Graduate
Academic Policies and Procedures

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Graduate Policies and Procedures

Compliance with University Regulations
Students are held responsible for adhering to the Standards of Conduct as listed in the Graduate Record. “The University reserves the right to suspend, enforce the withdrawal of, or expel a student whose academic standing is in its judgment unsatisfactory or who violates the University’s Standards of Conduct.” An electronic copy of the Graduate Record is available from the University Registrar’s website at http://records.ureg.virginia.edu.

Honor System
The Honor System of the University of Virginia has traditionally been a standard of conduct based on a community of trust. Simply stated, lying, cheating, and stealing are not tolerated within the community and are grounds for dismissal from the University. As part of the University, the School of Nursing falls under the jurisdiction of the Honor System and upholds its basic belief of honesty. Each time a nursing student takes a test, writes a paper, or turns in a client history and care plan, he/she is required to sign a pledge stating that the work is his/her own.

Release of Information about Students
The University may disclose directory information from a student’s education records without a student’s prior written approval, unless the student informs the Vice President for Student Affairs in writing and within 14 days of registration, that specified categories of directory information are not to be released without the student’s prior written consent. Directory information includes the student’s name; home and school address; home and school telephone number; date and place of birth; age; major field of study; school of enrollment; full-time/part-time status; year in school; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; dates of attendance; degrees, honors, scholarships, and awards received; and the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended. In addition, directory information includes the names, addresses, telephone numbers and occupations of students’ parents or guardians and the weight and height of members of athletic teams.

Accuracy of Students' Records
Students are ultimately responsible for maintaining the accuracy of their records. Student records are accessible to students via the online student information system. Students are encouraged to utilize the University of Virginia’s Student Information System (SIS) to check the accuracy of their records and grades. It is the student’s responsibility to keep their information up to date. The School of Nursing does not change grades after one semester has lapsed, therefore students should promptly bring any error on the grade report, transcript, or advising sheet to the attention of the School of Nursing Registrar. The Academic Requirements report is also available in SIS and students are encouraged to utilize this report to monitor their progression through their program.
Course Load
Full-time registration can be 12 course credits, 12 non-topical research credits or a mix of non-topical and course credits in the fall or spring semesters. Full-time enrollment in the summer session is 6 credits. Since students do not earn credits for courses taken on an “audit” grading basis, these should be excluded from the credit count for full-time status. However, for tuition purposes, audited courses cost the same as a regular course.

Overload of Credit Hours
Students who wish to enroll in more than the allowed maximum hours for their program must gain approval to do so (more than 17 credits). In order to receive approval, a student must complete a request for Increased Course Load form (http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/registrar/). The student will fill out the form and attach it to a completed Course Action Form that lists the course(s) that the student wishes to add into his/her schedule. Students will be required to complete a request for overload form and have the Assistant Dean’s approval before the overload courses can be added to the student’s schedule. The student needs to turn in the signed request AND the completed Course Action Form to the School of Nursing Registrar for processing.

Transfer Credit
The University of Virginia School of Nursing faculty will consider requests for transfer of credit from other fully accredited colleges or universities for courses which may be equivalent to those in graduate nursing programs. Other University of Virginia faculty may evaluate courses equivalent to those in other areas. Implementation of this policy will not negate the residency requirement policy.

When a student requests transfer of credit for courses completed in other colleges or universities to meet requirements in the University of Virginia School of Nursing or substitution of one UVA course for another, the following procedures must be followed:

1. The student must submit to the Office of the School of Nursing Registrar a completed Request to Transfer or Substitute Courses for Credit form (http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/registrar/). This form must be signed by the appropriate School of Nursing instructor prior to being given to the Registrar. A separate form must be completed for each course for which transfer credit/substitution is requested. The Registrar’s Office will then forward the request to the Assistant Dean for final approval.

2. The following support materials must be submitted with this form:
   a. A course syllabus containing a course description, objectives and content outline of the course.
   b. An official transcript that validates grade and credit for the course. The student must request that this be sent directly to the Office of the School of Nursing Registrar. If the request concerns a course to be taken at another institution, an official transcript must be sent at the request of the student immediately following completion of the course. Credit will not be awarded until the official transcript is received. If the transcript was submitted as part of the application materials, an additional transcript is not required.

