4	5
Total	**10**	**10**	**3**	**8**	**1**	**3**	**14**	**21**
Second Semester**								
NUR 113 – Nursing Concepts	4	4	1	3	3	9	8	16
ENG 101 – English	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
PSY 210 – Human Growth and Development	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
BIO 202 A & P II	3	3	1	2	0	0	4	5
Total	**13**	**13**	**2**	**5**	**3**	**9**	**18**	**27**
Third Semester***								
NUR 114 – Nursing Concepts II[+]	5	5	0	0	3	9	8	14
NUR 115 – Evidence Based Clinical Reasoning	1	1	0	0	1	3	2	4
SPH 106 or 107 – Speech	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Total	**9**	**9**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**12**	**13**	**21**
Fourth Semester								
NUR 211 – Advanced Nursing Concepts	4	4	0	0	3	9	7	13
BIO 220 – General Microbiology	2	2	2	4	0	0	4	6
Total	**6**	**6**	**2**	**4**	**3**	**9**	**11**	**19**
Fifth Semester****								
NUR 221 – Advanced Evidence Based Clinical Reasoning	3	3	0	0	4	12	7	15
HUM (Ethics preferred)	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
Total	**6**	**6**	**0**	**0**	**4**	**12**	**10**	**18**
Program Total	**44**	**44**	**7**	**17**	**15**	**45**	**66**	**106**

A course grade of "C" or higher is required for all nursing <u>and</u> academic core courses.

*Upon successful completion of NUR 112, students are eligible to apply to take the Nursing Assistant Certification Examination (NACEP) to become a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA).

** Upon completion of NUR 113, students are eligible to apply to take the Medication Aide Certification Examination (MACE) through the Alabama Board of Nursing to become a Medication Aide.

***Upon successful completion of all third semester coursework within the curriculum, students are eligible to apply to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN).

****Upon successful completion of all fifth semester coursework in the nursing curriculum, students are eligible to apply to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN).

+ NUR 114 must be taken prior to, or concurrently with NUR 115.

NURSING PROGRAM CONTACT HOURS

	PN Curriculum	ADN Curriculum
Academic and Nursing Theory Contact Hours	480	660
Academic and Nursing Lab contact Hours	195	255
Nursing Clinical Contact Hours	360	675
Total Program Contact Hours	**1035**	**1590**

ADN MOBILITY

In addition to the general admission requirements for the College and the nursing program, admission to the Associate Degree Nursing Mobility program requires:

a. Non-nursing applicants to have an AAS degree and current licensure or certification as an Emergency Medical Services - Paramedic, Medical Assistant Technologist, Physical Therapist Assistant, Radiologic Technologist, Surgical Technologist; and for Practical Nurses to have a certificate and current unencumbered or non-restricted license as a Practical Nurse in Alabama.
b. One year of full time work experience with direct patient care in field of study documented on company letterhead and signed by HR or employment administrator.
c. Proof of CNA course completion for non-nursing applicants (certification not required).
d. Unconditional admission to the College (see College catalog for requirements).
e. 2.5 grade point average (GPA) calculated on completed academic core coursework, and current or previous Southern Union students must have a minimum 2.0 GPA or higher at SUSCC.
f. Transfer students must enter SUSCC on clear academic status (cumulative 2.0 GPA).
g. Official transcripts in Records Office from ALL postsecondary institutions attended.
h. Official score on ACT National or ACT Residual (minimum composite score of 18)
i. Completion of all prerequisite general education courses (20 credit hours) with a minimum grade of "C": BIO 201, BIO 202, ENG 101, PSY 210, MTH 100 or higher, and SPH 106 or SPH 107.
j. Application for ADN Mobility Program by deadline.

First Semester

Courses	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credit	Contact
NUR 209- Concepts for Healthcare Transition Students*	6	1	3	10	18
First Semester Total	**6**	**1**	**3**	**10**	**18**

Second Semester

Courses	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credit	Contact
BIO 220- General Microbiology	2	2	0	4	6
NUR 211- Advanced Nursing Concepts	4	0	3	7	13
Second Semester Total	**6**	**2**	**3**	**11**	**19**

Third Semester

Courses	Theory	Lab	Clinical	Credit	Contact
NUR 221- Advanced Evidence Based Clinical Reasoning	3	0	4	7	15
HUM (Ethics preferred)	3	0	0	3	3
Third Semester Total	**9**	**0**	**3**	**12**	**18**

A course grade of "C" or higher is required for all nursing <u>and </u>academic core courses.

*Students who have successfully completed NUR 209 will be awarded 15 additional non-traditional hours at completion of the ADN Mobility Program. These hours will be documented on the SUSCC transcript as NUR 999.

APPROVED HUMANITIES ELECTIVES

In addition to Literature, disciplines include but are not limited to: Area/Ethnic Studies, Art and Art History, Music and Music History, Philosophy, Ethics, Religious Studies, Theater, and Dance. Southern Union offers the following classes that are transferable to four-year institutions.

- ART 100 Art Appreciation
- ENG 271 World or American Literature I
- ENG 272 World or American Literature II
- MUS 101 Music Appreciation
- HUM 101 Intro to Humanities
- IDS 102 Ethics
- THR 120 Theater Appreciation

GENERAL INFORMATION

COLLEGE ACTIVITIES

Students have the opportunity to participate in College wide activities which serve to broaden the total academic experience. Activities vary from campus to campus and appeal to a variety of interests. Activities are described in the *College Catalog,* coordinated through the Student Services Office on the Wadley Campus, and posted on bulletin boards and/or announced in class.

College sponsored clubs and organizations provide opportunities to share similar interests and work toward common goals. Please see the *College Catalog* for a list of approved organizations. You are encouraged to participate. Nursing students particularly may be interested in belonging to the Student Nurses' Association. A nursing faculty member serves as an advisor for this organization which participates at the local, state, and national level. The faculty members encourage students to become active in professional organizations, and this is a great way to start!

NURSING STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student representatives have the primary role of liaising with faculty, staff, and students as a way of enhancing communication and student involvement in decision-making processes. Student representatives will be invited to participate in the decision-making processes during nursing faculty meetings and other meetings surrounding special topics. Student representatives may be responsible for coordinating special events for individual nursing courses and participating in the Health ScienceAwards Ceremonies. Two (2) student representatives will be nominated by their classmates to represent each class. If a student representative does not progress in the nursing program with their class, a new representative will be appointed by the nursing faculty.

FUNDRAISING

The Dean of Health Sciences and Dean of Students must approve all fundraising activities *in advance***.** Fundraising is allowed only by organizations/clubs which are officially recognized by the College. The senior officer of the organization should gain approval from the Program Director/Chair and then submit a written request (forms are available from the Health Sciences Division) to the Dean of Health Sciences. Upon approval by the Dean of Health Sciences, the request will be forwarded to the Dean of Students. Following approval from the Dean of Students, fundraising activities may proceed.

SMOKE-FREE AND TOBACCO-FREE POLICY

Because Southern Union State Community College is committed to providing a safe and healthy working and learning environment for the students, faculty, and staff on its campuses, it is a smoke and tobacco free environment.

The use of all forms of tobacco products on property owned, leased, rented, in the possession of, or in any way used by Southern Union is expressly prohibited**.** "Tobacco Products" is defined as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes and any other smoking devices that use tobacco such as hookahs or simulate the use of tobacco such as electronic cigarettes.

Further, this policy prohibits any advertising, sale, or free sampling of tobacco products on Southern Union properties. This prohibition includes but is not limited to all areas indoors and outdoors, buildings and

parking lots owned, leased, rented or otherwise used by Southern Union. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in all vehicles – private or public vehicles - located on Southern Union properties.

This policy applies to all persons who enter the areas described above, including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, contractors and subcontractors, spectators, and visitors. All events hosted by a Southern Union shall be smoke and tobacco-free.

VISITOR POLICY

Southern Union State Community College welcomes visitors. Visitors are expected to abide by the regulations of the college. Students are held responsible for the conduct of their guests. Children must be under the supervision of their parents and are not to attend classes. Visitors parking permits are available from campus police on Wadley and Opelika campuses and administrative offices on the Valley campus.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Southern Union State Community College is committed to protecting its students, staff, and visitors from harassment, intimidation, and exploitation as prohibited by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and of Title VII (Section 703) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Harassment includes, but is not necessarily limited to, slurs, jokes, or other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, or disability. Harassment also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, graphic, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment refers to behavior of a sexual nature which interferes with the work or education of its victims and their co-workers or fellow students. Sexual harassment may involve the behavior of a person of either sex against a person of the opposite sex, when

• submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or educational opportunities;
• submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting that individual;
• such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Harassment of employees or students by employer, other employees, other students, or non- employees is a violation of this policy. Any person who believes herself or himself to be subjected to such harassment, intimidation, and/or exploitation should first tell the person responsible to stop the action. In addition, the person should contact a college official (faculty member or staff member) as promptly as possible after the harassment occurs. The college official will take appropriate action to resolve the complaint which may include a referral to Gary Branch, the Coordinator of Title IX and College Grievance Officer. The telephone number is (334) 745-6437.

RESPONSIBILITY IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

The main purpose of instruction is to promote student learning. This means that teachers direct all matters dealing with courses. That does not mean that teachers bear sole responsibility for students' education. Students need to follow a teachers' guidance, study, do homework, and prepare for class to master the information and skills being taught. Students cannot expect a good grade in a course without putting in

several hours of studying for each hour of scheduled class time. The recommended amount of student time is 2 hours per day for each hour of class.

Extra-curricular activities, including jobs, will not affect teachers' expectations and should not interfere with students' preparation for classes. Teachers should use their expertise and experience to prepare and present the subject of a course in the best possible way.

