

# Practical Nursing Program Handbook



## 2025-2026

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<https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/Boards/Nursing/>

Dear nursing student,

Welcome to the 2025-2026 school year at Valley Career and Technical Center!

We are glad you've chosen to pursue your nursing education with us. Nursing is more than a career decision, it is a commitment to serve others with compassion, knowledge, critical thinking, and strong ethical values. Throughout the program, you'll have many opportunities to develop and sharpen these attributes as you grow into the role of a professional nurse.

Our program is designed to prepare you to become competent, professional, and safe nurses. Nursing school is not easy, but it is incredibly rewarding. Our faculty are here to support, encourage, and guide you every step of the way.

This handbook is a tool to help you find expectations, responsibilities, and policies you'll need to know. Please read it and refer to it when you have questions so you can stay organized and prepared through the program.

You are about to enter one of the most trusted and important professions in the world. We believe in each one of you, and we are excited to watch you grow into the nurse you want to be.

Best wishes for a successful year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Painter'.

Mrs. Tiffany Painter BSN RN  
Practical Nursing Program Director  
Valley Career and Technical Center

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# **Valley Career & Technical Center (VCTC)**

## **VCTC Information**

Valley Career & Technical Center is a top Career and Technical Education Center in our area and one of 9 regional centers in Virginia. VCTC provides high-quality technical education and career preparation to meet the needs of today's high school students and adults. The school serves the public school systems of Augusta County, Staunton, and Waynesboro. Through our Adult and Continuing Education Departments, adult students can take part in various programs from GED preparation to highly technical apprenticeship training. With our campus located in Fishersville, we are conveniently located to serve all of our students.

## **VCTC Mission**

The Mission of Valley Career & Technical Center is to prepare our students to become responsible citizens through the development of career awareness, workforce readiness, and industry-specific job skills.

# **Valley Career & Technical Center Practical Nursing (VCTC PN) Program**

## **VCTC PN Program Mission**

The mission of the Practical Nursing Program at Valley Career & Technical Center is to prepare professional, knowledgeable, and ethical nurses who provide safe, patient-centered care and contribute meaningfully to the healthcare community.

## **VCTC PN Program Philosophy**

The faculty of the Practical Nursing Program at Valley Career & Technical Center believe that nursing is a profession grounded in knowledge, skill, ethics, and compassion. It is a discipline focused on promoting optimal health through meaningful relationships and holistic care.

Our philosophy supports the mission of the nursing program and reflects our beliefs about the individual, the community, the learning process, and the profession itself.

We believe that each student is a unique individual with the potential to become a competent and compassionate nurse. In a supportive and inclusive learning environment, students are challenged to grow through rigorous academic instruction, hands-on lab experiences, and clinical practice.

Our goal is to develop nursing professionals who uphold the values of respect, advocacy, compassion, and accountability. We believe a strong educational foundation is essential in preparing nurses to lead, advocate, and raise the standard of healthcare delivery.

## Program Description

The Practical Nursing program is an 18-month program. While the program is not accredited by a national nursing accreditation body, it is fully approved by the Virginia Board of Nursing.

Classes are held during the day from 8:45-2:45. Students will attend clinicals during the week at various locations and times.

Upon successful completion of the program, students earn a certificate in Practical Nursing and become eligible to apply to the Virginia Board of Nursing to take the licensure exam for Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN).

Qualifications of Applicant for Practical Nurse's License

Per VA54.1-3020:1 VA Regulations of the Board of Nursing

"An applicant for a license to practice as a practical nurse shall furnish evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant:

- 1 Has completed two years of high school or its equivalent;
- 2 Has received a diploma from an approved practical nursing program;
- 3 Has passed a written examination as required by the Board; and 4 Has committed no acts which are grounds for disciplinary action as set forth in this chapter."

## Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, the graduate will be able to:

1. Practice safe, patient centered care using foundational knowledge and skills across the lifespan
2. Demonstrate effective communication to build therapeutic relationships and provide quality care
3. Perform nursing skills competently in clinical and lab settings, following safety guidelines
4. Demonstrate professionalism through ethical behavior, accountability, and respect for diversity
5. Promote health and well-being through education and advocacy

## Program Outcome Goals

1. Maintain full program approval through the Virginia Board of Nursing.
2. Ensure that graduates and first-time NCLEX-PN test takers achieve a pass rate of 80% or higher.
3. Meet or exceed the national average pass rate for first-time NCLEX-PN test takers.
4. Meet or exceed the Virginia state average pass rate for first-time NCLEX-PN test takers.

5. Achieve above-average ratings on graduate surveys regarding preparedness for entry into the nursing workforce.
6. Ensure that graduates who obtain licensure are employed as practical nurses within one year of program completion.

### NCLEX-PN Exam Pass Rates

VCTC Graduate Cohort	Number of Graduates	NCLEX-PN Pass Rate: VCTC PN Program	NCLEX-PN Pass Rate: <b>VA State</b> (First Time Test-Takers)	NCLEX-PN Pass Rate: <b>National</b> (First Time Test-Takers)
2025	8	100%	*96.79 ytd	86.28 ytd
2024	8	100%	*92.74	88.38%
2023	15	100%	*83.13%	86.67%
2022	6	100%	83.06%	79.93%
2021	7	100%	74.77%	79.60%
2020	17	94.12%	79.68%	83.08%
2019	13	100%	84.28%	85.63%

\*calculated NCLEX Pass Rates for the Past 5 Years (Excel Spreadsheets)<https://www.dhp.virginia.gov>

## VCTC School of Practical Nursing Faculty & Staff

Director of Nursing - Tiffany Painter BSN RN  
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Practical Nursing Instructor- Brenda Burns RN  
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Practical Nursing Instructor- Alisha Botkin BSN RN  
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Practical Nursing Instructor/Clinical Coordinator- Anna Ott-Young RN  
[Younga@valleytech.us](mailto:Younga@valleytech.us) 540-245-5002 Ext: 240

Administrative Assistant  
 540-245-5002 Ext: 400

The Virginia Board of Nursing has established strict standards for nursing faculty. All nursing faculty members must hold current unrestricted nursing licenses, have a minimum of two years of direct client care experience, and maintain professional competence through activities such as nursing practice, continuing education programs, conferences, workshops, and academic courses. Faculty must also demonstrate expertise in the subject area they teach in.

# Admissions

## Rolling Admissions Procedure

Valley Career & Technical Center's Practical Nursing Program follows a rolling admissions process. This means applications are reviewed and accepted on an ongoing basis until the application deadline. This approach allows for flexibility in planning and offers applicants the opportunity to secure a seat in the program as soon as they meet eligibility requirements.

- Early application submission is strongly encouraged.
- Seats are offered in the order of completed and qualified applications.
- Incomplete applications will not be reviewed until all required documents are received.

Rolling admission process will open **November 1, 2025** for the class beginning in the fall of 2026. The following components are required during the application process:

- Attendance at one of the mandatory information sessions. (see VCTC PN website for link)
- Completion of the HESI Pre-Admission Assessment. This computerized test is designed to measure basic aptitude in the areas of math, English, and reading comprehension (see VCTC PN website for link). An overall score of 70% is required for consideration.
- Completed VCTC School of Nursing Application (see VCTC PN website for link)
- Current resume
- 3 professional references
- Essay (requirements noted in application)
- Official transcripts documenting one of the following: Applicant is a High School Graduate, GED recipient or has proof of completion of at least 2 years of high school (Code of VA 54.1-3020)
- Fingerprinting and criminal background check. Students are responsible for all fees. This can be completed from 8:00A.M.- 4:00 P.M. at the Personnel Office in Verona - Government Center. Call to make an appointment (540-245-5100).
  - a. Per Virginia Board of Nursing Guidance Document 90-55, completion of the Practical Nursing Program does not guarantee licensure. Criminal convictions may affect a graduate's eligibility for licensure. All applicants must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check as required by Virginia Code §54.1-3005.1."
- Personal interview with nursing faculty

If an applicant is accepted in the program for the 2026-2027 school year, they will have until **May 1, 2026** to return their letter of intent. They will have until **May 8, 2026** to pay a non-refundable deposit of \$500.00. Failure to meet any of the deadlines will forfeit the student's opportunity for admission.

