



# Licensed Practical Nursing Program Handbook

**2025-2026**



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## Section I

### Welcome Nursing Students

Congratulations on your acceptance into the River Valley Community College (RVCC) Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN) Program! We are excited that you chose to begin your journey with us.

The LPN program is nationally accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) through 2028. This accreditation ensures that our nursing program meets evidence-based standards of educational quality through continual assessment and evaluation.

The RVCC nursing faculty possess diversity in classroom and clinical expertise. They all are NH Board of Nursing approved educators and bring a variety of nursing experiences and years of clinical practice to share with you in your respective educational journeys.

This **Nursing Student Handbook** is an important tool to ensure understanding of the program policies and expectations of nursing students; please review carefully. During the first week of class, we will review these policies and answer any questions you may have. Along with this handbook, please review the **RVCC Student Handbook** for general policies and procedures. Program policies are subject to revision. Nursing students are notified by written notice of revisions.

We hope you will engage in student activities not only in the nursing program, but also throughout the college. Through these organizations, you will have opportunities to participate in community service events, health activities, and fund-raising. We are excited you have joined our nursing programs and look forward to supporting you throughout your educational journey.

Best Regards,

*Eileen Glover*

Eileen Glover, DNP, MSN, RN-BC, NEA-BC  
Department Chair, Allied Health  
LPN Program Director  
Professor of Nursing

**Full-Time Faculty Roster**

2025-2026

Eileen Glover  
Professor  
Department Chair, Allied Health  
LPN Program Director  
ASN – New Hampshire Community Technical College  
MSN – Walden University  
DNP – American Sentinel University

Heather Newfield  
Associate Professor  
LPN Program Director  
Littleton  
ASN- New Hampshire Community Technical College  
BSN- Chamberlain University College of Nursing  
MSN- Chamberlain University College of Nursing

Constance White  
Associate Professor  
ASN- Vermont Technical College  
BSN - Western Governors University

Sandra LaPointe  
Associate Professor  
LPN Program Director  
Manchester/Nashua  
ASN – Manchester Community College  
BSN – Rivier University

Kim Ambrose  
Associate Professor  
ASN- New Hampshire Technical Institute  
BSN – University of Vermont  
MSN – Walden University

Grace Desrosiers  
Associate Professor  
ASN – Great Bay Community College  
BSN – Southern NH University  
MSN - Southern NH University

## Section II

### River Valley Community College Mission Statement

River Valley Community College transforms lives by providing a quality and affordable education through innovative personal approaches to lifelong learning and career pathways.

### Nursing Program Mission Statement

The Nursing Program advances the mission of the River Valley Community College through excellence and accessibility to pre-licensure nursing programs of study. The Nursing Program supports students in achieving their personal and professional goals as responsible and contributing members of the nursing profession and of their communities. Our program is committed to providing innovative, evidenced-based curriculum that prepares students for evolving health care systems, commitment to outstanding patient care, and encourages lifelong learning. This program prepares students to take the national council licensing examination and enter practice as either practical or registered nurses.

### Nursing Program Philosophy

The nursing metaparadigm of person, health and wellness continuum, nursing, environment, and teaching/learning are foundational concepts which merge with the values and beliefs of the nursing faculty to create and maintain the nursing curricula. Supported with a foundation of science and liberal arts, the curriculum focuses on health and wellness and nursing concepts. The curriculum focuses on acquisition of pre-licensure knowledge, skills, and attitudes of QSEN competencies using the Dreyfus model of skill acquisition and the work of Dr. Patricia Benner. Nursing students begin the program of study at the novice level, and by integrating classroom theory, laboratory and clinical learning experiences, end the program at the proficient level, preparing them for clinical practice as a competent new graduate nurse.

**Person:** The faculty believes that every person is a holistic being with unique biophysical, psychosocial, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. People share common and universal needs for physiologic well-being, safety, love and belonging, recognition and self-esteem, and self-actualization. An individual's needs are influenced by society, culture, genetics, and the environment. People function within their individual context and have the ability and right to make their own health care decisions that maximize their health potential. A person has a perception of health and that perception of health influences their behavior and choices.

**Health Wellness Continuum:** Health is a dynamic state along a continuum, and includes physical, mental, and social well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Maintaining health is a dynamic process and is affected by the developmental stage, the environment and the person's individual beliefs and values. As nurses, we promote the ability of the individual to achieve optimal wellness. Nursing is a unique combination of the arts and sciences. Nurses are compassionate and competent providers of care who protect, promote, and optimize the health and abilities of people.

Nurses take action to prevent illness and injury, alleviate suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response, and advocate for the health care of individuals, families, and groups. The nursing process is a highly interactive, problem-oriented model which nurses use to provide holistic individualized care. The goal of the nursing process is to help people with health care needs to achieve homeostasis or to help them die with dignity. The nurse formulates clinical judgments based on evidence from the natural and behavioral sciences and humanities to accomplish this goal. Nurses use nursing presence to develop a therapeutic nurse-patient relationship to interact with individuals, families and groups.

