

# **Undergraduate Nursing Student Academic Policy Handbook**

(Traditional BS, RN-BS, and Second Degree Accelerated BS Tracks)



“The baccalaureate and master’s degree programs in nursing and Doctor of Nursing Practice program at University of Massachusetts Dartmouth are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing education”

<https://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE>

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Student Support & Policy Committee

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# **Undergraduate Nursing Student Academic Handbook**

Students must abide by all university policies in addition to the nursing specific policies described in this handbook.

## **Classroom Attendance**

Student attendance and participation in class is highly valued in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Class attendance is associated with higher levels of student learning and academic success. Therefore, student attendance and participation in class is expected. Specific course attendance policies and for notifying faculty of a class absence will be articulated in the course syllabus. Students are responsible for meeting course requirements and outcomes regardless of absence(s) from class. It is the student's responsibility to meet with course faculty to make arrangements for course work and assignments missed during their class absence.

Lukkarinen A, Koivukangas P, Seppaia T. (2016). Relationship between class attendance and student performance. *Procedia: Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 228, 341-347.

Although UMassD does not have a university-wide attendance policy, policies concerning absence from class related to religious observance, emergency, or health reason can be found here:

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/>

Extended absence for medical or personal reasons should be reported to the Office of Student Affairs. In the case of absence for emergencies or health reasons, please refer to the university policy found here:

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/students/absence-from-class---emergencies- or-health-reasons/>

Students who anticipate military absence should notify the faculty at the beginning of the term and work with faculty to formulate a plan to meet course requirements. Assistance is available as needed through the Office of Student Affairs found here: <https://www.umassd.edu/veterans/>

**Refer to the Undergraduate Nursing Program Clinical Handbook for policies regarding attendance requirements in nursing clinical and lab courses found here:**

<https://www.umassd.edu/nursing/student-handbooks/>

## Policy on Completion of NUR Designated Courses

Beginning with the academic year (AY) 2016-2017, all required courses in the nursing curriculum with a NUR designation must be completed at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. This includes an initial attempt, as well as any repeat attempt to successfully pass a required NUR course.

The goal of this policy is to ensure that students successfully meet the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences Baccalaureate Nursing Course and Program Outcomes and the University Studies course specific outcomes.

(Approved by Fac Org 11/2016)

### Grading Equivalents in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Nursing Program:

A+	(97-100)	4.0
A	(93-96)	4.0
A-	(90-92)	3.7
B+	(87-89)	3.3
B	(83-86)	3.0
B-	(80-82)	2.7
C+	(77-79)	2.3
C	(73-76)	2.0
C-	(70-72)	1.7
D+	(67-69)	1.3
D	(64-66)	1.0
D-	(60-63)	0.7
F	(0-59)	0

Grades and Grading System can be found in the University Undergraduate Catalog at:

[https://catalog.umassd.edu/content.php?catoid=23&navoid=1424#Grades\\_and\\_Grading\\_System](https://catalog.umassd.edu/content.php?catoid=23&navoid=1424#Grades_and_Grading_System)

**Note:** The nursing program adheres to a higher-grade standard for passing than the University. This is reflected in the progression and dismissal policies below.

# Progression and Dismissal Policies by Undergraduate Nursing Program Track

Students are advised to follow the sequence of courses that impact progression as outlined in their program plan. It is the student's responsibility to ensure course prerequisites and corequisites are met.

Program plans are located in the Undergraduate Nursing Student Curriculum Handbook found here:  
<https://www.umassd.edu/nursing/student-handbooks/>

## Students in the Traditional BS Track

### Guidelines for Progression in the Traditional BS Track

All prerequisite/corequisite requirements must be completed in sequence per College of Nursing and Health Sciences standards as per below:

Course	Prerequisites	Corequisites	
NUR 101	none	none	<b>The minimum passing grade for NUR, CHEM, MTH and BIO courses is a C+ or above.</b>
NUR 102	NUR 101	none	
NUR 212	CHM 105 BIO 221, 222, 223, 224	none	
NUR 211	NUR 102	none	
NUR 270	NUR 211, NUR 212 BIO 251/261	NUR 271	
NUR 271	NUR 211, NUR 212 BIO 251/261	NUR 270	
NUR 261	NUR 102 ENL 101/102 MTH 147/148	none	
NUR 352	NUR 270, 271	NUR 353	
NUR 353	NUR 270, 271	NUR 352	
NUR 360	NUR 352, 353	NUR 361	
NUR 361	NUR 352, 353	NUR 360	
NUR 370	NUR 352, 353	NUR 371	
NUR 371	NUR 352, 353	NUR 370	
NUR 380	NUR 352, 353	NUR 381	
NUR 381	NUR 352, 353	NUR 380	
NUR 424	NUR 360/361 370/71, 380/381	NUR 470, NUR 471	
NUR 471	NUR 360/361 370/71, 380/381	NUR 470, NUR 424	
NUR 470	NUR 360/361 370/71, 380/381	NUR 471, NUR 424	

ENL 101/102 must be completed freshman year.

MTH 147/148 must be completed prior to level 2 semester 2.

**Note:** PSY, SOA, PHL, elective(s), and 3A, 3B and 4B/C courses may be completed at any point in the program plan.  
(Approved by Fac Org 11/2023)

1. The minimum passing grade for all NUR courses is a C+ (77 or better). The minimum passing grade for designated CHEM, MTH, and BIO courses is a C+. The minimum passing grade for all other courses is a C; this includes university studies courses and electives. (Approved by Fac Org 11/2024)

2. Students who have a minor or double major:

Courses taken for a minor or double major that also apply to the required nursing or undergraduate University Studies plan must meet the minimum passing grade of C according to the CNHS nursing program progression standards. Grades for other required courses for minor or double major programs fall under the university's minimum passing standards. (Approved by Fac Org 11/2016)

3. Students who return after an extended leave of absence (beyond one academic year):

Starting from the point of return to the program, students who have been on an extended leave of absence (more than one academic year) will be subject to the most recent curriculum and academic and clinical policies, including progression and dismissal standards, in effect. See Return from LOA Policy below.

