

**Practical Nursing Program**

**STUDENT  
HANDBOOK**

**Department of Practical Nursing  
College of Professional Studies**

**June 2008**

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

## **Mission Statement**

The Department of Practical Nursing is committed to the provision of quality education for students seeking a one year certificate in practical nursing. The faculty are committed to the career ladder concept of education and to this end; the curricula have been developed to facilitate articulation between vocational and professional programs for those graduates desiring to do so. Upon completion of the Practical Nursing Program, graduates are qualified to take the NCLEX-PN licensure examination.

**“This handbook is not a contract and the institution reserves the right to change policies with notice to students.”**

## **Philosophy of Nursing**

The faculty of the Department of Practical Nursing believe that nursing is both a scientific discipline and a humanistic profession that promotes the highest possible level of health and well being among people. The practical nurse’s role is to provide nursing care for clients at various states of health.

### **Beliefs About the Client**

The faculty believe that clients are to be viewed holistically and that client health patterns, development of life experiences and other manifestations are influenced by interactions between the client and the environment. Each client is unique with dignity and worth. Each individual progresses through developmental stages from conception to death. Each individual has a hierarchy of needs that continually change.

## **Philosophy of Practical Nursing Department**

### **Beliefs About the Practical Nursing Student**

As members of the University, the faculty assume responsibility for admission and assistance of students who have potential for success; for selection and development of student learning experiences; and for support of students as they develop unique interests and abilities. The faculty are committed to the development of a multicultural learning environment which will promote the personal, intellectual, social and career development of all students, and enhance the sensitivity of the majority populations to the special needs of under-represented ethnic populations.

The faculty believe that learning is the process of integrating skills, attitudes, values, beliefs and insights into self within an atmosphere of academic inquiry. It is further believed that teaching is a process of assessing the needs and potential of students in an environment where the teacher serves as a facilitator of learning and critical thinking. The faculty support the right of the student to challenge and debate beliefs within the context of academic freedom.

**The graduate practical nurse demonstrates the following entry-level competencies:**

### **Assessment**

1. Assesses basic physical, emotional, spiritual and socio-cultural needs of the health care client.
2. Collects data within established protocols and guidelines from various sources:
  - a. client interviews;
  - b. observations/measurements;
  - c. health care team members, family and significant others;
  - d. health records.
3. Utilizes knowledge of normal values to identify deviations in health status.
4. Documents data collection.
5. Communicates findings to appropriate health care personnel.

### **Planning**

1. Contributes to the development of nursing care plans utilizing established nursing diagnoses.
2. Prioritizes nursing care needs of clients.

### **Implementation**

1. Provides nursing care according to:
  - a. accepted standards of practice;
  - b. priority of client needs;
  - c. individual and family rights to dignity and privacy.
2. Utilizes effective communication in:
  - a. recording and reporting;
  - b. establishing and maintaining therapeutic relationships with clients, families and significant others.
3. Collaborates with health care team members to coordinate the delivery of nursing care.
4. Instructs clients regarding health maintenance based on client needs and nurse=s knowledge level.

### **Evaluation**

1. Seeks guidance as needed in evaluating nursing care.
2. Modifies nursing approaches based on evaluation of nursing care.
3. Collaborates with other health team members in the revision of nursing care plans.
4. Assists in the review and revision of nursing care plans to meet the changing needs of clients.

### **Member of the Discipline**

1. Complies with the scope of practice as outlined in the nurse practice act of the state in which licensed.
2. Describes the role of the licensed practical/vocational nurse in the health care delivery system.
3. Utilizes educational opportunities for continued personal and professional growth.
4. Identifies personal potential and considers career mobility options.
5. Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses for the purpose of improving performance.
6. Adheres to a nursing code of ethics.
7. Functions as an advocate for the health care consumer.

The Practical Nursing Department is part of the School of Nursing which is located in the College of Professional Studies at this University. We as a department follow the same college rules and standards of operation designated by Northern Michigan University. There is additional information in this handbook that is pertinent only to the Practical Nursing Program. Please read the handbook carefully.

## Practical Nursing Curriculum

### Practical Nursing Program - Required Prerequisite Courses

		Credits
BI 104	Human Anatomy & Physiology	4
HN 210	Nutrition For Humans	4
HP 200	Physical Well Being	1
PN 100	Introduction to Practical Nursing	2
AH 102	Growth and Development	3
PN 103	Basic Pharmacology Skills	<u>1</u>
		15

These courses may be taken on a part-time basis prior to formal admission into the program.

### Nursing Curriculum Courses

#### Fall Semester

PN 114	Fundamentals of Nursing-Lecture	4
PN 116	Fundamentals of Nursing-Clinical <i>Taken during first 72 weeks</i>	4
PN 122	Medical-Surgical Nursing I-Lecture	4
PN 126	Medical-Surgical Nursing I-Clinical <i>Taken during second 72 weeks</i>	4
NE 212	Pharmacology-Lecture <i>Taken during full 15 weeks</i>	<u>2</u>
		18

#### Winter Semester

PN 132	Maternal-Child Nursing-Lecture <i>Taken during first 72 weeks</i>	4
PN 136	Maternal-Child Nursing-Clinical <i>Taken during first <b>or</b> second 7 ½ weeks</i>	4
PN 142	Medical-Surgical Nursing II-Lecture <i>Taken during second 72 weeks</i>	4
PN 146	Medical-Surgical Nursing II-Clinical <i>Taken during first <b>or</b> second 7 ½ weeks</i>	<u>4</u>
		16

Total Credits 49

### **Program Description**

This program encompasses three semesters. The pre-nursing semester(s) courses provide a core of knowledge on which subsequent courses are based. Nursing courses in the second and third semesters require clinical rotations in hospitals and health agencies in the local area. Transportation to these facilities is the student=s responsibility. Nursing courses which include theory lectures will be held on campus.