**Environment:** The environment is comprised of the internal and external forces that create the context in which the person interacts and functions. Internal and external environmental factors affect health outcomes. Along with genetics, personality traits, culture and life choices, the environment is a co-determiner of health and illness. Nurses consider biological, psychological, developmental, sociological, and spiritual dimensions in creating the nurse-patient relationship within a healthy environment that prevents illness and promotes health and wellness.

**Teaching/Learning:** The faculty believes that teaching and learning are cooperative processes with shared responsibility for achievement. Teaching the art and science of nursing requires establishing a partnership between students and faculty. The role of nursing faculty in this process is one of facilitator who provides resources, incentives, and a non-threatening milieu in which the learner is comfortable to engage with others. The role of the learner in this process is that of preparing prior to class, participating in learning activities, and questioning when unsure.

We believe that nursing skills are developed through clinical practice. On-going faculty evaluation of students and students' evaluation of teaching faculty are integrated in each course. These evaluations are essential assessments for program quality improvement and curriculum development. Core nursing competencies advance from simple to complex and are integrated and assessed at regular intervals in the program.

Learning is a continual, life-long process. The faculty believes that the availability of multiple entrance and exit options in nursing education is necessary for adult learners to meet their career goals. The associate degree in nursing provides a foundation for advancement to higher education and an expansion of nursing skills and career options.

The LPN programs adhere to the American Nursing Association (ANA) Code of Ethics.

To access the ANA Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements:

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/Code-of-Ethics-For-Nurses.html>

The 2025 – 2026 Common Academic Calendar is available at:

<https://www.rivervalley.edu/programs-training/academic-calendar/>

### **Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework guiding the nursing program of study is grounded in the work of Dr. Patricia Benner, which utilizes the Dreyfus Model of Skill Acquisition to promote competencies that progress from basic concepts to more complex across the curriculum. At the beginning of the program, individual learners are novice nursing students who, after successfully completing all program requirements, become competent new graduate nurses.

Each course incorporates learning experiences that facilitate student accomplishment of the program objectives related to six areas: patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, safety, quality improvement, informatics, and teamwork/ collaboration. Major concepts threaded throughout the educational experience at River Valley Community College's Nursing Program include the nursing process, the nurse as provider and manager of care, legal and ethical practice, environment, teaching and learning process, the health wellness continuum, person, and professionalism. As a graduate nurse, the individual demonstrates skills, attitudes, and knowledge that are essential for safe and effective nursing practice.

### **End of Program Outcomes**

1. Eighty percent (80%) of students will graduate from the River Valley Community College Practical Nursing Program within one year and seventy-five percent (75%) of students from the River Valley Community College Associate Degree Nursing Program will graduate within two years of the initial admission into the program.
2. The first-time pass rate for River Valley Community College nursing graduates is equivalent to or exceeds 80% pass rate for first-time test takers who are graduates of practical or associate degree nursing programs.
3. Within six months of graduation from the River Valley Community College Nursing Programs, ninety percent (90%) of the graduates will be employed as either Practical or Registered Professional Nurses.

### **End of Program Student Learning Outcomes**

**Graduates of the River Valley Practical Nurse curriculum will demonstrate competency in:**

#### **Patient-Centered Care**

Implement a plan of care that recognizes the patient or designee as the source of control and a full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for the patient's preferences, values, and needs.

As evidenced by:

- Demonstrating culturally competent, patient-centered care for patients and families across the lifespan in a variety of clinical settings using nursing process as a systematic approach for organizing, planning, implementing, and evaluating care.
- Providing equal and respectful care for patients and families from all socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures.
- Using interpersonal skills and professional values to create a therapeutic, caring relationship with the patient and family.

- Demonstrating collaboration and coordination with patients and families when making clinical decisions regarding nursing care.

### **Evidence-Based Practice**

Integrate best current evidence with clinical expertise for delivery of optimal health care.

As evidenced by:

- Participates in data collection and/or other research activities
- Collaborates with other professionals to provide individualized care based on best current evidence, patient values, and clinical expertise
- Locates evidence reports related to clinical practice topics and guidelines
- Participates in the integration of new evidence into standards of practice, policies, and nursing practice guidelines

### **Safety**

Minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance.

As evidenced by:

- Participates in error analysis and systems improvement
- Contributes to the development of effective patient safety plans
- Uses appropriate strategies to reduce reliance on memory and interruptions to reduce the risk of harm to self and others
- Demonstrates effective use of technology and standardized practices that support safe practice
- Demonstrates effective use of strategies at the individual and systems levels to reduce risk of harm to self and others
- Participates in collecting and aggregating safety data
- Uses organizational error reporting system for “near miss” and adverse event reporting
- Communicates observations or concerns related to hazards and errors involving patients and/or members of the health care team
- Prepares timely data collection to facilitate safe, effective transfer of patient care responsibilities during care transitions
- Demonstrates the use of debriefing strategies to reduce psychological and physical harm to patients
- Utilizes established safety resources to ensure safe and effective practice

### **Teamwork and Collaboration**

Function effectively within nursing and interprofessional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision making to achieve quality patient care.

