



**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
BEAUFORT
BSN HANDBOOK
2023-2024
APPROVED 8-16-2023**



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This handbook was last approved by the BSN Faculty in Fall semester 2023.

Approval and Accreditation

The University of South Carolina Beaufort (USCB) BSN program is approved by the *South Carolina Board of Nursing*. Inquiries related to the program's approval can be obtained directly from the board of nursing at any time.

South Carolina Board of Nursing
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"The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at the University of South Carolina Beaufort is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>)."



Handbook Notice

The University of South Carolina Beaufort BSN Handbook is intended to augment university policies found in the 2022-2023 University Bulletin. This handbook is effective August 20, 2023, and supersedes all prior versions. In select instances, requirements of the BSN program exceed university requirements due to the rigorous nature of the program and professional expectations. When requirements exceed university requirements, the BSN program expectations are delineated in this handbook.

Currently enrolled students are subject to revised policies found in this handbook, and are notified via email, class announcements, and/or other means of communication.

Welcome from the Chair

While becoming a nurse can be challenging, picking the right school shouldn't be. Pursuing a nursing degree is hard work and we have high expectations of our students, but we will help you get there. We celebrate what makes each one of our students unique and work with you to be the nurse you dream of becoming. The nursing profession needs nurses with diverse backgrounds who are compassionate, skilled, and visionary. At USCB, our goal is to educate students to be the best nurses they can be and create a lifelong passion for learning.

University of South Carolina Beaufort's Nursing program offers a world class education with a small-town approach. Personalized attention and small class sizes set us apart from larger programs. Our faculty members are highly educated experts in their fields, and we never use Teaching Assistants - ever. Classrooms are equipped with technology and students learn how to become nurses through a carefully built curriculum that support student success. Learning approaches vary to accommodate different learners' needs and all students learn how to become nurses through a combination of classroom, simulation, and clinical experiences. Together, a modern curriculum varied learning experiences and outstanding faculty lead to an exceptional learning experience for our students, who are well-prepared to take the NCLEX-RN® licensing exam.

Welcome to USCB and the BSN program!

~ Dr. Lynne Hutchison, Chair, Department of Nursing

Program Overview

History

The BSN program began with an RN to BSN program in 2009, expanding to offer a pre-licensure BSN program in 2011. The BSN program was the 10th baccalaureate degree to be offered at the university, in response to regional needs. The program was initiated through the support of regional healthcare partners and donors who made significant contributions to develop the program. The program received initial approval from the South Carolina Board of Nursing in 2011 and received initial accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in 2014.

Mission

Consistent with the USCB mission, the Department of Nursing exists to prepare competent and safe professional nurses to serve in local, regional, and national settings, using concepts, care strategies, and techniques to deliver patient/client-centered nursing services as a member of the discipline and the interprofessional health care team.

Philosophy

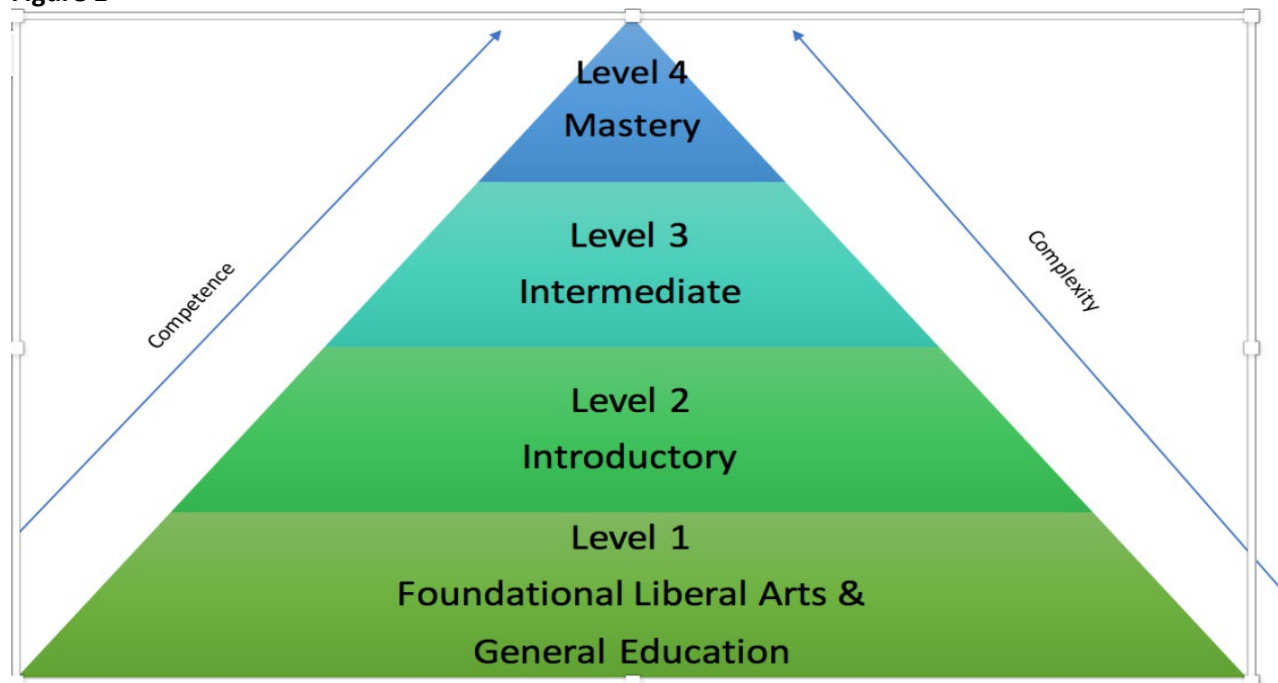
As a faculty, we believe that nursing is a relationship-centered profession with a unique science, complemented by other liberal arts and science-based disciplines. The foci of care are aimed at serving individuals, families, and communities with a scope that encompasses health promotion and maintenance, disease management, and care coordination across the spectrum of health service organizations. Nursing's influence reflects professional autonomy and extends to shared roles on interprofessional teams.

We also believe that students are responsive and responsible learners and that our role as educators is to unleash knowledge and skills acquisition and maximize their human potential consistent with contemporary nursing standards and best practices. We commit to best practices in teaching/learning with a focus on student-centered approaches to education.

Our dedication extends by modeling sensitivity, curiosity, and innovative practices to students in a scholarly, respectful, and safe learning environment; delivering expert nursing care to those needing healthcare as they face illness and seek health and wellbeing; and influencing service environments where clinical practice is performed to foster client/patient-centered holistic care. We believe health to be a state of being that optimizes human functioning and quality of life.

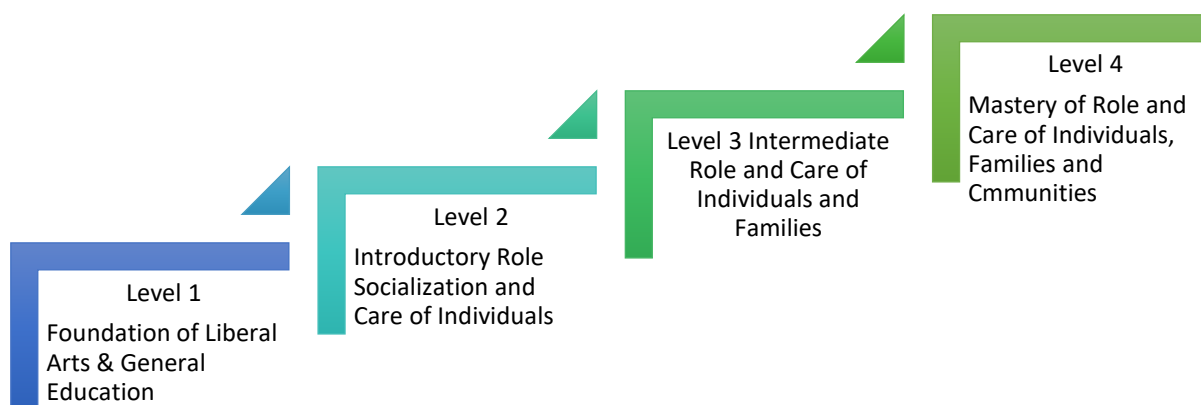
The BSN's curriculum philosophy incorporates Bruner's (1974) theory of Scaffolding of Learning, utilizing a three-pronged approach: 1) building on concepts from the simple to the complex, 2) moving the learner from a state of dependence to independence, and transitioning nursing care from individuals to families and ultimately to communities, toward entry-level competence in nursing practice (Figure 1).

Figure 1



Reference

Bruner, J. (1974). *Toward a Theory of Instruction*. Belknap Press.



Introductory – students demonstrate basic knowledge, skills, and attitudes; require frequent prompts and cues to perform nursing action safely

Intermediate – students demonstrate increased knowledge, skills, and attitudes; require prompts and cues to perform nursing action safely

Mastery – student demonstrates entry-level knowledge, skills, and attitudes: requires few, if any, prompts and cues to perform nursing action safely

Degree Program Goals

Program goals align with the AACN Baccalaureate Essentials and Quality and Safety Education of Nurses (QSEN) competencies.

USCB BSN Program Goal	AACN Baccalaureate Essential	QSEN Competencies
1. BSN graduates incorporate quality, safety and evidence-based care into the practice of nursing.	Liberal Education for Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice, Basic Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Care and Patient Safety, and Scholarship for Evidence-based Practice	Teamwork and Collaboration, Evidence-based Practice, Safety
2. BSN graduates exhibit sound clinical judgment.	Scholarship for Evidence-based Practice and Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice	Patient-Centered Care, Evidence-based Practice
3. BSN graduates are effective communicators and collaborators within the interdisciplinary healthcare team.	Information Management and Application of Patient Care Technology, Interprofessional Communications and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes, and Professionalism and Professional Values	Teamwork and Collaboration, Safety and Informatics
4. BSN graduates are prepared to assume leadership roles.	Basic Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Care and Patient Safety; Healthcare Policy, Finance, and Regulatory Environments; Interprofessional Communication and Collaboration for Improving Patient Health Outcomes; Clinical Prevention and Population Health	Quality Improvement and Safety
5. BSN graduates promote patient-centered care.	Liberal Education for Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice, Clinical Prevention and Population Health, Professionalism and Professional Values, Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice	Patient-Centered Care
6. BSN graduates use information and technology to communicate and manage knowledge to support decision-making.	Information Management and Application of Patient Care Technology, Clinical Prevention and Population Health, Baccalaureate Generalist Nursing Practice.	Patient-Centered Care and Informatics

BSN Program Outcomes

Guided by our mission and philosophy and based on a curricular design that builds on the liberal arts, graduates of our program will:

1. Provide safe, quality, collaborative, and evidence-supported care in entry-level nursing positions across settings and in interprofessional teams.
2. Identify clinical problems, administer therapeutic interventions, and evaluate outcomes for individuals, families, and communities in need of professional nursing services.
3. Engage in high stakes communication that conveys knowledge of medical practice and clinical informatics, priorities, and urgency for care within the scope and functions of licensure, willingness to advocate for the client/patient, adheres to ethical practice, and respect for interprofessional relationships.
4. Advance professional and organizational standards that impact patient populations by leading quality improvement and change management initiatives; influences access-to-care, cost effectiveness, and quality through policy interpretation and advocacy.
5. Demonstrate caring ideals that are culturally- sensitive, respect socio-economic differences, and honor client/patient and family variations and life preferences.
6. Incorporate the facile use of patient care and information technologies to advance relationship-centered care and population health strategies.

References

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2008). *Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice*. Retrieved from <http://www.aacn.nche.edu/education-resources/BaccEssentials08.pdf>

Institute of Medicine. (2010). *The future of nursing. Leading change, advancing health*. Retrieved from <http://iom.nationalacademies.org/Reports/2010/The-Future-of-Nursing-Leading-Change-Advancing-Health.aspx>

Quality and Safety Education of Nurses. (2018). *Prelicensure KSAs*. Retrieved from <http://qsen.org/competencies/pre-licensure-ksas>

South Carolina State Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations 2005 South Carolina Code of Regulations §91-31, Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation-State Board of Nursing: 1976 Code Sections 40-33-10(g),40-33-220(11), 40-33-270). Retrieved from <https://www.scstatehouse.gov/coderegs/Chapter%2091.pdf>

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Assessment of Program Outcomes

Evaluation Plan

The BSN program values continuous quality improvement and completes an assessment of achievement toward program, student, and faculty outcomes annually through its Master Plan for Evaluation.

