



# Nursing Program Handbook

## for Students

375 Church Street  
North Adams, Massachusetts 01247

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## Forward

The *MCLA BSN Nursing Program Handbook for Students* is designed to supplement the *MCLA Student Community Standards*, and *MCLA College Catalogue*. It should be used as a companion resource to these documents. Students are responsible for acting in accordance with the College and the Nursing Program regulations and policies set forth in these publications. The *Nursing Program Handbook for Students* also provides additional information specific to the nursing program, which will be helpful through your program of study at MCLA. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with this *Nursing Program Handbook*. It provides an extremely useful continuing orientation to the programs, faculty, and standards of the Nursing Program.

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### **MCLA BSN Program Mission**

MCLA BSN Program's mission is to prepare baccalaureate nurses who will enhance the health status of rural underserved communities through excellence and innovation in nursing education and practice. The program is rooted in MCLA's strong liberal arts foundation of the humanities, the arts, and the physical and social sciences. We are dedicated to the College's **mission** of excellence in learning and teaching, innovative scholarship, intellectual creativity, public service, applied knowledge, and active responsible citizenship.

### **MCLA BSN Program Vision**

Our vision is that MCLA BSN Program's will be an exemplary baccalaureate nursing program offered in a public liberal arts environment that is nationally recognized for improving healthcare in rural underserved communities experiencing health disparities.

### **MCLA BSN Program Values**

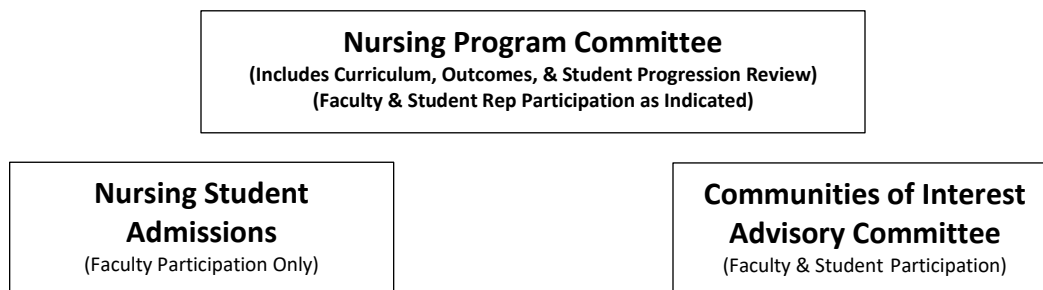
| <b>Values</b>                             | <b>Elaboration</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Access                                    | The nursing faculty believe that liberal arts and sciences serve as a core part of the educational discipline in nursing curriculum and support nursing students' abilities for critical-thinking, creativity, and holistic care and should be available and affordable to all who aspire to be nurses.                                                                                                                                                                |
| Critical Thinking                         | Nursing faculty believe learning to provide safe and quality nursing care requires experience, technical expertise, critical thinking skills, and clinical judgment. The high-performance expectation of nurses is dependent upon continual learning, professional accountability, independent and interdependent decision making, and creative problem-solving abilities.                                                                                             |
| Discovery & Understanding                 | Nursing education can provide valuable assets through collaboration with various types of agencies to address social and environmental health issues in a community. Recognizing the social, political, and economic agendas that create these conditions can result in nursing work that takes a more "upstream" approach to seeking solutions that mitigate ongoing disparities.                                                                                     |
| Global Awareness                          | Nursing faculty believe in the importance of integrating global health issues and events into nursing curricula. A critical consideration of the global nursing perspective is recommended when advocating enhanced global awareness in nursing practice, education and research.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Inclusive Community                       | Nursing faculty believe that it is important is that nursing students demonstrate diversity sensitivity and awareness. With a culturally and ethnically diverse population, it is essential that nursing students learn to provide culturally competent patient care. When students can understand and relate to their patients' needs and communicate with cultural awareness and sensitivity, patient care is improved, and we move towards achieving health equity. |
| Innovation, Experimentation, & Creativity | Nursing faculty believe critical thinking in nursing involves applying knowledge and experience to identify patient problems and directing clinical judgments by selecting from alternatives, weighing evidence, and using intuition. It includes questioning, data collection, analysis, synthesis, interpretation, inference, inductive and deductive reasoning, intuition, application, creativity, and verification.                                               |

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Leadership                 | Nursing faculty understand the importance of educating nursing students to exhibit strong leadership qualities which will help ensure the best outcomes for their patients. Nursing leaders drive a culture of high-quality, efficient, and holistic care—characteristics that are especially crucial with the demands of the current and future global health crises.                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Lifelong Learning          | Nursing faculty believe that nursing education and scholarship are ongoing. Through innovative evidence-based and theory-guided teaching, we help nursing students embrace the importance maintaining the needed knowledge and professional skills for quality, safe nursing practice. This required continuing education offers both personal and professional growth and constitutes an essential dimension of lifelong learning.                                                                                                      |
| Practicality & Application | Nursing faculty believe that the liberal arts foundation is an important purposeful inclusion into nursing pedagogy. This inclusion helps to improve nursing students’ skills to communicate, think globally, navigate diversity, make decisions, and improve their human selves. When caring for patients with complex medical, psychosocial, spiritual, and economic concerns, the ability to differentiate between what is true among a myriad of competing issues, and to identify solutions to these problems, are critical skills. |
| Stewardship                | Nursing faculty believe that nursing students can be influential members of their community and positively affect the lives of many individuals in that community by venturing outside the traditional healthcare arena. Students can affect the health of a community, even if not directly involved in “health care” projects, by focusing on social determinants of health.                                                                                                                                                           |

### Participation in Governance Through Committee Membership

Nursing student representation on various Nursing Program committees is encouraged. The student representatives on these committees are volunteers who self -elect to serve. Although each committee has 2 student representatives, committees welcome any additional student(s) who wish to attend meetings. Student representatives are available to their classmates to answer questions &/or hear concerns to be presented at committee meetings.

### Nursing Program Shared Governance & Committee Structure



**Structure:** Meetings are open to all nursing majors; meeting announcements are made via email. Those students interested in becoming involved in Nursing Program Governance should contact the Associate Dean of Nursing.

### **Ad Hoc Nursing Committees**

Students may be asked to participate in Ad hoc Committees, which are Nursing Program Standing Committees formed to study a special issue or to examine or draft policies. Student assistance is encouraged on these special committees.

### **College Committees**

There are numerous college student organizations, including the Student Government Association [Student life-Student government](#) , in which nursing students are encouraged to participate. See *MCLA Student Handbook, Community Standards* for a description of the committees and councils and the process by which students become active.

### **Nursing Program Definitions**

**Person** encompasses the individual, family, group, community and populations that comprise the collective recipients of nursing care. Persons are viewed as unique, dynamic, holistic systems that integrate biological, psychological, social, developmental and spiritual dimensions. Persons have the intrinsic right and responsibility to make autonomous, informed decisions and choices regarding their individual health care needs.

**Health** is a dynamic state of being in which the developmental and behavioral potential of an individual is realized to the fullest extent possible. Health is viewed on a continuum of optimal wellness health to illness reflecting the person's interaction with an ever-changing environment.

**Environment** provides the context in which health and the person meet. Nurses interact with diverse populations across a spectrum of environments. As they interact with persons in their environment, nurses have the opportunity to influence the environment enabling the person to achieve positive health-related outcomes.

**Nursing** "Integrates the art and science of caring and focuses on the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and human functioning; prevention of illness and injury; facilitation of healing; alleviation of suffering through compassionate presence. Nursing is the diagnosis and treatment of human responses and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations in recognition of the connection of all humanity." (American Nurses Association, 2021, p. 1.).

The education of nurses is a process that provides the advanced knowledge, judgment, skills and ethical standards needed for quality nursing practice. Understanding that the scope of nursing practice changes as health care continually evolves, the nursing faculty are committed to providing creative, interesting, and sound education that will best prepare both today's and tomorrow's nurses with the core competencies and scientific knowledge necessary to provide care across all health care settings. The nursing faculty ascribe to the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competencies, and the *American Nurses Association Standards* and other relevant professional standards that are program specific.

The nursing faculty, dedicated to academic excellence, and the practice of nursing, serve as a resource to guide and facilitate the learning process of professional nurses. An integral part of the learning experience is a collaborative partnership of faculty, student, and interdisciplinary health care professionals in the community. The faculty strives to engage the learner as a self-directed participant in the teaching-learning process and encourages a quest for lifelong learner.

### **Curriculum Model for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program**

Nursing is a practice-based discipline built upon a foundation of nursing knowledge that reflects nursing as an art and science. The science of nursing is an organized body of knowledge derived through scientific inquiry, theory development, and application through critical thinking skills. The art of nursing is the creative and caring application of this knowledge. A solid base in liberal education provides the distinguishing cornerstone for the study and practice of professional nursing. A strong foundation in liberal arts includes a general education curriculum that provides broad exposure to multiple disciplines and ways of knowing.

The MCLA BSN Program's competency-based curriculum is guided by the Quality and Safety Education in Nursing ([QSEN](#)) Core Competencies. The underpinning of the QSEN Competencies is nursing knowledge, which distinguishes nursing as a science and an art that incorporates six essential practice competencies: Patient-Centered Care, Safety, Evidence-Based Practice, Informatics and Technology, Teamwork and Collaboration, and Quality Improvement. Nursing knowledge, together with a liberal arts education, prepares graduates for entry-level practice in the identified nursing core competencies.

The MCLA baccalaureate nursing curriculum is structured over four levels: Level I-Freshman Year (Pre-Nursing), Level II- Sophomore Year, Level III-Junior Year and Level IV-Senior Year. The Freshman Year is designated as "Pre-Nursing" focusing on the physical and social sciences as well as the humanities and the arts providing students the necessary foundation for advanced-level nursing courses. This early focus on the arts and sciences is consistent with the ANA's (2021) revised definition of nursing, incorporating references to compassionate presence and recognition of the connection of all humanity, providing the foundational first level competencies. Beginning with the first nursing course in the Sophomore Year, the Nursing Program-specific outcomes are assessed at each of the II, III and IV levels and are established for each of the six core QSEN competencies.

An expectation of knowledge, attitude, and skill (KAS) development is paramount to the MCLA BSN Program curriculum model. Each QSEN Core Competency addresses the three domains of learning: cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitudes) and psychomotor (skills). The BSN Program ensures acquisition of knowledge and skills as well as clarification and maturation of attitudes within each of these core competencies. Student achievement of KAS occurs on a continuum from simple to complex across three levels (Sophomore, Junior and Senior) of the curriculum culminating into End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes (EoPSLOs).