Teachers (that is, *anyone* who teaches) will do their best to provide a disciplined yet comfortable and supportive classroom environment. They will encourage questions and questioning, although students should remember that insight often comes from struggling with a problem rather than being given the answer.

The ultimate responsibility for learning lies with the student. Although faculty members will teach, guide, assist, and encourage, learning is the responsibility of the student. Learning is hard work, and full-time students should consider "studenting" to be a full-time job. A college's priority is their students. While students pay tuition to attend school, the tuition provides the student access to the expertise of the faculty members. Students are responsible for evaluating their instructors honestly and candidly to contribute to each teacher's effectiveness and professional growth.

PARTICIPATION IN PROGRAM OF LEARNING

Students have the opportunity to participate in the development, conduct, and evaluation of the program. The students may contribute through semester evaluation of the course work and instructors, through participation in faculty meetings, and through evaluation of the program and curriculum after completion of the program.

The semester evaluations are distributed at the end of the semester to all college students and solicits anonymous comments regarding course content, instructors, instructional tools, assigned coursework, and examinations. End of semester evaluations are a course requirement therfore, course grades may be withheld until all semester evaluations have been completed. Students are asked to evaluate the entire curriculum at the completion of the program and six months to one year after graduation.

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS / CHAIN OF COMMAND

Should a problem arise during the semester, you should first strive to solve it with the instructor or student involved. If no agreement is reached or dissatisfaction results, you should consult the course coordinator. If this does not solve the issue you may make an appointment with the Program Director/Chair. The Dean of Health Sciences is then consulted if the problem remains unresolved.

CHANGES TO PROGRAM - INFORMING STUDENTS

Policies and procedures are communicated to students by means of the Health Sciences or program specific handbook, course learning management system, the College Catalog, and institutional website. This handbook is revised regularly to provide current and accurate information about the program on the Southern Union web site. Annual updates are required; however, changes may occur during the academic year.

Changes in program, policies, and procedures will be announced to each class by the instructors and copies describing such changes will either be distributed to each student individually or posted on bulletin boards in the classrooms, or outside the faculty office and on the course learning management system (Canvas). Instructors and the Program Director will be available to answer questions regarding any changes.

Students are required to submit documentation upon entry into the program and annually (Fall Semester) that they have read and understand the current handbook.

COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – WEB BASED MATERIALS

Courses in the Health Sciences division are augmented using the course management system known as Canvas. Students will be expected to access these materials as outlined in the course syllabus. For students who do not have a computer at home, computers and printing services are available in the Learning Resources Center. Students will be expected to acquire these resources.

HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM

The awarding of a college degree attests that an individual has demonstrated mastery of a significant body of knowledge and skills of substantive value to society. Any type of dishonesty in securing those credentials therefore invites serious sanctions. Examples of dishonesty include actual or attempted cheating, plagiarism*, or knowingly furnishing false information to any college employee.

Plagiarism is defined as submitting anything for credit in one course that has already been submitted for credit in another course, or copying any part of someone else's intellectual work – their ideas and/or words – published or unpublished, including that of other students, and portraying it as one's own. Proper quoting, using APA formatting (current edition), is required. Students must properly cite any quoted material.

There will be no toleration of plagiarism of any person's work, including that of another student. Work turned in to faculty must be the original work of the particular student. This also includes giving false information to the faculty about a student's use of another student's past paperwork in a class, false student clinical activities, i.e.: patient information or clinical hours. If a student **knowingly** submits false information, he or she will receive a failure from the course. In addition, any form of cheating will not be permitted. If a student is found to be cheating during testing or on a required activity, he or she will receive a "zero" for that activity and a possible failure for the course.

Violations of the Academic Honesty Code include, but are not limited to the following:

- Looking on another student's paper during a test or examination or communicating in any way with anyone other than the test administrator/faculty/proctor;
- Using **unauthorized** materials and/or devices in the preparation of any assignments or in the taking of any tests or examinations;
- Having in the immediate testing area materials or devices not expressly authorized by the test administrator;
- Accepting or providing unauthorized assistance in the preparation of assignments or the taking of any tests and examinations;
- Submitting as your own work essays, term papers, lab reports, or other projects which have been prepared by others;
- Obtaining, possessing, or gaining knowledge or answers to a current test or assignment before it has been distributed to the class and without the knowledge and consent of the instructor;
- Gaining, without authorization, access to the work of another student (ex: accessing the computer file of another student);
- Plagiarizing (presenting as one's own the ideas, data, and/or works of another);
- Inventing data or information in the preparation of assignments except when such invention is expressly

authorized;

- Violating supplementary academic honesty codes which have been adopted and approved in individual divisions of the college and distributed to students within those divisions.

If the incident is referred to the Dean of Students, suspension or expulsion from the college may result.

These "Standards of Conduct" apply to all students regardless of their mode of learning (inclusive of online students also).

If a student is found cheating on an exam or committing plagiarism, a grade of zero "0" will be assigned for that exam or assignment. Further disciplinary action will be taken at the discretion of the Dean of Students.

Tests may not be duplicated in any form including, but not limited to: handwritten, photocopy, video or tape recording.

Personal, portable electronic devices including cameras, hand-held devices, smart watches, laptops, or cell phones must not be visible/accessible during exams or scheduled exam reviews. Cell phones must be turned off or set on vibrate or silent mode.

ACADEMIC HONESTY CODE /ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
STUDENT BEHAVIOR

The Southern Union Health Sciences Department does not exercise control over the conduct of students in their private lives; however, when a group of students or an individual student acts as a recognized representative of a Southern Union Health Sciences Program or participates in an off campus activity sponsored by the Health Sciences Department, appropriate standards of conduct will be prescribed. Any conduct by a student shall be subject to review and appropriate action taken by the Health Sciences Department whenever it appears that the conduct has resulted in a hindrance or restriction of educational purposes or processes of the Health Sciences Department or when that conduct demonstrates a threat to the safety and well-being of others.

If at any time prior to graduation and during the course of participation in professional training as a Health Science student or in fulfilling other responsibilities as a Southern Union State Community College student, the student demonstrates patterns of behavior which constitute unprofessional conduct or which encroach on the student's ability to fulfill his or her responsibilities as a student, it will result in appropriate corrective action which may include suspension or expulsion from the Health Science program. Such behavior is defined to include, but not necessarily limited to, any of the following:

- failure of a student to notify appropriate persons of absence from scheduled learning experiences;
- dishonesty in interactions with staff or instructors;
- failure to adhere to required dress code;
- unsafe practices; the use of inappropriate language;
- being consistently late in fulfilling scheduled responsibilities
- failure to fulfill appointments; or
- failure to maintain confidentiality in matters related to educational responsibilities.
- inappropriate behavior while in uniform
- unprofessional conduct

The demonstration of severe physiological or psychological disorders which interfere with a student's ability to fulfill academic responsibilities or infringe on the student's future abilities to fulfill professional responsibilities will be cause for appropriate corrective action to include referral to a proper agency for professional diagnosis and treatment and/or suspension or expulsion. Failure or refusal to cooperate in this type of endeavor can result in suspension or expulsion from the Health Science program.

Abuse of alcohol which interferes with a student's ability to fulfill academic or professional responsibilities in the Health Science program or the illegal use of other drugs and substances will result in suspension or expulsion from the Health Science program.

ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL/DROP

A student may be dropped administratively from any course for:

1. Failure to complete college registration properly;
2. Failure to fulfill conditions of registration in those cases when a student may have been allowed to register on a conditional basis;
3. Falsification of application and/or records such as health insurance;
4. Failure to fulfill other conditions of admissions and/or registration;
5. Failure to comply with student conduct standards;
6. Failure to attend class (as); and
7. Failure to comply with "Standards or Scope of Practice" as established by the Alabama Board of Nursing, or other regulatory or licensing agencies for programs of study in the Health Sciences Division.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL

Students may elect to withdraw from a course prior to the published semester withdrawal date. It is the students responsibility to formally withdraw from a course. The student will receive a 'W' for any course dropped. If a student elects to withdraw from NUR 114, the student must also withdraw from NUR 115. For purposes of reinstatement into the nursing program, a course withdrawal is considered a semester of non-progression. Please see the Academic Policies in the SUSCC College Catalog and/or the Reinstatement Policy in this handbook for additional information.

MEDICAL / CATASTROPHIC WITHDRAWAL

A medical or catastrophic withdrawal may be granted in circumstances that are outside of the students control in which a serious personal life situation prevents the student from attending classes, clinical or lab. Both withdrawal options are intended to be considered on a case-by-case basis and may require additional documentation. To request a medical withdrawal, please contact the Nursing Department Chair. Please see the Academic Policies in the SUSCC College Catalog for additional information regarding a catastrophic withdrawal.

ATTENDANCE POLICY / TARDINESS

Students are expected to attend all classes for which they are registered. Each student should recognize at the beginning of his/her college career that a mature acceptance of his/her academic responsibilities is a requisite

for accomplishment in college; this applies particularly to class attendance. Any class sessions missed, regardless of cause, reduces the academic opportunities of the student. When a student is absent, the student is responsible for all announcements, content covered in class and for any assignments.

A student **may** be dropped administratively from any course for failure to attend class(es) when the student has missed more than 20% of the total number of hours that the class meets. The number of absences resulting in administrative withdrawal may differ in programs that lead to board licensure or certification but must be clearly stated in the course syllabus. The form to be used to request a student be withdrawn from a class appears in the appendices.