3. Please see the back of the form for detailed instructions.
Exceptions to this policy include:

- Students who have completed a course as a part of a baccalaureate program may not use that course toward the MSN degree (Exception: MSN-CNL students).
- Graduate students may receive a maximum of four graduate-level courses (up to 12 credits) completed at other institutions for transfer credit. In order to be considered for transfer, the courses must have been completed with a minimum grade of B.

**Academic Probation and Suspension**
Students who fail to remain in good academic standing will be placed on academic probation. A student is subject to suspension after the receipt of one failing grade or the cumulative GPA dropping under 3.0.

**Incomplete Grades**
The notation IN (incomplete) indicates that a final grade for the course is being withheld by the instructor until the student completes all course requirements or examinations. A student may not request an IN grade in an attempt to raise his or her grade. Prior to the end of the course, students must initiate the request for an IN and secure the instructor's approval.

A grade of IN becomes an F 150 days after the end of the given semester unless an Incomplete Grade form [http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/registrar/](http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/registrar/) requesting an extension of time has been signed by the course instructor and approved by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services. The faculty has adopted a policy that, unless authorized by the dean’s office, students must complete all course work before taking the final examination. Instructors are not authorized to extend the time for completion of course work without the dean’s approval. Students with two or more outstanding incomplete designations (in the same semester or cumulatively) may not enroll in courses in subsequent terms.

**Grade Changes**
No grade may be changed without the approval of the School of Nursing after it has been submitted to the University Registrar (UREG). The School of Nursing is not authorized by the faculty to change a grade submitted to UREG except when an instructor certifies that, because of errors in calculation or transcription, an incorrect grade has been submitted. Extra work to raise a grade, once submitted, is not permitted.

**Appealing a Grade**
Students who wish to appeal a course grade must first attempt to resolve the issue with the instructor of the course. Absent a satisfactory outcome, the student consults with the following chain of communication → faculty advisor → program director/coordinator prior to going to the Senior Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services regarding the next steps in the process of appeal. The Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services will consult with the Department Chair of the course instructor and the Associate Dean of Academic Programs as appropriate. For grades awarded for the fall semester, the written appeal must be submitted no
later than 14 calendar days after the beginning of the spring semester. For grades awarded for the spring semester or summer sessions, the written appeal must be submitted no later than 14 days after the first day of the fall semester. For January term, a written appeal must be submitted no later than 14 days after the end of that session or term. Appeals submitted after the deadline will be heard only in exceptional cases, as determined by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services. (Note that written does not include email; it must be printed.)

Credit/No Credit (CR/NC)
Required courses may not be taken as CR/NC unless CR/NC is the only grading option.

Registration
Students must register using the University of Virginia’s Student Information System (SIS). Students can add courses, drop courses, and change other schedule options using the online registration system. Sometimes the student system will not allow changes. For example, students may want to drop below the minimum number of credits or add a course which requires the permission of the instructor. In these cases, students must complete a Course Action Form to change the schedule. This form is available from the School of Nursing Registrar’s website. This form requires the signature of the appropriate faculty member and the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services. Forms and other registration information can be found at the School of Nursing Registrar’s Web site at: http://www.nursing.virginia.edu/registrar/.

Advising Hold
Once matriculated into the Graduate School, all students are required to meet/email/talk with their advisor each semester before registering for classes. During this time, the advisor will release the student’s “advising hold” granting the student access to course enrollment for the following semester. Only your advisor can release this hold. The School of Nursing Registrar cannot release this hold.

Service Indicator / Registration Hold
Students who are not registered for courses during final enrollment and students who have registration holds or service indicators are in jeopardy of having their courses dropped if these holds are not lifted by the end of the second week of class each semester. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure they do not have any service indicators or holds. Registration holds or service indicators can be viewed in SIS. If a student has a registration hold, that student must contact the office who placed the hold in order to have that hold lifted once the reason for the hold has been remedied.

