

**TOWSON UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

**UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Degree Completion Option**

Revised January 2025

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	2
PREFACE.....	5
INTRODUCTION .....	6
MISSION STATEMENT .....	7
PROGRAM OUTCOMES.....	8
ESTIMATED FINANCIAL COSTS.....	9
General Expenses .....	9
Practicum Costs .....	9
CONTACT INFORMATION.....	10
General Contact Information .....	10
Degree Completion Advisory Team .....	10
Clinical Placement Team.....	10
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS.....	11
B.S. DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN NURSING – DEGREE COMPLETION.....	11
Program Admission Requirements .....	11
Degree Completion Curriculum.....	11
Additional Requirements & Information.....	12
RN Articulation Model and Transfer Credits .....	13
NURS 489 Nursing Degree Completion Practicum .....	14
Graduation Clearance .....	16
POLICIES & PROCEDURES.....	17
STANDARDS AND FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES FOR NURSING STUDENTS.....	18
CLINICAL PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICUM .....	20
HEALTH & VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CERTIFICATIONS, SCREENINGS, AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
CLINICAL & PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS.....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
FACILITY PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS .....	25
CODE OF CONDUCT .....	26
FORMAL COMPLAINTS .....	26
COPYRIGHT .....	26
ACADEMIC PROGRESSION & ADVISING.....	27
Advising Requirements .....	27
Associate-to-Bachelor’s (ATB) Progression .....	27
Registered Nurse to B.S. (RN-BS) Progression.....	27
Course Registration Procedure .....	28
Minimum Grades for Academic Progression .....	28

CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT.....	29
Leave of Absence (LOA).....	29
Voluntary Withdrawal .....	30
Withdrawal due to Inactivity .....	30
University Reenrollment.....	30
ACADEMIC STANDING & CONTINUANCE .....	31
Course Attempt & Repeat Limit Policy.....	31
Procedure to Request Course Repeats .....	31
Dismissal from the Degree Completion Option.....	32
Reinstatement & Readmission to Degree Completion Option .....	32
Criteria for Reinstatement.....	33
Reinstatement Request Process .....	34
Re-Applying to the Degree Completion Option .....	34
Switching Options within the Undergraduate Program .....	34
GRADES & GRADING .....	36
Departmental Academic Grading .....	36
Incomplete Grades.....	36
Grading Scale for Department of Nursing.....	37
COURSE APPEALS POLICY .....	38
Right to Appeal.....	38
Course Appeal Procedure .....	38
APPEAL OF PROGRAM DISMISSAL.....	38
ATTENDANCE POLICIES .....	39
Class Attendance/Absence Policy .....	39
Emergency Closing.....	40
EXPECTATIONS & EVALUATION.....	41
Classroom Courses .....	41
General Exam Policies.....	41
Clinical Policies.....	42
BLOOD BORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE PLAN .....	44
DEPARTMENTAL AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES.....	46
HONORS AND AWARDS .....	47
Honors Society .....	47
Nursing Department Awards .....	47
FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS .....	48
Financial Aid .....	48
External Scholarships .....	49
Department Scholarships.....	49

NURSING STUDENT ASSOCIATION .....	50
CAMPUS-WIDE RESOURCES .....	51
Library Resources.....	51
Student Outreach and Support.....	51
Student Emergency Funds & Resources.....	51
Student Computing Services.....	51
Office of Accessibility & Disability Services.....	51
Advising and Counseling Services .....	52
Diversity Resources .....	52
DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES .....	53
Academic Success Support.....	53
Assigned Department Advisor.....	53
APPENDIX .....	54
Appendix A.....	54
General Program Information.....	54

## PREFACE

The faculty and staff of the Department of Nursing (herein referred to as “the Department”) welcome you as you continue the next steps toward the Bachelor of Science degree with a major in Nursing. We hope that your semesters at Towson University in the Nursing major will be challenging and rewarding.

This handbook is the effort of many people. Its purpose is to delineate policies, procedures, and protocols adopted by the Department specific to students enrolled in the degree completion option. The Department may amend this handbook through modification, deletion, or addition of information. The handbook does not constitute a contract. If you have further questions, please contact your advisor.

It is the responsibility of the student to abide by the policies and procedures established by the Department. All students will be notified of changes to policies and procedures via email from their academic advisor or Department staff.

Students should familiarize themselves with the *Towson University Undergraduate Catalog* to satisfy all published degree requirements for each major and minor being completed. Failure to do so does not provide a basis for exceptions to academic requirements or policies. It is expected that students will receive assistance from their advisors, but students must assume responsibility for completing published degree requirements by reviewing their Academic Requirements report frequently.

*Last handbook revision date: January 23, 2025*

# INTRODUCTION

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Towson University's Department of Nursing is to provide exceptional graduate and undergraduate education in a student-centered, caring environment to meet the diverse health needs of all populations. Graduates are prepared to practice in a rapidly changing health care environment using compassion, ethics, evidence-based care, and inter-professional collaboration. Faculty promote integration of professional values and a commitment to lifelong learning.

(Rev. 11.16)

## **PROGRAM OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of the Nursing major, the graduate will:

1. Integrate evolving knowledge from nursing and other disciplines in the exercise of clinical judgment and the provision of nursing care across diverse practice environments.
2. Develop a caring relationship with individuals and communities by communicating effectively, applying the nursing process, promoting health, and advocating for person-centered care.
3. Incorporate knowledge of the interplay between population health and the social determinants of health in the care of diverse populations in a variety of settings.
4. Use knowledge of the research process and the resulting evidence base to improve patient health and transform health care.
5. Analyze how quality improvement principles and a culture of safety promote the delivery of high-quality care.
6. Collaborate with professional partners to deliver respectful, high-quality care that aligns with the goals and needs of the individual, family, and/or population.
7. Apply knowledge of healthcare systems to promote safe, equitable, and cost-effective care to individuals and populations across the continuum of care.
8. Incorporate safe and ethical use of information and communication technologies in nursing care.
9. Develop a professional identity reflective of the characteristics and values of nursing.
10. Demonstrate accountability for engaging in activities that foster the acquisition of nursing expertise, personal well-being, and leadership development.

*Revised May 2024*

## ESTIMATED FINANCIAL COSTS

This page outlines **estimated costs** that you can expect in addition to tuition charges. These estimates are provided for you to have an idea of the money you will need to budget for your education. Fees and prices may change. University tuition and fee information can be found on the [Student & University Billing Office](#) site. The Department of Nursing has no control over university fees not listed here or additional fees charged by other companies.

### General Expenses

DESCRIPTION	COST	COMMENTS
Textbooks/Course Materials	\$400-600	Estimate of overall cost of textbooks required for TU courses throughout the program. Individual textbook costs vary by course.
Parking (Main Campus)	\$202-403 (Annual) \$100-222 (Term) \$3-\$12 (Daily Visitor)	Range of parking rate options for the 2024-25 academic year. An annual parking permit may not be needed for all students. Students should refer to their plan of study and the <a href="#">TU Parking</a> site to determine the best parking option to meet their needs.  New students for spring may receive prorated parking for their first term. This information does not include off-site clinical placement parking fees.

### Practicum Costs

The following estimates are specific to the health, certification, competency, and placement requirements for enrollment in NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum. This course is taken in a student's final semester in the degree completion option. For more details on the practicum requirements and placement process, refer to pages 14-15 of this handbook. Clinical requirements are detailed on pages 20-25 of this handbook.

DESCRIPTION	COST	COMMENTS
CPR/BLS Certification	\$80-100	Cost may vary by location and vendor.
Health Insurance	Varies by provider	Students may purchase through the TU <a href="#">Health Center</a> . Required for completion of practicum.
Vaccinations and/or Titers	Varies by provider	May be completed by your primary care provider or the TU <a href="#">Health Center</a> (appointment required).
Criminal Background Check and Urine Drug Screen	Varies by provider	Requirement may vary based on NURS 489 Practicum placement site.
Official Transcript with Completed Associate Degree in Nursing	Varies by School	Must be submitted to University Admissions immediately upon the conferral of associate degree in the ATB option or prior to start of RN-BS option.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### **General Contact Information**

- Email: [nursingdco@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdco@towson.edu)
- Phone: 410-704-4170
- Office: HP 5100

### **Degree Completion Advisory Team**

The following faculty and staff serve as academic advisors to students enrolled in the degree completion option. If you are not sure who to contact, please use the general contact information listed above for assistance.

#### **Dr. Elizabeth Crusse, DNP, MS, MA, RN, CNE**

Clinical Assistant Professor and Assistant Chairperson

- Email: [ecrusse@towson.edu](mailto:ecrusse@towson.edu)
- Phone: 410-704-4205 (Main Campus); 240-527-2726 (USMH Center)
- Office: HP 5110G (Main Campus); Room 402 (USMH Center)

#### **Ms. Lisa Shue**

Academic Program Manager

- Email: [lishue@towson.edu](mailto:lishue@towson.edu)
- Phone: 410-704-4384
- Office: HP 4120G

#### **Ms. Molly Sisson**

Nursing Admissions & Advisement Manager

- Email: [msisson@towson.edu](mailto:msisson@towson.edu)
- Phone: 410-704-2564
- Office: HP 4120E

### **Clinical Placement Team**

Email: [nursingdocs@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdocs@towson.edu)

Placement Team Members:

- Professor Megan Duffy, Clinical Placement Coordinator
- Ms. Arlene Cerebelli, Nursing Operations Specialist

**NOTE:** If any policy in this handbook directs you to submit materials or contact a member of the Department of Nursing through a specific email address, please use the email stated in the instructions and not the personal emails listed on this page. Submission of information to the correct email addresses is essential for optimal communication and operations within the department.

# DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

## B.S. DEGREE WITH A MAJOR IN NURSING – DEGREE COMPLETION

### Program Admission Requirements

Enrollment in the degree completion options requires completion of prerequisite courses that may not be included in the associate degree in nursing curriculum. If these courses are not part of the associate degree requirements, they must be completed prior to the first semester of the nursing major with a C (2.0) or higher. These requirements may be satisfied by the TU courses listed above or equivalent transfer credit.

- General Chemistry with Lab (4 credits) – TU CHEM 121 & 121L or CHEM 131 & 131L
- Microbiology with Lab (4 credits) – TU BIOL 215 or BIOL 318
- Nutrition for Health Professionals (3 credits) – TU HLTH 331

### Degree Completion Curriculum

Completion of the following nursing courses at Towson University fulfills the requirements for a bachelor’s degree with a major in nursing based on an active unencumbered Maryland or compact RN license.

Course Number	Course Name	Units	Format
NURS 333	Writing for Evidence-Based Practice ( <i>Core 9</i> )	3	F, H, O
NURS 349	Health Assessment and Health Promotion Across the Lifespan	4	F, H, O
NURS 416	Diversity & Social Justice in Healthcare ( <i>Core 13</i> )	3	F, O
NURS 435	Nursing Research for Evidence-Based Practice	3	F, O
NURS 460	Nursing & Healthcare IV: Older Adults	2	F, O
NURS 476	Public Health Nursing	3	F, O
NURS 484	Nursing Leadership and Management	3	F, O
NURS 489	Degree Completion Practicum – Clinical	3	F
Upper-Level Elective	Healthcare Ethics* – FMST 325, HCMN 441, IDHP 325, PHIL 361, or RLST 305	3	F, H, O
Upper-Level Elective	Health-Related Course – AADS, GERO, HCMN, HLTH, FMST, KNES, OCH	3	F, H, O

\*Other upper-level ethics courses may be taken for healthcare ethics requirement with advisor approval.

### **Course Format**

- **F = Face-to-Face:** More than 50% of the classroom activities are held in a traditional classroom environment. Face-to-face courses may still include some online activities throughout the course.
- **H = Hybrid:** Half or more that 50% of classroom activities are held in the online format.
- **O = Online:** All class activities are held in the online format. May be delivered asynchronously or synchronously.

Course format and offerings may vary each term depending on student interest, course enrollment, and department resources. Student preference for course format and location is not guaranteed throughout the option.

