The Office of Admissions and Student Affairs has prepared this information guide for use by all students at the University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) School of Nursing. Its objective is to readily provide information frequently needed by students about the UTMB School of Nursing and the UTMB campus. This information guide does not replace, but rather supplements, the UTMB General Catalog and the School of Nursing Bulletin. Students should contact the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs (409-772-8271) for specific information not found in this handbook.

Note: Entries below without a page number are linked to UTMB or SON documents or websites.

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Disclaimer

This Student Handbook is intended for information purposes only. It is not a statement of official policy of The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. The provisions of this Student Handbook do not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any applicant, student, or faculty member and The University of Texas System and The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston.

The University reserves the right to change course offerings, fees, tuition, academic calendars, curricula, degree requirements, graduation procedures, and any other requirement affecting students. Changes will become effective whenever the proper authorities so determine and will apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled.

Policies, procedures, and guidelines contained in the Student Handbook override any contained in School of Nursing course syllabi.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH OVERVIEW

General Information Catalog

The catalog of The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston consists of five separately published components:

- UTMB General Information Catalog
- School of Nursing Bulletin
- School of Medicine Bulletin
- School of Health Professions Bulletin
- Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Bulletin

The UTMB Catalog provides general information, including degrees and programs offered, admission, orientation and registration, tuition and fees, academic policies, student life, student support services, and the institutes.

Each bulletin for the four UTMB schools provides the school’s calendars, program-specific degree requirements, course offerings, and other school-specific information.

Title IX Compliance

Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972 states, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.”

To make a report of gender based discrimination, harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, contact the UTMB Office of Title IX Compliance, 2.302 Rebecca Sealy Hospital, 409-772-2112 or email Title.IX@utmb.edu.

Full information is available on the Student Services Title IX webpage. UTMB is committed to maintaining an environment that is safe and supports equity in educational and professional pursuits.
SCHOOL OF NURSING OVERVIEW

School of Nursing Major Events

Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony for Nursing (Traditional BSN)

The School of Nursing holds the Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony to welcome incoming Traditional BSN students. This event introduces the students to UTMB leadership and School of Nursing faculty, and cloaks students in honor of their entrance to the nursing program and the profession, and instills a commitment to provide compassionate care among future health professionals. White coats are ordered through the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs (OASA) office prior to each semester. A reception sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs and the UTMB Alumni Office follows the ceremony. Family and friends are invited to attend and share this important celebration.

Pinning Ceremony (BSN)

The Pinning Ceremony is a time-honored nursing school tradition, dating back before the turn of the 20th century. Students receive their nursing pins after meeting the necessary program requirements for completion of the baccalaureate program. The event includes The Blessing of the Hands and a candle lighting ceremony.

Students order their official UTMB School of Nursing Pin from the UTMB Campus Store in January, and select a SON faculty member to present their pin at the ceremony held the morning of Commencement. Family and friends are invited to attend and share this meaningful ceremony.

Reflection Ceremony (MSN and DNP)

The Reflection Ceremony is held to honor the graduates of the master’s and DNP programs. Each MSN Track Administrator and the DNP Program Director present their graduates with the hood to be worn at Commencement. Recipients of awards selected by both faculty and students are recognized at this ceremony. Family and friends are invited to attend and share this meaningful ceremony.

Commencement (All programs)

The School of Nursing conducts Commencement exercises once a year in the spring. Students in the Nursing PhD program participate in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Commencement in the spring. All spring graduating students are expected to attend Commencement. Students who complete their degree programs at a time other than the end of the spring semester are strongly encouraged to attend the formal Commencement exercises.

The degree/certificate date will be the date of the close of the regular semester of program completion. Should a student complete program requirements at a time other than the close of a semester, the degree date will coincide with the conclusion of the regular semester following degree requirements completion.
Career Fair (BSN)

A Career Fair is held for prospective BSN graduates. Students meet representatives from hospitals and other health care organizations, as well as the Armed Forces. This is an opportunity for students to meet and submit resumes to employers who are hiring new graduates. The employers provide information about employment at their organization and answer questions. Many of our graduates obtain interviews and offers of employment as a result of the Career Fair. In addition, the Career Services website provides career related information and job postings for graduating students.
Academic Advising

Degree Plans
• All students are assigned a Faculty Advisor to help them review their academic degree plan and revise plans as needed.

Student Responsibility
• Students are responsible for managing their degree plans, and should check their MyStar portal each semester to ensure all courses are accurately recorded and that their degree plan is up-to-date.

Academic Advisors
• The BSN and MSN/DNP Academic Advisors are responsible for tracking degree plans to confirm students have met all requirements for graduation.
• The Academic Advisors can assist students if there is a concern regarding the reported information in MyStar.
• Academic Advisors also track leaves of absence or other breaks in enrollment, including course withdrawals, program withdrawals, dismissals, and appeals.
• Students should contact the appropriate Academic Advisor:
  o BSN – Jolly Daniel, BSN, RN
  o MSN and DNP – Stephanie Johnson, BSN, RN
**Academic Counselor**

**Role**
- The Academic Counselor provides assistance to all students regarding study skills, time management and organizational planning, and test taking skills through individual sessions and/or workshops. Students can schedule an appointment at any time during their education to get assistance.
- The Academic Counselor also assists with personal issues that may interfere with a student’s academic performance, and provides resources/alternatives available to students on and off campus.
- The Academic Counselor coordinates the peer tutoring sessions for Traditional BSN students.

**Scheduling**
- Students sign up for group tutoring sessions through Blackboard. If tutoring is not offered for a particular course, students should contact the Academic Counselor.
- Students preferring an individual Study Skills session should submit a request via email, and include several dates, times they will be available, and an accurate contact number. The Academic Counselor will schedule the session using an Outlook meeting request.
- Students who are experiencing difficulty in a course or do not meet the required grade on an examination are **strongly encouraged** to schedule a session with the Academic Counselor, as well as meet with the course faculty and Faculty Advisor.

The Academic Counselor for all SON students is [Kaci Woods-Chinn, MA, BS](mailto:kaci.woods-chinn@son.edu)
ADA Accommodation

Establishing a Qualified Disability

- A student who has a documented disability or would like to obtain information regarding services for students with disabilities at UTMB, should contact the Institutional ADA Officer, or one of the other offices listed below. Information will be kept confidential and only those individuals responsible for assuring reasonable accommodations will be given information.
- All nursing students must be able to meet the Essential Functions with or without accommodation. These functions are listed by program in the SON Bulletin.
- Procedures for establishing a disability and requesting accommodations are contained in Students with Disabilities (IHOP Policy 7.1.1), which can also be acquired at the following locations on campus:
  - Institutional ADA Office, 2.118 Jamail Student Center, (409) 747-4818.
  - UTMB School of Nursing Office for Admissions & Student Affairs, Room 2.208, (409) 772-8271.

Requesting an Accommodation

- Once admitted into a nursing program, any student who believes he or she requires an accommodation as the result of a disability is encouraged to contact the ADA Office. This should be done a minimum of four weeks prior to enrollment to allow the University time to review and, if required, provide a reasonable accommodation.
- A student or prospective student is not obligated to disclose a disability unless he or she requests an accommodation.

Accommodation Implementation

- Students who have had their request for accommodations approved by the ADA Officer are sent a letter outlining the accommodations. In order to meet the accommodation, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the Course Coordinator and the staff of the needed accommodation two weeks prior to any scheduled exam.
Admissions Policy

Policy

• The quality of UTMB’s School of Nursing academics is reflected in the number of nationally ranked programs and nationally recognized scholars at our school, our high licensure pass rate, and the demand for our graduates. The school offers undergraduate, master’s, and doctoral degree tracks, each with its own set of admission requirements. A detailed listing of the requirements for each degree track, as well as a sample curriculum plan, can be found on the UTMB SON website.

• The SON Admissions Committees strive to maintain an environment free from discrimination against individuals on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), age, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information, or veteran status. This includes, but is not limited to, academic program admissions, employment, financial aid, healthcare services, educational services and access to UTMB programs, facilities, or services. This applies to all students, and anyone who utilizes UTMB facilities.
Annual Compliance Requirements

Introduction
• Responsibility and accountability for actual compliance with laws, regulations, and policies rests with each individual student. The Institutional Compliance Program promotes compliance with all applicable legal requirements, fosters and helps ensure ethical conduct, and provides education, training, and guidance to all employees and faculty. Our plan is designed to prevent accidental or intentional noncompliance with applicable laws and regulations; to detect such noncompliance, if it occurs; to discipline those involved in noncompliant behavior, and to prevent future noncompliance.

Accountability
• UTMB must ensure that all students and employees complete federally- and state-mandated compliance training. The University and Schools are subject to substantial fines if the requirements are not met. Students who have not completed their annual compliance training will not be allowed to enroll in classes until the compliance training is completed. Students can find their required compliance training in their MyStar account.
• The Associate Dean for Admissions & Student Affairs in each school is accountable for ensuring that their students are adequately trained and for detecting noncompliance with applicable policies and legal requirements when reasonable management efforts would have led to the discovery of problems or violations.

Notification
• The Office of Compliance, in conjunction with each respective school, will notify students of mandated modules through the MyStar portal. Students will be notified of additional required modules and school- or program-specific deadlines.

Required Compliance Modules
• State and Federally mandated modules:
  o HIPAA Awareness
  o General Compliance
  o Sexual Harassment
• HIPPA Federal Regulations, UT System and Information Services mandated modules for individuals with an email address (All employees and students):
  o Information Protection
• UT System mandated:
  o Standards of Conduct Guide Acknowledgement
• UTMB mandated modules:
  o Standard/Isolation Precautions
  o Healthcare Fire Safety Training

All modules are included in one course titled Annual Student Required Training, which is listed in their MyStar portal.
Annual Compliance Requirements (Continued)

**Deadlines**
- New Traditional BSN students must complete all required modules within 30 days of enrollment. Other new students have 60 days to complete the online training. All continuing students must complete all required modules by August 31 each fiscal year (9/1 through 8/31). Compliance training requirements can be accessed [here](#).
- Students are required to complete specific modules prior to clinical or laboratory experiences. Clinical absences due to compliance issues are considered unexcused.

**Tracking**
- UTMB monitors the implementation of the Institutional Compliance Plan. The Executive Director of Institutional Compliance conducts periodic reviews of identified high-risk compliance areas. UTMB promotes compliance with all general compliance policies and applicable federal and state laws and regulations.
- The online tracking system will track required modules, dates completed and renewal dates. Administrators from each school will be assigned to track and monitor the student’s training records. Students will be notified via their [MyStar](#) portal of compliance training to be completed.

**Consequences if Requirements Are Not Met**
- Students who do not meet the school-specific deadlines will be prevented from participating in clinical/laboratory activities.
- A “HOLD” will be placed on registration for students who do not complete the University mandated and school specific requirements by stated deadlines. Registration will be blocked for the next semester.

**Training at Other Facilities**
- UTMB modules are very comprehensive and specific. Therefore, UTMB students must complete the training provided by UTMB. Because of the specific training requirements, UTMB cannot honor compliance training completed at other institutions. Students are also required to complete specific compliance training requirements at clinical facilities.
Assistance with Academic and Non-Academic Issues

Chain of Command

• “Chain of command” is a phrase used often in the professional workplace that also applies to the educational setting. It simply means going to the right person with the specific issue. If the issue is not resolved, then the student moves to the next person on the chain. It is important not to miss “links” in the chain in resolving an issue. For example regarding academic concerns, the chain of command is as follows:
  • Course Coordinator
  • Program Director for BSN and DNP students or Track Administrator for MSN students
  • Academic Associate Dean
  • Dean of the SON

The Faculty Advisor serves as a resource for the student to clarify SON policies.

Beginning Problem Resolution

• It is always appropriate to begin with the course faculty, Faculty Advisor or the Office of Admissions & Student Affairs. They can provide direction regarding the correct “chain of command” and current policies for the particular issue. Relevant policies are contained in the UTMB Handbook of Operating Procedures which can be located here.

