



DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

**RN to BSN
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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NATIONAL UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

WELCOME TO NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

The National University, Department of Nursing faculty and staff are excited to welcome students into the RN to BSN Completion Program. The steps you have taken and the academic work you have completed as prerequisite to admission provide an excellent background for the work and challenges that lie ahead. Best wishes to you as you begin your program of study.

RN to BSN PROGRAM UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

It is essential that students understand the information in this handbook to facilitate their progression through the program. This handbook, your Admissions Advisor and the Coordinator of the RN to BSN Program are excellent resources. The student handbook is designed to be used by the student throughout the program and in conjunction with other National University publications including the General Catalog.

The faculty and staff are available to assist students in their academic endeavors. It is important that the faculty and Admissions Advisor be notified of potential problems that might interfere with academic success (illness, financial problems and personal issues) as soon as they arise rather than later, when options may be limited.

CATALOG INFORMATION

All students are expected to be aware of University regulations and to abide by them. These policies and procedures are outlined in the General Catalog and are on the university website at www.nu.edu.

**MISSION, VISION, PHILOSOPHY AND
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES**

BACCALAUREATE NURSING PROGRAM

Baccalaureate nursing education provides the foundation for professional nursing practice as a beginning generalist clinician who provides care to individuals, families, communities and populations. The baccalaureate degree prepares nurses for leadership in providing direct care and collaborating within care teams that work to improve the quality and safety of health care.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the nursing program at National University is to create a learning-centered environment that supports the education of nurses who will improve human health through nursing judgment to provide high quality, caring, competent, and safe nursing practice for individuals, communities and populations in a diverse society.

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of the nursing department is to become a center of nursing academic excellence through nursing education that is learner-centered, interpersonally engaging, innovative, success-oriented, and technologically responsive to a rapidly changing student population and health care delivery system that facilitates achievement of National University's mission.

PHILOSOPHY

We believe the process of educating nurses is focused on assisting students to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to continuously improve the quality and safety of nursing practice to diverse individuals, communities and populations. Nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes advance from simple to complex as students' progress through their educational programs as self-directed lifelong learners.

Knowledge, skills, and attitudes are the foundation of nursing judgment. Knowledge is defined as the integration of data and information into an organized cognitive structure which creates meaning and perspective. The fundamental structure of nursing education is developed through knowledge gained in theory courses and clinical learning experiences. Nursing skills include cognitive, psychomotor and affective competencies necessary to make judgments and implement safe, effective and evidence-based nursing care that improves patient outcomes. The concept of attitude is defined as the development of professional identity and values. The development of professional identity involves personal reflection and the application of standards and ethics of nursing practice. Nursing practice incorporates personal integrity, patient advocacy, membership in a collaborative healthcare team, and lifelong learning.

Nursing judgment is the outcome of applied thinking skills to nursing practice. Nurses employ specialized knowledge and skills to provide evidence-based, culturally competent, best practices, to improve the health of individuals, communities and populations. Nursing judgment and professional identity are enhanced through concepts of adult centered learning principles. As adult learners, nursing students are responsible for their own learning and incorporate self-directed activities relevant to practice oriented situations.

Educators facilitate student learning by functioning as partners, role models, coaches, and mentors of students in their discovery of new knowledge. Nursing educators assist the student to bridge past experiences with current content and practice to develop nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Faculty members foster a spirit of inquiry by promoting personal reflection and incorporating the principles of evidence-based practice as students work to attain excellence in nursing practice.

ORGANIZING CONCEPTS

Caring

The essence of nursing is caring, defined as an interpersonal relationship characterized by a view of the patient as a holistic being, by unconditional acceptance of the patient, and by respect and positive regard for the patient. The caring relationship has the purpose of improving the wellbeing of the patient through the nurse's therapeutic use of self. Caring forms the basis for development of therapeutic relationships with patients, and is integral to the science and art of nursing.