CELL PHONES

Cell phones must be turned on silent or vibrate during class time. Communication by any inappropriate means of communication during class is strictly prohibited. If a student has a situation in which they expect a call during class time, then it is the student's responsibility to alert the faculty member. The student will be asked to step outside the class to take the call. If this situation occurs during a test, the student should arrange with the faculty member to answer the call. At no time should the student have the cell phone in a direct patient care area at clinical. Taking a picture during clinical is considered a violation of HIPAA.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE USE

Smart phones, smart watches, tablets, and/or cellular phones are not allowed during testing. The use of electronic devices in the clinical settings is allowed, as long as the device is being used as a clinical aide. Wireless headphones (EX: airpods) are not permitted in the clinical setting. While these devices can be a great asset to the student, it is the student's responsibility to realize the boundaries needed with the use of these devices in order to maintain HIPAA compliance, as well as professionalism**.** SUSCC's HIPAA policy will apply to the use of electronic devices, while in the clinical setting.

The taping of lectures may be allowed for studying purposes. Students are not allowed to retransmit lectures without the explicit consent of the instructor. (Examples of transmission are, but not limited to posting lectures on websites {You Tube, Facebook, etc.}, and dispersion of copies of recorded lectures. This includes both whole lectures and portions of lectures).

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY/ SOCIAL MEDIA

Definition: As non-limiting examples of the Social Networking sites/social media this policy is intended to cover are Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and any other site that is normally considered under social networking.

The taking of photographs, texting, using personal email, and the use of social media at clinical sites is strictly prohibited.

Students are advised to use social media cautiously and to avoid disclosing any information that could be considered confidential patient information. Any disclosure, intentional or unintentional, of information that could lead to the identification of a patient will result in appropriate disciplinary actions up to suspension from the college. Removal of an individual's name, or face, or image, is not sufficient to protect identity or confidential information. The use of privacy settings that are available on many social networking sites, does not guarantee that information will not appear in public and is thus not deemed sufficient to protect confidential patient information.

Students are **not** to make negative or disparaging or unprofessional remarks about fellow students,

instructors, patients, patient visitors, clinical sites or other healthcare professionals through social media. Any negative or disparaging remarks, intentional or unintentional, through social media will be considered unprofessional and will be considered a form of misconduct. This type of misconduct will be subject to appropriate disciplinary actions.

The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Do not save confidential or sensitive patient information, or information of any sort which could serve as identifying information, on your personal computer or other electronic device
- Email or texting correspondence with faculty should be treated confidentially and should not include patient identifying information
- Do not transmit any patient-related information or images through social media. Do not take pictures or videos of patients or record discussion with cell phones or other personal devices
- Limiting access through privacy settings is not deemed sufficient to protect privacy and confidentiality of information. There is no such thing as a "private" social media site
- Comply with clinical agency regulations regarding use of computers, cameras, electronic devices and cell phones while present in the clinical agency
- Always maintain patient privacy and confidentiality
- Report breaches of confidentiality or privacy to appropriate discipline instructors promptly.

A violation of this policy will result in appropriate disciplinary action up to and including suspension from the college.

VIDEO RECORDING / PHOTOGRAPHY

The Southern Union Health Sciences Division develops and implements events and initiatives to promote the overall well-being of the college, to create awareness of the college's mission, history, and contributions to the region, and to foster positive relationships with prospective students, alumni and friends of the college.

Public relations and marketing activities include, but are not limited to, distributing press releases and news stories concerning college activities, developing and distributing publications regarding college mission and programs, participating in community activities, and designing and implementing marketing material for print and electronic media.

Any student who wishes not to be video recorded or have photographs taken during events or initiatives must notify the staff/faculty prior to the scheduled event date.

COMPUTER COMPETENCE

Graduation Requirement for Health Science students: Graduates must show evidence of basic competence in the use of computers. Basic competence shall be measured by the student's ability to engage in computerized testing, use the course management system to access course information and submit required assignments, use applications to process online course materials, use computerized software at clinical agencies, and complete web-based assignments. Though no testing is required to satisfy this computer competency, students must self-evaluate their abilities to complete these and other computer-based tasks.

COMPUTERIZED TESTING

Students will need to arrive at the computer laboratory or designated location at the designated time. Students are not permitted to enter the testing area prior to the beginning of the scheduled testing time. No food or

drinks are allowed in the lab. Students may only bring a pencil and a basic calculator. If paper is needed, faculty members will supply you with a blank sheet to be handed in at the completion of the test. No cell phones or hand-held devices are allowed at your desk. Book bags must be left at the front of the classroom or on the side. The students are allowed only to access the test in progress. No other programs or internet applications should be open on the taskbar or used at this time. Once the test is complete and submitted, the student may review the test if allowed by the faculty member. Once the test is complete, the student will end the testing session and exit the computer laboratory. Students may not check email, surf the web, or go to other web sites during, or after the test. **ANY** violation in this policy will result in the student being referred to the Dean of Students for violation of the Academic Integrity policy in the college student handbook/catalog and program handbook.

COMPUTER LABS AND INTERNET

Use of Southern Union State Community College's computers to access software or information on the Internet indicates that the user will comply, both in letter and spirit, with the policies established for the College's computer labs. Students are not to reconfigure, load, download, copy, delete, or in any way alter the software programs or computer configurations.

Internet access is limited to instruction purposes and is not to be used for entertainment. The user must be aware that information retrieved from the Internet may not have been verified, validated, or authenticated by a properly credentialed source to assure its accuracy. Information accessed on the internet or other computer software available is to be used in a professional and responsible manner. Southern Union State Community College isn't responsible for information which is considered offensive in nature or is misused by the user.

Information accessed on the internet is not to be used for illegal purposes and is not to be used to transmit threatening, obscene, pornographic, or harassing materials. Users of the internet are not to interfere with or disrupt network users, services, or equipment. Disruptions include, but are not limited to, unsolicited advertising, propagation of computer worms or viruses, and using the network to make unauthorized entry to other machines accessible via the network.

Southern Union State Community College and The Alabama Supercomputer Authority reserve the right to monitor and review all traffic for potential violations of this policy and have final authority for the determination of violations and subsequent penalties. Penalties include, but are not limited to, disciplinary action by the College.

Use of Computer Labs

1. Software is not to be loaded, unloaded, downloaded, or reconfigured.
2. Computers are not to be turned off while a program is running.
3. Food, drink, and children are not allowed in computer labs.
4. Computer space must be cleaned-up prior to leaving the lab.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES (ADA)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against any qualified person regardless of his or her disability. The College strives to create a welcoming environment and will work in good faith to meet the needs of all populations. All reasonable and appropriate accommodations for qualified disabled students, applicants, or employees, will be met unless doing so would present an undue hardship to the College.

To request accommodations, students with disabilities should provide documentation of the disability to the ADA Coordinator on their campus. The documentation should address the specific accommodation and should be dated within three years of the enrollment date. Once the documentation is filed with the ADA Coordinator, the student's instructors will be notified in writing of the requested accommodation. Please allow one week for all accommodation arrangements to be made. Students should update their information with the ADA Coordinator for the courses for which they are seeking accommodations each semester.   Effective Spring 2023, all ADA computerized tests will occur in a designated location specifically set up for ADA testing.

CLASSROOM

CLASSROOM INTERACTION

All interactions within the classroom are expected to be honest and respectful. Teachers set the tone and demeanor of their classes. Discussion and questions are encouraged when appropriate. Questions and comments by students should be thoughtful and relevant.

Unsanctioned talking, eating, sleeping, and reading unrelated material during a class will be considered rude and disruptive. Students will be asked to leave the classroom if rude or disruptive to the learning environment. Students who are asked to leave must meet with the faculty member, Program Director, and/or Dean before he or she will be allowed to return to class.

Instructors will begin and end class promptly in accordance with the published class schedule. Students are expected to arrive on time and not leave or prepare to leave until the class has been dismissed. Faculty members may close the door and not allow students to enter a class until a class break.

COURSE SYLLABI

Each nursing course has a syllabus that is the student-teacher agreement for that specific course. The syllabi will be available online through the Canvas learning platform. The syllabus contains the course objectives, each of which must be achieved to pass the course; the requirements of the course; and the evaluation methods. **It is the responsibility of the student to read and fully understand the contents of the course syllabi at the beginning of the semester for each course enrolled.** If you have questions or need clarification, make an appointment with the faculty member. Syllabi are projections of activities that will take place over several months; however, teachers may modify activities to fit unforeseen circumstances. Changes will be announced in class and/or provided in writing via the course management system Canvas.

COURSE EVALUATION / GRADES

A minimum grade of "C" in theory (75 or above) and "satisfactory" clinical performance is required to successfully complete the course.

A=Excellent (90–100); B=Good (80-89); C=Average (75–79); D=Poor (60–74); F=Failure (59–below)

Individual exam grades <u>are not</u> rounded to the next higher score.

A **PASSING** overall course grade of 0.5 or higher is raised to the next whole number. For example, if an overall course grade is 89.6, then an A will be recorded for that course grade.

A **FAILING** overall course grade of 0.5 or higher grade <u>will not</u> be rounded to a passing letter grade. For example, if an overall course grade is 74.9, then a D will be recorded for that course grade.

Exam questions within the Health Sciences division may be but not limited to the following: multiple choices, short answer, matching, fill in the blank, order ranking, hot spot, select all that apply, scenario based and essay. Your tests will be primarily on a computer.

Students must pass all components of the course to progress to the next course. If a student fails skills lab or clinical, he/ she will be given an F for the course. The student must apply for reinstatement. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.

TESTING POLICY

Students of Southern Union State Community College Nursing Program will be required to take nationally normed tests throughout the curriculum. Students must take the exams at assigned times. Students attending the Wadley or Valley campus may be required to travel to take tests in the Health Sciences computer lab on the Opelika Campus. All exams are monitored. Students will not be allowed to bring anything into the room except a pencil and a basic calculator. Students experiencing extenuating circumstances immediately prior to any scheduled exam are responsible for contacting their course faculty prior to taking the exam to request other testing arrangements. Once an exam is attempted, the score is final.