Withdrawing from a Course
If you wish to discontinue a course after the drop deadline, you must submit the Course Withdrawal Request Form. If you miss the drop deadline you have eight weeks from the start of the semester to leave a class using this option. This will result in a W on your transcript. You must talk to the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services if withdrawing late from a course will leave you with fewer than 12 credits. This may also jeopardize financial aid or full-
time status for purposes of international student visa, NCAA eligibility health insurance, veterans’ benefits, and automobile insurance for “Good Student” discounts. If you stop attending a course without formally dropping or withdrawing from it, you will receive a failing grade. If, after the course withdrawal deadline has passed, you are enrolled in a class you never attended, you will need to petition the Assistant Dean for Academic and Students Services to withdraw from the class. Failure to do so will result in your receiving a grade of F.

NetLearning
Throughout your educational experience at the University, you may be required to complete competencies. These competencies are delivered on the internet through the NetLearning system. If assigned, students will be notified and are required to complete all the learning modules and will be able to log onto the NetLearning system to complete this training. You can access the NetLearning web site at: http://netlearning.nursing.virginia.edu. Most students are automatically assigned modules to complete. If, however you are a hospital employee, you will be required to self-assign modules as the SON administrator does not have access to your NetLearning Profile. Hospital employees will be requested to provide copies of their NetLearning transcripts to the SON Registrar periodically for tracking purposes.

Criminal Background Check (CBC)
All nursing students, including those in the PhD in Nursing program, are required to complete a criminal background check. OASS will send new students forms to complete. These forms will be processed by the Virginia State Police using state and federal records. Clinical agencies may require students to undergo a secondary criminal background review or drug examination using their own vendor.

Cases that do not pass the State Police/FBI criminal background check will be looked at individually by the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Services, a faculty Program Coordinator, a representative from the General Counsel’s office, a representative from the Office of the Dean of Students, and the State Board of Nursing to determine whether a student can remain enrolled.

Because all Nursing PhD students will serve as Graduate Teaching Assistants, they must meet the same requirements as Nursing School degree students.

CPR
All graduate students must provide verification of CPR certification by October 1 of the first year with an update required every other year. UVA accepts only the American Heart Association AED certification for Healthcare Providers. You must have Adult, Infant and Child training.

Instructor No-Show
Students are required to wait 15 minutes for an instructor who is late or a no-show.
Nursing Uniform Policy
Students are to wear their usual uniform or scrubs, and when on rounds, a white lab coat that is clean and starched. Hair should be tied back, minimal jewelry, no facial rings. Students must wear an ID that says UVA student on it (not their usual ID) when working as a student. Any deviation from or creative interpretation of this policy is done at the discretion and with the approval of the clinical faculty responsible for students on a particular unit.

Identification Badges/Cards
A valid University ID card allows students to cash checks, vote in student elections, and attend athletic events, movies, and concerts. It allows students to use recreational facilities and Student Health. Students on meal plans use the ID card as their ticket to eat in the dining halls. Students must present the ID card to the checker each time they enter a dining facility. The Health Sciences ID badge functions as the student ID for Nursing students.

Health Sciences Photo ID Badge
All students using UVA Health System facilities for any purpose must have a UVA Health System identification badge. Students are expected to wear the Health System ID badge in a highly visible location at all times when on clinical units. All graduate students should obtain a hospital ID upon enrollment in the program. Lost or damaged ID badges may be replaced at the Hospital ID Office. There is a charge to replace ID cards.

Home Visiting Policy
All clinical courses requiring home visiting will include the following policy in the syllabus.

Instructors:
1. Instructors will assign students to individuals or families based on the instructor’s and/or nurse’s familiarity with the individual or family.
2. If any family poses a risk or, for any reason, a potential risk to the student’s safety or the students perceives such a risk, the individual or family will not be visited by the student.
3. Instructors will use their discretion to make the assignments for students to visit alone or in pairs.
4. Instructors will know where and when students are visiting.
5. The instructor will be accessible to the students by phone or beeper while they are visiting.

Students:
1. Students will keep instructors apprised of when and where they are visiting. Students will notify instructors of any perceived danger.
2. Students will keep detailed logs of each visit and instructor will review the logs.
3. Students will follow all safety guidelines (see safety policy).
**Insurance**
All students must be covered by year-round health insurance. Each student must be insured under the University Health Insurance Plan or by another insurance contract that the student or his/her parents consider to be comparable in benefits to the University Plan. All students must present proof of insurance with their pre-enrollment health forms.

**Licensure**
All PhD students are required to have current RN licenses. Students employed as Graduate Assistants (research assistants or teaching assistants) must have a valid Virginia RN license if they are assisting with clinical content.