## Tuition

Tuition and fees are reviewed annually and subject to change. The following rates apply to the 2025–2026 school year. VCTC’s Practical Nursing Program does not accept federal financial aid but does accept personal loans, private financial assistance, and scholarships from sources such as employer tuition programs, Virginia Career Works, and the Virginia Department of Health.

All tuition and fees must be paid in full by **August 12, 2025**. Please note that all tuition and fees are non-refundable after this date. Arrangements made with the finance department for payment plan must be completed by **August 1, 2025** for the 25-26 school year. The first-year deposit of \$500.00 is non-refundable at any time.

### **Practical Nursing 1<sup>st</sup> Year Students July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026**

Description	Fee	
	In Region (Augusta County, Staunton & Waynesboro)	Out of Region
Tuition	\$ 5,460.00	\$ 5,733.00
Instructional, Lab & Clinical Fees	\$ 335.00	\$ 330.00
Texts, Online Resources, NCLEX Prep	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00
Liability Insurance	\$ 30.00	\$ 30.00
Drug Screen	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
HOSA Dues	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
NALPN Dues	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 7,025.00</b>	<b>\$ 7,293.00</b>

### **Practical Nursing 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Students July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026**

Description	Fee	
	In Region (Augusta County, Staunton & Waynesboro)	Out of Region
Tuition	\$ 4,920.00	\$ 5,304.00
Texts, Online Resources, NCLEX Prep	\$ 1,100.00	\$ 1,100.00
Clinical Fees	\$ 60.00	\$ 60.00
Drug Screen	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00
HOSA Dues	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
NALPN Dues	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 6,180.00</b>	<b>\$ 6,564.00</b>

\*Questions may be directed to VCTC’s finance department at 540-245-5002

**Note: Failure to pay tuition and fees by the due date is grounds for dismissal from the program**

## Documents required after acceptance into program

The following are sent to student with acceptance letter

1. Documentation of a recent Dental Examination (within the last year)- **Due first day of class**
2. Documentation of a recent Physical Examination (within the last year)-**Due first day of class**
3. Signed Liability Statement-**Due first day of class**
4. Signed Statement of Understanding regarding the Board of Nursing, licensure in the state of Virginia, and criminal history- **Due first day of class**
5. Statement of Health Insurance Verification or waiver- **Due first day of class**
6. Signed Emergency Treatment form- **Due first day of class**
7. Signed Confidentiality form- **Due first day of class**
8. Documentation of up-to-date vaccinations: **Due first day of class**
  - Two MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) vaccinations OR positive titers for Measles, mumps, and rubella are required
  - Two Varicella vaccinations OR one positive Varicella titer
  - Three Hepatitis B vaccinations according to protocol OR One positive Hep B titer. Note: if titers are equivocal, vaccinations will be required
  - Documentation of Tetanus vaccine within the past 10 years
  - Any Covid-19 Vaccinations & Boosters and **or** completed exemption form.
  - A documented 2-step TB skin test for PN I. Must show dates given and dates read between 48-72 hours
    - Or** TB QuantiFERON Gold (T-Spot) Blood test with negative results
    - Or** chest x-ray within the last 5 years.

\*PN II students must provide a TB questionnaire completed by your provider. **Due August 8**

9. Yearly Influenza Vaccines or exemption form are required for both PN I & PN II. **Due November 1**

**Note:** All medical exemptions for vaccines require documentation from the student's healthcare provider. Students are not guaranteed access to clinical facilities if they are not in full compliance with VCTC vaccination requirements, even with medical exemption documentation from a physician. Inability to attend clinical experiences for this reason could impact the student's ability to successfully meet clinical objectives and/or meet the minimum clinical hour requirements established by the Va. Board of Nursing in order for a student to be eligible for graduation from the program as well as licensure eligibility.

10. American Heart Association BLS Healthcare provider or American Red Cross BLS for Healthcare provider CPR certification obtained prior to the first day of class and kept current throughout the program. Note: It is your responsibility to ensure this card remains current for the entire length of the program.

**Note:** if all of the previously mentioned admission requirements are not met by the stated deadlines, disciplinary action will be taken and the student may not be allowed to continue in the program.

## Readmission After Withdrawal from the Practical Nursing Program

### **Withdrawal During Practical Nursing I (PN I)**

Students who voluntarily withdrew from the program during PN I and wish to be considered for readmission to a future cohort **within two years of their last enrollment** must submit the following:

- A new application for admission
- One professional reference
- A current criminal background check (per program policy)
- A typed statement outlining a plan for academic and clinical success
- Up-to-date PPD (tuberculosis screening), tetanus, and all required immunizations
- A current BLS (Basic Life Support) CPR certification card
- A newly signed student handbook acknowledgment form

**Note:** If more than two years have passed since the student's withdrawal, they must follow the full admissions process as a new applicant.

### **Withdrawal During Practical Nursing II (PN II)**

Readmission into PN II is a two-step process and is evaluated on an individual basis:

Step 1- Initial Review:

To be considered for readmission into PN II, the student must:

- Submit a current and complete application form
- Provide a current criminal background check
- Apply within two years of withdrawal
- Have successfully completed all components of PN I (including a minimum average of 80% in each course)
- Obtain a favorable faculty recommendation

## Step 2- Skills Competency Evaluation:

Upon preliminary approval, the student must successfully complete a comprehensive skills demonstration in the lab. This exam will be scheduled 4 to 6 weeks prior to the start of PN II.

If the student does not demonstrate adequate proficiency, direct re-entry into PN II will be denied. The student may be required to re-enter the program at PN I level.

## Essential Functions and Standards of the Licensed Practical Nurse

In order to complete both the classroom and clinical components of the Practical Nursing Program, students must demonstrate the ability—either independently or with *reasonable* accommodations—to meet the essential duties and performance standards required of a practical nurse. The following are the essential performance standards:

- Critical thinking- the ability to effectively apply clinical reasoning and judgement consistent with the objectives of the program often under pressure related time constraints and in an environment with a high level of distractions.
- Professional relationships- the ability to demonstrate sufficient interpersonal skills for application in appropriate professional interactions with a diverse population of individuals, families and groups.
- Communication- the ability to communicate professionally in a variety of verbal and written expressions.
- Mobility- Physical abilities sufficient for movement from room to room in small spaces and the ability to provide safe physical support and stability to client/patient in a variety of situations.
- Motor Skills- Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care.
- Hearing- Auditory ability sufficient for monitoring and assessing health needs.  
Vision- Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for patient care.
- Tactile Sense- Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment.

Reference: National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (1996). Validation study: Functional abilities essential for nursing practice. National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc.

Southern Regional Education Board. (n.d.). Americans with Disabilities Act.

<https://www.sreb.org/publication/americans-disabilities-act>

## Accommodations

Once accepted into the program, requests for accommodations for testing should be directed to the Nursing Program Director or Shenandoah Valley Center for Advanced Learning's director at least 1 month prior to the beginning of the school year in which the student has applied and must include the following:

1. A letter of request from the student that specifies the accommodations being requested.
2. A written report of an evaluation (educational, psychological or physical) within the preceding two years from a qualified professional which states a diagnosis of the disability, describes the disability and recommends specific accommodations.
  - This *evaluation* should include a professionally recognized diagnosis of the disability and identification of the standardized and professionally recognized tests/assessments given.
  - If the evaluation was completed more than two years prior to this request, a physician or psychologist must provide a summary stating why current testing is not needed (ex. the disability does not change over time and new testing would not reveal new information)
  - The scores resulting from testing, interpretation of the scores and evaluations.
  - The recommendation is necessary and appropriate for the diagnosed disability.
  - An accommodation will not be considered reasonable if it creates an alteration to the essential functions required of a practical nurse, even if it is recommended by a testing or treating practitioner.

*Reference- Virginia Board of Nursing Guidance document: 90-22. Requests for Accommodations for NCLEX and NNAAP Testing and Medication Aide Examination for Registration (2019)*

# Program Structure

## Calendar

The Practical Nursing program is an 18-month program that begins in August of each year. The program closely follows the approved calendar for Augusta County Public Schools. Variations may occur to accommodate clinical experience schedules and to complete required program hours. Days designated as “teacher workdays” are likely to be clinical days for students and staff. Reliable childcare for parents in the program is imperative.

