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GENERAL INFORMATION

Introduction
This Handbook, along with the College catalog, provide students in the Practical Nurse program with essential information including Nursing Department policies and expectations, as well as academic requirements and students’ rights and responsibilities.

The information contained in this handbook is subject to revision that may redefine expectations and requirements. Students will be notified of changes through classroom announcements, email, campus communications boards, and on the College website.

Accreditation and Approvals
Vista College is nationally accredited by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE) to award certificates, diplomas and associate degrees. Vista College is licensed and approved to offer the Practical Nurse program by the following state agencies:
- New Mexico Board of Nursing
- New Mexico Higher Education

Mission and Objectives
The mission of Vista College is to provide high quality, specialized career preparation or enhancement to meet and cope with technological changes resulting in employment and career success. Vista College recognizes this is an era of accelerated changes and accepts the responsibility to aid its students in preparation for these changes by providing quality education and career guidance relative to the demands of an automated work place.

Consistent with its mission, Vista College has established the following objectives:
1. To enroll students who demonstrate the aptitude and attitude to successfully pursue programs offered
2. To teach classes utilizing instructor and computer-assisted learning techniques
3. To cooperate with community employers and educational institutions to develop and revise curricula which include competency-based vocational skills training and traditional occupational classroom experiences for students
4. To provide programs designed to meet the needs of allied health, business and industry while maintaining an awareness of individual student requirements
5. To acquire and maintain data from graduates, employers, publications, and professional conferences which is organized and shared with faculty, staff and advisory board members to ensure that courses and program content are relevant and timely
6. To assist displaced workers in training and re-training of marketable skills
7. To assist graduates in securing training-related careers
8. To maintain a professional positive integrity that serves as a role model for enrolled students

Nursing Department Mission Statement
The mission of the Nursing Department is to prepare competent nurses to provide safe, evidence-based, patient-centered care in diverse, technologically-based, healthcare environments. The educational process facilitates critical thinking, professionalism, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

Student Involvement in Department Governance
Student feedback is essential to improve the curriculum and instruction offered at Vista College. Evaluations are taken seriously by the faculty and administration and are valuable in enhancing students’ learning opportunities, improving courses, and guiding faculty development. Each semester students are given the
opportunity to provide anonymous feedback on program elements including course content, course instructors, and clinical experiences.

Additional opportunities for student input include:
- Participation in nursing committees;
- Submissions to the student comment box;
- Posting on the campus communication board located in the Nursing Department; and
- Participation in evaluative activities such as surveys of agencies and resources; graduate exit surveys; and ad hoc focus groups.

American Nurses Association Code of Ethics
Nursing students must adhere to the Code of Ethics for Nurses (American Nurses Association, *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements*, 2015) as follows:
- The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.
- The nurse’s primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.
- The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards and development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.
- The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.
- 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.

Professional Organizations
Professional associations set standards for, and work on behalf of, the practitioner in a number of ways including advocacy, lobby activities, continuing education, information, consultation, publications, grants, loans, and scholarships and the opportunity for professional growth and recognition.

Students are encouraged to join, at student rates, organizations that represent and support the profession. Membership allows the student to vote on matters of importance to the profession, and to access networking opportunities. Through membership, they become acquainted with student members from other schools, as well as practicing nurses, enhancing the student’s professional development.
Revised Nurse (PN) Outcomes
Practical Nurse (PN) graduates are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN) and are prepared to enter practical nursing practice in a variety of health care settings. PN graduates will be prepared to exercise sound clinical judgment to improve the health of individuals, families, and communities in complex and culturally diverse environments.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO) are derived from the departmental mission and professional standards of practice. The graduate of the PN program will be able to:
- Demonstrate critical thinking through the use of a clinical problem-solving process to provide safe nursing care in diverse healthcare environments;
- Collaborate with patients and the interprofessional healthcare team to coordinate and implement patient-centered care;
- Apply technology, current evidence, and quality improvement in nursing practice; and
- Integrate legal, ethical, and professional standards into the established scope of nursing practice.