As evidenced by:

- Demonstrates self-awareness of strengths and limitations as a team member
- Initiates plan for self-development as a team member
- Acts with integrity, consistency, and respect for differing views
- Functions competently within the Licensed Practical Nurse scope of practice as a member of the health care team
- Assumes the role of team member or leader based on the situation
- Initiates requests for assistance when the situation warrants it

- Acknowledges areas of overlap in role or responsibility as a member of a team
- Uses the contributions of others when assisting patients to achieve health goals

### **Informatics**

Use information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision-making.

As evidenced by:

- Accesses needed information accurately and efficiently
- Utilizes sources of data that reflect current standards of practice
- Utilizes appropriate technologies in the process of assessing and monitoring patients
- Uses information effectively to improve nursing practice
- Uses information technology to enhance own nursing knowledge

### **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.

As evidenced by:

- Actively seeks information about quality initiatives in individual care settings and organizations
- Participates in quality improvement processes to make processes of care interdependent and explicit
- Participates in the use of quality indicators and core measures to evaluate the effect of changes
- Participates in the use of quality improvement tools to assess performance and identify gaps between local and best practices

## **Section III**

### **Nursing Program Policies**

The following policies directly relate to processes and expectations of students in the nursing program(s). It is the student's responsibility to read this handbook and be familiar with these policies. Failure to do so does not negate any student responsibility related to violation of any of the policies. Failure to comply with any of the policies in this Handbook may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the course or River Valley Nursing Program.

### **Student Code of Conduct**

#### **Academic Responsibilities and Professional Behaviors**

The following are guidelines of the general academic responsibilities and professional behaviors that are expected of all RVCC nursing students. Students will receive verbal or written warnings of violation of expected behaviors by faculty or the Department Chair. It is then the student's responsibility to modify the behavior for which the warning was given. **Failure to comply to any noted code of conduct violations may result in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the course and possible dismissal from the nursing program.**

#### **Academic Responsibilities**

- Adhere to the college policies/procedures, nursing program policies/procedures, and healthcare facility policies/procedures as noted in current handbooks, CCP modules, orientation modules, and as instructed by nursing faculty.
- Acknowledge that learning is accomplished through faculty facilitation, self-directed learning, and interaction with others.
- Core Liberal Arts Courses
  - Must be completed either prior to or during each respective semester as listed in the Nursing Program Map.
  - Must be completed with a grade of “C” or greater.
  - Core Liberal Arts courses taken at other colleges may be transferred if a “C” or greater grade is achieved and were completed within 10 years. Information can be found in the RVCC College Catalog at <https://catalog.rivervalley.edu/transfer-of-credit>
- Nursing courses
  - Must be completed in sequential order with a passing letter grade of “B<sup>-</sup> (minus) “.
  - All components of the course (lecture, lab, clinical) must be sequentially passed for progression in the program.
  - The entire sequence of nursing courses must be completed within three (3) years from the start of the first course in the LPN program (NURS110R).
- It is recommended that students should work no more than 20 hours per week
- Arrive on time to class, lab, and clinical and be engaged in the learning.
- Attend all nursing classes, lab sessions, and work-based clinical learning experiences.
- Complete homework and other assignments on time and submit according to instructions.
- Complete all work using academic integrity and following the direction of the instructor.
- Check their school email every day when school is in session and every week during vacation time.
- Take personal responsibility for submitting and maintaining current required documents.
- Take personal responsibility for engaging in learning and success in the nursing program.

### **Academic Integrity**

The LPN Program follows the College’s policies on academic integrity, including but not limited to plagiarism and cheating. All students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical behavior in their work. For details on the College’s Academic Integrity Policy, please refer to the following link: <http://catalog.rivervalley.edu/academic-integrity>

### **Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity Policy**

The public expects its healthcare workers to be competent in their jobs and ethical in their approaches. Faculty in the LPN program expects all students to live up to those ideals. Students are expected to complete all assignments, projects, exams, and other assessments using their own knowledge and skills. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as chatbots, text generators, or other generative AI-assisted technologies) to complete or generate any part of coursework, unless explicitly permitted by the instructor, constitutes academic dishonesty and will be addressed according to the college policy for cheating and plagiarism. If a student presents AI-generated content as their own original work, it will be treated as

plagiarism. Tools that simply identify errors in spelling, grammar, and sentence structure without automatically changing the content of the paper are generally acceptable.

Examples of prohibited use of AI includes, but not limited to:

- Submitting AI-generated work as one's own
- Submitting AI-generated work without citation
- Using AI to generate any or all components of assignments, essays, or projects that are presented as the students' original student work.
- Using AI to circumvent other learning or assessment processes.

Resources to guide students in this area:

- College Student Handbook: <https://catalog.rivervalley.edu/academic-integrity>
- Student Code of Conduct Section C: <https://catalog.rivervalley.edu/studentcode-of-conduct>

Instructors in your courses may utilize Turnitin. Turnitin is a tool approved by the Community College System and is integrated into Canvas. Turnitin checks submissions for originality by comparing against a database of web content, student work, and other publications. It checks content to determine whether it appears to be human versus AI generated.

By checking the “end-user license agreement” box when submitting assignments in Canvas, you are consenting to the inclusion of your work in Turnitin's database. If you do not consent you must contact your instructor to discuss the potential for alternative arrangements.