NCLEX-RN® First-time and All Time Pass Rates

Cohort	First time pass rate	All attempts pass rate	Not yet passed	Not tested
2018	92%	100%	0	0
2019	59.46%	92%	8%	0
2020	73.17%	92%	8%	0
2021	89%	95%	5%	1
2022	81.13%	94.5%	5.5%	3
2023*	100%	n/a	n/a	4

*As of June 30, 2023

Academic Programs and Curricula

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program provides students with essential knowledge and skills based on a foundation in the liberal arts and sciences. Students develop skills in analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. In the core nursing courses, involving didactic instruction and clinical practice, students continue preparation for the practice of professional nursing.

The BSN program consists of: the pre-licensure (or generic) track leading to the BSN degree and eligibility for licensure as a registered nurse

Pre-licensure BSN Curriculum Map

Freshman Year			
Semester 1	Credits	Semester 2	Credits
<i>ENGL B101 English Composition I</i>	3	<i>ENGL B102 English Composition II</i>	3
<i>BIOL B243 Anatomy & Physiology I</i>	4	<i>BIOL B244 Anatomy & Physiology II</i>	4
<i>MATH B111 College Algebra</i>	3	ARTS, ARTH, MUSC, THEA (Fine Arts)	3
<i>PSYC B101 Introduction to Psychology</i>	3	<i>NURS B105 Concepts, Communication, & Calculations</i>	3
<i>U101 Student in the University</i>	3	<i>STAT B201 Statistics</i>	3
TOTAL CREDITS	16	TOTAL CREDITS	16
Sophomore Year			
Semester 3	Credits	Semester 4	Credits
<i>BIOL B230 Microbiology</i>	4	NURS B202 Decision-Making in Concept-Based Care	3
<i>COMM B201 Interpersonal Communication</i>	3	NURS B202C Clinical Care & Introduction to Nursing Techniques	3
<i>HRTM B242 Nutrition</i>	3	NURS B310 Pathophysiology	3
<i>PSYC B321 Developmental Psychology</i>	3	NURS B312 Assessment & Physical Examination of Individuals	3
<i>SOCY B101 Introduction to Sociology</i>	3	Language (Recommend SPAN B101)	3
TOTAL CREDITS	16	TOTAL CREDITS	15
		CLINICAL HOURS	160
Junior Year			
Semester 5	Credits	Semester 6	Credits
NURS B320 Pharmacologic Interventions	3	NURS B356 Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B326 Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B358 Care of Children	3
NURS B326C Clinical Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B360C Clinical Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B330 Transcultural Health Practices	3	Language (Recommend SPAN B102)	3
NURS B350 Science of Evidenced-Based Practice	3	HIST B101, B102, B111, B112, B115, or B116	3
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	15
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	120
Senior Year			
Semester 7	Credits	Semester 8	Credits
NURS B410 Leading in Organizational Settings	3	NURS B425 Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B412 Care of Individuals with Mental & Addictive Disorders	3	NURS B425C Clinical Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B418 Community & Public Health Nursing	3	NURS B435 Career Preparation and Transition	2
NURS B422C Clinical Care in Public & Community Health Settings	3	NURS B430C Clinical Synthesis and Seminar	3
Elective	3	Elective	2-3
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	13-14
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	240
		Total Credits for BSN Degree = 121	
		Total Clinical Hours = 760	

*Courses in italics are required pre-requisites for acceptance to the BSN major. *U101 required for first time freshman students only, not required for transfer students*

BSN Beaufort Honors Program Curriculum Map

Freshman Year			
Semester 1	Credits	Semester 2	Credits
<i>ENGL B101 English Composition I</i>	3	<i>ENGL B102 English Composition II</i>	3
<i>BIOL B243 Anatomy & Physiology I</i>	4	<i>BIOL B244 Anatomy & Physiology II</i>	4
<i>MATH B111 College Algebra</i>	3	<i>NURS B105 Concepts, Communication, & Calculations</i>	3
<i>PSYC B101 Introduction to Psychology</i>	3	<i>STAT B201 Statistics</i>	3
NURS B100 Nursing Honors Seminar	1	NURS B101 Nursing Honors Seminar II	1
U101 Student in the University	3	ARTS, ARTH, MUSC, THEA (Fine Arts)	3
TOTAL CREDITS	17	TOTAL CREDITS	16
Sophomore Year			
Semester 3	Credits	Semester 4	Credits
<i>BIOL B230 Microbiology</i>	4	NURS B201 Nursing Honors Seminar IV	1
<i>COMM B201 Interpersonal Communication</i>	3	NURS B202 Decision-Making in Concept-Based Care	3
<i>HRTM B242 Nutrition</i>	3	NURS B202C Clinical Care & Introduction to Nursing Techniques	3
<i>PSYC B321 Developmental Psychology</i>	3	NURS B310 Pathophysiology	3
<i>SOCY B101 Introduction to Sociology</i>	3	NURS B312 Assessment & Physical Examination of Individuals	3
NURS B200 Nursing Honors Seminar III	1	Language (Recommend SPAN B101)	3
TOTAL CREDITS	17	TOTAL CREDITS	16
		CLINICAL HOURS	160
Junior Year			
Semester 5	Credits	Semester 6	Credits
NURS B320 Pharmacologic Interventions	3	NURS B356 Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B326 Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B358 Care of Children	3
NURS B326C Clinical Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B360C Clinical Care of Childbearing Families Language (Recommend SPAN B102)	3
NURS B330 Transcultural Health Practices	3	HIST B101, B102, B111, B112, B115, or B116	3
NURS B350 Science of Evidenced-Based Practice	3		
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	14-15
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	120
Senior Year			
Semester 7	Credits	Semester 8	Credits
NURS B410 Leading in Organizational Settings	3	NURS B425 Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B412 Care of Individuals with Mental & Addictive Disorders	3	NURS B425C Clinical Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B418 Community & Public Health Nursing	3	NURS B435 Career Preparation and Transition	2
NURS B422C Clinical Care in Public & Community Health Settings	3	NURS B430C Clinical Synthesis and Seminar Elective	3
Elective	3		
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	14
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	240
		Total Credits for BSN Degree = 121	
		Total Clinical Hours = 760	

*Courses in italics are required pre-requisites to begin NURS 200-level courses. *U101 required for first time freshman students only, not required for transfer students*

Approved 8-16-2023 by Faculty Organization, updated 10-19-2023 with CCNE accreditation language

**Bachelor of Science in Nursing – Pre-licensure Track
USC Salkehatchie Cohort**

Freshman Year			
Semester 1	Credits	Semester 2	Credits
<i>ENGL 101 English Composition I</i>	3	<i>ENGL 102 English Composition II</i>	3
<i>BIOL 243/243L Anatomy & Physiology I</i>	4	<i>BIOL 244 Anatomy & Physiology II</i>	4
<i>MATH 111 Basic College Mathematics</i>	3	<i>NURS 220 Clinical Nutrition</i>	3
<i>PSYC B101 Introduction to Psychology</i>	3	ARTS, ARTH, MUSC, THEA (Fine Arts)	3
<i>U101 Student in University*</i>	3	<i>STAT 201 Statistics</i>	3
TOTAL CREDITS	16	TOTAL CREDITS	18
Sophomore Year			
Semester 3	Credits	Semester 4	Credits
<i>BIOL 250/250L Microbiology</i>	4	NURS B202 Decision-Making in Concept-Based Care	3
<i>SPCH 140 Public Communication</i>	3	NURS B202C Clinical Care & Introduction to Nursing Techniques	3
<i>PALM 105 Concepts, Communication, & Calculations</i>	2	NURS B310 Pathophysiology	3
<i>PSYC 420 Survey of Developmental Psychology</i>	3	NURS B312 Assessment & Physical Examination of Individuals	3
<i>SOCY 101 Introduction to Sociology</i>	3	Language (Recommend SPAN 101)	3
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	15
		CLINICAL HOURS	160
Junior Year			
Semester 5	Credits	Semester 6	Credits
NURS B320 Pharmacologic Interventions	3	NURS B356 Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B326 Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B358 Care of Children	3
NURS B326C Clinical Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B360C Clinical Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B330 Transcultural Health Practices	3	Language (Recommend SPAN 102)	3
NURS B350 Science of Evidenced-Based Practice	3	HIST 101, 102, 111, 112, 115, or 116	3
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	15
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	120
Senior Year			
Semester 7	Credits	Semester 8	Credits
NURS B410 Leading in Organizational Settings	3	NURS B425 Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B412 Care of Individuals with Mental & Addictive Disorders	3	NURS B425C Clinical Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B418 Community & Public Health Nursing	3	NURS B435 Career Preparation and Transition	2
NURS B422C Clinical Care in Public & Community Health Settings	3	NURS B430C Clinical Synthesis and Seminar	3
Elective	3	Elective	2-3
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	13-14
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	240

*Courses in italics are required pre-requisites for acceptance to the BSN major. *U101 required for first time freshman students only, not required for transfer students.*

Total Clinical Hours = 760

Total Credits for BSN Degree = 121

Second-Degree Pre-licensure BSN Curriculum

Admission to the University of South Carolina Beaufort is determined by standard admission requirements. Incoming students with a Bachelor's degree in another field who wish to pursue a nursing degree must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above and an overall science GPA of 2.75 or above. Only equivalent transfer credits with grade of 'C' or higher will be applicable to the degree program. Credits accepted in transfer must be from an approved college or university. The final 32 credit hours of coursework must be taken at USCB to receive a degree from USCB.

Potential students are encouraged to meet with an academic advisor prior to general admission to determine eligibility and a recommended course of study. As admission to the nursing program is competitive, the GPA for applicants is usually significantly higher than the minimum 3.0 required. Once the prior Bachelor's Degree is verified by the Admissions Office, the general education requirements will be deemed as met. BSN program-specific requirements (taken at USCB or transferred in) that must be met for application to the nursing program are as follows (next page):

Second-Degree BSN Curriculum Map

Pre-Requisite Courses Required Prior to Acceptance and Enrollment in NURS B202*			
Courses	Credits	Courses	Credits
<i>PSYC B101 Introduction to Psychology</i>	3	<i>BIOL B230 Microbiology</i>	4
<i>PSYC B321 Developmental Psychology</i>	3	<i>BIOL B243 Anatomy & Physiology I</i>	4
<i>STAT B201 Statistics</i>	3	<i>BIOL B244 Anatomy & Physiology II</i>	4
<i>HRTM B242 Nutrition</i>	3	<i>NURS B105 Concepts, Communication, & Calculations</i>	2
BSN Entry			
Summer	Credits	Spring	Credits
Apply to BSN Program		NURS B202 Decision-Making in Concept-Based Care	3
		NURS B202C Clinical Care & Introduction to Nursing Techniques	3
		NURS B310 Pathophysiology	3
		NURS B312 Assessment & Physical Examination of Individuals	3
		TOTAL CREDITS	12
		CLINICAL HOURS	160
Junior Year			
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
NURS B320 Pharmacologic Interventions	3	NURS B356 Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B326 Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B358 Care of Children	3
NURS B326C Clinical Care of Adults with Acute & Chronic Conditions	3	NURS B360C Clinical Care of Childbearing Families	3
NURS B330 Transcultural Health Practices	3		
NURS B350 Science of Evidenced-Based Practice	3		
TOTAL CREDITS	15	TOTAL CREDITS	9
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	120
Senior Year			
Fall	Credits	Spring	Credits
NURS B410 Leading in Organizational Settings	3	NURS B425 Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B412 Care of Individuals with Mental & Addictive Disorders	3	NURS B425C Clinical Care of High Acuity Adults	3
NURS B418 Community & Public Health Nursing	3	NURS B435 Career Preparation and Transition	2
NURS B422C Clinical Care in Public & Community Health Settings	3	NURS B430C Clinical Synthesis and Seminar	3
TOTAL CREDITS	12	TOTAL CREDITS	11
CLINICAL HOURS	120	CLINICAL HOURS	240

* Courses in italics are required pre-requisites to begin NURS 200-level courses and may be satisfied in first-degree or other accredited college/university.

Admission Requirements

Beaufort College Honors Program Requirements

Applicants must meet all USCB admission requirements and meet or exceed these requirements:

- Overall and SC Core GPA ≥ 3.5
- High School Science GPA ≥ 3.0
- SAT (Combined) ≥ 1100 or ACT Score ≥ 22

The priority deadline for applying is December 1st with decisions anticipated by December 22nd. Applications may be accepted after December 1 and decisions will be made on a seat available basis.

Note: Once accepted into the BSN Nursing Honors program, students are required to continue to meet the same requirements for admission to the nursing program including:

- Completion of required prerequisite courses on the curriculum map before entering the third semester (second semester of sophomore year)
- Maintain the overall GPA of 3.0 and STEM GPA of 3.0 (A & P 1/2, microbiology, algebra grades). Starts with class entering fall 2023.
- Maintain residency requirements on Beaufort campus as outlined in the Honors Student Handbook found on the USCB Honors page.