Space in courses and preferred formats or University locations are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Students are required to interact with their advisor each term for permission to enroll in courses. Students actively engaged with their advisor in a timely fashion increase the likelihood of receiving preferred course sections.

### ***Course Enrollment Requirements***

All NURS courses require admission to the degree completion option and department permission to enroll. Select courses have additional enrollment prerequisites that must be met before a student can enroll in the course. All prerequisite courses must be completed with a C (2.0) or higher to meet the enrollment requirements. Course numbers listed are TU course designations; equivalent transfer credit will be accepted in lieu of TU courses.

Please note the following courses with additional prerequisites:

- **NURS 349:** Enrollment in online format of course is limited to licensed RNs and/or students who have successfully completed a health assessment course at the community college.
- **NURS 435:** Completion of a basic statistics or biostatistics course (MATH 231, MATH 237, or PSYC 212)
- **NURS 460:** Completion of nursing foundations/fundamentals course and one adult health nursing course in the associate degree
- **NURS 476:** Completion of NURS 435 and conferred associate degree in nursing
- **NURS 484:** Conferred associate degree in nursing
- **NURS 489:** Completion of all other degree completion courses (NURS 476 & 484 or upper-level electives may be taken concurrently), conferred associate degree in nursing, and active, unencumbered RN licensure in Maryland or a compact state.
- **Healthcare Ethics**
  - **FMST 325:** Completion of FMST 101, PSYC 101, or SOCI 101; department consent
  - **HCMN 441:** Completion of HLTH 207 or department consent
  - **IDHP 325:** Completion of PSYC 101 or SOCI 101 and sophomore standing
  - **PHIL 361:** Completion of at least one lower-level (100-299) philosophy course or consent of the instructor
  - **RLST 305:** Completion of one course in a natural science, religious studies, philosophy, or consent of the instructor
- **Upper-level Electives:** Varies by course.

Enrollment in upper-level elective courses may require permission from the appropriate academic department even if a student has completed the prerequisite course. Students should work with their advisor to determine if they meet the enrollment requirements for their preferred electives and to obtain course permission to enroll.

### **Additional Requirements & Information**

Students must complete two upper-level electives (courses numbered 300-499). One elective must be a healthcare ethics course in order to satisfy the university ethics requirement. If an ethics course has already been taken, the upper-level elective healthcare ethics requirement may be satisfied by any upper-level elective course. Health-related courses are preferred and recommended for both electives.

Students must complete a minimum of 30 units at Towson University. The degree completion curriculum is designed to meet this requirement. Students who completed their first degree at TU and are pursuing a second degree in nursing must still take a minimum of 30 new credits even if upper-level electives from their first degree may be accepted.

## **RN Articulation Model and Transfer Credits**

### ***Maryland Nursing Articulation Model (RN to BS)***

Students in both degree completion options (ATB and RN-BS) receive transfer credits according to the Maryland Nursing Articulation Model. The following information is from the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON) website:

- No more than half of the baccalaureate degree, with a maximum of 70 non-nursing credits, will be accepted from a community college. Nursing credits will not be transferred. However, Registered Nurses with an active unencumbered Maryland or compact RN license articulating to the baccalaureate level are awarded a minimum of thirty (30) upper division nursing credits in the program they are entering.
- Under the Maryland Nursing Articulation Model, credits are awarded for transferable nursing and non-nursing courses at the college level. Vocational-technical and non-college general education courses do not transfer, subject to individual college policies. No more than half of the credits for a degree can be transfer credits.

### ***Towson RN Articulation Package***

In accordance with Towson University transfer credit and graduation requirements, students in the degree completion option receive the RN Articulation Package once they have met the conditions of the RN Articulation Model. The RN Articulation Package consists of two groups of credit posted to the TU transcript: up to 60 credits of nursing articulation credits and 30 upper-level nursing credits. The RN Articulation Package will be posted on the TU transcript by the University Admissions office once the Department of Nursing has verified a student's associate degree in nursing and RN licensure.

The maximum any student may receive in transfer is 90 credits. The total of Nursing Articulation Credits posted may be reduced from 60 depending on the total of non-nursing credits earned at the community college. Any Towson University coursework transferred to the community college and counted toward the associate degree in nursing will not be included in the total of the Nursing Articulation Credits.

RN-BS students receive the RN Articulation Package at the start of their program once they have met the admission requirements for the RN-BS option. RN-BS applicants who are licensed in Maryland or a compact state but have not completed an associate degree in nursing may be eligible to receive a partial package of 30 upper-level nursing credits and a course-by-course transfer credit evaluation according to University Admissions transfer credit policies.

ATB students receive the RN Articulation Package upon the completion of their associate degree and activation of their RN license. This typically occurs in the summer or winter after completing the associate degree and prior to a student's final term at TU. Students with other transfer credits on their TU transcript may have their previous transfer credit evaluation replaced by the RN Articulation Package.

Eligibility for the RN Articulation Package is required for enrollment in NURS 489 Practicum and will be verified by the Department. ATB students are responsible for submitting the official transcript and communicating licensure status updates needed to verify their eligibility. If a student's name changes during the program for any reason and their RN licensure application name is different from their academic record, it is the student's responsibility to communicate that to their advisor and the Academic Program Manager.

**Required Student Actions:**

- Submit an official transcript showing a conferred Associate Degree in Nursing to University Admissions
- Notify advisor when transcript has been sent and if any unexpected delays occur with sending the transcript
- Communicate NCLEX test date(s) and results and licensure status to advisor

The timeline for posting degrees to transcripts may vary by school, so students should confirm that their degree is posted on their unofficial transcript before sending an official transcript.

The Department will verify the conferred degree upon receipt of transcript and confirm RN licensure through the Maryland Board of Nursing (MBON) site. The Department will notify University Admissions when a student is verified as eligible for the RN Articulation Package. The package will be posted by the middle of the students' final term.

Failure to submit an official transcript or confirm RN licensure may disqualify a student from enrolling in NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum and cause a delay in graduation. Refer to the next section for more information on NURS 489 requirements.

**NURS 489 Nursing Degree Completion Practicum**

NURS 489 is the clinical practicum for the RN student with a focus on community-based, management and/or leadership. This course is the capstone of the degree completion option. Students must meet the following requirements to enroll in NURS 489 and receive a practicum placement:

- Admission to the degree completion option (ATB or RN-BS)
- Conferred associate degree in nursing
- Senior standing
- Possession of an active, unencumbered RN license in Maryland or a compact state
- Completion of all other degree completion curriculum courses (NURS 476 and NURS 484 or upper-level electives may be taken concurrently).
- Completion of clinical practice requirements for practicum placement

Degree completion nursing students must meet certain clinical practice requirements, including health and vaccination requirements, certifications, competencies, and other placement requirements prior to the start of this capstone course. These requirements are provided in the *Clinical Placement Requirements for Practicum* section on pages 20-25 of this handbook. Students are responsible for meeting and maintaining these requirements at the start of and throughout the course. Clinical practice requirements vary by clinical placement site and student employment status. Additional facility-specific requirements will be communicated to students following confirmation of placement assignments. Due to the complexity of student clinical placement, permission to register for NURS 489 will only be granted after students have completed the process to verify intent to enroll and eligibility for placement outlined on page 15. Information sessions about practicum requirements, deadlines, and workload expectations will be held virtually each term prior to the deadlines on page 15; attendance is strongly encouraged.

### ***Practicum Registration Process***

Students who do not adhere to the notification deadlines outlined in this policy will not receive priority consideration for clinical placement.

1. Students must meet with their advisor in the term before they plan to complete NURS 489 to discuss remaining degree requirements, practicum eligibility, and the graduation process.
  - a. Students must notify their advisor via email that they intend to take practicum by the notification deadlines of October 15<sup>th</sup> for spring practicum and February 15<sup>th</sup> for summer or fall practicum.
2. The Clinical Placement Team will distribute a clinical placement survey to all practicum-eligible students. This survey must be submitted by the deadlines of November 1<sup>st</sup> for spring practicum and March 1<sup>st</sup> for summer or fall practicum.
3. Instructions for completing practicum eligibility requirements will be communicated to students via email by the clinical placement coordinator after the survey deadline.
  - a. RN licensure and a conferred associate degree are required as part of the practicum eligibility process. Deadlines for transcript submission and license verification will be communicated via email. Failure to submit an official transcript with a conferred associate degree or verify licensure may disqualify a student from clinical placement for that term.
4. Once a student meets all clinical practice requirements and a placement is secured, they must confirm acceptance of the placement in order to receive course permissions. Students with an assigned placement will receive course permission to enroll in a placeholder section for NURS 489 and be given instructions to complete facility-specific requirements.
5. Once all facility requirements are completed, students will be given course permission to register for their assigned section of NURS 489.
6. Students registered for practicum must attend a course orientation in the first week of the term.

If a student decides to delay their practicum to a later term at any point during the process outlined above, they must immediately email their advisor and the Clinical Placement Team to notify them of this decision. Students will be required to complete a new survey in the next term if they delay their practicum. Students who neglect to communicate a change in their practicum plans may not receive priority consideration for clinical placement in future terms.

### **Practicum Notification Deadlines**

#### **Spring Practicum**

- Notify Advisor – October 15<sup>th</sup>
- Submit Placement Survey – November 1<sup>st</sup>

#### **Summer Practicum**

- Notify Advisor – March 1<sup>st</sup>
- Submit Placement Survey – March 15<sup>th</sup>

#### **Fall Practicum**

- Notify Advisor – March 1<sup>st</sup>
- Submit Placement Survey – March 15<sup>th</sup>

## **Graduation Clearance**

Students must apply for graduation by the appropriate deadline for their final term (the term in which NURS 489 will be completed). This is required in order for students to be cleared for graduation at the end of the term. The graduation application is completed through the online Student Dashboard. For more information about graduation, visit <https://www.towson.edu/registrar/graduation/apply.html>.

### **Graduation Application Deadlines**

- Spring – January 15<sup>th</sup>
- Summer – July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Fall – August 15<sup>th</sup>

All TU degree requirements and nursing major requirements must be completed by the end of the term in which you apply for graduation. This includes the successful completion of the degree completion curriculum and meeting the requirements for the RN Articulation Package.

Once a student applies for graduation, the Department will collaborate with the Graduation Office and University Admissions to review student records and clear students for graduation. During the ATB graduation clearance process, students' Academic Requirements (AR) report will be updated to reflect the completion of any pending degree requirements. This may include posting of the RN Articulation Package (for ATB students) and applying a students' second upper-level elective to the healthcare ethics requirement if they were not required to complete an ethics course. Students must note that, due to the timing of this process, their AR report may reflect that they have not satisfied all degree requirements by the graduation application deadlines. Students should not be concerned if their AR suggests that some requirements are not satisfied at the start of their final term. Students will not be advised to apply for graduation and permitted to enroll in practicum unless they will be eligible to graduate in that term. ATB graduation clearance is typically completed for within a month of the start of the term; after that, AR reports will correctly reflect the completion of all degree requirements.

In the event that a student's graduation is delayed after they submit an application, they must notify the Graduation Office in order to register for classes for the next term.

# **POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

## STANDARDS AND FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES FOR NURSING STUDENTS

The Towson University Department of Nursing undergraduate nursing major is a rigorous and intense program that will require both mental and physical functional ability as the student accepts responsibility and accountability for the care of clients in a variety of health care settings. The nursing major prepares graduates to function as clinicians at the bedside and in beginning leadership roles. It also provides the foundation for graduate education. The functional standards set forth are the essential standards considered necessary for the student to attain the knowledge, skills and competencies necessary for the entry-level nurse.

The National Council of State Boards of Nursing has identified functional abilities required for nursing students and professionals. The Department of Nursing has adopted these basic standards as requirements for all nursing students. Students admitted into the nursing major must be able to meet the expectations of the program and clinical sites. Students are required to perform activities with or without reasonable accommodations in the classroom, lab and clinical settings. In order to be considered for accommodation, the student must submit appropriate documentation of their disability to the Office of Accessibility and Disability Services (ADS) at Towson University. ADS will engage in an interactive process with the student, the Department of Nursing, and the College of Health Professions to determine eligibility and reasonable accommodations, as appropriate.