### 2025-2026 SCHOOL CALENDAR

#### AUGUSTA COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

18 Government Center Lane, PO Box 960, Verona, VA 24482  
Phone: 540-245-5100 / Fax: 540-245-5115

**APPROVED**  
3/20/25

JULY 2025						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
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AUGUST 2025						
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SEPTEMBER 2025						
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OCTOBER 2025						
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NOVEMBER 2025						
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DECEMBER 2025						
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30	31					

**STUDENT CALENDAR**

July 22: Fee Collection begins

**August 6: FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**

September 1: Labor Day: No School for Students  
September 15: No School for Students

October 8: End of 1st Grading Period  
October 13: No School for Students/Opt. Parent Conference Day  
October 15: Report Cards Distributed to Students

November 3: No School for Students  
November 4: No School for Students  
November 26-28: Thanksgiving: No School for Students

December 12: Last School Day of First Semester  
December 22 - January 2: Winter Break: No School for Students.

January 5: No School for Students  
January 6: No School for Students  
January 7: First Day of Second Semester for All Students  
January 9: Report Cards Distributed to Students  
January 12: Holiday: No School for Students

February 16: No School for Students

March 3: No School for Students  
March 13: End of 3rd Grading Period  
March 20: Report Cards Distributed to Students  
March 30 - April 3: Spring Break: No School for Students

April 20: No school for students

**May 21: LAST DAY OF SCHOOL: 1:00 PM Dismissal**  
End of 4th Grading Period

First Semester will end on January 6. Last Day for Students is December 18.  
Second Semester will begin on January 7

JANUARY 2026						
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FEBRUARY 2026						
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MARCH 2026						
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APRIL 2026						
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MAY 2026						
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JUNE 2026						
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30	31					

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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

## Terms and Schedules

The Practical Nursing Program has four terms that take place in two consecutive school years. Students in the first two terms are Practical Nursing I students. Students in the second two terms are Practical Nursing II students.

### 2025- 2026 Practical Nursing I Schedule

- **Term 1:** July 31, 2025 - December 19, 2025 (4.5 months)
- **Term 2:** January 5, 2025 - June 26, 2026 (5.5 months)

#### **Class Schedule:**

Weekly: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday  
From 8:45 AM - 2:45 PM

#### **Clinical Schedule:**

One rotation in the fall and one in the spring  
Dates vary with clinical sites availability

### 2024 - 2025 Practical Nursing II Schedule

- **Term 3:** July 31, 2025 - December 19, 2025 (4.5 months)
- **Term 4:** January 5, 2026 - April 17, 2026 (3.5 months)

#### **Class Schedule:**

Weekly: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday\*

\*Please note: Days of the week may vary with each course

Class from 8:45 AM - 2:45 PM

#### **Clinical Schedule:**

Varies Per Course- Calendars will be provided for each course.

# Curriculum 2025-2026

## PN 1 Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Didactic Hours (Classroom)	Skills Lab Hours	Direct Care Clinical Hours	Total Clinical Hours	Total Course Hours
PN 101	Nursing Foundations	150	0	0	0	150
PN 102	Adult Health Nursing (Pharmacology included)	320	0	0	0	320
PN 103	Basic Care Skills	16	66	40	40	122
PN 203	Nursing Care Skills (Pharmacology included)	36	54	40	40	130
PN 205	Mental Health Nursing (Pharmacology included)	58	0	48	48	106
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5 Credits</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>828</b>

## PN 2 Courses

Course Number	Course Name	Didactic Hours (Classroom)	Skills Lab Hours	Direct Care Clinical Hours	Total Clinical Hours	Total Course Hours
PN 300	Adult Health Practicum	0	0	114	114	114
PN 301	Maternity / OB /Newborn Nursing (Pharmacology included)	80	4	32	32	116
PN 302	Pediatric Nursing (Pharmacology included)	60	0	32	32	92
PN 304	Adult Health Nursing 2 (Pharmacology included)	205	0	128	128	333
PN 401	Leadership	48	0	64	64	112
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5 Credits</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>767</b>

In order to progress through the program, students must successfully complete each individual course with an 80% or higher. This includes skills-based and clinical courses.

## Course Descriptions

### **PN 101-Nursing Foundations**

This course introduces the foundational principles of practical nursing. Students will explore evidence-based content including the role of the licensed practical nurse, the evolution of nursing, current healthcare trends, and legal and ethical considerations. The curriculum will incorporate licensure, employment, and professional responsibilities in contemporary practice. Additionally, the course introduces concepts of human growth and development across the lifespan, including biological, cognitive, and social processes, with emphasis on health promotion and illness prevention. This is the first course of the PN I year and is a prerequisite for PN 102.

Credit: 1

### **PN 102- Adult Health Nursing 1**

This course builds upon foundational nursing concepts by integrating a systematic approach to the study of adult health. Evidence-based content includes anatomy and physiology, nutrition, and an introduction to pharmacology as they relate to specific disease processes affecting adults. Students will examine the signs and symptoms of acute and chronic illnesses, diagnostic methods, preventative health strategies, and common treatment modalities, using appropriate nursing interventions. This course follows PN 101 and is a prerequisite for PN 205.

Credit: 1

### **PN 103- Basic Care Skills**

This course provides guided learning experiences to develop foundational nursing skills and procedures. Emphasis is placed on building the technical competencies necessary for entry into the clinical setting. Students will apply theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments. The course includes 40 hours of direct patient care. Successful completion of the skills lab component is required before progressing to the clinical care phase. This course is taken concurrently with PN 101/102 and is a prerequisite for PN 203.

Credit: 1

### **PN 203- Nursing Care Skills**

This course provides guided learning experiences designed to develop advanced nursing skills and procedures, with emphasis on technical competencies necessary for safe and effective clinical practice. Instruction includes medication administration and other essential clinical techniques. Students will integrate knowledge and skills through classroom instruction, laboratory practice, and clinical application. The course includes 40 hours of direct patient care. Successful completion of the skills lab component is required prior to participation in the clinical care portion. This course is taken concurrently with PN 102.

Credit: 1

**PN 205- Mental Health**

This course provides a foundational understanding of mental health and mental illness within the scope of practical nursing. Emphasis is placed on applying the nursing process to care for individuals with common psychiatric disorders and mental health needs. Students will explore psychosocial theories and their application in nursing care for individuals experiencing disruptions in psychological and social functioning. The course also familiarizes students with community resources that support individuals with mental illness and their families. This course follows PN 102.

Credit: 1

**PN 304- Adult Health Nursing 2**

This course provides practical nursing students with evidence-based didactic content and supervised clinical experiences in medical-surgical nursing and long-term care, pharmacology and medication administration encompassing the attainment and maintenance of physical health and the prevention of illness in the adult medical-surgical and older adult population. This is the first course of PN 2.

Credit: 1

**PN 300 – Adult Health Practicum**

Direct care clinical experiences provide nursing students with the opportunity to apply nursing skills in real-world healthcare settings under the supervision of qualified faculty. These experiences are conducted in accordance with written agreements between the school and clinical facilities, as required by the Virginia Board of Nursing. Students will deliver care to adult patients under the guidance of clinical instructors and facility nursing staff. Each student is expected to be responsible and accountable for the safe and competent performance of all assigned direct patient care tasks. This course is taken concurrently with PN 304.

Credit: 1

**PN 301 – Maternity/OB/Newborn Nursing**

This course introduces principles of growth and development within the context of maternal-newborn nursing. Emphasis is placed on fetal development, health promotion, disease prevention, and care during the antepartum, intrapartum, and postpartum periods, including complications of pregnancy and newborn care. Community resources will be identified and discussed. Evidence-based didactic content and supervised clinical experiences in maternal and newborn nursing will encompass the attainment and maintenance of physical and mental health and the prevention of illness in this population. This course follows PN 304.

Credit: 1

### **PN 302 – Pediatric Nursing**

This course is designed to teach principles of nursing care for children from infancy through adolescence. This course emphasizes the unique physiological, psychological, and developmental needs of pediatric patients and integrates family-centered care principles. Students will learn ways to promote normal growth and development, apply foundational nursing care, and use the nursing process to care for pediatric clients with acute and chronic illnesses. Evidence-based didactic content and supervised clinical experiences in pediatric nursing will encompass the attainment and maintenance of physical and mental health and the prevention of illness in this population. This course follows PN 301.