Graduates of the program are prepared to work in various health care agencies. Upon completion of the program, graduates are eligible to take the Practical Nursing licensure exam (NCLEX-PN). Graduates of NMU's LPN Program are well prepared for successful first time writing of the NCLEX-PN as demonstrated by a consistently high passing rate.

The program is approved by the Michigan State Department of Vocational Education and the Michigan Board of Nursing.

### **Admission Criteria**

Admission to the practical nursing clinical sequence of courses is limited. The School of Nursing **Practical Nursing Department** Admissions Committee reserves the right to select students to be admitted. **Admission into the clinical nursing sequence is based upon a student's GPA in the prerequisite courses. Students who have the highest prerequisite GPA will be admitted first until the class is filled.** Meeting the minimum criteria for admission does not guarantee acceptance into the Practical Nursing Program.

To be considered for admission into the Practical Nursing clinical program, students must meet the following qualifications:

1. Must have met all NMU admission requirements and be in good standing.
2. Must have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.00 (C) in all the prerequisite college courses required in the program with no grade below "C". In addition, students must have a cumulative NMU GPA of 2.00.
3. Must have successfully passed all required prerequisite nursing courses after a maximum of two tries. This includes PN 100, AH 102, PN 103, BI 104, HN 210 and \*NE 212 (\*if taken prior to admission in the program).

### **Retention in the Nursing Sequence**

For a student to remain in the nursing sequence they need to meet the following conditions:

1. **Maintain a minimum overall GPA of 2.00 in all nursing courses and an overall NMU GPA of 2.00. Achieve a C in all nursing classes (NE and PN).**
2. Adhere to the University's Student Code and Practical Nursing Student Policies.
3. Demonstrate a pattern of safe clinical practice commensurate with their educational experience to date.

### **Readmission Criteria**

When a nursing student wishes to be readmitted into the nursing sequence of courses after having a withdrawal or failure in a previously enrolled nursing course the student must initiate the following steps. Students who have failed any nursing courses more than twice are ineligible for readmission.

Send a written request for readmission to the Practical Nursing Program Faculty.

1. Readmission for PN 122/126 Medical-Surgical Nursing I **letter must be received before the start of the fall semester.**
2. Readmission for PN 132/136 Maternal-Child Nursing **letter must be received by November 20<sup>th</sup> of the year before requested readmission.**
3. Readmission for PN 142/146 Medical-Surgical Nursing II **letter must be received by November 20<sup>th</sup> of the year before requested readmission.**

The student who is seeking readmission will be required to demonstrate proficiency in a series of nursing procedures that are part of **all** successfully completed clinical nursing courses.

1. Each student will be mailed a list of nursing procedures that they must be Atested out@ in when their letter of request for readmission is received.
2. Arrangements for Atesting out@ are the responsibility of the student after consultation with the assigned faculty adviser.
3. Faculty will decide which option is appropriate for each student.

Option One:

- Practice nursing procedures
- Video tape the procedures
- Submit the video tape to the Practical Nursing Program office to be reviewed by faculty

Option Two:

- Test off with clinical instructor.

Testing:

The student requesting readmission will be required to take one or more tests prior to acceptance into the clinical nursing course sequence. The number of tests required will depend on the number of clinical courses successfully passed by the student.

Potential Tests Required:

- Fundamentals for Practical Nursing Students
- Maternity Nursing for Practical Nursing Students
- Nursing of Children for Practical Nursing Students
- Medical-Surgical Nursing

Readmission to the nursing sequence is also based on whether there are available openings in that course. The Department of Practical Nursing makes no guarantee that an opening will be available during any given time period.

Graduates of the Practical Nursing Program receive a certificate in Practical Nursing and a nursing pin. The pinning ceremony is planned by the students and is held on the Friday evening before commencement. The cost of the NMU nursing pin is a responsibility of the student.

**Grade Appeal or Other Complaints**

The student must follow the policies found in the University=s Student Handbook: Students Rights and Responsibilities, Student Code, University Policies and Related Documents.

**Grading Scale**

A	94 - 100	C	73 - 76
A-	90 - 93	C-	70 - 72
B+	87 - 89	D+	67 - 69
B	83 - 86	D	63 - 66
B-	80 - 82	D-	60 - 62
C+	77 - 79	F	< 60

A comprehensive achievement test is required prior to graduation. The fee will depend on the vendor used. The student will be responsible for paying the fee before the test date.

**COURSE RELATED POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**Requirements for Clinical Courses**

**Immunizations: Copies of documentation of compliance required to be submitted to the Practical Nursing Department by or on the first day of fall classes**

Immunization status is checked prior to each clinical rotation and must be current or **you will not be allowed to attend clinic**. Students are responsible for all costs associated with immunizations. All vaccinations are available from a private physician, the NMU Health Center and the Marquette County Health Department. Students are responsible for all costs associated with immunizations.

1. TB skin test (Tuberculosis). A TB skin test is required yearly. The test may be obtained free of charge at the Nursing Technology Center (NTC) during the first week of school. If there is a positive result, a chest x-ray must be reported. The chest x-ray report is valid for 3 years.

