

College of the Desert

Nursing Programs Student Handbook

2025-2026

ADN, LVN to RN Transition, LVN, CNA, HHA
8-18-2025

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INTRODUCTION

Student Handbook Policy

Students are responsible for reviewing and abiding by the updated handbook and will be held accountable for the policies and processes in the most current edition.

This handbook has been prepared as a supplement to the information provided in the College of the Desert (COD) Catalog and is intended to provide answers to the many questions you will have as you enter and progress through your program.

This handbook should be read carefully, saved, and used as a reference throughout your time in your program. The handbook policies and procedures are subject to change by faculty and administrators at any time. The most current copy of the handbook will be posted on the department website.

Students will sign the *Acknowledgement of Receipt* form, each semester, which can be found on the website under “Department Forms”.

Rev: 07/22

Welcome

To all Nursing Program & Allied Health Students,

The faculty, staff, and administration at College of the Desert welcome you to our health programs.

It is an exciting time to be involved in healthcare. Important changes are occurring in how healthcare is delivered and the scope of practice of health professionals. To keep pace with these changes, curricula are in a dynamic state of evolution.

Each of you brings to your program, and later the profession, the uniqueness of your special talents, experiences, and personality. We hope that you will take an active part in sharing these experiences with others as you move toward the goal of becoming a part of the healthcare team. To assist you in reaching your goal, you will find interested and concerned faculty with high personal and professional standards as well as a wealth of varying clinical expertise. It is the combination of all these factors that results in quality nursing and allied health education.

Our best wishes for a gratifying, satisfying, and growing experience in your program at College of the Desert.

Nursing & Allied Health Faculty
College of the Desert

Rev: 07/22

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMS

Programs Overview

The Desert Community College District began on January 21, 1958, as the culmination of more than ten years of study and planning. It was three years later that construction of the campus at Monterey Avenue and Fred Waring Drive started and students began attending classes in the fall, of 1962.

The Vocational Nursing program was initiated in 1965 and the Associate Degree Nursing program was initiated on the Palm Desert campus in 1966. The Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) program has been in place since 1991 and the Home Health Aide (HHA) has been in place since 1998.

Since 1968, over 4,000 nurses have graduated from the program, many of whom are employed in the Desert community.

The COD nursing and Allied Health programs are part of the School of Health Sciences and Education, which is comprised of: Registered Nursing, Vocational Nursing, Certified Nurse Assistant, Home Health Aide, Child Development and Education, Health Sciences, Kinesiology, and Athletics.

All programs are approved by their respective state boards. Students have the right to contact the Board regarding program concerns, especially if the student feels these concerns have not been addressed by college faculty and administration after following correct procedures and processes.

[California Board of Registered Nursing](http://www.rn.ca.gov) (BRN), www.rn.ca.gov, 400 R Street, Suite 4030, Sacramento, CA 95814-6200, (916) 322-3350,

[California Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians](http://www.bvnpt.ca.gov) (BVNPT), 2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 205, Sacramento, CA 95833, (916) 263-7800, www.bvnpt.ca.gov

[California Department of Public Health](https://www.cdph.ca.gov/) (CDPH), Licensing and Certification Program, Aid and Technician Certification PO Box 997416, MS 3301, Sacramento, CA 95899, (916) 324-0901, <https://www.cdph.ca.gov/>

Rev: 07/22

Nursing Department Mission

College of the Desert nursing programs educate individuals to become safe, competent, professional, and caring nurses, with a commitment to lifelong learning, and to contribute to the vitality of the communities we serve.

College of the Desert offers a variety of educational entry points into healthcare practice to support the current and future needs of our community. To prepare graduates for safe practice, the nursing program provides diverse academic and community-based settings for learning.

The nursing program's mission is aligned with the mission, vision, values, strategic goals, and directions of College of the Desert.

Adopted: 7/22

Vocational Nursing Program Philosophy

Philosophy

The vocational nursing program is an integral part of the College of the Desert. The vocational nursing faculty endorses the institutional mission statement that supports comprehensive educational opportunities for Vocational instruction and recognizes the challenge set forth by a diverse, growing, and energetic community dedicated to lifelong learning. The program meets the needs of the community by preparing students for career opportunities in Vocational nursing. The purpose of the program is to produce an entry-level practitioner of Vocational nursing who is eligible to complete the licensing examination for Vocational nursing and has the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to provide safe, competent nursing care.

We believe community college students bring a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, life experiences, learning styles, and developmental levels to the learning environment. The college community provides the opportunity for students and faculty to participate in cultural exchange; it encourages the examination and development of ideas through a balanced social forum and provides an environment for growth. We support self-development, including ongoing self-assessment and evaluation.

Philosophy of Man and Society

We believe each person, regardless of race, creed, religion, or culture, is a unique, complex, holistic being and deserving of respect. All persons share with others common human attributes and basic human needs, adapting to physical and psycho-social experiences and stresses. Individuals have an inherent right to strive to attain optimal health and achieve their full potential in life. They possess dignity, and self-worth and have the right to information that will assist them to make informed decisions regarding health care. We believe that access to health care is the right of each member of society.

Health, Illness Health Care and Recovery

We believe health and illness are relative, ever-changing states of being. Individuals exist on a continuum ranging from a state of optimal functioning to the absence of discernible disease, to obvious disease that can result in death. Illness occurs when there is an alteration in the function of one or more body systems. We believe the health care delivery system is changing quickly in response to societal demands, rapidly changing technology, and the increasing lifespan. These changes have resulted in a collaborative level of interaction between health care workers and the consumer.

Philosophy of Nursing

Nursing is a caring profession in which the nurse uses cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills to assist individuals to achieve their highest level of health. It is concerned with helping people cope with adverse physiologic, psycho-social, and spiritual responses to illness. Nurses assist individuals to use their available resources to adapt to an optimum level of functioning. The practice of nursing incorporates the use of the nursing process to assess an individual's current and potential health care needs and to plan, implement and evaluate nursing care.

A variety of caregivers are educated at different levels to provide health care services to the public. The Vocational nurse is educated to be a responsible member of a health care team, performing basic therapeutic, rehabilitative, and preventive care. The role of the Vocational nurse is an evolving one and encompasses providing specific services to patients under the direction of a licensed physician and/or registered professional nurse.

Philosophy of Nursing Education

Nursing education occurs in a variety of settings and prepares graduates with different levels of expertise. Vocational nursing education involves teaching nursing theory, skills, and attitudes that assist the students to assume responsibility and accountability as Vocational nurses. The nursing faculty uses a systematic approach to instruction that builds on previously learned knowledge from related disciplines and life experiences. Faculty select strategies, organize content, arrange experiences, and facilitate learning taking into consideration cultural factors, ethnic background, and the individual learning styles of students.

Philosophy of Teaching & Learning

We believe that learning results in a change in behavior that can be measured, and which persists. Teaching and learning involve an interactive process between instructor and student. Optimum learning for a diverse student body occurs in a non-threatening, supportive environment, in which frequent feedback is an essential element. Learning is maximized when the student feels a need to learn and accepts a share of the responsibility of planning and implementing the learning experience. Learning is facilitated when a variety of instructional modalities are coordinated with students' specific learning needs, goals, and individual support systems. Learning progresses from simple to complex and involves the active participation of both the student and the instructor. Ideally, learning is a life-long process.

Adopted: 01/96

Reviewed: 07/21, 05/22

Registered Nursing Program Philosophy

We believe community college students bring a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, life experiences, learning styles, and developmental levels to the learning environment. The college community provides the opportunity for students and faculty to participate in cultural exchange; it encourages the examination and development of ideas through a balanced social forum and provides an environment for growth. We support self-development, including ongoing self-assessment and evaluation.

Philosophy of the Individual

We believe each person, regardless of race, creed, religion, or culture, is a unique, complex, holistic being and deserving of respect. All persons share with others common human attributes and basic human needs, adapting to physical and psychosocial experiences and stresses. Individuals have an inherent right to strive to attain optimal health and achieve their full potential in life. They possess dignity, and self-worth and have the right to information that will assist them to make informed decisions regarding health care. We believe that access to health care is the right of each member of society.

Philosophy of Health

We believe health and illness are relative, ever-changing states of being. Individuals exist on a continuum ranging from a state of optimal functioning to the absence of discernible disease, to obvious disease that can result in death. Illness occurs when there is an alteration in the function of one or more body systems. We believe the health care delivery system is changing quickly in response to societal demands, rapidly changing technology, and the increasing lifespan. These changes have resulted in a collaborative level of interaction between health care workers and the consumer.

Philosophy of Nursing

We believe that nursing is a dynamic profession in which nurses work collaboratively to provide safe, compassionate, client-centered, holistic health care. As members of the health care team, nurses have an evolving practice, based on innovations, emerging technologies, and changing societal needs based on the Art of Caring. Nursing blends evidence-based practice with the altruistic art of caring to promote, maintain, and restore wellness. Nursing demonstrates professionalism and caring for vulnerable individuals throughout their lifespan using cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills. Nurses assist individuals to use their available resources to adapt to an optimum level of functioning.

Philosophy of Nursing Education

Nursing education occurs in a variety of settings and prepares graduates with different levels of expertise. The nursing faculty uses a systematic approach to instruction that builds on previously learned knowledge from related disciplines and life experiences.

We believe that sound nursing education is based upon concepts relating to the individual, health/illness, environment, and nursing. Nursing education values and adheres to professional standards and regulatory guidelines and incorporates knowledge from a variety of disciplines including the humanities, social, physical, and natural sciences. Nursing education facilitates students gathering the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that provide the framework for students to assume responsibility and accountability as nurses.

Nursing education provides the environment which fosters students to become managers of care, learn to anticipate the needs of their patients, and how to advocate for health promotion and risk reduction. Nursing education provides students with the tools necessary to become change agents for the individual as well as for the profession of nursing. We believe that nursing education provides students with the foundation for safe nursing practice. We believe nursing education is a

transformative process that builds upon past learning and serves as the beginning of a journey of lifelong learning for the professional nurse.

A variety of caregivers are educated at different levels to provide health care services to the public. The Vocational nurse is educated to be a responsible member of a health care team, performing basic therapeutic, rehabilitative, and preventive care. The role of the Vocational nurse is an evolving one and encompasses providing specific services to patients under the direction of a licensed physician and/or registered professional nurse.

Registered nurses with an Associate Degree in nursing function as designers, providers, managers, coordinators of care, and are members of the profession. They utilize critical thinking and clinical reasoning processes in their practice, including the establishment of priorities, performance of therapeutic interventions, and evaluation of client outcomes.

Philosophy of Teaching & Learning

We believe that learning results in a change in behavior that can be measured, and which persists. Optimum learning for a diverse student body occurs in a non-threatening, supportive environment, in which frequent feedback is an essential element. Learning is a life-long process. We believe that optimal learning occurs when multiple evidence-based teaching methodologies are utilized in an environment with mutual respect and collaboration between learners, faculty, and healthcare team members.

We as nurse educators believe that accountability, ethical standards, moral values, and high-level integrity lead to a successful nursing graduate. Learning is maximized when the student feels a need to learn and accepts a share of the responsibility of planning and implementing the learning experience. The engaged, motivated learner enters the educational process with valuable life experiences, personal initiative, commitment to the profession, and a belief in the worth and dignity of all persons. Through passionate engagement, critical reflection, and multiple ways of knowing, relating, and learning, students will apply theory to ensure safe nursing practice.

We as nurse educators are an expression of the profession and facilitate a safe, collaborative, interactive learning environment. In an environment of student-centered learning, faculty foster and stimulate critical thinking, clinical reasoning and judgment, and an appreciation of social, ethical, and cultural diversity. In collaboration with the student, the nurse educator utilizes a multi-level curriculum moving from simple to complex concepts to develop safe, competent, caring, professional nurses.

We believe that a curriculum producing well-educated nursing professionals should include the following program concepts holistic patient-centered care, evidence-based practice, professionalism, safety, caring, and collaboration/communication.

Adopted: 02/20; Revised: 05/22

Reviewed: 05/22

CURRICULUM

Vocational Nursing Program

Program Course Sequence Policy

Students admitted to the Vocational Nursing (VN) Program are required to follow the established course sequence as outlined in the program curriculum. All courses must be taken in the prescribed order to ensure the appropriate progression of knowledge and skills.

Any disruption to this sequence—including withdrawal, course failure, or administrative drop—will require the student to follow the [Reinstatement Policy](#) before returning to the program.

In accordance with the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT) regulations, students may not participate in clinical experiences until the related theory content has been introduced in the classroom. Students found to be in violation of this requirement may be subject to disciplinary action and/or removal from the clinical site.

Term	Course Code	Title	Units
Year 1 Winter/Summer	HS-013	General Nutrition	3
	HS-067	Introduction to Med/Dosage Calculations	1
Fall/Spring	HS-062	Your Living Body	3
	or BI-013 and BI-014	or Human and Anatomy and Physiology I and Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4 5
	PSYC C1000	Introduction to Psychology	3
Year 2 Fall	NVN 010	Fundamentals for the Vocational Nurse	16
Spring	NVN 020	Care of the client Experiencing Medical-Surgical Alterations	16
Summer	NVN 030	Vocational Nursing Care of Clients in Special Populations	7.5
Total Units for Certificate			49.5-55.5
Total Units for Degree			67.5-70.5

Adopted: 08/2025

Vocational Nursing Program Conceptual Framework

The conceptual (organizing) framework of the vocational nursing program at College of the Desert is derived from statements in the program philosophy relating to the human individual and society, health, and nursing. The philosophy and organizing framework provide guidance to the establishment of educational outcomes, course objectives, the sequencing of course content, and the program in general.

The Individual and Society

The individual is viewed as a unique holistic being with bio-psycho-social and spiritual needs. Individuals possess dignity and unconditional worth, have diverse values and beliefs, and have an inherent right to assume responsibility for the development of their own potential.

The individual moves through the lifespan from conception to death, experiencing various needs at different stages. Individuals exist as a part of a family and world community in which they interact with and are affected by environmental situations.

Health, Illness, and Health Care Delivery

Health is viewed as a changing state on the wellness/illness continuum. As individuals progress through life, optimum levels of wellness can be achieved. Illness results when alterations occur in an individual's optimum state of wellness.

Alterations in optimum wellness may be viewed differently by different individuals. Individuals' perception of the alteration may affect their ability to function.

Nursing

Nursing is a dynamic, caring profession in which the nurse assists individuals to achieve their highest level of functioning. nursing activities are implemented through the use of the nursing process which involves the assessment of basic physical, emotional, socio-cultural, and spiritual needs; planning care; implementation; and evaluation.

Adopted: 01/96

Reviewed: 07/21, 05/22

Vocational Nursing Program Concepts and Sub-concepts

- Professionalism
 - Leadership
 - Employability Skills
- Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)
 - Nursing Role
 - Pharmacology
 - Psychomotor Skills
- Holistic Client-Centered Care
 - Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)
 - Nutrition
 - Health Teaching
 - Cultural Awareness
- Communication
 - Informatics
 - Teamwork/Collaboration
- Safety
 - Quality Improvement

Revised -08/2025

Vocational Nursing Program End of Program Student Learning Outcomes (EPSLOs)

By the end of the program, students will:

1. Integrate leadership principles in a variety of healthcare settings.
 - 1b. Demonstrate the Professional Identity of the Vocational Nurse
2. Employ clinical judgment rooted in evidenced-based practice to provide nursing care at an entry level for a vocational nurse.
3. Prioritize client-centered care that recognizes the client as a full partner with individual preferences and beliefs.
4. Facilitate communication with the interprofessional health care team for the purpose of improving patient outcomes
5. Implement all aspect of safety through systems-based approach and individual practice

Revised: 08/2025

Vocational Nursing Program Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

By the end of the course, students will:

First Semester-NVN-010

1. Describe legal and ethical principles that guide the delivery of VN care. and regulatory principles that guide the delivery of nursing care.
 - 1b. Describe the professional identity of the Vocational Nurse.
2. Apply evidence-based practice in the care of clients at a beginning level.
3. Interpret relevant client information necessary for personalized plans of care in the aim of optimal wellness at a beginning level.
4. Apply elementary principles of therapeutic communication with the client.
5. Provide safe client care at a beginning level.

Second Semester-NVN-020

1. Demonstrate accountability of the Vocational Nurse in delivery of legal/ethical regulations.
 - 1b. Exhibit growth mindset and describe how it influences nursing care.
2. Demonstrate clinical judgment while implementing evidence-based practice.
3. Provide personalized care in the aim of optimal wellness at an intermediate level.
4. Demonstrate therapeutic communication to contribute to improved patient outcomes.
5. Provide safe care for patients experiencing alterations in health.

Third Semester-NVN-030

1. Integrate leadership principles in a variety of healthcare settings.
 - 1b. Demonstrate the Professional Identity of the Vocational Nurse
2. Employ clinical judgment rooted in evidenced-based practice to provide nursing care at an entry level for a vocational nurse.
3. Prioritize client-centered care that recognizes the client as a full partner with individual preferences and beliefs.
4. Facilitate communication with the interprofessional health care team for the purpose of improving patient outcomes.
5. Implement all aspect of safety through systems-based approach and individual practice

Revised: 08/2025

Registered Nursing Program

Program Course Sequence Policy

Once admitted to the Registered Nursing (RN) Program, students must complete nursing courses in the designated sequence as outlined in the program curriculum. Courses are structured to build upon prior knowledge and skills, and therefore must be taken in the prescribed order without exception.

Students are not permitted to take courses out of sequence. This includes enrolling in second-year specialty courses prior to the successful completion of all first-year requirements. Likewise, students may not enroll in foundational courses after advancing to second-year coursework.