HESI EXAM SCORING

HESI computerized exams are used for final exams in each course. The "recommended" score for HESI exams is 900 or above. Grades for HESI exams administered in the SUSCC Nursing Programare scaled by the 3- or 4-digit HESI Score accordingly:

HESI Raw Score:	Grade is:
1000 or greater	100%
975 - 999	95%
950 – 974	90%
925 – 949	85%
900 – 924	80%
880 – 899	78%
860 – 879	76%
850 – 859	75%
840 – 849	74%
820 – 839	72%
800 – 819	70%
775 – 799	68%
750 – 774	65%
725 – 749	63%
700 – 724	60%

650 – 699	55%
600 – 649	50%
500 – 599	40%
499 or less	10%

MAKE-UP TESTS

If unable to take an exam at the scheduled date and time, the student is expected to notify the instructor **prior** to the exam. If a student fails to notify the instructor prior to the scheduled exam time, the student will be required to submit an appeal and documentation supporting the absence to the Admission Progression Committee to request permission to make up the missed exam. Make-up exams are given at the discretion of the instructor and are not guaranteed to the student. Make-up tests may include fill-in the-blank, essay, and listing. Students may take only <u>one make-up</u> test per semester.

TEST REVIEW

Test results will not be reviewed except immediately after the test is given or as scheduled by the faculty member. Students will not be allowed to review tests at the end of the semester to challenge question answers for points. Students who wish to challenge a test question must do so in writing **within 1 business day** following the exam. Students who challenge test questions must provide the course faculty with documentation from a reputable source supporting the reasoning for the challenge.

ACCESS TO INSTRUCTORS/ TUTORING

Students will be able to meet with their instructors during designated office hours/ tutoring hours. Office hours are posted outside each faculty member's office and/or in the course syllabus**.** Students must schedule appointments with faculty at a time that is mutually convenient for both the student and faculty. Appointments should be kept by both parties; if circumstances prevent this, the person unable to make the appointment should contact the other and attempt to reschedule. Students who are reinstated into the program are required to meet with their current course faculty on an ongoing basis throughout the semester. The faculty for the current course enrolled will serve as the student mentor.

APPEAL POLICY/ FORMAL DUE PROCESS PROCEDURE

The College has established a grade appeal procedure to be used if a student has a valid reason to believe that a grade he/she received for an examination, a written/oral presentation, a clinical, a lab, or a project is inaccurate or an inaccurate grade has influenced the final grade in the class. This procedure will be followed for all students whether enrolled in courses held on campus in a traditional classroom setting or courses that are delivered via distance learning formats. **Formal appeals are accepted only when a student believes the instructor did not assign the grade correctly based on the syllabus guidelines. Students may also appeal the final grade in the class if he/she believes the final grade is inaccurate (calculation error).**.

The Academic Appeal Policy and Appeal Procedure steps are outlined in detail in the SUSCC College Catalog on the SUSCC website.

ATTENDANCE POLICY (CLASSROOM)

1. Each course syllabus *must* include the following items a. through viii.
>a. The number of absences allowed for the class, if any.
>b. Handling of late arrivals and early departures, if allowed.
>c. Policy for course make-up work, if allowed.
>d. Students on financial aid programs are responsible for knowing their particular attendance policies, if any. Those students must contact the financial aid office to receive written attendance reporting requirements.
>e. Students are responsible for the knowledge, skills, and abilities not acquired due to absences and for assignments made or due from the first day of the class.
>f. Clinical absences are not considered classroom.
>>i. Students are expected to attend each class session, to arrive on time, and to remain for the entire class session.
>>ii. Faculty will record attendance from the first day of the semester.
>>iii. Excessive absences, regardless of the reason or circumstance, may interfere with the student's ability to successfully complete the requirements of the course.
>>iv. In such cases, the student should withdraw from the class before the last day to drop with a grade of "W". Withdrawal from class may affect eligibility for federal financial aid. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office for information.
>>v. When a student is absent from class, the student is responsible for all material covered in the class and for any assignments made in class.
>>
>>vi. The instructor is not required to review with the student any material missed as a result of being absent, nor is the instructor required to notify a student if the student is in danger of a lowered grade due to any graded work missed.
>>vii. The instructor is not required to provide an opportunity for make-up work. The instructor's policies regarding make-up work shall be clearly defined in the syllabus to be available on the first day of class.
>>viii. Attendance requirements in programs that lead to board licensure or certification may differ from this policy.

2. Each instructor should <u>discuss attendance policies</u> during the first class meeting including, but not limited to:
>a. Number of absences allowed – if any
>b. Handling of late arrivals and early departures - if allowed.
>c. Course make-up work, if allowed.
>d. Students on financial aid programs are responsible for knowing their particular attendance policies, if any. Those students must contact the financial aid office to receive written attendance reporting requirements.
>e. Administrative withdrawal if used.
>**f.** An absence *may* be excused due to **extenuating circumstances.**
>g. **Extenuating circumstances** include, but may not be limited to:
>>i. Active military duty
>>ii. Jury duty/court appearance
>>iii. Death in the immediate family - This includes husband, wife, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, sister, or an individual with a close personal tie to the student. For purposes of application of this policy, an individual with a close personal tie to the student is limited to the following: a person standing *in loco parentis*; where unusually strong personal ties exist due to a student having been supported or educated by a person; father-in-law; mother-in-law;

son-in-law; daughter-in-law; brother-in-law; sister-in-law; nephew; niece; granddaughter; grandson; grandfather; grandmother; aunt; uncle.

iv. Illness - Students who give birth or experience an illness or injury which requires, but is not limited to, hospitalization, surgery, or more than one week's absence may be required to provide a physician's statement.

Attendance requirements in programs that lead to board licensure or certification may differ from this policy.

3. Appeal Process:
   a. Students that have been dropped for failure to attend may submit, in writing, an appeal to the course faculty member.
   b. Facultymember will evaluate the appeal for extenuating circumstances and will notify the student within five working days as to the outcome of the appeal.
   c. If a student is to be allowed to return to class, the faculty member must submit a request to the Student Records Office for the student to be re-enrolled.
   d. If a student is not allowed to return to class, the student may file a written appeal to the appropriate department chair who will notify the student within five working days as to the outcome of the appeal.
   e.   If the matter cannot be resolved at the department chair level, the student may make a final written appeal to the Health Sciences Admission Progression Committee. The decision of the committee is final and will be communicated to the student within five working days from the date the written appeal is received.

4. Hybrid and online course syllabi are required to contain the same attendance guidelines as other courses.

CLINICAL / LAB / SIMULATION

ELIGIBILITY FOR CLINICAL ROTATIONS

Southern Union is contractually obligated to comply with all immunizations, facility orientations, and other clinical requirements set forth by agencies used for clinical rotations which are subject to change.

All Health Science students are required to have background checks and drug screens completed to meet the requirements of clinical agencies in accordance with Joint Commission (JC) standards. Background checks and drug screens will be conducted by one vendor approved by the clinical facilities and the Health Sciences Division. Background checks or drug screens conducted by any vendor or agency that is not approved will not be allowed. Background check results should be completed before newly admitted or returning Health Science students will be allowed to register for courses. Students who have been out of the Health Science program sequence for one semester or more must repeat the criminal background check and drug screen. The student is responsible for paying for all background and drug screens required by the clinical agencies.

Students contract directly with the approved vendors and confidential results are maintained by the Health Records Coordinator. The clinical agency(ies) reserve the right to approve or deny the student for clinical privileges. Refusal of a clinical agency to accept a student for clinical rotations will prevent a student from enrolling in or participating in any of the SUSCC Health Sciences programs. The student is solely responsible for clearing any refusals/denials reported from the clinical agency. Students who are unable to resolve any denials will be dismissed from the Health Science Program and administratively withdrawn from all enrolled Health Science courses.

Students may not reenroll until the background check is clear. Some clinical settings may continue to require a separate background check, including fingerprints. At any time, the student cannot meet the clinical requirements of the agency; the student will be dismissed from the program and administratively withdrawn at the time the event occurs.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN CLINICAL SETTING

Nursing is one of the professions regulated by the legislative bodies of each state or jurisdiction of the United States to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The laws are designed to prevent incompetent persons from practicing the professions by establishing minimum standards to be metfor licensure.

As part of their educational program, student nurses are entrusted with the responsibility of providing certain kinds of nursing care to clients/patients. In several court decisions, the courts have taken the position that anyone who performs duties customarily performed by professional nurses is held to the standards of professional nurses. Thus, a student nurse is held to the standard of a professional nurse and will be personally liable for negligence if injury results.

It is the responsibility of the clinical instructor to determine that the student nurse has demonstrated reasonable competence to render safe nursing interventions independently or with supervision. **All students must consult with the clinical instructor prior to performing any invasive procedure.** If the clinical instructor's evaluation of the student nurse's behavior or health status indicates that the student is unlikely to provide safe nursing care, the clinical instructor has the legal responsibility to deny, *and will deny,* the student nurse access to clinical learning experience.

Clinical Rotations/Preceptorship: Health Sciences students are required to complete clinical hours in a healthcare facility, simulation center, and those experiences are educational in nature and are designed to develop skills necessary for entry-level competencies. Students are not permitted to concurrently work and complete preceptorship/clinical hours or receive compensation for participation in preceptorship/clinical rotations unless the student is enrolled in a formal apprenticeship contract with the college and employer. Students are not promised, nor should they expect a job at the health care facility as a result of participation in clinical experiences at a health care facility. Students will be given the appropriate grade for the clinical action dictating the refusal by a clinical agency.

Clinical/Preceptorship Hours: Students are expected to attend clinical for the duration of the scheduled clinical/preceptorship shift. Students are not permitted to leave the clinical site for meals unless specific instructions were given prior to the clinical experience.