International Students Seeking Admission to the Pre-licensure BSN Major

The USCB Department of Nursing welcomes international students from diverse backgrounds to apply to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) major.

Procedure:

1. Prospective applicants should first familiarize themselves with the University Procedures for International Students in the most recent USCB Bulletin.
2. Complete University's application online.
3. Submit official proof of English Proficiency consistent with university policy.
4. Applicants who have completed coursework, high school/secondary or university-level, outside of the United States will need to have a course-by-course evaluation of transcripts completed and forwarded to the University of South Carolina Beaufort by a recognized transcript evaluation service.
5. Applicants must complete all program pre-requisite courses at the University of South Carolina Beaufort or transferred in as an equivalent course from an accredited college or University in the United States.
6. Admission to the pre-licensure BSN major follows the same competitive process described in the *Nursing Student Handbook* and the nursing pre-licensure webpage found within the University's website.

Pre-licensure Requirements

Admission to the University of South Carolina Beaufort is determined by standard admission requirements. Transfer students, change of major students, and students seeking a second bachelor's degree who wish to pursue a degree in nursing should have an overall GPA of 3.0 or above and an overall science and math (STEM) GPA of 3.0 or above (all pre-requisite science coursework: Anatomy & Physiology I and II, Microbiology, and Algebra. Starting admission cycle for cohort of spring 2025). As

admission to the nursing program is competitive, the GPA for applicants is usually significantly higher than the minimum 3.0 required.

The 3.0 cumulative collegiate GPA is required because the academic requirements of the nursing program are rigorous and become progressively more difficult, necessitating strong academic ability. Success on the professional nursing licensing exam (NCLEX-RN®) has been correlated with GPA, particularly the cumulative science GPA.

All students (pre-nursing, transfer, and second-degree seeking students) may apply for admission to the nursing major (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) according to the deadline placed on the website to begin the degree requirement clinical courses in the spring semester of each year. There are 45 credits required in specific courses for application to the BSN Pre-licensure track. Detailed information on application to the BSN Pre-licensure may be found on the department website www.uscb.edu/nursing.

Notification of Admission Decisions for Pre-Licensure Nursing Intent Majors

The Department of Nursing Student Affairs Committee reviews all applications and considers the following criteria when selecting candidates:

- Academic history and trends including overall cumulative GPA and overall STEM GPA
- Number of courses successfully completed toward the major
- Residence in local counties principally served by the USC Beaufort mission
- A “C” grade or above on all science and Nursing courses with a maximum of one science *or* one Nursing course repeated once to earn a minimum grade of “C.” Students may repeat any course *one time* to improve their grades for application to the USCB Nursing Program. Both the first and second earned grades for any repeated course will be used in calculating the science grade point average (GPA) and the overall GPA.
- For any repeated classes, if the first attempt is older than 5 years, that grade will not be calculated into the GPA calculations.

Selected candidates will receive notification of a decision on or about October 15th via email. Decision Status includes:

Accept – applicant has met all criteria for full acceptance to the BSN program

Conditionally Accept – applicant has conditionally met acceptance to the BSN program and is required to meet outstanding pre-requisites and maintain required minimum GPA (overall 3.0 and science 2.75) by the end of fall term

Waitlist – applicant is qualified for admission but there are insufficient seats available in the program at decision time or applicant has more than 12 prerequisite credits remaining to be completed to decide admission

Not Accepted – the applicant does not meet minimum entry requirements

*Conditionally accepted candidates will be notified at the completion of fall semester after review of all semester grades and verification that all pre-requisite courses have been completed by the Student Affairs Committee. Waitlisted students will only be notified if a seat becomes available no later than January 5th of each year.

Advanced Placement

General education courses identified by the University can be used for advanced placement through CLEP examination. University departmental exams may be used for advanced placement if offered by the appropriate department and if the student meets the expected testing level identified by the department. See the current university bulletin.

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Transfer Credit

Transfer students for the pre-licensure track must:

- Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher and a cumulative STEM GPA of 3.0 or above. A Transfer Credit Summary will be prepared by the Office of Admissions after receipt of a student's official transcript from all colleges previously attended.
- Students may transfer equivalent courses for the general education requirements. The courses must meet the University requirements for transfer credit.
- Students may transfer equivalent courses within the nursing major. Junior and senior level BSN courses that are less than five years old will be evaluated for transfer on an individual basis. The courses must meet the University requirements for transfer credits. *The last 32 hours of credit must be earned in residence at the University.*
- Students pursuing the BSN as a second bachelor's degree will be required to meet program pre-requisite requirements; other general education requirements will be met through approved transfer credits.

Progression Requirements

Progression and Re-Admission to the BSN program

Students enrolled in the BSN Nursing major and admitted to the BSN clinical courses must abide by the following:

- A grade of "C" or better is required in all program requirements including NURS courses (see the Curriculum Map). Any student who earns a grade below a "C" in any of these classes must repeat that course. Students who earn a second failing grade (below a "C") will not be accepted into the USCB Nursing Program, or once admitted, will be dismissed from the USCB Nursing Program and may not seek readmission.
- A grade of 'C' or better in any course that is a prerequisite to other courses is required before progression to the next course.
- Students must take NURS B202, 202C, NURS B312, and NURS B310 concurrently. If a student requests to withdraw from NURS B202, NURS B202C, or NURS B312, they must withdraw from all of these classes as they are co-requisites. They can remain enrolled in NURS B310. If a student requests to withdraw from NURS B310, they must withdraw also from NURS B202, NURS B202C, and NURS B312 as Pathophysiology (NURS B310) is a co-requisite of these courses.
- Students must successfully pass both co-requisites of all clinical and didactic courses. Students who fail a clinical course that has a co-requisite didactic class will be issued a grade of incomplete ("I") for the corresponding didactic course(s). Students will have one year to complete the incomplete course(s) according to university policy.
- Students who fail a didactic course that has a co-requisite clinical class will be assigned a grade of incomplete ("I") for the corresponding clinical course(s). Students will then have one year to complete the incomplete course(s) according to university policy. Students will work with the course coordinators to assure clinical competence when completing the clinical course.
- Students in the pre-licensure BSN program must take NURS B425, B425C, B435, and NURS B430C concurrently. If a student requests to withdraw from any of these courses, they must withdraw from all courses as they are co-requisites.
- Pre-licensure students who have less than a 2.75 Collegiate Summary and/or USC GPA are placed on probation within the Department of Nursing for one major semester or 12 credit hours but may continue to take all required courses. If at the end of the probationary semester their Collegiate Summary and/or USC GPA are still less than 2.75, the probationary period may

be extended for one additional semester. If at the end of a second probationary semester the GPA is still below a 2.75, students are administratively removed from their required nursing course sequence. *Probation from the Department of Nursing and suspension from the University are two different academic regulations.*

- Pre-licensure students who have less than a 3.00 GPA in NURS required courses are placed on probation within the Department of Nursing for one major semester or 12 credit hours but may continue to take all required courses. If at the end of the probationary semester their NURS course GPA is still less than 3.00, the probationary period may be extended for one additional semester. If at the end of a second probationary semester the GPA is still below a 3.00, students are administratively removed from their required nursing course sequence. *Probation from the Department of Nursing and suspension from the University are two different academic regulations.* Only required NURS courses for degree conferral will be used to calculate the NURS GPA.
- Students who have been accepted to the nursing program and receive a “W” in any Nursing (NURS) course during their first semester in the program must reapply to the nursing program and compete with the next applicant pool.
 - USCB does NOT assign an automatic “W” or “withdrawal” grade if a student stops coming to class/lab/clinical or handing in assignments. A grade of “F” will be assigned. It is the student’s responsibility to officially drop the course by the drop date.
- Any student who receives a “WF”, will receive an “F” in the course.
- Throughout the curriculum, standardized achievement assessments are used to determine student progress in specific nursing content. Based on the results of these assessments, students may be required to enhance the learning of course content. The enhanced learning (remediation) work must be satisfactorily completed by the last day the class meets.
- Students must complete any required nursing content including enhanced learning work, as determined by standardized achievement ~~tests~~ assessments to avoid a grade of ‘I’ (incomplete) and potential delay in progressing to the next semester in the nursing curriculum.
- Students must complete all nursing courses in three and a half calendar years after acceptance into the clinical courses.

General Policies

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

The first rule of academic life is intellectual honesty. Students of the university are expected to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. The following acts of academic dishonesty subject to disciplinary action include but are not limited to: lying, plagiarism, bribery, cheating and academic misconduct (see also USCB Student Bulletin).

All student work is expected to be one’s own work. Exams are expected to be completed independently unless the instructor has provided students with the opportunity to collaborate. If an instructor suspects cheating on an exam, the student will be dismissed from the classroom, the exam will be collected and given a grade of zero (0) and the student referred to honor court.

Written work must be appropriately cited and referenced. Plagiarism is the presentation of non-original works as one’s own, intentional or unintentional. Plagiarism, even a first offense, may result in a failing

grade for the assignment and potentially the course. For more information on campus policies see the USCB Undergraduate Bulletin. For more information on plagiarism, see the Library Website.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The USCB Department of Nursing is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for students with special needs as directed by the Accessibility Services Office. Students with special needs are encouraged to contact the Accessibility Services Office (Library Suite 202, Phone: 843-208-8263, accessibility@uscb.edu) prior to or early in the student's program to determine if reasonable accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to communicate accommodations to all course faculty and, if alternate testing sites and times are required, give notice of at least 7 days before the test. Students with special needs, like all other students in the Nursing program, must be able to continually meet core performance standards and functional abilities established to ensure that all students meet the objectives of the Nursing program (University Bulletin, Accessibility Services, Academic Support section).

Advisement

All BSN majors are advised by academic advisors in the Department of Nursing. Students must be advised for courses each semester and will not be cleared to register until advisement has occurred. Students must also contact the designated advisor regarding a decision to drop or add a course or to alter the planned program of study. In addition, students are encouraged to contact the academic advisor with any academic concerns.

Attendance

The USCB nursing program is not an online program. There may be remote classes offered, but clinical courses require attendance at clinical agencies. Every class may have a face-to-face requirement. Nursing students are expected to attend and be punctual for ALL classes, clinical days, and laboratory experiences. Students are expected to show courtesy toward others in the classroom. This includes being on time to class. This policy *exceeds* University requirements in order to prepare students for professional practice. It is the belief of the Department of Nursing that classroom attendance is important to academic achievement and professional development. Since nursing is a practice discipline, safe performance requires that learning in theory class be transferred to clinical decision making.

Students are expected to attend class and be on-time for scheduled exams. ***Failure to notify a faculty of an absence prior to the exam may result in a grade penalty and/or grade of zero for the exam and no opportunity to make the exam up.***

Students are expected to communicate with the instructor regarding absence from class, clinical, or lab. The student is responsible for ***notifying the instructor*** in advance of any absence by email, telephone or other means deemed appropriate by the instructor. Failure to notify the faculty in advance may result in a progression contract.

Faculty reserve the right to include attendance and punctuality in the determination of final course grade and should be communicated by the course syllabus.

Excessive tardiness or absenteeism from the classroom, laboratory, or clinical area will result in a progression contract and potential termination from the program. The program does not differentiate between excused and unexcused absences because every absence has the potential to negatively impact on student learning.

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Tardiness, incivility, or failure to submit coursework on time may result in being placed on a “progression contract.” Failure to meet lab, clinical or course requirements may also result in being placed on a progression contract.

Absence/Tardiness from Laboratory and Clinical Experiences

Nursing laboratory and clinical experiences are considered an important part of each clinical course. The student is expected to notify laboratory/clinical faculty, clinical preceptor (as applicable) and the Course Coordinator if the student is to be absent or late.

First occurrence – verbal notice from faculty; student is expected to complete a make-up assignment, to be determined by faculty.

Second occurrence – written notice from faculty and implementation of progression contract for all clinical courses; student is expected to complete a make-up assignment, to be determined by faculty.

Third occurrence – no opportunity to make-up missed time; course failure.

Bloodborne Pathogens and Standard Precautions

All students and faculty are expected to provide quality care to all patients regardless of diagnosis. Faculty and students must be aware of policies and procedures to reduce the risk of infection to self and others. Students will be taught current information about preventing the acquiring and transmitting of infections and will be provided laboratory simulation practice using standard precautions.

In the event that a nursing student is exposed to an infectious disease, this occurrence is to be reported immediately to the instructor, the nurse manager of the clinical agency and the chair of the Department of Nursing at 843-208-8124. Such occurrences must also be documented in accordance with the policies of USCB-and the clinical agency to which the student is assigned at the time of exposure. Agency policies will be followed.