**End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes (EoPSLOs)  
of the MCLA Baccalaureate Nurse (BSN):**

Rooted in the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) project, the End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes (EoPSLOs) will prepare future nurses who have the knowledge, attitudes and skills (KASs) necessary to continuously improve the quality and safety of the healthcare systems within which they work.

At the end of the nursing program, the graduate will demonstrate the following competencies:

1. **Patient-Centered Care:** Appraise patient preferences, values, and cultural factors to identify care priorities in providing compassionate and coordinated care. (K, S, A)
2. **Informatics and Technology:** Critique health information systems and data to support clinical decision-making that support safe, effective nursing practice. (K, S)
3. **Teamwork and Collaboration:** Evaluate team performance and interprofessional collaboration, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making, team learning, development across the continuum of care. (K, S, A)
4. **Safety:** Evaluate system factors, error patterns, and near-miss events, to minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance of safe practice. (K, S, A)
5. **Quality Improvement:** Critique quality data, benchmarks, and process outcomes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems. (K, S, A)
6. **Evidence-Based Practice:** Analyze research findings and clinical data to determine best practices. (K, S, A)

**Curriculum Level & QSEN KSA Achievement Table (Updated Spring 2026)**

| MCLA BSN Curriculum – Level QSEN Competencies for Development of Program Outcomes – Knowledge, Skills & Attitudes (K, S, A) |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| QSEN Competency                                                                                                             | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Patient-Centered Care</b>                                                                                                | Identify that nursing care and services are provided to diverse patients/families in a variety of settings; provide priority-based patient-centered nursing care through application of the nursing process in selected health care settings. (K, S) | Implement nursing care across a continuum of care settings to meet holistic needs of patients and families regarding socioeconomic, cultural, ethnic, and spiritual values and beliefs influencing health care and nursing practice. (K, S, A) | Appraise patient preferences, values, and cultural factors to identify care priorities in providing compassionate and coordinated care. (K, S, A) |
| QSEN Competency                                                                                                             | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Informatics &amp; Technology</b>                                                                                         | Identify the role of technology in the process of assessing and monitoring patients; use appropriate technologies in the process of assessing and monitoring patients. (K, S)                                                                        | Use technology and information management tools to support safe processes of care and evaluate impact on patient outcomes. (K, S)                                                                                                              | Critique health information systems and data to support clinical decision-making that support safe, effective nursing practice. (K, S)            |

| QSEN Competency                     | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                      | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                  | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Teamwork &amp; Collaboration</b> | Identify own strengths, limitations, and values in functioning as a member of the healthcare team, function competently within scope of practice. (K, S, A)              | Integrate contributions of health care team members to assist patients/families to achieve health care goals across the continuum of care. (K, S) | Evaluate team performance and interprofessional collaboration, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making, team learning, development across the continuum of care. (K, S, A) |
| QSEN Competency                     | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                      | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                  | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Safety</b>                       | State the importance of creating a culture of safety; demonstrate effective use of standardized practices that support safe practice. (K, S)                             | Demonstrate effective use of technology and standardized practices that support safe practice. (K, S)                                             | Evaluate system factors, error patterns, and near-miss events, to minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance of safe practice. (K, S, A)  |
| QSEN Competency                     | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                      | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                  | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Quality Improvement</b>          | Describe the role of the professional nurse in improving health care; actively seek information about quality initiatives in selected health care settings. (K)          | Participate in the use of quality improvement tools to assess performance and identify gaps between observed and best practices. (K, S)           | Critique quality data, benchmarks, and process outcomes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems. (K, S, A)                                                                    |
| QSEN Competency                     | Level 2 – Sophomore                                                                                                                                                      | Level 3 – Junior                                                                                                                                  | Level 4 – Senior                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Evidence-Based Practice</b>      | Describe the concept of evidence-based practice (EBP); base individualized nursing care on best current evidence, patient/family values, and clinical experience. (K, S) | Use current evidence, clinical experience, and patient/family values to decide to modify patient care and clinical experience. (K, S)             | Analyze research findings and clinical data to determine best practices. (K, S, A)                                                                                                                          |

**BSN Program 4-Year Curriculum Plan:** The nursing program prepares graduates to take the National Council Licensing Examination in Nursing for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN), a required credential for nursing practice. The curriculum integrates MCLA's strong liberal arts foundation such as the humanities, the arts, the physical and social sciences with theoretical and clinical courses in professional nursing. The program also provides a strong foundation to successfully pursue graduate study in advanced nursing practice roles.

#### MCLA's BSN Program 4-Year Curriculum Plan: Total 120 Credits\*

| First Year: Pre-Nursing (Fall)                         | First Year: Pre-Nursing (Spring)               |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| BIOL 150 Intro to Biology (4 cr)                       | BIOL 342 Anatomy & Physiology I (4 cr)         |
| CHEM 150 Intro to Chemistry (4 cr)                     | MATH 232 Statistics (3 cr)                     |
| PSYC 100 Intro to Psychology (3 cr)                    | PHED 215 Lifetime Wellness (3 cr)              |
| CCA/CHH FSEM Freshman Seminar (3 cr)                   | ENGL 150 English Comp II (3 cr)                |
| BIOL 101 Seminar for Entering Majors (1 cr)**          | BIOL 240 Genetics (4 cr)                       |
| Second Year (Fall)                                     | Second Year (Spring)                           |
| NURS 200 Intro to Professional Nursing Practice (3 cr) | NURS 210 Pathophysiology/Pharmacology I (3 cr) |
| BIOL 343 Anatomy & Physiology II (4 cr)                | NURS 211 Medication Calculation (1 cr)         |
| BIOL 320 Microbiology (4 cr)                           | NURS 201 Adult Physical Assessment (4 cr)      |
| HLTH 210 Human Growth & Development (3 cr)             | NURS 202 Fundamentals (5 cr)                   |
| SOCI 100 Intro to Sociology (3 cr)                     | Elective (1-3 cr)**                            |

| Third Year (Fall)                                         | Third Year (Spring)                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| NURS 301 Nursing Care of the Adult & Older Adult I (6 cr) | NURS 302 Nursing Care of the Adult & Older Adult II (6 cr) |
| NURS 310 Pathophysiology/Pharmacology II (3 cr)           | NURS 303 Mental Health Nursing (4 cr)                      |
| CCA Creative Arts Core (3 cr)                             | CHH Human Heritage Core (3 cr)                             |
| CCA/CHH Human Heritage Core (3 cr)                        | CLA Language Arts Core (3 cr)                              |
| Fourth Year (Fall)                                        | Fourth Year (Spring)                                       |
| NURS 304 Nursing Children & Families (4 cr)               | HLTH 300 Ethical Issues in Healthcare (CCAP) (3 cr)        |
| NURS 305 Maternal-Newborn Nursing (4 cr)                  | NURS 402 Nursing Leadership (5 cr)                         |
| NURS 400 Nursing Research (3 cr)                          | NURS 411 Preparation for Licensure (2 cr)                  |
| NURS 401 Population/Community Health (4 cr)               | NURS 410 Issues & Trends in Professional Nursing (2 cr)    |

\* 120 credits are required for graduation. This includes the completion of an additional elective; students may choose 1-3 credits (see below).

\*\* Suggested Electives: BIOL 101 Seminar for entering Majors (1 cr); HLTH 105 Medical Terminology (1 cr); HLTH 110 Intro to Healthcare (3 cr); MATH 102 Mathematics for Liberal Arts (3 cr); PSYC 270 Abnormal Psychology (3 cr)