Any disruption in the sequence—whether due to course failure, withdrawal, or other reasons—will result in removal from the standard course progression and require the student to follow the [Reinstatement Policy](#) in order to return to the program when space becomes available.

Term	Course Code	Title	Units
Year 1 Summer/Winter	ENGL C1000	Academic Reading and Writing	4
	or ENGL C1000E	or Academic Reading and Writing Support	1
Fall/Spring	COD GE Area A3	Arts, Humanities and Culture	3
	BI 013	Human and Anatomy and Physiology I	4
	CH 007	Fundamentals of Chemistry	5
Winter/Summer	COMM C1000	Introduction to Public Speaking	3
	SOC 003	Fundamentals of Statistics	3
	or STAT C1000	or Introduction to Statistics	4
Spring/Fall	BI-014	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	5
	PSYC C1000	Introduction to Psychology	3
	or PSY 003	or Developmental Psychology	3
	BI 015	General Microbiology	5
Year 2 Summer/Winter	COD GE Area A6	Ethnic Studies	3
	COD GE Area A7	Personal Growth and Development, Health, Activity and Wellness	2
Fall/Spring	NRN 110	Foundations of Nursing Practice	3.5
	NRN 110C	Foundations of Nursing Practice: Clinical	3.5
	NRN 140	Concepts of Nursing: Gerontology	1
	NRN 140C	Concepts of Nursing: Gerontology Clinical	1
	or NRN 130	or Concepts of Nursing: Mental Health	
	NRN 130C	Concepts of Nursing: Mental Health Clinical	
Spring/Fall	NRN 120	Concepts of Nursing: Commonly Occurring Alterations	3.5
	NRN 120C	Concepts of Nursing: Commonly Occurring Alterations: Clinical	3
	NRN 120L	Concepts of Nursing: Commonly Occurring Alterations: Lab	0.5

Term	Course Code	Title	Units
	NRN 130	Concepts of Nursing: Mental Health	1
	NRN 130C	Concepts of Nursing: Mental Health Clinical	1
	or	or	
	NRN 140	Concepts of Nursing: Gerontology	
	NRN 140C	Concepts of Nursing: Gerontology Clinical	
Year 3 Fall/Spring	NRN 210	Chronic Alterations in Health	3.5
	NRN 210C	Chronic Alterations in Health: Clinical	3
	NRN 210L	Chronic Alterations in Health: Lab	0.5
	NRN 230	Pediatric Health & Wellness	1
	NRN 230C	Pediatric Health & Wellness: Clinical	1
	or	or	
	NRN 240	Health & Wellness in Growing Families	
	NRN 240C	Health & Wellness in Growing Families: Clinical	
Spring/Fall	NRN 220	Acute Complex Alterations in Health	3
	NRN 220C	Acute Complex Alterations in Health: Clinical	3
	NRN 220L	Acute Complex Alterations in Health: Lab	0.5
	NRN 250	Transition to Practice	0.5
	NRN 240	Health & Wellness in Growing Families	1
	NRN 240C	Health & Wellness in Growing Families: Clinical	1
	or	or	
	NRN 230	Pediatric Health & Wellness	
	NRN 230C	Pediatric Health & Wellness: Clinical	
Total Units for Degree			71-73

Adopted: 08/2025

Registered Nursing Program Conceptual Framework

The conceptual (organizing) framework of the Associate Degree nursing program at College of the Desert is derived from statements in the program philosophy relating to the human individual, the environment, health, and nursing. The philosophy and organizing framework provide guidance to the establishment of educational outcomes, course objectives, the sequencing of course content, and the program in general. The major concepts and the identified “threads” of the curriculum provide unifying themes for the development of the program of learning. The threads, ten in all, are reflected in the course objectives for each of the four major courses in the curriculum that have a clinical component.

The four major themes are the individual, health, environment, and nursing.

The INDIVIDUAL is viewed as a unique, complex, holistic being with biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions. Individuals possess diverse values and beliefs and possess dignity, unconditional worth, and the inherent right to assume responsibility for the development of their own potential.	The ENVIRONMENT is composed of internal and external stressors. The internal stressors are derived from the dimensions of the individual and the external stressors are representative of all the systems and processes that exist outside the individual. These stressors interact to affect an individual’s optimum wellness. A person’s perception of the stressor and ability and willingness to control the stressors will also affect optimum wellness.
HEALTH is viewed as a changing state on the wellness-illness continuum. As individuals progress through life, optimum levels of wellness can be achieved. Illness occurs when alterations occur in an individual’s optimum state of wellness.	NURSING is a dynamic profession that is scientifically based and executed through the use of the nursing Process. Nursing is directed towards promoting, maintaining, or restoring optimum wellness in those for whom the nurse cares.

Adopted: 02/93; Revised: 07/21

Reviewed: 05/22

Registered Nursing Program Concepts and Sub-concepts

- Professionalism
 - Leadership
 - Nursing Role
 - Employability Skills
- Evidence-Based Practice (EBP)
 - Nursing Role
 - Pharmacology
- Holistic Client-Centered Care
 - Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)
 - Nutrition
 - Health Teaching
 - Cultural Awareness
 - Community
- Communication
 - Informatics
 - Teamwork/Collaboration
- Safety
 - Quality Improvement

Adopted July 2022

Registered Nursing End of Program Student Learning Outcomes (EPSLO)

By the end of the program, students will:

1. Demonstrate accountability for the delivery of nursing care while influencing the behavior of others to achieve shared goals.
 - 1b. Demonstrate the Professional Identity of Nursing (PIN)
2. Assimilate clinical judgment, rooted in evidence-based practice, to provide nursing care at an entry-level.
3. Design client-centered care for individuals that recognizes the client as a full partner with individual preferences and beliefs.
4. Integrate communication principles to foster a respectful environment that supports shared decision-making in the efforts of improving client's optimal wellness.
5. Competently manage all aspects of safety for clients through system effectiveness, individual performance, and quality improvement to minimize risk of harm to clients.

Registered Nurse Program Core Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

By the end of the course, students will:

First Semester-NRN 110

1. Determine the legal, ethical, and regulatory principles that guide the delivery of nursing care.
 - 1b. Describe the professional identity of nurses.
2. Demonstrate a systematic approach to decision-making.
3. Discuss factors that impact differences in health status among individuals, communities, and populations.
4. Describe various communication tools used in the care of clients, communities, and populations.
5. Describe methods to provide an optimal environment for client-centered wellness.

Second Semester- NRN 120

1. Examine nurse accountability in the delivery of nursing care based on legal, ethical, and regulatory principles.
 - 1b. Examine the characteristics of a growth mindset.
2. Utilize clinical reasoning and prioritization when designing plans of care for adult clients.
3. Develop a plan of care considering variance among clients and populations.
4. Examine the role of communication in promoting optimal wellness.
5. Examine interventions and quality initiatives required to maintain safety.

Third Semester- NRN 210

1. Summarize how the nurse is accountable in the delegation, supervision, and delivery of nursing care based on legal, ethical, and regulatory principles.
 - 1b. Examine how the professional identity of a nurse impacts the team dynamics in the efforts of health outcomes.
2. Apply knowledge of systems to provide evidence-based practice across the continuum of care.
3. Develop a holistic client-centered care that includes mitigation of factors that impact health status.
4. Communicate in a manner that facilitates a partnership approach to quality care delivery.
5. Analyze safety measures and develop quality improvement plans to minimize risk of harm.

Fourth Semester-NRN 220

1. Describe how the leadership role of the nurse can be used to influence the behavior of others towards achieving shared goals.
 - 1b. Describe their personal professional identity as a nurse.
2. Demonstrates critical thinking and clinical judgment to plan and provide evidence-based nursing care at an entry-level.
3. Design client-centered care for individuals that recognizes the client as a full partner with individual preferences and beliefs.
4. Utilize communication tools and modalities to foster mutual respect and support shared decision-making within the interdisciplinary team.
5. Apply QI principles to provide a culture of safety for clients and care providers.

Adopted July 2022; Rev 8/23

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Licensure/Certification Eligibility

Graduates of the RN or LVN program are eligible to apply to take the National Council Licensing Examinations (NCLEX) for licensure as a nurse. Applicants must submit Live Scan fingerprints. According to California Business and Professions Code ([Licensee: Division 1.5. Denial, Suspension, and Revocation of Licenses; Chapter 2. Denial of Licenses\), Section 480](#)), “a board may deny a license regulated by this code on the grounds that the applicant has been convicted of a crime or has been subject to a formal discipline...”

The Boards investigate convictions by obtaining information on the underlying facts of the case, dates, and disposition of the case, and subsequent rehabilitation.

Requirements regarding disclosure of violations vary by the state board. We highly recommend students with past convictions, meet with the nursing Counselor to discuss policies, procedures, and recommendations regarding disclosure.

Questions pertaining to legal limitations of licensure for such convictions should be addressed by the student to the appropriate Board.

Offenses related to Licensure Issuance - CNA

Students submitting initial applications to the Department of Health Services for the CNA course will need to complete information disclosing any past criminal record. Electronically transmitted fingerprinting (LiveScan) is required for this course. If a history exists that has not been cleared with the California Department of Public Health, the student will not be able to continue in the class which in turn negates licensure.

Although students may pass a background check and drug screen for entry into clinical facilities, this does not guarantee students will pass a background check for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) or future employment. Any convictions (expunged or dismissed) can be a reason to deny or delay licensure by the state boards.

Rev: 07/22

Onboarding Process

Introduction

Onboarding is the process of completing requirements to gain entrance into clinical facilities and clearance to work with patients and staff in those facilities during your program. This process includes a physical exam clearance, clearance from communicable diseases, proof of identification, and other certifications required by clinical agencies. The purpose of the health clearance is for a healthcare professional to determine if you are physically fit to withstand the physical and emotional demands of the program. The health clearance is based on job function and reflects the [Core Performance Standards](#).

Clinical facilities' documentation is sometimes required 90 days prior to the start of the term; therefore, onboarding often occurs during the primary term breaks. The affiliation agreements with the clinical agencies require that students be free of communicable diseases.

Faculty and students are considered guests at the clinical facilities; therefore, the standards and requirements may differ from those imposed on the facility's employees. The requirements of the clinical facilities are final and non-negotiable.

We will assist you with this complex process, but it is ultimately up to each student to satisfactorily complete all requirements by deadlines set by the department.

Policy

1. Students must view their "myCOD" email daily, including during breaks to ensure effective communication.
2. All communication regarding onboarding and software training will go through "myCOD" email accounts. Emails may come from software systems on behalf of the department staff.
3. Students will be assigned access to onboarding platforms and be required to attend training on all systems.
4. Students are required to upload and manage their own necessary documents on all onboarding platforms.
5. The uploading of documents to onboarding platforms implies authorization to share the documentation with necessary clinical agencies.
6. Deadlines set for any portion of onboarding including, but not limited to, platform training, document submission, and attendance at a facility for badges, are set by the department in conjunction with the facilities. These deadlines are non-negotiable.
7. Students are responsible for paying for any fees associated with the process. The college is not responsible for any costs incurred, nor are refunds possible.
8. Students that do not meet onboarding requirements, including deadlines, or appointments at facilities, and/or attendance at the required training will not be enrolled or they will be dropped from their course. Students newly admitted to the program will be required to reapply to the program for admittance. Current students will be required to apply for reinstatement due to the disruption in the cohort model progression.
9. The application for reinstatement will count as the student's one opportunity for reinstatement as per the Program Reinstatement Policy.
10. Students that are not free from communicable diseases or do not have authorized health clearance will not be able to attend clinical and will be unable to continue in the program.
11. Onboarding requirements include but are not limited to
 - a. Physical examination clearance
 - b. Vaccinations for Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis (Tdap), flu, COVID-19
 - c. Proof of immunity from Hepatitis B, Measles, Mumps, Rubella, Varicella
 - d. Tuberculosis screening

- e. American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS/CPR) card
 - f. Facility documents for policies and procedures.
 - g. Background check
 - h. Drug screen
 - i. Facility badge photos and pick-up
 - j. Valid Government ID (may not expire during semester (see #11).
12. Onboarding requirements must be valid through the entire semester. Any item expiring during the semester term will not be accepted.

Program Requirements

In addition to onboarding requirements, the programs require the following items for all students.

Malpractice Insurance

College policy requires each student enrolled in health occupations programs with clinical components to purchase insurance coverage against liability for malpractice. The fee for this insurance is paid at the time of registration. No student will be allowed to care for clients without evidence of having purchased malpractice insurance. Students are to purchase malpractice insurance for each year of the nursing program.

Due to state regulatory changes, the California College Promise Grant (formerly known as the Board of Governor (BOG) Fee Waiver) administered at COD will waive enrollment fees only. Payment of the Malpractice Insurance Fee and Student Health Fee (by the student) is mandatory.

Social Security Number/Individual Tax Identification Number (ITIN)

While Social Security Numbers (SSN) are not required to take nursing coursework, the facilities used for clinical instruction do require either a SSN or ITIN. SSN or ITIN is also required for State Board examinations for licensure. If you do not have a SSN or ITIN card please contact the School of Health Sciences and Education office for further instruction.

Fit Testing

It may be necessary to conduct N95 Fit Testing on students for facility requirements. Should that be necessary, the nursing department will provide the testing and the masks required.

Acknowledgement of Receipt Forms

At the start of each term, students must acknowledge receipt of the course syllabus and student handbook. In addition, students are required to sign the Nursing Programs Confidentiality of Information Agreement and the Simulation Fiction Contract. These documents are available on the department website under the "Documents and Forms" section.

Required Surveys

Students are required to complete surveys distributed by the Nursing & Allied Health Department throughout the program. These surveys are sent to students' MyCOD email accounts and support data collection efforts mandated by the Board of Registered Nursing (BRN), accrediting bodies, and grant funders.

Completion of all assigned surveys by the specified deadlines is mandatory. Failure to do so may result in course failure due to noncompliance with program expectations, unprofessional conduct, and lack of effective communication.

Background Check/Drug Screen

Introduction

Health care facilities are required to develop policies for staff, students, and volunteers who provide care, treatment, and services. Facilities are required to verify qualifications which include but are not limited to: certification, licensure, or registration; education, experience, and competency information on criminal background; and compliance with health screening requirements. College of the Desert is required to comply with licensing requirements and with the policies of our partner agencies. If you have a felony or misdemeanor in your background, please see the nursing Counselor to discuss the impact on licensure and your nursing career.

Policy

1. Students for all programs are required to obtain a clear background check and drug screen during a specified timeframe, determined by the department. The department will provide instructions to the student on how the student will apply and pay for the background check.
2. Costs of background checks and drug screens are assumed by the student and will not be reimbursed or refunded for any reason.
3. Clinical facilities may request new drug screens throughout the program.
4. A new background check/drug screen will be required if the educational program is interrupted.
5. Students who do not complete the background check and drug screen by the given deadline will (a) not be allowed to register, or (b) be dropped from their course.
6. Students that do not meet onboarding requirements, including deadlines, or appointments at facilities, and/or attendance at the required training will not be enrolled or they will be dropped from their course. Students newly admitted to the program will be required to reapply to the program for admittance. Current students will be required to apply for reinstatement due to the disruption in the cohort model progression.
7. The application for reinstatement will count as the student's one opportunity for reinstatement as per the Program Reinstatement Policy.
8. Students that are not free from communicable diseases or do not have authorized health clearance will not be able to attend clinical and unable to continue in the program.
9. Students must provide consent to allow the school and clinical facilities, as necessary, access to the background check/drug screen results.
10. Background checks and drug screens will minimally include the following:
 - a. Seven-year history
 - b. Address verification
 - c. Sex Offender search
 - d. All names, all counties
 - e. Office of Inspection General (OIG) search
 - f. Social Security Number verification
 - g. Drug Screen
11. Students will be denied enrollment in the nursing course and/or program if the background check and drug screen do not come back clear.
12. Students denied enrollment due to criminal convictions may reapply to the program when it has been seven (7) years since an offense, or when they receive a dismissal or expungement.

13. Should any felony or misdemeanor charges be filed on a student at any time in the program, the student will be denied access to clinical agencies. Clinical rotations are a mandatory part of nursing education. If a student cannot participate in clinical, they cannot complete the nursing program and therefore, will be denied enrollment in the program.
14. The requirements of the clinical facilities are final and non-negotiable.
15. Any future applicable clinical agency or state board guidelines will be incorporated into this policy as they become available.

Adopted: 07/22; Rev 8/23, 8/24

Respiratory Protection Program

Information

It is the policy of the College of the Desert Nursing Department to protect the health and safety of its employees/students by using respiratory protection and other personal protective equipment when the frequency and duration of exposures cannot be substantially reduced or eliminated. Respiratory protection is provided at no cost to the employees/students.

This policy includes the implementation of this respiratory protection program as a means of providing the highest levels of protection to employees when they must be used. It establishes the procedures necessary to meet the regulatory requirements of OSHA. The full departmental policy can be provided upon request.

Policy

1. The Simulation Faculty, is responsible for administering the respiratory protection program.
2. This program applies to all employees and students who could potentially be exposed to airborne respiratory illnesses during routine operations in the event of an influenza pandemic or other infectious respiratory disease emergency.
3. The respirators selected will be used for respiratory protection from potentially airborne infectious diseases; they do not provide protection from chemical exposure. Through normal working situations students may be exposed to patients who could be infected with a potentially airborne infectious agent such as COVID-19.
4. Only respirators approved by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) will be selected and used.
5. It is the responsibility of the students to have an awareness of the respiratory protection requirements for their clinical sites. Students are also responsible for wearing the appropriate respiratory protective equipment according to proper instructions and for maintaining the equipment in a clean and operable condition. Students should also:
 - a. Participate in all training.
 - b. Maintain equipment.
 - c. Report malfunctions or concerns.