Academic Issues: Policy 7.1.22  SON-Academic Appeal: Grading and Evaluation

• An informal process includes attempts for resolution of grade appeals through the faculty member administering the grade, Course Coordinator, Track Administrator, and the Program Director. A timeline is outlined and must be followed. The informal appeal needs to be done within ten working dates from the test result reporting.
• If resolution is not attained at the course level, the student may move to formal appeal by filing a written request to the Associate Dean for the appropriate academic program. A timeline is outlined and must be followed. An ad hoc Appeals Committee will be constituted.
• If the student is still dissatisfied with the outcome, the student may appeal in writing to the SON Dean whose decision is final.
• The student may remain in courses in progress; however, he/she will not be allowed to begin any additional courses until the appeal is resolved unless permission is granted by the appropriate Academic Associate Dean.

Academic Issue: Policy 7.1.23  SON Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedures

• A student who is being dismissed from the SON for academic reasons will be notified by email and by certified letter. The student should follow this policy and timeline if appealing the dismissal. The Faculty Advisor, the Program Director, and/or the Associate Dean of Admissions & Student Affairs can provide guidance in the process.
• The student will be allowed to attend other classes in which they are currently enrolled during the dismissal appeal process if he/she has successfully completed prerequisites. Students will not be allowed to enroll in additional courses until the appeal has been resolved unless permission is granted by the appropriate Academic Associate Dean.
Non-Academic Issues: **Policy 7.1.3 Student Grievance Procedures**

- A student facing a non-academic issue is advised to meet with the Associate Dean of Admissions & Student Affairs. All non-academic issues are handled in accordance with IHOP Policy 7.1.3. A **timeline** is outlined and must be followed.

**Early Concern Note**

- Professional behavior is expected of all students in the School of Nursing. If a faculty member sees examples of inappropriate behavior, he/she will hold an Early Concern Note discussion with the student to discuss the behavior. The purpose of the meeting is to clarify behavioral expectations and help the student to be successful.
- The meeting is summarized in an Early Concern Note which is signed by the student and faculty member.
- The Early Concern Note may result in follow-up discussions, a meeting with the Associate Dean of Student Affairs, or referrals to outside resources such as Student Health or Financial Aid.
- Any act of scholastic dishonesty is covered under IHOP Policy 7.1.3.
Attendance at Professional Meetings and Conferences

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON baccalaureate students.

Purpose
• The UTMB faculty recognizes the importance of student engagement in professional organizations as part of the curriculum experience in professional nursing education. Furthermore, students who participate in leadership positions within these organizations are developing knowledge and skills essential for their own career development.
• Students and faculty share the responsibility for successfully achieving the education mission and course objectives that must be met by all students to be successful.

Procedure
• Students seeking to attend a professional student meeting or event should meet with the Course Coordinator for each course in which they are enrolled before the course begins. The student should apply for an excused absence from any required activity (clinical and examinations) and propose to the Course Coordinator an alternative for meeting the missed activity, such as an alternative clinical activity and make-up examination. Students should provide specific information with the request such as when and where the event will occur and the specific benefit to the student.
• Faculty will review and consider the student’s request for an excused absence. If the excused absence is approved, faculty will collaborate with the student to ensure that the alternative experiences are equivalent and meet the course objectives.

Eligibility
• Students must be in good academic standing.

Exceptions
• Requests not made prior to four weeks before the scheduled activity or event will not be considered, except under extenuating circumstances, which may include late meeting notification, inability of a student officer to meet commitment to attend event, etc. Students must provide documentation of extenuating circumstances.
Background Check and Drug Testing for All Students

Rationale
1. Prescreening requirements are required of all newly admitted students. Students who do not pass these requirements may not be permitted to enroll and will be removed from the new student list.
2. The Joint Commission (JCAHO) standard requires criminal background checks for security purposes on all employees, staff, and volunteers who supervise care, render treatment, and provide services. Individual institutions have been given the responsibility for mandating this clearance for students. Therefore, in keeping with this policy, all students are required to undergo a background check for security clearance in order to be admitted into UTMB.
3. Access to specific clinical placements, high-security research, and patient care areas may also require additional security clearance.
4. The majority of UTMB degree-seeking students fall into at least one of these categories (clinical access, employee, high security patient care, high security research, off-site clinical placement).
5. The rationale for extending these requirements to all students is the concept of due diligence and competency assessment of all individuals whose assignments bring them in contact with patients, research subjects, research animals or potentially hazardous research areas or employees. This approach ensures uniform compliance with Joint Commission standards pertaining to human resource management. Moreover, the public is now demanding greater diligence in light of the national reports of deaths resulting from medical errors.

Drug Testing Requirement
- Drug testing is a requirement for matriculation into degree-granting programs at UTMB. Students will be screened following admission but prior to enrollment. Some clinical agencies require additional drug screening. All students assigned to those specific clinical settings will provide a urine drug screen.
- Admitted applicants who do NOT provide a drug screen will be barred from enrollment and will be removed from the new student list.
- A student may not begin or continue coursework (clinical or non-clinical) until a negative (“clear”) test report is received and the student has satisfactorily fulfilled requirements set forth in Policy 7.1.26.
- Positive test results will be reported to the SON Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs for intervention. A positive test result may also lead to disciplinary action pursuant to IHOP Policy 7.1.3, Student Conduct and Discipline.
- For additional information, please see IHOP Policy 7.1.26 Student Drug Testing Policy.

Identification of Vendors
- UTMB has designated CastleBranch to do the background check and drug testing. Results from any other source will not be accepted.
Background Check and Drug Testing for All Students (Continued)

Allocation of Costs
• The student will pay the cost of the background check and drug testing. It is the student’s responsibility to pay for additional drug screens for a clinical agency, if required. The student will pay the cost at the time of testing.

Period of Validity
• It is anticipated that background checks will be honored for the duration of the student’s enrollment in the program if the participating student has not had a break in the enrollment.
• If a student has a criminal offense after enrolling in the school, it is the student’s responsibility to notify their Board of Nursing and provide any documentation requested.

Significant Findings in Background Check
• Admitted applicants who do not pass the required background check will have their case referred to a review panel appointed by the specific school to which they applied. The review committee will include the Track Administrator, Program Director, and Associate Dean of Admissions & Student Affairs. Any admitted applicant whose background check is referred to a review panel has the right to appear before the panel to contest or explain the negative contents of the background check.
• The panel will have the responsibility to review the case and recommend to the Admissions & Progression Committee:
  1) if the acceptance be rescinded for cause;
  2) if the concern does not rise to the level of rescinding admission; or
  3) if the background check uncovers a question which can be cleared by the applicant, matriculation can be deferred for up to one year while the matter is resolved.
• Falsification of information will result in removal from the admitted student list or from the program of study.

Appeal of Panel Decision
• Any admitted applicant whose admission is rescinded or otherwise deferred has the right to appeal that decision to the Dean. The decision of the Dean is final.

Recordkeeping
• All reports are considered confidential. Security reports will be filed in the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs for the duration of the student’s enrollment or until the applicant is removed from the admitted student list.
Background Clearance – Board of Nursing

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for all UTMB SON Traditional BSN students.

Requirement
• The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) requires all new Traditional BSN nursing students to obtain a DPS/FBI background clearance to take the NCLEX for licensure upon completion of the program.

Procedure
• The Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs sends a roster of new students to the BON.
• Within ten (10) business days, the BON issues a confirmation email to the Associate Dean that the student information has been entered in the BON system and students on the roster can initiate the clearance process.
• IdentoGo sends instructions to new students via email to schedule fingerprinting. Please note that the BON process can take several weeks/months depending on the situation and students are advised to submit their fingerprints as early as possible.
• IdentoGo electronically submits the fingerprint scan to DPS to initiate the background check and transmit results directly to the BON.
• When the results are received, the BON will do one of the following:
  o Mail a blue postcard directly to those students who have a clear background check; OR
  o Correspond with students who have a rejected fingerprint scan and request another scan; OR
  o Correspond with students who have a positive background check and request they petition for a declaratory order (DO); OR
  o Correspond with students that the Operations Team cannot approve their DO petition and they must pay a $150 review fee and their file will be transferred to the Enforcement Team.

Documentation of Clearance
• Students must obtain BON clearance prior to enrollment in their first semester.
• Students must provide the Office of Admissions & Student Affairs a copy of their blue postcard or their letter of clearance from the DO process.
• Students will also be required to provide this documentation when registering for the NCLEX at the completion of the program.

Repeat Clearance
• Students may be required by the SON or BON to repeat a background check if any offenses occur while in the program.
**Badge**

**Display of Badge**
- Identification badges are required for all full-time and part-time students. Badges are to be worn at all times while on campus or at a clinical site. As a security precaution, students must display their badges in order to enter many buildings on campus and the hospitals.
- Students must have their UTMB ID badge to take any course examination. No other form of identification is permitted.

**After Hour Access**
- UTMB badges are encoded to allow students after hour and weekend access to the School of Nursing building and the Lee Hage Jamail Student Center.

**Library, Discounts, Free Public Transportation**
- UTMB badges are necessary for checking books out of the Moody Medical Library, for obtaining discounts at various retail stores/restaurants, and for free use of public transportation in Galveston.

**Initial Badge**
- Badges are prepared at orientation by the UTMB Badge Office. Each student will have a UTMB badge made with the student’s photograph. The fee for the badge is included in the student fees.

**Replacement Badge**
- **Damaged/Lost:** A fee is charged for replacement of a lost or damaged badge.
- **Stolen:** If a badge is stolen, it will be replaced at no charge to the student if a UTMB police report is filed.
- **Name Change:** There is no charge for a badge issued when a name is changed when proof of name change is presented.


**Classroom Expectations**

**Rationale**
- Faculty and students are expected to conduct themselves professionally—in demeanor, use of language, and appearance—in the presence of faculty, staff, other students, patients, and visitors in the classroom, laboratory and health care settings.

**Classroom Environment**
- Faculty and students are expected to uphold a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning.
- The faculty is committed to providing the curriculum in a manner that will prepare graduates to be successful in the health care workplace.
- It is expected that students will be ready to work and listen at the beginning of class and after breaks. Professional behavior means that students do not have to be called to order more than once.

**Classroom Conduct**
- Professional demeanor and courtesy to peers, faculty, and guests and/or guest lecturers in the classroom setting are essential to the teaching-learning experience. Classroom conduct is expected to demonstrate mutual respect of faculty, students and peers.
- Elected course representatives will participate in the management of peer classroom conduct.

**Communication**
- Communication is expected to be professional in all encounters. Foul or abusive language in the classroom will not be tolerated.
- Conflicts are to be resolved in a manner that respects the dignity of every person involved.

**Attendance**
- Classroom attendance and active participation by each student is expected for optimal learning to occur. It is expected that students remain alert, awake, and focused on course related/specific material during class.
- Students are expected to arrive on time and remain for the entire class. Students arriving late are a major distraction to other students and the faculty. Faculty reserve the right to prohibit students from entering the classroom late. When emergencies occur and students must arrive late or leave early, students are required to contact the Course Coordinator at least 30 minutes prior to class by UTMB email to provide documentation.
- Consistent absenteeism, tardiness, delays in returning from breaks and early departures from the classroom are considered unprofessional behaviors. Students will be counseled by faculty if these behaviors occur and given an Early Concern Note or recommend disciplinary steps in accordance with [IHOP Policy 7.1.3 Student Conduct and Discipline](#).
Classroom Expectations (Continued)

Extraneous Conversations
- If students have comments pertinent to the topic of discussion, they should share the comments with the entire classroom. Questions and comments directed to the entire group and presented in a collegial professional manner are encouraged.
- Students are expected to refrain from extraneous conversations that are not pertinent to the classroom discussion.
- An undercurrent of side conversations or non-class related activities are disturbing to the learning atmosphere and are considered unprofessional. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave the classroom.

