



DEWITT SCHOOL OF NURSING

Student Handbook for Undergraduate Programs (BSN and RN-BSN)

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SYSTEM ★ NACOGDOCHES, TEXAS

Mission Statements and Nursing Goals

University Mission

Stephen F. Austin State University (SFA), a member of the University of Texas System, is a comprehensive institution dedicated to excellence in teaching, research, scholarship, creative work, and service. Through the personal attention of our faculty and staff, we engage our students in a learner-centered environment and offer opportunities to prepare for the challenges of living in the global community.

College of Health Professions Mission

The College of Health Professions prepares the next generation of professionals to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities through excellence in education, scholarship, service and clinical practice. The college is comprised of the Department of Allied Health Studies, the Department of Family Sciences, The Department of Psychological Sciences, The Richard and Lucille DeWitt School of Nursing, the School of Social Work and the Pre-Health Professionals Program. Through interdisciplinary collaboration, innovative teaching, experiential learning and evidence-based practice, the college equips graduates with the knowledge, skills, and compassion needed to advance health, strengthen communities, and improve quality of life. By fostering partnerships with healthcare providers, community organizations, and regional stakeholders, the College of Health Professions serves as a leader in advancing health outcomes, strengthening communities, and preparing graduates for meaningful careers and lifelong service. The College of Health Professions is committed to developing competent, ethical, and compassionate professionals who lead with integrity, embrace innovation, and improve the quality of life for the communities they serve.

DeWitt School of Nursing (SON) Mission

The DeWitt School of Nursing provides excellence in the undergraduate and graduate programs by valuing scholarship and service, developing a deep commitment to integrity and ethical behaviors, and caring for diverse populations in an ever-changing society.

School of Nursing Core Values

Excellence

The SON ensures a culture of educational and professional excellence committed to continuous quality improvement by providing transformative learning experiences. It is a culture where exceptional performance is the expectation.

Caring

The SON ensures a culture of caring where compassion and civility facilitate trust within the programs and extends into the community. It is a culture where diversity is valued, respected, and pursued.

Integrity

The SON ensures a culture of academic and professional integrity by upholding standards while encouraging humility, equity, ethical-decision making, and accountability.

Scholarship

The SON ensures a culture of scholarship that fosters a spirit of inquiry steeped in evidence-based practice. The programs are rooted in evidence-based teaching practices facilitating experiential learning which equip students to deliver high-quality, safe, patient-centered care.

Undergraduate Student End of Program Student Learning Outcomes

1. Formulate nursing care based on knowledge acquired from general education and nursing curriculum courses.
2. Deliver exceptional nursing care within established state and national standards.
3. Defend personal and professional integrity in the practice of nursing.
4. Value a commitment to the pursuit of lifelong learning and scholarship.
5. Model caring, compassion, and civility within the practice of nursing.
6. Provide holistic nursing care while respecting individual and cultural diversity.

Undergraduate Student End of Program Student Learning Outcomes (prior to Fall 2025)

1. Apply knowledge of the physical, social, and behavioral sciences in the provision of nursing care based on theory and evidence based practice.
2. Deliver nursing care within an established legal and ethical parameters in collaboration with clients and members of the interdisciplinary health care team
3. Provide holistic nursing care to clients while respecting individual and cultural diversity.
4. Demonstrate effective leadership that fosters independent thinking, use of informatics, and collaborative communication in the management of nursing care.
5. Assume responsibility and accountability for quality improvement and delivery of safe and effective nursing care.
6. Serve as an advocate for clients and for the profession of nursing.
7. Value continuing competence, growth, and development in the profession of nursing.

Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs)

The Richard and Lucille DeWitt School of Nursing prepares graduates to demonstrate the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs Evidenced by Knowledge, Clinical Judgments, and Behaviors (DECs)*. The competencies are based upon the preparation in the program of study. In nursing education, the DEC's serve as a guideline and tool for curriculum development and revision, a tool for benchmarking and evaluation of the program, and statewide standard to ensure graduates will enter practice as safe and competent nurses. The DEC's are incorporated into every course in the SON to ensure uniformity and continuity of standards. Please refer to the Texas BON website for additional information.