## Nursing Course Descriptions

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Credit hours are awarded as follows:</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Lecture:</b> 50 minutes/week = 1 credit   <b>Nursing Lab:</b> 2 hours/week = 1 credit   <b>Clinical Lab:</b> 3 hours/week = 1 credit                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>NURS200 Introduction to Professional Nursing Practice (3 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Introduces the student to the major concepts and ideas forming the context of contemporary professional nursing practice including professional standards of practice and development of professional behaviors. The evolution of nursing, nursing practice, and nursing theory is explored. This course is intended to help students develop a beginning personal philosophy of nursing as well as a foundation for quality and safety in professional nursing practice.                                                                                                                  |
| <b>NURS201 Adult Physical Assessment (4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Explores the concept of health and patient-centered assessment, integrating the essentials of communication, professionalism, safety, quality care, and evidence-based practice. The student will develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform a health assessment within the context of the nursing process. The laboratory focus is on the performance of assessment skills through data collection, analysis, and interpretation.<br>(1 Credit Hands-On Lab Component Included)                                                                                    |
| <b>NURS202 Fundamentals of Nursing (5 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Focuses on the acquisition of the basic knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for providing safe, patient-centered care. Emphasis is on the nursing process, functional health patterns, communication strategies, clinical reasoning and decision making, and professional role development. The clinical focus is on the beginning application of nursing knowledge and evidence-based practice interventions in the laboratory setting and with selected patients in clinical settings.<br>(1 Credit Hands-On Lab Component & 1 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)       |
| <b>NURS210 Pathophysiology/Pharmacology I (3 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Introduces the basic concepts and principles of pathophysiology and pharmacology. Students will study the science of pharmacology to develop an understanding of medications and their interactions in human disease and the mechanisms that govern them. Students will examine the pathophysiological and pharmacological phenomena that produce alterations in human physiology and the resulting human response to pharmacotherapeutic interventions. Topics are arranged by major body system.                                                                                         |
| <b>NURS211 Medication Dosage Calculations (1 credit)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Builds upon the student's basic math skills to calculate safe medication dosages, convert measurement systems, select appropriate dosage calculation tools for medication administration, and determine the parameters for safe medication administration. This course is intended to prepare the student nurse for safe, patient centered administration of medications, and accurate documenting in both traditional and electronic records.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>NURS301 Nursing Care of the Adult and Older Adult I (6 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Focuses on the beginning clinical reasoning for common health problems of the adult and older adult building on prior knowledge and skills gained in the NURS201 and NURS202. The roles and responsibilities of the nurse in the acute care setting in relationship to safety, quality, legal, and ethical issues will be discussed. Evidence-based practice and standards of care are integrated in course content, laboratory exercises and clinical experiences.<br>(1 Credit Hands-On Lab Component & 2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)                                   |
| <b>NURS302 Nursing Care of the Adult and Older Adult II (6 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Builds on prior knowledge and skills gained in NURS301 Nursing Care of the Adult and Older Adult I. Evidence-based practice and standards of care are integrated in course content, laboratory exercises and clinical experiences with exposure to a diverse patient population experiencing varying levels of wellbeing. The roles and responsibilities of the nurse in the acute care setting in relationship to safety, collaboration, discharge planning, and health education will be discussed.<br>(1 Credit Hands-On Lab Component & 2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included) |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>NURS303 Mental Health Nursing (4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Focuses on nursing care of individuals, families, &/or groups when mental health alterations exist. Specific psychiatric diagnoses are examined including but not limited to the following: anxiety/depressive disorders, substance related disorders, suicidal behaviors, and dissociative disorders. Current trends in mental health nursing are explored in course content and clinical experiences. The professional role is expanded through the development of skills as a nurse counselor.<br><i>(2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)</i>                 |
| <b>NURS304 Nursing Care of Children and Families (4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Explores family and developmental theories and pediatric practice in didactic and clinical experiences. Communication, health history, growth and development, social and cultural influences of the pediatric client are explored. Applying concepts enables students to provide anticipatory guidance and empowerment of parenting. Leadership skills are demonstrated in the clinical setting through participation within the healthcare team for the purpose of meeting the patient and family needs.<br><i>(2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)</i>        |
| <b>NURS305 Maternal-Newborn Nursing (4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Focuses on developing the skills necessary to provide safe, quality-driven care to the childbearing family. A major focus will be the healthy and at-risk mother and baby within the context of pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum/neonatal periods. Evidence-based practice is emphasized in the theoretical and clinical components of this course. Concepts related to perinatal physiology, genetics, psychological and developmental theories as well as cultural awareness are explored.<br><i>(2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)</i>             |
| <b>NURS310 Pathophysiology/Pharmacology II (3 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Builds on NURS210, with the introduction of further advanced concepts and principles of pathophysiology and pharmacology. Students will develop a deeper understanding of medications and their interactions in human disease and mechanisms that govern them. Students will continue to examine the pathophysiological and pharmacological phenomena that produce alterations in human physiology and the resulting human response to pharmacotherapeutic intervention. Topics are arranged by major body system.                                                          |
| <b>NURS400 Nursing Research (3 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Introduces the student to the quantitative and qualitative research process in nursing and examines the relationship between nursing theory, research, and practice. The foundation for how to conduct, interpret, critique, and apply nursing research findings into clinical practice is emphasized. This course familiarizes the student with the concept of evidence-based practice and the use of research-based findings for the purpose of informing decisions about care delivery.                                                                                  |
| <b>NURS401 Population-based (Community) Health Nursing (4 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Focuses on the assessment and identification of a priority public health need for a focused population. Working in communities, students will apply public health principles of epidemiological investigation, assessment of social and environmental influences on health and identification of societal resources. By partnering with individuals, families, and communities in activities to improve health and avoid illness, students will appreciate the nursing leadership needed for a healthier society.<br><i>(2 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)</i> |
| <b>NURS402 Nursing Leadership and Management of Care (5 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Explores leadership and management theories that facilitate entry-level nursing graduates to become leaders at the bedside, among inter-professional groups, and in the community. Classroom and clinical experiences are designed to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed for visionary leadership. Emphasis is placed on the role of the professional nurse in promoting safe, cost-effective care in a rapidly and radically changing healthcare environment.<br><i>(3 Credit Clinical Practice Component Included)</i>                                     |
| <b>NURS410 Issues and Trends in Professional Nursing (2 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| Promotes synthesis of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education's <i>Nurse of the Future Nursing Core Competencies</i> and <i>Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competencies</i> . A primary focus of this seminar is to solidify knowledge, skills, and attitudes essential for the role transition from student to professional nurse. Emphasis will be placed on how nurses impact quality patient outcomes through inter-professional collaboration, evidence-based practice, safety and informatics.                                               |
| <b>NURS411 Preparation for Professional Licensure (2 credits)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Assists in preparing the senior nursing student for success in the profession, including the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX). It includes history of the NCLEX-RN, current test plan, skills in reading and understanding standardized test item formats, and techniques to maximize self-confidence and improve test performance.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

## **Academic Standards & Progression Policies of the Nursing Program**

The academic regulations which represent the official position of MCLA and apply to all students are included in the [MCLA Student Community Standards](#) and [MCLA College Catalog](#). In some areas where Nursing is unique, these policies have been supplemented. The following are the academic policies, which, in addition to the above, regulate the academic and clinical learning experiences of the Nursing Program.

### **Admission Policy**

Admission to MCLA into the Pre-Nursing Program will adhere to MCLA's general admission practices [MCLA Undergraduate Admission Policy](#) including submission of high school completion transcripts. Students accepted into the Pre-Nursing Program will be admitted into the BSN as a Pre-Nursing Major.

Students seeking admittance to the MCLA nursing program will follow one of two paths:

- First year students declaring as a pre-nursing major, or
- Matriculated students who meet the following criteria for nursing program admittance.

### **Progression from Pre-Nursing to BSN Nursing Major**

Pre-Nursing students must successfully complete the following courses by the end of the spring semester of their first year with a final grade of 2.0 or higher to be eligible for consideration for the BSN Nursing Major.

Acceptance into the BSN Nursing Major is limited, with chances increased by earning grades higher than the minimum in these courses:

- BIOL 150 Intro to Biology I
- CHEM 150 Intro to Chemistry I
- BIOL 342 Anatomy & Physiology I
- MATH 232 Statistics

Applications to the BSN Nursing Major will be opened during the fall semester. Review of applications will begin on March 1st of the spring semester, with conditional notification upon conclusion of the review process.

Final acceptance into the BSN Nursing Major takes place at the completion of the spring semester after application. Final acceptance decisions are based on 1) the highest overall grade point average (GPA) of all student applications received, 2) a personal statement, and a 3) letter of recommendation from an academic or professional reference.

Change of major applicants for a BSN Nursing Major will pertain to matriculated freshmen only. Pre-nursing students who are not accepted into the Nursing Major will be reclassified as an undeclared (UND) major and directed to meet with an advisor to discuss future steps.

## Immunization & Physical Exam Policy

The [Code of Massachusetts Regulations](#) requires that all full-time (those taking 9 or more credits) undergraduate and graduate students under age 30 and ALL full and part-time Health Science students, regardless of age, submit documentation of the following immunizations to Health Services prior to the students arrival on campus. Please also include the completed health forms and a copy of your most recent physical exam.

| Immunization  | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tdap          | <b>1 dose;</b> and history of a DTaP primary series or age-appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given at $\geq 7$ years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been $\geq 10$ years since Tdap.                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Hepatitis B   | <b>3 doses;</b> laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable; 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| MMR           | <b>2 doses;</b> first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given $\geq 28$ days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. Birth in the U.S. before 1957 acceptable only for non-health science students                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Varicella     | <b>2 doses;</b> first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given $\geq 28$ days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable. Birth in the U.S. before 1980 acceptable only for non-health science students                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Meningococcal | <b>1 dose;</b> 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required for all full-time students 21 years of age or younger. The dose of MenACWY vaccine must have been received on or after the student's 16th birthday. Doses received at younger ages do not count towards this requirement. Students may decline MenACWY vaccine after they have read and signed the MDPH Meningococcal Information and Waiver Form provided by their institution. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement |
| Influenza     | <b>1 dose;</b> seasonal influenza vaccine for the current flu season (July-June) must be received annually by December 31st. New students entering between January 1st and March 31st must have received a dose of vaccine for the current flu season for entry.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

## COVID-19 Vaccination & TB Skin Test

- The COVID-19 vaccination and booster are required.
- If a student has an exemption for the COVID-19 vaccine the student will follow all hospital requirements for PPE and testing. If N95 masks are required due to the non-vaccination status and or weekly testing the student is responsible for purchasing the masks and the cost of testing.
- Students should have a regular 1 step PPD **before** beginning clinical in Sophomore Spring. All clinical education centers affiliated with the program require that students have a two-step Mantoux skin test (PPD) before starting their clinical education. **Failure to comply will result in the student not being allowed to start their clinical rotation.**

## Annual Flu Vaccination

Annual flu vaccination is required by the program. Students may be exposed to the flu during the clinical rotations. The college offers flu vaccinations clinics throughout the fall semester or students may go to their personal doctor. Flu shot documentation must be sent to the MCLA Health services. Flu shots need to be documented by October 1st.

*Students should be aware if a clinical site requires vaccination the student will need to be removed from clinical and graduation may be delayed.*

## Health Physical Exam

The College, program, and clinical education centers require that students have an initial health physical performed by a physician and at their own expense. This initial health physical is to be completed prior to the start of the fall semester before classes begin. The completed health physical form must be returned to the Health Services. **Failure to comply will result in the student not being allowed to start fall semester classes.** *(Some clinical affiliates may require a health physical on an annual basis.)*

## Progression Policy

All nursing (NURS) courses must be taken in order of the prescribed curriculum.

Nursing students must achieve a minimum grade of C or higher in each nursing (NURS) course. A final grade must be given for an incomplete grade before the start of the successive semester. Should a student withdraw or receive an insufficient grade in a course, that course can be repeated only one time. The student must achieve a grade of C or higher in the repeated course in order to progress in the nursing program.

Sophomore students must also achieve a grade of C or higher in non-nursing required courses (BIOL 240: Genetics, BIOL 343: Anatomy and Physiology II, BIOL 320: Microbiology, HLTH 210: Human Growth & Development, and PSYC 100: Introduction to Psychology) in order to progress to all junior nursing courses.

Nursing students who receive an insufficient grade (< C) or withdraw from one nursing course will be allowed to repeat the course the next time the course is offered. Failure to achieve a grade of C or higher when the course is repeated will result in dismissal from the major.

## Attendance Policy

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing requires class attendance standards, including a maximum amount set for missed nursing classes by all nursing students (see Section A.2.1 of MCLA policy). Students are expected to attend all classes as described in the detailed MCLA [Class Attendance Policy](#).

Nursing clinical experience is an integral part of the college's nursing program. Students are expected to attend all nursing clinical sessions. However, students may need to miss nursing clinical sessions due to illness or serious injury that may compromise their own health &/or the health and safety of clients, peers, and faculty. Students should use their best judgment and

resources, such as their clinical instructor, in the event of an illness or injury when making the decision of whether or not to attend a nursing clinical day. All missed time must be made up. Each nursing clinical faculty member will provide instructions to their clinical group regarding the procedure to follow in the event of a clinical absence.

### **Course Exemption**

All nursing (NURS) courses must be completed at MCLA.

### **Advanced Placement**

There is no advanced placement option for nursing NURS courses at this time.

### **Transfer**

MCLA Nursing Program does not accept internal or external transfer students into the BSN nursing program at the present time.