Students may also be asked to comply with a specific set of directions for the type of documents required for submission. Different instructors may have different requirements. For example, some instructors may require .docx, .pdf etc. It is the students' responsibility to check the assignment requirements and submit them in the correct document format.

### **Attendance**

Attendance for all learning environments is expected to comply with the New Hampshire Board of Nursing (NHBON) rule Nur 602.12 which dictates the minimum number of hours required for nursing classroom instruction and concurrent clinical practice. Failure to complete these hours may make it impossible for a student to meet course objectives. If an absence results in a greater than one-week duration, students should collaborate with their faculty to develop a plan of action to ensure compliance with program requirements.

### **Absences**

#### **Classroom/Lab Absences**

Greater than two (2) absences from a class and/or lab learning session may be considered excessive and could result in failure to progress in the program. An academic warning will be given to the student for notification that any further absences may result in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the course.

If a student is absent from lecture/lab:

- From class: Students are responsible for reviewing all material that was presented in class.
- From Lab: The student must email the lab instructor to make-up any skill/procedure competency or simulation experience within one (1) calendar week from the absence.

### **Clinical Absences**

Greater than one (1) absence from a clinical learning session may be considered excessive and could result in failure to progress in the program. A clinical warning will be given to the student for notification that further absences may result in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the course.

If a student is absent:

- An alternate assignment will be assigned for one (1) clinical absence to be completed within 48 hours of the absence. More than one clinical absence in a semester may result in a written warning and impact the student's ability to proceed in the course.

### **Absence related to surgery or injury**

Students with absences resulting from surgical or physical injury must submit documentation from their healthcare provider clearing them to safely attend clinical. Any injury that prevents a student from attending clinical will result in an absence. Students who think they may miss more than one clinical day should consult with Accessibility Services.

### **Absence related to pregnancy or religious observance**

Please refer to the RVCC policies related to pregnancy and religious observance

- <https://catalog.rivervalley.edu/absence-due-to-religious-observation>
- <https://catalog.rivervalley.edu/pregnancy-and-parenting-accommodations>

### **Missed Exam Policy**

It is the student's responsibility to email the instructor at least 2 hours prior to the scheduled exam, alerting the instructor of the pending absence.

Missing an Exam will result in a grade of zero (0) unless one of the following circumstances is met. All students that meet this criterion will need to make up the Exam, at the instructor's discretion, within 48 hours of the original exam administration time, or the student will earn a score of zero (0) on that exam.

Exceptions will be granted for the following circumstances:

- Death of an immediate family member: the student may decide whether to apply to the five-point leniency to visiting the loved one prior to death, being with family immediately following the death, or for attending a funeral. Immediate family members will be defined as: spouse, children, parent, sibling, grandparents, grandchild, stepchildren, stepparents, and step-siblings, parent-in-laws, children in-laws, sibling in-laws.
- Hospitalization of self or dependent minor at the time of the exam.
- Birth of the student's child.
- Illness for which a medical provider note states the student is unable to attend class.
- Court date that cannot be rescheduled.

- Military obligation.
- Other catastrophic events that are beyond the student's control, at the discretion of the instructor.

Please note the *exceptions apply to only one exam per semester*. Documentation of the above events must be submitted to the instructor at the time of the make-up exam.

### **Personal and Professional Behaviors**

*The personal and professional behaviors listed below are expected throughout the student's enrollment in the nursing program. Any behavior outside of a student role that results in loss of license, pending or current legal action, and/or termination of employment for unprofessional or uncivil behaviors may result in the student being dismissed from the nursing program*

- **Attentiveness** – Students are required to regularly attend class. The student is consistently on time for lectures, labs, and clinical experiences and stays until the conclusion of presentations or activities. The student is alert and demonstrates attentiveness during the presentation.
- **Demeanor** – The student has a positive, open attitude toward peers, instructors, and others during all interactions. He/she functions in a supportive and constructive fashion in group situations.
- **Maturity** – Students must possess the emotional maturity and stability to engage in professional interactions with faculty, staff, professionals, the public, and other students under a wide range of circumstances, including highly stressful situations. The ability to be flexible and adaptive in demanding situations is imperative. The student functions as a responsible, ethical, law-abiding adult. He/she is accepting of, and makes good use of, feedback and evaluations.
- **Cooperation** – The student demonstrates his/her ability to work effectively in large and small groups and with other members of the health team, freely giving and accepting in the interchange of information.
- **Moral and Ethical Standards** – The student respects the rights and privacy of all individuals, is knowledgeable and compliant with the American Nursing Association Code of Ethics and abides by all HIPPA and privacy policies per the LPN program, CCP orientation module, and the healthcare facility.
- **Personal/Professional Boundaries** - The student maintains separate personal and professional boundaries with faculty. Some examples of professional boundary violations include excessive self-disclosure on the part of the student, or students addressing faculty in an unprofessional manner.
- **Responsibility** – Students are required to submit documents prior to admission to the nursing program as well as updating such documents as they become due. The student needs to take full responsibility for ensuring all documents are current and submitted when due.
- **Accountability** - Students must demonstrate a willingness and ability to examine and adapt his/her behavior when behavior interferes with productive and harmonious professional relationships.
- **Safety** - Students are expected to provide safe care in all domains to patients they encounter during clinical experiences and to maintain fitness for duty throughout all clinical experiences. Students must be prepared to provide care to patients in a rapidly paced, physically and emotionally demanding environment.
- **Academic Integrity** – The student completes academic work honestly and in accordance with instructions. Plagiarism, unauthorized work sharing, use of unauthorized devices or reference materials, cheating or other failure to adhere to instructions for examinations or assignments is a violation of the nursing program professional standards.