Exceptions to having a PPD skin test include pregnancy or a past positive reaction. Breast-feeding is not a reason for exclusion. Students who are pregnant must present physician documentation of the pregnancy. If they wish to have a PPD skin test, they also need to present physician verification of approval for the test, and fill out a TB Symptom Questionnaire. Within a month of the delivery date (upon return to the clinical setting), they need to have a negative PPD on file. Students who have had a past positive PPD skin test, need to have evidence of having had a negative chest x-ray (within the past three years) on file and fill out a TB Symptom Questionnaire yearly.

**TB SYMPTOM QUESTIONNAIRE**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

UNABLE TO RECEIVE ppd SKIN TEST DUE TO:

\_\_\_\_\_Positive Reaction                  \_\_\_\_\_Pregnancy                  \_\_\_\_\_Other (specify)

Please circle the appropriate response:

- |    |   |     |    |
|----|---|-----|----|
| 1. | Have you had a recent, unintentional weight loss? | YES | NO |
| 2. | Have you had a persistent cough (over 3 weeks)?   | YES | NO |
| 3. | Have you had a fever?                             | YES | NO |
| 4. | Have you had night sweats?                        | YES | NO |
| 5. | Have you had changes in your sputa (e.g. bloody)? | YES | NO |

Please explain any YES responses:

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

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE PRACTICAL NURSING OFFICE.**

2. Rubella Immunization or Rubella Titre. Students must have proof of rubella vaccines after 1957 (date is from the Health Department). If you do not have proof, you have two options:
  - a. Get a rubella vaccine (which will be an MMR, available at the Marquette Health

- Department OR NMU Health Center), or
- b. Obtain a Rubella titre (shows level of immunity)
  3. Tetanus injection: Current within the last 10 years.
  4. Hepatitis B Vaccine. Students must have proof of Hepatitis B vaccine (effective fall 2006). Accidental needle punctures and/or exposure of an affected client's blood or body secretions can be a source of transmission of the Hepatitis B virus to the health care provider.

Nursing students are at risk for contracting hepatitis B because they are often exposed to blood and body fluids during their clinical practice. According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), between 15 percent and 25 percent of health care workers will contract hepatitis B during their careers. Your individual risk is directly related to how often you are exposed to blood and other body fluids.

Hepatitis B is a serious disease. Although 80 percent of those who contract acute hepatitis B do recover completely, about 1 percent die of a fulminant infection. The remaining people who do not recover become carriers. About 25 percent of carriers go on to develop chronic active hepatitis that may progress to permanent liver damage. Carriers can transmit the virus to their babies in utero, and carriers run a high risk of developing primary liver cancer.

A series of three injections should provide immunity. Students should submit a copy indicating that they have started the series of injections if they haven't yet been able to complete the series.

5. Chicken Pox Vaccine. This immunization is not required, but is strongly recommended if you have never had the disease.
6. Pertussis Vaccine. This immunization is not required, but the Advisory Committee for Immunization Practices has recommended that health-care personnel receive the pertussis vaccine. Protection from pediatric pertussis vaccine is known to wane starting in adolescence. Healthcare workers are in danger of contracting and transmitting pertussis due to occupational exposure. The CDC surveillance data indicate that pertussis is on the rise. The vaccine (Tdap) protects against pertussis, tetanus and diphtheria.
7. Annual Influenza Immunization in the Fall. This immunization is not required, but is strongly recommended. Health care personnel can spread the highly contagious influenza virus to patients in their care. Unvaccinated health care workers have been the cause of outbreaks in health care settings.

### **CPR Certification**

Current certification in CPR is required for all clinical courses. Information for courses is available at the American Heart Association (AHA) or Red Cross (RC). The AHA is the certificate preferred by the Department of Practical Nursing. It can be obtained through Marquette General Hospital, is valid for two years, and is less costly than the RC Certificate, which is valid for only one year. If the student (s) chooses to use the RC certification, they must obtain the Professional classification, **not** the Community classification. It is strongly recommended **that you look into obtaining your CPR certification ASAP as classes have limited enrollments and times.** Proof of CPR certification is required at the start of classes.

## **Documentation of Immunizations and CPR Certification**

Documented proof of immunizations and CPR certification is kept in the Practical Nursing Office. It is the student's responsibility to keep the information current. Documentation must be up-to-date for each clinical rotation or the student will not be permitted to attend clinic. Documentation should be submitted to the department secretary before the beginning of the semester.

## **Health Insurance**

Health insurance is strongly recommended. Northern Michigan University and affiliated health care agencies assume NO responsibility for injuries and/or illnesses incurred while performing duties as a student nurse.

## **Malpractice Insurance**

NMU provides nursing students with malpractice insurance when the student is performing duties on behalf of, or under the direction of NMU. Students can also choose to carry their own professional liability insurance. Additional information on the University insurance coverage and independent professional liability coverage is available in the Department of Practical Nursing.

## **Transportation**

Students must provide their own transportation to and from clinical facilities. Other transportation options include car pooling and bus transportation. Some clinic sites are within walking distance of the University.

## **Driving/Transporting Clients**

Students are not to transport clients in the student's personal motor vehicles. Students must be aware of and adhere to any pertinent clinical agency policies.