Credit: 1

### **PN 401- Nursing Leadership**

This course is designed to provide the practical nursing student with evidence-based didactic content related to nursing leadership. During the course, various leadership styles are explored and reviewed. Communication skills as well as conflict management skills are reviewed. Ethical and legal responsibilities when caring for clients as well as the responsibilities of an entry level nurse are also discussed. This course will help familiarize the practical nursing student with behavioral expectations and the scope of practice of the new graduate once entering professional practice. This course concludes the PN II year of the program.

Credit: 1

The theoretical portion of the Practical Nursing program is delivered at Valley Career & Technical Center through both classroom instruction and hands-on laboratory practice. To reflect the diverse roles of practical nurses in acute care, long-term care, ambulatory care, and community-based settings, clinical experiences are arranged at a broad range of healthcare facilities within the local and surrounding communities. VCTC's program offers students a rich variety of clinical opportunities that align with current healthcare workforce trends, preparing graduates for a wide array of career paths following licensure.

Students in the VCTC School of Practical Nursing will be provided with the following:

- Evidence-based didactic content and supervised clinical experience in nursing, encompassing the attainment and maintenance of physical and mental health and the prevention of illness for individuals and groups throughout the life cycle and in a variety of acute, nonacute, community based, and long-term care clinical settings and experiences to include adult medical/surgical nursing, geriatric nursing, maternal/infant (obstetrics, gynecology, neonatal) nursing, mental health/psychiatric nursing, nursing fundamentals, and pediatric nursing.
- Concepts of the nursing process that include conducting a focused nursing assessment of the client status that includes decision making about who and when to inform, identifying client needs, planning for episodic nursing care, implementing appropriate

aspects of client care, contributing to data collection and the evaluation of client outcomes, and the appropriate reporting and documentation of collected data and care rendered.

- Concepts of anatomy, physiology, chemistry, microbiology, and the behavioral sciences.
- Concepts of communication, growth and development, nurse-client interpersonal relations, and client education.
- Concepts of ethics and the vocational and legal aspects of nursing.
- Concepts of pharmacology, dosage calculation, medication administration, nutrition, and diet therapy.
- Concepts of client-centered care.
- Respect for cultural differences, values, and preferences.
- Development of management and supervisory skills.
- A minimum of 400 hours of direct client care supervised by qualified faculty.

## Course Delivery Methods & Education Facilities

Courses may be delivered in-person, online, or in a hybrid format. Instruction is student-centered, and faculty use a variety of teaching methods to support diverse learning styles. Active participation is encouraged, as students retain knowledge more effectively when they are engaged in the learning process beyond passive listening and study.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Methods of Instruction:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Interactive lecture &amp; class discussions</li> <li>● Multimedia presentations</li> <li>● Demonstrations</li> <li>● Case studies</li> <li>● Virtual clinical simulations</li> <li>● Games</li> <li>● Self-learning packets</li> <li>● Projects</li> <li>● Low &amp; Medium fidelity lab simulation</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Facilities at VCTC:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two designated classrooms</li> <li>- Large skills lab</li> <li>- Hospital Simulation Room</li> <li>- Dedicated Library Space with current periodicals &amp; computers available</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Plus:</b></p> <p>Variety of Clinical Locations: Acute Care, Long-Term Care, Skilled Care, Urgent Care, Physician's offices and more</p>
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## **Student and Faculty Expectations**

The VCTC PN faculty believes the **students** have the right to expect the following:

1. A positive, respectful, and engaged academic environment inside and outside the classroom
2. To attend classes at regularly scheduled times without undue variations; to have their instructor of record be present during most scheduled lecture periods
3. To receive a syllabus which includes an outline of the course objectives, evaluation criteria, and any other requirements for successful completion of each course during the first week of class meetings and to be clearly informed of any changes made to the syllabus during the semester with reasonable time to adjust to these changes
4. To consult with faculty outside of usual classroom times through regularly scheduled office hours or a mutually convenient appointment
5. To have reasonable time to learn course material prior to the administration of an examination
6. To receive a clear explanation of the faculty's definition and interpretation of academic misconduct within the course
7. To have reasonable access to graded materials for assignments, projects, or exams, to review graded material in a timely fashion, and to have a clear explanation of grading criteria and grade determination
8. To have their letter grade in a class based on their performance and not solely on their performance relative to their classmates

The VCTC PN **faculty** have the right to expect the following of students:

1. That students will take the initiative and responsibility for pursuing learning experiences
2. Accept constructive criticism in a professional and mature manner
3. Give appropriate notice for absences from class and clinical experiences to both the preceptor and faculty member
4. Be on time for all scheduled class and clinical periods
5. Complete and submit all assignments to faculty at the designated times

6. Be responsible for all posted materials in Canvas (the learning management system used by VCTC). Items on Canvas include but are not limited to: course syllabi, assignments, exams.
7. Dress in an appropriate professional manner as set forth in the Professionalism policy for classroom, lab, and clinical facilities.
8. Conduct oneself in a professional manner in the classroom, lab, and at all clinical sites, be courteous to faculty, peers, department staff, patients, and clinical personnel
9. Maintain confidentiality of patient information and HIPAA regulations
10. Comply with health regulations in a timely manner as required by the nursing program or by clinical facilities
11. Use proper channels of communication for concerns, complaints, and grievances as outlined in the Student Handbook
12. Adhere to regulations concerning cell phone/smart watch use
13. Come to class/laboratory/nursing clinical site prepared to participate by reading assigned or pertinent materials, reviewing objectives, and bringing needed supplies including appropriate identification and attire
  - a. If a faculty member/preceptor determines that a student is not prepared to participate fully in any program experience, the faculty member may ask the student to leave or not participate in certain activities.
14. Comply with the clinical policies and procedures as stated in this handbook, clinical syllabi, and clinical objectives

## Attendance

It is the belief of the School of Practical Nursing that attendance is imperative both for success in the nursing program and for success in the workplace. Therefore, the following policies and procedures will be strictly enforced by all nursing faculty:

### General Attendance Policy

- Students may acquire up to **5** attendance **occurrences** in **each** year of the two (school) year nursing program for a grand total of 10 occurrences. This includes all scheduled school days whether in class, virtual meetings, lab, simulation days, or clinical days.
- An excess of 5 occurrences during PN I, may result in the student not being promoted into PN II related to not meeting required content requirements or clinical experience time.

- An excess of 5 occurrences during 2nd year, PN II, may result in an inability to graduate related to not meeting content requirements or clinical experience time.

**Note: An occurrence is defined as an absence of up to 3 consecutive days for any reason.**

**Note:** Occurrences not used in PN I, will not be carried over into PN II.

### Attendance Policy Considerations:

#### **Required Medical Isolations that result in more than 3 consecutive days of absence**

- Will be treated as **1** occurrence as long as the student is able to provide documentation of medical necessity from their healthcare provider within 2 weekdays of their return to class and the student is able to makeup all class work per arrangements with instructor. Extended absences could result in the student's inability to successfully complete the current course(s). Due to limited availability of clinical locations and opportunities, a student who misses clinical experiences due to extended absences, may not be able to successfully complete the course(s) they are currently enrolled in.

#### **Jury Duty:**

- Efforts should be made to be excused from jury duty while enrolled as a student in the nursing program. To assist with your request to be excused, the Director of Nursing can provide you with documentation that can be submitted to the court. In the event that the request for excusal is denied, an absence of 1 to 4 days for jury duty will be treated as **1** occurrence. Extended absences could result in the student's inability to successfully complete the current course(s). Due to limited availability of clinical locations and opportunities, students who miss clinical experiences due to extended absences, may not be able to successfully complete the course(s) they are currently enrolled in.

### **Classroom Tardy Arrivals & Early Departures**

- Each student is required to be seated in class, logged in on-line, or in person at the clinical site ready to begin at the scheduled time.
- If the student anticipates being late, they must email their instructor **and** CALL the Nursing Department at (540) 245-5002 ext. 214 **prior** to the beginning of class. The student should leave a voicemail message if they are unable to reach a nursing faculty member.
- Students are NOT to send messages regarding missed time through classmates to instructors.
- Students are NOT to text instructors regarding missed time.