Patient-Centered Care

Nurses develop therapeutic relationships that recognize the patient (individuals, families, or communities) as the source of control and partner in providing culturally competent, holistic, compassionate care grounded in respect for the patient's preferences, values, and needs. Inherent in this therapeutic relationship is the concept of caring and interpersonal concern about another.

Safety and Quality of Care

Nurses deliver care consistent with current professional knowledge that minimizes the risk of harm to patients and providers, increasing the likelihood of desired health outcomes.

Nursing Judgment

Nursing judgment incorporates the utilization of the nursing process to prioritize and delegate safe, quality nursing care. Clinical judgments and decisions are substantiated with evidence that builds on knowledge from the sciences, arts, and humanities; life and practice experiences; and applied thinking to promote the health of patients within a family and community context.

Collaborative Care

Collaborative care is the nurse's participation as an integral member of an interdisciplinary healthcare team, which includes the patient, family, and community. In order for the team to function effectively, nurses foster open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision making to achieve quality patient care.

Professional Identity

Professional identity is a developmental process by which nurses integrate their roles as leaders, educators, clinicians, and patient-centered advocates upholding legal and ethical standards of practice.

Evidence-Based Practice

Evidence-based practice originates as systematic inquiry that substantiates the best nursing practices to provide high quality, safe patient care. Evidence-based practice requires continuous learning as the method for improving and updating nursing practice.

RN to BSN COMPLETION PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the RN to BSN Completion Program the graduate will:

1. Develop caring, therapeutic nursing relationships with individuals, families and groups.
2. Provide safe, high quality, culturally competent, patient-centered nursing care for individuals across the life span in a variety of settings.
3. Participate in the continuous improvement of nursing care quality and safety
4. Use nursing judgment to manage, prioritize, and delegate patient care in a variety of health care settings.
5. Effectively communicate and collaborate with patients and the interdisciplinary team.
6. Demonstrate professional identity by incorporating established standards of practice within the legal and ethical framework of nursing.
7. Apply best, current evidence into nursing practice to achieve desired outcomes

CHARACTERISTICS OF BACCALAUREATE GRADUATES

The National University Department of Nursing faculty believes that baccalaureate education for professional nursing includes processes that foster the development of values, attitudes, personal characteristics, and professional behaviors that are inherently related to the practice of the art and science of nursing. Values are defined as beliefs to which an individual is committed that are reflected in attitudes and personal qualities, and that guide consistent patterns of behavior.

We concur with the American Association of College of Nursing that values essential for the professional nurse are altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity and social justice. Examples of attitudes, personal qualities, and professional behaviors that reflect commitment to one or more of these values are listed on the following table. This list is not considered to be exhaustive and there is no one-to-one correspondence between or among the attitudes, qualities, and behaviors. Values and attitudes are listed alphabetically and not in order of importance. It is expected that graduates of this program will function as generalists who will be recognizable by virtue of their commitment to these values and through the consistent pattern of behavior based on this commitment.

Characteristics of Graduating Baccalaureate Students		
Essential Value	Examples of Attitudes and Personal Qualities	Examples of Professional Behaviors
<p>Altruism Concern for the welfare and well-being of others</p>	<p>Caring Commitment Compassion Perseverance</p>	<p>Demonstrates understanding of culture, beliefs and perspectives of others.</p> <p>Advocates for patients, particularly the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Takes risks on behalf of patients and colleagues.</p> <p>Mentors other professionals. Collaborates with others in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.</p> <p>Collaborates with other members of the health care team in planning and providing care.</p> <p>Demonstrates concern about social trends and issues that have implications for health care.</p> <p>Utilizes the nursing process to deliver individualized nursing care to clients of all backgrounds.</p>
<p>Autonomy Right to self-determination</p>	<p>Assertiveness Confidence Independence Openness Respectfulness Self-awareness Self-direction Self-discipline</p>	<p>Plans care in partnerships with patients.</p> <p>Honors the right of patients and families to make decisions about health care.</p> <p>Provides information so patients can make informed consent.</p> <p>Respects patient=s right to make decisions about health care.</p> <p>Encourages open discussion of controversial issues in the profession.</p>