## **Dress Code**

Your standard of personal care and dress represent you as an individual, the Department of Practical Nursing and the profession of nursing. Professional individuals set examples for others and students are expected to be neat, clean and well-groomed which include the following:

1. Nails will be clean, short and smooth to ensure client and student safety. No fingernail polish.
2. Hair will be controlled so that asepsis is maintained for both the student and client. Hair must be up and off the shoulder.
3. For asepsis and safety, jewelry will be limited to only plain wedding bands, watches and single pierced earrings which are small, post-type (no loops, tongue rings, or facial piercing of any kind).
4. Shoes must provide good support. High heels are not permitted. Shoes and shoe strings must be clean and in good repair. (90% white shoes)
5. Clothing must be loose enough to provide ease of movement in clinical activities.
6. Clothing must be ironed or wrinkle free.
7. Jeans may not be worn for clinical experiences including times when obtaining information from an agency for clinical assignment or during facility orientations.
8. Students and their clothing should be free of offensive odors.
9. No gum chewing.
10. If a shirt is to be worn under the PN uniform, it needs to be solid white.

## **Uniforms**

For most clinical courses, the student will wear a green and khaki, scrub style uniform. The

pants are green, top is khaki and optional cover jacket is green. Students are also required to wear white shoes in good repair. An NMU/LPN patch is included in the uniform requirement. The patch costs \$11.00 and must be purchased with the uniform. Once patches are sewn on tops, they cannot be returned to the store. Orders for uniforms can be placed at Strictly Business, 907 N. Third Street, Marquette, 226-8231. To ensure correct size and style, going into the store for a fitting is best. Payment must be made when the order is placed. A price discount may be available if full payment is made at the time of the order.

The website for Strictly Business is: [www.sbuniforms.com](http://www.sbuniforms.com). You may order your scrubs via the website if you wish. Look at the bottom of the screen for NMU uniforms and click on 'LPN class'. If you choose in-store pick up in Marquette, there is no shipping charge. Online payment is by Pay-Pal.

**Orders for uniforms must be placed no later than August 15, 2008.**

**Pick up orders by August 29, 2008.**

### **Name Tags**

NMU student IDs will serve as name tags. Name tags are required in all clinical settings. ID holders can be purchased at the LPN office:

Cost is approximately \$1.00.

### **Required Clinical Equipment**

1. Bandage scissors. Available from local pharmacies and online.
2. Stethoscope. Available from uniform shops and online.
3. Watch with a sweep second hand.
4. Safety goggles

5. Pocket calculator
6. Black pen

## **Attendance**

### **Didactic/Class Attendance**

The student is expected to attend all scheduled classes. Students are responsible for course material covered and all assignments made during class sessions. The student will assume the responsibility for contacting the faculty to ascertain the nature of any assignments or make-up examinations for an excused absence.

### **Make-up Examinations**

Students are responsible for giving notice of an absence through the Practical Nursing office (227-2640), or to the faculty member in charge of the exam. This notice must be given **prior** to the exam in order to be permitted to take a makeup exam. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Within two school days following the student=s return to school, he/she must contact the faculty regarding the make-up exam. Scheduling of make-up exams is at the discretion of the faculty member. An alternative test may be given in place of the original test. Any breach of the above or an unexcused absence may result in a reduction of the student=s overall score in the class.

### **Clinical Course Attendance**

Attendance is required for all lab and clinical practice. For a student experiencing any major health alteration (such as musculoskeletal injury, any surgery, etc.) the student’s personal physician must indicate in writing that the full practical nursing program (clinical and theory) may be continued. Special considerations from the physician must be communicated in writing to the program coordinator. A decision will be made by faculty and following clinical agency policy as to whether or not the student can continue in the course. Note that injuries or surgeries occurring midterm make it very difficult for a student to successfully complete a course.

It is the responsibility of the faculty to protect clients and students. Therefore, faculty will exclude students from the clinical area due to illness, lack of preparation for practice, tardiness without previous notification and inappropriate attire or any situation deemed unsafe.

### **Clinical Absences**

**Students are responsible for notifying faculty and/or clinical agency of absences from required clinical experiences prior to the scheduled time for the experience.** Students are expected to follow guidelines provided by individual courses. Approval of the faculty member should be obtained prior to any anticipated absence e.g. for such reasons as illness, crisis in the family or death of a family member. It is within the faculty member=s prerogative to determine the acceptability of the student=s absence.

### **Pregnancy**

The student who is pregnant when she enters the program or becomes pregnant while in the program is responsible for providing the practical nursing program with written permission from her doctor to continue in the program. The decision should be based on the understanding that in a health care environment, the pregnant student may be exposed to health hazards that may be damaging to her or to her fetus. If the pregnant student has lifting restrictions, she will not be

allowed to attend clinical practicum experiences until the lifting restrictions have been removed. The pregnant student will be expected to meet the stated conditions and objectives that are required of all students.

### **Absence Authorization**

Students representing an official University or College organization, group or athletic team who plan to attend an event which necessitates absence from a required experience must obtain approval from the appropriate faculty member a minimum of one week prior to the event. Whenever feasible, faculty will attempt to facilitate the student=s participation in the event and will arrange make-up of the missed experiences or exams.

### **Weather Emergencies**

In the event of inclement weather, faculty in the Department of Practical Nursing shall follow the University=s inclement weather policy. If however, the instructor and students are in the clinical setting before classes are canceled, the instructor shall use reasonable judgment in deciding to give students the option to remain in clinic. If the instructor gives students the option to remain and all students choose to do so, the faculty member will also remain in the clinical setting. Call: 227-BRRR (227-2777) for recorded message regarding weather and school closing.