(Approved by Fac Org 11/2016)

4. Students must meet all level prerequisites that affect progression with the minimum passing grade in the given academic year. A student may repeat a course only once with consent of the student's advisor, department chairperson and Dean. NUR courses require consent of the student's academic advisor and department chairperson and an available seat in the course. Students who do not meet progression standards do not automatically get a seat in the following year cohort. (Approved by Fac Org 11/2016)

**Note:** If a student repeats and passes a failed course the new grade may affect the GPA\* but the credits of failure will remain. When the repeated course has been retaken, the student will progress in the nursing program only as space is available. Selection of students eligible for progression may be limited by the availability of faculty and/or clinical placements. In the event that the number of eligible students exceeds available resources, students will be selected on the basis of academic standing. Any student who started the program prior to Fall 2020 who does not successfully progress because of course failure will need to successfully complete the equivalent courses in the new curriculum. (Approved by Fac Org 11/2020)

See the university policy here: <https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>

5. A second failure in the same course (failure as determined by 1A or 1B above) will result in dismissal from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.
6. At the end of each program year, the student must have an overall cumulative GPA of 2.0. Failure to meet these criteria will result in academic probation according to the university policy. See the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth General Catalogue.
7. A student has the right to appeal a final course grade. Refer to the grade appeal policy in the academic regulations section of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth General Catalogue.
8. Letter of progression: The Dean's office, or designee, will notify students in writing at the end of each semester regarding issues with their year-to-year progression.

**Note:** Students who fail to progress through their program plan with their cohort will be subject to meeting the curriculum and grade requirements of the new graduation cohort entered.

(Clarified & approved by Fac Org 10/2019)

### **Grounds for Dismissal in the Traditional BS Track:**

1. A student who earns **9 credits of failure** will be dismissed from the Nursing Program

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2016)

2. Consistent with the university policy, a student who has **24 or more credits of "withdrawal"** will be dismissed from the Nursing Program and will be subject to dismissal from the university

(Approved by Fac Org 4/2015)

3. The university policy may be found here:  
<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>
4. See the CNHS nursing program withdrawal policy below.
5. All students are subject to the UMass D Academic Sanctions Policies found here:  
<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>
6. Non-adherence to the Policy on Competence
7. Non-adherence to the Policy on Good Moral Character

## Students in the RN- BS Track

### Guidelines for Progression in the RN-BS Track

1. The minimum passing grade for all NUR courses is a C+ (77 or better). The minimum passing grade for designated CHEM, MTH, and BIO courses is a C+. The minimum passing grade for all other courses is a C including university studies courses and electives taken at U Mass Dartmouth or another institution while an active RN-BS student.

(Approved by Fac Org 11/2024)

2. All NUR courses must be taken at U Mass Dartmouth.

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2017)

3. Students who receive a grade/designation of incomplete in a course will not be allowed to progress in the program (RN-BS track) until said course has been successfully completed. According to the University Policy, the student will have one year from the recording of the incomplete grade to finish the course. During this time, the student will not be able to enroll in any other courses.

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2017)

4. A student may repeat a course only once with consent of the student's advisor, department chairperson and Dean\*. A second failure in the same course will result in dismissal from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. If a student repeats and passes a failed course the new grade will affect the GPA, but the credits of failure remain.

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2017)

**Note:** A course failure for an RN-BS student in the Southcoast Hospitals/UMass Dartmouth Partnership Project would mean dismissal from the Project. The student may remain in the regular RN-BS program and would be financially responsible for future RN-BS courses.

### Grounds for Dismissal in the RN- BS Track

1. An RN-BS student who earns a total of 6 credits of failure (in both NUR and non-NUR courses) will be automatically dismissed from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

(Approved by Fac Org 12/2016)

2. An RN-BS student who has 12 or more credits of "withdrawal" will be dismissed from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. See RN-BS Withdrawal Policy Below.

(Approved by Fac Org 10/2019)

3. All students are subject to the UMassD Academic Sanctions policy found here:  
<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>
4. Non-adherence to the Policy on Competence
5. Non-adherence to the Policy on Good Moral Character

# **Students in the ABS Track of the Undergraduate Nursing Program**

## **Grounds for Dismissal from the ABS Nursing Track**

1. The minimum passing grade for all courses taken in the nursing program is a C+ (77 or better). (Approved 3/18) **A failure in any NUR course will result in dismissal from the ABS program.**  
(Approved by Fac Org 12/2016)
2. All students are subject to the UMassD Academic Sanctions policy found here:  
<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>
3. Non-adherence to the Policy on Competence
4. Non-adherence to the Policy on Good Moral Character

## **Right to Appeal**

### **Right to Appeal a Course Grade**

A student has the right to appeal a final course grade. Refer to the grade appeal policy in the academic regulations section of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth General Catalogue found here:

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentsuccess/0-30-credits/grades/>

### **Right to Appeal a Dismissal Decision**

A student who has been dismissed from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) based on academic performance, and believes they meet the criteria for appeal of a dismissal decision, may submit an application for appeal review.

### **Appeal Process**

The Student Support and Policy (SSPC) Appeals Sub-Committee will meet at the closure of Fall and Spring semesters and apply standards for reviewing appeal of dismissal applications. The SSPC Appeals Sub-Committee will make a recommendation to the Assistant Dean regarding the student's dismissal appeal.

The Assistant Dean will make the final decision regarding reinstatement and notify student of the appeal decision electronically and by postal mail. Reinstatement to the CNHS is considered on an individual basis.

(Approved by Fac Org 05/18/2020)

### **Procedure for all Undergraduate Nursing Students' Appeal of Dismissal**

Students will receive a letter notifying them of dismissal from the CNHS based on unsatisfactory academic performance. A student who has been dismissed from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and has extenuating circumstances that affected academic performance may submit an application for appeal of dismissal.

The student's Application for Appeal should include the following: A typed letter by the student addressed to SSPC that includes:

- A statement requesting consideration for reinstatement.
- An explanation of the reason(s) the student feels contributed to poor academic success.

- A plan of intention describing what the student will do differently if allowed to continue in the nursing program.
- Appeals form document submitted by faculty of courses) in which the student has received an unsatisfactory grade according to the nursing track standard
- Supporting documents must be submitted with the letter.

### **Deadlines for Submission of Appeal Documentation**

All appeal application documents must be submitted to the Student Support and Progression Committee. The deadline for submitting appeal documents is identified in the dismissal letter notification letter. Meeting the deadline is essential to a timely appeal process. The date and time of email submission will be considered the postmark of submission. An appeal application and documentation post-marked after the deadline date will not be considered.

If the appeal deadline is not met, an updated appeal application can be submitted for the following appeal cycle. **Note:** Extenuating circumstances that prevent the student from meeting submission deadline will be considered on a case-to-case basis (e.g.: hospitalization). The date and time of email submission will be considered the postmark of submission. (Rev, approved by Fac Org 11/29/17).

**Note:** If a student is dismissed from the CNHS and is granted reinstatement following an appeal, the student will progress in the nursing program only as space is available. Failure to complete the nursing courses in sequence jeopardizes the student's standard progression through the nursing major. Additional time in the nursing undergraduate program may be needed.

**Note:** A student may appeal only once during their undergraduate career in the UMass Dartmouth College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

**Note:** Reinstated students will be required to meet the curriculum program plan and the grade requirements of the new graduation cohort they have joined. (Clarified and approved by Fac Org 10/2019)

### **Readmission to the Nursing Program**

Students are not readmitted to the nursing program. Students may be reinstated upon successful appeal of dismissal.