- Students are NOT to have family members contact nursing faculty regarding missed time unless there are unavoidable, extenuating circumstances such as student hospitalization.
- Tardy arrivals and early departures will result in ½ or 1 occurrence depending on the amount of time missed.
- Leaving during classroom/lab days with the intent of returning to class that same day will result in an occurrence that is equivalent to the tardy arrival and early departure policy. Depending on the amount of time, the leave will result in ½ or 1 occurrence.
- Students are expected to schedule all appointments during times outside of class/clinical times

<b>Tardy Arrival</b> in minutes after start time of class	<b>Early Departure</b> in minutes prior to documented class dismissal time of 2:45:	<b>Resulting Occurrence</b>
1 to 15 minutes	Less than 30 minutes	1/2
Greater than 15 min	Greater than 30 min	1

### No Call/No Show Policy

**No Call/No Show:** Defined as an absence without telephone notification prior to class or clinical time for **each** missed day:

- **1st offense-** Results in a “0” on all missed assignments and student will receive a written warning from the program director.
- **2nd offense-** Immediate Program Dismissal

**No call for tardy greater than 15 minutes for classroom/virtual learning/lab:** "No call tardy" is when a student is late and does not inform the instructor via email and phone call prior to the beginning of class, virtual learning, or lab

- Student will receive a “0” on all assignments that were due at 0845 and all assignments during class time that the student missed. Examples include but not limited to quizzes, presentations, tests
- A family member may contact VCTC staff/instructors in the case of an unavoidable, extenuating circumstance. In the case of an emergency situation, documentation is required.
- Classroom:
  - **1st offense:** all consequences stated above and a written warning with plan for improvement

- **2<sup>nd</sup> offense:** all consequences stated above, written warning with updates to plan for improvement, and essay on professionalism (instructions provided by director at time of offense)
- **3<sup>rd</sup> offense:** immediate dismissal from the program

## Clinical Attendance Policy

If a student **must** miss time during a clinical experience, or scheduled simulation clinical days, the student will:

- **During a *direct care clinical experience with a VCTC nursing instructor*:** the student must **call the clinical instructor** via the cell phone number provided prior to the beginning of the clinical experience. No TEXTING!!
- **During a *precepted clinical experience*:** the student **must call** VCTC’s Clinical Preceptorship Supervisor via the cell phone number provided **and** call the Clinical Site or Preceptor Prior to the scheduled clinical time.
- **During a *scheduled simulation clinical experience*:** the student must call the instructor who will be leading the simulation prior to the scheduled start time.
- **In the event that the appropriate person(s) cannot be reached:** the student must call the nursing department at 540-245-5002, EXT 214 and speak with nursing faculty or leave a voicemail message detailing the circumstances of the time missed.
- **Students who must leave clinical experiences or simulation experiences early:** must notify the appropriate clinical or simulation instructor, preceptor and the VCTC preceptorship supervisor as soon as the student is aware of the need to leave.

NOTE: Students are **NOT** to call Nursing Faculty members before 6:00 a.m. or after 9:00 p.m. Personal cell phone numbers are given to students for communication with nursing/clinical instructors regarding **clinical attendance only**.

*Failure to demonstrate professional boundaries and behavior is subject to disciplinary action.*

<b>Tardy Arrival</b> (in minutes after start time of clinical)	<b>Early Departure</b> (in minutes prior to clinical dismissal time)	<b>Resulting Occurrence</b>
1 to 15 minutes	Less than 30 minutes	1/2
Greater than 15 min	Greater than 30 min	1

Clinical experiences are a vital component of the practical nursing program and are strictly regulated by the Board of Nursing. In order to meet the Virginia Board of Nursing Clinical Experience requirements, the students must adhere to the following clinical attendance policy:

**Clinical time during the individual courses of the practical nursing program:**

- Students must attend **at least 80%** of the *Direct Care Clinical* hours scheduled for each course
- Students must meet **100%** of the stated clinical objectives for each course within the allotted amount of clinical time scheduled. Missed clinical time, even time that does not result in absences greater than 20% of the total allotted clinical time for the course, does not excuse the student from this requirement.
- Students must complete the *simulation hours in lieu of direct care clinicals* **in full** for each course, regardless of absences.

**By the conclusion of the practical nursing program:**

- Per Virginia Board of Nursing Regulation: Students must have successfully completed a minimum of 400 hours of clinical experience. No more than 25% of **total** clinicals experience hours may be in the form of *Simulation in Lieu of Direct Care* clinical hours, **and** no more than 50% of clinicals hours **per course** may be in the form of *Simulation in Lieu of Direct Care* clinical hours.

**No call/No show- clinical**

**No call for tardy greater than 30 minutes for clinical/preceptorship:** "No call tardy" is when a student is late and does not inform the instructor, clinical supervisor, or preceptor via phone call prior to the beginning of a clinical or preceptorship.

- Clinical/preceptorship:
  - **1<sup>st</sup> offense:** student will be sent home and not receive credit for clinical hours, will meet with clinical instructor and director for written warning with plan of improvement
  - **2<sup>nd</sup> offense:** all consequences stated above, written warning with updates to plan for improvement, and essay on professionalism (instructions provided by director at time of offense)
  - **3<sup>rd</sup> offense:** immediate dismissal from the program

# Assessments

## Assignments

All assignments are to be turned in on time, at the beginning of class on the assigned due date. **No late assignments will be accepted.** Failure to turn in assignments on time will result in a “0” for the assignment.

All written work is to be pledged with the following statement:

“On my honor, I am presenting my own work, I have used approved resources only.”

**Absence:** Students are responsible for all missing classwork and assignments due to absence. Students must initiate the conversation with the instructor for a negotiated make up of work. All make-up work/tests will be made up according to the syllabus or instructors’ direction. Failure to complete missing assignments and/or tests by the designated time will result in a grade of zero “0”.

## Testing

The nursing department expects all students to uphold professional integrity. Honesty, responsibility, and accountability are essential to quality nursing care, and students are required to commit to the honor code upon entering the program.

1. All written work is to be pledged with the following statement:  
“On my honor, I am presenting my own work, I have used approved resources only.”
2. Academic dishonesty is NOT TOLERATED. The following guidelines are for your protection:
  - Prior to taking a quiz/test whether online or on paper, students are to clear workspace completely except for one black ink pen and scratch paper given by instructor. Cell phones should not be on tables.
  - During online testing, no other tabs on the computer will be open.
  - During paper testing, students are to write in black ink only, except for math quizzes and or tests when pencil is permissible, there should be no extraneous marks (ex. doodles, scribbles). No credit will be given if answers are illegible.
  - Students should avoid any behaviors during quiz/test taking that could be interpreted as questionable by the instructor.
  - Students are to position themselves as far away from one another as possible.

- If a student makes an error on a quiz/test answer, he/she should mark through the answer with a SINGLE LINE and name initials, and write the correct answer beside it.
- No verbal discussion of any kind will be permitted after the first quiz/test is handed out, and until the last test is collected.
- Behaviors suggestive of looking at another's paper will not be permitted or tolerated.

Note: Any violation, as listed above will be assumed as academic dishonesty and could result in program dismissal.

3. Students should expect that some assessments in the classroom, lab, and clinical setting will have time limitations.

## Grading

Courses must be completed in the order described in the COURSE DESCRIPTION section of this handbook. Students must successfully complete each course with an average of **80% or higher** in order to progress into the subsequent course. Grades are determined by student performance on classroom and clinical assignments, exams, clinical performance, and demonstrations in the skills lab. Each course of study is graded as a single unit.

There will be NO ROUNDING of decimals. The following grading scale will be instituted and followed by all faculty members.

### Grading Scale:

A: 94-100

B: 93-87

C: 86-80

D: 79 and below

Students earn 1 credit for each course they successfully complete. To graduate, they must earn all required credits and meet all clinical requirements. Upon graduation, students will receive a certificate of program completion.

## Graduation

Students who meet all academic, clinical, and skill competency requirements of the VCTC Practical Nursing Program are eligible for graduation. Graduation does not guarantee licensure. As of January 1, 2016, all LPN applicants must complete a fingerprint-based criminal background check (Virginia Code §54.1-3005.1). For licensure details, visit:

[https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing\\_forms.htm](https://www.dhp.virginia.gov/nursing/nursing_forms.htm).