The following standards and functional abilities are expectations of students in the nursing major; they are not requirements for admission into the nursing program. Individuals applying for admission to the nursing program should review these functional standards to better understand how they may address any disability or limitation through reasonable accommodation. It is recommended that students consult with ADS as they consider what reasonable accommodation may be appropriate to mitigate the impact of a disability (e.g., amplified stethoscope, writing aids/software, stand-up wheelchair).

<b><u>Ability Group</u></b>	<b><u>Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Functional Abilities</u></b>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Ability sufficient for clinical judgment	Identify cause and effect relationship. Problem solving. Predict and evaluation outcomes. Sequence information.
<b>Reading</b>	Ability to comprehend English language via written word and computerized English language skills	Read documents including but not limited to protocols, policies, graphs, computer screens and bedside monitors.
<b>Arithmetic</b>	Ability to perform mathematical computations in order to safely calculate and convert medication dosages, weight, and other forms of measurements	Add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers. Compute fractions and decimals. Measure time, calculate medication dosage and count rates.
<b>Hearing</b>	Ability to clearly receive and interpret sounds	Auscultate and interpret sound from within the organ systems of the body. Physically respond to voices, alarms, and emergency signals.
<b>Visual</b>	Ability to clearly visual the client, equipment, and environment.	Observe and inspect client visible appearance. Observe client response or condition. Distinguish color and intensity. Prepare medications, visualize measuring increments, read monitors and computer screens.

<b><u>Ability Group</u></b>	<b><u>Standard</u></b>	<b><u>Functional Abilities</u></b>
<b>Smell</b>	Ability sufficient to detect environmental odors	Detect foul smelling odors. Detect smoke and gases.
<b>Physical Strength &amp; Endurance</b>	Ability to perform full range of patient care activities	Perform nursing duties for long periods of time at client bedside. Push/pull/support light and heavy objects. Carry equipment. Support clients in ambulation, positioning, and standing.
<b>Motor Skills</b>	Ability to provide safe and effective nursing care	Position clients. Obtain specimens. Calibrate instruments and equipment. Prepare and administer medications. Reach, bend and grasp with ease; fine motor skills
<b>Mobility</b>	Ability sufficient to move within confined space	Move adequately in confined patient care areas. Move quickly. Grasp with ease. Administer repetitive movements (e.g., CPR).
<b>Tactile</b>	Ability to touch and feel	Perform hands-on physical assessment.
<b>Communication</b>	Ability for interaction with others using verbal, written and computerized English language skills	Convey accurate information through speech and writing. Teach and explain procedures. Document and interpret nursing action and client response.
<b>Interpersonal Skills</b>	Ability to appropriately interact with others in a respectful manner	Establish rapport with client, family, staff and colleagues; respect differences, negotiate interpersonal conflicts.

### References

- Adapted from Good Samaritan College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Standards and Functional Abilities for Nursing Students. Retrieved from <https://gscollege.edu>.
- Adapted from Southeast Arkansas College. Functional Ability Requirements for Nursing and Allied Health Students. Retrieved from <http://www.seark.edu>.
- Adapted from Winona State University Graduate Nursing Department. Functional Abilities Statement (Student and Health Care Provider). Retrieved from <http://www.winona.edu/graduatenuing>.
- Adapted from Lakeshore Technical College Nursing Assistant Program. Functional Abilities for Nursing Assistant Program. Retrieved from <https://gotoltc.edu/>.
- Adapted from Towson University Department of Kinesiology. Athletic Training: Technical Standards for Admission. Retrieved from <http://www.towson.edu/kinesiology/athletictraining>.
- Adapted from "A Validation Study: Functional Abilities Essential for Nursing Practices" by Carolyn J. Yocum, National Council of State Boards of Nursing. 1996. Retrieved from <https://www.ncsbn.org>.
- National Council of State Boards of Nursing. (1999). Guidelines for using results of functional abilities studies and other resources. Chicago, IL: Author.

March 2013; June 2013

## CLINICAL PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICUM

Degree completion nursing students must meet certain initial and ongoing health and vaccination, certification, competency, and placement requirements for participation in the clinical experience for NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum. Additional requirements will vary by clinical placement site. Students are responsible for obtaining and maintaining these requirements throughout their clinical experience.

The process and deadlines for completing program and facility-specific requirements will be communicated to students according to the *Practicum Registration Process* on page 15 of this handbook. Failure to meet all program and facility requirements by assigned due dates will hinder a student's ability to receive a placement and/or register in the practicum course. Students who do not maintain compliance with the requirements during the clinical experience will not be eligible for clinical participation and are at risk for course failure.

Students must regularly monitor their Towson University email for updates regarding the practicum placement process, including document submission deadlines and course placement requirements. For any questions or issues concerning program requirements, contact the Clinical Placement Team at [nursingdocs@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdocs@towson.edu).

### **MEDICAL, CERTIFICATION, SCREENING, AND INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

REQUIREMENT	CRITERIA
Active CastleBranch Account/Document Submission	<p><b>Requirement:</b> An active CastleBranch account is recommended in order to complete program and facility-specific clinical practice requirements for NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum. Students who already have an active CastleBranch account may use their current account to share documents with the Clinical Placement Team. Students who do not have an active CastleBranch account will need to purchase a new account with the medical record tracker.</p> <p><b>Stipulation:</b> Email submission may be accepted with the understanding that students accept the potential security risk of sending medical documents through email.</p>
Criminal Background Check	<p>NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum requires placement at an off-campus clinical location. Most facilities require a criminal background check to be completed within the last 365 days for placement. <b>Students should not purchase a background check unless instructed to do so by the Clinical Placement Team.</b></p> <p>Students may be required to undergo another background check after the clinical placement has begun in accordance with the facilities' policies. Facilities reserve the right to undertake criminal background checks and drug screening to ensure the student has not been convicted of or is currently charged with a criminal offense relevant to the experience.</p> <p>If required by the facility, the background check must be clear of exclusionary offenses. A background check clear of exclusionary offenses is required. Criminal background check results will be available to the student and facilities only. Towson University does not review results. Exclusion from placement will result for any of the following offenses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Murder</li> <li>▪ Arson</li> <li>▪ Assault, battery, assault and battery, assault with a dangerous weapon, mayhem, or threats to do bodily harm</li> <li>▪ Burglary</li> <li>▪ Robbery</li> <li>▪ Kidnapping</li> <li>▪ Theft, fraud, forgery, extortion, or blackmail</li> <li>▪ Illegal use or possession of a firearm</li> <li>▪ Rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, or sexual abuse</li> <li>▪ Child abuse or cruelty to children</li> <li>▪ Unlawful distribution or possession with intent to distribute a controlled substance</li> </ul>

REQUIREMENT	CRITERIA
Urine Drug Screen	<p>NURS 489 Degree Completion Practicum requires placement at an off-campus clinical location. Most facilities require a urine drug screen to be completed within the last 365 days for placement. <b>Students should not purchase a drug screen unless instructed to do so by the Clinical Placement Team.</b></p> <p>If required by the facility, a Ten (10) Panel non-DOT Drug Test with negative results is required. Students may be required to undergo another urine drug screen after the clinical placement has begun in accordance with the facilities' policies. Facilities reserve the right to undertake drug screening to ensure the student is clinically compliant and appropriate to attend the facility.</p> <p>If a urine drug screen is required by a facility, students will receive instructions from the Clinical Placement team to purchase a new drug screen or share their drug screen results from another CastleBranch account at the time of NURS 489 placement.</p> <p>The drug screen results will be available to the student and facilities only. Towson University does not review results.</p>
MMR (Measles-Mumps-Rubella) Vaccination	<p><b>Requirement:</b> A positive antibody titer laboratory result is required as proof of immunity against MMR (Rubeola IgG, Mumps IgG, Rubella IgG). Documentation must include the student's name and date of birth, the name of the antibody tested, the date the results were received, and the antibody result.</p> <p><b>Stipulations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vaccination dates alone are not acceptable.</li> <li>▪ If the titer result is negative or equivocal, documentation of one booster vaccination is required. A repeat titer is not required.</li> </ul>
Varicella (Chicken Pox) Vaccination	<p><b>Requirement:</b> A positive antibody titer laboratory result is required as proof of immunity against Varicella IgG. Documentation must include the student's name and date of birth, the name of the antibody tested, the date the results were received, and the antibody result.</p> <p><b>Stipulations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Vaccination dates alone are not acceptable.</li> <li>▪ If the titer result is negative or equivocal, documentation of one booster vaccination is required. A repeat titer is not required.</li> </ul>
Hepatitis B Vaccination	<p><b>Requirement:</b> Proof of immunity to Hepatitis B must be confirmed through blood work. Immunity achieved through immunization or previous exposure may be verified by submitting one of the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Option 1:</b> A positive antibody titer laboratory result is required as proof of immunity against Hepatitis B.</li> <li>▪ <b>Option 2:</b> If the titer result is negative or equivocal, documentation of one booster vaccination is required. If the vaccination series is in progress, students must complete and the <a href="#">TU Declination Waiver</a>. Repeat titer not required.</li> <li>▪ <b>Option 3:</b> A document of the 2 or 3-dose booster vaccination series with a negative antibody titer result <b>and</b> the completion of the <a href="#">TU Declination Waiver</a>.</li> <li>▪ <b>Option 4:</b> Refuse the vaccination series by completing the <a href="#">TU Declination Waiver</a>.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stipulation:</b> Vaccination dates alone are <b>not acceptable</b>.</p>
Tetanus, Diphtheria & Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccination	<p><b>Requirement:</b> Students must have received a Tdap booster within the last 10 years and receive a Tdap booster upon expiration, if applicable, to remain in clinical compliance. Documentation must include the student's name and date of birth, the date the vaccination was received, and the vaccine name.</p>

REQUIREMENT	CRITERIA
Influenza (Flu) Vaccination	<b>Requirement:</b> Flu vaccination for the <i>current</i> flu season is required. Flu season is designated as August 1 <sup>st</sup> through March 1 <sup>st</sup> . Documentation must include the student's name and date of birth, the date the vaccination was received, and the vaccine name.
COVID-19 Vaccination	<b>Requirement:</b> Students must be vaccinated against COVID-19. Documentation of vaccinations and boosters must include the student's name, the date each vaccination was received, and manufacturer of each vaccination received.  <b>Stipulation:</b> See "Exemptions to Vaccination Policy" below if needed.
Exemptions to Vaccination Policy	Students may request a medical or religious exemption for vaccination requirements. Clinical facilities are not required to recognize these exemptions. Medical and religious exemptions may be reviewed by the Department Chairperson for approval. Documentation and request for Chairperson approval should be submitted to the Clinical Placement Team.  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Medical Exemption:</b> When a student has a medical condition that does not permit them to be immunized. A statement is required initially and annually thereafter, as applicable to the requirement. Documentation must include: the student's name and date of birth, a statement from a Health Care Provider that the student has a medical condition the does not permit them to be immunized. The Health Care Provider must sign and date this document. If the medical condition is temporary, the student is expected to comply with the immunization requirement(s) when the exemption expires.</li> <li>▪ <b>Religious Exemption:</b> When a student has a religious belief that does not permit them to be immunized. Documentation must include the student's name, date of birth, written, notarized, &amp; dated documentation from a religious authority explaining the need for religious exemption.</li> </ul>
Government Issued Photo ID	Students must have valid, government-issued photo identification. Documentation must include a copy of a valid driver's license, state ID, or passport that is NOT expired.
TU Rights and Responsibilities Form	Students must acknowledge their rights and responsibilities with regards to the criminal background check and urine screen for clinical placement. This form is downloaded from CastleBranch, signed, dated, and submitted to CastleBranch prior to the start of the program.
Health Insurance	Students must provide evidence of health insurance coverage (including Emergency Room coverage) prior to clinical placement and maintain coverage for the duration of placement. Documentation must include photo evidence of the front and back of the health insurance card is required.
TU Liability Waiver and Release Form	This form is required for any TU student in an experiential learning activity. This form must be completed prior to receiving a clinical placement for NURS 489. The form can be downloaded from Blackboard, signed, dated, and submitted according to the instructions provided on Blackboard.
N95 Fit Testing	An N95 fit test must be completed within the last 365 days prior to the start of NURS 489. Students must remain compliant with this requirement for entire clinical experience.  Documentation must include the student's name, the date of completion for the N95 fit test within the last 365 days, and the specific size mask that was fitted.