Licensure Information

applicable to pre-licensure BSN students only

Recommendation for Licensure

University recommendation for application for RN licensure will be made upon satisfactory completion of the nursing curriculum.

Information Regarding Eligibility for the NCLEX-RN

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) has established guidelines and criteria regarding the eligibility of persons with criminal convictions to obtain a license as a registered nurse. The BON may refuse to admit persons to its licensure examinations, may refuse to issue a license or certificate of registration, or may refuse to issue a

temporary permit to any individual who has been convicted of a felony, a misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, or engaged in conduct resulting in the revocation of probation imposed pursuant to such conviction. A Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) criminal background check is required by the BON. Convictions for offenses other than traffic violations will be investigated. A student contemplating entry into the BSN program that has /had such offenses should contact the Director of the School of Nursing regarding completing a Declaratory Order. Additionally, the information can be found on the BON website at <http://www.bon.texas.gov>.

The Texas Board of Nursing (BON) has established guidelines and criteria regarding the eligibility of persons with mental illness and/or chemical dependency to obtain a license as a registered nurse. The BON may refuse to admit persons to its licensure examinations, may refuse to issue a license or certificate of registration, or may refuse to issue a temporary permit to any individual with lack of fitness to practice by reason of mental illness or intemperate use of alcohol or drugs that could result in injury to patients or the public. A student with a history of mental illness or chemical dependency, who is considering entry into a BSN program, should contact the Director as previously noted in the last paragraph.

A student who has concerns in either of these areas is encouraged to file a Declaratory Order with the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) prior to his/her academic career. BON investigations may take up to a year. Detailed information is available from the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) or from the Director of the DeWitt School of Nursing.

Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA)

In compliance with the *Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act* (FERPA) the University designates that staff may not release certain information (grades) without prior written consent.

You may disclose directory information without written prior consent, unless the student notifies the Registrar's Office in writing to the contrary. Directory information includes the following items: name, address including e-mail, telephone numbers, major field of study, academic classification, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, weight & height of athletic team members, dates of attendance, degree and awards received and photograph.

Written consent is required to release all other information.

FERPA – Family Education Rights and Privacy Act

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the University receives a request for access.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate or misleading.

The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests.

The following items are considered DIRECTORY INFORMATION by the university and the university may disclose any of these items without prior written consent, unless the student notifies the Registrar, in writing to the contrary, by September 1 of each fiscal year.

- A. name
- B. all addresses, including University issued e-mail address
- C. all telephone numbers
- D. major field of study
- E. academic classification
- F. participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- G. weight and height of members of athletic teams
- H. dates of attendance and enrollment status
- I. degrees and awards received
- J. previous schools attended
- K. photograph
- L. class roster (not the student's class schedule)

Academic Permission

As a student at SFA, permissions are given through the Registrar's Office to allow the SON faculty to discuss grades with parents. If a form is not on file in the Registrar's Office and a parent wishes to meet with the Director and/or faculty, the student must authorize the release of information using the following procedure:

Students may choose to grant access to their educational records to other individuals by completing the FERPA Authorization form in mySFA.

1. Log in to mySFA.
2. Select the "Academics" tab.
3. Locate the "Academic Records" block.
4. Select the "FERPA Authorization form" link.

Follow the instructions to complete and submit the required documentation. Once submitted, students can follow these steps again to view the details of their information. Authorizations are usually effective 15 minutes after the form is successfully submitted.

Current students or alumni unable to access their mySFA account must contact the registrar's office by emailing registrar@sfasu.edu for assistance.

Technology

Technology Requirements

All students are required to have access to a laptop or desktop computer for academic and testing purposes. Please find the complete list of technology requirements here: <https://www.sfasu.edu/docs/nursing/technology-requirements.pdf>

For questions regarding laptop hardware or software, please contact The SFA Help Desk at <https://help.sfasu.edu/TDClient/2027/Portal/Home/> or 936-468-HELP.