# Professionalism

This program is designed to educate students about nursing and prepare students for the workplace. We consider time spent in the classroom and lab as preparation for workplace readiness.

## Classroom

### **Appearance:**

Students are required to wear **scrubs** to class.

Any tattoos that are deemed inappropriate, offensive, insensitive, suggestive, or lewd must remain covered while in class or lab.

- Examples of potentially offensive body art:
  - Tattoos that portray either positively or negatively a specific religion, race, or gender
  - Tattoos with profanity or controversial phrases
  - Tattoos of political figures or ideologies
  - Tattoos of weapons or threats of physical or emotional harm
  - Tattoos of nudity or sexual innuendos
  - Tattoos that promote drug or alcohol use

### **Behavior:**

Students will be respectful of their peers, instructors, and visitors by demonstrating self-discipline, courtesy, and integrity. The student's behaviors will not cause barriers to the instructor's ability to teach and peers to learn.

Students will attend all classes and arrive on time (see attendance policy)

### **Electronics:**

Laptops need to be brought to class daily charged and ready to use. These devices may be used by students to reference online textbooks, learning management systems, and the internet when an instructor allows. There should not be any online texting, emailing, or internet searching while the instructor is lecturing.

Students must turn off all personal electronic devices and cell phones during class lectures to be respectful of the instructor and peers. There are occasions when an instructor will permit use of cell phones during instructional time. Example: playing review games in class.

- Phones must remain on silent at all times (no sounds, no vibrations)
- Phones may ONLY be used before/after class and during breaks.
- If someone needs to reach you during class hours, please have them call the VCTC office at 540-245-5002 and you will be notified by the classroom paging system.

- If you must take an *emergency* call during class, leave the classroom quickly and quietly

## Skills Lab

### **Appearance:**

Dress and appearance guidelines are equivalent to the clinical dress and appearance guidelines (see next section) with exception of the uniform. The official VCTC uniform scrubs are reserved for clinical experiences.

Required equipment for lab:

stethoscope, bandage scissors, multiple pens with black ink, penlight, watch with second-hand, pocket sized notebook, black permanent marker

### **Behavior:**

Students will be respectful of their peers, instructors and visitors by demonstrating self-discipline, courtesy, and integrity. The student's behaviors will not cause barriers to the instructor's ability to teach and peers to learn.

Students will attend all labs and arrive on time (see attendance policy)

Eating and chewing gum are prohibited in the skills lab

Students will clean up the lab after use and all bed linens will be straightened before students may leave.

### **Electronics:**

No cell phone, laptops, smart watches, or other devices permitted in the lab unless allowed by the instructor for a specific assignment.

## Clinicals

Students are to report to ALL clinical sites well-groomed and dressed professionally. Good hygiene is required at all times, not only to present a professional appearance, but also to practice infection control and safety. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in inability to participate in lab and/or clinical.

### **Appearance:**

VCTC issued scrub tops and student purchased navy-blue scrub bottoms. Uniforms need to be clean, wrinkle free, and scrub bottoms should not touch the floor. Scrub bottoms must be long enough that no skin is exposed.

White or black socks are required. Socks must be long enough to meet or go under the scrub bottom leg opening.

Solid white, gray or navy scrub jackets are permissible. No sweatshirts or hoodies.

Shoes must be solid white, blue, or black nursing shoes *or* solid white, blue, or black athletic shoes made of non-permeable material (no mesh or canvas). Athletic shoes with mesh or holes are NOT permitted. No Crocs or open-toe clogs. They must always be clean.

The student must always wear the VCTC name tag above the waist when in the clinical setting.

All visible tattoos on the face and jaw are to be covered. Any other visible tattoos that could be deemed inappropriate, offensive, insensitive, suggestive, or lewd must be completely covered while in the clinical setting. (see examples of potentially offensive body art in classroom section above)

### **Hygiene/Infection Control:**

Hair is to be of natural color, clean, and neatly groomed; if it is long, it must be secured off neck and out of face. Long hair is hair that touches the shoulders. Beards, mustaches, and sideburns must be trimmed neatly.

Minimal jewelry is to be worn to prevent the spread of infection and to prevent patient or student injury. A watch, wedding band, and ONE pair of small non-dangling earrings are appropriate. No necklaces are not to be worn. Rings and studs in body piercings are not allowed due to infection control. Clear or flesh toned spacers or studs meant to prevent hole closure may be worn.

Nails are to be clean and trimmed short, no longer than 1/8th of an inch beyond the fingertips; no nail polish or artificial nails are permitted. Instructors reserve the right to require students to clean, trim, or file nails if the nails are deemed unsafe or unsanitary

No false eyelashes beyond natural length will be worn.

No strong perfumes or colognes are to be worn due to the potential to cause patients/clients distress including nausea, coughing, sneezing, etc.

### **Required equipment for clinicals:**

Stethoscope, bandage scissors, multiple pens with black ink, penlight, watch with second hand, pocket sized notebook, black permanent marker, Pharmacology drug book, VCTC PN Skills Checklist, official VCTC name badge.

### **Behavior:**

Students will be respectful of their peers, instructors, and clinical staff by demonstrating self-discipline, courtesy, and integrity. The student's behaviors will not cause barriers to the instructor's ability to teach and peers to learn.

Students will be prepared for each clinical experience.

Students will attend all clinicals and arrive on time (see attendance policy)

**Safety:**

Students are expected to administer care safely, and report unusual findings promptly. Notify their preceptor/faculty member if a patient's condition changes significantly or an incident report is filed

Students will not attempt to make a judgment about which they feel unsure. If they lack the theoretical or practical knowledge for an assignment, they should notify their preceptor/clinical instructor immediately

Students will engage only in those skills for which you have gained confidence and are within your scope of practice as dictated by their instructor or preceptor

Students will seek instructions and clarification as often as necessary regarding patient care

Students will seek help from faculty or preceptors for needed skills practice

Because students engage in clinical experiences with diverse and vulnerable populations throughout the program, any violations of VCTC PN program policies and expectations in these settings are treated with the utmost seriousness. Disciplinary action will occur in the event that a student demonstrates unsatisfactory clinical performance. This may be determined by clinical faculty members and/or preceptors. Disciplinary action will also occur for any student receiving ANY Unsatisfactory student evaluation from a staff member, preceptor, and/or nursing instructor.

***Unsatisfactory clinical practice is defined as any act, practice or omission which may directly, indirectly, or potentially cause physiological and/or emotional harm to a client or others in the clinical setting. Unsatisfactory clinical practice also includes unprofessional behavior and non-adherence to policy and procedure of VCTC's current School of Practical Nursing Student Handbook and/or of the clinical agencies.***

**Examples of unsatisfactory or unsafe clinical practice include but are not limited to:**

- Inability to meet or maintain appropriate, professional behaviors
- Failure to incorporate caring behaviors in patient care (ex. meeting basic needs in a timely manner, demonstrating compassion and respect)

- Inability to perform clinical responsibilities within a reasonable time constraint
- Misconduct, including but not limited to, theft, dishonesty, insubordination, unlawful actions, incompetence, drug and/or alcohol use (in class/clinical) and abuse, neglect and/or unsafe clinical practice
- Demonstration of unstable mental, physical or emotional behavior(s) that may affect the safety of the student or others
- Failure to maintain the required level of competency:
  - Inability to adhere to rights of medication administration
  - Demonstrating incompetence during a clinical rotation
  - Failure to maintain patient confidentiality
  - Attempting activities without proper orientation, classroom preparation, or proper assistance or supervision
- Failure to notify appropriate healthcare team members of changes in clients' status or failure to follow verbal/written instructions
- Physical or mental health problems that lead to unsafe clinical practice
- Examples of **unsafe** clinical performance:
  - Violates or threatens the physical safety of the client, e.g., leaves bed in high position, leaves the client in a position unable to reach the call bell
  - Violates or threatens the psychological safety of the client, e.g., does not communicate therapeutically, uses clichés, minimizes client's concerns
  - Violates or threatens the microbiological safety of the client, e.g., fails to practice adequate hand washing, comes to clinicals sick
  - Violates or threatens the chemical safety of the client, e.g., medication errors
  - Inadequately and/or inappropriately uses the nursing process, e.g., makes repeated faulty nursing judgments, and fails to follow instructions/physician's orders
  - Assumes inappropriate independence/dependence in actions or decisions, e.g., fails to seek help when needed, continuously seeks help with tasks already mastered; gives medication, hangs IV solutions, performs invasive procedures without supervision/permission of the instructor
  - Violations with the dress code policy or improper name identification

## ANA Code of Ethics

All students within the VCTC School of Practical Nursing are expected to adhere to the American Nurses Association (ANA) **Code of Ethics** for Nurses. Any VCTC nursing student will be expected to function in accordance with professional standards. The ANA Code of ethics consists of the following nine provisions

(American Nurses Association. (2015). *Code of ethics for nurses*. American Nurses Publishing):

Provision 1 - The nurse practices with compassion and respect for every person's inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes.