		<p>Supports the rights of other providers to suggest alternatives to the plan of care.</p> <p>Interacts with appropriate legislators on health-related issues.</p> <p>Promotes patient Self-Care Agency in deliver of nursing care.</p>
<p>Human Dignity Inherent worth and uniqueness of individuals and populations.</p>	<p>Consideration Diversity Empathy Humaneness Kindness Cultural sensitivity Respectfulness Trust</p>	<p>Provides culturally competent and sensitive care. Protects the patient=s privacy.</p> <p>Preserves the confidentiality of patients and health care providers.</p> <p>Designs care with sensitivity to individual patient needs. Addresses worldwide health issues.</p>
<p>Integrity Acting in accordance with an appropriate code of ethics and accepted standards of practice.</p>	<p>Accountability Authenticity Competence Critical thinking Honesty Inquisitiveness Professionalism Rationality Reflectiveness Responsibility Truthfulness</p>	<p>Provides honest information to patients and the public.</p> <p>Documents care accurately and honestly. Seeks to remedy errors made by self or others.</p> <p>Demonstrates accountability for own actions.</p> <p>Provides the public accurate information about professional nursing.</p> <p>Demonstrates a commitment to life-long learning.</p> <p>Participates in the profession=s efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.</p> <p>Obtains sufficient data to make sound judgments before planning course of action.</p> <p>Critically reviews and applies research findings to area of clinical practice.</p>
<p>Social Justice Upholding moral, legal, and humanistic principles.</p>	<p>Courage Citizenship Ethics Integrity Morality Objectivity Equality Acceptance Fairness Non-discriminatory Tolerance</p>	<p>Supports fairness and non-discrimination in the delivery of care.</p> <p>Promotes universal access to health care.</p> <p>Encourages legislation and policy consistent with the advancement of nursing care and health care.</p> <p>Promotes health to all persons.</p> <p>Acts as health care advocate.</p> <p>Provides nursing care based on the individuals needs, irrespective of personal characteristics.</p> <p>Demonstrates responsibility to the public for the wise use of health care dollars.</p>

ENROLLING IN CLASSES

As part of the admission process, your Admissions Advisor will assist you with any scheduling needs throughout your program including individual course enrollment. Please be aware that you may need to complete additional general education (GE) or upper division courses to meet overall requirements for your baccalaureate degree. Please review your Academic Advisement Report (AAR) periodically with your Admissions Advisor to ensure that you are on track with graduation requirements. To find out who your Admissions Advisor is or to access your AAR, sign on to your SOAR Student Portal.

ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES

A program orientation will be provided. If you are unable to attend, we ask that you complete the following tutorials before you start your first class.

1. Bookstore/Textbooks
Our Student bookstore has a tutorial to assist you with obtaining your textbooks. Access <http://www.nu.edu/OurPrograms/StudentServices/Student-Bookstore.html> to learn how to obtain your books.
2. National University's Library System
This is an excellent tutorial designed to help you use the rich online library resources at National University. The web page for the library orientation is: <http://nu.libguides.com/training>.
3. New Student Orientation
Learn about the resources available to you at NU. <http://www.nu.edu/OurPrograms/StudentServices/Online-Student-Orientation.html>
4. Code of Conduct
To learn about National University's "rules of the road" go to this Web page: <http://www.nu.edu/OurPrograms/StudentServices/AcademicPoliciesandP/Code-Conduct-Online-Students.html>.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

National University provides a number of services to help students attain their educational goals. New students should familiarize themselves with these services as described in the online General Catalog under the section labeled STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES at www.nu.edu . Please pay particular attention to the technical requirements for online courses. Students will need to purchase a headset with a microphone using a USB connection.