Netiquette

The principles of online communication relate to honoring others and their opinions; respecting differences; responding honestly using thoughtful and respectful dialogue; respecting privacy; constructive, professional responses to faculty and peers; and avoid slang, jargon, and emoticons. Academic writing style is required for all online communication.

Nursing Honors Courses

Nursing students who have been accepted into the University School of Honors may receive honors credit for a nursing course. For information regarding this, view the School of Honors website at <https://www.sfasu.edu/honors>.

SON Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

All students are responsible for the Standard Operating Procedures of the School of Nursing. Please review the School of Nursing Procedures located on the SFASU Nursing website (www.sfasu.edu/nursing). You are required to consent to, and abide by, the procedures of SFASU and of the DeWitt School of Nursing while a student in this nursing program. Procedures are subject to change and, if changes occur, the updated SOP will be posted on the SON website, and students will be notified when changes occur.

Academic Integrity

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this procedure.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one's self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one's own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one's own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

Dress Code

Students should maintain a professional appearance, with name tags, when they are officially representing the School of Nursing (SON), either in a clinical setting or at a professional meeting. When not required to wear a uniform, professional dress is required. The procedure is detailed and within the SOPs listed on the SON website.

Electronic Filing and Maintenance of Required Immunization Records

applicable to pre-licensure BSN students and RN-BSN students when required by clinical agencies only

Immunization information submitted to Castlebranch, Inc. is an electronic database which is required and reviewed by the SON. A copy of immunizations will be uploaded to Castlebranch, Inc. by each student. The electronic database provides a tracking mechanism to ensure that all students maintain current immunization status. Failure to keep immunizations current could lead to the inability to attend the clinical sites and other possible ramifications in the course grade including accrual of clinical demerits.

Video/Audio/Photography Recording Consent

The School of Nursing may record participation and appearance in clinical simulations and/or classroom activities. These are used only for educational, instructional, and/or advertising purposes by the SON. Any simulation video/audio recordings are destroyed within one year of the filming or recording unless otherwise noted on a separate consent.

HIPAA Compliance

Stephen F Austin State University (SFASU) has cooperative agreements with agencies in the area for clinical training of its students enrolled in all health-care fields and programs. To ensure that SFASU students, faculty, and staff involved in these programs understand the patient privacy requirements of the clinical sites and of applicable laws, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996, SFASU offers this guidance for those persons to ensure compliance with those requirements. Students will be required to complete a HIPAA module at the beginning of each semester. *Note: The discussions, uses, or disclosures discussed below encompass written, verbal, or electronic communication.*

HIPAA COMPLIANCE DO'S AND DON'T'S	
DO'S	DON'T'S
Do sign the SFASU Faculty/Staff/Student confidentiality agreement before any involvement in a clinical program. Do attend SFASU training or in-class clinical instruction on requirements relating to patient privacy. Do know and adhere to a clinical site's privacy policies and procedures before undertaking any activities at the site. Do maintain, at all times, the confidentiality of any patient information, regardless of whether the identifiers listed in the "DON'T'S" section of these guidelines have been removed. Do promptly report any violation of those procedures, applicable law, or SFASU's confidentiality agreement	Don't discuss, use, or disclose any patient information while in the clinical setting unless it is part of your clinical assignment. Don't remove any record from the clinical site. Don't disclose any information about a patient during your clinical assignment to anyone other than the medical staff of the clinical site. Don't use patient information in the context of a learning experience, classroom, case presentation, class assignment, or research without attempting to exclude as much of the following information as possible: <i>Names or patient's real initials</i> <i>Geographical, lesser than a state</i>

by you, an SFASU student, and faculty or staff member to the appropriate SFASU clinical coordinator or program director. Do understand that a violation of the clinical site's policies and procedures, of applicable law, or SFASU's confidentiality agreement will subject you to disciplinary action.	<i>Dates of birth, admission, discharge, death</i> <i>Telephone and/or fax numbers</i> <i>E-mail addresses</i> <i>Social security numbers</i> <i>Medical records or account numbers</i> <i>Health plan beneficiary numbers</i> <i>Certificate/license numbers</i> <i>Web locators/internet protocols</i> <i>Biometric identifiers</i> <i>Full face photos</i> <i>Any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code</i> <i>All ages over 89</i> <i>Room numbers</i>
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Social Media Conduct

In exchange for educational opportunities provided by clinical rotations, students agree to comply with all state, local, and federal requirements governing the privacy of medical information. Students must agree to uphold all **HIPAA** and other privacy requirements during clinical rotations.

