THE POST – LICENSURE BSN PROGRAM reserves the right to update the policies in this handbook during the course of the program to reflect the changing nature of healthcare and education.

This Handbook supplements the policies and procedures specified in the Ferrum College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students are expected to read and adhere to all policies of the College as published in the College Catalog and College Student Handbook.
# Ferrum College
## Post-Licensure BSN Program Student Handbook

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I. Program Overview and Mission

Overview

The Post-Licensure Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree program is designed for nurses holding an unencumbered RN license. The RN to BSN program offers content specific to research, use of scholarly evidence in practice, legal aspects of practice, communication, and management and leadership topics. Armed with this knowledge, graduates are prepared to contribute to operational and organizational success in a variety of ways. The BSN nurse possesses a depth and breadth of knowledge grounded in clinical reasoning, data, and best practice. This complex set of skills enables the baccalaureate-prepared nurse to interface meaningfully with individuals, families, groups, communities, and populations across the lifespan, and across the continuum of healthcare environments. Additionally, the BSN graduate is prepared to pursue graduate education.

The RN to BSN program builds upon the students’ initial licensure program, clinical experience, and a strong foundation of general education courses. The Ferrum College RN to BSN program uses experiential and innovative teaching practices in a caring and personalized atmosphere.

Accreditation –

- New Applicant Status pending with CCNE (December, 2020).

Memberships – none at this time.
Ferrum College Mission

Ferrum College is a liberal arts institution founded on Christian principles and related to the United Methodist Church. Our mission states "We are a dynamic learning community where students enter with promise and leave with purpose."

Nursing Program Mission

It is our mission to prepare principled, professional, scientifically grounded nurses who embrace discovery, value the richness of diversity, and exemplify caring and compassion as they serve within their communities, both global and domestic.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Use knowledge, theory, evidence, and clinical reasoning to provide nursing care for patients across the lifespan and health-illness continuum.

2. Demonstrate skill in written and oral communication with diverse audiences of patients and peers.

3. Demonstrate skill in the management and leadership of nursing care within interprofessional teams.

4. Practice within the context of professional, ethical, and legal responsibilities.

5. Evaluate and use current healthcare technology and informatics to support quality and safe care.

6. Demonstrate a commitment to evidence-based practice to promote quality and patient safety.

7. Explain how healthcare policy influences the healthcare system and professional nursing practice.

8. Engage in health promotion and disease prevention interventions at the individual and population level.

9. Articulate the value of continued education and intellectual engagement with the practice of nursing.

II. Code of Ethics/Performance Standards

Nursing Students are held to the same professional codes and standards as are Registered Nurses, including the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses as follows:

American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses

1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth,
and unique attributes of every person.
2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
4. The nurse has authority accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions: and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.
5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.
6. The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.
7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.


Academic Integrity

Adherence to the Ferrum College Academic Honor Code is an expectation. Unless otherwise specified by faculty, all work presented by a student is assumed to be that student's original work, created by that student while working alone. Violations of the Ferrum College Academic Honor Code (e.g., cheating, falsification, plagiarism) will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, cheating in academic work, academic misrepresentation and multiple submission of the same work without previous written approval of the instructor(s) are issues which fall under the jurisdiction of the Ferrum College Honor Board.

Minimum Performance Standards

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, nursing students must be, with reasonable accommodations, physically and mentally capable of performing minimal standards to meet program objectives. The Minimum Performance Standards for Admission and Progression include:

Essential Mental Abilities:
1. Follow instructions and rules
2. Maintain reality orientation accompanied by short and long term memory
3. Apply basic mathematical skills
4. Demonstrate safe nursing practice within the defined clinical time period
5. Display gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective nursing care
6. Utilize sufficient critical thinking abilities for clinical judgment
**Essential Communication Skills:**

1. Speak clearly in order to communicate with patients, families, healthcare team members, peers and faculty
2. Effectively utilize interpersonal abilities to interact with diverse individuals, families and groups
3. Demonstrate communication abilities sufficient for clear interaction with others in verbal and written form
4. Read and accurately interpret written communications (i.e., test questions, physician’s orders, etc.) without assistance

Students with disabilities who require accommodations should contact the Office of Academic Accessibility (OAA) as early as possible prior to the start of their first academic semester, or upon onset of disability, to initiate the intake and eligibility process. Students who seek academic accommodations must submit current disability documentation to the Director of the OAA to request the desired accommodations.