Cell Phones/ Electronic Devices
- Cell phones will remain in the silent or vibrate mode at the discretion of the faculty. There will be no talking between students while faculty is delivering course content. Any student who exhibits unprofessional behavior may be asked to leave the classroom. Students will be counseled by faculty if these behaviors occur and given an Early Concern Note or recommended disciplinary steps in accordance with IHOP Policy 7.1.3, Student Conduct and Discipline.
- Audible signals from cell phones, iPods, wireless headsets, etc. are prohibited in the classroom unless authorized by the faculty. Cellphones should be silenced. Response to phones should be restricted to emergencies only.
- Electronic devices are prohibited during course examinations. Any student who has an electronic device in their possession during an examination will be given a grade of zero for the examination.

Special Accommodations: Taping of Lectures
- UTMB provides taped sessions for most courses via the Tegrity or Voice Thread systems. Students who need taping devices as an accommodation for a disability should make arrangements with course faculty following the ADA accommodation guidelines. Taping of lectures is not allowed unless permission is obtained from the classroom instructor.

Food and Drink in the Classroom
- Consumption of food is not permitted in classrooms.
- Beverages in sealed or capped containers are permitted. Beverages must be capped when not being consumed.
- All students are expected to make sure their seating area is clean prior to leaving the classroom.

Classroom Attire
- Students are representatives of the SON, UTMB, and the nursing profession. Therefore, classroom attire is expected to project an image of professionalism.
- Refer to Dress Code Policy.
Classroom Expectations (Continued)

Consequences of Unprofessional Behaviors

- Consequences are dependent on the disruptive behavior. The faculty has the right to expect appropriate classroom conduct.

- If a student is non-compliant the instructor may:
  - Stop the lecture and remind student(s) of classroom etiquette.
  - Ask the student(s) to respect the rules or leave the classroom.
  - Ask the course representatives to assist with peer classroom conduct.

- Students who demonstrate unprofessional behavior will be counseled by their faculty and given an Early Concern Note. The purposes of the Early Concern Note is for the student and faculty to identify unprofessional behaviors and the reason for the concern, clarify expectations, provide advice/resources as needed, and ensure professional behavior is consistently demonstrated going forward. The faculty will determine if further action is required by the Associate Dean for Admissions & Student Affairs and the appropriate Associate Dean for review and possible disciplinary action.
Clinical/Lab Requirements

Rationale
- Clinical and lab experiences are provided in a variety of institutional and community health care settings that offer an opportunity for students to apply the principles and skills of nursing. Written clinical/lab assignments, clinical/lab conferences, seminars, and clinical/lab projects, and clinical/lab simulations are utilized to assist the student in acquiring clinical competence.

Demonstration of Skill Competency
- Skills required for progression in the curriculum are a part of course requirements.
- Students are required to participate in all scheduled laboratory periods and clinical practice activities. Students who experience difficulty in achieving competency and confidence in performing skills (either during laboratory evaluations or during clinical practice) will be directed to practice these skills in the Nursing Simulation Center.
- Students who do not demonstrate adequate preparation and the ability to perform the required competencies during a clinical/lab experience may be dismissed from clinical/lab for the day and may be directed to the Nursing Simulation Center to gain the skill level required. Students are required to present evidence of additional practice and achievement of competence before the next clinical/lab experience. Make-up of the clinical/lab time will be required.

Absence from Clinical/Lab
- Clinical/lab attendance is mandatory. Only one excused clinical/lab absence is permitted during any course. (Illness requiring more than one day will be considered as one excused absence.) Unexcused absences may result in a clinical/lab failure.
- Students who miss clinical/lab experiences must notify their clinical/lab instructor and the clinical unit at least one hour before the beginning of the shift. The student should obtain the name of the person on the clinical unit to whom they gave the information.
- Failure to notify the instructor and the agency of the absence is grounds for clinical/lab failure.
- The only excused absences for the course are:
  - Illness certified by a health care provider
  - Serious illness or death in student’s immediate family certified by a health care provider or an obituary. (Refer to IHOP Policy 3.06.09 Family and Medical Leave for definition of immediate family).
  - Being away from the clinical/lab site with the sanction of the University for a religious holiday or mandatory military service. These must be scheduled at least two weeks prior to the beginning of the semester.
  - Unforeseen catastrophic event. (UTMB Handbook Of Operating Procedures, Section 3 Human Resources Policies - Policy 3.1.1 Staffing During Adverse Conditions) (Adverse condition: inclement weather or other factors which have an actual or potential disruptive effect on institutional operations (e.g., hurricanes, utility interruptions, floods, etc.).
- Excused absences must be rescheduled at the discretion of the Course Coordinator.
Clinical/Lab Requirements (Continued)

Clinical/Lab Tardiness
- Students are expected to be on the unit at a time identified by clinical/lab faculty. Students who will be late for clinical/lab must notify their clinical/lab instructor and the clinical agency as early as possible.
- A verbal warning will be given and entered into the student file for the first tardy in a clinical/lab rotation. A written warning follows a second tardy in a clinical/lab rotation.
- A student may be dismissed from clinical/lab for a third tardy, which is grounds for clinical/lab failure.

Daily Clinical/Lab Performance
- In addition to evaluating a student’s knowledge and skills, there is an obligation to determine whether the student’s performance in the treatment and/or care of patients is acceptable for the expectations and standards of the nursing profession.
- A student who receives an unsatisfactory evaluation for a clinical/lab day because of unsatisfactory professional performance (unsafe, incompetent, or negligent) in the treatment and/or care of patients may be subject to immediate reassignment, course failure, academic probation, or program dismissal.

Clinical/Lab Evaluation
- Students will be evaluated on their clinical/lab performance according to achievement of stated clinical/lab objectives. Minimal competency in skills must be demonstrated to meet clinical/lab requirements for the course.
- A student’s clinical self-evaluation is a part of the evaluation process.

Clinical Failure
- The student must achieve a passing evaluation in clinical/lab performance in order to successfully complete the clinical/lab requirements and pass the course. A student who receives a failing clinical/lab performance evaluation will receive a failing grade in the course, even if grades on other tests or evaluations are satisfactory.
- A student who fails a clinical/lab rotation may be subject to academic probation or program dismissal.

Erratic Behavior
- A student exhibiting erratic behavior may be removed from the clinical/lab setting. This would be considered endangerment to the patient.

Suspected Drug/Alcohol Use
- If drug or alcohol use is suspected as the cause of erratic behavior, a drug screen may be required (at the student’s expense) in accordance with IHOP Policy 7.1.26, Student Drug Testing. This behavior may also be subject to IHOP 7.1.3, Student Conduct and Discipline Policy.
Course Registration

Batch Registration
- Traditional BSN and RN-BSN students will be registered for courses each semester by the appropriate Academic Advisor based on the curriculum sequence.
- MSN and DNP students will be registered for courses in the first semester only by the Academic Advisor based on the curriculum for each track.

Self-Registration
- MSN and DNP students will register for courses based on their individual degree plans after their first semester.

Course Changes
- Students must contact their Faculty Advisor if course changes are needed.
Course Representatives – Traditional BSN

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON Traditional BSN students.

Role
• Assist in identifying issues and concerns.
• Collect data to promote effective problem solving.
• Promote effective two-way communication between course faculty and the student body in relation to course issues and concerns.
• Communicate decisions to students.

Criteria for Selection
• No withdrawals or failures in any SON courses and in academic good standing.
• Commitment to attending all scheduled classroom meetings.
• Willingness and ability to communicate with both faculty and classmates.

Assumptions
• Faculty members are committed to giving students a voice in their education.
• Communication promotes problem solving and provides students a model for building professional relationships.
• Students grow professionally when they participate in making decisions about their education in a responsible way.
• Mutual respect and two-way communication are essential to good outcomes in nursing education.

Responsibilities
• Student representatives are expected to:
  o Participate in an orientation program to prepare for serving in the representative role.
  o Represent their classmates in at least two meetings per semester with the Course Coordinator. Additional meetings may be necessary if special issues arise.
  o Bring issues identified by fellow students to the attention of the Course Coordinator.
  o Assist with gathering data about issues to support effective problem solving.
  o Propose potential solutions when bringing problems and concerns to the Course Coordinator and course faculty.
  o Participate in communicating decisions and other issues of concern from faculty to classmates.
  o Participate in management of peer classroom conduct.

Election Process
• Two students will be elected using the following process for each baccalaureate course:
  o The election should be announced by the Course Coordinator in advance of the time it will be held.
  o Faculty should determine whether they prefer to hold the election at the beginning or end of class.
Course Representatives – Traditional BSN (Continued)

- The faculty member calls for nominations. If the class representatives are chosen in the classroom, the faculty may choose to write the names on the board, or ask for a student volunteer to do so. The faculty may also agree to have students handle the entire process. Alternatively, the faculty may choose to accept nominations electronically to begin the nomination process.
- Students nominated should be asked if they are willing to serve if chosen.
- Once nominations are closed, voting should be done by written or electronic ballot.
- Ballots are counted and announced to the course during the first week of class.
- The Course Coordinator communicates the election results to the Baccalaureate Program Director, the Administrative Associate, and the Academic Counselor.

Guidelines for the Course Representative Process

- Issues that are brought to the Course Representative should be clearly and fully described in writing along with proposed solutions.
  - The concerned individual must sign the request or be in an email.
  - Anonymous communications will not be addressed.
- Issues should be presented to the Course Representative in a timely manner, giving the representative and the faculty a reasonable amount of time to respond.
- Course Representatives are not responsible for the solutions to problems. They are responsible for communicating effectively and assisting the problem-solving process.
CPR Certification Requirement

Requirements

• All nursing students must document successful completion of the American Heart Association Basic Life Support - Healthcare Provider (BLS-HCP) course upon entering the School of Nursing. This course includes instruction in adult, child, infant, and two-man CPR. Online courses do not meet this requirement and cannot be accepted.

• This course must be taken every two years to demonstrate competence in CPR techniques and maintain certification.

• **Valid certification is a prerequisite for all clinical rotations. Students without a valid CPR certification may not attend clinical activities until the certification is current.**

• If the student’s CPR card is due to expire mid semester, it must be renewed prior to the beginning of the semester in which it expires.

Documentation

• All students must provide documentation of current CPR certification to CastleBranch. Students entering the baccalaureate program are encouraged to take the BLS-HCP course one to two months prior to entry, so that the two year certification period covers their term of enrollment in the school.

Re-certification Notification

• All student CPR certification databases are maintained through CastleBranch. Students who do not complete the re-certification process while enrolled will be notified via email.

• It is the student’s responsibility to ensure current certification.

Documentation of Renewal

• Students must provide documentation of re-certification when required to the SON.

Renewal Courses

• The UTMB Education Laboratory offers BLS-HCP renewal courses. Call (409) 772-2823 to obtain a schedule and to register. There is a course fee.
Dress Code for Students

Classroom

Introduction
- The personal appearance of students affects the respect for those outside the SON. As a representative of the SON, students are expected to dress in a manner that is tasteful and not offensive, suggestive, revealing or insulting to others. Student attire in the classroom must reflect the professional nature of the nurse. The impression students make by their outward appearance may have an impact on their career in the future.

Acceptable Attire
- Dress shorts (no shorter than three inches above the knee)
- Dress denim jeans
- Collared shirt/blouse
- Collegiate, special event and UTMB sponsored T-shirts
- Khaki pants
- Skirt or pants/slacks
- Dress capris
- Shoes must be clean and in good repair. Opened toed shoes must be “dress sandal”
- Scrubs may be worn in the classroom

Unacceptable Attire
- Short shorts (more than three inches above the knee)
- Frayed or modified cut-off shorts, rips or tears or frayed jeans
- Bare midriffs or halter tops
- Low cut blouses or dresses (exposing cleavage)
- Strapless or “one shoulder” dresses
- Low-rise/lowered pants, allowing the underwear to be seen; No pajama bottoms
- T-shirts with inappropriate logos (advertisements for alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, risqué pictures, /slogans or sexually explicit slogans)
- Tank tops/tube tops
- Miniskirts (skirt lengths should reflect good business taste and cover thighs when seated)
- Jogging suits
- “Hoodies” with hoods covering the head in the classroom

Consequences
- Students deemed inappropriately attired by their course faculty will be counseled and asked to leave.
- Noncompliance with the dress code in the classroom setting may result in additional written assignment(s) to make up for missing class time (examinations cannot be made up).
Dress Code for Students (Continued)

Clinical/Laboratory Dress and Grooming Requirements – BSN

Audience
- The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON baccalaureate students.