### **Policy on Course Withdrawal by Undergraduate Track**

Refer to the university policy for withdrawals from classes for medical or mental health reasons/ voluntary and involuntary medical leaves found here:

<https://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/maintaining-aid/withdrawal-policy/>

### **Traditional Nursing Track Students**

Students are strongly discouraged from withdrawing from courses. Students should seek advice from their advisors and/or course faculty before withdrawing from a course.

Withdrawals may result in a conference call with the Assistant Dean or designee.

Withdrawing from a nursing course, designated with a NUR, will count as a first attempt of student completion for said course. Students in these circumstances will only be allowed one further attempt at successful completion. A student who has **24 or more credits of "withdrawal"** will be dismissed from the Nursing Program and will be subject to dismissal from the university. (Revised and approved by Fac Org 4/2015)

The registrar will place an advising withdrawal hold (ADVV) on ALL Freshman nursing student accounts blocking the student's ability to withdraw from a course. Students can not withdraw from a course without meeting with their advisor first.

The following message will appear when a student attempts to withdraw: *If you wish to withdraw from a course please meet with your academic advisor in the nursing program. This hold will be removed prior to the registration period.* (Revised and approved by Fac Org 10/2017)

Withdrawing from a course may affect student progression according to the program plan, their full-time status and eligibility for financial aid and housing and impact their graduation date. Students need to discuss the implications/consequences of withdrawing from a course with their advisor. **It is the student's responsibility to notify their advisor of the need for an advising appointment to discuss course withdrawal a minimum of 72 hours prior to the withdrawal deadline.** The academic advisor will remove the hold to allow the student to withdraw from a course via the COIN system ONLY after meeting with the student.

#### **After academic advisor has removed the withdrawal hold:**

During the add/drop period, a student may drop a course in COIN with no record of the drop recorded.

**After the add/drop period, but before the course withdrawal deadline, a student can withdraw from a course using COIN and a "W" will be recorded on the transcript. After the withdrawal deadline students will not be able to withdraw from a course**

The advisor will document in the student record the student's course grade at the time of course withdrawal for progress monitoring purposes only. For students withdrawing from an NUR-designated course, re-enrollment in the course will be limited to seat availability (see progression guidelines)

#### **RN-BS Track Students:**

Students are discouraged from withdrawing from courses. Students should seek advice from their advisors and/or course faculty before withdrawing from a course. Withdrawals may result in a conference call with the

Dean or designee. Withdrawing from a nursing course, designated with a NUR, will count as a first attempt of student completion for said course. Students in these circumstances will only be allowed one further attempt at successful completion.

#### **Students with 12 units of withdrawal will be dismissed from the program.**

(Approved by Fac Org 10/2019)

**Important note:** Once you have registered for classes, failure to attend classes does not constitute a withdrawal from the University and does not excuse you from your financial obligations. Students who stop attending or abandon their classes without officially withdrawing will remain on all class rosters until they officially withdraw from the University or until the end of the semester at which point they will be graded accordingly. The Student Leave of Absence/Withdrawal form can be found at:

<https://www.umassd.edu/financialaid/maintaining-aid/withdrawal-policy/>

## **ABS Track Students**

Students in the ABS Track who wish to withdraw from a course must meet with the Assistant Dean in the CNHS.

**Note:** Withdraw policies for ABS and RN-BS Track students differ from the University policy for undergraduate students because of the reduced number of credits required to be taken at UMassD to meet degree requirements for their program tracks.

## **Undergraduate Policy for Nursing Students Returning from a Leave of Absence**

### **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Students who have been absent from the College of Nursing for more than one year must meet the University requirements for readmission and meet with the Associate/Assistant Dean of Undergraduate studies to develop a plan for success.

### **PURPOSE:**

To promote the didactic and clinical education of students in a manner that builds on the foundation of knowledge, skill and judgment developed in a prescribed progression of course work and to assure currency of academic knowledge and clinical skills.

### **PROCEDURE:**

1. Students who have been absent from the College of Nursing for more than one year from last enrollment must meet University readmission requirements.
2. All students who have been absent from the program must meet with the Assistant/Associate Dean before re-entering into the program.
3. All previous coursework and relevant work experience will be reviewed to determine a plan of study for program completion.
4. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate eligibility to return to course activity, in consultation with the Assistant/Associate Dean and academic advisor
  - a. This may involve some type of examination (ATI/HESI) and/or clinical remediation as per the individual student's academic needs.
  - b. The returning student is responsible for any costs incurred for any testing or clinical remediation.
  - c. The returning student must successfully complete the requirements prior to the start of semester the student plans to return in.
5. If a student fails to meet the HESI/ATI benchmark or fails the clinical remediation, he or she will meet with their Academic Advisor in consultation with the Department Chair who will develop a plan to resume study in the BSN Program.
6. The completion date of the student's degree program will be extended by the duration of the leave taken, up to the maximum time allowed for completion of their program.
7. Students returning to clinical courses after an absence of more than two semesters (one year) may be placed on a waiting list for placement. All efforts will be made to place these students.

### **RESPONSIBILITY:**

- Student Success and Progression Committee
- Program Chairperson
- Assistant/Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

Student Signature Page

**APPROVAL AND EFFECTIVE DATE:** November 29, 2017

**Note:** Starting from the point of return to the program, student who have been on an extended leave of absence (more than one academic year) will be subject to the most recent curriculum, academic, and clinical policies, including progression and dismissal standards, in effect. (11/2016)

## **Undergraduate Nursing Students Returning from a Leave of Absence**

### **Student Signature Required**

*I understand that it is my responsibility to meet with the Assistant/Associate Dean before re-entering the program, and demonstrate eligibility to return to courses, as required. I understand that additional testing and clinical remediation may be required. I understand that I may be placed on a waiting list for clinical placement upon returning to clinical courses after an absence of two semesters (one year).*

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Student Signature

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Date

# ATI Subject Test Scoring Policy

Using a combination of the practice and proctored assessments to achieve no more than 5% of the course grade.

## PRACTICE ASSESSMENT

**4 points**

### Complete Practice Assessment A.

Remediation:

- Minimum 1-hour Focused Review on initial attempt
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

Take Post Study Quiz (if available)\*\* and complete an active learning template for each topic missed.

### Complete Practice Assessment B.

Remediation:

- Minimum 1-hour Focused Review on initial attempt
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

Take Post Study Quiz (if available)\*\* and complete an active learning template for each topic missed.