REQUIREMENT	CRITERIA
Tuberculosis Screening	<p><b>Requirement:</b> Evidence of a negative tuberculosis test must be completed within the last 365 days at the start of the program and <b>annually</b> thereafter for the duration of the program. Documentation must include the student’s name and date of birth, the name of the screening test, the date the result was received, and the result.</p> <p>There are four options for documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>Option 1:</b> A 2-step TB skin test (administered 1-3 weeks apart). For example, on day 1, the PPD placed and read 2-3 days later (Step 1). Within 1-3 weeks of initial PPD placement, another PPD is placed and read 2-3 days later (Step 2).</li> <li>○ <b>Option 2:</b> QuantiFERON Gold Blood Test.</li> <li>○ <b>Option 3:</b> T-Spot Blood Test.</li> <li>○ <b>Option 4:</b> For those with a history of positive TB test results, a chest X-Ray report must show clear or no evidence of active disease.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stipulation:</b> If a test result is <b>newly positive</b>, the student must submit a chest X-Ray and Tuberculosis symptom assessment that is obtained from and signed by the student’s Health Care Provider verifying the student is free from Tuberculosis. The Chest X-Ray date must be after the date of the positive test.</p>
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)/Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification	<p><b>Requirement:</b> A current <b>CPR/BLS certification for Healthcare Provider</b> is required. A current CPR/BLS certification for Healthcare Provider is required. This certification must be completed within the last 2 years and remain active for the duration of clinical placement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The certification course must be approved by the <a href="#">American Heart Association</a> or the <a href="#">American Red Cross</a>. The course content may be completed online or in-person. The hands-on skills training must be completed <b>in person</b>.</li> <li>▪ Documentation must include the name of the organization in which the student obtain certification as well as the certification course title (ex: “American Heart Association BLS Provider” or “American Red Cross BLS Healthcare Provider”) with the student’s name, and date of expiration.</li> </ul> <p><b>Stipulation:</b> Online skills training, virtual simulations, and courses in Adult/Child/Baby First Aid/CPR/AED or Basic CPR are <b>not accepted</b>.</p>
Universal Onboarding Modules	<p>Completion of 11 competency modules with a score of 80% or greater is required prior to clinical placement. Evidence of completion for all competencies must be submitted in the form of a Certificate of Completion including the student’s name, date of completion, and title of the modules.</p> <p>The modules are located on Blackboard in the Nursing Program Community Site under the Clinical Placement Info tab. Please follow instructions to access, complete, and submit the correct document.</p> <p>The 11 competencies include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Corporate Compliance &amp; Code of Conduct</li> <li>▪ Cultural Competency &amp; Respect</li> <li>▪ Hospital Quality Measures</li> <li>▪ Infection Control &amp; Exposure Prevention</li> <li>▪ Patient Bill of Rights &amp; Responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Patient Confidentiality, HIPAA, &amp; PHI</li> <li>▪ Personal Protective Equipment &amp; Transmission Based Precautions</li> <li>▪ Fire/Electrical Safety/Hazmat/Radiation Safety</li> <li>▪ Safe Patient Handling</li> <li>▪ Patient Care &amp; Protection</li> <li>▪ Workplace Safety</li> </ul>

## CLINICAL & PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION
Changes in Health Status	<p>Students must notify the Department of Nursing of any changes in their health status which may influence their ability to function in the clinical setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Faculty have the right to direct a student to leave the clinical setting if they believe a student is not physically or mentally competent to function safely in the clinical area.</li> <li>▪ The Department of Nursing reserves the right to require an updated physical examination or psychiatric evaluation if the student may not be physically or mentally competent in the clinical setting.</li> <li>▪ Required documentation/next steps to be determined based on the student's situation.</li> </ul>
Standards & Functional Abilities	<p>The National Council of State Boards of Nursing has identified functional abilities required for nursing students and professionals. The Department of Nursing has adopted these basic standards as requirements for all nursing students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Refer to page 13-14 of the Student Handbook for the Standards and Functional Abilities for Nursing Students.</li> <li>▪ The program is a rigorous and intense program of study that requires both mental and physical ability as the student accepts responsibility and accountability for the care of patients in a variety of health care settings.</li> <li>▪ The Nursing major prepares graduates to function as clinicians at the bedside and in beginning leadership roles. The program also provides the foundation for graduate education.</li> <li>▪ The functional standards are the essential standards considered necessary for the student to obtain the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for the entry level nurse.</li> </ul>
Transportation	<p>Students must be able to provide their own transportation to and from clinical settings and between clinical facilities. Students must be on time for clinical experiences. Reliance on public transportation is not an excuse for tardiness.</p>
Cell phones and/or mobile devices	<p>Cell phones and/or pagers <b>are not</b> permitted in the clinical setting except under "special" or "necessary" circumstances. Any exception to this requires faculty approval.</p>

## EQUIPMENT & UNIFORM REQUIREMENTS

REQUIREMENT	DESCRIPTION
Equipment	<p>Equipment requirements may vary by clinical placement setting. Students will be expected to bring the appropriate health assessment equipment (e.g., stethoscope) as recommended by their preceptor.</p>
TU OneCard	<p>All TU students should have a <a href="#">OneCard</a> as student identification. This may be required as identification for entry to the placement facility.</p>
Uniform/Dress Code	<p>Uniform and dress code requirements may vary by clinical placement setting. Students should wear scrubs and closed-toe shoes unless otherwise directed by their preceptor. Students are expected to adhere to any additional dress code requirements of the placement facility while in the clinical setting.</p>

## **FACILITY PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

<b>REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
Facility Placement Requirements	<p>Based on the clinical placement location, students must complete additional facility-specific requirements prior to the start of their practicum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Additional requirements vary by clinical location. These will be communicated to students after a placement is confirmed.</li><li>▪ Students must complete all facility requirements by assigned due dates to receive permission to enroll in NURS 489. Failure to do so will prevent students from registering for the practicum course and therefore retain their placement.</li><li>▪ Facility-specific expectations will be communicated via email and in the Degree Completion Nursing organization on Blackboard.</li><li>▪ Students should not complete any facility-specific requirements until directed to do so by the Clinical Placement Team.</li></ul>

## CODE OF CONDUCT

Unless otherwise stated, policies refer to students in both the degree completion option and basic/pre-licensure option. All Towson University nursing students are held to the standards of practice, professional performance, and ethical behavior described in Maryland Nurse Practice Act and the National Student Nurses' Association.

State law codifies the Maryland Nurse Practice Act. It delineates the roles, responsibilities, and standards of conduct under which all nurses must practice. Students are referred to **The Nurse Practice Act**, which can be accessed at <http://mbon.maryland.gov/Pages/nurse-practice-act.aspx> (Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses COMAR 10.27.09. Code of Ethics COMAR 10.27.19).

The National Student Nurses' Association Code of Conduct specifically addresses the roles, responsibilities, standards of practice, and professional behavior expected of all student nurses. A summary of professional behavior can be found in Appendix C. The National Student Nurses' Association Code of Conduct in its entirety can be accessed online at <http://www.nsna.org/nsna-code-of-ethics.html>.

All students are held accountable to the standards of practice, professional performance, and ethical behavior described in the aforementioned documents as well as department policies and procedures and the Towson University Code of Student Conduct described in *Appendix F* of the Undergraduate Catalog at <https://catalog.towson.edu> or the Student Affairs website at <https://www.towson.edu/studentaffairs/policies/conduct.html>.

Revision 12/16

## FORMAL COMPLAINTS

A formal complaint is one received in writing by the Department Chairperson from a student or other constituent about matters other than a grade appeal.

## COPYRIGHT

Instructor lectures and course materials, including, but not limited to PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. The instructor is the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own use; however, students may not, nor may students allow others to, reproduce, or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly whether or not a fee is charged without the instructors' express written consent. Similarly, students own copyright in their original papers and exam essays. If an instructor is interested in posting students answers or papers on the course site, the instructor will ask students for written permission.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRESSION & ADVISING**

### **Advising Requirements**

To ensure successful degree completion, students are assigned to a TU nursing advisor. Students are encouraged to communicate with their advisor regularly. Advisors will communicate with students through TU email addresses and reserve the right to refuse communication through personal emails. Students must regularly check their TU student email for advising and program communications. Students are required to communicate with their assigned advisor in order to receive permission to enroll in any courses. An advising meeting is required prior to fall and spring registration; email communication is acceptable for minimester and summer registration. Advising sessions may be offered through in-person, video meetings, or telephone calls. Students completing video meetings are expected to conduct their advising sessions with the camera turned on in a location with minimal noise and stable internet.

Students are required to meet with their advisor in the term before they plan to complete NURS 489 to discuss remaining degree requirements, practicum eligibility, and the graduation process.

### **Associate-to-Bachelor's (ATB) Progression**

Students admitted to the Towson University (TU) Nursing major's Associate-to-Bachelor's (ATB) degree completion option are assigned to a cohort and a plan of study based upon their ATB and community college nursing admission terms. ATB students must maintain continuous, year-round enrollment (including minimester and summer terms) and adhere to their assigned plan of study. Students who do not follow their assigned plan of study are not guaranteed degree completion in the typical program length or space availability in required courses taken outside of their prescribed plan.

The ATB plan of study requires dual enrollment during the course of the associate degree. Students will receive placeholder credits on their TU transcript during terms in which they are only registered for community college courses. These placeholder credits are used to monitor progression and total enrollment across both institutions. Students may not skip the TU courses in their ATB plan of study and continue to receive placeholder credits on their TU transcript. A maximum of one term of TU coursework may be delayed to a later term with the approval of the student's ATB advisor. If a student does not enroll in the prescribed TU courses for two terms, they will not receive any further placeholder credits for community college course until they have enrolled in TU courses again.

The ATB plans of study are carefully designed to align students' community college enrollment with appropriate TU courses. Any delay in progression through the associate degree program requires a student's TU course plan to be adjusted accordingly. Students are expected to communicate any community college progression issues to their TU advisor to ensure that their TU course plan remains accurate and appropriately aligned with their community college courses.

### **Registered Nurse to B.S. (RN-BS) Progression**

The Registered Nurse to B.S. (RN-BS) option allows students to complete the degree completion curriculum at a pace that works best for them. All new RN-BS students will meet with an assigned advisor prior to their first term to develop

a degree completion plan based on their individual needs and goals. The program can be completed in as little as one to one and half years, depending on the program start term, or it can be completed one course at a time over 2-3 years. Continuous, year-round enrollment, including summer and minimester, is strongly encouraged for RN-BS students.

The Department recognizes that RN-BS students are typically working nurses who may need to adjust their plan of study based on changes to work schedules and/or to balance the demands of school and work. To ensure successful degree completion, RN-BS students must communicate with their advisor about any changes to their plan of study as soon as possible.

### **Course Registration Procedure**

Registration in any nursing course requires department permission. Course permissions are granted according to the student's plan of study and only after correspondence with their assigned TU advisor. Advisors will communicate with students each term regarding upcoming enrollment. Student preference for course format, location, or instructor is not guaranteed throughout the option. Course permissions are distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis according to space availability. Failure to respond in a timely manner increases the chances of a student not getting a seat in their planned course(s). Once permission is granted for the course, the advisor will notify the student of their assigned course sections.

The student must enroll themselves in assigned courses through their online Student Dashboard. Students are expected to register for assigned course(s) promptly after registration begins for the term. Course permissions will expire a week prior to the course if they are not used. The Department of Nursing reserves the right to assign an earlier expiration date for permissions if deemed necessary. If permission(s) expire, they will only be granted new permission(s) if there is space available in the course(s).