General
- The purpose of maintaining appropriate dress and grooming is to present and maintain a standard of professionalism. Students must adhere to the dress code of the setting in which they are doing clinical experiences.
- UTMB Nursing Service Policy 2.08, Dress Code and Professional Appearance, provides the general guidelines for clinical experiences within UTMB. This includes the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Hospital. Faculty will discuss specific issues during clinical orientation.

Nursing Simulation Center, Inpatient Clinical and Outpatient/Community Clinical
- Students will be required to wear scrub attire to participate in lab and check off sessions in the SON Simulation Center. Athletic shoes that are clean, fresh, and non-porous are acceptable. Shoes should be all white or black.
- Burnt orange UT scrub attire, lab coat, and the UTMB/applicable facility badge are required at all clinical sites.
- SON white lab coats should be worn at all times at the clinical sites when students leave the assigned clinic floor.
- Clinical attire for some clinical sites may vary. Professional attire with white lab coat, approved burnt orange UT scrubs and UTMB/applicable facility badge are required/appropriate for outpatient/community clinical sites. Faculty will discuss alternative attire during course orientation.
  Note: adherence to specific clinical facility dress code may be required.

Identification
- **Badges must be worn on campus and at clinical sites at all times (and applicable facility badges at all clinical sites).** Badges are part of the required clinical/laboratory dress and should be worn on the lab coat or blouse/shirt above the pocket to be visible. Clinical sites will not allow students on the premises without the proper badge. Students without badges will be sent home and a makeup day will be required.

Clinical Accessories
- A complete uniform includes the following appropriate accessories:
  - Pen with black ink
  - Bandage scissors, penlight, and stethoscope
  - Smartphones with specified clinical software
    - **NOTE:** Smart devices are not permitted at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Hospital.
Clinical/Laboratory Dress and Grooming Requirements – BSN (Continued)

Shoes
- Athletic shoes must be all white or black, clean, impervious to fluids (for example, leather, not mesh or suede), and in good condition.
- Open toed shoes, clogs, and sandals are not acceptable in any clinical or lab setting.
- Hose or socks must be worn.

Fingernails
- Fingernails must be trimmed (not to extend past the end of the finger) and must be neat and clean.
- Clear polish may be worn if neat and not chipped.
- Artificial nails/wraps, acrylic overlays, or gels are not permitted.
- Colored nail polish and designer paintings/decals are not permitted.

Scented Personal Products
- Perfume, cologne, aftershave, and scented powder are not permitted.
- Fragrances can be offensive to patients, especially post-surgical patients or those who are experiencing nausea, respiratory problems, or allergies.

Personal Hygiene
- It is essential that health care providers be free of offensive body odors. Students will be counseled if body or hair odors are noted.

Gum/Tobacco Products
- Chewing gum or tobacco products may not be used in any clinical or laboratory facility.

Jewelry
Acceptable jewelry includes:
- One ring per hand (no large, dangling or sharp rings).
- Watch with second hand.
- No more than two earrings in each ear (studs not to exceed 1/4 inch in diameter).
- No more than one chain or necklace (must not dangle and must be worn inside clothing).

Unacceptable jewelry includes:
- Bracelets (except medical alert bracelets/necklaces).
- Long necklaces.
- Pins (identification or professional nursing pins are acceptable).
- Dangling/hoop earrings.
- Large rings, studs or rings in any visible body part other than the ear.

Hair
- Hair shall be well groomed and not extend below the bottom of the lab coat collar. Longer than shoulder length hair must be pulled back and secured off the collar with an elasticized band or pinned.
Clinical/Laboratory Dress and Grooming Requirements – BSN (Continued)

• Hair/bangs must not cover the eyes and be well groomed and not viewed as shaggy or unsightly. Hair must not fall forward over face when bending over.
• Hair color must be within neutral hair color tones. Extremes in hair color or style will be deemed unprofessional for clinical activities.

Facial Hair
(Males)
• Male students’ facial hair should be clean shaven or neatly trimmed.
• If required to use masks or respirators for personal protective equipment, males may need to trim or remove facial hair for proper fit for protection.
• Mustaches are permitted. However, the mustache shall be neatly trimmed and shall not extend over the top lip or vertically or horizontally beyond the corner of the mouth where the lips join. Handlebar mustaches are prohibited.
• Sideburns are permitted. However, the sideburns shall be neatly trimmed and shall not extend below the middle of the ear. Sideburns of an exotic nature (e.g., muttonchops) are prohibited.

Tattoos
• Tattoos/body markings must be totally concealed. Students are permitted to wear one-color (black or white) long sleeved clothing under their scrubs to cover tattoos.

Violations of Clinical/Lab Dress and Grooming Requirements
• Students deemed inappropriately attired by their clinical/laboratory faculty will be counseled and asked to leave.
• Clinical or laboratory time missed is considered unexcused and may result in clinical failure.
• Students in violation of dress code in skills lab will be referred to the Course Coordinator.
Email Account

Usage
- All communication from the UT System, UTMB, SON, and program information will be sent to the student’s UTMB email address.
- Students are expected to check their emails on a regular basis for SON announcements. Specific course information can be found on Blackboard.
- Students must follow the guidelines for usage as stated in IHOP Policy 2.19.6, Information Resources Security.
- UTMB email accounts automatically become inactive after one month of inactivity. If this occurs, students must contact the UTMB Help Desk at 409-772-5200 to reactivate their account.
Employment during Enrollment - Traditional BSN

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON Traditional BSN students.

Recommendations
• A student's combined employment and semester-hour load should not exceed 40 hours per week. Students are advised to weigh employment carefully, as nursing school has a very demanding curriculum. Ideally, it is recommended that full time students do not work during the semester (exceptions include participation in the work-study program).
• The student’s Faculty Advisor is available to assist students in exploring degree plan options to reduce course workload if employment hours cannot be reduced.
• The Office of Admissions & Student Affairs, located in 2.208 SON, is available to assist students in exploring financial aid options in order to reduce or eliminate the student’s need for employment. Students should also contact the Financial Aid Office, located in Old Red.

Responsibilities during Employment
• Students are personally responsible and liable for any activity they participate in while employed or participating in volunteer work.
• Students employed in an agency/volunteer activity have responsibility, personally and professionally, to engage in only those activities that fall within their job description as non-professional workers (e.g. nurse assistants). They have a responsibility to refuse to participate in activities that they have not been legally licensed to perform (e.g. giving medications, assuming total responsibility for a division, etc.).
• The SON assumes no responsibility for a student’s activities as an employee of an agency or as a volunteer participant.

Professional Liability Insurance
• Professional liability insurance is included in student fees through the SON and is valid only in their student role, not their employment role.
Exam and Exam Review Policy

Classroom

Rationale

- Exam policies and procedures are established to create fair and optimal conditions for all students to demonstrate their knowledge through testing. Professional conduct is demonstrated through compliance with the standards for behavior in the testing environment identified below.

Academic Integrity

- Students are expected to abide by the UTMB Honor Pledge in all testing situations. 
  
  On my honor, as a member of the UTMB community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion, and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors.

- Cheating is a serious breach of academic integrity and will be dealt with according to IHOP Policy 7.1.3 Student Conduct and Discipline.

For All Exams:

- Students must be in their assigned exam seat at the time designated on the schedule and be prepared to follow instructions. Sufficient time should be allowed prior to the exam to place personal belongings in a locker and attend to personal needs as well. Students not in their assigned seats at the scheduled exam time will be considered late.

- If a student is late, they will not be allowed to sit for the exam. The student should email the assigned Course Coordinator for further instructions. The Course Coordinator will make the decision regarding a makeup exam. If the Course Coordinator denies the request the student may then make an appointment with the respective Program Director to provide a decision regarding the makeup exam. If the Program Director denies the request for a makeup exam, the student has the ability to submit a formal appeal according to the SON – see the Academic Appeal: Grading and Evaluation policy.

Computer Based Exams:

- Students are allowed to bring in one #2 pencil. Scratch paper will be provided (ATI testing only). Answer sheets are provided with unit exams.

- All students are to sit in their ASSIGNED seat and display their ID badge (without the holder). No other forms of identification can be used. Please refrain from talking while seated in the testing center. Students are not permitted to leave the room until the exam has started.

- Personal items are not permitted in the testing room. All belongings must be placed in a locker prior to the exam session. These items included but are not limited to: cell phones, note cards, books, flashcards, briefcases, recording devices, photographic equipment, electronic devices of any kind, watches and other jewelry of any kind except wedding bands. Students are required to remove any caps and scarves (except religious garments). No sunglasses, ornate clips, or headbands will be worn.

- Any student found to have an electronic device in their possession during an exam or exam review will receive a grade of zero for that exam and face disciplinary action and up to and including possible dismissal.
Exam and Exam Review Policy – Classroom (Continued)

- Students are strongly encouraged to take care of comfort needs prior to entering the testing room. If a student needs to leave the testing center during an examination to go to the restroom, the student will hand his/her worksheet to the proctor and reclaim it upon returning. Only one student will be permitted to leave the examination site at a time. Faculty may choose to accompany the student to the restroom.
- Students may be asked to leave the testing room and may be questioned if a proctor perceives an irregular behavior.
- All exam materials are private and students are responsible for ensuring their answers cannot be viewed by another student. Screens are not to be removed from the computer for any reason. Attempts to see other students’ work or sharing one’s own work will be considered as evidence of cheating.
- If students have questions regarding exam items, comments should be recorded on the answer sheet. The faculty will review all comments prior to determining final grades for the exam.
- Students who complete an exam prior to the end of the scheduled exam period are to shut down their computer and take their answer sheet to the proctor. Students will not be allowed back in the testing rooms and asked to refrain from talking in the testing center hallway as a consideration to those students who are still testing.
- At the end of the exam period, all remaining students will be instructed to turn off their computers.
- Online programs will offer a proctored testing session on a campus for each examination. Course faculty will announce dates and times for these sessions at the beginning of the course.

Exam Review

- Following unit exams, a review will be scheduled. There will be no exam review following the final for any course.
- The purpose of the exam review is to provide feedback in regard to exam items missed or answered correctly.
- All belongings, including cell phones (to be silenced), must be placed at the front of the room for all exam reviews.
- During an exam review, students may ask questions. It is not a time for negotiation about the exam items. All discussion regarding individual exam scores must be communicated to the Course Coordinator via email.

Punctuality

- For scheduled exams, additional testing time will not be provided in the event of tardiness.
- A student arriving late will not be able to take the exam if another student has completed the exam and left the testing room. The Program Director or designee will review the situation with the student to determine if a make-up exam can be permitted.

Absence from Exams

- The number of absences from an exam will be monitored throughout the program. If a pattern of absences is identified, a student will need to meet with the Program Director.
Exam and Exam Review Policy – Classroom (Continued)

- **Excused Absence**: A student who is unable to attend a scheduled examination due to illness or other emergency must contact the Course Coordinator prior to the exam if possible. Failure to do so will be considered unprofessional conduct and will be referred to the Program Director for follow up. The Course Coordinator in consultation with the Program Director determines eligibility for make-up exams.

Examples of excused absences include serious personal or family illness or death; in these cases, documentation of all extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the faculty in writing (or email) as soon as possible.

- **Unexcused Absence**: A student will receive the grade of zero for any unexcused absence from an exam (scheduled or make-up). Examples that do not qualify as excused absences include, but are not limited to, forgetting to take the exam, over sleeping, not realizing the due date for the exam, work schedule, fatigue, vacations, family events, or poor planning.

**Make-up Exams**

- Make-up exams may be taken for excused absences (i.e., illness, family or personal crisis).
- Make-up exams should be scheduled as soon as reasonably possible by arrangement with the Course Coordinator.
- All exams must be taken in the appropriate sequence.
- All unit exams must be completed prior to the final examination.
- If a student misses scheduled exams, he/she will be given an alternative form of the examination. The format of the examination is at the discretion of the faculty. Alternative forms may include: fill in the blank, short answers, essays, mix and match, or multiple choice questions.