### **Student Safety**

Faculty consider the student=s safety when planning clinical experiences. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their own safety by adhering to the guidelines listed below and discussing with the faculty any situation which the student believes to be unsafe prior to exposing him/herself to risk.

1. Students leaving clinical after dark should travel in groups.
2. Students should carry a minimum amount of money and valuables. Only the amount of money necessary during clinical should be carried in pockets. Purses, cell phones and computers should be left locked in a vehicle or at home when possible.
3. Students should be alert and observant for risks so that suspicious situations can be avoided. If the student observes a suspicious situation to or from clinic, the student should leave immediately and contact the appropriate authorities.
4. Students should be prepared for winter emergencies when driving to class or clinical.

### **Academic Integrity**

The Department of Practical Nursing abides by the University Rules as set forth and adheres to the Students Rights and Responsibilities and Student Code. It is the student=s responsibility to review these rules. These are included within the NMU Student Handbook: Students Rights and Responsibilities, the Student Code and University Policies and Related Documents available from

the Dean of Students Office, Room 2001 C.B. Hedgcock, 227-1700 or online at [www.nmu.edu/dso](http://www.nmu.edu/dso).

### **Academic Dishonesty Policy**

It is the policy of the Department of Practical Nursing that all students be judged as individuals based on the merits of their own work and that the work submitted to the instructor be a true and honest representation of the individual student's productive effort. Therefore, the faculty of the Department of Practical Nursing wish to remind students that academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in any form.

No student shall during the course of an exam:

1. offer any information of any kind to another student;
2. receive any information of any kind from another student, or copy any information from another student;
3. or have in his/her possession any tool, written material or device which has not been authorized by the instructor giving the exam.

No student shall submit as his/her own work any work containing ideas or materials from another without full acknowledgment of the author and the source. This shall include materials submitted as scholarly papers, written nursing care plans, logs, case studies and all other written assignments.

No student shall upon reviewing his test results attempt to alter them in any manner.

No student shall sell, give away, or furnish in any form, any questions or answers to any exam scheduled to be given to any nursing course.

Section 2.2.3.01 of the NMU Student Code states:

- 01 No students shall, during the course of a quiz or examination (1) offer information of any kind to another; (2) take and/or receive information of any kind from another student, or from the quiz or examination responses made by another student; or (3) have in their possession any tool, written material, or other device which may be of assistance to them in taking the quiz or examination, and which has not been authorized by the person proctoring the quiz or examination.

### **Policy on Student Clinical Practice**

#### **Academic Evaluation of Unsafe/Unprofessional and Weak Practice**

The student practices within the boundaries of the state nurse practice act, current professional standards of practice, Department of Practical Nursing course objectives and Department, University and clinical agency policies, procedures & unit specific protocols.

A student whose clinical practice is judged to be unsafe and/or unprofessional may be removed from the clinical experience. In order to be eligible to resume the clinical experience, the student who has been removed must comply with the stipulations prescribed by the faculty for re-admission to the clinical experience.

The faculty responsible for the clinical experience will review the clinical practice of a student who exhibits weaknesses that may lead to unsafe and/or unprofessional practice. The faculty, with appropriate input from the student, will develop a set of expectations which the student is to attain to remedy those weaknesses in the current and/or subsequent semester.

**Rationale:** Faculty of the Department of Practical Nursing have a legal and professional responsibility to assure the public, other students, the University and the nursing profession that students can practice safely and professionally in their various clinical practice settings commensurate with their educational experience. The policy embodies that accountability by defining unsafe practice, unprofessional practice and weak practice; by establishing guidelines for faculty to make a judgment of unsafe, unprofessional and/or weak practice; and by providing procedures to be followed when a judgment of unsafe, unprofessional and/or weak clinical practice is made.

## **Definitions:**

### **Unsafe Practice**

Behavior, in providing nursing care to clients, that fails to achieve standards of care, violates the nurse practice act, violates the ANA standards of practice or calls into question the professional accountability of the student. The behavior causes harm or has the potential to cause harm to a client or other person. Depending upon the degree of actual or potential harm a client may suffer, one time deviation from safe practice may be sufficient to judge a student unsafe. Examples of unsafe practice include but are not limited to the following:

1. practicing in a clinical practicum under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol that could or does interfere with one's ability to practice;
2. demonstrating behavior that puts a client at risk of harm by violating a standard of care;
3. acting in a manner likely to cause serious harm to self or others, including but not limited to inadequate preparation for a clinical experience;
4. acts of omission or commission likely to cause harm to clients including but not limited to physical abuse, placing clients in hazardous positions or circumstances, mental or emotional abuse, medication errors or the inability to provide ordered treatment of care;
5. failure to provide accurate, inclusive, written and verbal communication, or falsely documenting in a clinical record, written assignment or student log;

6. attempting activities without adequate orientation, knowledge, assistance or supervision.

### **Unprofessional Practice**

Behavior in providing nursing care to clients that violates the ANA Code of Nurses. Under this guideline, examples include but are not limited to the following:

1. failure to notify the agency and/or clinical instructor of absence or lateness;
2. practicing in a clinical practicum under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol that does or may interfere with the ability to practice;
3. violating client privacy rights through breach of confidentiality of interactions or records or failure to protect the privacy in personal care;
4. engaging in behavior that is disrespectful of a client=s social or economic status, personal attributes or health problems.