### ***Upper-Level Elective Permissions***

If it is deemed necessary, advisors may help facilitate registration in high-demand upper-level electives by requesting registration permission from departments on a students' behalf. Students may be notified of their permission to register in upper-level electives by the academic department offering that course. Permission to register in another department's course does not constitute a reserved seat in the course. Students must register promptly to secure their seat in an upper-level elective course. If a student neglects to use their elective permission before the class fills up, they will be responsible for identifying an alternate course and securing registration permission directly from the department. Advisors may choose to assist with alternative elective registration at their discretion.

### **Minimum Grades for Academic Progression**

Students must achieve a C (72) or greater in each nursing theory course and a satisfactory (S) in each clinical nursing course to satisfactorily complete the course. Achievement of a grade below a C (72) in a theory course or an unsatisfactory (U) evaluation of a clinical course outcome constitutes course failure.

## CONTINUOUS ENROLLMENT

Students in the degree completion are expected to maintain continuous enrollment as a Towson University student. Continuous enrollment is defined as enrollment in consecutive fall and spring terms. For terms in which ATB students do not take any TU courses per their plan of study, ATB placeholder credits will satisfy the continuous enrollment requirement. The ATB plans of study require year-round enrollment, including summer and minimester terms. RN-BS students are encouraged to maintain year-round enrollment and may be required to take summer or minimester courses based on course availability.

If a student is unable to maintain continuous enrollment based on their assigned cohort/plan of study, they may request a one-term Leave of Absence (LOA) or a voluntary withdrawal from the option. Please refer to the policies and procedures for LOA and withdrawal below.

### **Leave of Absence (LOA)**

Students who wish to remain in the degree completion option but cannot maintain continuous enrollment according to their plan of study may request a one-term leave of absence (LOA) from their assigned cohort/plan of study. For ATB students, an LOA request is only appropriate if the student will not be enrolled in courses at both institutions for a fall or spring term. If a student will be enrolled at one or both schools and off-track from their assigned plan of study, they should discuss an adjusted plan of study with their advisor instead of requesting an LOA. For RN-BS students, an LOA request is only appropriate if the student will not be taking any TU courses for the fall or spring term.

To request a leave of absence, students must complete the following steps:

- 1) Contact nursing advisor to discuss the LOA policy and obtain a copy of the *Request for Leave of Absence (LOA)* form.
- 2) Submit the completed LOA request form and a brief written statement explaining the reason for the LOA to the Academic Program Manager at [nursingdco@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdco@towson.edu).
  - a. ATB students must also provide a copy of the letter or email approving their LOA from the community college program. If the community college LOA request is still pending, the student must indicate this in their email when submitting the form.
- 3) Confirmation of form receipt will be sent to the student's TU email address. The assigned TU advisor and community college ATB coordinator (for ATB students only) will be copied on the email.

Only one LOA may be granted from the time of formal admission through the completion of their bachelor's degree requirements. Requests for an extended LOA beyond one term may be considered on an individual basis. However, if a student requires an LOA longer than two terms, they are encouraged to voluntarily withdraw from the program instead and request reinstatement or re-apply when they are ready to return (see page 30 and pages 32-24 for policies).

The Department of Nursing's Admissions and Continuance Committee will review LOA requests. The Department reserves the right to deny a LOA request. An LOA does not extend the time period for finishing an incomplete grade. The LOA is void if a student registers for courses in a semester for which it was granted. It is the student's responsibility to contact their nursing advisor prior to returning from their LOA for advising and course permissions. Students returning from an LOA must also reenroll at the university in order to resume their program (see page 30).

### **Voluntary Withdrawal**

Students who no longer wish to pursue the Nursing major or need to withdraw from the major for more time than a leave of absence would allow must notify the Department of Nursing of their decision to withdraw. Students who wish to change their major and continue enrollment at Towson University in another degree field must also submit a Change of Major form.

To declare voluntary withdrawal from the degree completion option, students must complete the following steps:

- 1) Contact nursing advisor to discuss the voluntary withdrawal and reinstatement policies and obtain a copy of the *Notice of Voluntary Withdrawal* form.
- 2) Submit the completed form to the Academic Program Manager at [nursingdco@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdco@towson.edu).
  - a. The Department of Nursing asks that students provide a brief reason for their withdrawal. While this information is not required, it helps the Department of Nursing to know why students leave and to maintain accurate student records.
- 3) Confirmation of form receipt will be sent to the student's TU email address. The assigned TU advisor and community college ATB coordinator (for ATB students only) will be copied on the email.
  - a. ATB students who withdraw from the degree completion option but intend to continue in the community college nursing program may need to notify their community college financial aid office or submit an updated FAFSA form if using financial aid.

Submission of this form grants permission to the Department of Nursing to change your major from nursing to pre-nursing or undecided on your behalf. Students withdrawing from both the community college nursing program and the degree completion option at TU are responsible for notifying both institutions of their decision. Students who withdraw from the degree completion option in good academic standing may be eligible to return at a later date. Refer to the reinstatement policies and procedures on pages 32-34 of this handbook for more information.

### **Withdrawal due to Inactivity**

The Department reserves the right to withdraw students from the nursing major in the event that they do not maintain continuous enrollment, request an LOA or voluntary withdrawal, register for classes, and/or respond to advising communications for two or more terms. The Department will make at least two attempts to contact inactive students using the contact information on file in their student record prior to withdrawing them from the major.

Students who are withdrawn due to inactivity are eligible to return provided they meet the admission and continuance criteria of the major. Refer to the reinstatement policies and procedures on pages 32-34 of this handbook for more information.

### **University Reenrollment**

Degree-seeking undergraduate students who did not attend TU for at least one spring or fall term must submit a reenrollment application along with the required reenrollment fee. Students must adhere to the reenrollment deadlines, policies, and procedures outlined at <https://www.towson.edu/registrar/reenrollment.html>. Listing nursing as the major on the university reenrollment application does not guarantee reinstatement. Students must follow the reinstatement or reapplication policies on pages 32-34 of this handbook even if they have already reenrolled at the university.

## ACADEMIC STANDING & CONTINUANCE

### **Course Attempt & Repeat Limit Policy**

The Department of Nursing limits the number of nursing course withdrawals, failures, and/or unsatisfactory (U) clinical grades to one course beginning with a student's first term in the major. A student will be dismissed from the nursing major if they have two or more unsuccessful attempts or withdrawals in nursing courses from the time they matriculate into the major. Students who are dismissed from the major can follow the Appeal of Program Dismissal policy on page 38 of this handbook. A student's dismissal appeal must be approved before they request course repeats.

Note the following policies in regard to course attempts and repeat limits:

- Individual nursing courses may be repeated only once.
- A withdrawal from a nursing course is considered an attempt of the course.
- A student must request permission from the Admissions and Continuance Committee to repeat a course. If a student is permitted to repeat a course, reenrollment in that course is dependent upon space availability.
- Failure to achieve a passing grade of a C (72) in any repeated or attempted nursing theory or clinical course mandates automatic dismissal from the nursing major.
- A second unsatisfactory grade in any repeated or attempted nursing theory or clinical course mandates automatic dismissal from the nursing major.
- If a student is unsuccessful in two courses, either the same course twice or two separate courses, the student will be automatically dismissed from the nursing major.

### **Procedure to Request Course Repeats**

Students must petition to repeat any course they drop, withdraw from, fail, or complete with an unsatisfactory clinical grade. Any student who must repeat a course must follow this procedure:

- 1) Write a professional business letter addressed to the Admissions and Continuance Committee with their name, TU ID number, and the following details:
  - a) Specific request of the course(s) you wish to retake
  - b) Factors that contributed to course withdrawal, failure and/or unsatisfactory grade
  - c) Your plan to be successful if your request is approved
- 2) Submit your letter to the Admissions and Advisement Manager at [nursingadmissions@towson.edu](mailto:nursingadmissions@towson.edu). Letters must be Word or PDF files; letters written as an email will be returned to the student.
- 3) The request must be submitted within one (1) week of the end of the term in which the course was taken. For the purposes of this procedure, the end of the term is 72 hours after the last final exam. Students may refer to the [Academic Calendar](#) for the last day of exams.
- 4) Course repeat letters must also include any request to enroll in additional nursing courses outside of the prescribed sequence (if applicable).
- 5) The Admissions and Continuance Committee will review all repeat requests after the deadline for submission. You will receive a decision letter via email.

Reenrollment in a course due to course withdrawal, failure, and/or an unsatisfactory (U) grade is permitted if a student maintains in satisfactory academic standing within the program and if there is space available in the course.

### **Dismissal from the Degree Completion Option**

Notification of dismissal from the degree completion option is communicated to the student in writing via email. It is the student's responsibility to maintain current information (address, phone number email address, etc.) on record at Towson University. Specific conditions warranting dismissal from the option include, but are not limited to:

- Two grades of D, F, FX, or W in Towson University Nursing courses
- Academic dismissal from the community college RN program
- Academic misconduct according to the Towson University Academic Integrity policy

Students who are dismissed due to Towson University grades and policies are not eligible to request reinstatement to their original option or re-apply for any other option in the undergraduate nursing program.

Students dismissed from the ATB option due to dismissal from the community college program may be eligible to request reinstatement or to reapply to the nursing major at a later date. Students interested in returning should refer to the Reinstatement & Readmission Policies outlined on pages 32-34 in this handbook.

### **Reinstatement & Readmission to Degree Completion Option**

Students who are removed from the degree completion option due to withdrawal, inactivity, or dismissal from the community college may be eligible to return to the major under the specific circumstances outlined in this policy. Any student who is dismissed from the degree completion option due to their TU grades or academic misconduct at TU is not eligible for reinstatement or readmission to the nursing major. Reinstated or readmitted students will be subject to current course availability and enrollment requirements.

#### ***Reinstatement after Dismissal or Withdrawal Prior to Associate Degree Completion***

Students who withdraw or are dismissed from their community college program or who withdraw from the TU ATB option prior to completion of their associate degree may be eligible to return to the degree completion option through reinstatement or reapplication. Reinstatement into the community college's nursing program or admission to another ATB partner's nursing program does not guarantee reinstatement to the ATB option at TU.

A student's eligibility and options for returning to ATB will depend on whether they were reinstated to the original community college program, have been admitted to another ATB partner's nursing program, or have completed their associate degree in nursing since they left the ATB option.

- 1) If reinstated to the same partner community college program they were originally dismissed or withdrew from, a student may do one of the following:
  - Request formal reinstatement to ATB and resume studies according to their assigned plan of study
  - Re-apply to the major as an RN-BS student after completion of their associate degree in nursing and earning their RN licensure
- 2) If admitted to a different ATB partner's RN program after dismissal or withdrawal from another school, a student may do one of the following:
  - Re-apply for ATB admission through the new community college partner
  - Re-apply to the major as an RN-BS student after completion of their associate degree in nursing and RN licensure
- 3) If admitted to another community college nursing program that does not have an ATB partnership with TU,

a student may re-apply to the major as an RN-BS student after completion of their associate degree in nursing and earning their RN licensure.

Refer to page 34 of this handbook for the Reinstatement Request Process and/or information on re-applying.

### ***Reinstatement after Voluntary Withdrawal (Post-Associate Degree Completion)***

Students who voluntarily withdraw from the TU degree completion option with a conferred associate degree may request reinstatement to their degree completion option (RN-BS or ATB). Students must still carry an active, unencumbered RN license in Maryland or a compact state. If students have completed new coursework at another institution since their withdrawal, they must submit official transcripts and have left that institution in good academic standing. Students must follow the current curriculum at time of reinstatement.

### ***Reinstatement after Withdrawal due to Inactivity***

RN-BS students who are withdrawn due to inactivity in the major may request reinstatement to the RN-BS option at any time. They must meet the criteria for reinstatement outlined on this page.