**Exam Scheduling**

- Traditional baccalaureate course examinations will be given on a scheduled date at a designated time and place. RN-BSN, MSN, and DNP students, who are enrolled in a course with specifically designated dates and times for examinations, will test during the scheduled time.
- Makeup and selected RN-BSN, MSN, and DNP examinations will be provided online or on an individual basis in a testing room during the identified testing times or by appointment.

**Postponement of Final Exam**

- A student may request postponement of the final examination in a course when there are extenuating circumstances. The student must contact the Course Coordinator to request postponement, and the Program Director must approve the request. The final examination must be rescheduled as soon as reasonably possible.
- While the final examination may be postponed for good cause, no final examination may be taken prior to its scheduled date. Postponed exams will be in an alternative format.
- The grade symbol of “I” will be assigned when a final examination postponement has been approved.
Exam and Exam Review Policy (Continued)

Online Testing for Distance Education Courses

Rationale
- Exam policies and procedures are established to create fair and optimal conditions for all students to demonstrate their knowledge through testing. Professional conduct is demonstrated through compliance with the standards for behavior in the testing environment identified below.

Academic Integrity
- Students are expected to abide by the UTMB Honor Pledge in all testing situations.
  
  *On my honor, as a member of the UTMB community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion, and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors.*

- Cheating is a serious breach of academic integrity and will be dealt with according to IHOP Policy 7.1.3 Student Conduct and Discipline.

Online Testing Software
- The UTMB School of Nursing offers online testing, which provides a secure browser so students can take exams at a proctored site.

Orientation to Online Testing Software
- Students should refer to the Online Exam Menu tab in the individual course on Blackboard to review online exam procedures.

Exam Availability Period
- The course instructor will provide the schedule for exams in the course information.

Off-campus Proctored Testing Sites for Distance Education Students
- If online students cannot come to campus for a proctored testing session, they must be proctored by a recognized testing center. Such centers may be college/university testing centers, college/university libraries, or for-profit entities like Sylvan Learning Centers. Students are responsible for identifying a testing center that they will use for proctored exams and for all costs related to proctored examinations.

- Students who plan to use a testing center will provide the following information about their chosen center the first week of class:
  - Testing Center Name:
  - Testing Center Website URL:
  - Testing Center Phone Number:
  - Proctor’s Name:
  - Proctor’s Email Address (must be testing center email)
Exam and Exam Review Policy – Online Testing (Continued)

- Students are responsible for keeping this information current and accurate for each examination. This information may be used to verify the testing center and proctor.

Extenuating Circumstances

- Extenuating circumstances will be dealt with on an individual basis. Students should discuss issues that would keep them from completing an exam during the exam availability period immediately with their instructor.
- Examples of extenuating circumstances include serious personal or family illness or death; in these cases documentation of all extenuating circumstances must be submitted to the faculty in writing (or email) as soon as possible.
- Examples that do not qualify as extenuating circumstances include but are not limited to forgetting to take the exam, not realizing the due date for the exam, work schedule, fatigue, vacations, family events, or poor planning.

Penalty for Missing an Exam

- Penalty for not taking the exam at the scheduled times ranges from five points a day to a zero for the exam. For example, five points will be deducted from the eventual exam score for each day the exam is not taken after the scheduled time. However, the faculty reserves the right to assign a zero for work not completed within the assigned time period.
Faculty Advisors

Administration
• Students will be assigned a Faculty Advisor when they are accepted into the program. If students have questions or concerns and are unable to contact their Faculty Advisor, they should contact the following:
  o RN-BSN and MSN Students – Appropriate Track Administrator or the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs
  o BSN and DNP Students – Appropriate Program Director or the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs

Assignment
• Students are assigned a Faculty Advisor who serves as a key resource throughout the students’ enrollment in the SON. The Faculty Advisor reviews their degree plan, guides the academic progression of the students, and assists in identifying services and resources to meet their personal and/or academic needs.

Communication
• Students are required to meet with their Faculty Advisor at least once each semester.
• Advisors may be contacted by email, telephone or during posted office hours. The student can also use the MyStar site to send/receive communications with the Faculty Advisor. This system tracks the messages and sends the faculty member or student an email as well.
• Any decisions regarding course changes should be discussed first with the Faculty Advisor. Students need to understand the possible effects on the degree plan and financial aid.

Dropping or Withdrawing from a Course
• A course may be dropped by the census date provided the required paperwork is processed. See the Academic Calendar for the specific date for each semester.
• Dropping a course, by itself, will not affect satisfactory progress, but it may change the student’s full-time/part-time status and may therefore affect financial aid eligibility.
• Dropping courses alters a student’s degree and graduation plans; consequently, advisement is essential. Students should first discuss the change with their Faculty Advisor.
• Students also need to be aware that dropping a course may affect their financial aid and should discuss this with the Financial Aid office.

Process for dropping a course
• Student notifies the Course Coordinator and Faculty Advisor
• Student obtains the Class Schedule Change form from the SON website or Academic Advisor
• Student obtains appropriate signatures
• Student turns in signed form to the Academic Advisor via email: son.studentforms@utmb.edu.
Faculty Advisors (Continued)

**Withdrawing from a Course**
- Students may withdraw from full-semester courses at any time after the course begins until ten business days prior to the end of the course, and will receive a “W”. See the [Academic Calendar](#) for the specific date for each semester.
- Students may withdraw from courses less than a full semester at any time after the course begins until seven business days prior to the end of the course, and will receive a “W”.
- Withdrawals are not included in the GPA calculation.

**Process for withdrawing from a course**
- Student notifies the Course Coordinator and Faculty Advisor
- Student obtains the Class Schedule Change form from the [SON website](#) or Academic Advisor
- Student obtains appropriate signatures
- Student turns in signed form to Academic Advisor via email: son.studentforms@utmb.edu

The respective Program Director will be notified of any withdrawals.

**Failure to Officially Drop/Withdraw from a Course**
- A student who, without permission from the Clinical Faculty, Course Instructor, Program Director, or Associate Dean of the program, discontinues attending a course or scheduled clinical experience without completing the established drop/withdrawal procedures will, at the end of the enrollment period, be assigned the letter grade earned in each course or clinical experience based upon the student’s performance (or nonperformance) on the entire course requirements.

Three withdrawals will result in academic dismissal from the School of Nursing.

**Adding Courses**
- Required courses may be added prior to the census date each semester, however, students **must** have their Faculty Advisor's prior approval.

**Process for adding a course**
- Student notifies the Course Coordinator and Faculty Advisor
- Student obtains the Class Schedule Change form from the [SON website](#) or Academic Advisor
- Student obtains appropriate signatures
- Student turns in signed form to Academic Advisor via email: son.studentforms@utmb.edu

**Transfer of Courses**
- Students may request to transfer upper division or graduate elective courses or nursing courses once they have been admitted. The Program Director must approve all course transfers.
Faculty Advisors (Continued)

Leave of Absence

- Prior to withdrawal from all courses in any semester, students **must** meet with their Faculty Advisor. A leave of absence must be approved by the Program Director for any term in which a student is not enrolled in required course work.
- Students must be in good academic standing to request a Leave of Absence  unless the Leave of Absence is due to an approved medical leave of absence
- The policy for a voluntary leave of absence is located in the UTMB Catalog and the SON Bulletin.
- A medical leave of absence is handled by the Institutional ADA Officer. The Officer will determine the need and length of the leave.
- Students receiving financial aid should consult the Office of Financial Aid before withdrawing/dropping a course or taking a leave of absence to see if their financial aid will change with the planned change in courses

Withdrawal from the Program

- Students must meet with their Faculty Advisor and Program Director to withdraw from the program. Students are required to complete an Exit interview with Financial Aid (either in person or via the telephone).
- Should a student wish to re-enter after withdrawal from the program, the student must re-apply for consideration.
- The policy for withdrawal from the program is located in the UTMB Catalog and SON Bulletin.

Non-Academic Issues

- Faculty Advisors and/or the Academic Counselor can also assist students with non-academic issues (e.g. family crises, financial issues).
Grading and Degree Requirements

Baccalaureate Students

Audience
- The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON baccalaureate students.

Classroom and online Examinations
- Students must receive a 75% weighted average on the course and the exam components to receive a passing score for the course.
- Students who miss a scheduled assessment examination will receive an incomplete in the course until the assessment examination has been completed.

Daily Clinical Performance – Traditional BSN Students Only
- In addition to evaluating student’s knowledge and skills, there is an obligation to determine whether the student's performance in the treatment and/or care of patients is acceptable for the expectations and standards of the nursing profession.
- A student who receives a “Does Not Meet Expectations” evaluation for a clinical day because of unsatisfactory professional performance (unsafe, incompetent, or negligent) in the treatment and/or care of patients may be subject to immediate reassignment, course failure, academic probation, or program dismissal.

Course Clinical Performance
- A “Meets Expectations” clinical performance in all critical behaviors is required to receive a passing grade in a course.
- A student who receives a “Does Not Meet” final clinical performance evaluation will receive an F in the course, even if grades on other tests or evaluations are satisfactory.
- A student who fails a clinical rotation may be subject to academic probation or program dismissal.
- Refer to Policy: Clinical Expectations.

Scholastic Probation
- A baccalaureate student will be placed on scholastic probation when his or her GPA falls below 2.0 for the current term and/or the cumulative GPA falls below 2.0 at the completion of any semester or the student receives a failing grade in any nursing course.
- The student will be notified of probationary status.
- To be removed from probation and to continue in the nursing program, the student must raise his or her GPA in all courses, as well as the cumulative GPA, to a minimum of 2.0 by the end of the next semester or the next semester the course is offered.
- In addition, a probationary student who fails to raise his or her GPA by the end of the next grading period is not considered to be making satisfactory progress, and therefore is not eligible for financial aid the following semester.
- All students on probation must adhere to the probation stipulations.
Grading and Degree Requirements (Continued)

Master’s Students

Audience

• The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON master’s students.

GPA Requirements

• All required courses with a clinical component require a minimum grade of B for satisfactory completion. One C is acceptable in a non-clinical course. Two Cs throughout the program results in dismissal from the program. In addition, students are subject to academic dismissal if:
  ➢ They fail to maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 for two consecutive terms; or
  ➢ They withdraw from three courses while enrolled in the SON unless the withdrawals are required due to an approved medical leave of absence; or
  ➢ They withdraw from two courses (unless the withdrawals are due to an approved medical leave of absence) and fail an additional course.

Clinical Performance

• In addition to evaluating a student’s knowledge and skills, there is an obligation to determine whether the student’s performance in the treatment and/or care of patients is acceptable for the expectations and standards of the nursing profession.
• A student who receives an unsatisfactory evaluation for a clinical day because of unacceptable or unsatisfactory professional performance in the treatment and/or care of patients will be subject to immediate reassignment, academic probation, or academic dismissal.

Clinical Course Failure

• Students passing the didactic portion of a clinical course, but failing the clinical portion of the course will be given a grade of C for the course. Students who fail both the didactic and clinical portions of a course will be given an F for the course. A grade of C or F in a clinical course is considered an unsatisfactory grade and the student is required to retake the course.

Repetition of Clinical Courses

• Only one required course with a clinical component may be repeated. Enrollment must be at the next regularly scheduled offering.
• If a student receives an unsatisfactory grade (C, F) in a second clinical course, he/she will be dismissed from the program.

Scholastic Probation

• An MSN student will be placed on scholastic probation when they are admitted conditionally, have a GPA of less than 3.0 in a given term, or if they receive a grade of C or below in a clinical course.
• The student will be notified of their probationary status by email and USPS.
• To be removed from academic probation, the student must meet the conditions of admission by the end of the first semester of study or achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0 by the end of the next grading period.
• All students on probation must adhere to the probation stipulations.
Grading and Degree Requirements (Continued)

**DNP Students**

**Audience**
- The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON Doctor of Nursing Practice students.

**Academic Performance**
- To be in good standing in the Doctor of Nursing Practice program, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale for all required, letter-graded courses and in each term receive no failing grade (F-Failure or U-Unsatisfactory). No grade below a C is acceptable and the student will be required to repeat the course.