Students are strongly discouraged from working during the 8 hours immediately prior to a scheduled clinical shift. If at any time the clinical faculty feels or determines that a student is unable to successfully and safely participate in a scheduled clinical rotation, the student will be dismissed from the clinical site.

Student Dismissal: The clinical agency (ies) reserves the right to dismiss a student from clinical due to unprofessional or unethical behaviors. Any time the student cannot meet the clinical requirements of the clinical agency the student will be dismissed from the Health Science Program and administratively withdrawn from all Health Science courses at the time the event occurs. Any Health Science student who is dismissed by a clinical agency is not eligible for admission into a SUSCC Health Science Program at any time.

Representation as a Student: Students may not represent themselves as Health Sciences students or engage in client/patient care except as part of an assigned, planned learning activity in a practice/clinical setting.

UNIFORM GUIDELINES

Uniform: Clean and wrinkle-free Caribbean blue scrubs with embroidered SUSCC logo on right chest. Official Southern Union State Community College ID badges are required to be worn on the left chest at all times during clinical. Pants should not be frayed on the bottom or dragging the ground. Shirts worn under scrub tops should be a neutral color (solid white, Caribbean blue, black or gray). Lab coats, if desired, may be Caribbean blue, black or solid white with the ID badge visible. For women who do not wish to wear pants: Dress/skirt length should be no shorter than the top of the knee with appropriate white socks or hose.

ID Badge: Official Southern Union State Community College name badge is to be worn on the left side of the chest on the uniform at all times while in the clinical agency. Students ID badges must have a current date. Students who do not wear their ID badge will be sent home from clinical.

Shoes: Clean and cleanable, closed toe nursing or athletic shoes which are to be worn only for clinical. Closed toe and closed heel shoes preferred. Open heel shoes must have a heel strap. If unsure about shoe selection, have your shoe approved prior to clinical. No boots.

Jewelry: Limited to wedding rings (ring with stone can be worn if hospital policy allows); watch with a second hand; and small, single, non-dangling earrings. Earrings may be worn only in pierced earlobes. Facial piercings are not permitted. Jewelry may not be worn in any other area of the body that may be pierced and visible to others.

Perfume: Perfume or cologne shall not be worn in the clinical area.

Hair: Clean and confined so that it does not interfere with patient care. Hair must be kept off the shoulders and collar. Hair color must be naturally occurring to humans and style should be within accepted societal norms. Students may not wear hair decorations to the clinical setting such as jewelry and or other articles not found naturally occurring in hair. Headbands must be no wider than 2 inches in diameter. Scarves, hats, and caps are not permitted.

Nails: Natural, short and clean nails only. No clear or colored polish is allowed. Artificial nails, nail tips, gel nails are not permitted.

Personal: Students are expected to maintain necessary personal hygiene including bathing daily, shampooing hair, and using underarm deodorant. Underclothing (including underwear and bras) must not be visible through the uniform.

Tattoos: Tattoos that could be offensive to others must be covered.

Other: A professional appearance is expected. Jeans, T-shirts, shorts, hoodies, sweatshirts or other casual clothing may not be worn at any time at a clinical agency, or while representing SUSCC at various meetings.

Students must also comply with all policies specified by clinical agencies

HEALTH POLICY

Students entering any program in the Health Sciences Division must be aware that they may be exposed to various contagious diseases during their clinical education and career. Precautions to be taken are outlined in the introductory patient care courses. Additional information may be provided by each clinical facility. Students are required to use available protective devices and to use standard (universal) precautions.

Students, upon diagnosis of communicable disease(s) (i.e., chickenpox, measles, flu, etc.), must contact the clinical instructor immediately. Based on current medical knowledge, the instructor will make judgment of communicability and advise the student regarding attendance.

Students in all health care programs must comply with Public Law #102-141, Section 633 and "The Alabama Infected Healthcare Worker Management Act." The law requires that the HIV or HBV infected health care worker report to the State Health Officer his/her condition within 30 days of the time he/she is aware of his/her infection. The infected healthcare worker must realize that any health care provider providing care to an infected healthcare worker must notify the State Health Officer of the infected status within seven days of the time he/she diagnoses or provides such care.

INJURY DURING CLINICAL

If you are injured during clinical experiences (needle stick, back injury, etc.), you must:

1. Notify your clinical instructor immediately.
2. Complete an appropriate incident report/ or variance report required by the agency.

You will be referred to the hospital's Emergency Room to be examined by a physician. The hospital will provide immediate care.

Students who incur a needle stick or any other type of direct risk exposure with a patient may be advised by the clinical agency to begin immediate treatment for HIV. For most effective results, treatment must be started within two (2) hours of exposure. The cost for laboratory tests and medications (until test results are obtained) may be as high as $1000.00.

The student is financially responsible for any illness or injury occurring during clinical rotations; therefore, it is required that students have health, hospitalization, and accident insurance. During clinical rotations, students are not employees of the clinical agency or the college. If injured during clinical rotations, students are not entitled, and will not receive, workman's compensation from either the institution or the health care facility.

SAFETY-Potential Health and/or Safety Hazards: The nature of healthcare education is such that one may be exposed to potential health and/or safety hazards while participating in clinical rotations. With that knowledge and understanding, and on behalf of myself, my heirs, and administrators, I hereby release Southern Union State Community College, its employees, officials, agents, and representatives from any claim of liability for injury, loss, damage, or death that may result or arise from my experience as a student in the clinical agency. I further understand that, if injured at a clinical agency while participating in clinical activities, the clinical agency is not responsible for providing workman's compensation benefits.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

Safety procedures and universal precautions are covered as they relate to the content area and are reinforced throughout the duration of the program. It is the student's responsibility to seek guidance from an appropriate resource if they have any doubts, questions or concerns regarding correct procedure.

CLINICAL ASSIGNMENTS (WRITTEN AND/OR DIGITAL)

Requirements for satisfactory completion of clinical assignments vary with each Health Sciences course. See each course syllabus for requirements. Clinical assignments may be written and/or digital in nature and are to be submitted on the determined due date. Assignments that are not submitted by the due date may be considered unsatisfactory.

CLINICAL ABSENCES/TARDINESS

All college laboratory and clinical experiences are considered clinical. It is expected that the student will assume responsibility for punctual and regular clinical attendance. When it is impossible for the student to attend a clinical session due to an extenuating circumstance, it is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor or the assigned unit at least 30- 60 minutes prior to the beginning of the clinical experience. Contact must be done via text/email/telephone message to the faculty.

If the student is to be late/tardy (arrive after the posted scheduled clinical start time), the assigned unit or instructor should be notified as soon as possible. Students who are more than 15 minutes late/tardy, will not be permitted to remain in the clinical setting. More than 2 tardies in a semester is unacceptable and will result in a clinical unsatisfactory. Students who are tardy or absent and do not follow the appropriate procedure for notification of the instructor will receive an unsatisfactory for the clinical day. Daily clinical exams/ quizzes may be given. Requirements for satisfactory completion of lab/clinical are listed in each course syllabus.

All clinical absences, even when made up, count toward the student's total absence hours. Under no circumstances shall a student miss an excess of 10% of clinical hours during the semester. The exact hours for each class are found in each course syllabus. If excessive hours are missed, the student's progression in clinical rotations and the allied health program will be prohibited. The student will be referred to the Health Sciences Admission Progression Committee. The student will submit documentation for the absences and the committee will review and make the decision as to whether the student may remain enrolled in the program. The decision of the committee is final and is considered the appeal for the student. For example, if the total number of clinical/lab hours for a course is 135 hours, when a student misses more than 13.5 hours of on campus laboratory or clinical hours, he/she will not be allowed back in clinical until the committee reviews his/her appeal. Failure to be eligible for clinical rotations will result in dismissal from the program.

All missed lab time must be made up in the skills lab with independent practice. Missed clinical time must be made up on a day designated by the instructor. Failure to complete all hours of lab /clinical may result in a grade of I (Incomplete) for the course and failure to progress to the next nursing course until lab/clinical time is made up.

CLINICAL EVALUATION

Purpose: The purpose of the evaluation is to ascertain that the student has met measurable objectives deemed necessary for the competent practice of nursing.

Students will be evaluated on clinical performance in two ways.

1. Daily Self Performance (DSP)- This formative evaluation is done each day by the student and the clinical faculty members. Students have 24 hours to complete this evaluation. It will be done through E*value. Any area that the faculty finds to be below the rating of 3 (three) may require that the student meet/talk with the course coordinator/full-time faculty (See below).

Grading: A grade is assigned for each competency or group of previously met competencies based on the scale above. The faculty/instructor should initiate conferencing and/or disciplinary measures if the student performs unsatisfactorily or unsafely. The clinical grade will be denoted as follows: (5) Exemplary, (4) Proficient, (3) Competent, (2) Needs Improvement, (1) Unsatisfactory, (0) Unsafe Practice/Critical Behavior

EXEMPLARY = 5

- SUMMARY: Performs exemplary nursing care without assistance or direction from the clinical instructor except where necessary per clinical guidelines. The student is self-driven and demonstrates well-above expected level based on course criteria. "Above and beyond" compared to their peers.

PROFICIENT = 4

- SUMMARY: Performs proficient nursing care with little assistance or direction from the clinical instructor. Performed above expectations and was mostly self-driven. "A touch above"

COMPETENT = 3

- SUMMARY: Performs competent nursing care for skill and semester of student. Required some guidance or direction from the clinical instructor, but was safe for nursing practice and met clinical expectations. "Satisfactory/Met guidelines"

NEEDS IMPROVEMENT = 2

- SUMMARY: Performed below-average nursing care and required more direction or guidance from the clinical instructor than that of their peers. The student had to be corrected or cued many times. Could adequately demonstrate knowledge with direction, but not independently. "Missed the mark"

UNSATISFACTORY = 1

- SUMMARY: Provided minimal nursing care, did not actively participate in the clinical or was not prepared to the level expected for course criteria. Required extensive guidance, redirection, or assistance to function for the clinical day, however, did not perform any unsafe or critical behaviors. "At risk"

UNSAFE/CRITICAL BEHAVIOR = 0

- "Risky/Dangerous"

2. **DSP sign off** -At the end of each semester, each student and one full time faculty member will review all their formative (daily) evaluations.