### **Educational Mobility**

MCLA BSN Program will adhere to and embrace the Position Statement on Educational Mobility for Nurses approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Office of Health and Human Services as well as the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing: [Nursing Educational Mobility Position Statement](#)

### **Withdrawal from Course or College**

Students should follow the College's course or College withdrawal policy/procedures: [Add/Drop/Withdraw from Course Policy and Withdrawal from Course or College Policy](#)

#### **NURSING-SPECIFIC WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE POLICY**

*(in addition to MCLA Withdrawal from Course Policy)*

Withdrawal from a nursing (NURS) course may affect progression in the nursing program as all nursing (NURS) courses must be taken in order of the prescribed curriculum.

Students considering withdrawing from a nursing (NURS) course must meet with their nursing faculty advisor prior to initiating a course withdrawal.

#### **NURSING-SPECIFIC WITHDRAWAL FROM NURSING PROGRAM/COLLEGE POLICY**

*(in addition to MCLA Withdrawal from College Policy)*

Nursing Majors who withdraw in good academic standing (as defined in the College's Academic Standing Policy) from the Nursing Program must request readmission to the program. Requesting readmission to the nursing program does not guarantee readmission. Readmission is dependent on space availability and may require an additional year of study.

Students who have left the Nursing Program or College and are not in good academic standing at the time of departure are not guaranteed readmission to the College or to the Nursing Program. The student must first gain readmission to the College before consideration for readmission to the Nursing Program is given.

## **Leave of Absence Policy**

Students will follow the MCLA [Leave of Absence Policy](#).

### **NURSING-SPECIFIC LEAVE OF ABSENCE POLICY *(in addition to MCLA Policy)***

A nursing major seeking a leave of absence is advised to meet with their advisor to discuss the implication of a leave on their progression in the nursing curriculum and intentions for returning to the program. Due to the highly structured nature of the nursing program, nursing students will be prohibited from taking a Leave of Absence from the nursing program for a period of less than one academic year. This is necessary to allow nursing students to return from Leave at the same point within the structured curriculum.

## **Readmission**

All students who previously attended MCLA but did not complete their degree may apply for readmission to the College by submitting an admission application. If the student completed additional course work at another institution after leaving MCLA, an official transcript of this course work must be sent to the Office of Admission. Any outstanding obligations to the College, such as financial commitments, must be reconciled prior to readmission.

Students who have been academically suspended from the College must meet specific criteria and complete six transferable credits, with a GPA of 2.0 or better, outside of MCLA to be considered for readmission. For more information regarding MCLA's readmission: [Readmit Students Policy](#)

### **NURSING-SPECIFIC READMISSION POLICY *(in addition to MCLA Readmission Policy)***

Nursing Majors who withdraw in good academic standing from the Nursing Program must request readmission to the program. Requesting readmission to the nursing program does not guarantee readmission. Readmission is dependent on space availability and may require an additional year of study.

## **Graduation**

To graduate from Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, students must meet the following criteria:

- Achieve a final grade of **2.0 or higher** in all courses for those credits to count toward completion of the nursing degree.
- Obtain 120 credits including four-year plan of study in Nursing.
- Meet all Nursing Program requirements.
- Complete all Liberal Arts and Science requirements.
- Meet all other MCLA requirements as stated in [Undergraduate Experience Policy](#).

### **Student Rights & Grievances (Academic & Behavioral)**

Students will follow the MCLA [Academic Standing, Grievances, and Appeals Policy](#).

For student behavioral concerns, please refer to the MCLA Student Handbook: [Community Standards Rights and Responsibilities](#)

### **Essential Performance Standards for Nursing Majors**

The Essential Performance Standards for Nursing Majors are the basic cognitive, psychomotor and affective activities that are essential to nursing. Reviewing the essential performances below can assist students interested in the nursing program to make an informed decision regarding choice of career. Other specific requirements and competencies are outlined in course syllabi and clinical performance evaluation tools.

The MCLA BSN Program, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. A person qualified for the Nursing Program is one who has met the academic standards and is able, with or without reasonable accommodation, to meet the essential performance standards of a registered nurse as specified in the American Nurses Association *Standards of Practice* (2021).

Students with disabilities have the right to request and receive reasonable accommodations to ensure access to programs and facilities at MCLA. To receive reasonable accommodations, students are responsible for requesting accommodations and documenting the nature and extent of their disability in a timely manner. Students should direct their requests for reasonable accommodation to the Office of Disability Resources at 413-662-5314 or visit the office in Mark Hopkins Hall. The [Office of Disabilities Resources](#) will work individually with students to determine accommodations that are reasonable for them.

**Minimum Technology Requirements:** Any computer/tablet/device capable of running Google Chrome and installing Teams/Zoom with at least 1 GHz processing power and at least 1 GB RAM. Examples include devices running Windows 7/8/8.1/10/11, Mac OS X 10.10 and up, and Chromebooks; any mobile device that is currently receiving vendor updates (iOS and Android); ability to access and run Microsoft Office documents and services (Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.); webcam, microphone, and speakers/headphones may be required for some courses. MCLA IT also recommends broadband connections, hardware less than 5 years old, webcam supporting at least 720p, speakers or headphones.

**Additional Technology Requirements:** Canvas is the primary learning management system for the college, including nursing. Each individual course within the nursing program will outline the needed technology resources within the course syllabi. As ATI is utilized throughout the program, specific guidelines are provided within that site [Technical Requirements | ATI](#). The nursing program has access to several computer labs on main campus and the library also provides students with loaner laptops for use during testing or class activities for those who do not already have access to them.

## Essential Performance Standards for Nursing Majors

| Essential Functions                             | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Examples (this includes but is not limited to these abilities)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Auditory</b>                                 | A student must possess auditory ability to monitor sounds in order to assess health needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear and interpret information a patient is communicating orally.</li> <li>• Hear auscultate sounds using a stethoscope.</li> <li>• Hear auditory signals from technical equipment.</li> <li>• Hear cries for help.</li> <li>• Communicate over the phone.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Visual Acuity</b>                            | A student must possess visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment necessary to provide nursing care.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discriminate colors for diagnostic purposes.</li> <li>• Assess movement of patients.</li> <li>• See drainage on dressings and drainage on body fluids.</li> <li>• Note fluid levels in collection devices, syringes, and infusion devices.</li> <li>• Read gauges, such as a sphygmomanometer, that monitor patient progress.</li> <li>• See to administer treatments such as intravenous fluids and oxygen observe color changes in patient skin color.</li> <li>• Observe patient behavior, which is necessary in a rehabilitation or psychiatric setting.</li> </ul>                                                                        |
| <b>Tactile</b>                                  | A student must possess tactile ability sufficient to perform a physical assessment of a patient and to perform procedures necessary for nursing care.                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform palpation and other functions necessary for a physical examination.</li> <li>• Assess texture, shape, size, temperature, and vibration.</li> <li>• Perform therapeutic functions such as inserting a urinary catheter, changing dressings, and giving medications.</li> <li>• Collect specimens necessary for assessment of the patient.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Physical Strength (Gross Motor Function)</b> | A student must have sufficient motor function, neuromuscular strength, and coordination to effectively perform the activities required of a nurse.                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk/stand for extended periods and distances over an 8-hour period.</li> <li>• Transfer patients from a wheelchair to bed, and from bed to stretcher.</li> <li>• Obtain information from patients using palpation, auscultation, and percussion.</li> <li>• Perform CPR.</li> <li>• Move about in patient care environments.</li> <li>• Bend &amp;/or lift to assist clients with activities of daily living and manipulate client equipment.</li> <li>• Move, push, or pull equipment, beds, stretchers, wheelchairs, etc.</li> </ul>                                                                                                        |
| <b>Fine Motor Coordination</b>                  | A student must have sufficient fine motor coordination to safely and effectively perform essential nursing functions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manipulate diagnostic instruments to adequately perform all aspects of physical assessment.</li> <li>• Perform treatments and procedures administer intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous, topical and oral medication.</li> <li>• Successfully don and remove protective apparel to maintain standard precautions.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Communication</b>                            | A student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, family members, and other members of the health care team. This includes expressive and receptive modes of verbal, nonverbal, and written communication.                                                                                                                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain treatment procedures.</li> <li>• Initiate health teaching.</li> <li>• Document nursing assessment, nursing action, and patient/family responses.</li> <li>• Read patient documentation and relevant medical literature.</li> <li>• Give an accurate report of patient information to other healthcare professionals and members of the health care team.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Social &amp; Behavioral</b>                  | A student must possess the interpersonal ability to interact with individuals, families, and groups from varied social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. The student must have the capacity for self-reflection and change. The student has the ability to maintain professional demeanor, communication, and respect for others at all times. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Function safely, effectively, and calmly under stressful situations.</li> <li>• Demonstrates respect, caring and empathy for others.</li> <li>• Develop mature, compassionate, sensitive, and effective relationships with clients.</li> <li>• Complete all responsibilities required in the care of patients/clients.</li> <li>• Remain free from alcohol &amp;/or chemical impairment in classroom and clinical settings at all times.</li> <li>• Demonstrates moral and ethical behavior.</li> <li>• Demonstrates positive conflict resolution skills.</li> <li>• Receives and responds appropriately to constructive criticism.</li> </ul> |

## **Student Exam Policy**

**(This policy applies to all tests, quizzes, exams, & finals)**

**Policy Purpose:** MCLA Nursing Program is committed to assuring that exams and the exams management & administration process is run effectively and efficiently.

**This exam policy will assure that:**

- All exams and assessments are conducted in accordance with MCLA and ATI Policies and Procedures; all regulations, guidance and instructions are followed.
- The integrity and security of all examination/assessment systems is maintained at all times.
- Exam candidates understand the exams process and what is expected of them.

### **Exam Procedures & Student Expectations**

The Honor Code applies, regardless of the type of exam. Students must always do their own work, using only those materials allowed by the professor, and taking only the designated amount of time. **Exams will be submitted at the end of the time limit whether or not the student has answered every question.**

- For Select All That Apply questions utilized on all Nursing Program exams, ATI will score in alignment with NCLEX grading.
- No re-take of any exam or portion of an exam is allowed.
- No extra credit will be provided for students to raise their grade in Nursing Program courses.
- Five drug calculation/pharmacology questions will be incorporated into every clinical nursing course exam.
- If it is determined that the student has been dishonest, a grade of "0" will be issued for the exam/assignment and the student may be referred to the Associate Dean of Nursing &/or the Dean of Academic Affairs for further disciplinary action.
- **Students arriving after the start of the exam will not be permitted into the classroom** and must take responsibility for coordinating a make-up exam, if a make-up exam is permitted by the instructor.
- Upon entering the classroom/designated exam room, all cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and left with all other student possessions in the designated area.
  - Jackets/hoodies/hats/sweaters with pockets are to be removed and left with the rest of the student's possessions.
  - Smartwatches are to be removed and left with the rest of the students' possessions.
- Students are strongly encouraged to use the restroom PRIOR to taking the exam.
- Exam room disruptions are challenging to manage and in an effort to provide all students with the appropriate testing environment, **students are not permitted to ask course faculty questions during the exam.** Students with approved accommodations via the

Office of Disability Resources should coordinate this process with the instructor in advance to reduce testing room disruptions.