- **Personal Appearance** – The student’s personal hygiene and dress is expected to reflect the high standards of the nursing profession.
- **Provision of Care** - Faculty or on-site clinical supervisors who determine there is a potential or clear concern that the student is unable to maintain the provision of safe care to patients, or that the student’s actions or behaviors are detrimental to the functioning of the healthcare environment, shall remove the student from the clinical area. Depending on the reason for removal, appropriate college resources will be consulted. If an immediate concern is identified, a meeting with the Department Chair will be scheduled as soon as possible.
- **Chain of Command** – In nursing, like many other professions, concerns and conflicts are managed by movement along a “chain of command.” The chain of command in its simplest definition is the line of authority and responsibility along which decisions are made. Nursing Program students are expected to resolve concerns/issues by following the chain of command: immediate theory, lab, or clinical instructor, nursing advisor, Nursing Program Coordinator, Department Chair. Students should **never** attempt to resolve concerns by contacting clinical agency personnel directly.
- **Verbal/written communication** – all communication with RVCC faculty, staff, and students should adhere to acceptable, professional standards. All RVCC Nursing Student policies and expectations apply to the use of verbal and writing communication.
- **Social Media** – all RVCC Nursing Student policies and expectations of behavior apply to the use of social media. Students are prohibited from using social media to share confidential information about fellow students, patients, or clinical affiliations.

### Civility in Nursing

Civility is a critical principle, behavior, and attitude of professionalism in healthcare. Civility is a behavior that:

- shows respect toward another
- causes another to feel valued
- contributes to mutual respect, effective communication, and team collaboration

All students are expected to behave with civility when interacting with other students, faculty, and other individuals involved in the teaching-learning process.

### Uncivil Behavior Examples

Examples of uncivil behavior which are discouraged include but are not limited to:

- Demeaning, belittling or harassing others.
- Rumoring, gossiping or using damaging/demeaned language about a classmate, instructor, clinical agency, or clinical agency employee.
- Habitually interrupting or undermining faculty instruction.
- Lack of response to college communications, including not responding to email communication.
- Sending emails or posting information online or via social media that is inflammatory and/or confidential in nature.
- Yelling, screaming, or demonstration of inappropriate displays of temper at instructors, peers, clinical agency staff, or any RVCC staff.
- Threatening others, including physical threats and intimidation, verbal/nonverbal threats, and implied threats of any kind of harm (physical, emotional, reputational).

- Consistently arriving late to class/ lab, and clinical.
- Knowingly withholding information needed by a peer, preceptor, instructor, clinical agency staff, or nursing program staff.
- Discounting or ignoring input from instructors or preceptors regarding classroom and/or clinical performance or professional conduct specific to the profession and standards of nursing and expectations of the college.
- It is recommended that students should work no more than 20 hours per week
- Arrive on time to class, lab, and clinical and be engaged in the learning.
- Attend all nursing classes, lab sessions, and work-based clinical learning experiences.
- Complete homework and other assignments on time and submit according to instructions.
- Complete all work using academic integrity and following the direction of the instructor.
- Check their school email every day when school is in session and every week during vacation time.
- Take personal responsibility for submitting and maintaining current required documents.
- Take personal responsibility for engaging in learning and success in the nursing program.

#### **Licensing, Legal, or Professional Behavior Issues**

As a professional provider of health care in NH, a student is required to inform the Nursing Department chair of any potential issue related to their current professional license, legal violation, or behavior which results in termination from employment if the behavior violates any policy in the Nursing Student Handbook. ***Failure to declare any of the above issues prior to admission to, or while a current student of, the nursing program may result in immediate dismissal from the program.***

***Legal violations or charges pending on a background check may require a student to withdraw from the nursing program until annulment of charges are granted.***

#### **Work-Based Learning Clinical Experiences**

Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational opportunity for students to apply learning to the professional workplace environment, preparing the nursing student for practice as a new graduate nurse. Work-based learning clinical experience has specific requirements per the healthcare facility. These requirements may be related to immunizations, background checks, drug testing, written documentation and/or orientation modules. These requirements must be fulfilled by the student by the deadline set by the healthcare facility or LPN program. Failure to meet these requirements in a timely manner may result in a student being unable to attend clinical until the requirements are met and a clinical absence. Continued non-compliance with meeting the clinical requirements may result in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the course per the excessive clinical absence policy. Please see the [RVCC Student Handbook](#) for full college policy.