Curriculum Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Number</th>
<th>Course Name</th>
<th>Total Quarter Credits/ Contact Hours</th>
<th>Didactic Quarter Credits/ Contact Hours*</th>
<th>Lab Quarter Credits/ Contact Hours**</th>
<th>Clinical Quarter Credits/ Contact Hours***</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level I</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PN120</td>
<td>Introduction to Practical Nursing</td>
<td>4.5/45</td>
<td>4.5/45</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3/60</td>
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<td>PN130</td>
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<td>3/30</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>19.5/225</td>
<td>16.5/165</td>
<td>3/60</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>PN160</td>
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<td>3/30</td>
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<tr>
<td>PN164</td>
<td>Medical Surgical Nursing</td>
<td>12/240</td>
<td>4.5/45</td>
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<td>4.5/135</td>
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<tr>
<td>PN168</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3/60</td>
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<td>Level III</td>
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<td>PN224</td>
<td>Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing</td>
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<td>PN228</td>
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<td>Level IV</td>
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<td>PN240</td>
<td>Parent Child Nursing</td>
<td>6/90</td>
<td>4.5/45</td>
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<td>1.5/45</td>
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<td>PN244</td>
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<td><strong>GRAND TOTALS</strong></td>
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<td>46.5/465</td>
<td>9/180</td>
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*10 Classroom Contact hours = 1 Quarter credit
**20 Lab Contact hours = 1 Quarter credit
***30 Clinical Contact hours = 1 Quarter credit

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Learning Experience
On-campus instructional methods include a variety of delivery formats such as: lectures, slide presentations, simulation scenarios, demonstration and return demonstration, role playing, interactive online instruction, and critical-thinking activities. Students will participate in both individual and cooperative learning activities in the classroom, clinical lab environments, and patient care environments. Computer labs, skills lab equipment, simulation manikins, and other equipment provide the technological support for various teaching methodologies.

Laboratory/Skill Competency
In the laboratory, nursing instructors explain, clarify, and demonstrate nursing procedures. Students practice these procedures in a supportive learning environment to further develop their skills and understanding of nursing care procedures. Students complete assigned readings and learning activities prior to lab in order to be able to take full advantage of in-lab time by discussing assigned material and practicing and demonstrating skills.

Students work with each other in a respectful and professional manner, participate in clean-up, and are responsible for the equipment and materials in terms of safety, maintenance, and care. Students may use only the equipment related to skills that have been taught in the classroom and lab. No eating or drinking is permitted in the lab.

Once students are assessed and successfully demonstrate competency in designated nursing procedures in the lab setting, they will then be allowed to perform these skills in the clinical setting. All skills will be learned first, then practiced in the lab during the course. Faculty will perform ongoing evaluations of clinical skills competency in all clinical/laboratory courses. Students who fail to perform a skill successfully will be provided with remediation, followed by a second evaluation of the skill by a different instructor. If a student fails to successfully perform any skill after two attempts, the student will fail the course.

Skills competency retention throughout the program is critical to overall program success. Students will be able to demonstrate competency in already-learned skills throughout the program, and will be evaluated on previously-learned skills (from earlier courses) during subsequent courses. Students who are unable to successfully perform a previously-learned skill will be required to engage in remediation outside of scheduled class hours until competent to perform.

Clinical Learning Experience
Students are assigned randomly to off-campus clinical groups, and to clinical sites that will best facilitate each student’s learning opportunities. Clinical hours vary and may include evenings, nights, weekends, and 10- to 12-hour shifts. Students may be required to travel up to three (3) hours each way to the clinical site. The student is responsible for transportation to all experiences, and any parking fees. If a student does not drive, in order to be present on time, he or she must make arrangements such as carpooling with other students or using public transportation.

Clinical experiences are based on contractual agreements between Vista College and each clinical facility. During the clinical rotation, students are required to know and adhere to all College and all site policies and procedures. Agency staff, patients, and family members have the right to refuse care provided by nursing students. Faculty reserve the right to change a student’s daily patient/unit assignments to provide optimal learning experiences.