**Academic Dismissal**
- DNP Program students are subject to academic dismissal if:
  - They fail to maintain a GPA of at least 3.0 for two consecutive terms; or
  - They receive a second F or U grade; or
  - They withdraw from three courses while enrolled in the School of Nursing unless withdrawals are required due to an approved medical leave of absence; or
  - They withdraw from two courses (unless the withdrawals are due to an approved medical leave of absence) and fail an additional course.

**Scholastic Probation**
- A DNP Program student will be placed on scholastic probation if his or her GPA falls below 3.0 for the required courses at the completion of any semester, or the student receives a failing grade (F-Failure or U-Unsatisfactory) in any DNP course.
  - The student will be notified of their probationary status.
  - To be removed from academic probation, the student must achieve a minimum GPA of 3.0 for all letter-graded courses and satisfactory in all satisfactory/unsatisfactory-graded courses by the end of the next grading period.
  - All students on probation must adhere to the probation stipulations.
Grading and Degree Requirements (Continued)

Posting Student Grades

UT System Advisory

- The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 provides that personally identifiable student records are not public and requires educational institutions to maintain the confidentiality of these educational records. Although the posting of student grades is not specifically addressed by the Act, the general requirements of the Act clearly regulate the form of grade posting. The ensuing guidelines are consistent with the requirements of the federal Act and are based on interpretations of FERPA, numerous legal reviews, and interpretations by the UT System Office of General Counsel.

UTMB SON Posting Guidelines

- Test and assignment grades are made available to students through the grade book in Blackboard. All courses have an online presence in Blackboard, which is password protected, secure and confidential.
Graduation Eligibility

Baccalaureate Students

Responsibility
- Each degree-seeking student is responsible for knowing the degree requirements appropriate to his or her particular degree program and completing those requirements in order to be awarded the degree.

Faculty Approval
- Upon the completion of all requirements, students must be approved for the degree by a vote of the faculty of the School of Nursing.

Length of Time to Complete
- To qualify for graduation, the baccalaureate student must satisfy all eligibility requirements, including successful completion of the curriculum for which the student registered, no later than three years from the date of first enrollment in the School of Nursing unless the delay is due to a medical leave of absence.

NURS 4101: Integration of Core Concepts
- NURS 4101 is included in the curriculum requirements for initial licensure students. Completion of NURS 4101 is achieved when the student successfully passes a comprehensive exit examination at the stated competency level. If a student has not successfully completed NURS 4101, that student will not graduate but may participate in Commencement activities. The student will graduate at the end of the term in which the course is successfully completed.

Cumulative GPA for Upper Division
- The student must have a cumulative 2.0 grade point average for required courses in the School of Nursing and a cumulative overall grade point average of 2.0 for all work undertaken at UTMB.

Texas Core Requirements
- The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requires that all students successfully complete the Texas Core Curriculum, which includes 42 semester credits of lower division courses, to receive a baccalaureate degree. Included are specific requirements for English I and II, language, philosophy and culture, creative arts, six semester hours in American history, and three semester hours each in US and Texas government.
- Students must successfully complete the Texas Core requirements prior to entering the program.
- To meet the prerequisite requirements, Texas Core Curriculum courses must be completed with a grade of “C” or higher.
- Texas Core Curriculum courses are not offered at UTMB.
Transcripts for Transfer Credits
- Official transcripts for any course work taken at another institution while enrolled in the SON must be in the permanent file before graduation from the SON.

Name on Diploma
- Original diplomas issued will always carry the name of the student as it appears on the official academic record at the UTMB at Galveston on the day of graduation.
- Using an initial of the first name is permitted but the first name or first initial cannot be omitted. A middle initial may be used or the middle name may be eliminated on the diploma. The surname will always be the same as on the record at the time of the issuance of the diploma.

Change of Name on Diploma
- Subsequent to graduation, if a student elects to change their name on their official academic record at the UTMB at Galveston, they may order a duplicate diploma in the name on the record, after payment of the diploma replacement fee.

Dates of Degree
- Degrees are awarded at the end of the summer, fall, and spring terms. No degree is conferred except on the official dates announced publicly.

Commencement Ceremony
- The only formal Commencement for the entire academic year is held in the spring. Students graduating in the summer and fall can attend the spring Commencement ceremonies. Spring graduating students are required to attend Commencement.
Graduation Eligibility (Continued)

Graduate Students

Audience
- The information in this policy is intended for all UTMB SON graduate students.

Responsibility
- Each degree-seeking student is responsible for knowing the degree requirements appropriate to his or her particular degree program and completing those requirements in order to be awarded the degree.

Faculty Approval
- The student must be approved for the degree by completion of all eligibility requirements and a vote of the faculty of the SON.

Length of Time to Complete Graduation Requirements: Master’s Students
- To qualify for graduation, the master’s student must satisfy all eligibility requirements, including successful completion of the curriculum for which the student registered, no later than four years from the date of first enrollment in the SON unless the delay is due to a medical leave of absence.

Grade Requirements: Master’s Students
- In addition to fulfillment of all program requirements, requires removal of any academic deficiencies.
- No student may graduate with an incomplete (I), not reported (NR), Withdrawal (W) or failing grade (F or U) on the transcript unless the deficiency has been resolved.
- Each student must have an overall program GPA of 3.0 or above at the time of graduation.

Length of Time to Complete Graduation Requirements: Doctor of Nursing Practice Students
- To qualify for graduation, the Doctor of Nursing Practice student must satisfy all eligibility requirements, including successful completion of the curriculum for which the student registered, no later than four years from the date of first enrollment in the SON unless the delay is due to an approved medical leave of absence.

Grade Requirements: Doctor of Nursing Practice Students
- In addition to fulfillment of all program requirements, graduation with the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree requires removal of any academic deficiencies.
- No student may graduate with an incomplete (I), not reported (NR), Withdrawal (W) or failing grade (F or U) on the transcript unless the deficiency has been resolved.
- Each student must have an overall program GPA of 3.0 or above at the time of graduation.
Graduation Eligibility - Graduate Students (Continued)

Transcripts for Transfer Credits
- Official transcripts for any course work taken at another institution while enrolled in the School of Nursing must be in the permanent file before graduation from the School of Nursing.

Name on Diploma
- Original diplomas issued will always carry the name of the student as it appears on the official academic record at the UTMB at Galveston on the day of graduation.
- Using an initial of the first name is permitted but the first name or first initial cannot be omitted. A middle initial may be used or the middle name may be eliminated on the diploma. The surname will always be the same as on the record at the time of the issuance of the diploma.

Change of Name on Diploma
- Subsequent to graduation, if a student elects to change their name on their official academic record at the UTMB at Galveston, they may order a duplicate diploma in the name on the record, after payment of the diploma replacement fee.

Dates of Degree
- Degrees are awarded at the end of the summer, fall, and spring terms. No degree is conferred except on the official dates announced publicly.

Commencement Ceremony
- The only formal Commencement for the entire academic year is held in the spring. Students graduating in the summer and fall can attend the spring Commencement ceremonies. Spring graduating students are required to attend Commencement.
Guidelines for Filing a Written Complaint

Rationale and Assistance Available

- Students have a right and responsibility to report issues of concern.
- Each student is assigned a Faculty Advisor to assist with concerns.
- At any point, students can seek the help of the Associate Dean for Admissions & Student Affairs. Students can also contact the UTMB Student Ombudsman in Student Services and/or use the UTMB Professionalism Button.

Student Grievance Procedures

- The Student Grievance Procedures policy (IHOP Policy 7.1.3) outlines the general procedures to be followed should a student wish to file a formal grievance.

Discrimination

- UTMB SON follows Title IX of the Education Act Amendments of 1972, which states, “No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance”.
- To make a report of gender based harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, contact the UTMB Office of Title IX Compliance, 2.302 Rebecca Sealy, or call 409-772-2112. Full information is available on the Title IX website. In an emergency situation where someone’s health is in danger, please call 911 or Campus Police at 21111 immediately.
- Written allegations of violations of the UTMB Nondiscrimination Policy (IHOP Policy 3.2.1) should be filed with the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct

- Written allegations of violations of the Sexual Harassment and Misconduct Policy (IHOP Policy 3.2.4) should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator located in 2.302 Rebecca Sealy.
- Any faculty member or administrative personnel who gains knowledge of an alleged act of discrimination which violates this policy, must report the incident within three (3) business days to the Title IX Coordinator if it is a student or Employee Relations if the allegation is against a faculty or staff member.

Sexual Assault

- UTMB will not tolerate sexual assault in any form. In cases of sexual assault, campus or local police should be notified immediately and the student is encouraged to seek medical treatment. Please see UTMB IHOP Policy 3.2.4 for procedures.

Other Non-Academic Matters

- Written allegations of other non-academic concerns (IHOP Policy 7.1.3) should be submitted to the Associate Dean of Admissions and Student Affairs, who will forward the allegations to the UTMB Student Conduct Officer.
Americans with Disability Act

- A formal written complaint pertaining to violations of the Students with Disabilities Policy (IHOP 7.1.1) can be filed with the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs. If a student indicates a need for an accommodation to effectively meet all Essential Functions, the Institutional ADA Officer will review the request and needed accommodations.
- Students need to complete a Formal Request for Accommodation due to a Disability and a request for documentation of disability from a qualified professional diagnostician. These materials should be provided to the Institutional ADA Officer as soon as possible in order to evaluate the possibility of accommodations.

Student Conduct and Discipline Violations

- Initial investigations of violation of academic misconduct and discipline fall under the responsibility of the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs in the SON. Non-academic misconduct issues fall under the responsibility of Internal Investigations.
- If a violation is not resolved, written allegations of violations of the Student Conduct and Discipline will be handled in accordance with IHOP Policy 7.1.3.

Faculty Issues

- Students are encouraged to follow the appropriate line of authority. Students should first address the issue with a faculty member, next they are encouraged to speak with their Faculty Advisor, then their Track Administrator or Program Director. At any point, they can seek the help of the Associate Dean for Admissions & Student Affairs. They can also contact the UTMB Student Ombudsman in Student Services and/or use the UTMB Professionalism Button.
Health Insurance Requirement

Policy

- Health insurance coverage is mandated for all UTMB students. Failure to maintain health insurance coverage may result in cancellation of registration.

- Each semester, students are automatically enrolled in the UT Student Health Insurance plan (AcademicBlue) at the time of registration. Students with comparable health insurance can complete a waiver form on the AHP website. Students who do not submit this form or do not have comparable coverage will be billed for the UT plan after the census date.

- Additional information regarding the UT Student Health Insurance Plan and the waiver submission dates are available on the Enrollment Services website.

- Please refer to IHOP Policy 7.1.29 – Student Health Insurance for details.
Immunization Requirements

Submission of Documentation
• Evidence of immunizations required by UTMB must be submitted to CastleBranch for verification and processing prior to enrollment for all students.
• Current immunization requirements are located on the Student Health website. Some clinical institutions may require additional immunizations or titers.

Meningococcal (Bacterial Meningitis)
• One dose is required within five years of the first class day and at least 10 days before the first class day. Students are exempt if they are 22 or older the first day of their first semester.
• Exemptions can be granted for medical and conscience reasons. For medical reasons, documentation from a physician is required. For conscience or religious reasons, exemption must be on the form from the State of Texas. This can take up to two weeks to obtain this form and it must be received within 90 days from the time it was notarized.

Tetanus Toxoid, Reduced Diphtheria Toxoid and Accellular Pertussis (Tdap)
• All students must have one dose of Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis), then a Tetanus/Diphtheria (Td) booster every 10 years thereafter.

Measles (Rubella or red measles)
Rubella (German measles)
• Students born in or after 1957, must have either documentation of two doses of measles or two doses of MMR vaccine (separated by at least 30 days) after 12 months of age OR a titer result adequate to indicate immunity. For students born before 1957, one dose is required OR a titer result adequate to indicate immunity.
• Required for all students. Students must have either documentation of one dose of rubella or MMR vaccine after 12 months of age OR a titer result adequate to indicate immunity.
• NOTE: Some clinical sites are only accepting titer results. If students have the vaccine and titer, please provide both results.