The reinstatement or readmission options for ATB students withdrawn due to inactivity in the major will depend on their associate degree status at the time of return:

- If a student was removed due to inactivity prior to the completion of their associate degree and wants to return while still enrolled in the community college's nursing program, they may request reinstatement to ATB.
- If a student was removed due to inactivity prior to the completion of their associate degree and wants to return after completion of the associate degree, they must reapply for admission to the nursing major's RN-BS option.
- If a student was removed due to inactivity after the completion of their associate degree and wants to return, they may request reinstatement to ATB to finish their final courses.

Students who are inactive for over two or more years and/or have completed new coursework at another institution may be required to re-apply for admission if the Department of Nursing determines that a new application is more appropriate than reinstatement.

### **Criteria for Reinstatement**

Students must meet certain criteria in order for their reinstatement requests to be reviewed:

- If students have completed new coursework at another institution since their last term in the degree completion option, they must submit official transcripts and have left the institution in good academic standing.
- Students who are reinstated to their original community college program following withdrawal or dismissal must successfully complete at least one term of nursing courses before they may request reinstated to ATB.
- Students must still carry an active, unencumbered RN license in Maryland or a compact state for reinstatement to the RN-BS option.

### **Reinstatement Request Process**

Students who are eligible to request reinstatement to the degree completion option must formally request reinstatement via the following procedure:

- 1) Write a professional business letter addressed to the Admissions and Continuance Committee that includes the following details:
  - a. Formal request to be reinstated to the degree completion option, including the specific term for which reinstatement is being requested
  - b. The reason(s) for your previous dismissal or withdrawal from the degree completion option
  - c. The reason(s) you want to resume your enrollment in the degree completion option
  - d. How you plan to be successful in the degree completion option if reinstated
- 2) Submit your request to the Academic Program Manager at [nursingdco@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdco@towson.edu).
  - a. Letters must be Word or PDF files; letters written as an email will be returned to the student.
  - b. ATB students must copy their ATB coordinator or program director on their email.
- 3) Submit official transcripts to University Admissions if new coursework has been completed at another institution since the last term of attendance at TU.

The Admissions and Continuance Committee will review reinstatement requests and communicate decisions via the student's TU student email. For ATB reinstatement, the partner community college's ATB coordinator or program director will be copied on the decision.

If approved for reinstatement, students must apply for university reenrollment by the reenrollment deadline (refer to University Reenrollment on page 30). Reinstatement requests should be submitted at least two months in advance of the requested reinstatement term and no later than a month prior to the start of the term. Reinstatement requests received after the university reenrollment deadline may be deferred for the next possible academic term.

### **Re-Applying to the Degree Completion Option**

Students who choose to re-apply to the degree completion option, either as ATB with another community college or as RN-BS, must meet the admission criteria for that option at that time. Students who were dismissed at the community college and are admitted to another ATB partner are encouraged to successfully complete at least one term of nursing coursework in their new program prior to re-applying to ATB.

If re-admitted to the major, students must follow the current curriculum at time of re-admission. Previously completed TU coursework will only be accepted if a successful grade was earned and that course is still part of the degree completion curriculum.

### **Switching Options within the Undergraduate Program**

Switching between ATB partners within the degree completion option or between the degree completion option and the basic/pre-licensure option is not permitted. All options in the undergraduate nursing major have competitive admission requirements and screening processes. Admission to one option within the nursing major is not a guarantee of admissibility to any other option. RN-BS students are not eligible for any other option in the major because they are already licensed RNs.

If an ATB student wants to join the basic/pre-licensure major, they must meet the admission criteria and application procedures outlined on the [Admission Requirements](#) site. If a student is dismissed from the community college nursing program, they must also adhere to the [Individual Admissions Policy](#) of the basic/pre-licensure major. Dismissed ATB students are strongly encouraged to review this policy and pursue academic improvement in another major before they consider applying for admission to the basic/pre-licensure major.

## GRADES & GRADING

### **Departmental Academic Grading**

In accordance with the philosophical tenets and goals of the University, the Department supports learners at the undergraduate level in pursuit of those studies that promote critical thought about human affairs and development of cognitive behaviors and values necessary for responsible citizenship and the practice of nursing. Therefore, the student must demonstrate the ability to provide professional nursing care.

### ***Grade Weight Policy***

To estimate the student's professional growth, Faculty involved in the individual course establish the weighing of the components of each course. The Department of Nursing follows the “plus/minus” [grading system](#) of the University. Attainment of a minimum grade of "C" or 72.000 is required in each Nursing course.

### **Incomplete Grades**

The Department of Nursing follows the Towson University [Incomplete Grades](#) policy when issuing an incomplete (I) grade. If an incomplete grade is awarded in a course that is a pre-requisite for a course in the next term, students must successfully complete the incomplete course requirements prior to advancing. Failure to complete these requirements may affect the student's ability to progress in the nursing major.

### **Grading Scale for Department of Nursing**

This chart outlines the conversion of numerical score to letter grade and grade points earned per unit of credit. All nursing courses must be successfully completed with a numerical score (%) of 72 or higher.

<b>Numerical Score (%)</b>	<b>University Letter Grade</b>	<b>University Grade Points per Unit</b>
94 – 100	A	4.00
90 – 93	A-	3.67
87- 89	B+	3.33
84 – 86	B	3.00
80 – 83	B-	2.67
77 – 79	C+	2.33
72 – 76	C	2.00
67 – 71	D+	1.33
64 – 66	D	1.00
63 and below	F	0.00

## COURSE APPEALS POLICY

### **Right to Appeal**

Students who feel they have been treated unfairly in regard to their academic performance at Towson University, whether in the classroom or clinical setting are entitled to appeal for an impartial review and reconsideration of their achievement.

### **Course Appeal Procedure**

1. A student should first confer with the faculty member or members involved in the course primarily responsible for assigning grades.
2. If the matter is not satisfactorily resolved through this approach and the issue warrants further consideration, then the student may direct a written letter of appeal to the Departmental Chairperson within 5 working days of receiving a response from the faculty member or members.
3. If the student is not satisfied with the resolution at the Department level, he or she should follow the Appeal Procedure as outlined in the Undergraduate Catalog at <http://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/grades-grading>.
4. Ultimately if the grade in the nursing theory course remains below a C (72) then the student must follow the *Procedure to Request Course Repeats* on page 31 of this handbook. Students must submit their request to repeat a course within five (5) business days of receiving their denied appeal. If the appeal is denied within five (5) business days of the start of the course, the course repeat request must be submitted prior to the start of the class.

ATB students who wish to appeal a course at their community college must follow that institution's procedure for course appeal.

### **APPEAL OF PROGRAM DISMISSAL**

Students are entitled to appeal for reinstatement to the major following dismissal from the program. To appeal their program dismissal, students must write a letter of appeal directly to the Department of Nursing Chairperson. Appeal letters must address the factors that led to their dismissal from the program and how they plan to be successful if reinstated. Letters must be submitted within five (5) business days of receiving their dismissal letter from the Admissions & Continuance Committee. Late appeals may be considered at the discretion of the chairperson. Students appealing their dismissal may be required to meet with the chairperson to discuss the appeal before a decision can be made. Students who are not satisfied with the outcome of their appeal at the departmental level may choose to appeal to the Associate Dean of the College of Health Professions. This appeal must be submitted within five (5) business days of the chairperson's decision. Decisions of the Associate Dean are final.

If the appeal is approved, the student must follow the *Procedure to Request Course Repeats* on page 31 of this handbook. Students must submit their request to repeat a course within five (5) business days of receiving their appeal approval. If the appeal is within five (5) business days of the start of a course, the course repeat request must be submitted prior to the start of the class. Students may be required to meet regularly with their advisor and/or the Student Success Coordinator for academic support while repeating courses.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### **Class Attendance/Absence Policy**

All students must follow the Class Attendance/Absence Policy of the University. Furthermore, students are held accountable to specific requirements outlined in individual course and clinical syllabi/packets.

1. Students are expected to attend all classes. Consistent attendance offers the most effective opportunity for students to understand concepts, materials and expectations of those courses in which they are enrolled. Although some courses do not use attendance as a criterion for grading, there are others where in-class participation is an integral part of the course. Examples include, but are not limited to, seminars and courses that require public speaking, laboratories, language learning, group discussions or internships. Frequent absences from these types of courses, whether excused or unexcused, may affect the final grade.
2. Faculty who use absences as a factor in grading must explain in the course syllabus what effect even an excused absence might have on the evaluation of a student's work.
3. Students may not attend a class until they are registered for the class, and they must satisfy all financial obligations to the institution before they register.
4. Family members, including children, of students are not permitted to attend classes. On rare occasions, this might be permitted if related to a course activity such as a presentation.
5. It is the policy of the university to excuse the absences of students for the following reasons:
  - a. illness or injury when the student is unable to attend class
  - b. death of a family member (see the Student Bereavement Procedure)
  - c. religious observance where the nature of the observance prevents the student from attending class
  - d. participation in university activities at the request of university authorities (e.g., Intercollegiate Athletics, Forensics Team, Dance Company, etc.). Students who will be representing TU at events, conferences, or other official activities should obtain a Notification of Absence from Class Form from the [Office of Campus Life](#) to be given to their instructors to verify the excused absence. Students are encouraged to notify faculty of anticipated class absences as soon as they learn they will be missing class.
  - e. compelling verifiable circumstances beyond the control of the student
6. Students requesting an excused absence must provide documentation to the instructor two weeks prior to the scheduled absence when known in advance or as soon as possible when not known in advance. Absences that do not fall into any of the above categories are unexcused. Faculty may set a limit on the number of unexcused absences.
7. Students who are absent from class are responsible for any missed work, assignments or assessments (e.g., quizzes, tests, papers, etc.). Faculty members are required to allow students with documented excused absences to make up missed work or assignments when this is feasible. When the nature of the assignment makes this impossible, faculty members should attempt to make a reasonable adjustment of the assignment.

Refer to the Towson University Undergraduate Catalog at <https://catalog.towson.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/class-attendance-absence-policy/> for this policy, the Student Bereavement policy, and other resources.

## **Emergency Closing**

Students are expected to follow the emergency closing policies of the Towson University campus where their classes are primarily located in the event that inclement weather or other emergency conditions warrant an early closing, all-day closing or delayed opening.

In addition to the campus-specific resources provided below, the following local news channels or websites also provide closing information for school closings:

- WBAL-TV (Channel 11): <https://www.wbaltv.com/weather/closings>
- WJZ-TV (Channel 13): <https://baltimore.cbslocal.com/school-closings/>
- WMAR-TV (Channel 2): <https://www.wmar2news.com/weather/school-closings-delays>

### ***Towson Main Campus***

Towson University main campus information is posted by 6am. For an overview of the main campus closing policies and practices, including the status of campus events and resources in the event of a closing, and frequently asked questions, visit <https://www.towson.edu/news/emergency.html>.

All TU students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive all emergency text alerts. For information on automatic enrollment in text alerts and updating your mobile number, visit [www.towson.edu/textalerts](http://www.towson.edu/textalerts). Campus closing/delayed opening information can also be found through the following resources:

- Campus-wide email (Check at <https://webmail.towson.edu/>)
- University Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/towsonuniversity>)
- University Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/TowsonU>)
- University Instagram account (<https://www.instagram.com/towsonuniversity/>)

### ***Towson University in Northeastern Maryland (TUNE) Campus***

The TUNE campus follows the emergency opening/closing decisions of Harford Community College ([www.harford.edu](http://www.harford.edu)). Because the forecasts of Towson and Bel Air can be different at times, TUNE's decision to close is completely independent of the decision for main campus in Towson. TUNE might be open on a day when main campus is closed or vice-versa. Registration in HCC AlertMe is not automatic for TUNE students. TUNE students are strongly encouraged to register for HCC AlertMe to receive text alerts about emergencies, closings or delays at TUNE. To sign up, complete the TU in Northeastern Maryland Emergency Notification Registration form online at <https://www.towson.edu/academics/undergraduate/tune/notificationreg.html>.

### ***University System of Maryland Hagerstown (USMH) Campus***

Students attending classes at the University System of Maryland Hagerstown (USMH) campus will follow USMH emergency/inclement weather information and decisions. Students can sign up for text and email alerts at <https://hagerstown.usmd.edu/campus/safety-campus-alerts>.