## STANDARDIZED PROCTORED ASSESSMENT

**Level 3 = 4 points**

**Level 2 = 3 points**

**Level 1 = 2 point**

**Below Level 1 = 1.7 points**

**Remediation = 2 points:**

- Minimum 1-hour Focused Review
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

**Remediation = 2 points:**

- Minimum 2-hour Focused Review
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

**Remediation = 2 points:**

- Minimum 3-hour Focused Review
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

**Remediation = 2 points:**

- Minimum 4-hour Focused Review
- For each topic missed, complete an active learning template as part of the required remediation process.\*

process.\*

process.\*

process.\*

process.\*

**10/10 points**

**9/10 points**

**8/10 points**

**7.7/10 points**

### Proctored Assessment Retake\*\*\*

**No retake required**

**No retake required**

**Retake required/recommended**

**Retake required/recommended**

\* Handwritten ALTs are preferred.

\*\* Post-study quiz questions may be provided to a student based on specific student knowledge gaps. (Major Content Areas 75% or less. 0 to 50 items possible for additional remediation). If no quiz is generated, faculty may choose one of the alternative remediations methods listed on page 5.

\*\*\* If the program requires a retake of a Proctored Assessment and a student meets the program benchmark on the retake, that student can earn an additional percentage point

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2024)

## ATI-RN Content Mastery and ATI-RN Comprehensive Predictor Exams in the ABSN track

NUR 250 Knowledge Foundations in Nursing	ATI-RN Fundamentals
NUR 326 Care of Adults with Acute and Chronic Illness	ATI-RN Med-Surg
NUR 338 Family Health Nursing	ATI-RN Maternal Newborn
NUR 340 Psychiatric-Mental Health Nursing	ATI-RN Mental Health
NUR 330 Community Nursing	ATI-RN Community Health
NUR 408 Transition to Professional Practice	ATI-RN Leadership ATI-RN Comprehensive Predictor
NUR 450 Nursing Care of Adults with Complex Health	ATI-RN Pharmacology

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2024)

# Academic Dishonesty and Misconduct

Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to cheating on examinations, submitting written material that is the work of others, purchasing papers over the Internet, or seeking unauthorized use of computer files of a student or faculty member.

Misconduct includes but is not limited to, furnishing false or inaccurate information, disruptive conduct, or theft and damage to university property.

Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses and are not tolerated by the College of Nursing or the University. Strict policies and procedures for dealing with these offenses are in place at the University.

Refer to the U Mass Dartmouth Academic Integrity Policy for Undergraduates, Academic Sanctions, Probation and Dismissal and student conduct policies available through the links below:

<https://www.umassd.edu/media/umassdartsouth/university-policies/new-policies/policies-2019/ACA-017-Student-Academic-Policy-for-Undergraduates.pdf>

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures>

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/academic-affairs/academic-integrity-policy-and-reporting-form/>

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/departments/community-standards/>

In addition to university policies for academic integrity and conduct, students must adhere to the following policies on Academic Dishonesty, Competence and Good Moral Character. These policies hold nursing students to a higher standard than the university as required by the profession and regulatory bodies.

## **Students must sign off on this policy using form provided below**

## Academic Dishonesty in Undergraduate Nursing Education

### General Principles

Ethical practice and academic integrity should form the foundation of any nursing education environment. This underpinning is vital to quality patient care and outcomes. Honesty is regarded as a basic ethical value and academic integrity is essential in the educational environment. In the nursing profession, it is especially important as the well-being of the patients in our care depend on honesty and academic integrity. As healthcare professionals, integrity is foundational to the nurse's role and responsibility.

Allen C, Stanley S, Cascoe K, Stennett R (2017) Academic Dishonesty among Undergraduate Nursing Students. Int Arch Nurse Health Care 3:074. [doi.org/10.23937/2469-5823/1510074](https://doi.org/10.23937/2469-5823/1510074)

Nursing students have the obligation to behave in a way that is consistent with the standards of professional nursing practice. Not every action and decision can be included in this document, so students are expected to consistently conduct themselves in a respectful, professional, and ethical manner. As nursing students, you are not only representing yourself, but the profession of nursing, our College and the University.

Each student must take the individual responsibility in the choices s/he makes, and this is equally important in the responsibility of learning and understanding of any/all materials that are presented in the nursing program.

## **Use and/or Distributing Materials to Provide Advantage to Others**

To maintain academic and professional integrity, our College prohibits students from selling, distributing, copying, website posting, texting, email or publishing (for example, but not limited to: Slack, Quizlet, CourseHero, Grammarly, Facebook):

Faculty/Instructor Generated:

- Course Lecture Notes; Handouts; Recordings; Presentations Graded or Not Graded:
- Care plans; Concepts maps; Assignments

Test information (from any test administered by faculty)\* Confidential or any other information

Any material identified by a course faculty member

\*Obtaining, purchasing, sharing or distributing test banks that are designated by the publisher as faculty resources is considered academic dishonesty and a violation of the University Academic Integrity Policy and expectations of the College.

Students should take credit for work only they have done themselves. If a student copies from peers, or other sources, then it is not her/his work and is considered cheating.

## **Collaboration:**

Research shows that collaborative learning results in higher engagement and mutual support in learning. Students are encouraged to collaborate with classmates when working on group and individual work **as designated by your faculty**. However, activities and/or "unauthorized collaboration" that includes cooperation for a deceitful purpose is not considered appropriate collaboration. To avoid an issue, **students are directed to check the instructions and contact faculty** before collaborating on a task.

## **Social Media Use:**

Professional values, ethical standards, and adherence to HIPAA requirements extend to all forms of social media. Violations in relation to these professional standards and behaviors may result in exclusion from the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, refer to nursing program.

Students should be aware of, consider, and comply with:

- The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing's\*\* regulations whenever using social and electronic media. For more information visit <https://www.mass.gov/doc/july-2012-edition-1/download>
- The National Council of State Boards of Nursing's brochure: *A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media* identifies guidelines to which students should adhere to\*\*:  
<https://www.ncsbn.org/brochures-and-posters/nurses-guide-to-the-use-of-social-media>

\*\*Students are held accountable for all social media and related updates to the MBON and NCSB expectations and any other relevant sources.

## **Please Also Note:**

### **All students are expected to:**

- Report any known or suspected violations of expectations to either the course faculty member or Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies. If not reported, such students) will be in violation herself/himself.

- Review the University Policy on Complicity and Failure to Act, in the Code of Conduct at <https://www.umassd.edu/policies/>

This policy is in addition to all other Nursing and University policies related to academic integrity, student conduct, and academic progress.

Attributions - Information also based on following: Simmons University Web Site; University of Pennsylvania, Center for Teaching and Learning; Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy

## Academic Dishonesty in Undergraduate Nursing Education

Name (Print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I have reviewed:

The policy on **Academic Dishonesty in Undergraduate Nursing Education** and understand the expectations of this policy and academic policies described in the nursing student handbooks

<https://www.umassd.edu/nursing/student-handbooks/>

And The University Academic Integrity Policy:

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/academic-affairs/academic-integrity-policy-and-reporting-form/>

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/students/student-conduct-policies-and-procedures/>

I had the opportunity to have my questions answered.