Students must arrive at clinical settings on time, professionally attired according to the College dress code, with appropriate equipment including a watch with second hand, his/her equipment kit, and a Vista College
picture Student ID. Students who do not meet these standards may be allowed to participate in the clinical experience but are in violation of the Student Conduct policy and must subsequently meet with the Dean of Nursing.

Students will provide care to a diverse group of patients, provide comprehensive reports on patient status to the instructor and/or designated agency personnel, and participate actively in clinical conferences. It is mandatory that students maintain health information confidentiality and adhere to patient privacy regulations.

Students will remain on their assigned unit in the clinical setting for the entire shift unless otherwise reassigned by the instructor. Students wishing to leave the unit for a break, must obtain permission from the instructor before doing so. Students will be assigned a meal break time, and will return at the time identified by the instructor. Students who return late will be subject to the policy on tardiness.

Students will be supervised and assessed during all procedures, will receive daily feedback about clinical performance, and will receive a final evaluation at the end of the clinical rotation. At any point during the clinical course, any student whose performance could result in a clinical failure will be scheduled to meet at the campus with the clinical instructor and Dean of Nursing to identify deficiencies and actions necessary for improvement.

**Safe Practice**

Patient and staff safety is of primary importance in the clinical setting. Students **will not**:

- Perform procedures or administer medications without prior approval of the clinical instructor
- Care for patients without the clinical instructor or a staff nurse in attendance
- Accompany a patient to another care area without obtaining prior approval from the clinical instructor
- Take verbal or telephone orders
- Witness consents for procedures or other legal documentation
- Carry medication or narcotic keys
- Use cellular phones or personal electronic devices for any activities other than those directly related to the educational experience

Unsafe practice is any situation during which a student’s contact with a patient places the patient, student, staff, healthcare facility, and/or college at risk. Examples of unsafe practice include, but are not limited to: *lack of preparation, breach of confidentiality, failure to report significant assessment findings or changes in patient status, leaving a patient unattended, undertaking tasks with insufficient supervision or permission, incorrect practice, or leaving the unit without permission*. If the student’s performance is potentially unsafe, a student may be asked to leave the clinical setting, may receive a clinical failure, or may be dismissed from the program.

The *Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements* communicates a standard of professional behavior expected throughout the nursing program. The College reserves the right to dismiss a student for unprofessional, unethical, dishonest, or illegal conduct that is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics.

**Medication Administration / Errors**

Students may be allowed to administer medications in the clinical setting based on prior successful demonstration of competence in drug calculation and administration. Once assessed competent, with the approval of the instructor, and supervised by the instructor or a nurse, the student may administer:

- Oral, rectal, topical, subcutaneous, intradermal, and intramuscular medications
- Already-mixed continuous, primary intravenous solutions
• Secondary intravenous medications
A medication error or potential error is defined as any situation in which the correct procedure for medication administration is not followed. If an error occurs, the patient's safety is of utmost importance. Students must report immediately a medication error to the clinical instructor, as well as the unit nurse manager or charge nurse.

ACADEMIC POLICIES
• The College reserves the right to modify policies, course schedules, curricula or courses due to exigent circumstances, program upgrades, and/or content changes
• Students who experience interruptions in established academic progression may delay the date of graduation
• Course credits earned at the College may not be transferable to other schools
• The College reserves the right to cancel programs of study, modes of delivery, or individual courses as it deems necessary, with notice to the students
• At the discretion of the College, programs and individual courses are subject to change for reasons that include, but are not limited to, curriculum revisions, changes in course and/or program enrollment, instructor availability, facility and/or space availability, or such other action as the College may deem appropriate or necessary

Attendance
Attendance and punctuality are indicators of professional accountability and are essential for student learning and continued eligibility to receive Federal Financial Aid. Students are expected to attend every class, laboratory and clinical experience, arriving on time prepared to work.

Course instructors will take attendance and records are maintained to comply with institutional requirements. At the start of each course the student will receive a course syllabus containing a class schedule for the semester, attendance requirements, and all required activities including exams.