3. **Critical Behaviors** are those behaviors that must always be met when representing SUSCC: examples include the clinical/laboratory setting, simulation center, professional meetings, and community outreaches. Failure to meet these expectations will result in disciplinary action. Clinical failure can result for the following:

- Practice or behaviors that are outside the facility policy as stated in student orientation and or college or student handbook.
- Practice outside of the student's training and scope of practice.
- HIPAA violations (see policy).
- Intentional or unintentional safety practices that result in harm or potential harm to patient, student, or staff.
- Unprofessional behaviors.
- Pattern of unsafe behavior.

Clinical Unsatisfactory is given for acts that are deemed to be inappropriate or when a student is not performing at the expected level. Unsatisfactory clinical performances are placed in the student's file and are carried from semester to semester. Repeated unsatisfactory clinical performance will constitute a clinical failure. It is the student's responsibility to meet with course coordinator/full time faculty and set up remediation and plan of action. Clinical time that is deemed unsatisfactory must be made up.

Clinical Failure is given for a critical behavior (as listed above) or for repeated, uncorrected unsatisfactory clinical performance. When a clinical failure is given the student will receive a grade of "F" for the course. Readmission to the program will be determined by the Admission Progression Committee. If readmitted, prior clinical unsatisfactory/failure will remain in the student's file and will be considered in any future clinical performance reviews/evaluations

CLINICAL FAILURE

Students who receive a clinical failure prior to the withdrawal date published in the yearly college calendar will receive a course grade of "F" on their transcript at the time the grade is earned. The student will not be allowed to withdraw from the course. Students enrolled in two NUR courses during the same semester who receive a clinical failure in one course will be withdrawn from the second NUR course.

CLINICAL SKILLS LABORATORY POLICY

Students will have three opportunities in the skills lab to demonstrate competency. Failure to demonstrate competency with the skill after the third attempt will result in course non-progression.

The student will be responsible for demonstrating competency of specified skills in the skills lab. The instructor will teach, demonstrate, and supervise the practice of the skill. The student is responsible for required readings and review of videos and handouts as applicable. The student should make arrangements for additional practice of the skill if needed.

E-value is utilized for some lab skills. The student is responsible for logging skills performed and patient demographics into E-value. The student will attempt to check-off the specified skill through one-on-one observation by an instructor. The skills validation will be determined to be either successful (S) or unsuccessful (U). Evaluation will be based on the instructor's final assessment.

The student will get three (3) opportunities to successfully complete each skill. The student cannot repeat a check-off attempt on the same day of a failed attempt. If unsuccessful on the first try, the student must do the following:
- Review of skill via reading procedure and video (if applicable)
- Practice in lab (as permits) and outside of lab time as needed
- Demonstration to another student who has previously checked off
- Arrange a second check-off attempt with the course coordinator

If unsuccessful on the second try, the student must do the following:
- Review of skill via reading procedure and video (if applicable)
- Practice in lab (as permits) and outside of lab time as needed
- Demonstration to faculty member
- Arrange a third (final) check-off attempt with the course coordinator

If the student is unsuccessful on the third try, the student will not be permitted to progress in the nursing course and will be withdrawn from that nursing course.

If a student is absent from a scheduled check-off validation for any reason, that check-off attempt is forfeited and a makeup will not be provided.

HIPAA – HEALTH INSURANCE PORTABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY ACT OF 1996

Title II of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 requires the protection of all individually identifiable health information. This protected health information must be kept confidential whether electronic, paper, or oral. In order to satisfy HIPAA compliance, the Southern Union State Community College Health Sciences Programs requires all electronic devices to be password protected, and all information to be de-identified. Due to the seriousness of this policy HIPAA violations will be considered a severe offense and therefore the consequences will be severe.

CONFIDENTIALITY/ HIPAA

All patient/client information is confidential. Protecting patient confidentiality is the law. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996 came into effect in April 2003. Noncompliance can result in monetary, civil, and criminal penalties.

Southern Union State Community College Health Science division takes HIPAA violations very seriously. In order to help preserve patient confidentiality, levels of HIPAA violations have been developed and will be strictly enforced for every student that is enrolled in Health Science courses at Southern Union. This policy consists of 3 levels of violations with repercussions outlined in each level.

Records of student violations of the SUSCC Confidentiality/ HIPAA policy will be maintained in the student's health science file.

LEVEL 1: Constitutes an act of negligence.

Examples of a level one violation include but are not limited to:

- Leaving patient information unattended.
- Turning in assignments with a patient's name attached
- Sharing passwords with other classmates.
- Not signing off of a computer in the clinical setting.
- Not password protecting any personal device that is used to record patient information

The Level 1 violation will result in a student being given a reprimand (STA, Clinical unsatisfactory etc.) and counseling by instructor. A Level one violation **carries** over to subsequent semesters.

LEVEL 2: Repeat violation of a level one incident within the **same semester** or **subsequent** **in** a Heath Science program (does not have to be the same incident).
OR
Intentional violation of the SUSCC Confidentiality/ HIPAA policy.

Examples of a level 2 violation include but are not limited to:
- Unauthorized access to patient records.
- The discussing of Patient's, Patient's family and or visitor's information with others not involved in the patient's care
- Discussing patient, patient's family and or visitor's information on social media sites
- Discussing the patient's, patient's family and or visitor's information whereas others not involved in the direct care of the patient may overhear your conversation.
- Sharing/Discussing the identity of a patient, patient's family and or visitors outside of the clinical setting, even if not discussing information regarding their care.

The level 2 violation will result in the student receiving a clinical failure for the course that the offense took part in. Additionally, the student will be academically withdrawn from all health science courses. The student will have to go through the application process for possible readmission to the program. This offense will stay in the student's permanent file. If readmitted to a health science program, any further violation of the SUSCC HIPAA policy will automatically move the student to a Level 3 violation.

LEVEL 3: Additional violation of the SUSCC Confidentiality/ HIPAA policy after already _ receiving a Level 2 violation.
OR
A malicious offense used to cause harm to a person, or used for personal gain

The level 3 violation will result in a student receiving a clinical failure for the course that the offense took part in. Additionally, the student will be academically withdrawn from all health science courses. The student will not have the option of returning to that program or any program of study in the Health science division.

The following are some general guidelines for students regarding HIPAA compliance:

- Students should not discuss patient/client information with anyone except for clinical personnel and those in the Health Science program who are involved in your education and adhere to the same confidentiality (e.g., faculty, graduate colleagues).
- Client records should never leave the clinical agency.
- Students should never save patient/client sensitive information (with identifying information) on their computers.
- E-mail correspondence with faculty should also be treated confidentially and identifying information about patients/clients should not be included.
- All documentation related to clinical clients must be treated as a legal document and confidentiality respected and maintained.
- Client names should not be included in clinical paperwork, case presentations, or on notes.
- Photocopying of client records is **NOT** permitted in any clinical setting.
- Records should not have client's names or initials when turned in for clinical paperwork
- Students should NEVER discuss ANY information, no matter how insignificant it may seem, on any social media site.
- For more information regarding HIPAA please visit http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/
- All violations of the SUSCC confidentiality/ HIPAA will remain active for two years after the incident or until the completion of the currently enrolled program (whichever is longer) regardless of the program. The active violation will transfer to any Health Science program from any other Health Science program.

SIMULATION CENTER OVERVIEW

The Health Sciences Simulation Lab is located in TB1 (Technical Building 1) near the Student Union. Parking can be located at the Lake Condy side entrance. The simulation lab provides an active learning environment and replicates the health care settings in which the students practice. Students may be involved in a teaching/learning simulation or an active scenario, in which students practice and develop skills through simulated hands-on learning experiences. The simulation lab is considered a clinical site; therefore, **ALL** clinical/laboratory policies are applicable to the simulation lab.

SIMULATION CENTER GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Wear the appropriate school uniform, name tag, hair up, etc.
- Bring **COMPLETED** prep work if you were assigned any. This is your ticket in the door. Failure to do so will prevent you from completing your simulated clinical experience.
- Be on time. Arrivals later than 15 minutes will not be allowed to complete the simulated clinical

experience.
- Do not leave the simulation lab unless you have completed the simulation evaluation in E-Value. Know your Password.
- Be prepared. In any given simulation, you may need your stethoscope, information gained from completing your prep work, and previous skills learned.
- Cell phones should be put away unless you are using nursing central or something pertaining to the simulation. Please turn off or put on vibrate.
- Don't be disrespectful or disruptive: If you are not in the active scenario, please remain quiet and learn from your peers.

SIMULATION CENTER CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

During your participation in a simulated clinical experience at the Southern Union Simulation Center, you will be both an active participant in simulated scenarios and an observer.
The objectives of the simulated clinical experience are to educate health science students to better assess and improve their performances in evolving health care situations. The simulated clinical experience is designed to challenge health science student's response and judgment in a controlled environment, and develop clinical reasoning.

In order to preserve the realism of the scenarios used in the Southern Union simulation center and to provide an equitable learning experience for each student, all persons using the simulation center will be required to maintain confidentiality regarding their experience. The simulation center confidentiality policy applies to the simulation itself, as well as all patient information made available to the students. You are also expected to maintain strict confidentiality regarding both yours and others performance, whether seen in real time, on video or otherwise communicated to you.