Training

6. Employees/Students will be trained prior to the use of a respirator, at least annually thereafter, and whenever supplemental training is deemed necessary by the Respiratory Protection Program Administrator, or when conditions in the workplace effecting respirator use change. Training will cover:
 - a. Identifying hazards, potential exposure to these hazards, and health effects of hazards.
 - b. Respirator fit, improper fit, usage, limitations, and capabilities for maintenance, usage, cleaning, and storage.
 - c. Inspecting, donning, removal, seal check and trouble shooting.
 - d. Explaining respirator program (policies, procedures, Cal/OSHA standard, resources).

Fit Testing

7. After the initial fit test, fit tests must be completed at least annually, or more frequently if there is a change in status of the wearer or if the employer changes model or type of respiratory protection (see below). As of 7/1/04 the Cal/OSHA Respiratory Protection Standard 8 CCR 5144 applies to health care workers. This template will be changed to reflect the most current OSHA regulations as new information becomes available.
8. Fit tests are conducted to determine that the respirator fits the user adequately and that a good seal can be obtained. Respirators that do not seal do not offer adequate protection. Fit testing is required for tight fitting respirators.

9. Fit tests will be conducted:

- a. Prior to being allowed to wear any respirator.
- b. If the facility changes respirator product.
- c. If the employee changes weight by 10% or more, or if the employee has changes in facial structure or scarring.
- d. If the employee reports that a respirator that previously passed a fit-test is not providing an adequate fit
- e. If the RPPA or other supervisor notices a change in employee/student that would require an additional fit-test as Cal/OSHA standards require.

Gifts and Gratuities

Students may not accept gifts, gratuities, or payment for items from patients or faculty. Cards and letters are appropriate. Gifts to faculty at the end of courses or clinical rotations are not expected. Students are requested not to give gifts.

Adopted: 07/22

Physical Activity Restriction

Policy

1. Students are required to report to the faculty and department any change in physical health status (examples: broken bone, skin lesions, chest pain, contagious disease, pregnancy, injury, surgery).
2. Students are required to submit documentation to the lead faculty and department staff from the healthcare provider stating that they may participate in unrestricted activities essential to clinical nursing practice according to the [Core Performance Standards](#). This statement must be received prior to the student participating in nursing programs' course activities.
3. Physical Activity Clearance forms are located on the [Nursing Department Website](#).
4. Restricted physical activities may prohibit participation in clinical experiences and may delay progression in the nursing program until the restrictions are lifted and the student has documentation of unrestricted activities essential to clinical nursing practice.

Rev: 07/22

ADA Compliance Statement

In compliance with the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the 2008 ADA Amendments Act, the Health Sciences & Education School does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities.

Disability is defined in the Act as a (1) physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of his or her major life activities; (2); a record of such impairment; or (3) being regarded as having such an impairment (Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN), 2020).

The nursing department supports the recommendations of the SREB CCEN and has adopted the [Core Performance Standards](#) for use by the program. Each standard has an example of an activity that nursing students are required to perform to successfully complete the program.

For the purposes of nursing program compliance, a “qualified individual with a disability is one who, with or without reasonable accommodation or modification, meets the program’s essential requirements known as the Core Performance Standards (SREB CCEN, 2020)”.

Admission to the program is not based on the Core Performance Standards. Rather, the standards are used to assist applicants and students in determining the need for ADA-related accommodations or medications. The Core Performance Standards are intended to constitute an objective measure of 1) a qualified applicant’s ability with or without accommodations to meet the program’s performance requirements; and 2) accommodations required by a matriculated student who seeks accommodations under the ADA (SREB CCEN, 2020).

If a student has a physical, psychiatric/emotional, medical, or learning disability that may impact the ability to complete nursing program course work, the student is encouraged to contact the staff in the Disabled Student Services Program (DSPS) in the Craven’s Student Services Building. DSPS staff will review concerns and determine with the student and nursing faculty, what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation are confidential.

Adapted from Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) Council on Collegiate Education for Nursing (CCEN), 2020, <https://www.sreb.org/publication/americans-disabilities-act>

College of the Desert views disability as an important aspect of diversity and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSPS) office is the office that collaborates with students with disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. Please contact the DSPS office at (760) 773-2534 or visit CSSC Room 101 for more information. Once registered with DSPS, students will be provided with an Authorized Academic Accommodations form that can be shared with faculty.

Rev: 07/22

Core Performance Standards

Critical Thinking - Critical thinking ability for effective clinical reasoning and clinical judgment consistent with the level of educational preparation

- Identification of cause/effect relationships in clinical situations
- Use of the scientific method in the development of patient care plans
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of nursing interventions

Professional Relationships - Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interactions with a diverse population of individuals, families, and groups

- Establishment of rapport with patients/clients and colleagues
- Capacity to engage in successful conflict resolution
- Peer accountability

Communication – Communication adeptness sufficient for verbal and written professional interactions

- Explanation of treatment procedures, initiation of health teaching.
- Documentation and interpretation of nursing actions and patient/client responses

Mobility - Physical abilities sufficient for movement from room to room and in small spaces

- Movement about patient's room, workspaces, and treatment areas
- Be on your feet 6-12 hours at a time and perform activities that include reaching, balancing, carrying, pushing, pulling, stooping, bending, and crouching
- Administration of rescue procedures-cardiopulmonary resuscitation

Motor Skills - Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care

- Calibration and use of equipment
- Therapeutic positioning of patients

Hearing - Auditory ability sufficient for monitoring and assessing health needs

- Ability to hear monitoring device alarm and other emergency signals
- Ability to discern auscultatory sounds and cries for help

Visual - Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for patient care

- Visually discriminate depth and color perception
- Perform close and distinct visual activities involving persons, computers, and paperwork
- Ability to observe patient's condition and responses to treatments

Tactile Sense - Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment

- Ability to palpitate in physical examinations and various therapeutic interventions

Other

- Identify and distinguish odors that are pungent, or the products of infection or metabolic imbalance (e.g., ketones)
- Work and make safe decisions in stressful situations

Adopted: 07/22

Title IX Statement

Information

Title IX of the Education Amendment Acts of 1972 prohibits discrimination based on sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, and gender identity) in any educational program or activity. Discrimination can be defined as exclusion from participation in, denied the benefits or services, subject any person to different rules or treatment, or engaging in gender-based or sexual harassment such as making unwelcome sexual advances, comments, or name-calling based on sex (U.S. Department of Human Health Services, Office for Civil Rights Headquarters, 2021). Title IX complaints and/or investigations are handled by the [Office of Student Life](#) 760-862-1317.

Policy

Any student who is accused and under a Title IX investigation or criminal investigation will be removed from the class or program until the investigation is complete and charges are found unwarranted. Once charges are found unwarranted or dismissed the student will be reinstated and placed in the next available semester.

Students experiencing harassment under Title IX should reach out to the Office of Student Life as these matters are handled outside the nursing department.

Protocol for Incident, Injury, or Pathogen Exposure for Students or Faculty

Information

The following is the protocol for students or faculty who experience needle-stick, mucous membrane exposure, or other methods of blood-borne contamination. This protocol is provided by the College of the Desert Office of Human Resources.

Protocol

In the Off Campus Clinical Setting:

1. Notify supervisor/instructor
2. Call Injury hotline 877-518-6702
 - a. College of the Desert Search Code RSR17
3. Follow "Company nurse" advice for medical treatment
4. Notify employee health department of the hospital
5. Call COD Human Resources at (760) 773-2529 to report the exposure
6. Notify the Director of the COD nursing program 760-776-7303
7. Complete [Incident Report for Injury/Pathogen Exposure](#) for COD and email to the Director of Nursing
8. Complete Incident report for the hospital (check with unit manager/director for instructions)

On Campus (skills lab):

Minor Injury (broken skin, bruise, needle-stick from practice syringe)

1. Injury reported to the instructor
2. First aid is performed as needed
3. Instructor notifies HR x 2529
4. Student reports to School nurse at the Health Services Office x 7211
5. Complete [Incident Report for Injury/Pathogen Exposure](#) for COD and email to the Director of Nursing

****If after hours, and the Health Service Office is closed, call Security @ 2111 and follow clinical setting process above.*

Serious Injury requiring 911

1. Provide first aid and manage crowds
2. Call 911
3. Call security x 2111
4. Call the school nurse x7211
5. Notify the front office for the Director of Nursing -x 7303
6. Complete [Incident Report for Injury/Pathogen Exposure](#) for COD and email to the Director of Nursing
7. Notify COD Human Resources within 24 hours x 2529

Rev: 07/22, 08/23

IN CASE OF WORKPLACE INJURY:

ACCION a seguir en caso de un accidente en el trabajo



1-877-518-6702

▶ AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY

- 1▶ Injured worker notifies supervisor.**
Empleado lesionado notifica a su supervisor.
- 2▶ Supervisor / Injured worker immediately calls injury hotline.**
Supervisor / Empleado lesionado llama inmediatamente a la línea de enfermeros/as.
- 3▶ Company Nurse gathers information over the phone and helps injured worker access appropriate medical treatment.**
Profesional Médico obtiene información por teléfono y asiste al empleado lesionado en localizar el tratamiento médico adecuado.

EMPLOYER NAME
(NOMBRE DE COMPAÑIA)

SEARCH CODE
(CÓDIGO DEL BÚSQUEDA)

College of the Desert

RSR17

Notice to Employer/Supervisor:

Please post copies of this poster in multiple locations within your worksite. If the injury is non-life threatening, please call Company Nurse prior to seeking treatment. Minor injuries should be reported prior to leaving the job site when possible.

Visit us online: www.CompanyNurse.com

Chain of Command and Grievance Resolution Process

Information

This policy and procedure are to aid a student experiencing a problem related to the nursing program. This process incorporates the COD informal grievance process and includes state board regulations. Therefore, students experiencing a problem in the nursing program must follow the nursing program grievance resolution process in place of the COD college catalog “Informal Grievance Resolution Procedure”. Students may also collaborate with the nursing counselor to facilitate communication. Students can use the diagram for the Chain of Command to assist in the procedure below.

The process for a grade grievance is a separate process and can be found in the college catalog under “grade grievance”.

Harassment and/or discrimination is a serious grievance. The Director of Nursing should be informed of these issues directly. The Director of Nursing will refer students to the harassment process which is handled outside the nursing department through the Title IX procedure.

Procedure

1. A student must begin the grievance procedure within five (5) days from the date of the alleged grievance. The student may choose to terminate the grievance at any time. A grievance filed within thirty (30) days of the end of the semester may be deferred until the following semester.
2. The procedure shall be completed within ten (10) days of reporting of the original complaint to the other party. It is the student’s responsibility to describe to the parties involved the nature of the grievance so that the parties involved understand that the grievance procedure has been initiated.
3. Students should first communicate with the faculty involved to resolve the concern. Matters relating to the clinical area should be discussed with the appropriate clinical instructor.
4. An informal meeting will be held by the student and appropriate college faculty. The purpose of the meeting is to identify the perceived violation of the student’s rights and to develop a resolution that is of mutual satisfaction to all parties involved. The student shall discuss and attempt to resolve the matter with the faculty at the meeting. If the student is satisfied with the outcome of the meeting, the process could end.
5. If the matter cannot be resolved, the student is advised to follow the chain of command in the following order: semester level Lead Instructor, Department Chair, Assistant Director of Nursing, Director of Nursing, Dean of the School of Health Science and Education.
6. Students must give the opportunity for each person to resolve prior to moving to the next level in the chain of command.
7. Students not following each level of the chain of command will be denied a meeting and referred to this procedure.
8. Once the above process has been exhausted and the grievance is not resolved, the student may move on to the “formal procedure” according to the [COD College catalog Grievance Policy](#).

Rev: 07/22; 08/23

Chain of Command Diagram



Professional Conduct

Information

The nursing and allied health programs have a responsibility to maintain high professional standards. Professional behavior is an essential competency of the healthcare provider role. A student's performance, behavior, and professional conduct will be evaluated by the faculty and may result in academic failure of the course. Additionally, students are held to the Student Conduct Standards as outlined in the current COD Catalog. As students enter this program with the goal of becoming a professional nurse, they not only accept the responsibilities and trust given to nursing, but also the obligation to adhere to the profession's code of conduct and relationships for ethical practice.

Students may not represent themselves as a COD student outside of the scheduled class time in a healthcare facility. Please remember that your conduct as a student reflects upon you as an individual, on the healthcare programs, COD, and the profession.

Professional And Ethical Standards

The ANA Code of Ethics for nurses identifies the fundamental moral and ethical values necessary in the practice of nursing. This code serves as the basis for evaluation of the personal qualities that students are expected to develop throughout the nursing programs at College of the Desert. Additionally, the code serves as a foundation for policies and procedures within the program.

The Code of Ethics for Nurses: Preface

The Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements (the Code) establishes the ethical standard for the profession and provides a guide for nurses to use in ethical analysis and decision-making. The Code is nonnegotiable in any setting. It may be revised or amended only by formal processes established by the American Nurses Association (ANA). The Code arises from the long, distinguished, and enduring more tradition of modern nursing the United States. It is foundational to nursing theory, practice, and praxis in its expression of the values, virtues, and obligations that shape, guide, and inform nursing as a profession.

Nursing encompasses the protection, promotion, and restoration of health and well-being; the prevention of illness and injury; and the alleviation of suffering, in the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations. All of this is reflected, in part, in nursing's persisting commitment both to the welfare of the sick, injured, and vulnerable in society and to social justice. nurses act to change those aspects of social structures that detract from health and well-being.

Individuals who become nurses, as well as the professional organizations that represent them, are expected not only to adhere to the values, moral norms, and ideals of the profession but also to embrace them as a part of what it means to be a nurse. The ethical tradition of nursing is self-reflective, enduring, and distinctive. A code of ethics for the nursing profession makes explicit the primary obligations, values, and ideals of the profession. In fact, it informs every aspect of the nurse's life.

Provisions:

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

Reference: American Nurses Association. (2015). Code of ethics for Nurses with interpretive statements. Retrieved <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>

Policy

Students must adhere to the Nursing Code of Ethics at all times. Violations of the COE may result in failure of the course and up to ineligibility for reinstatement.

Professional Behaviors

Information

All students in the nursing programs at College of the Desert are required to conduct themselves in a professional manner. In recognition that communication styles and behaviors vary among various cultures and generations, a list of behaviors is offered as guidelines for professional behavior.

Professional Behaviors

- Unconditional human regard for every person
- Caring
- Compassion, sensitivity, commitment
- Maintains physical & emotional safety
- Positive attitude
- Therapeutic communication with patient's family, staff, peers, faculty
- Appropriate eye contact/smiling
- Appropriate assertiveness
- Maintains personal & professional boundaries
- Appropriate independence & autonomy
- Accountable/Punctual
- Trustworthy
- Follows directions & rules
- Compartmentalizes own thoughts, feelings & values
- Strives to meet program & course learning outcomes
- Self-evaluation congruent with performance
- Effective conflict resolution
- Consistently puts forth best effort
- Positive growth in clinical performance
- Respectful

Unprofessional Behaviors

- Discourteous, rude, disrespectful
- Deliberate lack of consideration of others
- Surly, haughty, arrogant, sullen
- Showing resentment or defiance
- Resisting authority/insubordination
- Not submitting to authority
- Flippant, Brusque
- Dishonesty
- Bullying including cyberbullying/Incivility
- Lack of punctuality or timeliness
- Eye rolling or Smirking
- Spreading rumors, gossiping
- Excluding or marginalizing others
- Unwilling to work with others
- Abusive/Harassment
- Mean Spirited
- Malicious
- Intimidating
- Raising voice or yelling
- Uses profanity
- Threatening (physical and/or emotional)
- Walking away in disgust
- Demeaning
- Refusing to share important information
- Failure to comply with the chain of command
- Recording an instructor, staff, or student, without permission

Adopted: 7/22

Behaviors for the Safety of the Public

Information

The boards of nursing protect the health, safety, and well-being of the public through the fair and consistent application of the statutes and regulations governing nursing practice and education in California. The COD nursing programs are approved by their respective boards, therefore have a primary focus and intention to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the public.

Policy

1. The faculty reserves the right to remove from the clinical area any student who, in the faculty member's professional judgment, places the client in physical or emotional jeopardy or requires an inordinate level of supervision to ensure patient safety.
 - If an instructor intervenes and an error is prevented, this still constitutes a student error and/or safety concern.
2. Patterns of behavior deemed unsafe, as determined by the professional judgment of faculty, may result in academic failure of the course without opportunity for reinstatement.
3. Safety violations will result in ineligibility for reinstatement.

Examples of Unsafe Behaviors

This list includes examples and is not conclusive.