Provision 2 - The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3 - The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the patient's rights, health, and safety.

Provision 4 - The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice, makes decisions, and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and provide optimal care.

Provision 5 - The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6 - The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality healthcare.

Provision 7 - In all roles and settings, the nurse advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and nursing and health policy generation.

Provision 8 - The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Provision 9 - The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the profession's integrity, and integrate social justice principles into nursing and health policy.

## Conduct

Students and faculty are to conduct themselves in accordance with accepted standards of good citizenship, honesty, morality, and with proper regard for the rights of others. Lying, cheating, stealing, misrepresentation, bullying, and academic dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, will not be tolerated in the VCTC Practical Nursing Program and can lead to dismissal from the program.

## Definitions of unprofessional and unethical conduct:

### Lying

The act of intentionally providing false or misleading information, whether verbal, written, or electronic, with the intent to deceive others. This includes falsifying documentation related to clinical performance, patient care, or academic work.

### Cheating

Using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids, or assistance in any academic or clinical setting. This includes copying from others during exams, using prohibited resources, or submitting work that is not one's own.

### Stealing

The unauthorized taking or use of property, supplies, equipment, or information belonging to others, the school, clinical sites, patients, or fellow students. This includes physical items as well as intellectual property.

### Misrepresentation

Providing false information or presenting oneself in a deceptive manner, including but not limited to forging signatures, altering records, or falsifying clinical hours, competencies, or credentials.

### Bullying

Any behavior that intimidates, humiliates, threatens, or demeans another individual. This may include verbal abuse, written or online harassment, exclusion, or any conduct that creates a hostile or unsafe learning or clinical environment.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any violation of the principles of academic integrity. This encompasses, but is not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication of data, assisting others in dishonest acts, and any attempt to gain academic advantage through dishonest means.

### Plagiarism

The act of presenting another person's work, ideas, words, or intellectual property as one's own without proper acknowledgment. This includes copying text from sources without citation, submitting someone else's assignments, paraphrasing without credit, or using AI-generated or purchased content without disclosure. Plagiarism is a serious breach of academic and professional integrity.

Note: All students are expected to understand these actions and how to avoid them. Any violations can lead to student dismissal.

## HIPAA

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is a federal law designed to protect the privacy and security of patients' health information (PHI). It establishes national standards for electronic health care transactions and national identifiers for providers, health insurance plans, and employers. PHI includes any information about health status, provision of health care, or payment for health care that can be linked to a specific individual.

Students will encounter various aspects of patient care that involve the handling of PHI. It is imperative that all nursing students understand and adhere to the principles of HIPAA to ensure the privacy and security of patient information. Failure to comply with HIPAA regulations and institutional policies may result in:

- Disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal from the nursing program.
- Civil and/or criminal penalties under federal and state laws.
- Reporting of violations to appropriate licensing boards, potentially affecting your ability to obtain a professional license.

Note: Each student has signed a confidentiality form on admission to the program. Education specifically for HIPAA is provided in the classroom, lab, and clinical settings.

## Social Media and Communication

Students should be aware that each of us have a responsibility to understand the benefits and consequences of participating in social media. Social media is defined as **ANY** web-based and/or mobile platform for which users generate content that creates interactive and highly accessible content, pictures, and dialogue. Photographs, videos, and any other digital media should demonstrate individual professionalism. Faculty and students carry the responsibility of adhering to privacy and confidentiality standards and should be familiar with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). All students have a responsibility to promptly report any identified breach of confidentiality or privacy to a nursing faculty member or program director. Please see the following link regarding Social Media Guidelines for Nurses <https://www.ncsbn.org/347.htm>

Students and faculty will implement professional boundaries with social media. Faculty will not accept "friend" requests on social media platforms from a student prior to graduation.

Students are expected to communicate with instructors through professional channels and should avoid using text messaging for informal or casual communication

Note: Failure to follow the guidelines for social media or any identified breach in confidentiality will result in **automatic program dismissal**.

**Note: Audio or video recording of any classroom or clinical site, instructor, fellow classmates or patients is strictly prohibited.**

### Smoking, Vaping, Chewing, Alcohol

No smoking, vaping, alcoholic beverages, or use of any tobacco is permitted at VCTC or any clinical sites (see drug screening policy). None of these substances should be used while wearing a VCTC student uniform in any location. Students are not allowed to wear the VCTC nursing uniform to any establishment that could be viewed as unacceptable (bars, clubs, etc.). VCTC Practical Nursing students will abide by the drug and alcohol policies for Augusta County Public Schools while on the property of Valley Career and Technical Center.

### Visitors and Family

No children or family members are allowed in the class or clinical academic environment during instructional time.

## **Discipline**

Each nursing instructor reviews academic expectations specific to their course, which are outlined in the syllabus and handbook. In addition, the VCTC Nursing Department upholds standards of professional behavior required for program completion and NCLEX-PN eligibility. Adherence to these policies is mandatory. Violations may result in disciplinary action or dismissal, depending on severity.

### EXAMPLES of Major Offenses of the Nursing Program Policies and Expectations:

- Insubordination to instructors, staff in department, and staff in clinical sites
- Cheating/Plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty
- Attending class or clinical under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs
- Failure to comply with Nursing Program's health policy (immunizations, physical exam, etc.).
- Attempted or actual theft
- Malicious damage to Department of Nursing property

- Violence or threat of violence - physically, verbally, or technology generated to others.
- Inappropriate sexual or disrespectful behavior (verbal, physical, or technologically generated) directed at others
- Failure to comply with standards of care as determined by the hosting clinical agency policies.
- Failure to complete a course with an average of 80% or greater
- Incurring criminal charges obtained after acceptance into the nursing program
- Misrepresenting oneself

### EXAMPLES of Minor Offenses of the Nursing Program Policies and Expectations:

- Violation of dress code
- Tardiness and absences for class or clinical
- Not submitting assignments in a timely fashion
- Loud or disruptive or inappropriate behavior in class or clinical site

\*\*A continual pattern of minor offense behaviors as outlined above can be treated in a similar manner as a major infraction.

### Disciplinary Action Procedure

The VCTC Practical Nursing Program upholds professional and academic standards. Violations may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Consequences will be based on the **nature and severity** of the infraction.

#### **Step 1 – Written Warning**

A written notice is issued for failure to meet conduct standards. It includes a caution that continued misconduct will lead to probation.

A **Plan of Improvement** will be initiated and placed in the student’s departmental file.

#### **Step 2 – Probation**

Probation is a defined period during which the student must meet specific terms outlined in a **Plan of Improvement Contract**. Failure to comply may result in:

- **Suspension:** Temporary removal from all nursing courses. A written request for reinstatement is required and must be approved by the Director of Nursing and two faculty members. Scrubs and name tag must be returned.
- **Dismissal:** Permanent removal from the program. The student will not be considered for readmission. All issued materials must be returned.