Changes in Student Health Status

Students must report any significant change in their health status that impacts their ability to meet the USCB Nursing Program essential abilities or be in compliance with the health requirements outlined on the “Fit for Duty” form. *By definition, any situation that curtails clinical performance activities for more than one clinical absence or creates a pattern of absences, and/or involves a hospitalization/medical observation will be considered a “Significant Change in Health Status”.*

The following are common examples (not an exhaustive list) of changes in health status:

- diagnosis of infectious/communicable illnesses/diseases,
- pregnancy,
- injuries affecting physical ability,
- hospitalizations,
- behavioral health issues
- other emergency events

A variety of factors, including length of time (more than one clinical absence or a pattern of absences), hospitalization/medical observation, clinical agency policies, and adherence to the usual standard of medical care, will enter into the determination of what kind of documentation is required before a student can return to clinical experiences.

1. Length of Absence from Clinical

- a. If the resolution of the health problem requires more than one clinical absence, the Change of Health status will be deemed significant and will require documentation and signature by a provider stating that the student is fit for duty.
2. Hospitalization/medical observation
 - a. Hospitalization will be considered a significant change in health status and will require documentation and signature by a provider stating that the student is fit for duty.
3. Compliance with Clinical Agency Policies
 - a. USCB Nursing students and faculty must meet the health requirements of our clinical affiliates. If a student has had a significant change in health status as determined above, documentation and signature by a provider stating that the student is fit for duty will be required.
4. Adherence to the Usual Standard of Care
 - a. If medical, psychological, and other types of interventions are ordinarily part of care, [e.g., rest, limitation of weight-bearing, use of casts/boots, crutches, restrictions on lifting, medications that alter cognition, etc.], students may not return to the clinical agency until they provide documentation and signature from a provider stating that the student is fit for duty.
5. Student Illness
 - a. If a student presents to class or clinical feeling ill, the student may be sent home to minimize risk of spreading illness to others and allow the student to seek the appropriate treatment. Missed time is required to be made up in accordance with policy.

The Department Chair, in collaboration with course coordinator and clinical instructor will assess the situation regarding student clinical participation and need for supporting documentation prior to re-entering the clinical agency. The student may also be required to be evaluated by the Office of Accessibility Services to determine reasonable accommodations in the clinical setting.

Characteristics Essential to Professional Nursing

The goal of the nursing program at USCB, is to prepare every student to think critically, and practice nursing competently and compassionately in rapidly changing practice environments. All efforts are designed to build nursing knowledge, enhance nursing practice and patient safety, foster professional integrity, and ultimately improve the health outcomes of patients, families, and communities across the continuum of care.

As a profession, nursing places great reliance upon individual responsibility and accountability. Therefore, students are held responsible and accountable for their professional behavior. Nursing is a profession based in caring, with sensitivity to the uniqueness of individuals, families, and communities. The American Nurses Association Code of Ethics (www.nursingworld.org) guides professional nursing practice.

Students are expected to exhibit characteristics consistent with the professional nurse role. Students who do not manifest these characteristics may be referred to the Department Chair and counseled or required to seek appropriate assistance. Students who refuse to obtain assistance and/or persist in exhibiting inappropriate behaviors will not be permitted to continue in the nursing program. Students

whose behavior indicates issues related to professional ethics and a sound moral foundation place themselves at risk for course failure or dismissal from the program.

In addition, certain functional abilities are essential for students to engage in diverse, complex, and specific experiences essential for nursing practice. These abilities are essential to the successful completion of degree requirements and are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, classmates, faculty, and other healthcare providers. Thus, the faculty has determined that certain technical standards are requisite for admission, progression, and graduation from the nursing program. Classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical learning occurs throughout the program and involves considerations (such as patient safety and clinical facilities) that are not present for classroom accommodations. For this reason, any applicant or student who seeks accommodations prior to or immediately after enrolling in the nursing program must also request an assessment of the types of reasonable accommodations needed for the clinical training component of the program.

An individual must be able to independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet the following technical standards of general abilities and those specifically of (1) observation; (2) communication; (3) motor; (4) intellectual, conceptual, and quantitative abilities; (5) essential behavioral and social attributes; and (6) ability to manage stressful situations. Individuals unable to meet these technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, will not be able to complete the program and are counseled to pursue alternate careers.

The essential abilities necessary to acquire or demonstrate competence in nursing and needed for successful admission and program completion include but are not limited to*:

General Abilities: The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, hearing, and smell so that data received by the senses may be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. A student must also possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information needed to effectively evaluate patients. A student must be able to respond promptly to urgent situations that may occur during clinical training activities and must not hinder the ability of other members of the health care team to provide prompt treatment and care to patients.

Communication Ability:

The student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with other students, faculty, patients, and other professionals. The student must be able to communicate effectively verbally, nonverbally, and in writing to elicit information and to translate that information to others. Each student must have the ability to read, write, comprehend, and speak the English language to facilitate communication with patients, their family members, and other professionals in health care settings. In addition, the student must be able to maintain accurate patient records, present information in a professional, logical manner, and provide patient counseling and instruction to effectively care for patients and their families.

Motor Ability:

The student must be able to perform gross and fine motor movements with sufficient coordination needed to perform complete physical examinations utilizing techniques of inspection, palpation, percussion, auscultation, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A student must develop the psychomotor skills reasonable needed to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of diagnostic and therapeutic medical equipment, and such

maneuvers to assist with patient care activities such as lifting, wheelchair guidance, and mobility. The student must have sufficient levels of neuromuscular control and eye-to hand coordination as well as possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical stamina required for satisfactory and safe performance in the clinical and classroom settings including performing CPR, if necessary. The student must possess the ability of manual dexterity that would be required for certain activities, such as drawing up solutions in a syringe.

Intellectual, Conceptual, and Quantitative Abilities:

The student must be able to develop and refine problem-solving skills that are crucial to practice as a nurse. Problem-solving involves the abilities to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize objective and subjective data, and to make decision, often in a time urgent environment, that reflect consistent and thoughtful deliberation and sound clinical judgment. Each student must demonstrate mastery of these skills and possess the ability to incorporate new information from peers, teacher, and the nursing and medical literature to formulate sound judgment in patient assessment, intervention, evaluation, teaching, and setting short- and long-term goals.

Behavior and Social Attributes:

Compassion, integrity, motivation, effective interpersonal skills, and concern for others are personal attributes required of those in the nursing program. Personal comfort and acceptance of the role of a nurse functioning under supervision of a clinical instructor or preceptor is essential for a nursing student. The student must possess the skills required for full utilization of the student's intellectual abilities; the exercise of good judgment; the prompt completion of all responsibilities in the classroom and clinical setting; and the development of mature, sensitive, an effective relationship with patients and other members of the health care team. Each student must be able to exercise stable, sound judgment and to complete assessment and interventional activities. The ability to establish rapport and maintain sensitive, interpersonal relationships with individual, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds is critical for practice as a nurse. The student must be able to adapt to changing environments; display flexibility; accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical setting; effectively interact in the clinical setting with other members of the healthcare team; and learn to function cooperatively and efficiently in the face of uncertainties inherent in clinical practice.

Ability to Manage Stressful Situations:

The student must be able to adapt to and function effectively to stressful situation in both the classroom and clinical settings, including emergency situations. The student will encounter multiple stressors while in the nursing program. These stressors may be (but are limited to) personal, patient care/family, faculty/peer, and or program related.

Computer Basics

Students are expected to have basic word processing skills and competency with email, database searches, and web navigation. Students are expected to have a computer to which they have daily access.

*Adapted from

American Association of Colleges of Nursing. (2022). Accommodating students with disabilities Toolkit. Technical standards. Admission, academic progression, and graduation. Retrieved from:

<https://www.aacnnursing.org/Education-Resources/Tool-Kits/Accommodating-Students-with-Disabilities>

Civility & Code of Conduct

Civility is respect in action – to identify with others and to feel, to some extent, what others feel...to act in a responsible and caring manner. AACN identifies professionalism and professional values as one of the nine essentials of baccalaureate nursing education. In addition, "accountability is described as responsibility for individual actions and behaviors, including civility. [And in] order to demonstrate professionalism, civility must be present" (AACN, 2008, p. 26). Furthermore, the ANA *Code of Ethics for Nurses* (2015) requires nurses to treat colleagues, students, and patients with dignity and respect and states that any form of harassment, disrespect, or threatening action will not be tolerated. Nursing school is the time for students to learn and apply these professional standards.

Civility encompasses behaviors acceptable to the profession. These behaviors are expected of both students and faculty members and include politeness, courtesy, and respect in interpersonal situations, whether in clinical, lab, or the classroom settings. An example of civility is respectfully listening to another person's question of the instructor.

Examples of uncivil behaviors reported in the literature and experienced by Department of Nursing and faculty and may include but are not limited to:

- In-class disruptions (e.g., rude comments, excessive whispering/side conversations, texting, cell phone and computer misuse)
- Inattentiveness
- Sleeping in class
- Working on another course's work assignments
- Late arrivals and leaving early
- Verbal disrespect
- Anger or excuses for poor performance

It only takes one person to negatively affect the learning environment. Civility is an expectation in all encounters and experiences. The expectation at the USC Beaufort Department of Nursing is that faculty and students work together to resolve conflict as soon as possible by using open and respectful dialogue. Please respect and do not be disruptive to the learning experience or everyday experience of others. By working together, civility becomes part of our culture and a safe, respectful learning environment is created to meet the mission of graduating competent, caring and respectful nurses.

References:

AACN. (2021). *The essentials: Core competencies for professional nursing education*. Washington, DC: Author.

American Nurses Association. (2015). *Code of ethics for nurses with interpretive statements*. Silver Spring, MD: Nursesbooks.org.

Clark, C. M., & Springer, P. J. (2010). Academic nurse leaders' role in fostering a culture of civility in nursing education. *Journal of Nursing Education, 49*(6), 319-325.

Communication and Notification of Policy Revisions

The Department of Nursing reserves the right to update policies at any time, for current or future students. When new or revised policies exist, students will be notified through available communication channels such as: USCB student email, Blackboard courses, classroom announcements, bulletin board postings, and/or other means as appropriate. Students will be notified of the policy change and timeline for the policy to become effective.

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Course Syllabi

Department of Nursing course syllabi and course materials will be posted on Blackboard by the first day of classes.

Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen Testing

The profession of nursing has higher standards than the general public, due to nature of the work involved to protect the safety of patients entrusted to students as part of clinical course requirements. As such, nursing students are required to undergo a criminal background check and urine drug screen prior to entering a clinical agency in the first clinical nursing course, and prior to the start of the fall semester each year. This service is provided by CastleBranch, Inc. and complies with requirements set forth in clinical agency agreements.

The criminal background check includes: state and national criminal background check, sex offender and child abuse registry check, and verification of no OIG exclusion. The cost of the criminal background check may vary depending on name changes and number of previous residences in the past seven years.

A 12-panel drug screen is required. If a student is prescribed a medication that could affect results, the student must provide proof of a valid prescription. Students bear financial responsibility for completing this requirement annually, and more frequently if required by clinical agency agreement.

Clinical agencies **do** have the right to refuse student clinical placement based on results of the criminal background check and/or drug screen results. **A student will not be permitted to enter the clinical agency if the department chair and/or clinical agency determines the results do not meet minimum expectations.** Students are required to complete clinical coursework to pass the nursing courses and progress in the nursing program. Therefore, students who cannot pass a background check and/or urine drug screen will not be admitted to the USCB Nursing program. If a student does not pass the background check and/or urine drug screen, the student is **ineligible to perform the clinical experiences associated with courses for all agencies and progression in the USCB Nursing program, resulting in program dismissal.**

The USCB Department of Nursing will abide by the policy/policies of the State Board of Nursing for South Carolina regarding students who screen positive for tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). This includes, but is not limited to, CBD products.

Electronic Device Use

Faculty of the Department of Nursing encourage the use of new technologies and application of the latest information in conducting patient care. Electronic device use in the classroom, laboratory and clinical setting is at the discretion of the faculty, with consideration to the learning environment and privacy concerns. Audio recording of class or laboratory is solely at the discretion of the faculty, unless there is a written recommendation for this type of accommodation for an individual student.

Using electronic devices appropriately:

- Electronic devices used in clinical, or classroom setting will always be in airplane or silent/vibrate mode.
- With agency and instructor approval, electronic devices in the clinical area or skills lab may be used to look up information about drugs, diseases, diagnostic tests, or other clinical information. Students may be required to explain why they are using electronic devices, so that patients or staff members understand the purpose of using the device.