GENERAL QUESTIONS AND STUDENT CONCERNS

General questions should be emailed to the Program Coordinator at RNCompletion@nu.edu. Student issues and concerns, both academic and non-academic, should first be discussed with the appropriate course faculty and if not resolved should be directed to the RN to BSN Program Associate Director at RNCompletion@nu.edu in an attempt to find a timely equitable solution to a problem at the lowest possible level. It is to everyone's advantage to keep all correspondence (verbal and written) as respectful and confidential as possible. For grade appeals and grievances, students should follow the guidelines in the General Catalog at www.nu.edu .

RN TO BSN RECOMMENDED COURSE SEQUENCE

The RN to BSN Option is for the Registered Nurse (associate degree or diploma graduate) who wishes to earn a baccalaureate of science in nursing degree. **A total of 180 quarter units are required to earn a BSN from National University, 76.5 of which must be completed at the upper-division level.**

Catalog 79, Addendum A Policy:

A maximum of 31.5 quarter units of upper division elective units may apply toward the baccalaureate nursing (RN-BSN) degree if a student has passed the NCLEX examination.

Preparation for the Major/Pre-Requisite Course:

Sociology 350 Cultural Diversity (may be used to meet a GE requirement)

Sequence	Course #	Course Name	Length of Course	Credits Earned
1	NSG 303	Professional Issues For RNs	4 weeks	4.5 quarter units
2	BST 322	Introduction to Biomedical Statistics	4 weeks	4.5 quarter units
3	NSG 443	Evidence-based Practice for Research	4 weeks	4.5 quarter units
4	HTM 310	Health Informatics	4 weeks	4.5 quarter units
5	NSG 442	Nursing Leadership and Management	8 weeks	4.5 quarter units
6	NSG 442A	Nursing Leadership and Management Practicum	90 hours	3 quarter units
7	NSG 444	Community/Population based Nursing	8 weeks	6.0 quarter units
8	NSG 444A	Community/Population based Nursing	90 hours	3 quarter units
9	NSG 447	Quality Improvement	4 weeks	4.5 quarter units
10	NSG 447A	Quality Improvement Practicum	8 weeks 135 hours	4.5 quarter units
GE/UD	General Education and Upper Division Units as needed			

PRACTICUM COURSE REQUIREMENTS

According to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN, 2012) nursing is a practice discipline that includes both direct and indirect care activities that impact health outcomes. Practice experiences are embedded in baccalaureate nursing programs to prepare students to care for a variety of patients across the lifespan and across the continuum of care. Practice experiences refer to experiential learning in any setting where health care is delivered or health is influenced that allow for and require the student to integrate new practice related knowledge and skills. Practice experiences include activities that support health and/or provide care, interacting with a variety of providers and/or with patients and cannot be completed solely by a student in isolation. “Patients” are defined as individuals, families, groups, communities, or populations.

Practice experiences to transition the nursing student’s competencies to the baccalaureate level of proficiency include organization/systems understanding, leadership development, evidence-based practice, information management and integration of technologies into practice, interprofessional collaboration and communication, clinical prevention and population health, comprehensive assessment, and quality improvement strategies. Didactic and practice experiences should be provided to all baccalaureate students, including those in RN to BSN programs, in order for the student to achieve these expected skills and knowledge and to integrate them into one’s practice.

The National University RN to BSN Program includes the following three required practicum courses:

1. Nursing Leadership Practicum (NSG 442A)
This 8 week course requires 90 hours of mentor/faculty guided practice experience that may include activities that support health and/or improve clinical outcomes.
2. Population Based Nursing Lab/Practicum (NSG 444A)
This 8 week course requires 90 hours of mentor/faculty guided experience in a community setting. Students are required to implement a community health project and evaluate the results of the project during the course.
3. Quality Improvement Practicum (NSG 447A)
This 8 week course requires 135 hours of a mentor/faculty guided experience where students collaborate on a quality improvement project.