**III. Academic Policies and Procedures**

**College Academic Policies and Procedures**

Ferrum College publishes information and established policies in the College Catalog and Student Handbook. Students enrolled in the nursing program are subject to these policies and are strongly encouraged to refer to the College Catalog and the Student Handbook for a complete listing of all policies and procedures.

**Programmatic Academic Policies and Procedures**

Policies are established in education settings to assist those who pursue particular courses of study to meet program criteria. These policies are provided as guides to student behaviors in all interactions. Policies are provided and explained to new students as they enter the program. Changes are communicated to students in writing prior to the implementation of the change. To remain in satisfactory standing, the student must meet requirements established by these policies.

**Complaint/Grievance Procedure**

Refer to the current Ferrum College Student Handbook – Student Internal Complaint System.

**Grading Policy**

The nursing program grading scale is as follows for all courses with NUR prefix (with the exception of NUR 100):
93% - 100% A
85% - 92.99% B
78% - 84.99% C
Below C is not acceptable for undergraduate Nursing Students *
70% - 77.99% D
<70% F

**Note the above grading scale does not round.** There will be no rounding up of the final course grade.

Specific grading criteria for each course are stated within course syllabus and assignment grading rubrics.

**Program Admission Criteria**

Students either
1. Hold an unencumbered RN license, or
2. Are enrolled in a VCCS RN program (*dual enrollment can occur in year 2 of VCCS program with certain criteria met)

Students will
- Transfer RN courses and general education courses (minimum 65-66 credits)
- Receive a free transcript evaluation on application to identify any outstanding general education requirements (General education courses can be taken concurrently with nursing courses)
- Complete the RN to BSN curriculum (28 credits) in sequence

*Between transfer credits, General Education courses remaining, and Nursing courses, students will need to earn a minimum of 121 credits total with a minimum of 31 credits coming from Ferrum College.

For competitive admission consideration, a cumulative GPA of 2.5 is preferred.

**Progression and Retention**

Our part-time progression plan allows for completion of a Bachelor of Science in Nursing at a pace that suits your life. The program offers 2 eight-week sequential courses a semester, allowing for degree completion in as little as 18 months. Program progression requires:
- a final grade of “C” or higher in all courses
- a cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.50
- Adhere to the academic policies provided in the RN to BSN Student Handbook

Students who do not earn a passing grade in a course may retake the course up to two times until the course has been successfully repeated. A student may withdraw only once from each nursing course (NUR prefix) without penalty, provided they withdraw by the college’s published withdrawal deadline. A second withdrawal from the same nursing
course will be considered as one nursing course failure. A third withdrawal from the same nursing course will result in program dismissal.

To continue in the RN to BSN program the student must:

- Maintain at least a 2.50 cumulative GPA
- Earn a “C” or higher in all courses

Probation/Dismissal

Program Probation will occur for any of the following reasons:
- Cumulative grade point average falls below 2.50 for one to two (2) consecutive semesters.
- Student Advisors will offer remediation and other forms of support to assist student to reverse probation status.

Program Dismissal will occur for any of the following reasons:
- Cumulative grade point average falls below 2.50 for more than two (2) consecutive semesters.
- Accumulation of two (2) final grades of less than “C” in any of the required courses (beyond two retake opportunities per course).
- A third withdrawal from the same nursing course.

*For a student successfully retaking a professional nursing (NUR) course in which a grade of less than “C” was earned, the initial grade of less than “C” will count in the overall accumulation of two nursing course failures.

Readmission after Program Dismissal or Program Withdrawal

A student must go through the College's general admission procedure for readmission to the College if the student has not attended Ferrum College in 12 months or more.