- Leaving the exam room during an exam is prohibited, if for any reason a student must leave the room during an exam arrangements should be made with the faculty directly in advance. If arrangements are not made in advance the student may be penalized for leaving the exam room. An exam penalty may include loss of points and or a recorded exam grade will be "0."
- If a student cannot be present for an exam, **it is the student's responsibility to notify the course faculty 3 hours prior to the exam via your MCLA email** so that a makeup exam can be scheduled, if permitted within a week. **In addition:**
  - Faculty reserve the right to review each request for a make-up exam on an individual basis; in the event a make-up request is denied the student will receive a grade of "0" for that exam.
  - The student must contact the faculty a within 24-hour time frame of the missed exam to arrange the make-up examination, if permitted.
  - If a student fails to contact the faculty member within a 24-hour time frame, the student forfeits the ability to complete a make-up exam and will receive a grade of "0" for that exam.
  - If permitted, all examinations must be made up within one week after the student returns to school at a time determined by the course faculty OR the recorded exam grade will be "0."
  - Faculty reserve the right to administer the make-up examination utilizing an alternative format at their discretion (example: essay, oral).
  - If a make-up exam is granted at the discretion of the instructor, a five percent (5%) grade deduction may be applied to the make-up exam score.
- **Medical documentation or other supporting documentation verifying illness or extenuating circumstances may be required prior to approval of a make-up exam.**
- All students earning less than 75% on an exam **must** make an appointment with the faculty for a discussion of their test prep, study habits etc.
- The student will use the ATI provided remediation tool to determine what may have influenced the grade earned.
- The faculty will then discuss the student results of the remediation tool to assist the student with strategies for improvement on the next exam.
- Students who do not follow this process will be contacted by the faculty for a discussion of the importance of remediation for success in the nursing program and they may be issued a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP).
- **Students requiring Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodation must provide the course faculty documentation from the Office of Disability Resources during the first two weeks of the semester.**
- In the event that a student requires accommodation later in the semester, the faculty **must** be notified at least one week prior to the exam &/or quiz in order to arrange accommodations.
- **Note: There are no retroactive accommodations for student testing.**

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who wish to access accommodations are advised to contact the Office of Disability Resources at 413-662-5314 or visit the office in Mark Hopkins Hall. The [Office of Disabilities Resources](#) will work individually with students to determine accommodations that are reasonable for them. Based on a student's documentation, an accommodation plan is developed to facilitate equal access. It is the responsibility of the student to deliver and discuss the accommodation plan with their professor.

**Test Weight Policy:** Nursing students will be required to take nationally normed ATI tests throughout the curriculum. These assessments are appropriately aligned to the content of the specific course to ensure student success in that nursing focus, such as mental health nursing. ATI-proctored Content Mastery exams may be administered as the final exam for a specific course (see individual syllabus for more information). If this ATI exam is used as the final exam, practice exams will be imbedded into the course to ensure students are using the tools in ATI that prepare them for that proctored exam. Furthermore, no individual exams will exceed 20% of the final course grade as MCLA nursing program does not believe in high-stakes testing. See specific exam weight guidance below.

#### **ATI Content Mastery Exam Weights**

|                                                                            |                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sophomore Content Mastery Exams</b><br>Not to exceed 10% of final grade | Proficiency Level 3= 10 points<br>Proficiency Level 2= 7 points<br>Proficiency Level 1= 4 points<br>Proficiency Level <1 = 0 points   |
| <b>Junior Content Mastery Exams</b><br>Not to exceed 20% of final grade    | Proficiency Level 3= 20 points<br>Proficiency Level 2= 15 points<br>Proficiency Level 1= 10 points<br>Proficiency Level <1 = 0 points |
| <b>Senior Content Mastery Exams</b><br>Not to exceed 20% of final grade    | Proficiency Level 3= 20 points<br>Proficiency Level 2= 15 points<br>Proficiency Level 1= 10 points<br>Proficiency Level <1 = 0 points |

#### **ATI Content Mastery Practice Exams Remediation Weight (0-5 Points)**

To help ensure optimal results on ATI proctored exams in courses where Content Mastery Exams are required, ATI Practice exams A&B will also be assigned. Remediation will be required and students will be given points based on time spent on formal ATI remediation as follows: **<1 hour = 0 points, 1 hour = 1 point; 2 hours = 2 points; 3 hours = 3 points; 4 hours = 4 points; 5 hours = 5 points (maximum).**

| <b>Student Level</b>                         | <b>Other (Non-Content Mastery) Exam Weight Not to Exceed</b> |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Level II (Sophomore)                         | 10%                                                          |
| Level III (Junior)                           | 20%                                                          |
| Level IV (Senior), including specialty areas | 20%                                                          |

## American Nurses Association Standards of Professional/Ethical Conduct

The MCLA BSN Nursing faculty demonstrate high standards of professional, ethical behavior by adhering to the [2025 Code of Ethics Provisions | American Nurses Association](#) and the [Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing Nurse Practice Act](#).

It is expected that all students demonstrate high standards of professional, ethical behavior in the classroom, clinical, lab, service-learning settings, and on campus. Students are expected to be compassionate, polite, and demonstrate respect for human dignity at all times. Students must also follow clinical agency and MCLA Nursing Program policies as well as federal and Commonwealth of Massachusetts regulations.

The faculty reserves the right to recommend the withdrawal of a student at any time, without prejudice, who does not maintain an acceptable level of behavior, as defined by the ANA Code of Ethics, ANA Scope and Standards of Practice, Massachusetts BORN Nursing Practice Act, Federal regulations (e.g., HIPAA), and clinical agency/ Department of Nursing policies.

### ANA Code of Ethic's Provisions (2025)

**Provision 1:** The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

**Provision 2:** A nurse's primary commitment is to the recipient(s) of nursing care, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

**Provision 3:** The nurse establishes a trusting relationship and advocates for the rights, health, and safety of recipient(s) of nursing care.

**Provision 4:** Nurses have authority over nursing practice and are responsible and accountable for their practice consistent with their obligations to promote health, prevent illness, and provide optimal care.

**Provision 5:** The nurse has moral duties to self as a person of inherent dignity and worth including an expectation of a safe place to work that fosters flourishing, authenticity of self at work, and self-respect through integrity and professional competence.

**Provision 6:** Nurses, through individual and collective effort, establish, maintain, and improve the ethical environment of the work setting that affects nursing care and the well-being of nurses.

**Provision 7:** Nurses advance the profession through multiple approaches to knowledge development, professional standards, and the generation of policies for nursing, health, and social concerns.

**Provision 8:** Nurses build collaborative relationships and networks with nurses, other healthcare and non-healthcare disciplines, and the public to achieve greater ends.

**Provision 9:** Nurses and their professional organizations work to enact and resource practices, policies, and legislation to promote social justice, eliminate health inequities, and facilitate human flourishing.

**Provision 10:** Nursing, through organizations and associations, participates in the global nursing and health community to promote human and environmental health, well-being, and flourishing.

## Standards of Professional Conduct for Student Nurses Overview

### [NSNA Code of Ethics](#)

The purpose of nursing education is to provide an opportunity for MCLA BSN nursing students to demonstrate competence in the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to practice in their profession. In class, lab and the clinical learning environments, students are expected to progress in level of competence under the supervision of nursing faculty. Students failing to apply safe clinical practice methods and demonstrate professional behaviors will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include a written report with performance improvement plan, dismissal from the course resulting in immediate failure, or dismissal from the nursing major with no eligibility to return.

#### Standard of Practice

From entry into the clinical setting through completion, the student is expected to practice in a safe, responsible and professional manner regarding the patient, the environment, faculty, students and other members of the health care team. The Standard of Professional and Safe Clinical Conduct is based on an understanding that to practice nursing as a student is an agreement to uphold the trust society has placed in us. The statements of the standard are intended to provide guidance for nursing students in their personal development of an ethical, safe and professional foundation and need not be limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment but can assist in the holistic development of the person.

#### **Self: *The student nurse will:***

- Demonstrate the necessary knowledge, attitude &/or skill required for participation prior to entering the clinical environment.
- The student will submit, prior to entering the clinical course, the required documentation for clinical clearance. Students will be responsible for maintaining current documentation with the Health Center. Should any type of testing &/or certification expire during the course of a clinical semester, the student will not be permitted to enter the clinical environment, thus prohibiting successful course completion. If expiration is discovered post-semester, student will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from the nursing major.
- **NOT** enter the clinical or classroom setting when they have an impairment or illness that is or may be harmful or infectious to others.
- Follow all Nursing Program policies as outlined in the *Nursing Student Handbook*, course syllabi &/or course information documents provided by faculty.
- Follow specific professional and safe behaviors expected of student nurses which include:
  - Demonstrate honesty in all behaviors and communications.
  - Arrive on time and report to clinical instructor. Nursing students may not leave assigned clinical area during assigned time, except during breaks when the student may go either to the cafeteria or break areas identified by clinical instructor.
  - Demonstrate behavior indicative of a drug and alcohol free professional.
  - Display stable mental/emotional and physical health.

- Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for all personal actions. (Failure to report error(s) to instructor will be cause for disciplinary action).
- Taking appropriate steps to ensure personal injury does not occur.
- Abstain from all forms of sexual harassment toward fellow students, instructors, clients and agency staff.
- Follow the dress code set forth in the *Nursing Student Handbook*.
- Demonstrate full understanding of confidentiality, including Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) regulations, by not participating anywhere in inappropriate conversations, inappropriate sharing of information, or obtaining information which is/are not pertinent to the student's current clinical assignment.
- Demonstrate correct, accurate, and timely documentation.
- Demonstrate correct, accurate, and timely verbal communication.
- Provide safe therapeutic care to patients, utilizing the level of supervision that has been outlined by the student's clinical instructor.

**Care of Patients: *The student nurse will:***

- Demonstrate correct use of all therapeutic processes, insuring physical, mental and emotional safety of the patient and their property.
- Place patient welfare first.
- Demonstrate a non-judgmental attitude toward patients with regard to race, color, national origin, religion, socioeconomic status, age, disease process (physical and mental) and sexual preference.
- Provide only care which the student has been deemed competent to perform utilizing the level of supervision appropriate to the circumstance.
- Demonstrate a team approach to patient care by communicating in a timely fashion, orally &/or in writing, all clinical information.
- Adhere to all program and facility policies and procedures for clinical practice and follow directions for the assigned experience.
- Be responsible and accountable for all assigned patient care and report to instructor and staff prior to leaving assigned unit/clinic. (Failure to report off prior to leaving unit constitutes abandonment of care and is subject to disciplinary action.)