- Performing invasive procedures outside of the scope of practice and/or without appropriate supervision
- Administering medications outside the scope of practice and/or without appropriate supervision
- Endangering the public
- Removing a patient from a facility for any reason, regardless of facility policy, clinical site/staff request or clinical care plan.
- Utilizing lab equipment outside a practice environment
- Client abandonment
- Expressions of anger or hostility directed towards clients or others.
- Attempting, threatening, or placing a client or other, in physical or emotional jeopardy.
- Behavior consistent with or being under the influence of the use of controlled substances, alcohol, or any intoxicant.
- Failure to follow an instructor's directions.
- Insubordinate attitude or profane language or behavior with the intent to disrupt, malign, harm, or discredit program faculty or staff.
- Entering patient care areas without faculty approval.
- Inability to effectively communicate with the health care team or patient in the English language.
- Falsification of documentation.
- Behavior incompatible with the role of the professional nurse.
- Unsafe performance of previously learned skills
- Medical error in which the student is at fault as evidenced by circumventing safety guards, not applying basic learned skills, or neglect.
- Dishonesty. (Ex: cheating, lying, stealing, plagiarism either within the semester or throughout the program)

Rev: 7/22; 08/23

Substance Abuse and Mental Disability

Information

The nursing student must be emotionally and mentally healthy and free of any illegal drugs/alcohol in all nursing program classes, laboratories, and clinical rotations. Additionally, students may not be impaired by any prescribed medication while attending any school function.

Nursing faculty of COD support the California Board of Registered nursing and Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians statements regarding alcoholism, drug abuse, and emotional illness and recognizes that:

1. These are diseases and should be treated as such
2. Personal and health problems involving these diseases can affect one's academic and clinical performance, and that the impaired nursing student is a danger to self and a grave danger to the patients in his or her care.
3. Students who develop these diseases can be helped to recover.
4. It is the responsibility of the student to voluntarily seek diagnosis and treatment of any suspected illness.
5. Students are required to report any change in health status and provide clearance to participate in unrestricted activities essential to nursing practice.
6. Confidential handling of the diagnosis and treatment of these diseases is essential.
7. Students must be free of any evidence of impairment.
8. Patient safety is always the number one priority.

Procedure for dealing with a student who has no documented impairment who discloses drug abuse, mental disability, or inappropriate use of alcohol while enrolled in the program:

1. Conference between the student, Dean, Department Chair, and/or didactic or clinical faculty to develop a plan of action.
2. Recommendations for remediation and possible referral to the COD school psychologist.

Below is a list of behaviors that suggest impairment. This list is not comprehensive.

Physiologic

- slurred or rapid speech
- trembling hands
- persistent rhinorrhea (excessive nasal discharge)
- altered pupil dilation
- flushed face
- red eyes
- odor of alcohol
- tachycardia
- somnolence (drowsiness/sleepiness)
- unsteady gait
- declining health
- isolation or avoidance of group work
- pattern of absenteeism and tardiness
- decreased clinical and academic productivity
- fluctuating clinical and academic performance
- change in dress or appearance
- inappropriate or delayed responses
- elaborate excuses for behavior
- decreased alertness/falling asleep in class/clinical
- dishonesty
- inappropriate joking about drug and alcohol use
- paranoia
- delusions
- hallucinations

Behavioral

- irritability and mood swings

Policy

If a student is exhibiting behavior that suggests impairment by alcohol drugs, and/or emotional/mental disability, the nursing faculty member, always maintaining confidentiality, will:

1. Remove the student from patient care immediately and report the removal of the student to the clinic/hospital staff, so that patient care can be maintained.
2. Notify the Director of Nursing and Allied Health (760) 776-7303.
3. Require blood and/or urine testing in an approved lab immediately at student expense. Refusal to provide a specimen when requested will result in immediate dismissal from the program without the opportunity for readmission.
 - a. In a facility without a lab on-site, the student will be sent by taxi (at student expense) to an approved lab. The Director's office will then notify the student's emergency contact person to take the student home after blood and/or urine testing has been completed. If unable to contact the Director's office, call COD Public Safety (760) 341-2111, who will notify the student's emergency contact person. Public Safety will notify the Director of Nursing & Allied Health and appropriate COD personnel.
 - b. Submission of blood and/or urine testing will assume authorization to share results and information with necessary COD personnel and health care provider.
4. Document the incident via facility policy and COD Policy
5. Inform the student, prior to leaving the facility, that they may not return to nursing classes, lab, or clinical until they have met with the Director of Nursing as soon as possible to:
 - a. Review the incident, including the documentation of behaviors, signs, and symptoms of impairment exhibited by the student necessitating action.
 - b. Provide the student with the opportunity to offer further explanation and additional relevant information.
 - c. Review results of the student drug screen.
 - d. Review with the student the policy for Alcohol/Drug Abuse and Mental Disability and potential academic/clinical consequences.
6. The Director will consult with didactic and clinical faculty, mental health expert(s), and appropriate COD personnel regarding whether a policy violation has occurred and whether the procedure should move forward.
7. If it is determined that a violation has occurred, the Director will notify the student of the decision.

Substance Abuse Problem Identified:

1. If the drug screen is positive, the student will be required to have an evaluation and treatment plan developed by a medical professional licensed in California in the field of chemical dependency and/or addiction medicine.
2. Students may request reinstatement, if eligible, after a minimum of six months of treatment and clear drug tests documented by a licensed professional. Additionally, documentation from the licensed professional must include a full release to return to school before consideration will be given for reinstatement.
3. Reinstatement is not guaranteed.
4. Upon reinstatement, the student will be required to continue to be subject to random drug tests when requested by the nursing department, at the student's expense.
5. Failure to comply with testing requirements will result in dismissal from the program without reinstatement privileges.

Mental Disability Problem Suspected: If the drug screen is negative, but the student's behavior is indicative of an emotional/mental health disability that may impact the student's performance in the program, the student will be required to have a comprehensive evaluation by a third-party mental health professional identified and paid for by the student.

After clearance from the mental health provider, the student may apply for readmission, provided the student has a documented history of treatment adherence and a letter from the treating mental health professional granting full release to return to school.

If the evaluation does not substantiate an emotional/mental health disability problem that might impact their performance, the student will return to class with no negative academic consequences. A behavioral contract will be developed by faculty and the Director.

Any further suspicious behavior may result in dismissal from the program if deemed a potential safety risk to the public.

Adopted 7/22

Professional Communication and Social Media Policy

Information

This policy is intended to guide students in professional communication that is expected in the programs as well as in the professional community. Communication includes verbal, non-verbal, written, and electronic means (emails, text, social media post, etc.). Social media are defined as forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information. Types of social media include, but are not limited to collaborative projects (Wiki), websites, blogs, microblogs (Twitter, Instagram), content communities (e.g. YouTube), social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, virtual game worlds), and virtual social worlds.

Students should be aware, communication reflects you, the program, COD, and the profession. Before you communicate in any fashion, take a moment to consider if your words might lessen the community's trust in our ability to serve them (ex: "I'm sick at clinical today", "my patients annoy me", "the patient liked me better than the nurse", "my program isn't teaching me anything", etc.). Students are advised to visit the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing \(NCSBN\)](#), for the latest guidelines and to view a brief video on nurses and social media usage.

Policy

1. Faculty, staff, and Administration will be addressed professionally by title, and in a professional and courteous manner.
2. Appointments should be made directly with faculty.
3. Appointments for the Dean, Director of Nursing, or nursing Counselor should be made by contacting the BNC office.
4. All students, staff, and faculty will communicate via COD email addresses. This is the official means of communication within the programs.
5. Students and faculty are required to view their COD email account daily.
6. Canvas is the college-wide learning management system (LMS). Orientation to Canvas is available on the college [website](#). It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for updates to course materials or communication on a daily basis.
7. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with and know how to utilize Canvas, onboarding platforms, and the website for the nursing department.
8. Photos/video recording in any clinical setting for any reason is not permitted and is in violation of HIPAA
9. Recording by any method, at any time, is by permission of the instructor only.
10. Recording of lectures may be limited to students with documented learning accommodations.
11. Recording of any kind may not be shared, transmitted, or sold and must be destroyed at the end of the semester.
12. Recording devices provided through the Disabled Student Services and Programs (DSPS) office are to be utilized during lecture only. These devices are prohibited in the clinical settings. Students are prohibited from recording any portions of test review or meetings with instructors. Students may refer to the DSPS contract for more details.
13. Students are prohibited from speaking to the media, representing COD (in title, uniform, or any other manner) without written consent from the COD Public Relations Office and the Director of the program.
14. Students who choose to communicate via social networking sites are held solely responsible for its content. Inappropriate or unprofessional postings may jeopardize a student's status in the program.
15. Students may not utilize any college or program branding (i.e., logos, banners, name) for any reason including social media, or email accounts and/or pages without consent from the COD Public Relations Office and the Director of the program. All students are invited to join the official Student Nurses' Association (SNA) Facebook page.

16. Complaints or criticism about COD, fellow students, instructors, clinical sites, patients, patient populations, and/or clinical experiences, may result in failure without the possibility of being reinstated, on grounds of unprofessional behavior.
17. No photos or videos taken in the skills lab are to be used for social media without written consent from the Public Relations Office and the Director of the program.
18. Violations of communication and social media policies may result in performance improvement plan and up to failure of the course without eligibility for reinstatement on the grounds of unprofessional conduct.

Testing Policies

Information

Testing is designed to measure students' knowledge and psychomotor skills for safe entry-level practice and to evaluate critical thinking skills. Policies are provided to mimic the NCLEX testing environment and procedures to acclimate students to what could be a stressful process.

Policy

- Exams/quizzes are not limited to only multiple-choice and may include different formats.
- Exams are given in class according to the course calendar.
- Exams/quizzes may be given at any time during the term of the course.
- Students may be assigned seating during exams and quizzes.
- Faculty reserves the right to video record students during examinations.
- Discussion of information about test items, answers, or questions is a violation of academic integrity and may lead to dismissal from the program.
- Students may not engage in disruptive behavior at any time during the exam.
- If a student needs the instructor's attention for any reason, the student must raise their hand.
- Students are required to have all sign-on codes/passwords and be computer literate before coming in the testing environment.
- Tampering with the operation of the computer or attempting to use it for any function other than taking an exam will result in a zero on the exam and academic dishonesty procedures.
- Once finished with the exam, students must leave the testing room and outside walkway and keep their voices to a whisper.
- Only approved four-function calculators may be utilized in taking exams and quizzes and will be provided by the instructor.
- Exams may be administered through ExamSoft/Examplify.
- Students must use their iPad for exams as per the iPad Program Policy.
- Students that do not have their iPad on the day of the exam will be considered absent.
- Exams for RN students allow 90 seconds per point in the first year and 75 seconds per point in the second year.
- Exams for VN students allow 90 seconds per question in semester 1 and semester 2 (weeks 1-8).
- VN students are allowed 75 seconds per question beginning in Semester 2, Week 9, and continuing through the end of the program.
- Time limits will be strictly observed. Students observed working beyond the time limit will receive a zero on the assessment and may fail the course on grounds of academic dishonesty.
- A student will receive a grade of "0" with no opportunity for make ups and may result in disciplinary action as described if the student:
 - Writes a crib/cheat sheet (answers to questions written on anything before, during, or after the exam)
 - Removes the exam from the classroom at any time
 - Records any discussion of test questions or answers.
 - Receives answers from other students
 - Utilizes any unapproved resources
 - Takes any copies or digital copies/photos of any exam

- Phones must be powered down.
- Students must place all personal belongings at the front or side of the classroom, as designated by the instructor.
- Personal items will not be permitted at the student desk. Personal items include, but are not limited to:
 - Any electronic device
 - Bags/purses/wallets
 - Books/study material
 - Cameras of any kind
 - Coats/hats/scarves/gloves
 - Food
 - Watches
 - Lip Balm

Make-up Examinations/Quizzes

- Students who are ill or have an emergency that prevents their attendance at a scheduled examination must call the instructor prior to the scheduled examination.
- Students are required to contact the instructor administering the exam on the same day of the exam to request a make-up exam.
- Make-up examinations are administered at the discretion of the instructor. The instructor may require documentation.
- Make-up examinations will not be given later than one week from the scheduled exam unless an unusual or extenuating circumstance exists.
- The instructor may choose to administer an alternate exam.
- Five percent (5%) may be deducted if the make-up exam is taken one day after a scheduled exam. Ten percent (10%) per day may be deducted from the total thereafter.
- Final examinations are given during final exam week.

Test Review

- It is each individual instructor's decision as to whether or how a test review will be given.
- No test review or exam results will be given until all students have completed the examination.
- For exam security, test review is conducted through the use of a Strengths and Opportunities report, not review of questions.
- Any question concerning a test score must be brought to the attention of the instructor within one (1) week of the examination date.
- Questions concerning exams should be brought to faculty in a professional manner.
- It is not program policy/philosophy to discard test questions solely based on student arguments.
- Students are encouraged to review each test within two (2) weeks of the exam. Analysis of test-taking and study skills can be discussed with the instructor at this time.
- Review of final exams is against program policy.

Medication Competency Safety Assessment

Prior to administering medications in the clinical setting, students must first pass a Medication Competency Safety Assessment with a score of 90% or better. This assessment covers material previously taught. If need be, students may

repeat this assessment two additional times (a maximum of three). No student may pass medications until this assessment is successfully completed with a score of 90% or better on attempt one, 100% on attempt two or three. Not administering medications in the clinical area will result in the student's inability to meet the clinical objectives. MCA will be graded as complete/incomplete and will be awarded once the student passes an MCA attempt.

Integrated Testing & Clinical Judgment Exams

Integrated Testing is an online, comprehensive testing and review program in which all RN and VN students participate. The assessment exams are designed to provide students with various learning tools and written feedback to help guide them in course content review, to identify strengths and challenges pertaining to specific content areas, to improve test-taking abilities, and ultimately, to successfully pass the NCLEX® examination for professional licensure. The assessment evaluates knowledge in relation to the nursing judgment process, critical thinking, therapeutic intervention, communication, and competency skills and are written from the NCLEX® blueprint at the application level. Students will be involved in taking proctored exams each term and will have access to numerous non-proctored exams for NCLEX® preparation.

Rev: 7/22; 08/23; 5/25

Assignments

- All assigned papers are due by the assigned due date at the beginning of class.
- All work must be turned in to complete the objectives of the course.
- All approved group assignments must include the names of all contributors.
- All nursing program assignments must be cited according to current editions of the American Psychological Association (APA).
- Assignments will be evaluated using an associated rubric.
- Assignments are to be uploaded to Canvas and, where applicable, must go through the system plagiarism checker.
- Plagiarism scores must be below 15%. Scores 15% or higher will result in a “zero” grade and may trigger academic dishonesty policy.
- Students are expected to follow specific guidelines provided in each syllabus regarding other assignments.
- Review of assignments must take place within two (2) weeks of submission.

Theory Assignments

- No late papers will be graded. A grade of zero (“0”) will be assigned to that paper.

Clinical Late Work Policy

- Students are permitted one late submission per semester for clinical assignments, acknowledging that unforeseen circumstances may occasionally occur.
- The late assignment must be submitted within **five (5) calendar days** of the original due date. Assignments submitted beyond this timeframe will **not be accepted** and will receive a grade of zero.
- No additional late submissions will be permitted beyond this one-time exception for the duration of the semester.

Attendance

Information

Attendance is integral and critical to student success in any program. Attendance and punctuality reflect professional accountability. The attendance policies of the programs apply to all students in accordance with the COD college catalog and with the governing body of each program. A student is expected to attend all sessions of the classes (theory, skills lab, or clinical) for which they are registered, be on time, and when absent, notify their instructor, and obtain any missed information from fellow students.

Students may be required to attend clinical on days and times that the student is not usually scheduled. Successful completion of the clinical portion of each course is based on student performance according to established clinical objectives. These rescheduled clinical experiences will be used exclusively for situations that result in loss of clinical experiences due to clinical site restrictions. These rescheduled clinical experiences will not be used for make-up due to a student's illness, a need for remediation, or a loss of clinical days due to a student's inability to meet deadlines imposed by clinical agencies.

Policies

General Attendance Policies

1. Non-attendance on the first day of theory and/or clinical may result in being dropped from the class
2. Full and prompt attendance at clinical and theory is expected and mandatory. Patterns of absences and tardiness will be monitored in each course and through the program
3. It is the student's responsibility to contact their instructor regarding any absences or tardiness prior to the start of the class meeting. All instructors have voicemail and email options. Failure to do so will result in a Performance Improvement Plan for professionalism concerns.
4. Do not give messages to other students for the instructor.
5. If absences mean that a student is unable to meet clinical objectives, failure of the course will result.
6. The California State Boards require that clinical be taken concurrently with theory. A student who has failed clinical or dropped the course may not continue to attend theory or clinical.
7. The COD nursing programs abide by the attendance policy outlined in the college catalog in conjunction with California State Board requirements.
8. It is the student's responsibility to obtain any missed information from fellow students.
9. Faculty may require make-up for missed classes.
10. Students who miss more than fifteen (15) minutes of class will be considered absent.
11. Students tardy but less than fifteen (15 minutes) after the start of class, will receive a Performance Improvement Plan. A pattern of three (3) or more of these instances may result in triggering the Professional Conduct policy and possibly leading up to a failing grade.

Theory Attendance

1. Excessive class absences, defined as more than the number of times 'class' meets per week, will result in the student being dropped from the course or in failure of the course. (Example: a class meets twice a week and three days are missed = excessive absences)
2. Students who miss more than fifteen (15) minutes of class will be considered absent from the class.

3. Students tardy but less than fifteen (15 minutes) after the start of class, will receive a Performance Improvement Plan. A pattern of three (3) or more of these instances may result in triggering the Professional Conduct policy and possibly leading up to a failing grade.