- No texting, e-mailing, or use of any electronic device of any type will be done in the presence of a patient or clinical agency staff member, unless the student has express permission of the faculty member.
- Faculty may validate students are using electronic devices in the clinical area or skills lab for purposes related to their clinical training.
- Just as other medical equipment may act as a reservoir for microorganisms and contribute to the transfer of pathogens, so may electronic devices. Be sure to disinfect/decontaminate them as needed.
- No personal electronic devices are allowed during any exams. Students with special accommodations requiring a special device must have documentation from the Accessibilities Office.
- Be respectful to the patient at all times and ensure that your entire attention is focused on the patient when you are in the patient's room.

Inappropriate Electronic Device Use

Pictures and videography are not permitted routinely by students while in the laboratory or a clinical care area, regardless of agency, and use of cameras or video equipment is strictly prohibited. Unauthorized use may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal from the nursing program. Inappropriate use of electronic devices will result in a written warning for the first violation. A clinical failure will be given for the second violation.

Employment, Student

Nursing is a rigorous and challenging academic program requiring flexibility to meet course needs. The program discourages outside employment more than 10 hours per week as the evidence demonstrates students who work while enrolled full-time are at greater risk for not completing the program. Students who are employed are required to adjust work schedules around academics. Academic schedules will not be adjusted for work-related purposes.

Faculty Office Hours and Availability

Faculty shall hold office hours weekly, which are posted outside the faculty office door and listed on the course syllabus. Appointments are encouraged but not required. If a student contacts faculty via email outside of scheduled office hours, the student can expect up to 48 business hours for the faculty to respond. Texts should be limited to issues of clinical and attendance.

Grade Forgiveness

The Department of Nursing adheres to the USCB policy on grade forgiveness as outlined in the USCB bulletin. The USCB Nursing Program does not permit grade forgiveness for any repeated program requirements once a student enters the Nursing Program.

Learning Management System

The university utilizes Blackboard as its learning management system (LMS). Each face-to-face course will have a web-enhanced component to share course-related content. Courses which are delivered online or in a hybrid format will utilize additional LMS features suited to best deliver course content and meet course outcomes.

Leave of Absence

A Leave of Absence request may be granted for students in good academic standing, wishing to take time out from the Nursing program for a particular semester. The student is required to:

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- Notify the appropriate advisor of the Department of Nursing in writing, utilizing the Leave of Absence (LOA) Form.
- If the LOA is granted, the student must schedule an appointment with the Chair of the Department of Nursing to request reinstatement. A Petition form will need to be completed and filed.

Any student returning to the nursing program after a semester's absence or longer must initiate a meeting with the course coordinator of the clinical course in which the student will be participating to determine the need and potential plan for skills reinforcement. The student bears responsibility for implementation and successful completion of the plan prior to attending clinical.

Students **must** complete **all** nursing courses in three and a half calendar years after acceptance into the clinical courses.

Library Resources

USC Beaufort's main library is located behind the Hargray Building on the Bluffton Campus. All of the nursing references are located in the main library or through electronic resources available through the USCB Library. The University also maintains a smaller library on the Beaufort Campus located in the Sandstone Building on Boundary Street. The Bluffton Campus library supports an information commons area, collaborative computer center, foreign language laboratory, small individual carrels, and small rooms for group study. The Beaufort Campus library serves as one of a dozen of full-depository libraries in South Carolina for state government documents. Both libraries contain distance education viewing rooms. Computerized literature searches and photocopiers are also available for use at the USC Beaufort libraries. A fee may be involved for these services. Library hours vary by semester and the University calendar. Please check with the library for posted hours.

Make-up Assignments

Students are expected to communicate in advance with the instructor regarding absence from class/clinical/lab. The student is responsible for scheduling a time to make up class work, if authorized by the instructor. The make-up option is dependent upon the student notifying the instructor in advance of the absence.

The option, method, and location for make-up work including class content, quizzes, exams, clinical, and/or lab will be determined by the instructor. See course syllabus for specific instructions. The student is responsible for initiating all make-up arrangements. It is expected that make-up work will be completed within a week of the originally scheduled date or at the discretion of the instructor. Failure to make arrangements in a timely manner will result in a grade of zero (0) for the particular learning activity or assessment.

New Student Orientation

Newly accepted students are required to attend New Student Orientation held on or before the first day of the spring semester. During this program, students will be introduced to program expectations and policies to foster student success. Attendance is mandatory.

Nursing Student Fees

Nursing students pay additional fees to support costs associated with the program. Nursing Program fees can be substantial, and include:

Nursing Lab Fee: This fee covers costs associated with recurrent and one-time expenses related to the use of CastleBranch Compliance Tracker, assessment software and laboratory equipment and supplies.

Nursing New Student Fee: This fee is associated with NURS B202 and covers program enrollment expenses and professional liability insurance for the student upon entry into the program.

Out-of-Pocket Costs for Nursing Students

- Uniforms: 2-3 scrub tops, 2-3 scrub pants and shoes
- Clinical instruments: stethoscope and watch with second hand (cost variable)
- Books and additional learning software
- Personal health insurance (need proof each semester)
- Parking fees, parking tickets
- Physical, vaccines, antibody titers, repeat vaccinations and titers, and Health Clearance Requirements (cost of annual physical, annual flu/covid/ other vaccines, and required TB tests)
- Personal laptop computer (not a tablet or Chromebook see specifications under technology section)

Petition Process

Students have the right to petition for special consideration of an issue (re-entry, advanced placement, etc.). To petition the program, complete the Student Petition Form and attach supporting documentation related to the issue. This is a distinct process from a student grievance. If a student is unsatisfied with the outcome, the student may choose to pursue a formal grievance.

Privacy & Confidentiality Practices

Patient Privacy

Patient privacy is to be respected. Healthcare data that identifies a patient is **not** to be removed or transmitted from the clinical site. Lab values and other assessment data can be transferred to clinical paperwork as long as no patient names or identifying numbers are connected to the data. If there are any questions or concerns about whether or not certain data can be shared, stored, or transmitted, students agree to seek clarification. It is important to err on the side of caution.

Students acknowledge that under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and its regulations, patient information is confidential. Students further acknowledge that health care providers have patient privacy policies which students are required to observe. Students who violate patient privacy information with the use of electronic devices commit HIPAA violations and will be subject to the HIPAA infractions policy of the clinical agency and possible dismissal from the nursing program.

Student Privacy

Students have privacy protection granted under The Family Educational and Privacy Act (FERPA) and information shared in accordance with university policy. If a student wishes to have academic information shared with another person, the student must complete a FERPA Waiver. Student information relevant to practice in a clinical agency is considered “need to know” by the clinical agency, who has a duty to protect patients. Students are required to sign a Statement of Acknowledgement detailing what information may be shared with the clinical agency, and for what purpose. Once the information is released to the clinical agency, the clinical agency assumes responsibility for maintaining the privacy of this data and USCB bears no liability if a privacy breach occurs through clinical agency databases and/or files.

Student Data and Privacy

Continuous quality improvement is essential to measure a program's strengths and areas for improvement and is required by accrediting agencies. As part of that process, there is a need to collect data for continuous quality improvement initiatives. This may include, but is not limited to, student exemplars of work, test grades, graduate and employer surveys, and clinical evaluation tools. All information collected and reported will be presented as aggregate data or personally identifiable information will be redacted for individual student work. If a student wishes to be excluded from any individual work being used for this purpose, the student must inform the Department Chair in writing.

Social Media Policy:

Social networks and the Internet provide unparalleled opportunities for rapid knowledge exchange and dissemination among many people, but this exchange does not come without risk. **It is important to remember that information posted on any social media platform (YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others) is available to everyone in the world who has internet access, including USCB faculty and staff as well as potential employers.** Nurses and nursing students have an obligation to understand the nature, benefits, and consequences of participating in social networking of all types. Online content and behavior have the potential to enhance or undermine not only the individual nurse's career, but also the nursing profession. Students are urged to take this into consideration when posting on these or other internet networks. The best postings adhere to appropriate internet etiquette, portray a professional network identity, and do not contain content that can identify a patient, clinical agency or the individual university in a manner that may be viewed as unfavorable. For more information, review NCSBN Social Media Guidelines.

ANA's Principles for Social Networking

- Nurses must not transmit or place online individually identifiable patient information.
- Nurses must observe ethically prescribed professional patient — nurse boundaries.
- Nurses should understand that patients, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.
- Nurses should take advantage of privacy settings and seek to separate personal and professional information online.
- Nurses should bring content that could harm a patient's privacy, rights, or welfare to the attention of appropriate authorities.
- Nurses should participate in developing institutional policies governing online conduct.

Tips to Avoid Problems

- Remember that standards of professionalism are the same online as in any other circumstance.
- Do not share or post information or photos gained through the nurse-patient relationship.
- Maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Online contact with patients blurs this boundary.
- Do not make disparaging remarks about patients, employers or co-workers, even if they are not identified.
- Do not take photos or videos of patients on personal devices, including cell phones.
- Promptly report a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

Violations of these standards may result in disciplinary action by the program and potential for dismissal from the program. Further, violations will be reported to the university and referred to the honor court for university action.

References:

American Nurses Association. (2011, September). Principles for social networking and the nurse. Silver Spring, MD: Author.

National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (2011, August). White paper: A nurse's guide to the use of social media. Chicago, IL: Author.
www.NursingWorld.org

Professional Liability and Workers' Compensation

The university provides professional liability insurance on behalf of nursing students and faculty. The nursing insurance fee offsets costs of the annual purchase of this policy.

Nursing students are covered by Workers' Compensation while engaged in clinical laboratory activities (SC Code of Laws 42-7-60). Any nursing student who is injured in the clinical laboratory should report the incident to the clinical faculty and should contact the Department of Public Safety at USCB to file an incident form. If the student requires medical evaluation, the student is advised to follow up with Coastal Carolina Hospital, the contracted agency for student services requiring urgent attention. If the student requires emergent medical attention, 911 will be called, basic life support measures administered by available USCB personnel, and the student will be transported to the nearest emergency department.

Safety

The Department of Public Safety and Campus Police develop policies related to student safety. There are emergency callboxes located throughout campus. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, students should call 9-1-1. To report non-life-threatening emergencies, contact the Officer on duty, 24 hours a day at 843-208-8911. Automatic External Defibrillators are located throughout campus; please note where they are located in your buildings.

General Safety Tips

- Keep valuables out of sight
- **All students are encouraged, through Self Service Carolina, to sign up for the Emergency Alert System's very valuable service to receive Campus Alert text messages, emails and social media postings.**
- Park close to buildings
- Lock your Doors

Campus Lockdown

The campus has posters in classrooms and common areas to remind students what to do in the case of a campus lockdown. The lockdown alarm will sound when the campus is notified of possible shootings, or a dangerous situation occurs in the areas surrounding or on the campus. Each alert is to be taken as an authentic threat and everyone on campus is to carry out the following procedures.

What should I do?

Everyone must seek shelter or a safe area and await further instructions.

- If you are inside, lock or barricade access to your area, close blinds, turn off lights and avoid being directly in view of doors and windows and stay as low to the ground as possible. Keep quiet and act as if no one is in your area. **Do not open the door for anyone.**

- If outside, hide and stay out of view as much as possible. The objective is to have no people visible. This may mean taking shelter in the nearest building or hiding between cars in the parking lot.
- There will be many activities taking place during a lockdown event. In addition to seeking safe haven as instructed above, DPS and staff will be executing planned procedures to ensure your safety.
- Campus leaders will execute "internal to campus" call down procedures to call by phone all areas of the campus.
- Building coordinators, floor monitors, custodians, public safety officers, and maintenance employees will fan out and lock building doors and encourage people to take shelter.
- Staff in areas with roll up doors/truck doors should close and lock those doors.

How do I know when it is safe?

The alert will sound continuously until DPS issues the "All Clear". When the "All Clear" message is heard, students and staff may return to class, work, etc.

- **Do not sound the fire alarm** to evacuate the building. People may be placed in harm's way when they are attempting to evacuate the building. If a fire alarm does go off during a lockdown, do not evacuate unless you smell smoke.
- Be aware of alternate exits if it becomes necessary to flee. Persons should lock themselves in classrooms, dorm rooms, and offices as a means of protection.
- Persons should stay low, away from windows and barricade their door(s) if possible and use furniture or desks as cover.
- Cover any windows or openings that have a direct line of sight into the hallway.
- Shut the blinds or pull the shades down. Turn off the lights and try to give the impression that the room is empty.
- Put your cell phones on vibrate.
- Do not make any noise.
- Students and staff should not attempt to leave the building until told to do so by DPS/ Police personnel. The exception to this is when a person believes that they are in more danger in staying in the building than in attempting to escape.
- If you are outside of a building when a lockdown is announced, if it is safe to do so, run into the nearest building and follow the above lockdown instructions. If it is not safe to run into a building or the building is already locked, hide behind a large heavy object (i.e. vehicle, tree).