- Clinical experiences are arranged in local health care facilities in New Hampshire and Vermont, and may be scheduled on days, evenings, or weekends.
- Students may only administer medications under direct supervision of the nursing faculty per policy of the individual clinical site.
- Students must demonstrate medication math proficiency prior to administering medications in the clinical setting.

- Clinical agencies may require social security numbers in their entirety or in part for clinical requirements.
- Clinical placements are subject to availability and may require travel. Students are responsible for their own transportation.
- Any student who develops an illness, injury, or occupational exposure during a clinical experience will receive treatment by and be billed for services by the clinical facility. Students are required to immediately notify faculty and may need to report (according to facility policy) to other agencies. The nursing faculty will document the incident and report it to the Nursing Department Chairperson/VPAA.
- Students will be required to complete background checks and drug screenings at the entrance to and throughout the duration of the nursing program. Background checks and drug screenings may have differing timeframes, locations, requirements, and costs, depending upon individual clinical agency requirements.
  - Costs of background checks and drug tests are the responsibility of the student.
  - Failure to complete background checks and/or drug screenings by RVCC and/or clinical agency-specified timeframes will result in a student being denied access to the work-based learning clinical resulting in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the nursing course.
  - Students with a positive drug screen will be denied access to the work-based learning clinical resulting in an Administrative Failure (AF) in the nursing course.
  - If a healthcare agency refuses to allow the student to participate in a work-based learning clinical experience based upon a criminal background check result or behavioral concern, an Administrative Failure (AF) will result.

#### **Required Clinical Documentation**

The clinical portion of the nursing programs is offered at area health care facilities (“clinical sites”). Clinical sites establish their own requirements for people entering their facilities for educational purposes. Clinical sites may have established vaccination requirements, including vaccination for COVID-19. As with all clinical program requirements, the clinical site reserves the right to deny participation to any student who does not meet required clinical criteria and does not follow clinical site policies. Individual programs of study do not have the authority to secure clinical experience(s) for students who do not meet eligibility criteria. Students participating in clinicals must adhere to the sites’ requirements. While these are not college requirements, failure to adhere to the clinical site requirements will result in ineligibility to complete the Nursing program.

- Verification of current health insurance (photocopy of card)
- Current, unencumbered LNA licensure or equivalent skill set
- American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Providers (photocopy of both sides of card)
- Criminal background check
- Verification of a two-step TB skin test (with 1-3 weeks in between first and second test) or a QuantiFERON Gold blood test for initial screening
  - If either the TB skin test(s) or the QuantiFERON Gold blood test is (are) positive, a student must have a negative chest x-ray and medical screening to rule out active pulmonary tuberculosis and to determine if treatment is necessary for either active tuberculosis disease or latent tuberculosis infection.
- Completed health history physical exam form with the following:
  - Completed vaccine series OR immunity to the following diseases:
    - Varicella (Chicken Pox)
    - Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)

- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Acellular Pertussis (TDaP)
- Hepatitis B (and or signed waiver)
- Influenza - annual influenza vaccine due by October 31 of each calendar year or as designated by the Nursing/Allied Health Department Chair.

### Student Roles and Responsibilities

Work-based learning (WBL) is an educational opportunity for experiential learning in a professional workplace. Students are provided with pre-clinical competencies, a clinical orientation of the facility, and a Clinical Evaluation Tool (CET). It is the student's responsibility to understand the goals, objectives, and evaluation criteria for competencies as well as adherence to all policies, rules, and procedures set forth by RVCC, the academic department/program, and the assigned workplace.

The student in the work-based clinical learning environment is required to adhere to professional behavior expectations, follow all the policies and procedures of the college, nursing program, clinical agency, and use clinical judgement to provide safe and effective nursing care to individuals assigned to their care.

#### **Students are *NOT* permitted to:**

- Perform delegated medical acts.
- Act as a witness under any circumstances or for any purpose, **including** medication administration.
- Provide telephone advice to discharged patients or their families.
- Perform any skill or procedure without the approval and/or supervision of the clinical instructor.
- Take verbal or telephone orders.
- Carry narcotic keys.
- Remove medication from a medication cart / medication station system (e.g., Pyxis) without the supervision of the instructor.
- Be left in sole charge of the department, work unit, or any patient/resident.
- Transport patients/residents alone without facility staff.
- Remove a medical record or a printout of the medical record from the work unit.
- Discuss patient information outside of the immediate clinical environment.
- Falsify any patient/resident record or any other document prepared or used in the health care organization.
- Use of health care organization's telephones or other equipment for personal matters.
- Eat, drink, and chew gum in patient/resident care areas.

#### **Prohibited Conduct**

***Students found guilty of any of the following prohibited conduct may be immediately dismissed from the nursing program.***

- Engage in behavior that causes or may cause physical, verbal, mental, or emotional abuse to a patient/resident.
- Reporting to clinical experience intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Use or consumption of alcohol or other intoxicating substances on health care organization premises.
- Selling or distributing illegal substances while on health care organization premises.
- Bringing a weapon or something that could be construed as a weapon (e.g., guns, knives, etc.).