Clinical/Lab Attendance

1. Absences must be made up in the skills lab, on a clinical make-up day, or as otherwise arranged by the faculty member. Make-up plans must be approved by a faculty member.
2. Excessive class absences, defined as more than the number of times 'class' meets per week, will result in the student being dropped from the course or in failure of the course. (Example: a class meets twice a week and three days are missed = excessive absences)
3. Make-up days still count as absences.
4. The make-up assignment for RN program students may include but is not limited to a recommendation for customized practice hours in the open skills lab; one or more case studies, simulation, research, or other paper or project that is clinically focused (focuses on patient care issues) and is comparable in complexity and time for completion to one day on the clinical unit (one day for each day of missed clinical).
5. Make-up assignments for VN program students will include skills lab, simulation, or other clinical hours only as per state board regulations.
6. Failure to make up clinical days as assigned will result in the student failing clinical and therefore failing the course.
7. Students who miss shift reports will be considered absent from the clinical.
8. Students tardy who do not miss shift report, will receive a Performance Improvement Plan. A pattern of three (3) or more of these instances may result in triggering the Professional Conduct policy and possibly leading up to a failing grade.
9. A statement by a physician (or other primary care providers) may be required for a student to be eligible to return to clinical after injury, illness, or pregnancy issues that may affect their ability to perform at the level of the [ADA technical standards](#).
10. Orientation to the clinical facility is critical to your ability to perform. Absence from orientation may necessitate withdrawal/drop from the course.

Rev: 7/22; 08/23; 5/25;8/25

Academic Dishonesty

Information

Academic honesty is a cornerstone of the educational community. Plagiarism and cheating are characteristics of unprofessional behavior, a violation of the ANA Code of Ethics, and are considered academic dishonesty. In addition to a “zero” for the assignment, this behavior may lead to failure of the course without the possibility of reinstatement.

Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Sharing information regarding simulation scenarios, skills testing, or other forms of evaluation
- Plagiarism
- Cheating
- Resubmitting an assignment previously used for credit
- Failure to cite sources used in submitted work
- Failure to properly cite sources in text and in reference
- Using someone else’s work for credit
- Recording exam material or exam review sessions

Refer to the current COD catalog for more examples and information on academic dishonesty.

Policy

In the instance that academic dishonesty is suspected, faculty will:

1. Schedule a meeting with the student to gather further information regarding the intent, understanding of instructions, and policies of academic dishonesty.
2. Take the information gathered to the next “closed faculty meeting” (the meeting schedule is posted on the HSED website). For discussion of facts.
3. Cases of plagiarism will result in a “zero” for the assignment, regardless of intent.
4. In addition to a “zero” on the assignment, cases of academic dishonesty will result in remediation or possibly dismissal from the program on the grounds of dishonesty and violation of the code of ethics.

Academic Schedule and Employment

Information

Due to the fast pace and heavy academic demands required by the programs, the faculty recommends that students avoid employment more than 12 hours per week. Clinical and/or theory schedules are subject to changes each semester. Therefore, students' personal commitments must remain flexible to accommodate scheduling requirements throughout the program.

Policy

1. A student may not work a night shift prior to a clinical day. Night shift is considered between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
2. Students may be sent home for perceived unsafe behavior due to lack of sleep. This will result in an absence on the student's attendance record and a Performance Improvement Plan for potential safety concern and unprofessional behavior with possible failure without the possibility of reinstatement on the grounds of safety.
3. Students employed by a clinical partner must notify the nursing program administration of a leave of absence from their employer at the time of approval or initiation of the leave.
4. It is the student's responsibility to proactively communicate any employment leave that may impact their clinical participation and/or academic progress.
5. A leave of absence from an employer may directly affect a student's ability to meet course objectives.
6. If a student is unable to fulfill the clinical requirements due to their leave status, they may be required to withdraw from the course or may receive a failing grade.
7. Students will need to follow the reinstatement process as outlined in the student handbook.
8. Students who are unable to meet clinical requirements at the time of program entry may not be permitted to start the program.

Rev: 7/22;8/25

STUDENT PROGRESSION

Entrance

Nursing Programs Application Process

Application to COD's nursing programs is separate from application to the college. An application form is available during specific application periods and can be obtained from the school website. Enrollment into the nursing programs is limited. Detailed information regarding the nursing programs, selection, and other important particulars is available on the School of Health Sciences & Education website. Any falsification of application information will result in immediate disqualification as a candidate for any nursing programs.

RN Program Acceptance

In accordance with legislation and Education Code, admission criteria to the ADN (RN) program follows a multi-criteria screening and ranking, approved by the California Chancellors Office. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements (GPA of at least 2.5 in the prerequisite science courses and a TEAS score of 62% or higher) before being considered for the program.

LVN to RN Advanced Placement

LVN to RN advanced placement students will have their previous education evaluated and skills assessed for appropriate placement into the RN program. This process may require a placement test including skills competency checks.

VN Program Acceptance

In accordance with legislation and Education Code, applications will be initially evaluated to determine eligibility based on completion of all prerequisite courses with a combined GPA OF 2.5, and the achievement of an overall GPA of 2.5 for all courses taken within the past 7 years.

Those applicants determined to meet baseline eligibility requirements will then go through the random selection process.

Applicants determined to be eligible, but not initially selected, will remain in consideration for selection according to their random selection ranking until all slots in the class offered have been confirmed as accepted.

CNA Program Acceptance

The nurse assistant course is generally offered each fall and spring semester and requires an application found on the School of Health Sciences & Education website.

Applicants are required to attend a mandatory orientation and complete onboarding tasks to be enrolled in the course.

Registration

Students must be registered for the nursing course that they are attending. Students will not be allowed in theory or in the clinical area if they are not officially registered. Registration is done by the nursing department once you have been accepted into the nursing program.

Policy for Granting Credit for Previous Education and Experience

General Policy

The general policy for College of the Desert nursing programs is to provide all students be given credit for the nursing knowledge and skills they have acquired through education and/or experience and be placed at a level that will assure successful attainment of educational goals. The form for [Credit for Previous Education](#) is located on the [nursing website](#).

Transfer Credit

Transfer credit shall be given for applicants with previous education from an accredited institution who have satisfactorily completed academic course work with a grade of “C” or better in a class and/or clinical laboratory within the last five (5) years. This includes the following courses:

- Armed services nursing courses
- Licensed Psychiatric Technicians courses
- Vocational or Practical nursing courses
- Registered nursing courses
- Certified nursing Assistant courses
- Other courses the school determines are equivalent to courses required for the Vocational nursing program

CNA Credit

All course work from other nursing programs will be granted credit based on similarity to College of the Desert. A written examination and skills assessment may be required for the purpose of establishing the need for remediation.

All CNAs are given the option to omit portions of the first four weeks of the first semester of the VN program by applying their 150 hours of transfer credit. Assessment of CNA students may be conducted to establish the necessity for remediation. All remediation will be completed prior to the first day of the semester.

Transfer Procedures

Students seeking transfer to College of the Desert vocational nursing will need to have all coursework evaluated by the Director of the nursing program or a designee. The following needs to be submitted to the Director/designee prior to evaluation:

- Written letter requesting transfer
- Official transcripts from all schools attended
- Copies of course description and outline/syllabus from completed Vocational nursing courses
- Copy of certificate/licensure as applicable

Evaluation of previous nursing education will be based on a review of these materials. Comparison with the COD curriculum will be made. Everyone will be granted advanced placement according to the degree to which previous education compares with COD curriculum based on space available.

Rev: 7/22

Nursing Programs Grading and Evaluation

Theory

- A student must earn a 75% or better in the theory portion of the course and pass clinical to progress to the next core course.
- It is the policy of the nursing department that grades are not rounded.
- No extra credit work will be provided to students to achieve a passing grade.
- All assignments must be completed and turned in even if the assignment is late and the student receives a zero.
- Students have two (2) weeks to review any assignment or exam.
- Grades for nursing program courses are calculated on a rating system in the following manner:

A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	75%-79%
D	65%-74%
F	64% or below

Clinical

- Clinical is pass/fail.
- To receive a passing grade in clinical, the student must meet all of the following criteria:
 - Must meet all clinical objectives in all areas of the clinical evaluation tool by the end of the semester.
 - Must obtain a cumulative score of 85% or better on all required clinical learning activities.
 - All learning activities must be completed to pass clinical. Incomplete or missing work results in a clinical failure.
 - Successful completion of Medication Competency Assessment (MCA). See Testing policies for more information.
- Clinical evaluation is based on performance in the clinical setting, the skills laboratory, skills check-off, and required written work.
- Students must pass clinical as well as theory to progress to the next semester.

Student Evaluations

Information

All students will be kept apprised of their performance in both the theory and clinical components of all nursing courses.

All Students will receive written evaluations of their clinical performance during conferences with their clinical faculty at mid-term and at the end of the semester. Mid-Term and Final evaluations are signed by both the student and instructor and placed in the student's file.

The Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) are a communication record used to convey a concern and methods of correction. PIPs are a means of helping students succeed in their courses and the program.

An instructor or administrator may initiate a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) at any time during the semester to improve student performance. PIPs are used to document and communicate a concern and a plan to address the concern. PIPs are completed in the ConexEd system. Once an instructor completes a PIP in the ConexEd system, the student will receive a notification in their COD email. The student can then review the concerns and will have an opportunity to write comments and select an "agree/disagree" option. Choosing the "disagree" option does not negate the PIP or its recommendations.

Performance Improvement Process

1. If at any time, a student's performance in a nursing course is unsatisfactory, the instructor in collaboration with the student will meet to discuss the challenges.
2. Occasionally a meeting with both the clinical and theory instructor will be necessary.
3. Course faculty will determine if remediation is possible, based on their professional judgment. If remediation is possible, the instructor(s) and the student will jointly develop the PIP that may include a referral for additional support.
4. The PIP may be composed of both required and optional strategies for improvement.
5. An agreed upon completion date and follow-up meeting date will be instituted. It is the student's responsibility to complete all required elements of the PIP by the deadline.
6. During the follow-up meeting, the student's remediation efforts and outcomes will be evaluated and discussed including signatures/notes from all referrals. At this time, the PIP can be closed or a new one created with a new collaborative plan and agreed upon deadline. This process can continue until satisfactory performance is achieved, or remediation is no longer recommended.
7. Failure to meet the stipulations identified in the PIP by the designated date may result in failure of the nursing course and inability to progress in the nursing program.
8. If remediation is determined to not be possible the student will receive a failing grade in the course and may be ineligible to reinstate.
9. Instructor may present the case at a closed faculty meeting to collaborate with faculty and leadership for best course of action.
10. If during the faculty meeting it is decided the student is unable to meet course and/or clinical objectives or remediation is not recommended, the student will be provided a final PIP with noted issues and referred to nursing counselor for exit interview.

Rev: 7/23; 08/23

Program Completion

RN Graduation Requirements

Please refer to the [COD college catalog](#) for current graduation requirements.

VN Completion

Please refer to the [COD college catalog](#) for current graduation requirements.

CNA Completion

Students must provide a valid Social Security number as required by the California Department of Public Health, Licensing and Certification, Aide and Technician Certification Section (ATCS) under Health and Safety Code, Sections 1337 through 1338.5 and 1736.1-1736.6 in order to process requests for nurse assistant and home health aide certification.

Nurse Assistant certificates are locally approved and are NOT notated on the student's academic transcript in accordance with the State regulations.

After Program Completion

For a variety of reports and records, the program needs information regarding your employment and/or further education. Additionally, 6 to 9 months after graduation you will receive a program satisfaction survey by email. We greatly appreciate and need your participation and cooperation in completing and returning the surveys as requested.

California State Nursing Board Examinations

Graduates of the COD nursing programs are eligible to apply for the NCLEX Examination. Satisfactory completion of this examination and background clearance results in licensure in the State of California.

There is an application fee to apply to the Boards of nursing. There is also a registration fee to take the NCLEX. During the final semester of the program, students will meet with the Director of Nursing or designee at which time applications and information regarding filing dates and preparation for examination will be shared. The student will be responsible for completing application materials during the timeline presented.

Application to Graduate

Once it is determined that a student is eligible for graduation, an "Application to Graduate" form may be obtained online under the Admissions and Records forms section of the student portal (My COD account). Please see the Schedule of Classes for deadlines. If you do not comply with the deadlines for "Application to Graduate", then your name cannot be submitted to the California State Boards to allow you to sit for the NCLEX® exam.

Evaluation of Transcripts

Degrees are not automatically awarded. Students must review their transcripts with the nursing Counselor for completeness prior to their second year to assure all coursework requirements for graduation have been met.

Graduation

All graduates of COD nursing programs, regardless of the semester in which they finish, are eligible and encouraged to attend the college commencement exercises at the end of the spring semester. The student should visit the [Admissions and Records website](#) for information on participation in college commencement exercises. The student will be asked to confirm participation in commencement exercises through their "Application for Graduation".

Vocation Certificate of Achievement

A Vocational Certificate of Achievement may be awarded to a student who has completed a required sequence of courses in an occupational field. The Certificate is not automatically awarded when a student completes the requirements. Students must file a "Request for Evaluation" in the Admissions and Records Office at least one semester prior to completing certificate requirements. All transcripts from other colleges must be on file before an evaluation request can be filed. Students must file an "Intent to Earn Certificate" in the Admissions and Records Office during the semester in which they are completing the requirements. The certificate requires fewer than 60 units of college work. At least six (6) units in the certificate field shall be completed in residence at College of the Desert. A minimum of a "C" average shall be maintained in all courses required for the certificate. All courses shall be approved by the department advisor. In the case of an additional certificate(s) in a related field, the student will be required to take a minimum of six (6) units of additional course work determined by the department advisor. See 'Degree and Certificate Programs' section in the current College of the Desert catalog for specific certificate requirements.

Program Exit

If the student exits before the end of the semester, it is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from the course by contacting Admissions and Records. The student will then need to complete the two-step Exit Interview procedure, including meeting with the faculty member first and then following through with an appointment with the nursing counselor or designee. All facility badges must be returned to faculty.

Program Reinstatement/Reentry

Information

Students are allowed only one opportunity for reinstatement into the nursing program. Students who have exhausted their reinstatement eligibility, or who have not been reinstated within two (2) years of their last successfully completed course, are not eligible to reapply to the nursing program, in accordance with Title 5 regulations restricting repetition of previously passed coursework.

Reinstatement is required when a student disrupts the established course sequence and/or cohort progression for any reason, including but not limited to course failure, withdrawal, or administrative removal.

Because class sizes are limited, reinstatement is not guaranteed and is subject to space availability in the appropriate course. If no space is available, the student may be required to wait until the next available term.

Policy

1. Any student seeking reinstatement must complete and submit a [“Request for Reinstatement”](#). The “Request for Reinstatement” is available on the [COD nursing website](#).
2. Requests for Reinstatement are void if a student did not complete an exit interview.
3. A [“Request for Reinstatement”](#) is required each semester until reinstatement is granted.
4. Reinstatement is defined as returning to the next semester in the program sequence immediately following the last successfully completed nursing course. Students may not skip ahead or re-enter at a different point in the program.
5. For students considered for reinstatement [“Requests for Reinstatement”](#) are first prioritized according to the process outlined in the “Criteria for Student Reinstatement Placement”.
6. When more than one student in a priority group is seeking reinstatement to a semester, the requests are ranked by a random selection process utilizing the randomized number system to determine order of reinstatement within the priority.
7. Students who withdraw from the program due to emergent or life-threatening medical circumstances may, upon submission of appropriate documentation and review by program faculty, be considered for one additional reinstatement opportunity.
This exception applies only after the withdrawal has occurred and does not require or allow prior approval. Pre-authorization will not be granted, as this policy is intended solely for unforeseeable, critical medical events.
8. To be considered, students must submit comprehensive medical documentation that includes a diagnosis, treatment dates, and verification that the condition directly impacted their ability to continue in the program. Final determination is at the discretion of the faculty committee and is not guaranteed. All reinstated students are placed in the program on a space available basis.
9. Students who have not been reinstated into the program within two (2) years of the last successfully completed course will need to reapply to the program.
10. Students reinstated into the program will be given a remediation plan to assist in their success. The remediation plan will be communicated to the student at least four (4) weeks prior to the start of the intended semester of reinstatement. Remediation plans may include meetings with the counselor, academic support specialist, simulation, and other activities deemed necessary by faculty.
11. Qualified reinstatement is contingent upon completion of all parts of mandatory remediation plan. Failure to complete or demonstrate competency in required remediation activities (e.g., simulation check-offs, written assessments) may result in the denial of reinstatement, even if space is available.

12. Reinstated students will be assigned to a clinical group by faculty based on program needs and student success strategies. Clinical site or instructor preferences will **not** be considered, and students may **not defer reinstatement** based on clinical assignment.
13. A student who exits the program will be considered ineligible for reinstatement into the nursing program for:
 - a. Unsafe clinical performance as determined by a faculty member based on the clinical evaluation tool.
 - b. Acts of dishonesty or unethical behavior
 - c. Violation of the nursing programs professional conduct standards.
14. Reinstated students will be required to fulfill all requirements implemented for their incoming term including new onboarding, new student orientation, background, etc.
15. Students who have exhausted reinstatement eligibility or who have not been reinstated within two (2) years of their last successfully completed course are no longer eligible for admission to the nursing program, in accordance with Title 5 regulations restricting repetition of previously passed coursework.

Semester Specific Reinstatement Policy

NRN 110 and NVN 010

- A maximum of 10% of the total class may be composed of reinstated students.

NRN 120-250 and NVN 020-030

- Space Available.
- Nursing Transfer, 30-unit option, and international students will be prioritized based on submitted documents.