## Immediate Suspension or Dismissal

The program reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a student **without prior warning** for serious violations, including but not limited to:

- Failing to demonstrate compassion, respect, or protect patient rights
- Violating patient privacy or HIPAA law
- Engaging in plagiarism
- Demonstrating unsafe or unprofessional behavior
- Crossing professional boundaries
- Acting with gross negligence in medication administration
- Performing invasive procedures without instructor supervision or permission

**Based on the ANA Code of Ethics** dismissal without a written warning, probation, or suspension may occur if the student:

- ⇒ fails to practice compassion and respect for individuals
- ⇒ fails to protect the health, safety, and rights of patients
- ⇒ fails to demonstrate responsibility and accountability for personal actions in any situation/occurrence associated with the VCTC program.
- ⇒ fails to abide by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 Public Law 104-191 (HIPAA) which protects the privacy and identification of clients in a health care organization
- ⇒ engages in acts of plagiarism
- ⇒ fails to demonstrate professional/appropriate boundaries and behavior

\*\* See American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics----

<http://nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Ethics-1/Code-of-Ethics-for-Nurses.html>

### **Note:**

- *Performing any invasive procedure without authorization results in immediate dismissal.*
- *Medication errors due to gross negligence causing harm may result in immediate dismissal.*
- *Repeat violations after a Plan of Improvement has been initiated may result in dismissal.*

## Grievances

VCTC's School of Practical Nursing realizes that misunderstandings and disagreements may arise regarding issues such as academic matters, policies, conditions, and faculty decisions. Decisions regarding grading, probation or dismissal status may be appealed through the departmental grievance policy. **The goal of the Grievance Procedure is to achieve a fair and expeditious resolution of a problem at the lowest authority level.**

**Step 1-** An appointment needs to be made with the faculty directly related to the issue in question to discuss the matter, discuss a possible resolution, or other options that might be available.

**Step 2-** After discussing matters directly with the faculty, a written request can be made to obtain the form in order to formally initiate the grievance procedure. The grievance form for this purpose is available from any nursing faculty.

- The steps for the grievance process are included with the forms. Complete the forms in blue or black ink or type. Clearly state the issue you are grieving and include any supporting documentation. The forms must be completed and returned by the person filing the grievance. A decision regarding the matter will be made within 1 week of the date received. Student will be notified of the results in writing.

**Step 3-** If the student feels that the issue is not resolved, he/she may, within 7 days of notification regarding the results of previous appeal, request in writing a further review. This should be addressed to the Director of Practical Nursing Program at Valley Career and Technical Center (VCTC). (The form to be used is part of the original grievance packet used in step 2.) A decision regarding the matter will be made within 1 week of the date received. Student will be notified of results in writing or will be asked to meet with the Director.

**Step 4-** If still unsatisfied, the student may choose to send for final appeal to the VCTC administration. This must occur within 7 days of the previous notification. It must be in writing utilizing the forms provided and be accompanied by the previous chain of decision. A decision regarding the matter will be made within 1 week of the date received. Student will be notified of final results in writing. Please note, the Practical Nursing Program at VCTC is overseen with guidance from the Virginia Board of Nursing, all regulations in effect, by the program director. The administration at VCTC is a valuable resource and can facilitate a resolution to a grievance however, it is not within the legal scope of any administrator in Augusta County to make decisions regarding admission or dismissal of any nursing student who is enrolled in a Virginia Board of Nursing approved program.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Student Injury or Exposure Occurring at a Clinical Site**

Student injury or accidental exposure to blood, body fluid, or other potentially infectious material that occurs while participating in a scheduled clinical or laboratory experience must be reported immediately to the instructor.

In the event of accidental exposure, the following procedure will be implemented:

- The student, following the clinical agency's policies and procedures, is to report to the local emergency room for treatment, initial testing, and care immediately after the incident. The results will be disseminated to the student according to the clinical agency's policy.
- The cost of any emergency medical care or treatment shall be the responsibility of the student receiving the care or treatment.
- Although it is highly recommended to seek immediate treatment, the student does have the right to refuse treatment and the student will provide written documentation of refusal to be signed by faculty.

### **Drug Screening**

A comprehensive drug screen will be required prior to entry into the clinical phase of the program. The drug screen will be scheduled in cooperation with Augusta Health/Occupational Health and will be completed following their policies and procedures for collection, verification and reporting to VCTC. Any student who tests positive for illegal substances or legal substances without appropriate prescription verification will be subject to automatic dismissal. The nursing faculty reserves the rights to request a random screen of any student who is suspected to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. A positive test for such substances will result in a program dismissal. Students will be responsible for all fees associated with these drug screenings. If a student refuses to comply, this will be considered a refusal to test and will result in a program dismissal.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

VCTC follows Augusta County School policy regarding closings for inclement weather. If Augusta County Public Schools are closed, the VCTC school building is closed and there is no in person class. If ACPS are opening late, PN students are to report as directed by their instructor to class or clinical. These start times may be different than ACPS. WHSV-TV 3 out of Harrisonburg begins reporting at 0530 during crisis situations including bad weather conditions. Other local TV and radio stations also broadcast Augusta County School closing. It should be noted that during school closings related to weather, etc. the school and or parking lot is not open to

students. In the event that you need signatures or faculty advisement, it will be necessary for you to wait until school is reopened.

**Note: There may be times when faculty will conduct clinicals or class regardless of Augusta County Public Schools delay or closure status. Students are expected to have a plan in place to ensure they arrive on time for the start of class or clinical.**

## Parking Policy

PN students must park in any open parking spot not designated for faculty. Parking permit hang tags will be provided on the first day of class for PN I students. PN II students will use parking hang tags provided during first year. Parking permit hang tags must be visible through the windshield.

## **Student Services**

### Nursing Student Resource Area

A portion of the lab has been designated as a library with student resources available thanks to the Waynesboro Rotary club. Students may sign up or prearrange time with their instructor to utilize this space and associated resources. Typically, this space is available before and after school or during lunch. Items available for student use include:

- Hard copies of nursing periodicals
- A variety of current nursing books
- Use of laptop computers with ability to print class required materials
- Quiet work area to eliminate distractions

### Student organizations

#### **HOSA:**

VCTC PN students are members of HOSA—Future Health Professionals, a national organization for healthcare students. HOSA promotes leadership, personal growth, and professional development through civic, educational, competitive, and social activities. Participation encourages strong work ethic and high ethical standards. <https://hosa.org/>

#### **NALPN:**

The National Association of Licensed Practical Nurses (NALPN) supports LPNs and student nurses through education, advocacy, and professional development. Membership promotes

leadership, high standards of practice, and advancement in the nursing profession.

<https://nalpn.org/>

## Student Activities

Practical nursing students participate in community service activities. Students have participated in events such as Relay for Life, Out of the Darkness, A Night to Shine, and have waited tables at veterans' banquets. Organizing food drives for the local food bank and creating "comfort bags" for young girls at local schools.

## Student Fundraising

Students will be required to hold a minimum of two fundraisers as a class to assist with student activities such as HOSA, and graduation expenses.

## Class Leadership Positions

Students have the opportunity to serve in class leadership roles. In the first year, each student may campaign for a position by preparing and presenting a speech. Classmates will vote, and elected students will hold leadership positions. A new election will be held at the end of the first year for second-year leadership roles.

## Augusta County Public School Policies

In addition to the policies outlined in this handbook, students enrolled in the VCTC Practical Nursing Program are also subject to the policies and regulations of Augusta County Public Schools. This includes, but is not limited to, policies related to violation of laws, student conduct, and safety. Students are responsible for understanding and adhering to all applicable policies from both the Practical Nursing Program and Augusta County Public Schools.

## VCTC School of Practical Nursing Statement of Understanding

I \_\_\_\_\_ have received and read the Valley Career and Technical Center's Practical Nursing Handbook. I understand that this handbook contains important information about the policies, procedures, and expectations of the practical nursing program.

My signature below acknowledges that I have read and understand the contents of the Practical Nursing Handbook. I agree to adhere to the policies and procedures outlined therein, including but not limited to:

1. **Integrity:** I will uphold the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity in all my coursework and clinical activities.
2. **Attendance and Participation:** I will attend classes, clinical rotations, and other required activities, and I will actively participate in my education.
3. **Code of Conduct/Code of Ethics:** I will conduct myself in a professional and ethical manner at all times, respecting my peers, instructors, patients, and all members of the healthcare team.
4. **HIPAA Compliance:** I will maintain the confidentiality of all protected health information (PHI) as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and institutional policies.
5. **Safety and Infection Control:** I will follow all safety and infection control protocols to protect myself, my patients, and my colleagues.
6. **Use of Electronic Devices:** I will adhere to the institution's policies regarding the use of electronic devices in educational and clinical settings.

I understand that I understand that failure to comply with the policies and procedures stated in this handbook may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the nursing program.

### **Signature**

By signing this statement, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the Practical Nursing Handbook's policies and procedures.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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