I understand for future questions I may obtain guidance from my course faculty, the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies, and the Department Chair.

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Signature

(Approved by Fac Org Sept 4, 2019)

# **Policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character**

## **Section I - Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to explain the College of Nursing and Health Sciences' (CNHS) position regarding Professional Nursing Competency and Good Moral Character (GMC) standards for all clinical nursing courses. All students, faculty and staff are expected to read, understand, and comply with this policy described herein. Students will sign an acknowledgement of receipt of this policy at the beginning of the first nursing course and all students will review and sign this policy each September. The policy and executed acknowledgement will be placed in the individual student file located in the Dean's office. The Assistant/Associate Dean or designee will periodically disseminate this policy so that all students, staff, and faculty understand its importance and implications.

## **Section II - Preamble**

The following policy has been adopted by the Faculty Organization of the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth (UMass Dartmouth) College of Nursing and Health Science. The policy is based on the assumption that nursing students of the UMass Dartmouth CNHS will be eligible for licensure as registered nurses (RNs), as well as practicing as nurses at the basic professional RN level. The professional nature of these experiences, and the professional licensure and certification associated with nursing education brings an ethical responsibility to our faculty to attend to the competency and GMC of its students.

Students admitted to the UMass Dartmouth CNHS are expected to complete the curriculum requirements related to Professional Nursing Competency and GMC. The UMass Dartmouth CNHS to adhere to all policies at UMass Dartmouth University including the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended. Students are not required to disclose their disability to the CNHS. Qualified Students with disabilities who believe they need an accommodation to meet the Professional Nursing Competency and/or GMC must register with the UMass Dartmouth Center for Access and Success.

The following standards have been deemed by the UMass Dartmouth CNHS to be essential to all clinical nursing courses. All nursing students must meet the Professional Nursing Competency and GMC Policy, effective September 2012.

Additionally, all UMass Dartmouth CNHS students must also adhere to the UMass Dartmouth Student Code of Conduct. Violations of student conduct that pertain to Professional Nursing Competency and/or GMC standards may be process with this policy.

Please review the UMass Dartmouth handbook on student conduct for clarification. Additionally, the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics should guide any consideration of appropriate behaviors in the profession.

## **Section III - Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character (GMC) Definitions**

### **A. Professional Nursing Competency**

The CNHS faculty have a professional obligation to UMass Dartmouth and the public to ensure that nurses graduating from its programs are competent to practice within the nursing profession. Part of professional competence is having a knowledge base that allows practitioners to make sound clinical decisions.

Professional competence is the habitual and judicious use of effective communication, knowledge, technical

skill, reasoning, emotions, values and reflection in daily practice for the benefit of the individual and community being served (Epstein & Hundert, 2002). The UMass Dartmouth CNHS has determined that the standards below are essential to the nursing profession. Therefore, students entering the nursing program at the UMass Dartmouth CNHS are expected to meet these standards for progression in the program to graduation.

## **1. Communication and Observation Skills**

Students are expected to sufficiently demonstrate verbal, non-verbal, written, computer assisted entry, and observational skills during clinical experiences. Communication includes not only speech, but also seeing, reading, writing, and computer literacy abilities in the classroom and clinical on and off-campus settings; the ability to communicate with a wide variety of people, and the ability to be easily understood.

The following are examples of communication and observation skills. The nursing student is able to:

- Speak clearly and effectively in English
- Hear and observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and to perceive nonverbal communications
- Communicate in writing or computer entry, as well as orally using standard, professional nursing and medical terminology
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients' family members and other members of the healthcare team, as well as faculty and peers in a 1-1 or group situation.
- Elicit, convey or exchange information at a level that allows for the implementation and evaluation of the nursing process
- Communicate in ways that are safe and not unduly alarming to patients, family members, and other members of the healthcare team
- Relay appropriate information to patients: teach, explain, direct and counsel a wide variety of individuals, as well as provide clear, direct communication in English during highly stressful, crisis situations

The list of competency standards has been reprinted for use by UMassD CNHS with permission from Dr. Barbara G. Miller, New York University College of Nursing Technical Standards for Core Nursing Competency Performance.

## **2. Cognitive Abilities**

Nursing students on admission and throughout the program are expected to sufficiently demonstrate cognitive abilities which include intellectual, conceptual, integrative, quantitative, critical thinking and comprehension skills that allow her/him to carry out the nursing process in the care of patients. The following examples include, but are not limited to, nursing students demonstrating these related cognitive skills:

- Sufficient skills to read and understand written documents in English
- Sufficient skills in problem solving including measurements, calculations, reasoning, memory, analysis, and synthesis of subjective and objective data as well as critically appraise the best available research evidence
- Sufficient skills to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures
- Critical thinking ability sufficient for academic and clinical judgments demanded of nurses which require the intellectual abilities to critically appraise, to synthesize knowledge, integrate and prioritize all aspects of patient care in a prompt, timely fashion; synthesis of objective and subjective

- findings and diagnostic studies in order to formulate nursing diagnoses and initiate a plan of care integrating patient preferences
- Incorporate data from multiple patient sources (e.g. physical assessment, vital signs, lab values, interdisciplinary documentation) in a prompt manner in order to provide appropriate, safe patient care
- Recognize, make decisions quickly, and respond rapidly and safely to changes in a patient's status based on a variety of sources, such as physical assessment and pertinent laboratory findings, and ability to revise care to promote appropriate patient outcomes

### **3. Gross Motor Skills, Strength, Mobility, and Physical Endurance**

The student is expected to be able to perform gross and fine motor movements required to provide comprehensive nursing care. Examples of care that the student must be able to perform safely include, but are not limited to:

- Lifting as described below:
  - Turning and positioning patients as needed to prevent complications due to bed rest or minimal movement
  - Transferring patients in and out of bed
  - Transporting and exercising patients
  - Pulling and pushing patients and/or equipment
  - Administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)
- The student is expected to have the psychomotor skills necessary to perform or assist with procedures, treatments, administration of medications, and emergency interventions. On a regular day, whether in the classroom or clinical (on-campus simulation or off-campus clinical), the student may be expected to sit, walk and stand. Examples include but are not limited to, the ability to:
  - Stand and/or sit for long periods of time (e.g., minimum of 3-hours)
  - Stand and maintain balance while transferring patients, reach below the waist and overhead while providing patient care procedures
  - Walk without cane, walker, casts, walking boots, or crutches, as well as, arms free of casts or other assistive/restrictive devices in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside or general nursing care
  - Have two hands, real or prosthetic