Criteria for Student Reinstatement Placement

Student: _____

Date: _____

Course student is requesting reinstatement to: _____ Academic Term student is requesting reinstatement to: _____

CRITERIA		POSSIBLE POINTS	POINTS EARNED
Directions: Assign the appropriate score for each criterion. Only one score per section should be listed.			
1.	KNOWLEDGE		
	a. Students assigned an "incomplete" for a semester.	100	
	b. Student initiated, voluntary withdrawal, in good standing maintaining a minimum theory score of at least 75% and meeting all clinical objectives at time of withdrawal. If withdrawal is prior to sufficient evaluation, e.g., quiz or exam, then ending performance (theory percentage and clinical evaluations) from previous semester may be used	85	
	c. Involuntary withdrawal related to unsatisfactory theory performance throughout or at end of course. Theory score less than 75% but greater than 72%. OR-	15	
	d. Involuntary withdrawal related to unsatisfactory theory performance throughout or at end of course. Theory score less than 72% but greater than 70%. OR-	10	
	e. Involuntary withdrawal related to unsatisfactory theory performance throughout or at end of course. Theory score less than 70%.	5	
	f. Involuntary withdrawal related to unsatisfactory clinical performance throughout or at end of course.	10	
2.	GRIT		
	Received a passing grade (75% or >) on comprehensive exam	5	
3.	PERSISTENCE		
	Completed all course work assigned to date	5	
4.	DEGREE REQUIREMENTS		
	Eligible to take NCLEX upon graduation as evidenced by having completed all Associate Degree and program required courses, nursing classes accepted.	5	
5.	SKILLS/CLINICAL		
	a. Completed clinical objectives without a PIP	10	
	b. Met clinical objectives after meeting criteria in PIP	5	
	c. Did not successfully meet all clinical objectives	0	
6.	PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS		
	a. No PIP or notification of unprofessional conduct	10	
	b. One PIP or notification for unprofessional conduct with sustained correction of issue	5	
	c. Two or more PIPs and/or notifications for unprofessional conduct	0	
7.	ATTENDANCE		
	a. No missed clinical or theory classes	10	
	b. Met min standard of program attendance policy	5	
8.	INITIATIVE		
	Takes initiative to use resources and followed up on faculty recommendations from PIPs / other at time of exit	5	
OTHER			
Only complete if student has not been reinstated in the next consecutive semester.			
9.	Demonstrates evidence of remediation or correction of problem areas, e.g. taking a pharmacology class, dosage calculations, personal counseling, tutoring, etc.	5	
10.	Student was denied previous acceptance due to unavailability of space. Students will be given additional 5 pts for each semester denied.	maximum 15	
Faculty Signature		Date	

CLINICAL POLICIES

Clinical Placement

Information

College of the Desert has an affiliation agreement with each of the facilities where students are placed for clinical. Students and faculty are subject to the general policies of each institution. It is recommended that students rotate through all clinical facilities throughout the program. Students should anticipate the need to occasionally change clinical schedules during a semester to meet clinical objectives.

Policy

1. Students may not complete clinical assignments on their work unit.
2. Students that are related or in an intimate relationship with another student will be assigned to separate clinical sections.
3. Clinical assignments will be scheduled over a variety of hours and days of the week to accommodate the needs of a large group of students and at the same time does not overburden any particular healthcare facility.
4. Faculty input will guide student placement in clinical sections.
5. Students will be expected to accept whatever clinical sections are available and should be prepared to schedule their private lives to accommodate classes that occur at least four days a week.
6. In cases in which a student is completing a clinical rotation at a facility where he/she is also employed, clear role recognition and scope of practice as a student must be abided by. Privileges that may be afforded to the individual as an employee must not be exploited while acting in the role of a nursing student completing a clinical rotation. Examples of such behavior include, but are not limited to:
 - a. accessing medical records that are not for a patient the student is currently assigned to
 - b. accessing areas of the facility that the student is not authorized to be in, or
 - c. performing duties that fall outside of the scope of practice for the student nurse.

Confidentiality and Privacy Policy

Information

Students are involved with the complete personal care of clients in many facilities. Students will comply with all privacy standards as accorded by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) of 1996. For further information about HIPAA Guidelines visit the [Human Health Services](https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/index.html) website. <https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/index.html>

The third provision of the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses (2015) addresses the nurse's responsibility to protect patients' privacy and confidentiality.

Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, safety, and safety of the patient.

3.1 Protection of the Rights of Privacy and Confidentiality: Privacy is the right to control access to, and disclosure or nondisclosure of, information pertaining to oneself and to control the circumstances, timing, and extent to which information may be disclosed. nurses safeguard the right to privacy for individuals, families, and communities. The nurse advocates for an environment that provides sufficient physical privacy, including privacy for discussions of a personal nature. nurses also participate in the development and maintenance of policies and practices that protect both personal and clinical information at institutional and societal levels.

Confidentiality pertains to the nondisclosure of personal information that has been communicated within the nurse-patient relationship. Central to that relationship is an element of trust and an expectation that personal information will not be divulged without consent. The nurse has a duty to maintain confidentiality of all patient information, both personal and clinical in the work setting and off duty in all venue, including social media or any other means of communication. Because of rapidly evolving communication technology and the porous nature of social media, nurses must maintain vigilance regarding postings, images, recordings, or commentary that intentionally or unintentionally breaches their obligation to maintain and protect patients' rights to privacy and confidentiality. The patient's well-being could be jeopardized, and the fundamental trust between patient and nurse could be damaged by unauthorized access to data or by the inappropriate or unwanted disclosure of identifiable information.

Policy

1. All nursing students must adhere to strict confidentiality of all patient/client/resident, student, agency, and healthcare team information at all times without exception, including but not limited to social media sites.
2. Communication (verbal, electronic, or written) about clients and/or clinical experience that reveals any Patient Health Information (PHI) is a direct violation of privacy and confidentiality regulations and client rights.
3. Any documents containing PHI may not leave the clinical facility.
4. Removal of documents from facilities will result in a safety violation and removal from the program.
5. Failure to maintain the confidentiality of others will not be tolerated and may lead to immediate dismissal from the program without readmission privileges.
6. Maintaining confidentiality of the patient/client/resident information supersedes the student's personal, religious, or cultural responsibilities.
7. In addition, students are protected by Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and should not be discussing the performance of other students with anyone without a need-to-know.
8. Students should also not be sharing student ID numbers, usernames, and passwords with anyone, as this information links to a student's personally identifiable information.

Protected health information includes the following patient identifiers. This list was extracted from the HIPAA Security and Privacy regulations.

- Name & initials
- Geographic subdivisions smaller than a state (includes street address, city, county, precinct, zip code, and equivalent geo codes - except the first three digits of zip codes unless the population density is under 20,000).
- All date elements, other than year, related to an individual (includes birth date, admission date, discharge date, and date of death).
- Telephone numbers
- Fax numbers
- E-mail addresses
- Social Security numbers
- Medical record numbers
 - Health plan beneficiary numbers
- Account numbers
- Certificate/license numbers
- Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers (includes license plate numbers)
- Device identifiers and serial numbers
- Web universal resource locators (i.e., URLs)
- Patient-related photos

Adopted and Revised: 7/22

Invasive Procedures and Medication Administration

Information

The Nursing Practice Acts permit students enrolled in a Board-approved prelicensure nursing program to render nursing services when these services are incidental to a course of study in the program (Business and Professions Code 2729 (a)).

During clinical rotations, students do not operate "under the license" of their teacher or the assigned nurse. Once deemed competent in the nursing program, the student is held liable, at the level of the nurse, for the administration and outcome of the skill performed. Below is a policy regarding invasive procedures and medication administration, which is intended to ensure the safety of both the public and the student.

Invasive procedures are defined as medical procedures that invade the body by puncturing the skin or inserting instruments into body cavities. Examples: Indwelling Catheter insertion, IV catheter insertion, Nasogastric/orogastric tube insertion, etc.

Medication administration is defined as any administration of prescribed medication to a patient. For the safety of the public, medication administration will be conducted in a distraction-free environment as much as can be provided in the facilities.

Policy

1. Any invasive procedure or medication administration for 1st year RN students and all levels of VN students must be done under the direction and supervision of your clinical instructor.
2. 2nd year RN students must have clinical instructor permission to perform invasive procedures or medication administration with the assigned nurse, as facility policy allows.
3. Failure to have the appropriate level of supervision will result in the failure of the course without the opportunity for reinstatement based on safety concerns.

Rev: 7/22; 08/23

Dress Code

Information

Nursing students have an obligation to maintain professionalism. Proper appearance is integral to professionalism and the role of the healthcare provider. Therefore, the following dress standards have been developed. Students in the nursing programs at COD wear a designated uniform. Students will purchase the most current approved uniform sets. Information on the uniform is provided during the admission and/or registration process. Student dress and grooming will reflect the policies of the program, the technical requirements of the task, and the positive image of the program.

Policy

1. The student uniform is to be worn only when functioning in the capacity of a College of the Desert student and not in any instance when the student is an employee of a health care facility or agency.
2. The student uniform is exclusive to the clinical setting and is not to be worn in public places.
3. Students are to appear for clinicals properly dressed and groomed rather than adjusting after arriving.
4. Students who are dismissed from an assigned clinical experience because of inappropriate dress and/or grooming will be considered absent and subject to the provisions of the Attendance Policy.
5. The uniform shall be freshly laundered, pressed, without stains, and in good repair.
6. Alterations of uniforms are required to ensure the proper length of pants & fit of the uniform at the expense of the student.
7. Uniforms may not be excessively tight.
8. Undergarments are not to be visible.
9. Students may not wear any uniforms directly from a patient-care facility to the classroom, campus skills lab, or computer lab.
10. Students are required to wear the COD nursing student badge and facility student badge when in uniform.
11. Gum chewing is not permitted in clinical or skills lab areas.
12. Clinical facility badges must be surrendered at the end of the semester.
13. Clinical facilities may bill a student for IDs lost or not returned.
14. COD may put a hold on your account for badges not surrendered upon departure from the program.

Clinical Uniform (RN, LVN, CNA)

- Socks should be white and cover all areas of skin standing and sitting
- Standard clean white shoes that can be wiped clean and are non-permeable are required. Shoes must meet infection control standards.
- Clogs with heel exposure, canvas shoes, or sandals may NOT be worn with the uniform.
- Closed-toed shoes are always required in the skills lab and at clinical sites.
- Plain white pullover shirts may be worn under uniform tops for warmth.
- No lab coats, sweatshirts, hoodies, or coats may be worn. You may purchase and wear official COD clinical jackets over COD uniform tops.

RN Clinical Uniform

- The RN clinical uniform consists of navy-blue scrub top and bottoms from the approved vendor

RN Skills Lab and Community Uniform

- The skills lab uniform consists of the COD nursing program polo and black or navy scrub pants.
- No yoga pants, leggings, or jogger type scrub pants allowed
- Black or white closed-toe shoes without laces

VN Clinical Uniforms

- The Clinical Uniform consists of the COD nursing program white scrub top and navy-blue bottoms from the approved vendor

Nursing Assistant Clinical Uniforms

- The NA clinical uniform includes a white scrub top and white scrub pants from the approved vendor for the COD nursing assistant program.
- Students are also required to purchase the school patch, which is worn on the left shoulder sleeve.
- Students utilizing the skills lab for practice should wear a clean uniform.

Grooming

- Students will be clean, free of odors and strong fragrances (e.g., foul breath, cigarette smoke, perfume), and well groomed.

Hair

- Hair will be neat, clean, controlled, and secured so as not to interfere with client care.
- Mustaches, beards, and sideburns must be neatly trimmed.
- Hair color must be within the realm of genetic possibility.
- Hair must be pulled back away from the face and up off the collar.
- No multi-color hair clips or decorative holders are allowed in the clinical setting.
- No surgical caps allowed in the clinical setting.

Nails

- Nails must be short and clean.
- No nail polish, nail art, or stickers may be worn
- The wearing of artificial acrylic/gel nails, dip, or anything requiring UV light is prohibited while providing patient care.

Make-up

- Make-up will be subdued.
- False eyelashes are prohibited.

Jewelry

- One ring in the form of a plain wedding-type band will be permitted.
- Only one pair of stud earrings will be permitted.
- No earrings or body jewelry are allowed in any area of the ear except the lower earlobe.
- Other visible piercings are not allowed.

Tattoos

- Tattoo coverage must be maintained with clothing items under dress code standards. Bandages, “sleeves”, etc., are an infection control risk and are not permitted.

Equipment Standards

- All nursing students are required to have their nursing equipment.
- A pocket organizer may be used.
- Equipment requirements include
 - Stethoscopes
 - Stethoscopes should be worn in a manner that secures them to your body or in a pocket to avoid injury to clients or contamination of a sterile field.
 - Stethoscopes must include the ability to hear low- and high-pitched sounds.
 - Bandage scissors
 - Penlight
 - Kelly clamps (RN students only)
 - A watch with a second hand
- In addition to nursing equipment, students will purchase a nursing kit each semester appropriate to the semester enrolled that includes lab equipment for open skills practice. Costs for the nursing kits can be found in the COD college catalog.

Rev: 7/22; 08/23; 08/2025

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING CENTER

Experiential Learning Center Overview

The Experiential Learning Center (ELC) at College of the Desert is a dedicated instructional space designed to support immersive, simulation-based education for nursing and healthcare students. The center includes:

- **Open Lab** – BNC 32
- **Simulation Lab** – BNC 38
- **Nursing Lab Room & Overflow** – BNC 37 and BNC 39
- **Nursing Lab** – B8
- **Future VR Simulation Lab** – BNC 40 (Fall 2025)

BNC 40 will feature virtual reality (VR) simulation tools for immersive, technology-enhanced experiences aligned with modern healthcare education trends. It will also serve as an auxiliary open lab space during peak times. VR sessions may be scheduled or integrated into course pathways as appropriate.

The ELC is a welcoming, inclusive, and psychologically safe environment where all learners are supported to take risks, engage fully in the learning process, make mistakes, and use those experiences to build competence, confidence, and professional judgment without fear of embarrassment or punitive action.

Definition of Simulation Staff

In this handbook, the term Simulation Staff refers to the Simulation Faculty and the Laboratory Specialists, who are also cross-trained as Simulation Operators. The Laboratory Specialists/Simulation Operators manage open lab resources, prepare simulation environments, and provide technical and logistical support during simulation activities. These are the individuals you will regularly see in the ELC, supporting you during both scheduled simulations and lab sessions.

In the College of the Desert's Nursing Program, the Simulation Faculty is Mary Suarez, MSN-Ed, RN, CMSRN, CNE, CHSE. The Laboratory Specialists/Simulation Operators are Ryan McWey and Andres Ruiz-Felix. The Simulation Staff work together to support simulation activities, open lab operations, and student learning in the Experiential Learning Center (ELC). The Simulation Staff collectively plan, implement, operate, and evaluate simulation and skills-based learning activities within the ELC.

Simulation Program

The Simulation Program operates within the Experiential Learning Center and is guided by the following:

Mission

To engage individuals in high-quality experiential learning that enhances knowledge acquisition and contributes to the development of safe, competent, professional, and compassionate nurses.

Vision

To be a leader in simulation education through innovative technology and evidence-based pedagogy while empowering and inspiring lifelong learners.

Core Values

Excellence, Innovation, Professionalism, and Teamwork. These values are embedded in every simulation activity and operational process.

Simulation Lab Overview (BNC 38)

The Simulation Laboratory, located in BNC 38, serves as a key component of the nursing curriculum. Simulation-based learning immerses students in realistic, scenario-driven environments that replicate clinical conditions using low-, mid-, or high-fidelity manikins. It is a supportive and inclusive space where students can safely practice, make mistakes, and learn without the risks associated with real patient care. These experiences are formative in nature, designed to help students grow in competence and confidence. Challenges and errors are viewed as opportunities for learning, reflection, and improvement, fostering a growth mindset that encourages continuous skill development, clinical reasoning, and safe decision-making. This approach helps prepare students to transition into real-life patient care with greater readiness, confidence, and professional judgment.

Simulation provides opportunities to:

- Practice and refine nursing interventions
- Observe conditions and procedures not always available in clinical settings
- Make and learn from mistakes in a controlled environment
- Participate in repeat scenarios to reinforce key concepts
- Engage in collaborative problem-solving and critical thinking
- Build confidence in a supportive, learner-centered environment

Guidelines for Student and Instructor Participation

Student Rights

- Practice in a psychologically safe, inclusive, and judgment-free environment.
- Receive an orientation to the simulation space, equipment, and fidelity of the scenario.
- Be informed of simulation objectives, expectations, and required pre-simulation activities.
- Request assistance or clarification without penalty during designated phases of the simulation process.
- Engage in structured, evidence-based debriefing to reflect on performance and enhance learning.
- Participate in simulation activities aligned with course content and program outcomes.

Student Responsibilities

- Suspend judgment of realism for any given simulation in exchange for the promise of learning new knowledge and skills.
- Maintain a genuine desire to learn even when the suspension of disbelief becomes difficult.
- Treat the simulated patient with the same care and respect as if it is an actual patient.
- Request assistance when necessary and practice within your role's scope.
- Maintain academic integrity and uphold the "Basic Assumption":
"We believe that everyone at College of the Desert is intelligent and well-prepared, cares about doing their best, wants to improve, and contributes to the learning community."
- Maintain confidentiality of all simulation content and peer performance (per S003).
- Participate fully in prebriefing, simulation, and debriefing sessions.
- Complete post-simulation evaluations.
- Maintain confidentiality of all simulation content and peer performance (per S003) and sign the Media & Recording Consent Form as required in P&P S004.
- Embrace challenges and view mistakes as opportunities to grow. Simulation is a formative learning experience designed to build skills, confidence, and professional judgment in a safe and supportive environment.