Following program dismissal, petitions for program readmission will be accepted after a two-year period has elapsed. The student should notify the Program Chair in writing of the desire to be re-admitted to a specific Nursing Program. The student must be in good academic standing at Ferrum College. Readmissions are granted on a space-available, competitive basis.

Extenuating Circumstances Policy

If there are documented extenuating circumstances surrounding a course failure or withdrawal, students may apply for exception. In the event of documented extenuating circumstances surrounding program dismissal, students may apply for readmission prior to the two-year time-frame. Petitions for exception or readmission must be made in writing to the Program Chair and must be accompanied by a letter and supporting documentation from a physician or other licensed professional. The letter and supporting documentation must validate that the extenuating circumstances contributed to the failure, withdrawal or dismissal. Documented extenuating circumstances will be stringently reviewed and readmission is not guaranteed. In cases of academic program dismissal with early re-admission for extenuating circumstances, one subsequent nursing (NUR) course failure will result in dismissal with no future option for re-admission.
Transfer Credit

The Program Chair will determine transfer credit in professional nursing courses for students after the applicant’s acceptance into the Nursing program. This will be determined through evaluation of official transcripts and course syllabi. In addition to the College’s general transfer credit policies, all of the following criteria apply:

- The Program Chair evaluates courses considered for nursing transfer credit and determines that they are equivalent in content to the courses being replaced.
- Courses considered for nursing transfer credit must be completed with a minimum grade of “C”.
- Courses considered for transfer credit must have been taken at an accredited nursing school.

IV. The Classroom Community: Policies and Procedures

Classroom Attendance & Participation

The student is expected to engage in the activities of the program and coursework. Students who are successful in asynchronous learning plan well and integrate academic responsibilities, projects, and deadlines into their other commitments such as work, family, and service obligations. Each student is held accountable for all material covered in the course, text, additional readings, discussion forums, and presentations. Should unforeseen circumstances arise, it is the responsibility of the student to contact course faculty as soon as possible. Proactive communication is a key component in this learning milieu.

Civility in the Classroom Policy

Civil behavior and mutual respect between faculty and students are critical in the college classroom environment if teaching, learning, critical thinking, and sharing of ideas are to occur. Respectful and civil behavior at a very basic level includes the following: engaging appropriately in classroom activities, openness to new ideas, and demonstrating the ability to discuss topics without inappropriate language or verbally attacking others. Students who do not comply with the Civility in the Classroom policy described in the Faculty Handbook and the Student Handbook may be removed from the academic setting and may risk serious consequences as outlined in the Civility policy.

Class Preparation

Students are expected to remain current in topics assigned in the course and actively engage in all learning activities and work together as a learning group. Detailed class preparation assignments are posted weekly on Brightspace. Check Brightspace several times a week for announcements and additional information.

Testing Policies

In the event a student cannot take a scheduled test or final exam on or by the established date/time, prior instructor notification is required for make-up test arrangements. A late penalty of five (5) points will be deducted from the test grade each business day. Make-up tests may include questions different from the original test administered to the class at
large. Failure to do so will result in a score of zero. For tests missed without prior instructor arrangement, there may not be a make-up option, depending on the circumstances. A score of zero would be recorded in the event of no make-up option.

If a student experiences an extenuating circumstance, no grade penalty will be imposed if the student notifies the instructor prior to the start time of the test. An extenuating circumstance is defined as: Motor vehicle collision, severe illness of the student or immediate family member with a health care provider excuse, or death of an immediate family member with supporting evidence such as an obituary notice.

Late Assignments

Generally speaking, late work is not accepted. The instructor must be contacted prior to the due date/time to discuss any emergency/extenuating circumstance preventing the on-time completion of an assignment. Grade penalties may apply to late work. Any grade penalty will be described in the course syllabus for each course.

Written Assignments

Students in all Nursing tracks are required to use the most current edition APA (American Psychological Association) style manual in the preparation of all written work unless otherwise specified in the assignment. Any grade challenges on written assignments must be submitted to the course instructor in writing and supported with evidence from current professional nursing literature within five (5) working days after the grade is posted.