You will be discussing the scenarios during debriefing, but we believe that "all that takes place in the simulation environment—stays in the simulation environment". Due to copyrights, and to maintain optimal simulation experiences for the other learners who will be following you in the center, you are to maintain strict confidentiality regarding the specific scenarios, as well as what happened during the simulation experience. A breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary actions see: the student code of conduct in the Southern Union college catalog.

SIMULATION CENTER VIDEO RECORDING

Simulations may be recorded and used for purposes including, but not limited to debriefing, faculty review, educational, research, public relations, advertisement, promotional and/or fundraising activities. **Any student who wishes not to be video recorded must notify the simulation staff/faculty upon arrival to the simulation center.**

STUDENT HEALTH INFORMATION/ CLINICAL RECORDS

ACEMAPP: CLINICAL RECORD PLATFORM

All student health records should be uploaded by the student into ACEMAPP (acemapp.org). The student is responsible for keeping their annual (12-month) ACEMAPP subscription and all health records current. Students can access their school health records through ACEMAPP (acemapp.org) therefore, the school will not provide copies to clinical agencies after the student graduates.

Please allow up to 2 business days for documents to be reviewed and approved in ACEMAPP by the Health Sciences Records Clerk. If a clinical document is denied, a comment will be provided in the student's ACEMAPP account. Documents are not reviewed after business hours.

Clinical facility orientation documents are assigned for students to complete on the ACEMAPP platform. It is the students responsibility to ensure that their ACEMAPP account is current. Instructions on how to check your ACEMAPP account can be found at https://vimeo.com/417734538. Students with incomplete ACEMAPP accounts will be denied access to the clinical site(s) and may receive a clinical unsatisfactory.

MAINTAINING HEALTH RECORDS

Students enrolling in a health science program must complete **all** clinical health requirements prior to enrolling in any Health Science class. The health record must be in date for the entire semester. For example, if a TB skin test expires on October 12, the student must repeat the test before he or she can register for fall semester. **There are no exceptions to this rule.** Students who fail to complete the health records by the last day to register for the semester will be considered non-progression and must reapply for admission into the program.

RELEASE OF CLINICAL INFORMATION

Health Sciences students must give Southern Union State Community College permission to release information regarding clinical and classroom performance to clinical agencies, including those with whom the student may apply for employment. Students must also give permission for required clinical documentation such as but not limited to the following: immunizations, TB skin test, CPR, drug screens, and criminal background checks to be available to the clinical agencies as requested.

REQUIRED IMMUNIZATIONS

Clinical affiliation agreements between SUSCC and our partnering clinical agencies detail the terms under which each clinical site will provide on-site student educational experiences. Provisions related to immunizations require each student to be compliant with the current clinical facility policies relevant to the clinical experiences.   The following immunizations are required for students enrolled in the nursing program:

- **Hepatitis B:** All students are required to receive the Hepatitis B vaccine series or have a positive Hepatitis B titer. The vaccine series is a series of three injections. The student must have the first injection prior to the first term of registration. The second injection must be received one month after the initial vaccination; the third injection must be received six months after the first vaccination. All Hepatitis documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.

- **Varicella:** All students are required to receive two Varicella immunizations or have documentation of a positive Varicella titer. The student must have the first injection prior to the first term of registration. The second injection must be received two months after the initial vaccination. History of illness/ childhood illness does not meet the Varicella requirement. All Varicella documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.
- **Influenza (Flu):** All students are required to get an annual influenza vaccine. Waivers are accepted. The deadline for the flu vaccines each year is October 1. All influenza documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP. Unvaccinated students must wear a simple mask during flu season while at the clinical site.
- **COVID:** All students are required to complete a full series of the COVID vaccination. Student waivers are permitted. Boosters are not required at this time. All COVID vaccination documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.
- **Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR):** All students are required to receive two MMR immunizations or have documentation of a positive MMR titer. All MMR documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.
- **TDAP:** All students are required to receive one TDAP immunization. Immunizations are good for 10 years. All TDAP documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.

TB SKIN TEST

A TB skin test is required annually. If a student has a positive skin test, then the student must have a chest x-ray every two years and complete the TB questionnaire annually. All TB documentation must be uploaded into ACEMAPP.

CPR CERTIFICATION / BASIC LIFE SUPPORT (BLS)

All Health Sciences Division students are required to be certified in Basic Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) through the American Heart Association at either the Healthcare Provider level or Basic Life Support level prior to registration each semester. **Red Cross certification is not accepted by the clinical agencies.** Certification must be maintained while enrolled in the program. CPR is current for two years (24 months) from the issue date and must remain current throughout the semester. CPR documentation is uploaded by the student into ACEMAPP.

PERSONAL MEDICAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Each student in the Health Sciences Division must have personal health (medical) insurance throughout enrollment in the program. Documentation must be uploaded to ACEMAPP by the students. Students will not be allowed to register until their provided proof of Health Insurance has been approved in ACEMAPP. If uninsured, medical insurance per semester is available through a third party. Please contact the Health Records Clerk for information.

MALPRACTICE (LIABILITY) INSURANCE

Each student must maintain current malpractice insurance throughout enrollment in any Health Sciences Division program, including semesters without a clinical component. The malpractice insurance is purchased through Southern Union during registration the first semester of classes and each semester thereafter. The cost of the insurance is approximately $10-15 per semester for coverage at the $1,000,000/$3,000,000 level. Payment for malpractice insurance is included in student fees.

PHYSICAL EXAMINATION / HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRE

Students are required to submit upon admission to the Health Science program a health questionnaire completed by their health care provider. The completed health questionnaire is to be uploaded in ACEMAPP.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

The Alabama College System endorses the Americans' with Disabilities Act. In accordance with Southern Union State Community College policy, when requested, reasonable accommodations may be provided for individuals with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are not retroactive. They begin the day the student submits the required form. Students must present reasonable accommodations each semester.

Physical, cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and social abilities are required in unique combinations to provide safe and effective patient care. The applicant/student must be able to meet the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations throughout the program of learning. Admission, progression, and graduation are contingent upon one's ability to demonstrate the essential functions delineated for the Health Sciences programs with or without reasonable accommodations. The Health Sciences programs and/or its affiliated clinical agencies may identify additional essential functions. The Health Sciences programs reserve the right to amend the essential functions as deemed necessary.

In order to be admitted and to progress in the Health Sciences program one must possess a functional level of ability to perform the duties required of a healthcare provider. Admission or progression may be denied if a student is unable to demonstrate the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

The essential functions delineated are those deemed necessary for the Alabama Community College System Health Science programs. No representation regarding industrial standards is implied. Similarly, any reasonable accommodations made will be determined and applied to the respective Health Sciences program and may vary from reasonable accommodations made by healthcare employers.

The nursing essential functions delineated on the SUSCC website (suscc.edu) are necessary for nursing program admission, progression, and graduation and for the provision of safe and effective patient care.

Upon admission, an individual who discloses a disability can request reasonable accommodations. Individuals will be asked to provide documentation of the disability in order to assist with the provision of appropriate reasonable accommodations. The respective College will provide reasonable accommodations but is not required to substantially alter the requirements or nature of the program or provide accommodations that inflict an undue burden on the respective College. In order to be admitted one must be able to perform all the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations. If an individual's health changes during the program of learning, so that the essential functions cannot be met with or without reasonable accommodations, the student will be withdrawn from the Health Sciences program. The Health Sciences faculty reserves the right at any time to require an additional medical examination at the student's expense in order to assist with the evaluation of the student's ability to perform the essential functions.

Requests for reasonable accommodations should be directed to the Southern Union State Community College Disability Services Officer. If reasonable accommodations cannot be made, the student will not be able to remain in the Health Sciences program.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS VERIFICATION

Upon admission to the Health Sciences program, students are required to complete the Essential Functions verification form. This form must be uploaded in ACEMAPP and updated as the student's status changes. You must respond on the verification form if you fully meet the criteria (100%) or are unable to fully meet the criteria (less than 100%). If you are unable to fully meet the criterion, an explanation and/or additional information will be required. Reasonable accommodation may be requested. The Southern Union State Community College Disability Services Coordinator will determine if the accommodations can be met.

Students who give birth or experience an illness or injury which requires, but is not limited to, hospitalization, surgery, or more than one week's absence may be required to provide a physician's statement which verifies:
• That returning to routine class, lab, and clinical activities does not pose undue risk or harm to the student or others with whom the student will come incontact.
• Compliance with the Essential Functions/Technical Standards established for the program of study.

DRUG SCREENS

Student Drug Screen Guidelines
As stipulated by the appropriate discipline specific licensure agency, students must perform in the clinical setting in such a manner that will promote safe patient care. In addition, clinical agencies are obligated to assure that patients are protected to the extent reasonably possible from possible harm due to completion of clinical rotations. This includes drug screening prior to the first clinical experience, random drug screening at intervals and drug screening should a student exhibit behaviors indicative of substance abuse.

Pre-Clinical/Random Screening
All students will receive the drug screening guidelines prior to clinical rotation in the Health Science Programs. Drug screening will be scheduled and conducted by a designated laboratory determined by the school. The fee for testing is to be paid by the student. Any student failing to report for random screening at the designated time must complete testing with the designated laboratory within 48 hours or they will be dismissed from the program. Failure to complete drug screening as required will prohibit the student from completing the required health science courses. Positive drug screens are confirmed by the Medical Review Officer (MRO).

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Readmission to the Program
A student who is unable to complete the required courses due to a positive drug screen may apply for readmission to the Health Science Programs. To be considered for readmission following a positive drug screen, the student must:

- Submit a letter from a treatment agency verifying completion of an approved substance abuse program that meets licensure guidelines for the respective discipline.
- Submit to an unannounced drug screen at the student's expense prior to readmission. A positive screen will result in ineligibility for readmission.
- Submit to an unannounced drug screen at the student's expense prior to readmission and random drug

screen throughout the program. Any additional positive drug screen will result in ineligibility for readmission.