Instructor Role in the Simulation Experience

Students can expect the Simulation Faculty to:

- Design and facilitate simulation scenarios that align with course objectives and the Healthcare Simulation Standards of Best Practice™ (INACSL, 2021).
- Provide a thorough orientation to the simulation environment and foster a psychologically safe space for learning.
- Facilitate structured, evidence-based debriefings that encourage reflection, critical thinking, and collaborative problem-solving.
- Offer timely, constructive feedback that supports ongoing skill development and professional growth.
- Model professional behavior, respectful communication, and adherence to the same standards expected of students.
- Ensure simulation equipment is ready and functioning so students can focus on the learning experience.

Policies & Procedures

The following policies and procedures govern student participation in the Experiential Learning Center (ELC) and are derived from the official Nursing Department Policies & Procedures (P&P) manual:

Confidentiality

Simulation activities are confidential learning experiences. Students must not share scenario details, peer performance observations, or video recordings outside of the simulation environment. Doing so violates FERPA, HIPAA, the ANA Code of Ethics, and the Nursing Program's Academic Integrity Policy (see P&P S003).

Psychological & Physical Safety

The ELC fosters psychological safety so students can learn from mistakes without fear of embarrassment or penalty. Faculty will review safety guidelines during prebriefing. Students must follow safe patient-handling techniques, PPE requirements, and immediately report any hazards or injuries to faculty or the Simulation Staff (see P&P S002).

Audio-Visual Recording

- Simulation sessions are recorded for instructional and debriefing purposes.
- Recordings are confidential, password-protected, and deleted at the end of each semester.
- Sharing or posting of recordings is strictly prohibited.
- Access is limited to participating students and faculty (see P&P S004).

Media & Recording Consent

All students participating in simulation-based learning activities in the Experiential Learning Center (ELC) are required to sign and acknowledge the Nursing Program's Media & Recording Consent Form at the start of the program or course. This consent confirms that students understand simulation sessions are audio- and video-recorded for educational purposes. Students will have access to the recordings of simulation sessions in which they participated, which may also include other students present in the same session. Recordings are stored securely, accessed only by authorized faculty and participating students, and deleted at the end of each academic term. By signing the consent form, students agree not to copy, share, post, or otherwise distribute any simulation recordings. Refusal to sign the consent form may limit participation in certain simulation activities, which may impact course completion requirements (see P&P S004).

Simulation-Only Equipment

All supplies and equipment in the ELC are for training purposes only and must never be used for actual patient care (see P&P S006).

Dress Code and Preparedness

- Students must arrive in full clinical uniform and adhere to grooming standards as outlined in the Student Handbook.
- Skills kits must be brought to each simulation activity.
- Students must complete all assigned pre-simulation work; failure to do so may result in an absence.

Professional Behavior

- Treat all simulators, standardized patients, and equipment with care and respect.
- No cell phone use, food, or drink (including water) is permitted in the simulation lab.
- Handle all spills and cleanup responsibilities per lab policy.
- Follow infection control procedures, including hand hygiene and glove use.

These expectations reinforce professionalism, patient safety, and a respectful learning environment and align with the College's overarching student conduct policies.

Simulation Experience Structure

Simulation Session Flow

The following outlines the structured sequence of activities in the simulation learning process.

Pre-simulation

Students are required to complete a pre-simulation assignment prior to the scheduled session. This preparatory activity is designed to enhance learning and ensure students arrive informed, engaged, and ready to participate. Pre-simulation assignments are available in the Canvas course shell and must be completed as directed by the Simulation Faculty.

Prebriefing

Prebriefing is a structured, faculty-led process that reviews the simulation case, clarifies learning objectives, and reinforces expectations. During this time, students are encouraged to ask questions, address uncertainties, and build a shared mental model for the upcoming experience.

Orientation

At the start of each simulation session, students receive a focused orientation to the simulation environment. This includes an overview of available equipment and supplies, simulator functionality, the daily agenda, assigned roles, and overall session expectations.

Simulation Activity

Students participate in hands-on simulation, applying knowledge and skills in real-time clinical scenarios.

Debriefing

Following the simulation, students engage in a reflective, faculty-guided debriefing session to analyze performance, reinforce learning, and promote critical thinking.

Pre-Simulation Preparation

A pre-simulation assignment is a required preparatory activity designed to help you engage meaningfully with the simulation scenario. It ensures you arrive informed, ready to participate, and equipped to apply critical thinking based on the patient's clinical data. Pre-simulation work supports clinical reasoning and helps establish a shared mental model across all participants.

To complete your pre-simulation assignment:

- Review the simulation module in your Canvas shell.
- For most students, this will be located in the laboratory section of your course.
- For NRN-110 and specialty courses (NRN-130, NRN-140, NRN-230, NRN-240), the module is located in the clinical shells.
- Complete assigned readings and activities listed in the module to support your understanding of the scenario and clinical context.
- Access the simulated patient chart in DocuCare.
- Chart access is time-tamped and monitored by the Simulation Faculty.
- This step is mandatory. If not completed, you may be reassigned to another lab section on the same day, and a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) will be issued.
- Complete an SBAR report based on the information found in the simulated electronic health record (EHR) in DocuCare. This will serve as your clinical handoff tool, helping to guide your interventions.
- A DocuCare access code will be issued at the beginning of each semester. Please use the specific code assigned to you by The Simulation Faculty, as it is linked to your designated clinical section. Access codes are individualized and must not be shared.
- Use your textbook as needed to review relevant pathophysiology, medications, labs, diagnostics, and clinical cues.
- Examine patient data trends and synthesize a working hypothesis to prioritize care strategies.
- Bring your completed SBAR to simulation. You may reference this during the simulation experience.
- Review verbal SBARs embedded in your Canvas module prior to arrival.
- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Simulation begins with a prebriefing at the scheduled start time.
- Punctuality is expected and mirrors clinical standards. Late arrivals will follow the same consequences outlined in your clinical attendance policy.
- Completion of all pre-simulation requirements and attendance at scheduled sessions is expected. Failure to meet these expectations will be addressed in accordance with the program's attendance policy and may result in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).

Prebriefing

Each simulation session begins with a structured prebriefing and orientation led by the Simulation Faculty. Prebriefing is designed to prepare learners for the simulation experience by reviewing the scenario, clarifying learning objectives, and reinforcing expectations and ground rules. This time also provides an opportunity for students to ask questions and address any “muddy points.”

To participate in the simulation, students must complete the assigned pre-simulation activities, which ensure a shared mental model and the foundational knowledge necessary for effective engagement.

During prebriefing, the Simulation Faculty will review:

- Role assignments and session timeline
- Behavioral expectations and professional conduct
- Ground rules and learning objectives

Prebriefing typically lasts approximately 15 minutes and serves as a critical step in establishing a psychologically safe and productive learning environment.

Following the prebriefing, each group will receive a focused orientation to the simulation space. This includes an orientation of the lab environment, an overview of available equipment and supplies, an explanation of simulator functionality, a description of the session flow, details on student rotations, and an explanation of assigned responsibilities.

Simulation Experience

- Student performance is observed in real time during each simulation. Learners rotate into the simulation lab in pairs, with each pair allotted approximately seven minutes to implement prioritized nursing interventions based on the patient's clinical presentation.
- While direct participation time is brief, the simulation is designed as a collaborative learning experience. Students who are not actively engaged in the lab observe the unfolding scenario via live video feed in the debriefing room. This observation period is an essential part of the simulation process. Observing students are expected to critically analyze the case, collaborate with peers on possible interventions, and prepare a plan for their upcoming participation. Active engagement during this time fosters a shared mental model and enhances the learning experience for the entire group. Observation is an active and essential part of simulation learning. Even when not in the primary nurse role, students are expected to apply clinical reasoning, anticipate interventions, and contribute to the team's plan of care. This shared responsibility supports collaborative practice and meets accreditation standards for full learner engagement.
- During the simulation, learners apply knowledge and skills acquired through theory, clinical, and lab experiences. This includes conducting assessments using a high-fidelity manikin that simulates realistic physiological responses, as well as implementing nursing interventions in response to the simulated patient's condition.
- Learners may also be required to:
- Administer medications using the five rights of medication administration

- Analyze and respond to patient data in real time
- Communicate with the healthcare provider using an iSBAR report
- Perform a telephone readback to confirm verbal orders, ensuring closed-loop communication
- Simulations are recorded and live-streamed through SimCapture for instructional and evaluative purposes. Recordings are accessible only to participating students via SimCapture. These video recordings are deleted at the end of the academic term. Sharing or distributing simulation videos is strictly prohibited.
- Each simulation follows a standardized script with clearly defined learning objectives aligned with course-level Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and program-level End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes (EPSLOs).

Debriefing Process

- A structured debriefing follows each simulation experience. Debriefing is a learner-centered, reflective process guided by trained facilitators. Its purpose is to reinforce key concepts, identify knowledge, skills, and communication gaps, and support the development of clinical judgment.
- Debriefing:
 - Supports the transfer and integration of learning to future clinical practice
 - Helps identify and resolve individual, team, or system-level performance issues
 - Encourages insight and critical reflection through facilitated dialogue (Decker et al., 2021)
- Following the simulation, students participate in a facilitated discussion using a structured, evidence-based reflection model. Faculty use techniques such as open-ended questions, advocacy-inquiry, and the Socratic method to guide reflection. While the instructor facilitates the discussion, students are expected to lead the conversation, engage in analysis, and contribute meaningfully to group learning.
- The debriefing process is designed to last at least the same duration or at least half the length of the simulation scenario to allow sufficient time for meaningful reflection.
- Simulation scenarios and discussions must remain confidential. Sharing scenario details or video content outside the session violates FERPA and may result in disciplinary action.
- Faculty are responsible for maintaining a psychologically safe, supportive, and respectful learning environment throughout the debriefing process, in alignment with best practices for simulation-based education.

When participating in the simulations, your role is to assume all aspects of a practicing nurse's professional behavior. Additionally, when a gap occurs between simulated reality and actual reality, it is expected that you try to understand the goals of the learning session and behave as if the gap did not exist, and carry on with appropriate nursing care, critical thinking, and judgment.

BNC 32 Open Skills Lab

BNC 32 functions as the primary open lab space within the Experiential Learning Center (ELC). It supports skills development, remediation, and self-directed practice for nursing students. All currently enrolled students are registered in the non-credit HS-300 course, which governs access to BNC 32. The open lab may be used for independent practice, small group learning activities, and the option to receive one-on-one feedback from an Open Lab Instructor.

HS-300 Requirement

Students must complete at least one (1) hour of independent skills practice in BNC 32 during the semester. This practice must be completed outside of scheduled lab, clinical, or theory class time. HS-300 is a pass/no pass course.

Logging Hours

Nursing students have an obligation to take personal responsibility for accurately recording their lab attendance. All students must log in and out using the kiosk station in BNC 32:

- Use your student ID number without leading zeros as your username.
- Set your password during your first login and keep it secure. If you have forgotten your passcode, use the "Forgot passcode" link on the login screen.

Logging in and out is the responsibility of each student. Failure to log in will result in no credit for time spent in the lab, and forgetting to log out may result in partial or no credit toward the HS-300 requirement. Students are expected to track their hours regularly and ensure progress toward the one-hour HS-300 requirement using the provided instructions. While the HS-300 lead faculty review total hours at the end of the semester for course completion, students are responsible for monitoring and verifying their hours throughout the term.

A courtesy reminder email will be sent by lab staff near the end of the semester if the one-hour HS-300 requirement has not been met. Students experiencing login or logout issues, such as password issues or kiosk errors, should promptly seek assistance from a lab specialist to resolve the problem.

Open Lab Hours

Open lab hours are posted in the HS-300 Canvas shell and throughout the Nursing Complex. Availability may vary during peak periods or when the lab is in use for instruction.

Open Lab Rules

Supplies

- Students must bring their personal skills kits to each session. Skills kit supplies should be reused whenever appropriate to preserve resources and reduce waste.
- Any additional items or specialty equipment must be requested from the laboratory specialists at least three (3) days in advance to ensure availability.

- All supplies and equipment in the ELC are for educational use only and must never be used for actual patient care (see S006).

Professionalism

- Full adherence to the nursing program dress code is required at all times in the ELC (see Student Handbook – Dress Standards).
- Professional communication is expected. Conversations must be kept at a low volume to maintain a focused learning environment.
- Respect for peers, faculty, and staff is essential. Disruptive or unprofessional behavior will be addressed in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy and P&P S001 Participant Rules.

Cleanliness

- Students are responsible for leaving the space clean and organized at the end of each session.
- All equipment and supplies must be returned to their designated locations or placed on the “go-back” cart if the correct location is unknown.
- Equipment should be handled with care and used according to faculty instructions and manufacturer guidelines.

Food and Drink

- Food is not permitted in the lab at any time.
- Water bottles with secure lids may be kept at student desks but must be kept away from patient care equipment and electronic devices to protect equipment integrity.

Use of Overflow Rooms

- Overflow rooms (BNC 37, 39, 40, or B8) are restricted to approved instructional use.
- Students may only access these rooms with prior authorization from the Laboratory Specialists or the Simulation Faculty.
- Room openings during peak times will be announced via Teams or Canvas.

Instructional Support

- Instructors’ availability varies. Students should consult the Open Lab calendar in HS-300 before arriving to confirm if an Open Lab Instructor is scheduled.

Open Lab Instructor

- The Open Lab Instructors are available by appointment to provide informal feedback, guidance, and skill coaching.
- These instructors do not perform skill validations or grading.

Assigned Lab Instructor

- Formal skill validations and assessments are conducted only by the lab instructor assigned to the student's course section.

- These instructors are responsible for evaluating student performance according to course and program standards.

Practice Options

- Students may use BNC 32 for:
- Independent practice of clinical skills
- Small group learning activities
- Scheduled sessions with an Open Lab Instructor for guided feedback

Related Policies & Procedures	Title	Summary
S001	Participant Rules for Simulation Educational Activities	Outlines professional behavior, preparation, and participation expectations for simulation.
S002	Psychological and Physical Safety	Details measure to ensure safe, supportive, and inclusive simulation learning environments.
S003	Simulation Confidentiality	Defines confidentiality requirements for simulation scenarios, peer performance, and recordings.
S004	Audio-Visual Recording in Simulation	Establishes rules for recording, access, and privacy during simulation activities.
S006	Separation of Simulation and Actual Patient Care Materials	Ensures all equipment and supplies in the ELC are for training purposes only.

ELC Policies and Procedures Link

Adopted: 7/22; Revised: 8/25

GENERAL STUDENT INFORMATION

General Department Information

Hours

The nursing department office is generally open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. During the summer, the campus switches to a schedule of 7:30 am-5:30 pm Monday-Thursday and is closed on Fridays. The front office contact number is 760-776-2578. Program-specific information can be located on the College of the Desert (COD) nursing website. Course-specific information can be located on the college's Learning Management System (LMS), Canvas.

Appointments with Faculty

Faculty are available to meet with students during posted office hours. Students are encouraged to contact faculty to arrange an appointment.

Lost and Found

COD and clinical agencies are not responsible for the loss of valuables, including textbooks. We recommend that all books and class materials be marked with your name. You can retrieve items from the nursing department's front desk. After two weeks, items are turned over to the Public Safety department.

Student Emergencies

Students are required to have emergency contacts listed in the COD Portal (Self-Service). Students are responsible for ensuring that emergency contact information is current throughout the program.

Emergency notification for students is accomplished by contacting the nursing office staff at (760) 773-2578, who will then contact the student/instructor. After hours and on weekends, you may contact Campus Security at (760) 341-2111.

Student Contact Information

Initial contact information is collected from the student application to the program. Students are required to maintain current contact information on the COD Portal. Changes to phone numbers can also be reported to the front desk staff.

Visitors, guests, children, etc.

Students are not allowed to bring guests, children, or friends to class, clinical settings, or lab experiences. These individuals are not covered by campus insurance and thus create potential liabilities.

Student Representation on Committees

Students are encouraged to participate in the college governance structure and take part in the student legislature. In addition, students are asked to select representatives to the School of Health Sciences and Education and nursing program faculty meetings where they will have the opportunity to address student concerns. Student participation at these meetings is critical to the implementation of a nursing program that is responsive to student needs. Students are non-voting members at the faculty meetings.

The schedule of School of Health Sciences and Education and nursing program meetings will be posted each semester on the website.

Meetings typically are held on Thursdays from 3 pm to 5 pm in the BNC conference room.