### **4. Behavioral and Social Attributes/Abilities**

Nursing students must exhibit the professional behavioral and social attributes embedded in the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) (2008) Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice. They must possess the emotional and mental health required for full use of their intellectual, communication, observational, motor and sensory abilities in order to exercise appropriate judgment and promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients in a variety of settings and from different cultures. The following are examples, which are not limited to, the behavioral and social attributes and abilities that nursing students need to demonstrate:

- Ability to relate to patients, family members, as well as work cooperatively with other members of the health care team and colleagues with honesty and integrity, and with non- discrimination in relation to the patient's race, ethnic group, age, gender, religion or political preference, ability to pay, gender or sexual orientation
- Ability for the development of a mature, sensitive and effective therapeutic relationship with clients
- Ability to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients

- Ethical behavior reflecting adherence to the professional nursing code of ethics, student nurses' code of ethics and student academic integrity policy
- Sufficient emotional and mental stability to:
  - Tolerate physically taxing workloads
  - Handle emotions that might affect practice performance
  - Function effectively when stressed
- A level of consciousness and attentiveness that guarantees patient safety
- Ability to care for patients with communicable diseases using appropriate standard precautions and/or guidelines
- Ability to accept and integrate constructive criticism given in the classroom and clinical setting
- Ability to examine and change his/her behavior when it interferes with productive individual or team relationships and/or the care of patients
- Ability to work in close quarters with patients, healthcare team members and nursing faculty

## 5. Sensory Skills

Nursing students must have hearing, visual and tactile skills sufficient to monitor, access, and respond to patient health needs. Nursing students must possess these skills in connection with the other identified technical skills in order to observe and learn from demonstrations in the on-campus clinical simulation laboratory and in the off-campus clinical patient care areas, and to make observations accurately at a distance and close at hand of the patient and the patient's environment. Observation necessitates the functional use of the senses of vision and other sensory modalities.

Examples of the necessary sensory skills include, but are not limited to:

- Normal tactile feeling and use of touch to feel sensitivity to heat, cold, pain, pressure, etc.
- Use of auditory sense to detect sounds related to bodily functions using a stethoscope; to hear and interpret many people and correctly interpret what is heard; i.e., physician' or nurse practitioner orders whether verbal or over telephone, patient complaints, physical assessment (especially heart and other body sounds), fire and equipment alarms, etc.
- Auditory sense to communicate clearly in telephone conversations and respond effectively with patients and with other members of the healthcare team
- Acute visual skills necessary to detect signs and symptoms, body language of patients, color of wounds and drainage, and possible infections anywhere; interpret written words accurately, read characters and identify colors on the computer screen
- Observation skills to observe lectures, demonstrations, research and patient situations in the practice of healthcare professions; observation is necessary to perform competent health assessments and interventions and necessitates functional use of vision, hearing, tactile and somatic senses
- Capacity to make accurate visual observations and interpret them in the context of laboratory studies, medication administration, and patient care activities

**Normative difficulties:** This policy is not intended to address the common and expected difficulties experienced by a majority of nursing students particularly as they start a new clinical course. These normative difficulties might include, but are not limited to, mild emotional reaction and adjustment difficulties, mild or transient difficulty keeping up with academic work and normative conflict with professors, fellow students, supervisors and administrators in clinical placements.

## **B. Good Moral Character**

Another part of competence is what has been called Good Moral Character (GMC) to practice nursing. GMC is defined for practical purposes as the ability to practice nursing in a safe and competent manner. The Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing has GMC standards that must be met in order to be eligible for licensure. "The most current regulations and requirements for GMC and licensure is available on the [Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing website](#)."

The term "GMC" reflects behavior that facilitates safe practice. Violations of GMC standards impact/potentially impact students' ability to practice in a competent manner. Examples of behavior or conditions that impact ability to practice include but are not limited to the following and are reviewed case by case:

- The use of psychoactive substances while learning to perform or performing nursing care
- When a student's performance is impaired safe, effective care is at risk whether it occurs in the classroom, skills laboratory or clinical setting
- Legal transgressions, such as theft, falsification of records, diversion of drugs for sales or to supply another, or the substitution, alteration or denial of prescribed medications to patients are unacceptable at UMass Dartmouth CNHS.
- Violations of Laws in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Clinical Substance Abuse

(revised and approved 4/27/15)

## **Section IV - Assessment and Remediation Steps - Reporting a matter of concern**

Students, while enrolled in the nursing program, who are arrested or charged with a misdemeanor or other crime including the use, possession, manufacture, sale or distribution of alcohol or any other drug, are required to report this within two University/business days to the Dean of Nursing. Students who receive a positive drug screen during any of their clinical rotations will be required to meet with the Dean of the CNHS or designee within five University/business days of the positive drug screen. Additionally, students may not return to classes, on-campus clinical or off-campus clinical until meeting with the Dean or designee.

Additionally, students, faculty or staff who become aware that a student is showing characteristics that may suggest noncompliance with nursing competencies, and/or GMC are urged to report this to the Dean's office. The Dean or designee of the CNHS will schedule a meeting with the student within seven (7) school days and may recommend informal or formal proceedings. The Dean or designee, after meeting with the student and any other individuals, may recommend informal or formal proceedings. Such proceedings may be extended if they occur during semester breaks. All members of the CNHS community are responsible for complying with the Policy on Professional Nursing Competence and GMC including reporting of any potential infringement of this policy.

*No lawyer or legal representative is allowed to participate in the informal or formal proceedings. No recording devices will be permitted in the informal or formal proceedings.*

The CNHS will inform the Student Affairs Office of any conduct that is also a violation under the Student Code of Conduct. In such a case, conduct that is noncompliant under this policy and the Student Code of Conduct will be addressed in both the CNHS and Student Affairs.

### **Informal Proceedings**

Informal proceedings, after discussions with the student, will include non-binding suggestions to the student for the purpose of improving a nursing competency(ies) and/or GMC or the remediation of a nursing

competencies.) and/or GMC noncompliance. During the Informal Proceeding, the Dean or designee will direct the faculty member or member of the CNHS community to provide specific information about the complaint and specific recommendations. This information will be documented in the reporting form for this Policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and Good Moral Character GMC. This form will include a list of competencies and/or GMC not met; circumstances surrounding the unmet expectations, and recommendations. This form will be forwarded to the Dean or designee. The report will not become part of the student's record but will be given to the Dean or designee. The report will be kept in a separate confidential file by the Dean or designee for a period of 3 years after the student leaves the program. The student also will receive a copy of the reporting form.

Recommended remediation from Informal Proceedings may include but will not be limited to the following: additional academic work, meetings with faculty or clinical mentors, periodic review of progress, periodic feedback on progress, and recommendation for counseling or medical intervention.