**Vehicles**
All students are allowed to have a vehicle on Grounds. More information regarding vehicles can be found in the Record and at the Department of Parking and Transportation, http://www.virginia.edu/parking.

**Textbooks**
Textbooks may be purchased at the UVA Bookstore. Some Nursing course books may be sold at the Student Bookstore on the Corner. Books are identified by the course number and faculty teaching the course. New students should wait until they have attended orientation before they plan to purchase textbooks.

**Student Assessment Program**
All pre-licensure nursing students are required to purchase the Elsevier Student Assessment Program (ESAP). ESAP is a special assessment program that includes learning and assessment activities, such as case studies, supplemental review materials, and practice exams. ESAP specialty exams are given in selected courses as a prescribed percentage of the course grade. The program includes a cumulative examination in the final year of the program that assesses student readiness for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). Students scoring below the benchmark on a specialty exam or the cumulative exam are required to complete an individualized remediation (review) plan and retake the specialty / cumulative exam. The program also includes a three-day live review course in the final year of the program. Students will purchase ESAP, prorated, in semester installments.

**Social Media**
**Nursing Student Guidelines for the Use of Social Media**

**Purpose**
In response to the recent escalation in the number of healthcare professionals violating HIPAA through social media outlets, the University of Virginia School of Nursing recognizes the need to provide nursing students with the following expectations.
Overview
Social media has become an increasingly popular form of communication. However, as members of the academic and healthcare communities, its use should reflect honesty, courtesy, and respect for others. Students are expected to display and maintain integrity and professionalism while communicating. Thus, nursing student posts or on-line activities should reflect positively upon the University of Virginia as well as its student body, faculty, and staff.

Expectations
Always Consider Posts Public
- Before posting on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media, please consider the appropriateness of the post as it may appear on the front page of a newspaper or the headline of the evening news.
- Avoid posting anything that is defamatory, offensive or harassing.
- Avoid posting content about peers, administrators, or faculty that is, or could be construed as, derogatory.
- Avoid posting about a patient or a patient encounter even if identifying information has been removed.
- Recognize that “deleted” content may still be accessible.

Always Maintain Professionalism
- Avoid communicating with patients in any on-line platform, e.g., Facebook, Twitter.
- Avoid “friending” a patient, patient’s family members or significant others.
- Avoid posting about a patient or a patient encounter.
- Avoid posting pictures of yourself participating in any unprofessional behaviors or activities, e.g., drinking alcohol, or dressing in a sexually provocative manner.
- Use the highest privacy settings, but recognize that there is no privacy on-line.
- Remember that professionals have both a legal and an ethical duty to protect a patient’s privacy.

Resources


University of Virginia Library Social Media Guide: http://www2.lib.virginia.edu/styleguide/socialmedia/index.html
University of Virginia Health System Social Media Guidelines:

UVA SON Social Media Guidelines – Created May 2013; Revised June 2013

SON Snow Line
If there is inclement weather and you need to check on class scheduling changes, please check the University of Virginia Web site, the University Snow Line (434-924-SNOW).

Degree or Enrollment Verification and Transcripts
The School of Nursing Registrar is NOT able to provide degree verifications, enrollment verifications, or transcripts. The University Registrar provides these services. Further information can be found on the UVA Registrar’s website (www.virginia.edu/registrar). Verifications are official and can be used for most, if not, all degree or enrollment requests even if those requests are accompanied by forms.

The Next Generation of UVA Nursing

As we enter a multigenerational community, we pledge to move forward and be a part of the next generation of nursing by learning from the past to make an even greater difference in the future. By taking this pledge, we each promise to do the following:

I will not make insensitive and condescending statements, or participate in any other actions of incivility against my fellow colleagues, educators, or patients that have professionally held back those before me.

I will not just take orders, but I will be empowered to fully understand them. To question when necessary, and in doing so remembering: to be respected, I must respect.

I will not only advocate with the utmost integrity and lack of bias, but also empathize to show the truest form of compassion and beneficence in which I am capable.

I will not only be known for educating and taking care of my patients, but also for educating and taking care of myself, so I can be an active professional for the sake of my future patients, for the sake of my fellow colleagues, and for the sake of the future of this healthcare system.

I pledge to be a next generation nurse.

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