Substance Abuse Verification Process
The Health Science Programs, for the protection of patients, faculty, staff, and students, has the right to require a student to submit to testing for substance abuse at the student's expense when the health science program has reasonable cause to believe that a student is abusing controlled substances. Reasonable cause is defined as, but not limited to, the following:

● Observable phenomena, such as direct observation of drug use and/or the physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug, such as, but not limited to, slurred speech, noticeable change in grooming habits, impaired physical coordination, inappropriate comments or behaviors, and /or papillary changes;
● Abnormal conduct or erratic behavior, absenteeism, tardiness, or deterioration in performance.
● A report of drug use.
● Evidence of tampering with a drug test.
● Information that the individual has caused or contributed to harm of self, visitors, faculty, other staff, or patient as a result of being under the influence of drugs.
● Evidence of involvement in the use, possession, sale, solicitation, or transfer of drugs.

If a faculty member observes such behavior, and if such behavior is observed or validated by another faculty member or clinical agency staff member, the faculty member must dismiss the student from the educational or patient setting immediately and contact the Department Chair/Program Director/designee in order to review the situation.

The Department Chair/designee or program director/designee will then determine if there is "reasonable cause" to test the student for substance abuse.

If another student, or any other individual other than an instructor observes abnormal conduct or erratic behavior of a health science student, the observation must be reported immediately (or as soon as possible) to the appropriate instructor. Once the department chair is notified, the appropriate measures will be taken.

If the decision is made to test the student, the Division Chair, Program Director, or designee will direct the faculty member to make arrangements to have the testing performed immediately within the clinical facility if possible. The student will be requested to sign an informed consent to be tested before the specimen is collected.

The student's failure to consent to the substance abuse test shall result in immediate termination from the Health Science Programs.

NURSING PROGRESSION POLICIES

ALABAMA COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM / SOUTHERNUNION STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE NURSING PROGRESSION POLICY

In order to progress in the nursing program, the following policy should be followed:

1. A total of **two** unsuccessful attempts in two separate semesters (D, F, or W) in the nursing program will result in dismissal from the program.
2. A student may be **reinstated** to the nursing program only one time. The **reinstatement** is not guaranteed due to limitations in clinical spaces. All nursing program admission standards must be met.
3. A student must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the current institution for **reinstatement**.
4. If a student has a documented extenuating circumstance (defined on pgs. 29-30) that should be considered related to a withdrawal or failure, then this student may request a hearing before the Admission Committee or other appropriate college committee for a decision on repeating a course or readmission to the program.
5. ADN students whose second unsuccessful attempt occurs in NUR 211 or 221 may apply for the ADN Mobility program option. These students must meet all admission requirements for the ADN Mobility option, including a 2.5 cumulative GPA, one year full-time work experience with direct patient care as an LPN, and a valid Alabama Practical Nursing License.

Definitions:

Reinstatement: Students who have a withdrawal or failure in a nursing course and are eligible to return to that course will be considered for reinstatement to the program.

Readmission: Students not eligible for program reinstatement may apply for program admission as a new student. If accepted as a new student, the student must take or retake all nursing program courses. **Students are not eligible to apply for admission as a new student to any Health Science program while currently enrolled in the SUSCC nursing program.**

1. Students applying for reinstatement may be required to demonstrate competency in clinical skills.
2. Students who are unsuccessful in NUR112 or NUR 209 must reapply as a new student to the program.

READMISSION / REINSTATEMENT POLICY

Students, who interrupt the specified progression through the program of study for any reason, must apply to return to the program each semester. If allowed to return to the nursing program, the policies in the *Student Handbook* and *College Catalog* at the time of reentering will apply. ***Any nursing student who has withdrawn or has been suspended from the nursing program and subsequently returns must meet the standards and curriculum requirements in effect at the time he or she was readmitted.*** In addition to tuition, students who are reinstated into the program are responsible for all applicable fees/expenses each semester.

Readmission requires:

1. Receipt of completed reinstatement form by admission committee deadline
2. Clinical space availability.
3. Academic eligibility.

a. A 2.0 grade point average from Southern Union coursework.

b. A cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher at SUSCC.

4. Ability to meet and comply with standards and policies in the current *College Catalog* and *Student Handbook.*

5. Reinstatement must occur within one year from the last clinical course or the student must reapply to the program as a new student.

PROCESS FOR REINSTATEMENT

1. Students should first schedule an appointment with the Health Sciences advisor and/or Program Director to discuss eligibility for reinstatement.

2. Students must apply for /reinstatement to the nursing program online by published deadlines. Students who submit reinstatement requests after the deadline may be considered at next course availability.

3. Students must apply for readmission to the college if not currently enrolled. College readmission must be accomplished by published deadlines.

4. Update immunizations and other health records, drug screen, and background check as required for clinical experiences.

5. Students who are reinstated into the program will be responsible for any course expenses (supplies, testing fees, evaluation fees) associated with repeating a nursing course.

TRANSFER POLICY

Students wishing to transfer must:

1. Meet the entry and progression requirements of the institution and the nursing program.

2. Provide evidence that all required general education and nursing courses maintain a grade of C or better taken at another institution and maintain a 2.0 cumulative GPA in all previous college coursework.

a. Alabama Community College System Standardized Nursing Curriculum courses will be transferred without review of the course syllabus.

b. Nursing courses from any other institution are accepted only after review by the accepting institution to ensure content consistency.

3. Must be a student in good standing and eligible to return to the previous nursing programs indicated by letter of recommendation from the Dean/Director of the previous program.

4. Must occur within one year from the last clinical course.

5. Complete at least 25% of the total program at the accepting institution.

6. Acceptance of transfer students into nursing programs is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal requirements does not guarantee acceptance.

7. Validation of skills and knowledge may be required to determine program placement.

8. Must meet acceptability criteria for placement at clinical agencies for clinical experiences.

LICENSURE

LEGAL LIMITATIONS FOR LICENSURE AND EMPLOYMENT
(Alabama Board of Nursing)

According to the Nurse Practice Act of Alabama, the Administrative Code of the Alabama Board of Nursing, application for licensure in Alabama may be denied if a person has been convicted of a felony, is guilty of a crime involving moral turpitude, and/or has displayed other grounds for denial as specified by law. Additionally, many healthcare facilities will not employ a person, even if fully certified and/or licensed, who has been convicted of a felony or who has unfit personal habits including alcohol or drug abuse.

While an applicant may meet the qualifications, final approval to take the licensure examination and become licensed in Alabama is subject to action by the Board of Nursing.

Passing Criminal Background check and admission to the nursing program does not ensure the ability to take a licensure exam.

DENIAL OF A LICENSE

Grounds for denial of an RN or LPN licensure by examination include but are not limited to:

● conviction of a felony
● conviction of a misdemeanor or felony involving moral turpitude or gross immorality
● conviction of a state or federal law relating to controlled substances (may be misdemeanor or felony)
● failure to show good moral character as pertaining to nursing
● abuse of or addiction to alcohol or other drugs
● being mentally incompetent
● unprofessional conduct
● false representation of facts on application for licensure

(Code of Alabama, 1975, Section 34-21-25; Alabama Board of Nursing Administrative Code 610-X-8- .01; 610-X-8-.05)

APPLICATION FOR LICENSURE

Instructions and the application for RN or LPN licensure by examination may be obtained from the state board of nursing websites.

The application for licensure by examination includes questions regarding past arrests or convictions for DUI and/or criminal offenses (misdemeanor or felony) and history of mental illness or chemical dependency. Candidates are advised to respond honestly as failure to do so can result in denial of license.

You will be asked to answer yes or no to the following questions:

1. Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a criminal offense other than a minor moving traffic violation?
2. Have you within the last 5 years abused drugs/alcohol or been treated for dependency to alcohol or illegal chemical substances?
3. Have you ever been arrested or convicted for driving under the influence of drugs/alcohol?
4. Have you within the last 5 years received inpatient or outpatient treatment or been recommended to seek treatment for mental illness?
5. Have you ever had disciplinary action OR is action pending against you by any state board of nursing?

6. Have you ever been placed on a state AND/OR federal abuse registry?

7. Have you ever been court-martialed/disciplined OR administratively discharged by the military?

If you answer "Yes" to these questions, appropriate documents will have to be submitted.

Applications which indicate eligibility for licensure pending examination results will be processed routinely. Applications with an affirmative response to one or more of the aforementioned questions cannot be routinely processed.

The candidate with a past arrest or conviction or history of chemical dependency or mental illness is to submit with the application an explanation of the circumstances involved. Appropriate court ortreatment records may be submitted at that time. The candidate will be contacted byBoard staff and an investigation will be conducted. The application cannot be processed nor can a temporary permit be issued until the matter isresolved.

When warranted, an administrative hearing will be conducted. Appropriate notice of the time, date, and place of the hearing and an explanation of the candidate's rights will be forwarded. Each such disciplinary case is determined individually by the Board based upon the evidence presented. A candidate with questionsregarding his or her application should call the board office for direct response (334) 242-4060.

Information for Persons Interested in Seeking Licensure as RN or LPN Alabama Board of Nursing, 1989.

STATEMENT OF DISCLAIMER

The College reserves the right to change cost, curriculum, course content, calendar, or any other items contained herein as changing circumstances may dictate. All such changes are effective at such times as the proper authorities determine and may apply not only to prospective students but also to those who are already enrolled at the College.

All formats, guidelines, and evaluation criteria as published in this handbook are subject to modification at the discretion of nursing faculty for the purpose of meeting the specific requirements of the changing professional objectives of varying nursing courses. Such modifications will be published in the respective course syllabi and posted in the course management system for the class.