**Care of the Environment: *The student nurse will:***

- Demonstrate respect for the agency through proper use and care of all equipment and property.
- Demonstrate understanding of safety by using safety devices, seeking appropriate assistance, and keeping all potentially injury producing objects out of the patient's access.
- Demonstrate understanding of disease transmission by using standard precautions, proper hand washing, linen care, and isolation techniques.
- Adhere to agency policies and directives.

**Faculty, Students and Members of the Health Care Team: *The student nurse will:***

- Demonstrate respectful and professional interpersonal communication with faculty, student, families, members of the health care team and others with whom the student interacts with during class and clinical. Examples of unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to:
  - Failure to participate, cooperate, and contribute to group assignments.
  - Utilizing profanity or other words and body language that convey disapproval or dismissal of opinions of others.
  - Appropriating work from other students as own assignments.
- Demonstrate understanding of safety by using safety devices, seeking appropriate assistance, and keeping all potentially injury producing objects out of the patient/client's access.
- Demonstrate understanding of disease transmission by using standard precautions, proper hand washing, linen care, and isolation techniques.
- Adhere to agency policies and directives.
  - Conduct themselves with civility and respect for self and others during class/clinical and lab meetings. Turn off cell phones, mp3 players, and other devices when entering the class/clinical/lab.
  - Laptops will not be used for web surfing, email, games, and other interactions on the computer are inappropriate activities during class/clinical/lab.
  - No use of earphones for iPods, etc. during class.

**Commitment to Civility Statement**

The Nursing Program encourages all faculty and students to review our commitment to civility. As outlined in this statement, disrespectful or abusive speech and or disruptive behavior from individuals or groups will not be tolerated. Everyone in the Nursing Program has the responsibility to foster a safe and supportive learning and work environment.

The concepts of community and justice are central to the core values of MCLA. MCLA commits to compassion and relationship building in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust, creating a sense of belonging to the entire campus community. This encourages us to respond to the needs of others, in a spirit of hospitality, within and beyond the college. MCLA aspires to the highest standards of social responsibility as an institution and is committed to instilling values of equal opportunity and justice in our college community. Individually and collectively, we are dedicated to pursuing the common good and to improving the lives of all people. Thus, faculty, students, and staff are committed to promoting a healthy and just community and environment. Our goals are to increase the awareness of students, staff and faculty to the importance of civility, its implications, and the behaviors that are acceptable and not acceptable in our learning community.

Civility is the art of treating others, as well as ourselves, with respect, dignity, and care. As a community of nurses, we acknowledge the ethics and values that underlie the health professions and that they should be recognized, practiced and cultivated in our learning and work environments. The following behaviors are examples of those we practice and expect in order to reinforce civility and positive norms.

- a. Speak or behave in a manner that does not disrupt or interfere with the learning of others.
- b. Use clear communication verbally, nonverbally, and in writing (including social media).
- c. Treat others with respect, dignity, collegiality, and kindness.
- d. Avoid gossip and spreading rumors.
- e. Rely on facts and not conjecture.
- f. Collaborate and share information where appropriate.
- g. Offer assistance when needed, and, if refused, accept refusal gracefully.
- h. Take personal responsibility or accountability for one's own actions.
- i. Recognize that abuse of power or authority is never acceptable.
- j. Speak directly to the person with whom one has an issue.
- k. Demonstrate openness and a willingness to listen to other points of view and ideas; and explore controversial issues through respectful deliberation.
- l. Respect and protect the rights and property of others.
- m. Demonstrate respect for others by actively discouraging discriminatory conduct, violence, coercion or intimidation against any member of the academic community.
- n. Respect freedom of expression while recognizing that such tolerance does not require agreement with expressed ideas.
- o. Above all, aspiring to uphold the professional Code of Ethics (ANA, 2021).
- p. Engage School of Nursing resources and persons to resolve conflict when necessary.

### **Social Media Policy Statement**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) provide patient protection around personal health information that is to be respected and protected at all times.

The MCLA Nursing Program in accordance with the National Council, State Boards of Nursing, prohibits the use of any type of social media that exposes patient &/or family or agency (e.g., hospital, clinic, nursing home). Students are not allowed to post or send personal information or pictures related to any clinical, lab, or classroom experience. Additional inappropriate and unprofessional content posting includes, but is not limited to, images, pictures, or statements, poor role-modeling, bullying or any other forms of disrespect to others, breaches of confidentiality, or inappropriate or illegal activities. Violations of patient confidentiality are always inappropriate and unethical. Therefore, any breach of confidentiality &/or other inappropriate content postings will be dealt with accordingly and may result in disciplinary action taken by the Nursing Program and MCLA.

Students are accountable for adhering to specific course or agency guidelines. If a student violates any one of these policies, MCLA has the right to take appropriate academic &/or legal action up to and including dismissal from the College. If a student identifies any breach in confidentiality or privacy, they must report it immediately to course and clinical faculty. All social networking sites are readily accessible to the public. Therefore, all students are encouraged to set their blog &/or all social networking profiles to **private** because the postings have the potential to impact future employment &/or be subject to criminal prosecution and fines.

**Types of Social Media:** Social media platforms whose use is prohibited would include any and all electronic means of communication that posts images or texts.

**Failure to Meet the Standard:** The failure of the MCLA BSN nursing student to meet any part of the above standard will cause action to be taken by the clinical/course instructor, Associate Dean of Nursing.

The minimal action that will be taken is a written report in the form of the Performance Improvement Plan. The maximum action that can be taken is dismissal from the course resulting in immediate failure or dismissal from the nursing major with no eligibility to return. The course of action taken will be dependent on the nature of the incident and the potential or real threat to patient safety, the integrity of the SON, and the well-being or the risk for the clinical agency as determined by the clinical/course faculty, the Academic Progression Committee (APC), the Associate Dean and the Dean of the SON.

See links to Social Media Guidelines for Nurses: [Social Media Guidelines for Nursing Students](#) and [Social Media Use NCSBN](#)

### **Email Etiquette**

#### **Guidelines for professional emails:**

1. **Reply to your emails.** It is an essential expectation that professionals always reply to their email in a reasonable time. For students and faculty, it is expected that emails are generally answered within 24 hours during standard work hours, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., (exceptions may be when the College is closed for extended holidays). Even if you do not have an answer to the email or the information requested, it is professional and polite to indicate that you have received the email and will get back to the sender.

If you are cc'd on an email, it is considered optional to reply. Often people are cc'd on emails for informational purposes only and to be kept informed of the discussion.

2. **Include a clear, direct subject line.** Examples of a good subject line include "Meeting date changed," "Quick question about capstone proposal" or "Requesting an Appointment". People often decide when or if to open an email based on the subject line. Choose a subject line that lets the recipient(s) specifically know your question, concern, or that you are addressing their concern.

3. **Use professional salutations.** It is not professional to use laid-back, colloquial expressions like, "Hey you guys," "Yo," , "Hi folks" or "Hey". It is also not professional to simply not use a salutation. In general, a professional email should be constructed as you would a letter with a professional salutation, i.e. "Dear....."

4. **Proofread every message.** Proofread every email before sending to correct for any errors. Your mistakes will not go unnoticed by the recipients of your email. Spelling and grammar errors are unacceptable in a professional email from a graduate student or advanced practitioner. Again, this email may be your first introduction to the recipient; and you will be judged by your mistakes and errors.

5. **Nothing is confidential – so write accordingly.** A basic guideline is to assume that others will see what you write, so don't write anything you wouldn't want everyone to see. A more liberal interpretation: Don't write anything that would be ruinous to you or hurtful to others. After all, email is dangerously easy to forward, and it is better to be safe than sorry.

## **Student Substance Abuse Policy**

### **Purpose**

The Nursing Program is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy and professional learning and clinical environment that protects patients, students, faculty, staff and clinical partners. Nursing students and faculty are held to standards consistent with the expectations of the nursing profession and the requirements of the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing [Board of Registration in Nursing](#). Substance use may significantly impact the ability of healthcare providers and nursing students to administer safe, competent patient care: [Mass Nurses Guidelines on Substance Use](#)

Several affiliated agencies have mandated that students be screened for drugs before clinical affiliations at their facility. Recognizing that substance use is both a disease and a professional hazard, the Nursing Program has incorporated substance abuse topical content areas into its curriculum. This Nursing Program policy facilitates the student's success both clinically and didactically. It promotes a healthy learning environment for the student. In the clinical setting, this policy enhances patient safety. It also fosters the development of professional nurses who are well educated about the prevalence and adverse outcomes of substance abuse.

### **Policy**

This policy applies to all students who have matriculated in the Nursing Program. Use of alcohol or any unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, diversion, or improper use of any substances by any student in the Nursing Program may result in removal from clinical, classroom or lab. In addition, no student may consume or be under the influence of or be in the possession of alcohol at any time the student is in the clinical, classroom or lab. Students must also comply with all local, state, or federal laws and clinical site policies/regulations controlling the possession, manufacture, use, or distribution of controlled or illegal substances and alcohol. Undergraduate students must also adhere to The Alcohol and Drug Policy found in [MCLA Student Community Standards](#).

There are circumstances in which students may need to take over-the-counter or prescribed medications that have the potential to impair their performance or personal behavior. As such, all students are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have on performance and must notify the faculty within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or drug testing about the use of any medication that could impair performance or has the potential to influence a drug screen.

Failure or refusal to comply with the substance use policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any testing or to alter the results of testing will be considered a refusal to comply with this policy. In addition, failure or refusal to comply with any aspect of the substance abuse policy may be reported to the

appropriate Dean or their designee for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the College's Policy.

## **Procedures**

**I. Pre-Clinical Drug Screening.** Several affiliated agencies have mandated that students be screened for drugs before beginning clinical affiliations in their facility. The required urine panel for drugs of abuse includes the following: amphetamines, cocaine, marijuana, opiates, methamphetamines, Phencyclidine, Benzodiazepines & Barbiturates, Methaqualone, Propoxyphene, Methadone, and 6 AM (Heroin). All student nurses assigned for clinical and observation in these agencies are subject to compliance with this policy.

Students will be provided with clear instructions and dates for the pre-clinical drug screen during the appropriate semester(s)/session. In the case of an undergraduate nursing students, clinical assignments are random and will not be manipulated to eliminate this requirement. Those agencies requiring drug screening provide no option other than participation. A nursing student may opt to refuse drug screening; however, refusal to meet this requirement will prevent the student from fulfilling course requirements, resulting in course failure.