Please consult USCB's most current Lockdown Protocol [here](#).

Fire

The Fire Evacuation Procedure must be used in the event of a fire. Although the fire alarms in the building are tested occasionally, any alarm lasting more than 20 seconds should be considered a signal that a real fire is occurring. Nursing students should exit the building from the second floor Science and Technology Building via one of the three available staircases. In such an event, faculty must ensure that all students have left the building. The Department Chair (or designee) will report to the fire fighters when the second floor is clear.

School Closures

Inclement weather and/or other emergencies may result in school closure. In the event of university closure, campus alerts will be posted in the university website and distributed via USCB email. While school is officially closed, all coursework may be suspended, or, may continue remotely, until the university re-opens.

Approved 8-16-2023 by Faculty Organization, updated 10-19-2023 with CCNE accreditation language

Short and Long Term Military Duty

The USC-Beaufort Department of Nursing will accommodate short term military duty defined as training or other deployment types limited to one week or less, or no more than 2 clinical absences. Nursing students called up for long term duty or reassignment during a time of national crisis should consult the University Policy: “Withdrawal Due to Military Deployment in the University Bulletin.” The Department of Nursing will adhere to University Policy.

Procedure:

1. Students required to participate in short military term duty must inform their course coordinators as soon as notification is received.
2. The course coordinator is expected to work with the student to establish a make-up plan at the time of notification, prior to the student’s departure.
3. Student failure to complete pre-established make-up work may result in a course failure and inability to progress in the program.
4. Students deployed to long term duty will have their seat held in the program for up to one year.

Student Grievance Process

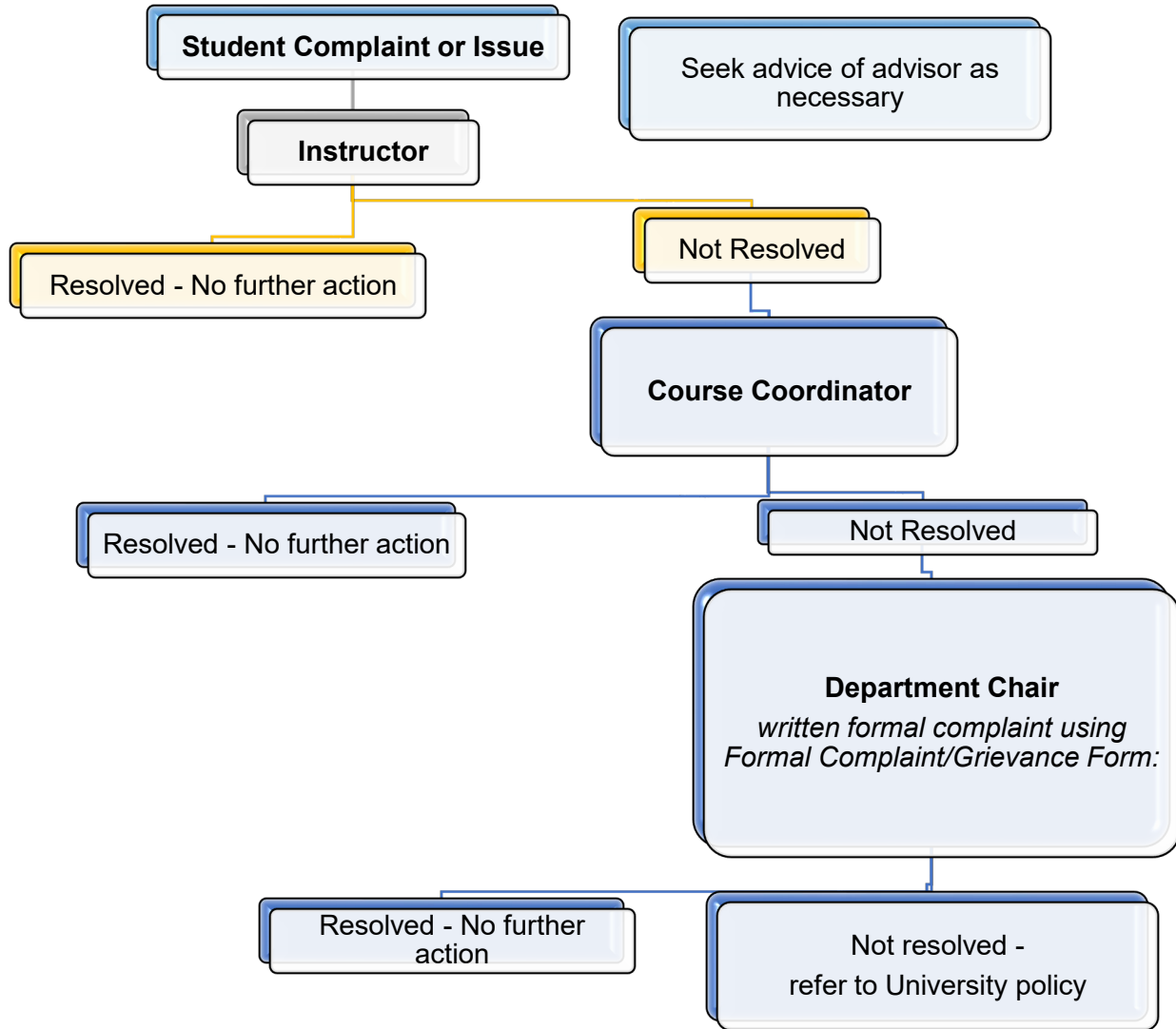
The Department of Nursing strives to provide a positive learning environment for all students. However, if a substantive concern about the Nursing Program arises, the student should follow the procedure outlined below. A substantive concern is defined as a written statement by a student or group of students that describes a situation perceived by the student(s) to result in an injustice being done to the individual(s).

Procedure

1. Meet with the instructor to try and resolve the concern.
2. If unable to resolve, submit concern in writing to the Chair, Department of Nursing.
3. Department Chair will meet with the student(s) and attempt to resolve the concern.
4. The student(s) will receive a written response to the concern within 2 weeks.
5. Student concerns will be maintained in a secure file in the Nursing Department Office.
6. Information regarding the number, type, and resolution of concerns is available to students upon request.

In the event that a student has a concern about a course or a clinical instructor, the student should first address the issue with the classroom, skills lab, or clinical instructor and then, the course coordinator. If the student is not satisfied with the response of the course coordinator, the student should follow the above procedure (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.



Study Abroad

The program supports the university's strategic plan to provide experiential learning opportunities beyond those typical in a nursing program. The Department of Nursing academically supports short-term faculty led study abroad experiences, designed to enhance student learning. These study abroad experiences are anticipated to be 7-14 days in duration, to a national or international destination for the purposes of cultural immersion and/or service-learning. Study abroad experiences are optional to students, who assume the expenses related to the study abroad program. These programs may occur during any term of the school year and correspond to a required or elective nursing course.

Students who seek fundraising to offset costs associated with study abroad are required to meet with the department chair and course coordinator to ensure university policies and approvals are obtained prior to engaging in any fund-raising activity.

Substance Use/Misuse

Student behaviors that are threatening, clinically unsafe, or in violation of the above standards are prohibited, pose an unacceptable risk, and are subject to sanction, discipline, or dismissal from the nursing program. This includes behaviors resulting from any health problem including physical, mental, emotional, or substance abuse inclusive of alcohol, illegal drugs, and medication of any kind.

Impairment is defined as being under the influence of psychoactive substances and/or evidencing psychological or physical symptoms. This can be episodic or chronic and affect cognitive, interpersonal and psychomotor learning and performance. Behaviors and physical changes of substance use disorder include, but may not be limited to:

- slurred speech
- lack of coordination
- impaired memory or attention
- smell of alcohol on the breath
- frequent tardiness or absences that are poorly explained
- frequent or unexplained disappearances from the class or clinical experience
- excessive number of errors (frequent medication errors or errors of judgment related to patient care)
- inappropriate verbal or emotional responses (such as verbal hostility toward others, uncontrolled anger or crying, unusual silences, irritability, or frequent mood swings during the course of the day)

Urine drug testing is required annually as part of the clinical clearance process. The program does not conduct random urine drug testing; however, the department reserves the right to conduct urine drug screening outside annual requirements if there is evidence of behaviors outlined above.

The use of psychoactive substances while performing or learning to perform nursing care is not acceptable. When a student's performance is impaired, safe, effective care is at risk whether it occurs in the classroom, learning skills laboratory, or in the clinical setting.

Procedure:

1. The student exhibiting behaviors of substance use disorder will be counseled privately. Faculty will explain the behaviors identified and next steps of the policy.
2. The student will be immediately dismissed from the class, laboratory, or clinical setting. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for a safe mode of transportation.

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3. The student will be required to schedule a random drug screen through Castle Branch and report to a CastleBranch approved laboratory for drug/alcohol testing center. The student has one hour to report to the laboratory and is responsible to arrange for transportation at the student's expense. Failure to report within the one-hour time frame will be considered a refusal to test.
4. The cost of testing will be billed to the student.
5. The student is not permitted to return to any class, laboratory or clinical setting until the Chair or designee reviews Laboratory results. Results will be shared on a need-to-know basis with the Provost or Vice-Chancellor of Student Development.
 - a. Negative results: Students will immediately be reinstated if laboratory results are negative for drugs or alcohol. Any missed coursework will be permitted to be made up in accordance with department policy.
 - b. Positive Results: Students who have positive results with instant and confirmatory testing will be dismissed from the Nursing Program.
 - i. The pre-licensure BSN student will be referred to the Office of Counseling and Disability Services for information regarding treatment options for substance use disorder. Positive results may result in further action by the Office of Student Affairs.
 - ii. RN students will be reported to the South Carolina Board of Nursing (SCBON), as required by regulation. The SCBON may take action on the RN's license and require mandatory treatment in the South Carolina Recovering Professional Program.
6. Refusal to submit to drug/alcohol testing will result in immediate dismissal from the BSN Program. A Refusal Form will be placed in the student's file. If the student refuses to sign the form, the refusal is documented on the form and placed in the student's file.
7. Faculty identifying suspected substance use disorder will notify the Chair or Course Coordinator regarding the incident and document findings in the student's department file.

If the student behavior is caused, or believed to be caused, by a health problem, the student will be referred for appropriate evaluation and treatment. *Health problems* are defined as including any physical, mental, and/or emotional problem that interferes with any of the following: cognition, judgment, orientation, lucidity, decision making, or any behavior threatening or unsafe to self or others. Health problems are inclusive of alcohol or substance use/abuse. The Department Chair has the authority to remove the student from clinical or any learning activity until the student can demonstrate that the problem has been resolved. If the behavior in question is not sufficiently resolved, the student will be required to withdraw from the nursing program. Students who wish to grieve the Department Chair's decision are directed to the University Grievance Procedure located in the University Bulletin. If a student's evaluation results in identification of drug and/or alcohol abuse, the student will be required to withdraw from the nursing program and the Department of Nursing. If after appropriate verification, the student has achieved a state of recovery that is appropriate for continuance in the USCB Department of Nursing, the student may petition the Department for possible re-entry to the nursing program (Available at www.uscb.edu/nursing or from the Administrative Assistant).

The BSN Program will consider readmission of a former student dismissed for substance use disorder. If the former student is seeking readmission, the following is required:

1. Evidence of successful drug/alcohol rehabilitation following dismissal. The treatment provider must be licensed/approved to provide such services.
2. Pre-admission drug/alcohol screening is negative.
3. Agree to random drug/alcohol screening while enrolled.

Provided these conditions are met and there is a seat available in the program, the individual would be eligible for re-admission. All current program requirements would need to be met in order to graduate. If during random drug/alcohol screening or re-screening due to suspected substance use disorder, laboratory results are positive with confirmatory testing, the student will be dismissed and will not be eligible for future re-admission into the BSN programs.

Reference

National Council of State Boards of Nursing [NCSBN]. (2011). *Substance use disorder in nursing: A resource manual and guidelines for alternative and disciplinary monitoring programs*. Chicago, IL: NCSBN. Retrieved from https://www.ncsbn.org/SUDN_10.pdf

Technological Requirements of Students

Students are required to have a dedicated personal laptop computer, high speed internet access, and printing access. Students may purchase computers with the University discount by going to the following site:

<http://uts.sc.edu/computerpurchase/index.shtml>. Tests may be administered electronically and the required specifications for this platform include:

Both Mac and Windows operating systems. However, this software **will not run on Chromebooks, Android, or Linux operating systems**. Thus, you will need to have available a laptop computer.