### **Weak Practice with Potential for Unsafe and/or Unprofessional Practice**

Behavior with potential for unsafe and/or unprofessional practice in providing nursing care to clients. Includes behavior that fails to achieve the standards of care, violates the nurse practice act, violates the ANA Code for nurses and/or standards of practice or calls into question the professional accountability of the student. Under this guideline, examples include but are not limited to the following:

1. difficulty or inability to apply theoretical knowledge to specific clinical situation;
2. inability to successfully organize care and documentation of clinic assignment;
3. inability to correctly interpret laboratory and/or diagnostic results;
4. difficulty or inability to determine priorities in completing clinical assignment;
5. difficulty communicating with clients, families, peers or other health care personnel.

### **Procedures That Will Be Followed:**

#### **Unsafe or Unprofessional Practice**

When a professor has reason to conclude that a student has practiced unsafely or unprofessionally, the professor needs to notify the student in writing prior to the next scheduled clinical day of these reasons. A copy of the written notification will be forwarded to the Department Coordinator. Included in this written notification are a description of:

1. specific actions necessary to demonstrate safe and/or professional practice including any medical/health evaluations in situations where the physical, cognitive and/or emotional behavior of the student placed the client at risk;
2. the time during which the corrective actions must be achieved;
3. any modifications of the clinical experience pending completion of specific corrective actions necessary to demonstrate safe and/or professional practice including but not limited to restriction of activities and responsibilities, supervision of activities or procedures, removal from clinical experience, and/or alteration in clinical site.

Students removed from the clinical experience who, in the professor=s judgment, have taken the specific corrective actions prescribed to remedy unsafe and/or unprofessional practice will be permitted to resume the clinical experience contingent upon the availability of clinical placements and adequate resources. Students achieving corrective action will either pass the course or pass the course with identified improvement activities as prescribed by the current and subsequent clinical professor.

A copy of the record of the judgment of unsafe and/or unprofessional practice will remain in their student record. If no further instances of unsafe and/or unprofessional practice occur, the record of unsafe and/or unprofessional practice will be removed at the time any potential for litigation expires.

The action to be taken if the specific corrective actions prescribed are not achieved include failure of the course or failure of the course and recommendation for discipline under the University Code of Conduct. Depending upon the degree of actual or potential harm, a one time deviation from safe and professional practice may be sufficient to warrant failure of the course and/or suspension from the program.

Students who fail a clinical course due to unsafe and/or unprofessional practice may pursue re-entry to the course by notifying the Department Coordinator. This does not preclude an appeal.

Students who fail a course because of unsafe and/or unprofessional practice and who disagree with the evaluation that their clinical practice is unsafe and/or unprofessional may appeal the professor=s judgment through the Grievance Procedure.

### **Weak Clinical Practice**

When the professor has reason to conclude that a student=s clinical practice is weak with potential for unsafe and/or unprofessional practice, the student will be notified as soon as possible. If deficits are identified in a timely manner, the student will be provided with a contract. This written notification will include a description of specific actions to be taken to improve the clinical practice, the support provided by faculty to promote improvement, the time period during which the specific

improvement actions must be completed, and any modifications in the clinical experience to demonstrate safe and/or professional practice. However, if significant weaknesses are not identified soon enough in the rotation to create a contact, the student is still (ultimately) responsible for meeting the objectives by the end of the rotation.

The action to be taken if the specific improvement action prescribed are not fully achieved include:

1. pass the course because some improvement has been demonstrated but the student needs to continue improvement activities in the subsequent clinical course (see next paragraph);
2. fail the course because improvement actions have not been completed in allotted time frame;
3. fail the course because behavior has become unsafe and/or unprofessional;
4. fail the course and recommend discipline under the University Student Code of Conduct.

If actions for improvement must bridge the current and subsequent semester, the professor of the current semester and the professor responsible for the subsequent clinical will mutually agree upon and provide the student with a written description of expectations. The written description will include specific improvement actions to be taken during the subsequent semester, the time prior during which the action must be completed in the subsequent semester and any modifications in the clinical experience that might be necessary to demonstrate safe and/or unprofessional practice.

### **Code of Conduct**

When engaged in nursing functions, the student must do so within legally prescribed bounds and is accountable for his/her actions. The student has the obligation to adhere to the standards of ethical practice and conduct which are stated in the American Nurses= Association=s Code for Nurses and the ANA Standard of Care.

### **ANA Code of Conduct**

1. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse safeguards the client=s right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature.
3. The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical or illegal practice of any persons.
4. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions.
5. The nurse maintains competence in nursing.
6. The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities and delegating nursing activities to others.
7. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession=s body of knowledge.
8. The nurse participates in the profession=s efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.
9. The nurse participates in the profession=s effort to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing.
10. The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.

## GENERAL POLICIES AND INFORMATION

### Nondiscrimination Policy

Northern Michigan University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, height, weight, marital status, familial status, handicap/disability, sexual orientation or veteran status in employment or the provision of services, and provides, upon request, reasonable accommodations including auxiliary aids and services necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in all programs and activities

#### For More Information Please Contact:

Catherine (“Cathy”) L. Dehlin  
General Counsel/EO Officer  
Title IX Coordinator  
502 Cohodas Hall

Email: [cdehlin@nmu.edu](mailto:cdehlin@nmu.edu)  
Office Phone: 906 227-2420  
Fax: 906 227-2478

Janet L. Koski  
Administrative Assistant  
502 Cohodas Hall

Email: [jakoski@nmu.edu](mailto:jakoski@nmu.edu)  
Office Phone: 906 227-2473  
Fax: 906 227-2478

The faculty of the Department of Practical Nursing believe it is important that all nursing students receive a quality learning experience regardless of their gender. Students should have the experience of caring for patients of both sexes. If a student feels that a faculty member=s behavior is discriminatory, the student should contact the Program Coordinator.

### Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Policy

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services in the Disability Services Office, Room 2001 C.B. Hedgcock, (227-1700; TDD 227-1543) or online at [www.nmu.edu/disserve](http://www.nmu.edu/disserve). Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state and University guidelines.

### Smoking Policy

Smoking or the use of tobacco products is not permitted in any facility or vehicle owned, operated or under the control of Northern Michigan University except in designated areas identified by smoking permitted or tobacco use permitted signs. This includes clinical sites. Additional information regarding the smoking policy is available in the Northern Michigan University Student Handbook.

### Northern Michigan University Student Handbook

The [Northern Michigan University Student Handbook](#) contains information on Students Rights and Responsibilities, the Student Code and University Policies and Related Documents. This publication is available in the Office of the Dean of Students, Room 2001 C.B.Hedgcock, 227-1700 or online at [www.nmu.edu/dso](http://www.nmu.edu/dso). The Handbook details NMU rules and regulations and grievance procedures.

### Campus Life and Student Services

Northern Michigan University, as a regional institution, serves students with varied educational, professional and vocation objectives. In order to meet the unique needs of all students and enhance their opportunities for learning, the University provides numerous services outside the classroom. Information regarding student services is available from the Student Services Center, Room 2201 C.B. Hedgcock, 227-1221. Some of the services most frequently used by students are described on the following page.

**Academic and Career Advisement Center:** Room 3302 C.B. Hedgcock, 227-2971 or online at [www.nmu.edu/acac](http://www.nmu.edu/acac).

This center provides a variety of services that enhance the academic success of students. In addition, the center provides academic counseling to students who are unsure of their academic direction or who wish to change their major field of study.

**Counseling and Guidance:** Room 3405 C.B. Hedgcock, 227-2981 or online at [www.nmu.edu/counselingcenter](http://www.nmu.edu/counselingcenter).

The center offers services that facilitate students' personal development, helping them to better participate in the NMU learning community. The staff of professional psychologists and counselors provides a variety of services, including individual counseling, group counseling and skill training in assertiveness, stress management and test-performance anxiety.

**Health Center:** Ground Floor, Gries Hall, 227-2355

The professional staff consists of physicians, nurse practitioners, registered nurses, a pharmacist, a medical technologist, a dietician and auxiliary personnel. A complete range of medical and minor surgical services are available.

**Job Search Center:** Room 3502 C.B. Hedgcock, 227-2800 or online at [www.nmu.edu/jobsearch](http://www.nmu.edu/jobsearch).

This office offers assistance with job placement, coordinates referrals for full-time jobs and internships, provides individual advisement regarding job search strategies and offers placement workshops. In addition, this office houses a career information library.

**Nursing Technology Center:** Room 1613 West Science, 227-2615

The NTC is available for individual and group learning of assigned work. The lab has nursing skills equipment and supplies, computer work stations, interactive disk players, TV/VCR equipment and video cameras. The NTC has a registered nurse scheduled throughout the semester to assist students with skill acquisition.

**Computer Labs:**

The University computer labs are located in the Learning Resources Center. Computer lab hours and staffing levels vary by semester but are open early and close late. For information on location and hours contact Academic Computing (227-1860).

**Olson Library:**

Services available from the library include access services to library materials, on-line catalog services, reference and information services, on-line data base searching, interlibrary loan and government documents. The library provides an instruction program to develop self-reliant library users. The library is open 7 days a week during the academic year. For information regarding hours contact the library (227-2260).

## CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK STATEMENT

Student placement in a clinical site/agency assumes that the applicant possesses good moral character and the ability to successfully pass the rigors of a background investigation and criminal history check. While it is **not** the policy of Northern Michigan University's **Department of Practical Nursing** to validate or ensure these prerequisite qualities in our majors, federal guidelines for many agencies mandate that the clinical site/agency perform background checks. Therefore, each nursing student is advised that the clinical site/agency may perform background investigation on students who are placed in their clinical site/agency. The nature and scope of the background investigation is the prerogative of the specific agency and is in accordance to federal or state guidelines mandating the background check, however, lack of consent may disallow a student from being placed in that clinical site/agency, and therefore, may prohibit the student from progressing the nursing program.

#### **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:**

1. Practical nurses must be licensed by the state(s) in which they plan to work. Persons making application for licensure are screened for criminal records and/or convicted felonies.
2. Admission to the Practical Nursing Program involves a significant time commitment. Students should expect to spend 34 hours per week on course related work on campus and in clinical placements. Students are required to be in clinic at 6:30 a.m. for some clinics and may also be assigned afternoon shift. Transportation to clinic sites is the responsibility of the student. Students should be available 3 days a week for clinics.
3. Practical nurses are exposed to a variety of substances within the work environment and other work sites such as occasional fluctuations in temperature and electromagnetic radiations. Exposure to blood and other body tissue and fluids, dust, electrical hazards, loud or unpleasant noises and occasional high humidity or wetness are the norm. Practical nurses are also exposed to many latex products. Practical nursing students must be able to stand for long periods of time and be able to assist with the lifting and transferring of patients.