## EXPECTATIONS & EVALUATION

### Classroom Courses

- Performance expectations are outlined in each theory course syllabi.
- Student evaluation includes but is not limited to student performance on examinations, written assignments, and other projects.
- Students who earn less than a 72 on an exam or other assignments are encouraged to meet with the course instructor and Student Success Coordinator to review the exam or assignments and strategize to enhance exam performance.

### General Exam Policies

#### *Attendance and Lateness*

- Exams are scheduled to begin and end at a designated time.
- Attendance at all course exams is mandatory. If absent, the student is responsible for notifying the faculty prior to the exam. If the student provides documentation supporting that the absence is an excused absence (as defined in the Attendance/Absence policy of the Towson University Catalog), the student may take a make-up exam.
- Make-up exams are provided only for students with an excused absence. The student must take the exam within 5 business days, excluding weekends, after return to the university or a grade of "0" will be assigned. Students are responsible for making make-up testing arrangements with the instructor. The student may receive an alternate form of the exam as a make-up at the faculty's discretion.

#### *Exam Integrity*

- Students testing online are subject to all Department of Nursing Testing Policies.
- Any student suspected of violating the Academic Integrity Policy (whether in class or online) will be subject to Towson University's Academic Integrity Policy. Strict enforcement of the integrity policy is maintained. This policy is available online at <https://www.towson.edu/about/administration/policies/03-01-00-student-academic-integrity-policy.html>.
- Examinations are the property of the Department of Nursing. A student may not remove a test from the classroom or copy or create an image of any exam item. Students may not share any information about any exam items, exam topics, or exam results with other students or make any of this exam information publicly available. If the student is found to have violated this policy, the Student Academic Integrity Policy will be enforced and may result in failure of the test/s with a 0, failure of the course and /or other academic sanctions.

#### *Exam Review*

- An exam review may be conducted by course faculty. The method of review is at the faculty's discretion. The environment during exam review is the same as during testing. Academic integrity, civility, and professional behavior is expected during an exam review.

### ***Testing Accommodations***

- Students requiring testing accommodations through Accessibility & Disability Services should notify faculty at the beginning of each semester.
- Information about ADS testing accommodation services at Towson University can be found at <https://www.towson.edu/accessibility-disability-services/>.

### **Clinical Policies**

#### ***Clinical Placement on Unit of Employment***

Students may not participate in any clinical or practicum experience on a unit where they are currently employed. The student must notify the Clinical Placement Team at [nursingdocs@towson.edu](mailto:nursingdocs@towson.edu) within one (1) week of receiving a placement on their unit of employment. Failure to notify the Clinical Placement Team of the conflict may put a student's clinical placement in jeopardy and hinder their progression in the major. Requests for exceptions to this policy may be considered at the discretion of the Clinical Placement Coordinator.

#### ***Clinical Performance and Professional Behavior***

The Maryland Nurse Practice Act regulates standards of practice for registered nurses in the State of Maryland. When providing clinical care, students are expected to adhere to professional standards of practice and code of ethics that have been developed to guide the profession of nursing. A client and their family have a right to expect safe, competent nursing care consistent with knowledge of scientific principles and guided by the nursing process. University Students agree to reimburse Hospital for the repair or replacement cost of any equipment or supplies damaged as a result of University Student's negligence.

#### ***Unsafe Clinical Performance***

A student who demonstrates unsafe clinical nursing practice may be dismissed at any time from the clinical area. Unsafe clinical practice is defined as any behavior that is actually or potentially detrimental to the client, family, self, peers, or health care agency. Behaviors may include but are not limited to contributing to physical injury or mental distress; performing acts beyond the level of nursing practice for which the student has demonstrated competency; engaging in clinical activities while under the effects of alcohol, drugs, or chemicals; lack of preparation to ensure effective clinical practice; or deficits in problem-solving skills.

#### ***Unprofessional Behavior***

All students are accountable for maintaining professional behavior in the clinical and/or classroom setting as a representative of Towson University, The Department of Nursing, and the nursing profession. Unprofessional behavior is defined as any behavior that violates the Maryland Nurse Practices Act or is a violation of course, university or clinical site policies. Behaviors may include but are not limited to a student under the influence or suspicion of both legal and illegal substances, repeated tardiness, late clinical assignment submission, unexcused clinical absence, language, or actions that do not display courtesy or respect to patients, staff, faculty or peers, unprepared to deliver care as a representative of Towson University Department of Nursing or not fully engaged in clinical practice.

Faculty members who dismiss a student for unsafe clinical practice and/or unprofessional behaviors must notify the course coordinator and department chair within 24 hours of the initial occurrence. The faculty member must document in a factual manner the unsafe clinical practice and/or unprofessional behavior and develop in collaboration with the student strategies for addressing the deficiencies. If appropriate, the faculty member refers the student for evaluation and support services. The document must be signed by both the faculty member issuing unsafe clinical practice and/or unprofessional behavior documentation and the student, representing that a conference for remediation was held. A copy of the documentation is given to the student, the course coordinator, the student's advisor, and the department chairperson.

A student may return to the clinical area or class only if the remedial action recommended is completed. If circumstances prevail that require further review of the incident that necessitated the initial removal of the student from the clinical area or classroom, additional documentation describing the incident must be prepared by the faculty member. The documentation will be sent to the department chair, the course coordinator and the student's advisor within 5 days of the occurrence. During the incident review period, the student may not engage in clinical practice.

## BLOOD BORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE PLAN

### Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure Control Plan

**Exposure Incident** means exposure to a specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials via needle stick, scalpel, razor, or other puncture to or contact with non-intact skin that results from the performance of an employee's or student's duties in the clinical setting. (US Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration, 2016, [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)).

*In the event that a student is exposed to bloodborne pathogens, the following procedure should be followed.*

#### **First Aid:**

Start immediate first aid. Any emergency care needed should be provided by the clinical agency where the incident has occurred and **at the student's expense. This means the student should be instructed to report directly to the emergency facility at the clinical agency for complete evaluation as would befit the clinical agency employees. If the clinical agency does not have an emergency department the student should report to closest hospital with an emergency room for evaluation and treatment at the student's expense.**

**Student should NOT be sent to the university Health Facility.**

#### **Parenteral Exposure**

EXPOSED PERSON: Should complete the following:

1. Soap and water wash for one minute.
2. Allow injury to bleed while washing.
3. Follow with disinfectant, such as betadine, iodine, or alcohol.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT: Agency should follow protocol as follows:

1. Administer tetanus vaccine if there has been none received in the past five (5) years.
2. Follow agency protocols for Hepatitis and HIV exposure follow-up.
3. Wound care as per emergency department protocols.

#### **Mucous Membrane Exposure**

EXPOSED PERSON: Should complete the following:

1. Flush with a heavy stream of normal saline or water immediately and for 4 to 5 minutes.

EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT: Agency should follow protocol as follows:

1. Follow agency protocols for Hepatitis and HIV follow-up care.

1. As soon as feasible, the incident should be reported to the Towson University, clinical instructor, and the RN/clinical nurse faculty in charge of the area where the student is assigned for clinical experiences.
2. The following procedures should be completed by the exposed student and the clinical instructor: The incident must be reported directly, whether it has occurred on or off campus, to the Chair of the Nursing Department, Dean of the College of Health Professions, and the Course Coordinator. If there has been a written report or documentation at the facility, a copy should be filed within the Department of Nursing at the office of the Department chair. A Towson University Incident Report must also be filled out and given to the office of the Department Chair.

3. The policies and procedures of the agency in which the student is assigned for clinical should be followed by the student with the assistance of the RN in charge and the clinical instructor. The exposed student and the clinical instructor will complete an incident report (or the appropriate documentation) for the clinical agency. A copy of this report should be made for the Department of Nursing at Towson University.
4. If source blood has been tested, every effort will be made to have results made available to the exposed student. The student will be informed that they is prohibited by law from disclosing the identity of the source individual.
5. The exposed student will be referred to their private health care provider for follow-up care. This follow-up care will be at the student's expense. The student will be provided with the following information for their provider by the Department of Nursing Chair:
  - Information on the student's Hepatitis B vaccination status.
  - A copy of the Exposure Incident Report, which includes documentation of the route(s) of exposure and circumstances under which exposure occurred.
  - A description of the student's duties as they relate to the exposure incident.
  - A copy of the student's completed Student Health Requirements Form.
  - Results of the source individual's blood testing if available.
6. It is the student's responsibility to get follow-up care from their private health care provider following an exposure incident and to pay for the cost of that care. Verification that follow-up care has been done should be documented and provided to the Chair of the Department of Nursing.

**In the event that a student is involved in a medical emergency on Towson University campus, treatment should follow policy as defined by the Towson University Emergency Resources Guide (<https://www.towson.edu/public-safety/emergencies/>).**

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and Department of Nursing Chair should be notified of incidents. To report to EHS:

1. Download the Incident Report Form at <https://www.towson.edu/public-safety/environmental-health-safety/forms/>
2. Complete and return the form to the Office of Environmental Health & Safety
  - a. Mail: Towson University Office of Environmental Health & Safety, 8000 York Road, Towson, MD 21252
  - b. Fax: 410-704-2993
3. Notify Department of Nursing Chair and file a copy of the incident report in the Department of Nursing office.
4. To notify the university's Insurance Administrator, contact 410-704-6377 or [safety@towson.edu](mailto:safety@towson.edu).

#### **Office of Environmental Health and Safety**

<https://www.towson.edu/public-safety/environmental-health-safety/contact.html>

- Phone: 410-704-2949
- Email: [safety@towson.edu](mailto:safety@towson.edu)
- Location: Public Safety Building, Room 205

Jan. 2011; Rev. 6/22

**Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) Standards - Bloodborne pathogens:**  
[https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/interlinking/standards/1910.1030\(c\)/regulations](https://www.osha.gov/laws-regs/interlinking/standards/1910.1030(c)/regulations)

**DEPARTMENTAL AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES**

## HONORS AND AWARDS

### Honors Society

#### *Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing*

Sigma Theta Tau International is an organization of nurse leaders, scholars, and researchers. Membership in the society is by invitation. The Society's mission statement is as follows:

Sigma Theta Tau International is committed to fostering excellence, scholarship, and leadership in nursing to improve health care worldwide. The society promotes the use of nursing research in health care delivery and makes its resources available to all people and institutions interested in the latest knowledge in nursing care.

At Towson University, the Sigma Theta Tau International Chapter is Iota Epsilon. In order to be nominated for this honor, academic records are evaluated during the student's S1 or S2 term in the program. Students must maintain high ethical standards as outlined by the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics, uphold the moral code of conduct of the National Student Nurse Association and the State Nurse Practice Act, rank in the upper one-third of their class, and have a minimum GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. Once approved for membership, an induction ceremony is held for new members. Currently the induction fee is about \$60.00 which includes dues for one year to the local chapter and the international society. A key, charm or pin of the Society is also available for purchase. Sigma Theta Tau International encourages and actively supports further professional development and promotes nursing scholarship, leadership, creativity, and commitment among its members.

### Nursing Department Awards

The following department awards are available to degree completion students.

#### *Nursing Practice Award*

*Criteria:*

- ❖ Demonstrates professional behaviors when caring for adults and families.
- ❖ Demonstrates critical thinking skills and problem solving when providing care for adults and families.
- ❖ Demonstrates sensitivity and compassion with clients and families.
- ❖ Displays perseverance and determination.
- ❖ Demonstrates a broad scope of nursing knowledge and has good written and verbal communication skills.

*Eligibility:*

- ❖ Undergraduate pre-licensure, undergraduate degree completion, and graduate pre-licensure nursing students

#### *Scholastic Achievement Award*

*Criteria:*

- ❖ The student demonstrates the highest cumulative grade point average (GPA) in the senior nursing class.
- ❖ To receive a Department of Nursing Scholastic Achievement Award, a student must be eligible for university honors (i.e., GPA must be at least 3.4).