Guidelines regarding computer specifications for compatibility with University computers and software may be found at: <http://uts.sc.edu/index.shtml>.

Withdrawal and Dismissal from the Program

A student may choose to withdraw from the BSN program at any time, and are subject to university policies related to grades, refunds, and financial aid obligations. Please consult the current University Bulletin.

A student may be required to withdraw and/or be dismissed from the BSN program resulting from poor academic performance, unsafe practice, health or behavioral issues inconsistent with safe nursing practice and/or the ability to complete program requirements outlined elsewhere in this handbook. Students have the right to file a student grievance if the student disagrees with the Department's decision to withdraw or dismiss the student. Please consult the section on student grievances in this handbook and the current University Bulletin.

Academic Program Dismissal occurs any time a nursing student:

- Incurs a second failure in the same course in the core nursing requirement courses
- Incurs two failures in different courses of the core nursing requirement courses

A student who is dismissed for academic failure from the BSN program is ineligible for re-entry.

Student Clinical Policies

Clinical and Laboratory Experiences

In accordance with university policy, each credit hour of laboratory or clinical is equivalent to 150 minutes of instruction in and outside the classroom (1:3 ratio). These credit hours may be distributed in any combination of laboratory and/or clinical experiences to best meet learning outcomes.

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The practice of nursing requires a combination of classroom, laboratory and clinical experiences for students to become safe practitioners. Students engage in laboratory and/or clinical experiences each semester, with select nursing courses. To progress in the program, students must achieve a passing grade in the lecture and the corresponding laboratory/clinical coursework.

Clinical agencies and settings vary from course to course, selected for the populations serviced to best meet student learning outcomes. Students will engage in clinical practice with hospitals, long-term care agencies, and various public and private community-based agencies. Students may request a specific clinical agency and the program will attempt to accommodate the request; however, the BSN program cannot guarantee any placement request.

Clinical experiences may occur during the day, evening, or overnight hours, and during the week and/or weekends, based on availability of agency and faculty. Students are expected to adapt to the schedule and ***attend all clinical experiences as scheduled.***

The Laboratory is a safe setting in which students learn important clinical skills and practice these skills, using low, medium, and high-fidelity simulation. Students are supervised by faculty at all times; select high-risk laboratory skills may be graded with a passing grade required to be successful in the course. Students will be informed which skills are tested in a high-stakes manner at the beginning of the course and provided ample opportunity to practice skills before testing.

USCB's BSN program uses Simulation to replace and enhance the clinical experience at a 1:2 ratio, meaning that one hour of simulation = two hours of clinical time. Preparation time for simulation is included, as is the debriefing experiences and any follow-up work assigned to the students. USCB's Simulation Lab Coordinator is trained in the pedagogy of simulation and oversees the adherence to International Nursing Association for Clinical Simulation and Learning (INACSL)'s best practices. When Standardized Patients (SPs) are used, the Association of Standardized Patient Educators (ASPE) standards of Best Practice are followed.

Clinical Clearance Procedure

Students are required to undergo clinical clearance prior to entering the first clinical agency, and prior to the start of each fall semester. It is the student's responsibility to achieve and maintain all clinical requirements throughout the program. Failure to do so shall result in withdrawal from the course if the student fails to meet the deadline for submission. The BSN program utilizes CastleBranch Inc. Compliance Tracker to securely upload all required documents. The fee for this service is covered through student fees.

Students are required to consent to the release of information to clinical agencies. This authorization is required once, prior to beginning the first clinical course and will be uploaded to CastleBranch Compliance Tracker.

Students who are in-progress with a vaccine series or determined by a healthcare provider to be a non-converter, the student is required to sign a waiver of liability once, prior to beginning the first clinical course and will be uploaded to CastleBranch Compliance Tracker.

These forms are available in CastleBranch and on the USCB Nursing webpages.

The deadline for sophomores entering the clinical agency for the spring semester is February 1. Juniors and seniors are required to have all clinical clearance documents complete and up to date no later than August 1st of each year and maintain compliance throughout the academic year. Personal health insurance may cover some but not all expenses. Students are responsible for all costs associated with obtaining and maintaining these requirements. Students who fail to meet established deadlines may be withdrawn from the program.

The university does not prohibit entry into the nursing program based on vaccination history, however, clinical partners have requirements similar to those for employees and may require vaccines to enter the facility. The university cannot guarantee clinical placements will accept religious or other exemptions for vaccines and the university is not responsible for securing a location willing to do so when it is outside the normal clinical placement process. This includes the following vaccines: routine childhood, covid, influenza, and any other newly required vaccinations based on CDC and clinical agency policies and recommendations. Be advised, in South Carolina per Chapter 91 of the Nurse Practice Act, up to 50% of clinical hours may be provided via simulation. The remainder of those hours must be in person clinical. If vaccination status prohibits a student from attaining in person clinical hours, the consequence could result in a course incomplete and the potential for being unable to complete the BSN degree at USCB.

Junior and Senior students who fail to complete all clinical clearance requirements by deadlines provided by the Clinical Coordinator will automatically be withdrawn from nursing courses. Re-enrollment will only be permitted within the University add/drop period after providing evidence of meeting all requirements.

Clinical Clearance Requirements include the following:

1. Annual health physical completed by a Physician, Nurse Practitioner, or Physician Assistant. The USCB Department of Nursing Physical Form is required.
2. Two-step PPD upon entry, and a one-step PPD each fall thereafter; Quantiferon TB-Gold may serve as an alternative however the TB Spot is not accepted.
 - a) A two-step PPD requires planting a PPD that is read 48-72h after placement. Readings beyond 72h are not acceptable. The second PPD should be placed within 1-3 weeks of the first PPD, as recommended by the CDC TB Guidelines.
 - b) Please note select clinical agencies require PPD testing as frequently as every 90 days.
 - c) PPD testing may be obtained by private providers and/or health clinics.
3. Evidence of **quantifiable** IgG titers demonstrating immunity to: 1. Hepatitis B; 2. Measles (Rubeola); 3. Mumps; 4. Rubella; 5. Varicella.
 - a) **Equivocal results are not accepted.** Providers are expected to follow CDC Guidelines for repeat vaccination and follow-up titers post-vaccination.
 - b) Students are required to provide proof from the healthcare provider of vaccination in the absence of immunity and comply with CDC healthcare worker immunization schedules for re-vaccination. A waiver of release of liability is required to be signed and maintained on file.
 - c) Students for whom re-vaccination is contraindicated are required to provide certification by the healthcare provider.
4. American Heart Association (AHA) Basic Life Support CPR with AED certification. An agency who complies with the latest AHA Guidelines for BLS may be a suitable alternative. CPR is expected to remain current for the entire semester to be compliant.

- a) Friends and Family CPR is not acceptable. If in doubt, please check with your advisor or Department Chair.
 - b) Sign the back of the card and submit the front and back of the card. Ensure your name on the card matches your enrolled name or provide documentation to support you are the same person (ex. Marriage license, Divorce decree, etc.).
5. Personal Health Insurance is required. If a student is covered under the plan of a parent with a different last name, provide proof from the employer that the student is insured under this plan. Students may present employer sponsored health insurance, private health insurance. Insurance obtained through the Affordable Care Act and/or public health insurance programs to meet this requirement.
 6. Statement of Acknowledgement for review of the BSN Student Handbook, which must be updated annually as defined above.
 7. Waivers for non-immunity, approved by healthcare providers (as required).
 8. Clinical agency vaccination requirements as per site (covid, influenza and any other pertinent vaccinations)

Dress Code

The dress code is designed to protect the personal safety of students while in the clinical area and to project a professional nursing image. Although this dress code is congruent with the majority of health care agencies in the Lowcountry region, some agencies have more restrictive dress codes. Thus, it is necessary for students to follow the code of the agency where they are working and to check with the instructor prior to the first day of clinical education at a particular site.

Professional Attire

All professional attire and uniforms should be neat, clean, opaque (unable to see through), wrinkle free, and properly fitting with appropriate undergarments that are not visible. During clinical practice and in the campus nursing lab setting, nursing students are required to wear an approved uniform.

- Tan scrub top with USCB logo
- Navy scrub pants
- White, Navy, or Black shoes (fully enclosed, flat-heeled, fluid resistant material)

Uniforms must be ordered through the approved vendor. Students are responsible for the costs associated with purchase of uniforms. It is recommended students purchase 2-3 sets of the uniform as they are worn 2-3 times per week, but this is at the student's discretion.

Attire must adhere to USCB standards as well as the agency's policy where the student is placed for clinical education. Select agencies prefer business casual/professional attire as opposed to the uniform. Acceptable dress includes: dresses, skirts or slacks, blouses, and shirts with collars. Dresses and skirts must be no shorter than 2 inches above the knees. Shorts or cut off pants (capri style) are not appropriate. Students are required to wear hose or socks, unless otherwise permitted by the clinical agency. Fully enclosed, flat-heeled, non-canvas mono-chromatic shoes are required. All shoes must be kept clean and polished (if necessary). Open toe or canvas/permeable materials are not permitted, unless otherwise permitted by the agency

Student ID

Students are required to wear a name tag on the chest of the exterior garment, unless otherwise specified by faculty. The name pin must be visible and should not be covered by stickers and/or pins. The tag must have the student's name and identification as a USCB nursing student. Picture ID must be

worn as provided by clinical agencies. Select agencies may provide photo IDs for use in the agency and may do so for free or charge a small fee. The fee will be covered by the University through student fees.

Hair

Hair should be tucked behind the ear to avoid contaminating the work environment. Hair, shoulder length or longer, should be pulled back and secured with neutral elastic. Hair decorations, such as bows and ornate barrettes are not acceptable. **Hair should conform to natural hair colors and non-extreme styles, or as otherwise permitted by the agency.** For infection control purposes, facial hair must be neatly groomed and close to the face.

Body Piercing and Other Jewelry

Body piercing jewelry must be removed prior to the clinical experience and skills lab. No more than one stud-style earring per earlobe may be worn. Religious necklaces and jewelry may be worn inside the uniform. For safety purposes, all rings other than simple wedding bands are to be left at home. Hospital regulations require that all jewelry is to be removed while a student is in the operating room.

Tattoos

Covering of tattoos may be required during the clinical and lab experiences based on agency policy. If a tattoo is in an area that cannot be covered by clothing, it is to be covered by a bandage.

Personal Hygiene

All students are required to maintain high standards of personal cleanliness.

- Any scent with a strong odor is not permitted, including cigarette smoke. Deodorant, make-up and hair products must be non-scented.
- Perfumes or colognes are not acceptable due to the potential for patient and staff sensitivity.
- Makeup should be minimal and conform to general body tones.
- Nails should be clean, well kept, and neutral colored, without designs and no longer than the tip of the finger. Due to their potential to harbor micro-organisms, artificial nails of any kind cannot be worn due to the increased risk of infection.

Travel for Clinical Experiences

Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to clinical sites each semester. Sites used for student experiences are usually confined to within 50 miles of the home Campus. For some courses, students may find it efficient to carpool. Some courses require the student to provide care within the home environment or community agency; thus, individual transportation is needed. It is the obligation of students to provide their own vehicle collision and/or bodily injury liability insurance for their personal vehicles. Neither the Department of Nursing nor the University of South Carolina Beaufort is responsible for any vehicle occurrences.

Academic Progression Requirements

Course Grades

All nursing program courses, and prerequisite classes, must be taken for a letter grade. Pass/fail and satisfactory/unsatisfactory grades will not be accepted.

Examinations

The nursing major incorporates frequent testing in most nursing courses. Testing is a major assessment tool in all courses associated with a clinical experience. Tests may be varied in format, length, time allotted, as determined by faculty. In general, an exam primarily including multiple choice questions should allot up to 90 seconds per item (ex. A 50-item exam can expect to take up to 75 minutes to complete), depending on the student's year in the program. As students' progress in the program, the level of difficulty increases to prepare students for complex clinical decision-making. Examinations may be given via paper and pencil in the classroom, online, and/or in class utilizing a computer and a software testing program (ExamSoft®). Delivery format is at the discretion of the faculty; however electronic testing through ExamSoft® or BlackBoard are the primary means of testing in the BSN program. Examinations are an important component of the program to assess student knowledge and prepare students for the NCLEX-RN® licensure exam.