- Stealing from patients/residents, the health care organization, or employees.
- Sharing computer or medication station system - (e.g., Pyxis) login information.
- Login in as another person or use someone else's login information.
- Falsifying any patient/resident record or any other document prepared or used during, or in conjunction with, patient/resident care.
- Disorderly conduct, including fighting; acting in an obscene manner or using obscene, abusive, or threatening language; or horseplay.
- Smoking while in the role of a student nurse.
- Leaving the healthcare facility without the approval of the clinical faculty.
- Defacing or damaging the health care organization's property.
- Failure to observe health care organization or RVCC/CCSNH regulations and/or policies
- Failure to maintain confidentiality of health care organization matters, including matters relating to patients/residents.
- Any action that destroys good relations between the health care organization and its employees or between the health care organization and any of its suppliers or patients/residents.
- Any behavior that is considered insubordination.

### Dress Code

Students must present themselves in a clean, neat professional manner when attending work-based learning clinical experiences within or outside the clinical agency. A student who is inappropriately dressed or presents with an unkempt appearance will be dismissed from the clinical experience and receive a clinical absence.

**Clothing:** All clothing should be conservative and in keeping with the nature of the health care organization image and appropriate to the nature and scope of the position. Clothing should be neat, clean, pressed, well-fitting and in good repair with no holes or wrinkles.

**Uniform:** Teal Blue uniform top and pants.

A solid color, short or long-sleeved top may be worn under the top for warmth or modesty. Minimum of one pocket on top and minimum of one pocket on pants.

**Shoes:** Shoes should provide good support and have a **closed toe and heel**. Clogs with a closed toe and heel are permitted. No sandals. Athletic shoes are appropriate if they contain minimal logos or colors. Black and/or white colors are preferred.

**ID Badge:** All students must wear a single identification badge that identifies them as a student. If the clinical agency does not provide a badge, the RVCC identification badge must be worn.

**Watch:** Student may use sweep-hand or calibrated digital display. You may not use any other device as a time piece (e.g., phone).

**Emblem:** The RVCC nursing emblem must be sewn on the left uniform sleeve, 2" from the shoulder seam to the top of the emblem. Emblem must be on all uniforms/lab coats.

**Jewelry:** No more than one, plain band ring. No more than two small post earrings in each ear. No tongue piercing. Avoid other visible body adornments.

**Tattoos:** Body art must be covered while at clinical.

**Fingernails:** Should not extend beyond fingertips; intact, clear nail polish may be worn. No artificial nails.

**Hair:** Neatly groomed and pulled back off and away from the face and shoulders.

**Make-Up:** In moderation. No use of scented cosmetics and toiletries.

**Cell Phone:** Cell phones may only be used per the school and health care organization policy. Absolutely NO texting, NO pictures, or personal internet use during clinical.

### **Technical Standards for Nursing Students**

All students in the River Valley Community College (RVCC) nursing programs must be able to perform diverse, complex, and specific functions and skills. These attributes include, but are not limited to personal and professional skills, physical agility, medical safety, and other requirements that individuals must possess to be eligible for satisfactory completion of the program of study as well as for the desired field of nursing.

These attributes must be demonstrated with or without reasonable accommodation as described under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The qualifications established by the faculty include but are not limited to the following essential technical standards:

#### **Motor Skills**

- The ability to perform full range of motion of body joints, fine motor movements of the hands, and the ability to stoop and bend.
- The ability to elicit information from patients by inspection, palpitation, auscultation, percussion, and other assessment maneuvers.
- The ability to execute movements required to provide general care and treatment to patients in all health care settings including emergency treatment: e.g., transferring, lifting, and turning clients, providing hygienic care, assisting patients in activities of daily living, and providing cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
- The ability to lift 40 pounds of weight on a daily basis.
- The ability to carry objects weighing up to 40 pounds daily.
- The ability to push or pull an occupied wheelchair, stretcher, or patient bed daily.

#### **Sensory/Observation/Communication**

- The ability to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. This requires functional use of the senses of vision and hearing.
- The ability to perceive the signs of disease and infection as manifested through physical examination, including from images of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information.
- The ability to closely examine images or other forms of output created by diagnostic equipment. The ability to observe and appreciate non-verbal communications when performing nursing assessment and intervention or administering medications.
- The ability to use spoken and written English to communicate in a coherent manner with individuals of all professions and societal levels.

- The ability to convey or exchange information at a level allowing development of a health history; identify problems presented; explain alternative solutions; and give directions during treatment and post-treatment.

The ability to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the health care team.

### **Professional Conduct/Behavioral Expectations**

- The ability to utilize intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients and families.
- The ability to maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals under all circumstances.
- The ability to recognize that one's own values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect ones' perceptions and relationships with others.
- The ability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways.
- The ability to learn and abide by professional standards of practice.
- The ability to engage in patient care delivery in all settings and be able to deliver care to all patients including but not limited to children, adolescents, adults, developmentally disabled persons, medically compromised patients, and vulnerable adults.
- The ability to maintain composure when subjected to high stress levels.
- The ability to adapt effectively to changing environments, especially those with high tension levels.  
The ability to respond in an emotionally controlled manner in learning situations and emergencies

### **Confidentiality of Health Information**

The student will safeguard the client's right to privacy by maintaining confidentiality. Such communication may involve verbal discussions, written communication, or electronic communication. Only those people with an authorized need to know should have access to protected information. Students will not discuss client problems in elevators, cafeteria, and lobby or in other inappropriate places.