Students are bound to comply with all privacy requirements when not at the clinical site, including conversations with family, friends, and peers. Students will be held accountable for maintaining the privacy of any information obtained in any form during the clinical rotations. **To uphold the privacy of such information, students must agree to not post or discuss any clinical experience, photography, video footage, or information about the clinical agency, its staff, or its clients on any Internet or social network site (i.e., Facebook, X, Instagram, Snapchat, email, etc.).** SON searches of Internet sites for breaches in privacy policies can occur randomly.

Students may be prohibited from returning to the clinical site if the privacy requirement is violated. Such violation could result in clinical demerits, course failure, a delay in completing degree requirements, and/or dismissal from the School of Nursing.

Simulation Center

Students, other healthcare learners, and facility users may only be in the Simulation Lab with a member of Stephen F. Austin State University School of Nursing (SFASU SON) faculty or staff present. Simulation Lab personnel or designee will be supervising use of the lab equipment and mannequins at all times. Faculty will adhere to the Simulation Center Procedure Manual for additional information regarding use of the Simulation Center. ***See SOP 1.9 for additional information.***

Simulation Center Student Rules

All students will wear approved uniforms and name identification tags while in the Simulation Lab. If a student is not dressed appropriately, he or she will be asked to leave.

1. All students will bring necessary clinical equipment to the Simulation Lab such as stethoscope, penlight, paper, and pencil.
2. No pens are allowed in the Simulation Lab. Any pens found in the lab will be removed by the faculty or staff immediately.

3. Students may not have open food containers or beverages in the Simulation Center.
4. All student cell phones should be turned off when entering the Simulation Center unless otherwise directed by the instructor.
5. Students must wait on their instructor to enter the Simulation Center. The only exception is students practicing skills that are scheduled through the Acuity Scheduling System. These students may enter the Simulation Center independent of the instructor at their scheduled time.
6. All students are to remain quiet and respectful in the Simulation Center. Any student who is noisy, disruptive, or disrespectful will be asked to leave the Simulation Center.
7. Do NOT use povidine iodine, activated Chloraprep, or ink (label dressings with pencil prior to placing on the manikin) on the manikins.
8. After simulation or skills practice, clean up the room and leave the room as you found it.
9. Place all trash in the appropriate containers. Sharps containers are only for needles, syringes, lancets, broken glass, or other sharp objects contaminated with blood. Red biohazard boxes are only for items that are saturated with medical waste and saturated non-sharps objects. All other items may be disposed in the trash can.
10. The Simulation Lab is considered a clinical site. As such, students should follow all instructions given by course faculty in the event of a late or missed day.
11. Treat all simulations and skills activities as real situations. If you do not take the simulation seriously, the instructor reserves the right to remove the student from the simulation. Any student removed from the lab will be subject to a clinical demerit as per procedure.
12. The Simulation Center is a safe environment. Here, it is okay to make a mistake. You will not be stopped if you make a mistake, but it will be discussed in debriefing. There will be no discussion of the simulation until such time that all students in the class have completed the simulation.
13. All students are required to sign the Simulation Confidentiality Agreement and Video/ Audio/ Photography Recording Consent prior to the first day in the Simulation Lab.
14. Any student may request a copy of the signed forms by emailing the course coordinator.

Simulation Confidentiality Agreement and Student Rules

Nursing students are required to keep all information regarding and surrounding the clinical simulation(s) in which they participate confidential until such time that all students in the student's current class has completed the simulation(s). Simulations are not to be discussed in any way with any member of the SON student body until all simulation(s) are completed. The simulation center student rules have been read and will be followed.