The Department of Practical Nursing does not review individual cases as to medical and/or legal suitability. However, we do wish to have prospective students informed of performance standards prior to making an investment of time and money in the program.

#### **Student Applicants with Possible Latex Allergies**

Students wanting to enter any Practical Nursing program at Northern Michigan University are strongly advised to consult and be tested by a physician who specializes in Allergy and Immunology prior to starting the program. The physician can determine and advise the student regarding contact dermatitis and/or latex allergy.

Natural rubber latex allergy is a serious medical problem and a disabling occupational disease among health care workers. Allergic reactions to latex range from skin disease to asthma and anaphylaxis that can result in chronic illness, disability, career loss, hardship, and death. There is no treatment for latex allergy except complete avoidance of latex. Early diagnosis and latex avoidance are essential because continued exposure can lead to advanced allergic symptoms that disrupt careers and everyday living, and create serious barriers to health care. Latex-sensitized persons should take the following precautions:

- a) avoid all contact with latex
- b) carry auto-injectable epinephrine
- c) wear a medical ID bracelet

Although latex gloves are the most prominent source of latex allergen, many other products contain latex including:

- Blood pressure cuffs, medication vials, and wound drains
- Stethoscopes, catheters, respirators, and goggles
- Oral and nasal airways, surgical masks, and electrode pads
- Endotracheal tubes, syringes, IV tubing, and tourniquets

Avoidance of latex in health care facilities used for clinical training of health occupation students is not possible. Non-latex gloves are available, however they do not provide as effective a barrier to bacteria, viruses, or blood.

The risk of progression from skin rash to more serious reactions is unknown. However, a skin rash may be the first sign that a worker has become allergic to latex and that more serious reactions could occur with continuing exposure.

An individual with a latex allergy who is starting career training is advised to select a career outside the health occupations.

I have read and understand the above information. I agree to keep Northern Michigan University and affiliated clinical agencies, free and harmless of all liability of any suits, claims, actions, or financial obligations of whatsoever kind or character as a result of my decision to enter a program of health occupations.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Witness\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

## **PROCEDURE FOR MANAGEMENT OF EXPOSURE TO BLOOD-BORNE DISEASES**

### **GENERAL:**

1. Significant exposure is defined as percutaneous or permucosal (ocular or mucous membrane) exposure to blood or other body fluids containing visible blood.
2. If possible, the wound or exposed area shall be immediately and thoroughly washed with soap and water.
3. The Department Head and NMU Health Center shall be notified as soon as possible.
4. A Northern Michigan University Incident Report for Accident/Injury/Illness shall be completed.
5. If the source client is identifiable, they shall be informed of the incident and requested to be tested. After informed consent is obtained, the source client=s blood should be tested for the following:

- Hepatitis B surface antigen
- HIV antibody

Label specimens: ?Rush - Needlestick@ and send to Marquette General Hospital or affiliate laboratory.

NOTE: If the source client is a Northern Michigan University student or faculty member, he/she will be requested to report to the NMU Health Center or the affiliate laboratory for testing. These lab fees only (Hepatitis B surface antigen and HIV antibody), will be paid by the Health Center if performed at the Health Center.

6. The exposed student/faculty member will also be referred to the Health Center for counseling and testing or to the employee health service at the affiliate. If the exposed person refuses to accept referral, a ?Documentation of Refusal to Accept Referral@ shall be completed (Attachment 2). The Health Center and/or the affiliate employee health service shall be notified of the exposed person=s refusal to accept a referral.

If the exposed person has completed Hepatitis B vaccination, obtain informed consent and test for:

- HIV antibody
- Hepatitis B surface antibody

Label specimens: ?Rush - Needlestick@ and send to Marquette General Hospital or the affiliate laboratory.

If the exposed person has not completed Hepatitis B vaccination, obtain informed consent and test for:

- HIV antibody
- Hepatitis B surface antibody (anti-HBs)
- Hepatitis B surface antigen
- Hepatitis B core antibody (anti-HBc)
- SGOT (AST)

Label specimens: ?Rush - Needlestick@ and sent to Marquette General Hospital or the affiliate laboratory.

7. For greatest effectiveness, Hepatitis B immune globulin (HBIG), when indicated, should be given as soon as possible after exposure, preferably within 24 hours. Its value beyond seven days after exposure is unclear.

The dose is 0.06 ml/kg, to a maximum of 5 ml, IM

8. When indicated, recommend a Hepatitis B vaccine. This is injected in the deltoid muscle, and can be given simultaneously with HBIG, but not at the same site. Primary vaccination comprises three IM doses of vaccine, with the second and third doses given 1 and 6 months after the first.
9. Recommend a Tetanus booster, 0.5 ml IM, if the injury is from a discarded or soiled sharp instrument, and the exposed person has not received a Tetanus booster vaccine in the past five years.

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**NORTHERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY**  
**College of Professional Studies**

**DOCUMENTATION OF REFUSAL TO ACCEPT REFERRAL**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Referral: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I have been advised to go to the NMU Health Center or affiliate employee health service immediately for counseling and testing because of the above mentioned reason(s). Even though it has been recommended that I do so, I do not plan to go now for the following reason(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The following possible risks of not accepting or acting upon the referral have been explained to me:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I hereby release Northern Michigan University from any and all liability arising out of or connected with my decision not to follow the above medical recommendation.

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

I witness the fact that the individual signed the above and said he/she read and understood the same.

Witness= Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

c: NMU Health Center