## **Formal Proceedings**

The Dean of Nursing or designee will begin Formal Proceedings if:

- a second complaint is filed; or
- if no change in the competencies) and/or GMC behavior occurs as a result of the Informal Proceeding;

**or**

- if failure in the course or dismissal from the UMass Dartmouth CNHS is a possible consequence of the complaint.

The Dean or designee will inform the student that a Formal Proceeding will be scheduled with a minimum of five (5) school days' notice. Such proceedings may be extended if they occur during semester breaks.

The Dean or designee will invite the following panel members and they will have voting rights: the supervising clinical/classroom faculty, an SSPC faculty member, and a Department Chair or representative. The student may invite a faculty member who will have voting rights, and an additional non-voting panel member, which may be a faculty member. ***No lawyer or legal representative is allowed to participate in the formal proceedings. No recording devices will be allowed.*** Forty-eight hours prior to the proceeding, the student must provide the Dean or designee with the names of those individuals that he/she has invited to be physically present at the Formal Proceedings. The Dean or designee will chair the panel and state the nature of the violation related either to competence or good moral behavior. The Dean will offer panel members an opportunity to discuss the issue and the remediation. The student will have an opportunity to explain his/her actions. Formal Proceedings recommendation(s) will be made after a majority vote of the voting members. In the event of a tie vote, the Dean or designee will vote. The range of remediation recommendations may include but will not be limited to all of the remediation listed under Informal Proceedings and will also include: a recommendation of failure in the clinical or classroom course; a recommendation of dismissal, suspension or probation. The recommendations) will be forwarded to the Dean or designee who may adopt, deny, or modify the recommendations) and make a decision. All appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrators will be notified. The proceedings, recommendations) and decision of the Dean or designee will be maintained as confidential to the extent allowed. The student and appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrative officials will be notified in writing of the decision.

## **Probation**

If the decision of the Dean or designee, is to place the student on probation, the student will be given a written list of impaired nursing competencies, and behaviors and a written list of recommended remediations). The

student will be diligently reviewed in subsequent clinical and classroom courses at least once each semester by the Dean of Nursing or designee. The probation may continue until the inappropriate behaviors(s) are resolved and the Competencies have been met. When the behaviors and competencies are met, the Dean of the CNHS or designee will recommend ending the probation. If probation continues for more than one full semester, the student will be recommended for suspension and failure in the current academic clinical course.

### **Suspension and Failure in Course**

If suspended, the student will not continue in the course from the date of suspension and will receive a failing grade in the course. The student may not progress in the curriculum but must first repeat the course from which he or she has failed. In repeating a course, the competencies not met, and/or inappropriate behaviors identified in the failed course will be documented. Recommended remediation will be specified and may include but will not be limited to the following: additional academic work, meetings with faculty or clinical mentors, periodic review of progress, periodic feedback on progress, recommendation for counseling or medical intervention. When the student repeats this course, he or she will meet with the faculty member and the Dean or designee at mid-semester regarding an appraisal of the remediation and or the effectiveness of the remediation.

### **Dismissal from the Nursing Program**

If dismissed by the Dean of the CNHS, the student will not continue in the CNHS from the date of dismissal and will not be permitted to enroll in CNHS at a later date. Students may apply for transfer to another UMass Dartmouth college or department.

In all of the decisions above, the student will receive a copy of the actions taken which will include: finding of the facts, conclusions and recommendations. A copy will also be placed in the student's confidential file in the Dean's office.

### **Confidentiality**

During and after these procedures the UMass Dartmouth CNHS will use reasonable efforts to maintain the confidentiality of all in the process. All individuals participating in the procedures will be informed of this expectation. Information provided by a faculty member, student, staff member or witness involved in the Informal or Formal Procedure will be maintained as confidential to the extent possible. When the Dean or designee has completed the procedures, he/she will, to the extent appropriate, inform all involved of the determination of results including the identified student and appropriate UMass Dartmouth administrative officials.

### **Section V - Appeal**

The Dean's determination of the formal proceeding may be appealed to the UMass Dartmouth Provost or his/her designee within 10 days of the date of the decision of the Dean. This appeal may be made on the grounds that: (1) the sanction administered as a result of the original student behavior is unjustified in its severity; (2) the weight of the evidence did not justify a finding from the Formal Proceedings; (3) CNHS failed to comply in material respect to its Formal proceeding procedures; or (4) new evidence exists that is relevant and that was unobtainable at the time of the original Formal Proceeding. The decision of the UMass Dartmouth Provost is final and cannot be appealed.

(Approved by Fac Org 09/2015)

## Student Notification, Acknowledgement and Release

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth's College of Nursing and Health Sciences' policy on Student Professional Nursing Competence and the MBON and College's Good Moral Character expectations, (the "Policy") which is attached here to and made a part of this Notification and Acknowledgement.

I understand that if I violate the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth's Student Code of Conduct and if this violation is also a violation under the CNHS "Policy", I may be processed through both UMassD Office of Student Affairs, consistent with the Student Code of Conduct, and the CNHS.

By signing this form, I give the Office of Student Affairs permission to inform the College of Nursing and Health Sciences of any resolved complaint made against me that violates the principles of the Policy on Professional Nursing Competency and Good Moral Character.

Print Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Reporting Form**

The purpose of this form is to record information required to initiate either an Informal or Formal Proceeding.

Student Name:

Name of individual making complaint:

Date:

List Members of  Informal or  Formal Proceeding (check one)

Describe specific behavior related to: Professional nursing competence; and/or Good Moral Character. Include names) of individuals reporting this behavior or involved; include dates) when this occurred: (Attach written description of the alleged infraction)

Describe student's perception related to these behaviors: (Attach written description of student's perception)

Recommendations from the Informal or Formal Proceeding:

Dean or Designee:

## Policy on Bullying

The state of Massachusetts defines "bullying" as, the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (ii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The state of Massachusetts defines "Cyber-bullying" as, bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include:

- (1) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or
- (2) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Per the state of Massachusetts, bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school- sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school- related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Bullying in any form as defined by the State of Massachusetts is prohibited by the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Bullying should be reported to the administration immediately. Anyone found engaging in the above behaviors will be referred to the Dean or designee who will follow up with the appropriate university authorities. <https://www.stopbullying.gov/resources/laws/massachusetts>

University policies are published on the UMass Dartmouth website: <https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/>

(Approved by Fac Org 5/2011)

# Policy on Complaint and Dispute Resolution Process

## Student complaints

During the academic year, a variety of issues may arise where a student believes that she or he has been treated poorly or unfairly or may have some other concern. The following list describes a number of different types of concerns and relevant resources. If a student has a concern and is uncertain how to proceed, an undergraduate student should contact the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies and a graduate student should contact the Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research.

### **Student complaints implicating the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Standards or Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (BORN) Regulations**

Any student wishing to file a formal complaint that may violate CCNE Standards or MA BORN regulations should follow the following procedures.