Information discussed as an aspect of clinical or classroom teaching must not be discussed or repeated to other individuals. Students are prohibited from reading the medical records of family members and/or friends. Should faculty inadvertently assign the student to a family member or friend/acquaintance, the student is expected to request another assignment.

Disclosure of confidential information may subject the student to liability based on defamation or invasion of privacy, or HIPAA violation as well as immediate dismissal from the nursing program.

All clinical assignments will be de-identified by removing the information one could use to identify the patient or clinical setting. No patient records should be removed from the clinical setting.

Students will abide by the policies established by the clinical setting. Violation of either college or healthcare facility HIPAA and/or privacy policies can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the LPN program.

### **Repeating a Nursing Course**

Each nursing course must be taken in sequential order and requires a letter grade of B- or higher and a minimum score on the Clinical Evaluation Tool to pass the course and progress to the next nursing course or graduate. Students who do not meet the minimum grades in the nursing course may request approval to repeat the nursing course. Students are offered one opportunity to repeat a nursing course. Both the clinical and the class must be repeated. Students must complete the entire nursing sequence of courses within two (2) years from the start of the first course in the PN program (NURS110). Repeating a nursing course is contingent upon space in the course. The decision will be made by the Department Chair and Nursing Faculty.

If the student withdraws due to other circumstances, the process to request to repeat is the same.

#### **Process for requesting approval for repeating a nursing course:**

1. Submit a written request to the Department Chair:
  - by October 31 for Spring Semester
  - by February 28 for Summer Semester
  - by May 30 for Fall Semester
2. Written request must include:
  - An explanation of factors leading to the lack of progression
  - A corrective action plan to remediate the factors that prevented success in the nursing course
  - Students who are in good standing and submit a substantive written request will be given an opportunity to meet with nursing faculty to request approval to repeat the nursing course.

The Department Chair will communicate the decision to the student by a date after which all students requesting approval have been interviewed.

Please note – students may be required to take a competency assessment in the content area related to non-progression. The competency assessment will be determined by the Program Director and nursing faculty for students who withdraw from a nursing course.

### **Certification/Licensing Violations**

As a professional provider of health care in NH, a student is required to inform the Nursing Department chair of any potential issue related to their current certification/license. This includes any disciplinary action in any state or jurisdiction including reprimand, probation, suspension, revocation, educational or practice stipulations, fines, or voluntary surrender of license or certification. ***Failure to declare any legal violation or certification/licensing issue prior to admission to, or while a current student of, the nursing program may result in immediate dismissal from the program.***

***Legal violations or charges pending on a background check may require a student to withdraw from the nursing program until annulment of charges are granted.***

### **General Grading**

Nursing faculty will adhere to the College grading policy as defined in the College's Student Handbook.

To receive credit for a nursing course, the student must:

- a. Achieve at least a minimum grade of B- (80), **and**
- b. Achieve a minimum score on the expected performance for the level of learning on the Clinical Evaluation Tool.

Prerequisite courses must be successfully passed with a grade of “C” to continue with either the ASN program of study or PN Certificate program. Students wishing to contest a grade must bring their concern to the course faculty within 48 hours of the exam/assignment posted grade. Contested grades will be addressed by faculty and amended or confirmed as indicated.

### **Variance Report/Performance Tools/Academic & Clinical Warnings**

Variance Reports, Performance Improvement Tools, and/or Academic/Clinical Warnings will be used to communicate to students in a formal fashion, any deviances from expected professional behaviors. Issues to be addressed include but are not limited to timeliness for written work, lack of clinical preparation, unsafe clinical practices, and non-professional behavior. Blank examples are listed on the following three pages. A copy of each document will be given to the student after it is signed. This document will be placed in the student's Academic Folder.

### **Student Academic Records**

Academic records are maintained according to [RVCC/CCSNH policies](#)

The College policy on confidentiality of students' records is outlined in Student Rights and Responsibilities in the [RVCC Student Handbook](#) and is adhered to by the Nursing Department.

### **Academic Advising**

All students at River Valley Community College are assigned an academic advisor. The advisor serves as the student's partner in determining and reaching his/her academic and career goals. Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor on a regular basis.

### **Disability Statement**

The nursing department adheres to the River Valley Community College policy on reasonable accommodations and academic adjustments and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which requires adjustments or accommodations for students with documented disability. Nursing Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Disabilities Coordinator as soon as possible to enhance the likelihood that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, please refer to the RVCC website at <https://www.rivervalley.edu/student-support/on-campus-resources/accessibility-disability-services/>

After meeting with the Disabilities Coordinator, students are **required** to meet with their nursing faculty and clinical instructors to discuss their needs, and if applicable any lab safety concerns related to their disabilities.

**Program Policies Acknowledgment Form**

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have access to the Nursing Student Handbook and have reviewed its contents. I understand that I am accountable for the information and policies contained in this Handbook and may contact nursing faculty to review areas I would like to review further.

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