*Eligibility:*

- ❖ Undergraduate pre-licensure, undergraduate degree completion, and graduate pre-licensure nursing students

## FINANCIAL AID & SCHOLARSHIPS

### **Financial Aid**

Students in the degree completion option may apply for all available federal and state undergraduate financial aid programs, including grants, scholarships, and loans. The Financial Aid Office provides information about the types of financial aid at <https://www.towson.edu/admissions/financialaid/programs/>.

### ***ATB Financial Aid***

The Towson University Financial Aid Office will process all federal and state aid. Aid eligibility is based on the combined total enrollment between TU and the partner community college. ATB students may also apply for institutional grants scholarships at the community college. Any institutional aid granted by the community college will be reported to TU and count toward the limit of total aid a student may receive. Students must list both Towson University and the community college on their FAFSA to apply for any institutional aid from the community college.

The TU Financial Aid Office does not pay ATB students' community college bill directly. Students are responsible for using their financial aid disbursement from TU to pay for their community college courses. While the partner community colleges are aware of students' participation in the TU ATB option, students must still be aware of their billing due dates for each school and communicate with their community college about their payment and billing responsibilities. The processes and policies for payment at the community college will vary by partner.

ATB students with questions about their financial aid may contact the Financial Aid Office at [atb@towson.edu](mailto:atb@towson.edu). Any communication sent to the ATB financial aid email must state that you are an ATB student and include your TU student ID number and partner community college.

### ***Course Load Change Form***

Financial aid eligibility is based in part on a student's course load, or the total credits they take in a term. A full-time course load 12 credits or more; a part-time course load is between 6-11 credits. Students in the degree completion option are often enrolled on a part-time basis. To prevent financial aid disbursement errors, any student in the degree completion option applying for financial aid must submit the *Course Load Change Form (CLCF)* to the TU Financial Aid Office if they will be enrolled in fewer than 12 credits in the spring or fall.

The purpose of the CLCF is to notify the Financial Aid Office that you will be enrolled on a part-time basis so that you are not awarded more aid than you are eligible for. Students who are awarded financial aid based on full-time enrollment but are actually enrolled part-time will be responsible for returning any extra aid awarded to the Financial Aid Office. To access the CLCF, log on to the TU Online Services Student Dashboard and select "Financial Aid Forms" from the Financials menu.

If submitting the CLCF for spring, you may include any minimester credits with spring units if the total combined units between the minimester and spring will change your enrollment total from part-time (6-11 credits) to full-time (12 or more credits). Summer financial aid is limited. For more information about summer and minimester aid, visit <https://www.towson.edu/admissions/financialaid/apply/summer.html>.

### **External Scholarships**

The Department of Nursing maintains lists of scholarship databases, resources, and opportunities for nursing students at <https://www.towson.edu/chp/departments/nursing/scholarships.html>.

The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) is also a great resource for state financial aid programs. Most state financial programs, including the Workforce Shortage Student Assistance Grant, are for Maryland residents. Non-Maryland residents looking to practice as a nurse in Maryland after graduation should consider the Tuition Reduction for Non-Resident Nursing Students program, which provides a tuition reduction for out-of-state students in exchange for a service obligation of four years as a full-time nurse in a Maryland hospital or related institution. Visit <https://mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/Pages/FinancialAid/descriptions.aspx> for more information about state financial programs.

Students are also encouraged to contact area hospitals for scholarship information. Many area hospitals provide scholarships to students currently enrolled in the Nursing major. Most require that the student be employed by the hospital upon graduation. The Veterans Administration, the U.S. Public Health Service, and several branches of the armed services have scholarship programs available for students interested in working at those agencies upon graduation.

### **Department Scholarships**

The Department of Nursing offers a number of scholarships each year to students enrolled in the nursing program. Nursing students who meet the eligibility criteria for any departmental scholarship may apply for consideration during the departmental scholarship application period each spring (December 31-March 31). The Department's Student Affairs Committee will post notices of available scholarship and loans on a student bulletin board in Linthicum Hall. Students may also be notified via their TU student email or Blackboard. To apply for department scholarship, visit [https://towson.academicworks.com/users/sign\\_in](https://towson.academicworks.com/users/sign_in).

## NURSING STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Nursing Student Association (NSA) was established in the Fall of 1987 as an SGA-affiliated organization. In accord with the National Student Nurses' Association's Mission, the mission of the [Towson University Student Nurses' Association](#) (TUSNA) is to:

Organize, represent, and mentor Towson University students preparing for initial licensure as registered nurses, as well as those nurses enrolled in Towson's degree completion options; promote development of the skills that students will need as responsible and accountable members of the nursing profession; advocate for high quality health care in a multicultural society.

A central goal of TUSNA is to facilitate unity, leadership, and active participation within the student body. To facilitate this goal of TUSNA, members serve on committees of the Faculty Organization and the College of Health Professions Council; organize community and social activities and promote professional growth through educational experiences and affiliation with the Maryland Association of Nursing Students (MANS) and the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA). The TUSNA's structure allows for attainment of the aforementioned mission and goal and provides for class representation and overall membership involvement. All nursing students are eligible to become members of TUSNA.

*Towson University's policies, programs and activities comply with federal and state laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, age, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity or expression and veteran status.*

*For further information contact the Office of Inclusion & Institutional Equity (OIIE) at 410-704-0203 or [OIIE@towson.edu](mailto:OIIE@towson.edu).*

## **CAMPUS-WIDE RESOURCES**

Towson University offers a wide range of services and resources to enhance student life and support academic success. The services outlined in this section are not a comprehensive list of campus resources. The following information is provided to highlight select services and resources that may appeal to nursing students. Students can find a full list of academic support and advising resources online at the [Academic Services & Resources](#) site. For a complete list of student life and support services, visit the [Student Services & Resources](#) site.

### **Library Resources**

There are substantial numbers of research and information resources that TU students can access. On campus, the Albert S. Cook Library offers a variety of resources to support learning and scholarship, including a vast collection of books, electronic databases, videos, and electronic journals. Through the Interlibrary Loan (ILL) program, TU students can also access materials throughout the University of Maryland System (USM) and a worldwide network of libraries. Students can learn more about library resources at [Cook Library](#).

### **Student Outreach and Support**

[Student Outreach and Support \(SOS\)](#) promotes student success by accompanying students through life challenges and connecting them with university and community resources. Students who are facing challenges with academics, finances, life and housing needs, mental health, and more can contact SOS directly for assistance with navigating the resources available to them at TU. SOS can

### **Student Emergency Funds & Resources**

Student Outreach and Support (SOS) offers several [emergency resources](#) to support students facing an emergency. These resources include the Student Emergency Grant Fund for students experiencing immediate financial hardship and the Chromebook Loaner Program for students who are experiencing technology emergencies and unable to afford a computer.

### **Student Computing Services**

Students experiencing in need of computer support can contact [Student Computing Services \(SCS\)](#). The SCS Service Desk provides technical support to students experiencing login, laptop, or mobile device problems. Laptop services include software support, malware removal, diagnosis of hardware issues, and loaner laptops in the event of prolonged laptop repair. SCS also provides guidance for purchasing new computers and may connect students to available discounts with select computer providers.

### **Office of Accessibility & Disability Services**

Students with a disability who believe they may need accommodations for this course should notify faculty with a memo from the [Office of Accessibility & Disability Services \(ADS\)](#). Since accommodations are not retroactive, it is strongly recommended that students provide faculty with notification as early as possible in the term. To register with ADS, or seek answers to questions about accommodations and services, contact the Office of Accessibility & Disability Services at 410-704-2638 or [tuads@towson.edu](mailto:tuads@towson.edu).

### **Advising and Counseling Services**

The university offers many advising and counseling services to meet students' needs in the areas of academic advising, career guidance, and personal counseling.

The [Counseling Center](#) offers flexible, culturally responsive, and solution-focused care to meet every student's unique needs. Counseling services include individual counseling appointments, after-hours crisis support, self-help programs, massage chairs, peer support, wellness workshops, meditation services, support groups, therapy groups, same-day mental health consultations, solution-focused support, and referrals services. There is no fee for most services at the Counseling Center.

The [Career Center](#) offers a comprehensive range of free services to assist TU students and alumni with their career-related needs. All students and alumni have access to services including career planning, career and personality assessment, career counseling, resume and cover letter review, mock interviews and interview training, job, and internship searches, finding student employment, and graduate school essay review. The Career Center can also connect students with identity-based resources to ensure equal access to opportunities. Through the Tiger Mentor Network, students can connect with TU alumni for relevant career advice.

The [Health Center](#) provides health and wellness services for TU students, including medical care, testing, illness treatment, health counseling, smoking cessation, and referrals. The Health Center also offers health education programs and resources on sexual health, dating safety, wellness and more.

### **Diversity Resources**

Towson University is committed to increasing the diversity among its students, faculty, and staff, addressing the needs and concerns of its varied populations, and promoting multicultural learning for all students. Diversity at TU is broadly defined as including race, ethnicity, country of origin, religion, gender identity, gender expression, age, ability, and sexual orientation. The Office of Inclusion & Institutional Equity (OIIE) offers many student diversity resources such as ally training, anti-racism resources, gender identity resources, chosen name resources, and hate/bias prevention education and support. For more information, visit the Office of Institutional Equity & Inclusion (OIIE) [Student Diversity Resources](#) site.

In collaboration with the OIIE, the Center for Student Diversity (CSD) works to support the access and academic success of historically under-represented groups through programs and services that enhance the student experience. The CSD provides academic, social and transition support for underserved students, promotes exchanges and dialogue between individuals of diverse backgrounds and identities, and works to eradicate bias, discrimination, and intolerance. Students are encouraged to explore their many programs, services, and events to find support and celebrate diversity on campus. For more information, visit the [Center for Student Diversity](#).

**NOTE:** Students who have experienced, witnessed, or learned of a hate crime or bias incident can file a report using the [Hate Crimes and Bias Incident Report Form](#).

## DEPARTMENTAL RESOURCES

### **Academic Success Support**

The nursing major is a rigorous and challenging program. Students are encouraged to avail themselves of the resources in the Department of Nursing early on to support their academic success. Academic success resources in the department include the Student Success Coordinator, assigned faculty advisors, and course instructors. A proactive approach to student success is recommended; students are encouraged to communicate their academic needs to their advisor throughout the term. Nursing faculty may provide additional help with course material or refer students to other campus or departmental resources. Students should connect with faculty or the Student Success Coordinator before they experience any academic struggles.

The [Student Success Coordinator](#) offers multiple resources to students to support their academic success, including Supplemental Instruction (SI), connection to tutoring services and individual academic coaching appointments. Academic coaching helps students identify strategies to meet their academic needs, such as time management, test taking, study preparation, test review, or test anxiety management. Supplemental Instruction (SI) is an evidence-based peer-led study program offered for select high-risk courses within the nursing major. Degree completion students enrolled in NURS 349 are welcome and encouraged to attend SI sessions for NURS 347 due to the overlap in course content. Students interested in attending other SI sessions must contact the Student Success Coordinator to discuss their options.

### **Assigned Department Advisor**

All degree completion students are assigned a Department of Nursing advisor within beginning in their first term of the program. Students must meet with their advisor for intentional advising at least once every fall and spring term. Advising contact is required for minimester and summer registration as well.

In addition to guiding students through registration each term, your assigned advisor is available as a resource for students throughout the academic year. Students in need of guidance or support are encouraged to contact their advisor for help. The advisor's role is to help students, celebrate their successes, connect them with resources, and guide them toward success in the program. The assigned advisor's name and contact information can be located in the online Student Dashboard under the Academics menu.

# APPENDIX

## Appendix A

### General Program Information

ADDRESS:	Department of Nursing Towson University 8000 York Road Towson, Maryland 21252-0001
TELEPHONE:	410-704-2067 (recorded information)
APPROVED BY:	Maryland Board of Nursing
DEGREE GRANTED:	Bachelor of Science, Nursing Major
ACCREDITED BY:	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
INITIAL ACCREDITATION:	April 21, 2001
MOST RECENT ACCREDITATION:	November 5, 2018
NEXT ON-SITE EVALUATION:	Fall 2028