Nursing Practice Act, Texas Board of Nursing

For detailed information regarding the Nursing Practice Act, see the Texas BON website at https://www.bon.texas.gov/laws_and_rules_nursing_practice_act.asp

Texas Administrative Code

Section 213.27 Good Professional Character

(a) Every individual who seeks to practice nursing in Texas must have good professional character related to the practice of nursing. This requirement includes all individuals seeking to obtain or retain a license or privilege to practice nursing in Texas.

(b) The Board defines good professional character as the integrated pattern of personal, academic, and occupational behaviors that indicate an individual is able to consistently conform his/her conduct to the requirements of the Nursing Practice Act, the Board's rules, and generally accepted standards of nursing practice. An individual who provides satisfactory evidence that he/she has not committed a violation of the Nursing Practice Act or a rule adopted by the Board is considered to have good professional character related to the practice of nursing.

(c) A determination that an individual does not have good professional character related to the practice of nursing must be based on a showing by the Board of a clear and rational connection between a violation of the Nursing Practice Act or a rule adopted by the Board and the individual's ability to effectively practice nursing. See Section 231.27 for the remainder of the provision. The provisions of this §213.27 adopted to be effective October 29, 2015, 40 TexReg 7403; amended to be effective February 25, 2018, 43 TexReg 863.

Section 217.11 Standards of Nursing Practice

The Texas BON is responsible for regulating the practice of nursing within the State of Texas. The standards of nursing practice are defined in detail congruent with the Texas Nursing Practice Act. See the Texas Administrative Code for details.

American Nurses Association (ANA) Standards of Nursing Practice

Standard 1: Assessment: The registered nurse collects comprehensive data pertinent to the patient's health or the situation.

Standard 2: Diagnosis: The registered nurse analyzes the assessment data to determine the diagnoses or issues.

Standard 3: Outcomes Identification: The registered nurse identifies expected outcomes for a plan individualized to the patient or the situation.

Standard 4: Planning: The registered nurse develops a plan that prescribes strategies and alternatives to attain expected outcomes.

Standard 5: Implementation: The registered nurse implements the identified plan.

5A: Coordination of Care: The registered nurse coordinates care delivery.

5B: Health Teaching and Health Promotion: The registered nurse employs strategies to promote health and a safe environment.

5C: Consultation: The advanced practice registered nurse and the nursing role specialist provide consultation to influence the identified plan, enhance the abilities of others, and effect change.

5D: Prescriptive Authority and Treatment: The advanced practice registered nurse uses prescriptive authority procedures, referrals, treatments, and therapies in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Standard 6: Evaluation: The registered nurse evaluates progress toward attainment of outcomes. Standards of Professional Performance

Standard 7: Quality of Practice: The registered nurse systematically enhances the quality and effectiveness of nursing practice.

Standard 8: Education: The registered nurse attains knowledge and competency that reflects current nursing practice.

Standard 9: Professional Practice Evaluation: The registered nurse evaluates one's own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations.

Standard 10: Collegiality: The registered nurse interacts with and contributes to the professional development of peers and colleagues.

Standard 11: Collaboration: The registered nurse collaborates with patient, family, and others in the conduct of nursing practice.

Standard 12: Ethics: The registered nurse integrates ethical provisions in all areas of practice.

Standard 13: Research: The registered nurse integrates research findings into practice.

Standard 14: Resource Utilization: The registered nurse considers factors related to safety, effectiveness, cost, and impact on practice in the planning and delivery of nursing services.

Standard 15: Leadership: The registered nurse provides leadership in the professional practice setting and the profession.

ANA Code of Ethics Provision Statements

- Provision 1: The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
- 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 rights, health, and safety of the patient.
- 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 to 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 health care.
- Provision 7: The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
- 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 integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

American Nurses Association. (2018). *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statement*. Retrieved from <https://www.nursingworld.org/nurses-books/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>