Faculty & Staff Contact Information

Department Role	Name	Email Address	Phone Number
Dean of Health Science & Education	Gary Plunkett	gplunkett@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-862-1318
Director of Nursing & Allied Health	Sarah Fry, MSN, RN, PHN, CNE	sfry@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-2578
Assistant Director of Nursing & Allied Health	Michelle French, MSN, RN, CNS, CEN, CNE	mfrench@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-2578
Clinical Placement Programs Supervisor	Andy Beltran	anbeltran@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-565-4881
Administrative Assistant, Nursing & Allied Health	Vincent Gandrillon	vgandrillon@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-2578
Nursing Program Assistant RN Program	Elena Mijarez	emijarez@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-2578
Nursing Program Assistant VN Program CNA Program	Cece Yamaguchi	cyamaguchi@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-2578
Admissions & Records Specialist	Lara Reyes	lreyes@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-862-1359
Lab Specialist	Andres Ruiz-Felix	aruizfelix@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-565-4883
Lab Specialist	Ryan McWey	rmcwey@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-565-4883
Simulation Coordinator/Faculty	Mary Suarez, MSN, RN, CHSE, CNE	mrsuarez@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-7215
Department Chair, Health Sciences & Nursing	Kurt Spurgin, DC, PhD	kspurgin@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-565-4820
Full-Time Faculty, Tenured RN Program	Monica Camargo, MSN, RN, CNE	mcamargo@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-7343
Full-Time Faculty, Tenured RN Program	Lisa Kinsey, PhD, MSN, RN, CNE	likinsey@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-862-1357
Full-Time Faculty, Tenured RN Program	Amy Hetherington, DNP, MSN, RN, CNE	ahetherington@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-7292
Full-Time Faculty RN & CNA Program	Bryan Batres, MSN, RN, CNE	brbatres@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-773-2533
Full-Time Faculty RN Program	Maricela Castillo, MSN, RN, CCRN	macastillo@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-773-2586
Full-Time Faculty RN Program	Talon Hart, MBA, CCRN, TNCC, CNE	tahart@collegeofthedesert.edu	Ext. 7058
Full-Time Faculty VN & RN Program	Mitzy Hernandez, MSN, RN, CNE-CL	mhernandez@collegeofthedesert.edu	Ext. 7054
Full-Time Faculty RN Program	Michelle Smith, MSN, RN	mismith@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-7246
Full-Time Faculty CNA Program	Barbara Jordan, MSN, RN	bjordan@collegeofthedesert.edu	Ext. 6718
Full-Time Faculty RN Program	Kristani Stewart, PsyD, MSN, NP, RN	kstewart@collegeofthedesert.edu	TBD
Student Outcome Specialist	Diana Simmons, BSN, RN, CCRN	dsimmons@collegeofthedesert.edu	Ext. 1392
Student Outcome Specialist	Amber McCartney BSN, RN	amccartney@collegeofthedesert.edu	Ext. 1386
Nursing Counselor	Ana Stockwell, PsyD, MSW	astockwell@collegeofthedesert.edu	760-776-7380

Advisement

All services at COD are available to nursing students. The college catalogue has a list of services available. If you feel the need for personal, educational, or financial help, contact your instructor, who can guide you to the proper offices on campus. For your convenience, as well as that of the faculty, appointments are encouraged. If you do not wish to share your problem with your instructor, students may always contact the nursing counselor directly for a confidential conference.

Scholarship Criteria

Scholarship activities are integral to the progressive improvement of the discipline of nursing. College of the Desert and the nursing program have multiple scholarship opportunities available to qualified applicants to assist them in achieving their goals. All students are highly encouraged to apply to AwardSpring so that they are eligible for scholarships from our generous donors. Scholarship applications are made available on an ongoing basis during the academic school year and are awarded to students that meet the following criteria:

Donor Specific Criteria

Qualifications, terms and conditions are established by the donor at the time of scholarship development/inception and are non-negotiable.

- Professionalism
- Academic standing
- Community involvement
- Extracurricular Activities
- Collegiality
- Leadership
- In-class participation
- Role model
- Mentorship

Student Success Services

To assist you in successfully completing the nursing program, COD provides student success services. Information on these services can be found on the COD website. Some services include:

- Counseling
- Progress monitoring
- Supplemental instruction
- Tutoring
- Study services
- Financial aid resources
- Remediation/academic support
- Veterans Services

Library Resources

Any librarian at the COD Library will help you. If you want more in-depth help, seek assistance from the nursing program specialist; that librarian is identified on [Nursing-specific LibGuides](#) along with contact information.

<http://library.collegeofthedesert.edu/nursing>

Clinical Agency Addresses

Desert Oasis Healthcare Home Health Services RN 265 N. El Cielo Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Family Hospice Care RN 255 El Cielo Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Desert Mountain 47763 Monroe Avenue, Indio, CA 92201
Willow Springs Healthcare 74-350 Country Club Dr., Palm Desert, CA 92260
Monterey Palms Healthcare and Rehabilitation Center 44610 Monterey Avenue, Palm Desert, CA 92260
McCarthy Family Child Development Center (COD) 43500 Monterey Avenue, Palm Desert, CA 92260
Rancho Mirage Healthcare 39950 Vista Del Sol, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
Telecare Riverside County Psychiatric Health Facility 47915 Oasis Avenue, Indio, CA 92201
San Gorgonio Behavioral Health 1751 N. Sunrise Way, Suite G Palm Springs, CA
Student Health Center, College of the Desert 43500 Monterey Avenue, Palm Desert, CA 92260
Rehabilitation Hospital of Southern California (Vibra) 70077 Ramon Rd, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital 47111 Monroe St, Indio, CA 92201
Eisenhower Health Hospital 39000 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
Desert Regional Medical Center 1150 N. Indian Canyon Dr, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Alzheimer's Coachella Valley 42600 Cook Street Suite e134, Palm Desert, CA 92211
Desert Springs Health & Wellness Center 82262 Valencia Avenue, Indio, CA. 92201
Bayshire Rancho Mirage Senior Living 72201 Country Club Dr, Rancho Mirage, CA. 92270
Serenity Hospice 777 E. Tahquitz Canyon Way Suite 301, Palm Springs, CA. 92262
Premier Care Center Palm Springs 2990 Ramon Rd, Palm Springs, CA. 92264
Desert CSU Mental Health Urgent Care 2500 N Palm Canyon Dr A4, Palm Springs, CA 92262
Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation (Betty Ford Center) 39407 Vista Del Sol, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
Caleo Bay Assisted Living and Memory Care 47805 Caleo Bay, La Quinta, CA 92253
Tranquility Sands Hospice 74333 CA-111 Suite 204, Palm Desert, CA 92260
Suncrest Hospice Care 36923 Cook St suite 102, Palm Desert, CA 92211
DAP Health + Borrego Health 1695 N. Sunrise Way Palm Springs, CA 92262

Dream Big Children's Center 82380 Miles Ave, Indio, CA 92201 69930 CA-111, Rancho Mirage, CA 92270
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Tranquil Springs Crisis Residential Treatment 47915 Oasis St. Unit C Indio, CA. 92201

Coachella Valley Behavioral Health Hospital (Beginning Fall 2025) 81555 JFK Ct. Indio, CA. 92201

Rev: 7/22; 08/23, 08/24, 8/25

Letters of Recommendations

Information

Letters of Recommendation (LOR) can be used for scholarships, employment, and for the Boards of nursing. Depending on the type of LOR needed, the procedure may vary. LORs are completed via a standardized form.

Students are notified, during new student orientation, of the impact that criminal background issues may have on licensure. Students are encouraged to discuss any criminal background issues with the nursing counselor prior to beginning a program that may end in difficulties with licensure from state board agencies.

Procedure for Employment or Scholarship LORs

1. Students can seek employment or scholarship LORs from part-time/clinical instructors or full-time/theory instructors.
2. Students should first speak with the faculty member from whom they want a letter of recommendation (LOR).
3. After verbal consent to write an LOR, students will request a "Request for Letter of Recommendation" from the COD nursing department front desk.
4. The COD nursing department staff will email the form to the student and faculty member via Adobe Sign.
5. The student will complete sections assigned through Adobe Sign.
6. The faculty members will complete sections assigned through Adobe Sign.
7. A copy of the LOR will be emailed to both the student and faculty members.

Procedure for Boards of Nursing Letters

1. Students will review the requirements for prior convictions and disciplinary actions on the [California Board of Nursing](#) website.
2. The student will request a meeting with the nursing counselor regarding a Board of Nursing character letter within the first 4 weeks of their final semester of the program. Information regarding writing a disclosure letter will be discussed. Failure to begin the process by this time may result in a delay of up to 3 months in receipt of the letter.
3. Students will again meet with the nursing counselor for review of the disclosure letter. At that meeting, faculty will sign a waiver to discuss the student's academic standing and program performance.
4. The student will meet with one **full-time/theory nursing faculty member** with whom they feel comfortable sharing their history. The student will bring a copy of their disclosure letter for the faculty member.
5. The students' performance will be discussed at a closed faculty meeting. Discussions will revolve around the following criteria: overall performance, patient safety, caring behavior, professional communication, professionalism (attitude, dependability, reliability, attendance, punctuality), and leadership qualities.
6. All full-time faculty present at that meeting will provide a 'general' recommendation and any helpful comments for the student letter of recommendation, enabling the chosen faculty member to communicate effectively in the form.
7. At the time of the NCLEX application, the faculty will provide the student with a digital letter for upload to the BRN with the NCLEX-RN application.

Adopted: 12/21

Student Nurses Association (SNA)

Information

The College of the Desert Student Nurses' Association (SNA) is a non-profit, student-led organization representing all nursing students at the College of the Desert. SNA's affiliation with the National Student Nurses' Association allows our members to benefit from leadership opportunities, scholarships, career information, and the privilege to give back to the community.

SNA serves as the voice of the students, working together with faculty and staff to improve the standards of nursing education within the program.

SNA's previous philanthropic endeavors include participating in health fairs, blood drives, and community health events. SNA promotes and encourages a collaborative partnership with nursing and related health organizations in the Coachella Valley.

All nursing students are invited and encouraged to participate in SNA events. As per NSNA bylaws, all registered RN program students are SNA members. RN and VN students are encouraged to attend meetings and events sponsored by the SNA. The SNA elects officers once per academic year in the fall and class representatives every semester.

Revised: 2013

Guidelines for Pinning Ceremonies

Information

The pinning ceremony dates to the 1860s, when Florence Nightingale was awarded the Red Cross of St. George in recognition for her tireless service to the injured during the Crimean War. To share the honor, she in turn presented a medal of excellence to her brightest graduates.

The purpose of the pinning ceremony is to recognize nursing students' successful completion of the requirements that qualify an individual to apply for licensure as a nurse. The pinning ceremony is a COD nursing program activity. It is a culminating experience for nursing students, their families and friends, nursing faculty, school personnel, and community members. The ceremony is in addition to commencement exercises. Students are encouraged to attend both the pinning and commencement ceremonies.

Planning

The director of the nursing program shall be kept informed of all discussions and plans, either through formal meetings or written correspondence. Final approval is required by the Director of Nursing before proceeding with plans. The total ceremony time should not exceed 90 minutes from start to finish.

Music

Music is played during the processional and recessional. The class chooses the music, and the administration approves it for its professional and appropriate content.

Speakers

Speeches should not exceed 5 minutes. Speeches must be reviewed by the administration prior to the ceremony.

Programs

The School of Health Sciences and Education will be responsible for formatting and printing the pinning ceremony program. The program will follow a standard format determined by the college.

Candles

The nursing department will supply candle lamps for the graduation ceremony. The SNA bears the responsibility of returning all candle lamps to the division office after the ceremony.

Decorations

Simplicity with decoration is encouraged. Balloons will be purchased through the nursing office. Class officers wishing to discuss changes in typical decorations should meet with the assistant director no later than week 8 of the term.

Cost

The COD Alumni Association donates a fixed amount of money to underwrite the expenses of the event.

Pins

The act of pinning the graduate nurse symbolizes a commitment to the profession of nursing. Each school of nursing has a distinct and unique pin.

Sample Program Format

- Processional—Graduates march in
- Welcome—Director of Nursing
- Greeting—COD President/Vice President
- Leadership Award—Presented by SNA President or VP (Selected by faculty)
- Presentation of Pins—Faculty (chosen by program faculty)
- Student Speakers—Student(s) (chosen by program faculty)
- Nurses' Pledge—Faculty (chosen by program faculty)
- Passing of Lamp—Student from N3 and N4 (chosen by faculty)
- Recessional—Graduates march out

Policy

1. Event planning for the RN program is done in collaboration with the program administration, staff, Student Nurse Association (SNA), and faculty. Graduating students are welcome to participate in the planning through the SNA.
2. The pinning ceremony for the RN program is usually held near the last day of finals week; the VN program pinning ceremony is usually held the first week of semesters following the completion of the program, in the mid-afternoon. Ceremonies are not held in the evening or on weekends.
3. A photographer will be scheduled to be at the event to take the class pictures and portraits. Students are responsible for ordering and paying for their pictures.
4. Uniforms will be professional, white nursing attire and follow the division dress code.
5. Students who choose to dress inappropriately may not participate in the ceremony.
6. Students may choose from the following uniform options based on personal preference, as long as they comply with the guidelines below.
 - **Option A: Nursing Dress Uniform**
 - i. All white nursing dresses must be no shorter than 1 inch above the knee and no longer than mid-calf.
 - ii. White stockings must be worn; socks are not permitted with this option.
 - iii. High heels and open-toe shoes are not allowed.
 - iv. A nursing cap is part of the traditional uniform (VN program: white cap without stripe; RN program: white cap with black stripe). The approximate cost is \$35.00 plus tax.
 - v. Hair must be neatly contained and off the collar.
 - **Option B: Pants Uniform**
 - i. A white nursing uniform (white scrub pants and top), white shoes and socks
 - ii. A white lab coat or white sport coat may be worn with either variation
 - iii. Hair must be neatly contained and off the collar.

Rev: 07/22; 8/25

DEPARTMENTAL FORMS

All departmental forms are located on the Nursing Department website. The following pages show an image of the document for reference only. Do not use the following pages for submission.

Nursing Programs Performance Improvement Plan (PIP)

Name: _____ Course: _____ Date: _____

Area of Concern:

_____ Theory _____ Clinical _____ Current Grade: _____

Nature of Concern/Principle Violated:

_____ Knowledge Deficit _____ Time Management _____ Interpersonal Concern _____ Safety
_____ Skill Performance _____ Communication _____ Documentation _____ Attendance
_____ Medication Concern _____ Professional Behavior _____ Application of Theory to Practice

Specific(s) of Concern:

Supporting Documentation:

College Catalog: _____ Course Syllabus: _____

Nursing Student Handbook: _____ Other: _____

Is Remediation Recommended? _____ Yes _____ No

(If "yes" complete the performance improvement plan. If "no" describe the consequences of this incident below)

Performance Improvement Plan to Include: _____ Completion & Follow-up Appt Date: _____

Required:

_____ Meet with Course Instructor _____ Nursing Programs Referral _____ Meet with Academic Support
_____ Meet with Nursing Counselor _____ Student Success Plan _____ Other

Suggested:

_____ Reduce Work Hours _____ Join Study Group _____ Develop Concept Maps
_____ Make Flash Cards _____ Engage in Self-Care Activities _____ Employ Better Time Management

By signing below, I agree to implement this PIP and abide by the plan of remediation by the above date. I understand that failure to successfully meet the requirements of this PIP may result in failure of this nursing course and inability to proceed in the nursing program.

Student's Signature Date Faculty Signature Date Faculty Signature Date

Nursing Programs Referral

Date:	Date Due:
Instructor:	Skill
Student:	Semester:

Reason for referral:

Objectives to be met:	Date Me
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Comments _____

Instructor Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____

Lab Instructor Signature: _____

Credit by Examination (Course Challenge)

For assessment of knowledge acquired through experience within the last five years, students shall be given credit upon completion of an examination demonstrating proficiency in specific bodies of subject matter, relevant to the College of the Desert Nursing Program.

To be eligible for credit by examination, a student must:

- Be enrolled in at least one course at COD
- Have completed at least 12 units in residence
- Be in good standing, not on academic probation
- Have submitted transcripts of all previous coursework.
- Not have earned college credit in more advanced subject matter
- Not have received a letter grade in the course for which he/she is seeking credit by examination

Students seeking credit by examination must follow the process in the current COD catalog/class schedule.

Assessment of Student Performance

- The student will receive a copy of the performance checklist in the packet of objectives
- A performance evaluation will be scheduled the same day as the written challenge examination
- An instructor will assess the student in the performance of skills
- Performance will be on a pass/fail basis, with a passing proficiency rate of 75% for each skill tested.
- Failure of a performance component will result in specific remediation to be completed prior to the first day of the first semester. A second written/practical examination may be required.

I DO NOT WISH TO BE EVALUATED AND RECEIVE CREDIT FOR PREVIOUS TRAINING, EDUCATION, AND/OR EXPERIENCE.

Signature (please write legibly)

Date

Simulation Fiction Contract

The purpose of simulation is to develop skills, clinical judgment, and reasoning to prepare for the care of “real” patients. Using simulators and simulation teaching techniques, faculty and the simulation operations team will create realistic patient care situations. The realism of each simulation may vary depending upon the learning goals for the session. The simulated environment and patient have certain limitations in their ability to exactly mirror real life.

When participating in the simulations, your role is to assume all aspects of a practicing nurse’s professional behavior. Additionally, when a gap occurs between simulated reality and actual reality, it is expected that you try to understand the goals of the learning session and behave as if the gap did not exist and carry on with appropriate nursing care, critical thinking, and judgment.

Instructor Responsibilities:

- Create goal-oriented, practical simulations based upon measurable learning objectives
- Add enough realism to each simulation so that the learner receives enough clues to identify and solve a problem
- Set and maintain a safe and engaging learning environment
- Provoke interesting and engaging discussions and foster reflective practice post session
- Identify performance gaps and help close the gaps

Learner Responsibilities:

- Suspend judgment of realism for any given simulation in exchange for the promise of learning new knowledge and skills
- Maintain a genuine desire to learn even when the suspension of disbelief becomes difficult
- Treat the simulated patient with the same care and respect due an actual patient
- Request assistance when necessary
- Treat patient according to the scope of practice for your role
- Maintain academic integrity regarding simulation experiences

College of the Desert views disability as an important aspect of diversity and is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) office is the one that collaborates with students with disabilities to provide reasonable accommodations. Please contact the DSPS office at (760) 773-2534 or visit CSSC Room 101 for more information. Students will receive an Authorized Academic Accommodations form from DSPS after registering, which they can share with faculty.

We believe that everyone at College of the Desert is intelligent and well-prepared, cares about doing their best, wants to improve, and contributes to the learning community

Learner’s Signature and Date

Instructor Signature and Date

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