**Submission of Complaint:** File a student petition in the Dean's Office where it will be assigned to the appropriate Associate/Assistant Dean. Identify the issue in sufficient detail to permit an investigation into the matter. All complaints must be written and signed and include the student's contact information. The appropriate Assistant or Associate Dean will acknowledge in writing receipt of the complaint within five business days.

**Initial Investigation:** The Assistant/Associate Dean will initially investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint. If resolution is not possible, the Assistant/Associate Dean will refer the matter to the appropriate administrator, administrative body, or an administrative official designated by the Dean (the "Referral Investigator"), within three weeks of receipt of the complaint. The Assistant/Associate Dean will communicate resolution of the complaint, or its referral, to the complainant upon such resolution or referral.

**Referral Investigation:** If referral of the complaint is made as referenced above, the Referral Investigator shall attempt to resolve the complaint as soon as possible, generally no later than three weeks after referral of the complaint. Upon completion of the referral investigation, the College will communicate its findings and, if appropriate, any intended actions to the complainant.

**Appeals:** If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome or resolution of a complaint, the complainant may appeal the decision in writing to the Dean of the College. Such appeal must be filed within two weeks of communication to the complainant of the resolution of the complaint. The Dean's decision will be communicated in writing to the complainant within three weeks of the time the appeal was filed and shall be final.

**Maintenance of Records:** The College shall maintain a written record of each complaint filed and its resolution in the Office of the Assistant/Associate Dean for a period of ten years from the date of the final resolution of the complaint.

Complaints not concerning CCNE or BORN regulations (examples below) should be submitted according to guidelines outlined on the UMassD website or in the University Handbook and College of Nursing and Health Sciences Nursing Handbooks.

## Grade appeals

Students who have questions about their grades should seek to discuss the matter first with the relevant faculty member. In certain limited circumstances, students may pursue a formal grade appeal. The process for pursuing a grade appeal is described at: <https://www.umassd.edu/studentsuccess/0-30-credits/grades/>

Students with questions concerning the final posted grade should immediately contact the course instructor to inquire about the issue as soon as grades are posted by the Registrar's Office. The student may also notify the Grade Appeal Facilitator at the same time.

## **Student Conduct & Dispute Resolution**

The Office of Student Affairs - Office of Community Standards oversees student conduct and dispute resolution. The Student Code of Conduct and other policies and regulations are available at:

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/departments/community-standards/>

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/students/student-conduct-policies-and-procedures/>

## **Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion**

The Office of Equal Opportunity, Diversity & Outreach is responsible for campus initiatives that achieve the goal of creating, educating, and sustaining a culturally competent, diverse, equitable, and welcoming campus. The office is responsible for the oversight of the University's compliance efforts in regard to affirmative action planning as well as the enforcement of equal employment opportunity policies and laws, including Title IX, non-discrimination, and harassment policies. Information and regulations are available at:

<https://www.umassd.edu/diversity/>

<https://www.umassd.edu/diversity/policies-and-forms/>

The university policy on complaints, grievances and appeals related to the American Disabilities Act (ADA) may be found here: <https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/students/complaints-grievances-and-appeals-policy/>

## **UMass Student Rights & Responsibilities**

The rights and responsibilities of UMassD students, including students' rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA"), are found in the student handbook and in the statement of student rights and responsibilities.

The student handbook is available at <https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/>

The Students Rights Policy is available at

<https://www.umassd.edu/policies/active-policy-list/students/student-rights/>

## **Other complaints**

Students with concerns that do not fall within any of the previously described categories should contact the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies and Research for assistance.

(Approved by Fac Org 9/2019)

# Graduation Requirements

The following requirements are in addition to the university requirements found here:

<https://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbook/academic-regulations-and-procedures/>

Students who intend to graduate must file an "intent to graduate" form with the registrar's office. Application deadlines may be found at: <https://www.umassd.edu/registrar/graduation/>

Once you have filed your intent to graduate, you will be notified of commencement events. Commencement ceremonies take place once a year, in May. The date is listed in the University calendar. Students and faculty have reserved seating and will process in academic attire. Tickets for family and friends are required. Details of this event are handled by the university, and students are notified as to procedures by mail.

## Traditional and ABS Track Students

The Dean will certify students for graduation only after all final grades have been received and the student has attained a minimum passing grade for required courses in their program plan.

- Traditional BS Track graduate in May:  
120 credits for students who started the program Fall 2020 and beyond  
122 credits for students who started the program before Fall 2020
- ABS Track graduate in December:  
83 credits (59 credits completed at UMass D; 24 prerequisite credits)  
Additionally, other requirements for certification are listed below.

## RN-BS Track Students

- Can complete the program and graduate in January, May, or September of any academic year.
- Students in the Undergraduate RN-BS Online Track Program must take a minimum of 31 credits at U Mass Dartmouth (28 RN-BS course credits and one 3 credit non-nursing course).
- Students must also meet University Studies requirements and other U Mass Dartmouth academic criteria for graduation, including (but not limited to) a minimum of 120 total credits and achieved the minimum passing grade or higher in courses required for graduation (31 RN-BS nursing credits + 45 RN Portfolio credits + 45 non-nursing credits (transfer credits or U Mass Dartmouth credits) = 121 credits).

(Approved by Fac Org 9/17/25)

## Traditional BS and ABS Track Students - NCLEX Preparation and Application

During the spring term, or Term 5 for ABS students, the Dean, Associate Dean or designee will meet with all graduating students from the prelicensure program to discuss State Board Licensing requirements. Information about the NCLEX-RN examination and application forms will be distributed at that time.

All traditional BS students are required to take the ATI Comprehensive Predictor Exam examinations during the spring semester. ABS students are required to take the ATI Comprehensive Predictor Exam in Term 5. Students

who fail to achieve acceptable performance on these exams will be required to complete additional remediation. During the last week of the semester, a face-to-face review course will be held on campus and full attendance of potential graduates during this class is required. Both formal and informal preparation, including use of virtual ATI, is required in order to pass the NCLEX-RN. Until required student participation and remediation demonstrates satisfactory effort and results as determined by the faculty, the one-page certificate needed to apply for this exam will be held by the Dean. The Dean will release the MBON NCLEX - RN certification form after each student demonstrates satisfactory completion of all required participation/preparation materials as determined by the faculty. Ongoing information about the expectations will be provided throughout the curriculum.

(rev. 7/97, 6/02, 10/04, 3/12, 1/15, 7/17, 5/19, 5/24)

**\*\*\*Please note:** if you plan to sit for the NCLEX-RN Exam in any state other than Massachusetts, you are responsible for contacting the Board of Registration in Nursing in the state of your choice to obtain an application. You are encouraged to review the instructions carefully.

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