**II. Screening for Reasonable Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use by Nursing Students.** During enrollment, a nursing student may be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing for cause when demonstrating behavioral changes that are suspected to be related to drugs or alcohol. The faculty member who observes these changes must contact the Associate Dean. The decision to refer a student for drug testing will be made based on, but not limited to:

- a. Observable phenomena such as direct observation of drug use &/or physical symptoms or manifestations of being under the influence of a drug.
- b. Erratic behavior, slurred speech, staggering gait, flushed face, dilated/pinpoint pupils, wide mood swings, odor of alcohol or marijuana, and deterioration of work performance.
- c. Credible reports from faculty, staff students, or clinical personnel.

Any student arrested or convicted of violating any federal, state, or local law pertaining to the manufacture, possession, sale, use, or distribution of a drug or alcohol or misuse of prescribed medications must report this event. The event should be reported to the Associate Dean of Nursing, and the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Students within three days of the event and prior to any clinical contact with patients, families, and other members of the affiliated agencies.

**III. Reporting.** Faculty and students have an obligation to report concerns regarding suspected impairment that may jeopardize patient safety or violate professional standards. A faculty or staff member who suspects possible substance use by a student must report the suspicious behavior to the Faculty/Course Coordinator who will then immediately contact the Associate Dean of Nursing.

**IV. Review by Nursing Program Progression Committee.** The Nursing Program is committed to a drug free program. Once evidence has been gathered documenting the use or suspected use of controlled substances &/or impairment, the student's case will be discussed at a meeting of

the Progression Committee. The Committee will consider all evidence to determine next steps including removal from clinical, leave of absence, &/or dismissal from the program. A student who is suspected of violating this policy may submit written information to the Committee for their review.

**V. Voluntary Self-Disclosure.** Students who voluntarily self-disclose a substance or alcohol abuse problem to a faculty member, academic advisor, Office of Academic Advising and Support, the Associate Dean of the Nursing Program, prior to a positive drug/alcohol test result, and who are willing to enter in and complete an appropriate program of treatment, may be granted a medical leave of absence while they undergo treatment. The student, in consultation with their health care provider and providers from the College Counseling and Health Center, will identify and enter a treatment program. The student must sign appropriate College forms providing designated College providers, Counseling, Health Center and Student Accommodations and Support Services, and the Nursing Program, permission to communicate the student's private providers about their recovery status.

**VI. Treatment & Academic Plan.** If a positive drug test is confirmed, the student will immediately be removed from all clinical courses and will be required to begin treatment. The student may remain in all other theory and designated classes. It is possible that this situation could have implications for a student's financial aid. The referral of a student for evaluation &/or treatment relating to alcohol/substance abuse and related issues is undertaken out of an intense concern for the overall health and welfare of our students and the patients whose welfare they are responsible for. Evaluation and treatment relating to possible alcohol/chemical dependency should not be construed as a punitive action. Treatment recommendations may involve but are not limited to one or more of the following:

1. Personal counseling provided through the College's Counseling Center, &/or referral to other resources outside the College when appropriate.
2. Referral for treatment/counseling and aftercare planning to a community-based intensive outpatient program.
3. Referral for treatment and aftercare planning to a community-based inpatient treatment facility. Typically these programs involve intensive individual and group counseling in a residential setting. Additionally, every effort is made to include a component of family counseling in the overall treatment program.
4. Students are financially responsible for their treatment.

**VII. Readmittance to Clinical Courses.**

1. The student may be subject to requests for random testing at any time while continuing in theory courses and must provide a negative follow-up drug test before re-admittance to a clinical course. Follow up testing costs are the responsibility of the student.
2. If the student has maintained negative random and pre-clinical drug tests, re-admittance to a clinical course and its accompanying content course may occur the next semester the course is offered; however, this is subject to space availability and there is no guarantee of when availability will occur.

## Infraction of Professional Conduct

Failure to adhere to the behaviors described in the *Code of Conduct for Student Nurses* is often a sign that a student may need assistance. The faculty recognizes that each incident and each individual involved is unique. Whenever there is an incident involving professional conduct, circumstances surrounding a professional conduct issue will be considered seriously and thoughtfully. The faculty will review each case and determine a course of action which could include the dismissal of the student from the Nursing Program.

### Good Moral Character Policy

The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) establishes policies (based on MGL c.112, ss74, 74A and 76 and Board regulations at 244 CMR 8.00) for initial licensure as a registered nurse or licensure by reciprocity in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. One of the criteria for application for licensure involves the determination of “good moral character.” Failure to meet this criterion could delay or prevent licensure.

Please refer to the [Mass Board of Nursing Good Moral Character Requirement for Licensure](#) for complete information. It is the student’s responsibility to seek legal guidance with any concerns about meeting these criteria.

[Good Moral Character Information Sheet](#)

## Clinical Practicum Policies

### Clinical Evaluation

Clinical courses (All NURS courses with a clinical component) have established clinical objectives that are met through a clinical. The achievement of clinical objectives will be on a “Pass/Fail” basis. The student is required to pass the clinical portion of the course.

The faculty, the student, &/or appropriate agency personnel will be involved with the evaluation process. Evaluations will be conducted at the midpoint and at the conclusion of each clinical course to determine the student’s achievement of the clinical objectives of the course. The evaluations will be reviewed and signed by both student and instructor. The completed evaluation will be placed in the student’s file in the Nursing Program office.

### Clinical Settings Policy

Faculty within Nursing Program seeks to provide the highest quality clinical learning experiences for nursing students. Selection of appropriate clinical placements is based on expected student competencies in each nursing course. Many schools of nursing share the available clinical sites. Therefore, it is expected that MCLA nursing students may be assigned to **evening &/or weekend clinical assignments** during their course of study. **In addition, scheduled clinical sites, dates, times, and assigned faculty are subject to change by the Nursing Program, if necessary.**

1. Faculty attempt to consider individual needs and circumstances in clinical assignment and scheduling.
2. Student requests for specific faculty members or agencies for their clinical assignments cannot be accommodated.
3. Students must conform to the requirements of the individual clinical agency to which they are assigned. This includes, but is not limited to drug testing, immunizations, CORI, and SORI.
4. All students are required to attend clinical orientation annually.
5. All students are required to complete the agency-specific Clinical Orientation before each clinical rotation in the CCP site, or as required by a specific agency.
6. Students are required to provide their own transportation to their assigned clinical and community agencies.

### **Attendance**

Clinical learning is an essential component of the nursing curriculum and provides experiences for the nursing student to apply new knowledge and skills. The number of hours for clinical learning within the nursing curriculum are established and endorsed by the Massachusetts Board of Nursing Registration. Thus, attendance for all clinical days/hours for each clinical NURS course is considered mandatory and required for satisfactory completion of the course.

### **Acceptable Absence Due to Illness/Emergency**

If a student is ill and unable to attend clinical, the student is required to **notify both their clinical faculty and the hospital/agency** prior to the time the student is scheduled to arrive. Verification of illness may be required; and is the student's responsibility. In the event of an absence due to an emergency, the procedure required by the clinical faculty member is to be followed.

### **Making Up Missed Clinical**

If a student is absent for any reason, an equivalent learning assignment for missed clinical hours will be required. Course faculty will determine if the student requires additional clinical hours to meet course objectives. If additional clinical hours are required, the course faculty will refer their recommendations to the Progression Committee for evaluation and approval. A student requiring additional hours will be reviewed by the Progression Committee. The decision for additional clinical hours will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

### **MCLA Nursing Student Medical Clearance & Return-to-Clinical/Lab**

Medical Clearance purpose is to establish a fair, consistent, and legally compliant process for determining when a nursing student/faculty may safely return to clinical, simulation laboratory, and skills laboratory activities following an illness, injury, surgery, hospitalization, or other significant change in health status. This is designed to protect patient safety, student/faculty safety, and the integrity of clinical education while complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The Nursing Program may require medical clearance documentation from a licensed healthcare provider when a student/faculty experiences a health condition that may affect the

student/faculty's ability to safely participate in clinical or laboratory activities or meet the program's essential functions/technical standards.

The Nursing Program will not discriminate against qualified students/faculty with disabilities and will engage in an individualized, interactive process to determine whether reasonable accommodations may allow the student to safely participate in educational activities consistent with ADA and Section 504 requirements.

No student/faculty shall be excluded from participation solely due to a diagnosis, disability, pregnancy, injury, or medical condition without an individualized assessment of:

- The student/faculty's ability to safely perform essential clinical functions;
- Risks to patients, the student/faculty, or others;
- Clinical agency requirements; and
- Whether reasonable accommodations can be implemented without fundamentally altering program requirements or compromising safety.

### **Medical Clearance Definitions**

*Significant Change in Health Status* includes, but is not limited to:

- Hospitalization or emergency department visit.
- Surgery or invasive procedure.
- Injury requiring assistive devices (e.g., cast, brace, crutches, sling).
- Communicable illness affecting clinical/lab participation.
- New medical or psychological condition affecting cognition, mobility, stamina, communication, or safety.
- Pregnancy-related restrictions.
- Use of medications that may impair judgment or psychomotor performance.
- Any condition resulting in missed clinical/lab experiences or functional limitations.

*Medical Clearance* is written documentation from a licensed healthcare provider indicating whether the student/faculty:

- Can return to clinical/lab activities.
- Has temporary or permanent restrictions.
- Requires accommodations; or is unable to participate at the present time.

*Student Responsibilities:*

- Promptly notifying the clinical instructor or nursing administration of any significant change in health status that may affect safe participation in clinical or laboratory activities.
- Complying with all clinical agency health and safety requirements.
- Providing requested medical documentation before returning to clinical or lab settings.
- Following MCLA's ADA process when accommodations may be necessary.

- Maintaining confidentiality and professionalism regarding health-related communications.

Failure to disclose a condition that creates a direct threat to patient or student safety may result in removal from clinical pending review.

The Nursing Program may require medical clearance before the student/faculty may return to:

- Clinical experiences.
- Skills laboratory.
- Simulation activities.
- Other direct patient-care educational settings.

Medical clearance documentation must:

- Be completed by an appropriately licensed healthcare provider.
- Include the date the student/faculty may return.
- Identify any restrictions or accommodations needed.
- Address the student/faculty's ability to perform essential clinical functions safely.
- Be submitted prior to the student/faculty's return to clinical or lab activities.

The Nursing Program reserves the right to request clarification of restrictions when necessary to evaluate clinical placement requirements and safety considerations.

Medical Clearance ADA and Reasonable Accommodation Process Students requesting accommodations due to a disability or medical condition shall be referred to the MCLA's Disability/Accessibility Services Office.