NOTE:

1. **IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT STUDENTS BEGIN LOOKING FOR A MENTOR PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE PRACTICUM COURSE. QUESTIONS REGARDING PRACTICUMS MAY BE SENT TO RNCOMPLETION@NU.EDU.**
2. **SOME INSTITUTIONS REQUIRE AN APPROVED AFFILIATION AGREEMENT WITH THE UNIVERSITY WHEREBY STUDENTS MUST BE IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL HEALTH CARE REQUIREMENTS (BACKGROUND CHECK, IMMUNIZATIONS, ETC.) PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE COURSE. THIS PROCESS MAY TAKE SEVERAL**

WEEKS TO SEVERAL MONTHS. STUDENTS MUST GO THROUGH THE RN TO BSN PROGRAM COORDINATOR AT RNCOMPLETION@NU.EDU TO REQUEST AN AFFILIATION AGREEMENT.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities are encouraged to discuss academic accommodations with their professors the first day of class. Please refer to the General Catalog, Student Support Services, Students with Disabilities for further clarification at www.nu.edu .

HEALTH CLEARANCE

Students are encouraged to confer with the contact person listed on the Affiliation Agreement for practicum facility health clearance requirements in advance of practicum courses. It is the student's responsibility to maintain currency with immunizations. Students may be asked at any time to provide proof of currency with immunizations per practicum course placements.

CPR - - BASIC LIFE SUPPORT CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT

Maintenance of a current Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certificate/card from the American Heart Association, BLS-Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers plus AED is required during practicum courses.

MALPRACTICE INSURANCE

Maintenance of current malpractice insurance is a requirement during practicum courses.

CHANGES IN PERSONAL INFORMATION

It is the individual students' responsibility to change database information, i.e., name, address, telephone number, etc. in SOAR Student Portal in a timely manner.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULING OF CLASSES/PRACTICUMS

Students should familiarize themselves with the National University academic year holiday schedule. All holidays that occur during the normal Monday through Friday university schedule will be honored. Any time the University is closed, no classes will be held. Students' should plan to attend a make-up class when a class meeting day falls on a national holiday.

COURSE OUTLINE/SYLLABUS

Each course has a Course Outline (syllabus). It includes the University Catalog course description, expected outcomes, required text, methods of evaluation and grading criteria. The student is expected to access all course materials on the University's on-line learning management system and be familiar with the course content and student expectations. **Students should be aware that courses will generally open online on the Sunday before the first week of class.**

ACADEMIC AND PRACTICUM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS & STUDENT SUCCESS

The faculty and staff are available to assist students with their academic progress and success. It is important that the faculty and Admissions Advisor be notified of potential problems that might interfere with academic success (illness, financial problems, personal issues, etc.) as soon as they arise rather than later, when options may be limited.

Students who are having difficulty in a course are responsible for notifying the course faculty, the nursing faculty advisor and the Admission Advisor in a timely manner. Faculty will work with individual students to ensure that they are referred to the **Student Academic Success Center (SASC)** who will assess and provide the most appropriate service to ensure academic success (i.e. writing center, mathematics tutoring, library services, etc.).

Students are expected to maintain professional standards in both academic and practicum courses. A grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 is required to remain in good academic standing. Students are also responsible for mastering and carrying over essential knowledge from previous courses.

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system provides a framework for faculty to report evaluation of student performance and achievement. NU employs a grading system of A, B, C, D and F, with a plus/ minus grading system as follows:

A	=	95 - 100	C +	=	78 - 79
A -	=	90 - 94	C	=	76 - 77
B +	=	87 - 89	C -	=	70 - 75
B	=	84 - 86	D +	=	67 - 69
B -	=	80 - 83	D	=	64 - 66
			D -	=	60-63

GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

The American Psychological Association (APA) style is the approved style to be used for written work by students. All undergraduate students must use the APA style for written assignments in nursing courses. *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (6th ed.) is available through the University Bookstore.

The faculty supports the use of web sites that explain the use of APA format. The following is a list of selected sites:

- <http://www.apastyle.org/>
- http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html

The following items are to be written using APA format as needed in papers: title page, margins, spacing, alignment, title, headings, paragraph indentation, pagination (page numbering), abbreviations, numerals, citations, quotations, and references.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas or work as one's own. Students must give credit for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge. If a student borrows ideas or information from another author, he/she must acknowledge the author in the body of the text and on the reference page. Students found plagiarizing are subject to the penalties outlined in the Policies and Procedures section of the National University Catalog, which may include a failing grade for the work in question or for the entire course.