Recommended timing for USCB administered NCLEX-RN® style exams is as follows, with additional time provided for NextGen type questions:

<i>Level</i>	<i>Time Per Question</i>
Sophomore Level (Level II)	90 seconds
Junior Level (Level III)	75-80 seconds
Senior Level (Level IV)	60-70 seconds

Faculty are not required to release grades immediately following a test to permit a thorough review of exam scores and detailed item analysis. Per best practice, grades should be posted within 72 business hours of test completion. If a question is determined to be a poor test item, the faculty may elect to: 1. Eliminate the item from the test; 2. Give partial credit for the item; 3. Accept multiple answers; or 4. Provide a constant. It is at the faculty's discretion how exam scores may be adjusted, if at all.

If a student achieves less than an 80% on an exam or assignment, the student is expected to meet with the faculty member to discuss study techniques, testing and success strategies.

Exam grades are not rounded. Students are required to achieve a minimum exam average of 75 **prior** to factoring in any other assessments (papers, projects, etc.) for all NURS courses required for degree conferral. Dates for final examinations are determined by the final examination schedule found on the USCB website (academics/undergraduate/schedules). In any course which meets once a week, no quiz, test or examination should be given during the last class meeting prior to the regular final examination period. No final examination may be held outside of the published final examination dates and times without authorization from the Provost Office.

At times, examinations may need to be conducted with remote proctoring services. There are specific computer technology requirements and sometimes a fee for these services. This information will be shared with you in the course syllabus.

Grading

For didactic courses, the following Department of Nursing grading scale will appear on all course syllabi. The grading scale for BSN majors **exceeds** University requirements as is typical of most BSN programs.

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A	92-100
B+	90-91
B	83-89
C+	81-82
C	75-80
D+	73-74
D	70-72
F	0-69

Note: A student must have an average of 75% or higher on the objective tests in courses that have a clinical co-requisite course in order to progress. Once the student earns the minimum test average of 75% or higher, the weighted values of the objective tests, assignments and other course requirements will be added into the calculation. **EXCEPTIONS:** The 75% test average rule does not apply to the following non-clinical NURS courses: B100, B101, B105, B200, B201, B300, B301, B305, B325, B330, B350, B360, B401, B410, B420, B450, and B499.

There will be no rounding of *final* course grades under 75% (ex. earning a cumulative score of 74.99% will result in a grade of “D+”).

Medication Calculation Examinations: Throughout the nursing program, medication calculation examinations will be required. Students must pass these examinations with a grade of $\geq 90\%$. Students will have up to 3 chances to meet this requirement. Inability to pass the examination with a 90% or greater score, by the third attempt, will result in automatic failure of the course. Students not meeting the minimum score on the first or second attempt will be required to remediate with faculty at set intervals. Students that fail attempts one or two can progress to clinical but will not be able to administer medications until the test is passed successfully. Medication calculation examinations will be administered in NURS C (clinical courses).

Skills Check off Grading: Throughout the nursing program, nursing skills check offs will be required. Students must pass these evaluations, with minimal prompts, per class syllabus. Students will have up to 3 attempts to meet this requirement. Students must remediate before subsequent attempts. Students may not be able to progress into the clinical setting until successful passing of the skill evaluation. Inability to pass the evaluation by the third attempt will result in automatic failure of the course.

Grade Access

Students' grades are kept confidential in accordance with federal law (FERPA). Individual course grades may be obtained on Blackboard. Final course grades are available to students electronically. Student identification numbers and a secure PIN are required for access. The permanent address on file for each student is used for official correspondence from the Department of Nursing. Unofficial transcripts can be printed from Student Information Online. If students desire an official copy of grades, the grades may be obtained at the Student Development Office (Hargray Building). A student ID card must be presented. A complete official transcript may also be obtained from the University of South Carolina, Office of the Registrar, Columbia, South Carolina.

Nursing Honors Program Students

Freshman students entering the USCB Nursing Honors Program are required to meet the following grade requirements to remain in and progress through the Nursing Honors Program, and to maintain the Honors scholarships/designation:

1. Earn a minimum grade of a “C” in all pre-requisite classes.
2. Earn a GPA of at least 2.75 in required first year science classes (Anatomy and Physiology I & II) by the end of the spring semester freshman year. Students who earn a science GPA of at least 2.5 and less than 2.75 will be placed on academic probation for the Nursing Honors Program. Students who earn a science GPA less than 2.5 will be dismissed from the Nursing Honors Program.
3. Maintain an overall minimum GPA 3.0 *and* Science of 2.75 (Anatomy and Physiology I & II, Microbiology) to enroll in upper-division courses beginning in the Spring semester of the sophomore year. Grades will be reviewed at the end of the Fall semester, sophomore year. Failure to achieve both required GPAs will result in dismissal from the BSN Honors Program.
4. At least one science course needs to have an Honors designation (Anatomy & Physiology 1 or 2, or microbiology)

Remediation, Progression and Disciplinary Plans

Remediation, progression, and disciplinary plans are utilized for students who require remediation for unsafe behaviors and/or violations of Nursing polices as outlined in this handbook. These plans are formalized in writing and developed with the student and involved faculty to remediate unsuccessful/unsafe behaviors. A progression plan may carry into subsequent semesters until such time it is deemed the unsuccessful/unsafe behavior has been resolved. Multiple progression plans or repeated unsafe or unprofessional behaviors that have not been corrected through remediation will result in dismissal from the BSN program. Disciplinary plans may also be subject to university as well as department sanctions. Serious offenses may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Standardized Assessments

All pre-licensure, BSN students are required to participate in achievement assessments to enhance student success in the nursing education program and on the NCLEX-RN® exam. This required activity demonstrates content mastery and better prepares students for licensure and assists the nursing faculty in providing the necessary academic and curriculum support as indicated by student performance. For each course that requires achievement testing assessment, students must take the assessment (s) and complete any required remediation activities in order to complete the course. All integrated achievement tests assessments must be taken in an assigned, proctored setting. Students who do not achieve target scores will be required to participate in learning enhancement (remediation) of relevant content areas as determined by policy .

Written Work

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and skills through written work. Written work requirements vary by course and student learning outcomes. Unless otherwise stated, all written work is expected to conform to the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 6th 7thed.* (2010-2020), which describes APA style. APA style is utilized in many of the social and behavioral sciences to present written material in professional journals. Students should refer to the APA manual as it is the official authority on format. Use caution with select websites and programs which may include inaccuracies.

All written work is expected to be the student's own, unless group work has been assigned. Students must be careful to appropriately cite resources as noted in the APA Manual. It is expected all written work is submitted on time and in the format required. Further, it is at the faculty's discretion to determine if the written assignment is to be submitted electronically and/or submitted in hard copy. For online courses written work is submitted electronically through the university's LMS.

Graduation Requirements

Program Completion

To be eligible for graduation a student must meet all University and Department of Nursing requirements including a minimum GPA of 2.75 for pre-licensure program students. Candidates for degrees must file formal applications early in the final semester anticipated before graduation in accordance with the deadline set by the Registrar's Office. This deadline is posted on the USCB website. Forms may be obtained online.

Eligibility to graduate with honors is determined according to standards set by the University Registrar. Recognition of honors at graduation is based on a student's University of South Carolina cumulative

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GPA; the GPA is based on credits earned up to and including the semester prior to graduation. The final semester is not included. The USCB GPA must meet the requirement for honors. Students must complete at least 60 hours in residence at USCB to be eligible for honors consideration. The following are honors designations:

Summa Cum Laude	A cumulative GPA of	3.95 – 4.00
Magna Cum Laude	A cumulative GPA of	3.75 – 3.94
Cum Laude	A cumulative GPA of	3.50 – 3.749

An application form must be completed by the student. The student should start the process in the fall semester of the academic year in which they plan to graduate. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the graduation application and complete the graduation survey, which are on the registrar's website at <http://www.uscb.edu/registrar/graduation/index.html>. Students who do not graduate during the graduation period for which they have applied must submit a new graduation application, along with the graduation application fee. **Students must meet the appropriate application deadlines.**

Eligibility for RN Licensure

Prior to completion of the last semester of study in the pre-licensure track, students are expected to apply for the nursing licensing examination, NCLEX-RN®, and apply for licensure to the South Carolina State Board of Nursing or other Board of Nursing in the jurisdiction where the student plans to be employed after graduation.

The South Carolina Board of Nursing has declared the following: An applicant for a license to practice nursing in South Carolina shall be subject to a criminal history background check as defined in 40-33-25 of the Nurse Practice Act. In addition to all other requirements and for the purpose of determining an applicant's eligibility for an authorization to practice, each applicant will be required to furnish a full set of fingerprints and additional information required to enable a criminal history background check to be conducted by the State Law Enforcement Division (SLED) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The cost of conducting a criminal history background check will be borne by the applicant and the department shall keep information received pursuant to this section confidential, except that information relied upon in denying an authorization to practice may be disclosed as may be necessary to support the administrative action (South Carolina Code of Laws).

Student Engagement

Evaluation of Curriculum and Faculty

Students' suggestions for development of the nursing curriculum and creation of Department of Nursing activities are welcomed by the faculty. Students' active participation in the learning process is essential. The faculty invite students to co-create the learning environment at USCB by participating in committees, task forces, and other participative groups.

Each student will be given the opportunity to evaluate the course and instructor at the end of the term. When doing the evaluations, students should thoughtfully consider the overall class experience including areas that have been excellent as well as those that have room for growth or improvement.

Evaluations need to be as objective and constructive as possible. For example, it is helpful to give feedback as to what should the instructor KEEP, what should the instructor QUIT doing, and what could

the instructor START doing to assist the student in learning. Learning to evaluate performance of self, colleagues, program effectiveness, and educational programs is an integral part of being a professional.

Mentoring Program

The Department of Nursing believes that mentoring is a critical component of student success. Mentoring may occur through upperclassmen who will introduce themselves at new student orientation. A student may also choose to have a faculty mentor who may or may not be the student's advisor. The goal is to discuss academic progress, challenges of the program, and work with the mentor to overcome those challenges. The program is informal and not a permanent part of the student's record.

Pinning Ceremony

A Nurse Pinning ceremony is held at the end of each spring term, prior to commencement. Each graduating student is pinned with the USCB Nursing pin, symbolizing one's completion of the program. The pin does not substitute for earning the BSN; the degree is conferred by the University of South Carolina Beaufort after verification all requirements for the degree have been attained.

Student Awards

As part of end of the year ceremonies, senior BSN students may be recognized for achievements during their academic journey. Awards may change periodically, but in general, students can expect the following awards to be routinely given:

Academic Excellence – awarded to the student(s) demonstrating outstanding academic ability through cumulative grade point average (GPA), with the highest level of honor and integrity.

Clinical Excellence – awarded to the student(s) demonstrating outstanding clinical skills and knowledge, translating theory into practice and doing so with caring and compassion.

Leadership – awarded to the student/s demonstrating outstanding leadership skills in the classroom, the clinical setting and through service to the community.

Outstanding Student – awarded to the student who is well-rounded and exemplifies a high level of academic achievement and leadership. This award is presented at the USCB Annual Awards Ceremony.

Susan C. Williams Spirit of Nursing Award – awarded to the student who best exemplifies reaching for the stars and overcoming obstacles to achieve one's personal best.

Shared Governance

Student feedback is strongly encouraged, and students have multiple means of providing feedback; for example, classroom evaluations, student focus groups, and surveys. A student representative is selected each year to serve as a non-voting student member on the following Department committees:

- Curriculum Committee
- Simulation Committee
- Student Affairs Committee (Ad Hoc)

Student Nurses Association

Students are encouraged to actively participate in all campus organizations. A USCB chapter of the National Student Nurses Association (SNA) has been established and sponsors regular meetings and

activities. Students are required to join the National Student Nurses Association prior to joining the USCB Chapter of SNA. Membership in the USCB SNA Chapter is open to all nursing and pre-nursing students in the college.

Look for meeting/event notices or contact the Department of Nursing office for meeting information. The SNA maintains a bulletin board on the second floor of the Science Building next to the Simulation Center/Nursing Laboratory and a website linked to the department home page.

Sigma Theta Tau:

Sigma Theta Tau International, known simply as “Sigma”, is the international honor society of nursing. In 2021, USCB chartered a local chapter of Sigma – Alpha Alpha Omicron. This chapter is part of North America Region 7. The mission of Sigma is “developing nurse leaders anywhere to improve healthcare everywhere.”

Students are eligible for consideration after completing three semesters in the USCB BSN program and rank in the top 35% of the class. Invitations are sent by AAO each year and those who accept are inducted in a formal ceremony held each fall.

Please click here to access the chapter’s website: <http://alphaalphaomicron.sigmanursing.org/home>