The Nursing Program will engage in an individualized interactive process that may include:

- Review of medical documentation.
- Assessment of technical standards and essential functions.
- Evaluation of clinical site requirements.
- Consultation with Accessibility Services.
- Consideration of reasonable accommodations.

All medical information and documentation shall be maintained confidentially in accordance with applicable federal and state laws, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and ADA confidentiality requirements. Medical documentation shall be accessible only to personnel with a legitimate educational need to know.

Medical Clearance Clinical Agency Compliance Students/Faculty must also meet the health, immunization, fitness-for-duty, and safety requirements of affiliated clinical agencies. Clinical agencies may impose additional participation requirements beyond those of the Nursing Program.

If a clinical agency denies placement due to inability to meet site-specific requirements, the Nursing Program will evaluate available alternatives; however, alternative placements may not always be possible.

*Medical Clearance Fitness for Duty and Safety Determinations:* The Nursing Program may temporarily restrict a student/faculty from clinical participation pending review when there is objective evidence that the student/faculty may be unable to safely perform essential clinical functions.

Safety determinations shall be based on:

- Objective medical information.
- Current functional abilities.
- Clinical environmental demands.
- Duration and severity of limitations.
- Potential risk to patients or others.

Decisions shall not be based on assumptions, stereotypes, or generalized fears regarding disabilities or medical conditions.

*Medical Clearance Return-to-Clinical Review Process:* Upon receipt of medical clearance documentation, the following individuals may review the request:

- Clinical Instructor.
- Course Faculty Member.
- Nursing Program Administrator.
- Accessibility/Disability Services Representative.
- Student Health Services.

The review will determine:

- Whether the student may return immediately.
- Whether accommodation is appropriate.
- Whether temporary restrictions can be safely accommodated.
- Whether additional information is required.

*Medical Clearance Appeals Process:* Students/faculty may appeal decisions related to clinical clearance or accommodations through the Nursing Program grievance procedure &/or MCLA's ADA grievance procedures.

### **Unsafe/Unsatisfactory Behaviors**

The following behaviors may be considered unsafe/unsatisfactory and may warrant completion of a Performance Improvement Form OR an Adverse Event Form.

1. Failure to complete an assignment on time.
2. A trend in tardiness or absence (excused or unexcused).
3. Unprofessional communication behaviors.
4. Inappropriate dress in clinical and lab.
5. Clinical unpreparedness: Inadequate knowledge of treatment, medications, or plan of care.
6. Clinical errors-meds/treatment (all errors should be noted to avoid bias).

7. Any behaviors deemed inappropriate by the faculty.

Clinical faculty may remove a student from the clinical site for any behaviors, not limited to those above.

### **Clinical Accident/Incidents**

Any accident or injury which occurs in the clinical area requires completion of an Agency Incident Report. The event should be reported to the nursing instructor immediately and an incident report completed and files with the agency and MCLA. MCLA is not responsible for payment of hospital or any other health care expenses incurred by the student due to any accident or health care needs which occur in the clinical situation.

### **Procedure Following Accidental Exposure to Blood or Body Fluids**

Students who have been exposed to bodily fluids or other potentially threatening substances must report this exposure to the appropriate supervisor and faculty member immediately, complete an incident report and comply with follow-up testing. Testing is mandatory after any accidental exposure incident. Confidentiality is maintained for the patient as well as the student or faculty member. Students must carry personal health insurance, in accordance with MCLA requirements as outlined in the [MCLA Student Community Standards](#).

### **Clinical Preparedness**

The student is expected to be prepared in advance for the clinical day as per site requirements. If not prepared, the students will not be permitted to participate in the clinical experience. This incident is considered a clinical absence.

### **Standards for Personal Appearance, Infection Control, & Safety in the Clinical Setting**

Personal attire and appearance must be in accordance with required standards that support infection control and safety standards at all times. This includes, but is not limited to:

#### **Hair**

- Hair (including facial hair) should be neatly groomed. Hair should be worn secured up and away from the face/ neck. Secured hair will not reach the collar or fall forward towards the face.
- Neon hair colors are not acceptable.

#### **Jewelry**

- Jewelry is limited to a wedding band, and a watch with a second hand.
- Body piercing adornments are limited to (1) pair of post earrings.
- Individuals may not wear ear gauges to clinical without flesh-colored inserts.
- No additional visible piercings are permitted.

#### **Tattoos**

- All tattoos/ink/body art must be covered if possible.

### **Fingernails**

- Natural fingernails (no artificial nails) must be short, neat, clean, and smoothly trimmed.
- Nail polish must not be chipped and must be clear in color.

### **Cosmetics**

- Cosmetics may be used in moderation.
- Omit use of scented products in the clinical setting, no cologne or perfume.

### **Clothing**

- **Students not properly attired will not be permitted to participate in the clinical experience.**
  - Clothing must be professional and properly fitting.
  - Uniforms must be laundered and ironed for each clinical day.
  - Undergarments must not be visible through clothing.
  - Jeans, shorts, leggings, spandex, halter/tube/tank tops, sheer fabrics, tee shirts, sweatshirts, flip-flops, miniskirts, or revealing clothing will not be allowed at any time in any clinical setting.

### **Gum Chewing**

- Gum chewing in clinical areas is not acceptable.

### **Basic Clinical Equipment**

- Students are required to bring the following equipment to each clinical unless instructed otherwise by clinical faculty:
  - Watch with a second hand.
  - Ball-point pen, black ink.
  - Nursing Program Clinical Bag (bag and equipment given to students for lab and clinical use in NURS 200 Health Assessment of the Adult).
    - Stethoscope.
    - Pen light.
    - BP equipment.
    - Calculator.

### **Student Uniform & IDs**

The official MCLA Nursing Student uniform and name badge (ID) is required for direct patient care in an acute care, home care or long-term care setting (and when so instructed).

### **Basic Uniform**

- Navy blue scrub top, navy blue pants.
- Students will wear all white leather shoes or black (no canvas, no clogs, no back straps, no open toes). All white or black leather sneakers or shoes are acceptable.
- Students' shoes, stockings / socks, and laces shall be clean, white, and in good repair.
- **For clinical preparation (non-patient care):** A name ID badge, and appropriate professional street wear (see standards for personal appearance section) will be worn

when going to an agency for a reason other than direct patient care (visiting the clinical area prior to the assigned clinical experience to select / research a client).

### **Community-Based Clinical Dress Code**

- The student dress requirement for other health clinical settings may be street clothes (with or without a lab coat, however, **jeans are never permitted**) as specified in the individual course syllabi or directed by the individual clinical faculty and the regulations of the clinical agency.
- Student name badges and agency ID badges (if required) must be worn at all times and clearly visible / readable. An MCLA name ID badge, and appropriate professional street wear (see standards for personal appearance section) will be worn when going to an agency for a purpose other than direct patient care (visiting the clinical area prior to the assigned clinical experience to select / research a client, etc.).

### **MCLA Nursing Insignia**

- The MCLA nursing patch must be neatly applied onto the upper LEFT sleeve of the scrub top or dress.

### **Student Name Badges**

- Student name badges and agency ID badges (if required) must be worn at all times and clearly visible/readable. The MCLA nursing patch and ID badge are purchased through your fees.

### **Agency Identification Badges**

- Students may be issued an identification badge by the affiliating agency. These must be worn at all times during the clinical practicum with that agency. The badge is the responsibility of the student who is then accountable to the agency for the return of the agency badge (faculty or agency, as directed) unless otherwise instructed.

### **Transportation**

Reliable transportation to, from, and during all clinical and field experiences is the responsibility of the student. Clinical facilities may be located throughout the Berkshires.

### **Inclement Weather**

The Nursing Program follows MCLA policy for class cancellation due to inclement weather. Many clinical practicums begin before College decisions regarding class cancellation are made, weather or conditions affecting the College may not affect attendance at the clinical site. The clinical instructor will make the decision to cancel the clinical practicum. The student is responsible for checking with their clinical instructor regarding cancellation of clinical practicum that is off campus. Each clinical instructor will make specific arrangements in advance, such as phone trees, for rapid notification of students. If the student is unable to attend the clinical practicum due to local conditions, the student must contact the clinical unit as specified in the clinical syllabus.

## Required Documentation for Clinical

**Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI):** CORI checks are required by the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for all EOHHS licensed, funded or operated programs are required of students prior to clinical affiliation in accordance with individual agency contractual requirements. Affiliate clinical agencies may not permit clinical placement in their agency to students with prior criminal record. CORI checks will be conducted on all students prior to the first clinical course and at any interval thereafter as required by the affiliate clinical agency, so more than one CORI may be required. A *CORI Request Form* must be completed and signed by each student.

**Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification:** All nursing students must complete CPR training prior to being cleared to enter the clinical setting. Prior to NURS 201 Fundamentals, ***Basic Life Support (BLS) for Health Care Providers***, American Heart Association certification is required. It is the student's responsibility to keep current and provide the Nursing Program with proof of current validation on an annual basis. The expiration date on the card will be strictly followed. The CPR card must be submitted to the Nursing Program staff by the date prescribed on the Clinical Clearance Form each year for photocopying and inclusion in the student's file. Students must comply with this policy in order to meet clinical requirements of agencies. **Students failing to comply will not be permitted to begin/or continue in the clinical experience.**

**Fingerprinting:** Many affiliating agencies require fingerprinting for nursing students who will be going into clinical. In this case, nursing students will have to have proof of fingerprinting by the fall of junior year.

**Health Policies & Records:** *Each year, MCLA Health Center, in accordance with State and affiliate agency health regulations must complete Clinical Clearance Form.* These health records must be completed before entering the first clinical rotation. Annual PPD tests are required while attending the nursing program. Clinical agencies require verification of the health records to assure that the student has the required immunizations. **Students who do not comply with the health policies will be delayed or prohibited from beginning the clinical experience.** All students are required to carry personal health insurance while a student at MCLA.

**Pre-Clinical Drug Screening:** Many affiliated agencies have mandated that students be screened for drugs before beginning clinical affiliations in their facility. The required eleven panel urine screen for drugs of abuse includes the following: Heroin, amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methamphetamines, methaqualone, opiates, phencyclidine, and propoxyphene. Expanded Opiates include: codeine, morphine, Percocet, oxycodone, Vicodin, hydrocodone, hydromorphone, and oxymorphone. All student nurses assigned for clinical are subject to compliance with this policy. Pre-clinical drug screening will be done through a contractual agreement between Elms College and the laboratory. **A nursing student may opt to refuse drug screening; however, refusal to meet this requirement will prevent the student from fulfilling course requirements, resulting in course failure.**

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