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Students are not allowed to take concurrent courses as Independent Study. Rather, they should wait for the next available class. In extenuating circumstances, students should contact the RN to BSN Coordinator at RNCompletion@nu.edu. For further information regarding Independent Study, students should contact their Admissions Advisor and refer to the National University General Catalog.

TEACHER AND COURSE EVALUATIONS

At the conclusion of each course, students are provided the opportunity to evaluate the course and faculty. Student evaluations contribute to the overall evaluation of the faculty and curriculum.

AGENCY AND PRECEPTOR EVALUATIONS

All NU nursing students are required to complete an evaluation of their practicum experiences. The evaluation will be completed at the end of each practicum course and submitted to the course instructor.

PUBLIC HEALTH CERTIFICATE

Upon graduation from the RN to BSN Program a student is eligible to apply for a life-time Public Health Certificate issued by the state of California Board of Registered Nursing to active California licensed Registered Nurses. Training in the detection, prevention, reporting requirements and treatment of child neglect and abuse is 7 hours in length, includes prevention and early detection techniques and is incorporated into the Community Population Course (NSG 444). Students may apply for the Public Health Nursing Certificate after receiving their BSN degree. It is the student's responsibility to apply for the certificate. Further information and the application form may be found at the California Board of Registered Nursing website at www.rn.ca.gov. Below is the process that students should follow.

1. The first step to obtain the Public Health Nurse Certificate is to click the link below and complete the PHN Application (pages 6-8). Scan and e-mail the signature page 8, to **Ron Cunanan** in a pdf format so that it can be routed to the Department Chair for signature.
Application link: <http://www.rn.ca.gov/pdfs/applicants/phn-app.pdf>
2. After the Department Chair signature is obtained, the signed page will be scanned and e-mailed back to the graduate. If pick up in person is desired, please arrange the in-person pick-up with Ron. You can reach Ron by email at rcunanan@nu.edu.
3. The graduate will also need to request an official NU transcript for \$5. You can do this online at www.getmytranscript.com. Select National University on the drop down menu and enter your information to have it mailed to you, or you can visit

Scripps Ranch Campus (<http://www.nu.edu/Locations/SanDiego/Scripps-Ranch.html>) and pick it up the same day.

4. The following items must be sent to the Board of Nursing:
 - Pages 6-8 of the PHN Application
 - A check or cashier's check of \$150 written out to the 'Board of Nursing' (memo: Public Health Nursing)
 - An official sealed National University Transcript

5. Mailing address for the PHN Application:
Board of Registered Nursing
Attention: PHN Evaluator
1747 North Market Boulevard Suite 150
Sacramento, CA 95834

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY NURSES HONOR SOCIETY

Select students will be invited to apply for membership to the NUNHS which is the development chapter for full chapter status as a Sigma Theta Tau International Nursing Honor Society. Qualifications may be found at the www.stti.org website. Further information will be provided to students who have completed at least fifty percent of the required coursework.

ADDITIONAL COSTS FOR COURSE MATERIALS

During your enrollment in the program you will need to purchase additional course related required online resources which include Online Course Learning Modules and associated eTextbooks. The Online Course Modules are mandatory student resources that are linked and integrated into three of your nursing core courses as described below. Purchase of the online modules also allows access to the associated e-Textbook online. Hard copy versions of the textbooks may be purchased separately, but are not required.

You will receive detailed instructions on how to purchase the online modules with e-Textbook prior to the start of the course. It is important that you follow the instructions carefully as soon as you receive them.

There is one textbook you will be required to purchase for your preparation course, SOC 350. No other course materials are needed for purchase in the NSG 303, BST 322, HTM 310 or NSG 447 & 447A courses.

You may contact your Admissions Advisor or the Nursing Coordinator if you have any questions: RNCompletion@nu.edu or (714)429-5189.