Mumps
• Students born in or after 1957, must have either documentation of two doses of mumps or MMR vaccine after 12 months of age OR a titer result adequate to indicate immunity. For students born before 1957, one dose is required OR a titer result adequate to indicate immunity.

Varicella (Chickenpox)
• If students know they have had chickenpox disease, they must have proof of a positive Varicella titer to confirm disease OR have proof of two Varicella vaccine immunizations. Some clinical sites are now taking the proof of two immunizations or a titer result. Baccalaureate students send their titer results to Student Health. All students submit their titers through CastleBranch prior to enrollment.
Immunization Requirements (Continued)

Hepatitis B
• Documentation of a three dose series of hepatitis B vaccine and a positive hepatitis B antibody titer must be submitted to CastleBranch prior to enrollment.

TB Testing
• Documentation of annual TB testing is a requirement of clinical agencies. Students who do not have a valid TB test on file will be prohibited from attending clinical activities. Students must have a skin test and reading within six months of enrollment. TB skin tests are also required on an annual basis while enrolled. Student Health provides the TB skin test for a small fee. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure current information.
• If students have a history of a positive PPD, they must provide documentation of the date of the positive PPD and a negative chest x-ray (CXR) taken after the date of the reported positive PPD.

Note: Some clinical sites are requiring a CXR every year after a positive PPD reading. Students are responsible for the cost of the CXR.

Prior to Clinical Courses
• All immunization requirements must be met to proceed in a clinical course. Verification of immunizations is required prior to beginning the semester. Therefore if immunizations are due to expire during the next semester, they should be updated prior to the beginning of that semester.
• Students who are not in compliance with the above policy will not be permitted to participate in clinical activities and will receive a failing grade in the course.
Lobby Use and Postings in the SHP/SON Building

Reserving the Lobby
- To use the lobby for student organized activities, students must submit an email or written request to Student Life for approval. A staff member will reserve the lobby once approval is obtained.

Selling of Food
- In keeping with UTMB’s food service contract, food sale functions are limited and must be approved by Student Life.

Approval for Postings
- Bulletin boards are located throughout the SON/SHP building.
- Everything that is posted to any bulletin board or other location in the building must be approved, initialed, and dated by an employee in the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs (Room 2.208) who will review this policy for posting notices in the building with the person requesting permission.
- Any notice without proper visible authorization or inappropriate placement will be removed and discarded.

Placement of Flyers
- All flyers, notices, etc. must be placed on one of the bulletin boards provided on each floor of the building. Student Affairs staff will suggest a proper location for the poster.
- Flyers are not to be placed on the walls or door glass.
- With approval from Student Life, information can also be posted in Levin Hall North and South, Marvin Graves, Mary Moody Northen, Clinical Science Auditorium, and the Jamail Student Center.

Time Limits for Postings
- Flyers and notices may not be displayed for more than two weeks without special approval from SON Office of Admissions and Student Affairs as noted in the authorization.

No Postings on Entry/Exit Doors
- Under no circumstances are notices of any kind to be placed on the entry/exit doors to the building.

Scotch Tape
- Under no circumstances is scotch tape to be used for posting notices and posters anywhere.

Posters
- Posters may be approved for display on bulletin boards only.
Lobby Use and Postings in the SHP/SON Building (Continued)

Use of Floor Easels
• Floor easels may be used, but only with appropriate placement location provided by the Office of Admissions and Student Affairs. There are safety, security, and building codes for all buildings on the UTMB campus that all employees and students must follow.

Timely Removal of Postings
• It is the responsibility of the person placing the notices on the boards to also remove them.
NCLEX Preparation – Traditional BSN Students

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for UTMB SON initial licensure students.

NCLEX
• In order to be licensed to practice as a registered nurse, students must pass the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN). Students are expected to participate in review learning activities and progress through increasingly complex, computer-based learning and testing modules associated with each major clinical course of the baccalaureate program.

Requirement for Graduation and Certification for NCLEX
• All pre-licensure undergraduate nursing students are required to successfully complete NURS 4101 (1 credit) during the last semester as part of the Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree requirements. This course provides students with opportunities to synthesize theory, content, and practice using a formal exit assessment examination. It is expected that successful completion of this course will prepare the student for the NCLEX licensure exam.
Online Student Evaluations of SON Courses

Philosophy / Purpose
• Student feedback regarding learning is a necessary component of the SON’s quality improvement program. Students have a responsibility to participate in improving the educational process.
• The purpose of establishing a student course evaluation policy with guidelines is to provide a format for collecting student input regarding content and methods of instruction for each course taught at the SON. The evaluation data will be collected through online access to computerized evaluation forms.

Notification
• The Associate Dean for the appropriate academic program or designee and faculty will send an email notice once a semester to all students reminding them of the importance of their responsibility to evaluate courses.
• Faculty may provide reminders to encourage student participation.

Requirements
• Students are required to provide feedback for each course taken through the online evaluation process as a component of the educational quality improvement process.
• To ensure valid data, a minimum of 80% of all students enrolled in a course will need to complete the course evaluation.
• The percentage of evaluation submissions will be reported by the SON Office for Education Technology MML staff to faculty throughout the evaluation period.
• Final grades will not be released in Blackboard until 80% of the class enrollment has submitted the course evaluation.
• Courses that end before the end of the semester should complete the evaluation process within the calendar dates for the course.

Evaluation Completion Process
• Faculty and the Office for Education Technology support staff will be responsible for ensuring evaluation tools are developed and placed online. Students will be able to access the course evaluations through a link in Blackboard for the courses in which they are enrolled.
• Online course evaluations will be available to students at least three weeks prior to the completion of the semester.

Management of Information
• All course evaluation submissions will be private and confidential and will not be released to any individual other than as necessary to compile the evaluation data. No faculty member will have access to an individual’s course evaluation.
• Course faculty will receive anonymous and confidential computer generated summary reports only.
• Designated Office for Education Technology staff will manage all evaluations. The data will be managed electronically and all identifying information will be removed from the student responses by the electronic database. The only information that will be able to be linked with a student is whether or not the course evaluation was submitted.
Confidentiality of Information

- All evaluation data is confidential and anonymous as all identifying information is separated from the evaluation data and placed in a separate table. Faculty does not have access to the raw data, or any evaluation data until after the course is completed. After the completion of the course, faculty has access only to a computer generated summary report of the evaluation. The Online Evaluation system is operated and maintained by UTMB Academic Resources, Information Services and the SON Office for Education Technology.

Information Shared

- Course Coordinators, Program Directors, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and SON Administration will receive the course evaluation analysis and comments after all grades have been sent to the Registrar’s office.


Parking

Goal
• To provide low cost parking to all students.

Traditional BSN Students
• Refer to the Parking Facilities website for details regarding parking options.

Online Students
• Online students may park in Garage 2 on Harborside Drive near the Emergency Room. If other parking space becomes available, faculty will post information on Blackboard.

Definition of Online Status
• SON online students (undergraduate and graduate) who are enrolled in online courses only and who have official business on campus either occasionally during a semester (semester average of one day per week) or for several continuous days during a semester.

Dormitory and UTMB Apartment Parking
• Refer to the Auxiliary Enterprises website for details
Professionalism

UTMB Honor Pledge
• Students recite and sign the pledge at orientation.

_On my honor, as a member of the UTMB community, I pledge to act with integrity, compassion and respect in all my academic and professional endeavors._

UTMB Professionalism Charter
• Every student receives a copy of the UTMB Professionalism Charter during orientation. The following professional commitments apply to each member of the UTMB community: culture of trust, diversity, competence and growth, confidentiality, honesty, responsible use of resources, value, appropriate relations, manage conflicts of interest, and appropriate discovery and use of knowledge.

The Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony for Nursing Oath
• The following oath is recited by Traditional BSN students at the Gold-AACN White Coat Ceremony.

_As a Nurse dedicated to providing the highest quality care and services, I solemnly pledge that I will:_

• **Consider the welfare of humanity and relief of suffering my primary concerns;**
• **Act in a compassionate and trustworthy manner in all aspects of my care;**
• **Apply my knowledge, experience, and skills to the best of my ability to assure optimal outcomes for my patients;**
• **Exercise sound professional judgment while abiding by legal and ethical requirements;**
• **Accept the lifelong obligation to improve my professional knowledge and competence;**
• **Promote, advocate for, and strive to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.**

_With this pledge, I accept the duties and responsibilities that embody the nursing profession._

_I take this oath voluntarily with the full realization of the responsibility with which I am entrusted by the public._

Texas Nursing Practice Act
• The Nursing Practice Act including Nursing Peer Review & Nurse Licensure Compact outlines the Texas Occupations Code and Rules regulating the practice of Nursing, effective September, 2013. The Act can be found here.

Code of Ethics
• Ethics is the foundation upon which nursing is built. Nursing has a distinguished history of concern for the welfare of the sick, injured and vulnerable. This concern is embodied in the provision of nursing care to individuals and the community. Nursing encompasses the prevention
Professionalism (Continued)

of illness, the alleviation of suffering, and the protection, promotion and restoration of health in the care of individuals, families, groups and communities. Nurses act to change those aspects of social structures that detract from health and well-being. Individuals who become nurses are expected not only to adhere to the ideals and norms of the profession but also to embrace them as part of what it means to be a nurse. The ethical tradition of nursing is self-reflective, enduring, and distinctive. A code of ethics makes explicit the primary goals, values, and obligations of the profession. The ANA Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements is available on the ANA website.

Provisions

- The first three provisions below describe the most fundamental values and commitments of the nurse; the next three address boundaries of duty and loyalty, and the last three address aspects of duties beyond individual patient encounters.
  1. The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of the health problems.
  2. The nurse’s primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group or community.
  3. The nurse promotes, advocates for and strives to protect the health, safety and rights of the patient.
  4. The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse’s obligation to provide optimum patient care.
  5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence and to continue personal and professional growth.
  6. The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining and improving healthcare environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality healthcare and consistent with values of the profession through individual and collective action.
  7. The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.
  8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national, and international efforts to meet health needs.
  9. The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy.

Breeches of Professionalism

- A breech of UTMB professionalism may result in an Early Concern Note and discussion between the student and the Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Affairs regarding appropriate intervention. If further disciplinary actions are required, the procedures are specified in the UTMB Handbook of Operating Procedures in Policy 7.1.3 Student Conduct and Discipline.
Student Governance

Introduction
- UTMB and the School of Nursing offer many opportunities to get involved and demonstrate leadership skills. The School of Nursing highly values student input in determining the curriculum, evaluation, and direction of the school. In addition, nursing student representatives serve on campus-wide committees and assist with developing policy and experiences for students.

SON Student Organizations/Committees
- Academic Mission and Evaluation Committee – engages in continuous quality improvement that promotes excellence in education, research, practice and public service.
- Curriculum Committee – facilitates development, implementation, and evaluation of nursing curricula for all nursing courses.
- Student Ambassadors – utilizes students to provide leadership and assist with recruitment and student affair events.
- Student Nursing Association - all student organization that contributes to the nursing education through programs and activities, and aides in the development of each student’s professional role.
- Peer Mentor Program – assists first-semester baccalaureate students with the transition, challenges, and progress in nursing school.
- Student Advisory Committee – identifies student needs regarding the SON website, Orientation, and other student affairs activities, and makes recommendations.

Campus-Wide Student Organizations
- There are over 70 campus-wide organizations. See the links below:
  - Interprofessional Education and Interprofessional Scholars Program
  - Professionalism Committee
  - Student Government Association
  - Office of Student Life
Student, Professional, and Honor Organizations/Societies

Student Nurses’ Association (SNA)
- Members:
  o All SON students are considered members. Category of membership differs depending on the academic program and active involvement.
- Purposes:
  o Assume responsibility for contributing to nursing education in order to provide for the highest quality of health care.
  o Provide programs representative of fundamental and current professional interest and concerns.
  o Aid in the development of the whole person, his/her professional role, and his/her responsibility for health care of people in all walks of life.