V. Communication

Email

The only authorized email address for academic, administrative, and co-curricular communications between Ferrum College and its students is through the <ferrum.edu> e-mail system. Each student is responsible for monitoring his/her Ferrum College e-mail account frequently (preferably daily).

Special note on email communication: As you begin your preparation for being a member of the profession, you are expected to communicate professionally with the professor and others. Specifically, when emailing in a business/professional manner, including emailing your professors:

- Include a subject in the subject line
- Include a professional salutation (Dear __________.)
- Use complete sentences and accurate capitalization, punctuation
- Avoid misspelled words (use spell check)
- Do not use slang
- Limit the use of emoticons
- Remember that what you say in email stays in email and can be circulated rapidly – consider picking up the phone or stopping by in person if an issue can be misconstrued in email
- Proof-read your emails before you hit send!
Brightspace Site

The Division of Nursing maintains a Brightspace site for each course for student use and reference. Important announcements and other information are posted on this site. Students are expected to check the site regularly and are responsible for any announcements posted there. Additionally, all nursing courses use Brightspace to supplement coursework, submission of assignments, and for grade posting.

VI. Nursing Program Organizations, Activities and Awards

All students are encouraged to become active members of College organizations that are of interest.

Nursing Program Committees

Student input and feedback are integral to ongoing program evaluation that fosters ongoing improvement. Students may serve on specific nursing faculty committees, as well as on selected College committees.

Interested students are invited to submit their names to the Program Chair or they may discuss possible nursing faculty committee appointment with their advisor or a member of the nursing faculty. Student input is invited and student participation is greatly appreciated.

Students will be sent an announcement (via Brightspace and email) prior to RN to BSN Curriculum meetings as a mechanism for providing constructive feedback. Student input is used to identify strengths and opportunities for improvements in the program and all students are encouraged to participate.

Pinning Ceremony

A pinning recognition event will be held annually for all program graduates who have completed the program. A student representative will be selected by their classmates to speak on behalf of the class at this event. Family & significant others are invited to attend. Excellence Awards are presented at this ceremony.

Excellence Awards

With each graduating class, the Nursing faculty present several awards to those who have demonstrated consistent efforts that exceed expectations. The Excellence in Nursing Award is presented to a RN to BSN graduate who exemplifies excellence in academic efforts. Each student receiving the Excellence in Nursing Award will have his/her name inscribed on a plaque. The plaque will be displayed in the Division of Nursing and a personal plaque will be given to each recipient.

The criteria for this award is:
- Grade Point Average of 3.50 or above
- Demonstrated excellence in achievement of program outcomes
- Demonstrated leadership in college-wide activities and/or community service
Program Improvement

Following graduation, alumni will be periodically contacted to provide input regarding program effectiveness. This input is used to identify strengths and opportunities for improvements in the RN to BSN program and all alumni are encouraged to participate.

Ferrum College Alumni Chapters

Alumni Chapters are established to provide graduates from Ferrum College with opportunities for social activities along with professional and personal networking. In determining where to establish a Chapter, the level of interest and the number of alumni who can organize, manage and support Association activities are considered.

Official Chapters are organized by region and according to zip codes. All alumni residing within a specific Chapter region are considered to be members of the Association and receive communications regarding events and campus news.

NURSES PLEDGE

In full knowledge of the obligations I am undertaking, I promise to care for the sick with all the skill and understanding I possess, without regard to race, creed, color, politics or social status, sparing no effort to conserve life, to alleviate suffering and to promote health.

I will respect at all times the dignity and religious beliefs of the patients under my care, holding in confidence all personal information entrusted to me, and refrain from any action which might endanger life or health.

I will endeavor to keep my professional knowledge and skill at the highest level and to give loyal support and cooperation to all members of the health team.

I will do my utmost to honor the international code of ethics applied to nursing and to uphold the integrity of the professional nurse.