State and National Student Nurses’ Association (TNSA and NSNA)
- The Texas Nursing Students’ Association and the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) mentor the professional development of future registered nurses and facilitates their entrance into the profession by providing educational resources, leadership opportunities, and career guidance.

Student Government Association (SGA)
- The Student Government Association (SGA) responds to the needs of all UTMB students and serves as a voice for students concerns.
- SGA is dedicated to improving students’ academic, social, and cultural environments.
- SGA is an elected body of student representatives from each of the four schools.
- For additional information, visit the SGA website.

UTMB School of Nursing Alumni Association
- The Alumni Association was organized in 1919 to promote the growth and development of the School. Through its efforts, student scholarships are awarded and emergency student loans are available. Also, individual members have established endowments for student scholarships, awards, and peer tutorial services. Upon graduation students are welcomed into the Alumni Association by the President. The Alumni Association also serves as a career network for alumni and provides career mentoring for students.
- All students can join the Alumni Association at a reduced fee.
- For additional information, visit the Alumni Association website.

Texas Nurses Association (TNA)
- The Texas Nurses Association (TNA) is a membership-based association of registered nurses in a variety of professional settings and is headquartered in Austin, TX. TNA is an affiliate of the American Nurses Association (ANA). TNA members are a diverse group of nurses in clinical settings, education, administration, advanced practice, and other professional arenas. As its core mission, TNA seeks to create excellence in nursing by assisting nurses to achieve their full professional potential and career satisfaction. The TNA’s vision is to have “satisfied nurses caring for satisfied patients”. Whether through active involvement, or through the simple support of
dues and endorsements, membership in TNA is vital – to the individual, to nursing, and to the health of Texans.

Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing

- Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) is the only international honor society of nursing and is headquartered in Indianapolis, IN. The Alpha Delta Chapter of Sigma ThetaTau International was chartered at The University of Texas on May 25, 1963.
- There are approximately 405 chapters across the nation on 503 college and university campuses affiliated with schools of nursing accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education or the National League for Nursing. Chapters are located outside the United States in Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, and Taiwan.
- Sigma Theta Tau was founded to:
  - recognize the achievement of scholarship of superior quality
  - recognize the development of leadership qualities
  - foster high professional standards
  - encourage creative work
  - strengthen commitment on the part of individuals to the ideals and purposes of the profession of nursing
- Each year invitations to membership are extended to selected students in either the baccalaureate or master’s program who range meet the criteria established by STTI. Faculty, practicing registered nurses and other nursing professionals in the community who meet specified criteria may also be invited to become members.
- Program meetings of an educational or scientific nature are held on a regular basis.
Transfer of Upper Division/Graduate Course Credits

Rationale
- Any student may request to transfer an upper division course(s) or graduate level course(s) to meet course requirements.

Upper Division/Graduate Credit Only
- Course(s) must be upper division or graduate level and not applied as an admission prerequisite or to meet the Texas Core.

Process for Required Courses: Masters and DNP Students
- Requests for transfer of credit from another university are reviewed after the student has been admitted to the UTMB SON.
- Students must submit a Request for Transfer form requesting to transfer credit from another university. The student should attach a letter that includes:
  - rationale for the request,
  - course title(s) they wish to transfer and the course(s) they wish to replace.
- Students will include copies of transcript, course syllabus, and course description as it appeared in the University Handbook or Bulletin when the student took the course, and a copy of the cover of the Handbook or Bulletin (date must be the same as course date on transcript) in which the course description appeared.
- All paperwork is submitted to the Academic Advisor via email: son.studentforms@utmb.edu. If there are questions, students should contact the appropriate advisor listed on the SON website.
- The Program Director and appropriate course faculty will review the transfer request.
- Students will be notified of the outcome of the request by the Academic Advisor. The approved form will be sent to the Faculty Advisor, Program Director, Admissions Coordinator and Enrollment Services.
- Students’ degree plans will be changed by the Academic Advisor to reflect transfer of credit. Upon request, students may receive a copy of the revised degree plan.

Process for Required Courses: Baccalaureate Students
- After admission to the SON, students must submit a request for transfer form to the BSN Program Director for Junior Students to transfer credit from another university. The student should attach a letter that includes:
  - rationale for the request and
  - course(s) they wish to transfer and the course(s) they wish to replace.
- Requests must include copies of the transcript, course description, course objectives and content outline. Additional information may be requested as needed for the evaluation process.
- The BSN Program Director will review the specified course for transfer.
- The BSN Program Director will approve or disapprove the request for transfer. The appropriate transfer request form will be completed and forwarded to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Program and Education Technology for signature.
- The Associate Dean will forward the request to the Academic Advisor, who will process and forward the request to the Registrar and Office of Admissions and Student Affairs.
Transfer of Upper Division/Graduate Course Credits (Continued)

- The student and Faculty Advisor will be notified by email of the final outcome.
Tuition and Fees Payments

Policy
- Policies governing the payment and refunding of tuition, fees, and other charges are approved by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System and comply with applicable state statutes.
- Tuition and fees are subject to change by legislative or Board of Regents action and may become effective without prior notice.
- The Texas Legislature does not set the specific amount for any particular incidental student fee.
- The student fees assessed are authorized by state statute; however, the specific fee amounts and the determination to increase fees are made by UTMB administration and The University of Texas System Board of Regents.
- Clarification of matters relating to payment or refund of charges should be obtained from the Office of Enrollment Services.

Assessment of Tuition and Fees
- Students are assessed tuition and fees each semester when course registration is complete.
- Tuition and fees are payable by the announced deadline, which is the last business day prior to the first day of class unless arrangements for installment payments have been completed.
- The registration of a student who fails to pay tuition and fees by the required deadline may be cancelled by the University Registrar.

Payment Options
Payment options available to students are:
- Full payment of tuition and fees in advance of the beginning of the semester.
- Payment according to the provisions of an approved installment payment option.
  - Payment of one-third of the tuition and fees is due in advance of the beginning of the semester, one-third is due prior to the start of the sixth class week, and the final one-third payment is due before the beginning of the 11th class week.
  - Payment of tuition and fees by the deferred payment plan requires completion of the appropriate deferred payment plan option forms available online in MyStar.
  - There is a nonrefundable $15 charge for the deferred payment plan.
  - A student electing the installment payment plan is responsible for all fees due for the period of registration and for all calendar deadline dates relating to refunds, schedule changes, withdrawals, late fee charges, and other relating costs.
  - A student who fails to make payment of tuition and fees by the due date may be prohibited from registering for classes until full payment is made.
  - Certain costs may not be deferred under the installment plan. Student liability insurance must be paid in full at the time of registration.
  - Installment plans must be finalized with Financial Aid by the census date, which is the 12th class day.
Tuition and Fees Payments (Continued)

Refunds

- A student officially withdrawing from school during a term that is 10 or more weeks in duration is entitled to a refund of tuition and certain fees according to the following schedule:
  - Prior to the first class day - 100%, less $15 registration processing fee
  - During the first five class days of the term - 80%
  - During second five class days of the term - 70%
  - During third five class days of the term - 50%
  - During fourth five class days of the term - 25%
  - After the 20th class day – None

- A student who drops a course prior to the census day of a semester or fourth class day for a six-week summer term but who remains enrolled for other courses during that semester or term is eligible for a 100 percent refund of tuition and fees for the course dropped.

- Refunds of tuition and fees paid by a sponsor, donor, financial aid, or scholarship are refunded to the source rather than directly to the student who has withdrawn if the funds were made available through the sponsor.

Additional Information

- Refer to the Enrollment Services Tuition and Fees web page.
Tutoring

Audience
• The information in this policy is intended for all UTMB SON BSN students.

Selection of BSN Tutors
• Tutors must be recommended by faculty and the Academic Counselor.
• Final approval is granted by the Program Director.

Training of BSN Tutors
• Prior to conducting sessions, the selected tutors must participate in orientation provided by the Academic Counselor.

Group Sessions for BSN Students
• Scheduled group tutoring sessions are open to all students.
• These group sessions are free to participants. Any student who schedules a tutoring session then fails to cancel that session 48 hours prior to the session will be assessed a $25 fee.
• Students must submit written justification via email to the Academic Counselor after the deadline to avoid fines.

Notification of Group BSN Sessions
• Dates and times for sessions are distributed via Blackboard or through an announcement within the respective course.

Individual Sessions for Online Students
• Online students can contact the Academic Counselor to schedule an individual study skills conference on Skype, phone or in person.
• Students may be asked to provide inventories and supplementary documents via email prior to their conference.
Volunteer Opportunities

Purpose
- During enrollment in SON programs, students are provided opportunities for professional development as leaders and team members.

Distribution of Information
- Students will be notified on Facebook and/or Blackboard and/or email when opportunities are available. Faculty may also present opportunities during class.

Selection
- Students must be in good academic standing to participate in these opportunities.
- Full time and part time students are eligible.
- Announcements will indicate if the available position is voluntary, appointed, or elected.

School of Nursing Committees/Task Forces
- Several standing SON Faculty Assembly committees request student participation (i.e. Curriculum Committee and Academic Mission & Evaluation Committee).
- Task Forces are formed to address specific issues and are usually short-term rather than continuous (i.e. Office of Admissions & Student Affairs Advisory Committee).

University Committees/ Volunteer Opportunities
- The Student Life Office receives requests to identify students to participate in various University committees (i.e. Professionalism Charter Committee, ADA Essential Functions Committee).
- UTMB Professional Committee has two representatives from each school sit on their Committee.

SON Ambassadors
- Students may apply to become SON Ambassadors. These individuals provide volunteer services to the School of Nursing in a variety of ways (i.e. assistance with Open House, Orientation, and Commencement).

Student Nurses’ Association (SNA)
- SNA offers the following elected positions:
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Secretary
  - Treasurer
  - Committees – Academic Events, Bylaws, Community Service, Fundraising, Historian, Public Relations, and Social Events
Volunteer Opportunities (Continued)

SON Student Groups
- Butterfly Project
- Critical Care Student Nurses
- Kid’s Club
- Peer Mentor Program for Traditional BSN Students
  - This group provides opportunities each semester for current BSN students to mentor newly admitted students during their first semester to help them acclimate quickly to the SON. Two student Mentor Coordinators manage the mentor process.
- Tiny Toes

Student Government Association (SGA)
- SGA offers the following opportunities:
  - SON Senators
  - Committees (i.e. Budget, Parking, Honor Pledge)
  - Task Forces may be formed at the discretion of the SGA Board.
- For more information, visit the SGA website.

UTMB Health Patient Safety Volunteer Program
- The UTMB Health hospital uses SON students that have completed their vital signs training to assist patients that have potential safety issues, such as potential falls. Students commit for one semester and gain experience working one-on-one with patients.
Institutional Handbook of Operating (IHOP) Procedures

Section 7: Student Policies

Policy 7.1.0  Student Health Governance Board
Policy 7.1.1  Students with Disabilities
Policy 7.1.2  UTMB Student Fee Advisory Committee
Policy 7.1.3  Student Conduct and Discipline
Policy 7.1.4  Student Travel Policy
Policy 7.1.5  Intellectual Property and the Office of Technology Transfer
Policy 7.1.8  Student Release During Adverse Environmental Conditions
Policy 7.1.10  Student Accident & Injury Reporting
Policy 7.1.11  Student Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault
Policy 7.1.12  Consensual Relationships
Policy 7.1.22  SON – Academic Appeal: Grading and Evaluation
Policy 7.1.23  SON – Academic Dismissal Appeal Procedures
Policy 7.1.24  Tax-free Sales by Registered Student Organizations
Policy 7.1.25  Student Immunization Requirements
Policy 7.1.26  Student Drug Testing
Policy 7.1.29  UTMB Student Health Insurance Policy
Policy 7.1.30  Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
Policy 7.1.31  Required Training for UTMB Workforce and UTMB Students

Student Related Policies:

Policy 2.19.7  Use of Social Media
Policy 3.2.1  Nondiscrimination, Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action
Policy 3.2.2  Americans with Disabilities Act Policy
Policy 3.5.5  Training and Development
Policy 3.7.6  Tobacco Free Policy
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