Students are expected to return on time from scheduled class breaks and to remain in class until dismissed by the instructor. When a student arrives late for class, laboratory or clinical, returns from a scheduled break late, or leaves early, it is counted as missed time. Such missed time is recorded in 15 minute increments to determine the total time missed.

Students who are absent 10% of the total hours for any classroom or laboratory course element will receive a Written Warning. Students who are absent 15% or more of the total hours for any classroom or laboratory course element will be withdrawn from the course.

Missed clinical experiences are missed opportunities to meet course objectives. Students who arrive more than 15 minutes late to clinical experiences will be sent home and marked absent for the entire clinical day. Students who miss more than two (2) clinical experiences in Medical Surgical Nursing, Advanced Medical Surgical Nursing or Practical Nursing Capstone will be withdrawn from the course. Students who miss more than one (1) clinical experience in Mental Health Nursing or Parent Child Health will be withdrawn from the course.

Violations of the Attendance Policy are not eligible for appeal.

Grading System
The following grading scale applies to all courses in the Practical Nursing Degree Program. Students must earn a grade of “C” or better in order to pass a course, otherwise, the course must be repeated. Two “F”
course grades during the program (even if the course is repeated and passed) will result in dismissal from the program. Please refer to the College Catalog for comprehensive information on grades.

### Grading Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Code</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Included in Credits Attempted</th>
<th>Included in Credits Earned</th>
<th>Included in CGPA</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Excellent (90-100)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Above Average (80-89)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Average (75-79)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Failing (Below 75)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Transfer Credit</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>PE</td>
<td>Proficiency Exam</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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<tr>
<td>WM</td>
<td>Withdrawal Military</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>WX</td>
<td>Withdrawal prior to Add/Drop Period</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
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</tr>
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Students may transfer course credit from other post-secondary public or private institutions accredited by an agency recognized by the US Department of Education for up to 75% of their program. See the College Catalog for the complete Credit Transfer policy.

**Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)**

All students are expected to maintain satisfactory academic progress toward successful completion of their program of enrollment. Please refer to the College Catalog for a comprehensive description of the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy.

**Student Assessments**

All Nursing Department examinations, quizzes, and assessments are proctored and timed. Classroom exams are multiple-choice, multiple response and alternative format questions. Standardized examinations may be used and will be computer-based.

All examinations must be taken on the day scheduled. When a student is late for an examination, he/she will be permitted to take the exam in the time remaining – no additional time will be provided. A student who wishes to make up a missed exam must submit documentation supporting his/her absence to the Dean of Nursing within 72 hours of the missed exam. Makeup exams may be scheduled based on extenuating circumstances, and are at the discretion of the Dean of Nursing. Once approved, the makeup exam must be completed within 14 consecutive calendar days of the missed exam.

All quizzes must be taken on the day scheduled. When a student is late for a quiz, he/she will be permitted to take the quiz in the time remaining. There are no make-up quizzes.

During testing, students will:
- Refrain from talking
- Leave all personal belongings, including all electronic devices, in a location identified by the instructor
- Place nothing on the desk; scratch paper, pencil and calculator will be provided by the instructor
- Begin the test at the same time
- Maintain academic integrity - any activity related to recording or sharing of content on written, practicum, or computer exams will be considered academic dishonesty
• Not bring or use of dictionaries or other resources
• Direct all questions to the test proctor

Students suspected of dishonesty will be removed from class without completing the exam and will be reported to the Dean of Nursing or designee.

**Medication Calculation Competency**

Medication calculation competency exams assess all nursing students’ abilities to calculate medication dosages and to apply the concepts that underlie dosage calculation. Medication calculation exams will be given in Pharmacology I, Pharmacology II and Practical Nursing Capstone courses. Each test will assess previously-acquired knowledge and will be a timed, level-appropriate exam. A math calculation review will be provided during class prior to administration of the first exam, and basic four-function, non-programming calculators will be provided during testing. Students are required to achieve a score of 100% on one of the three exams.

Students who do not achieve a score of 100% on the first or second exam will be provided with a review and remediation prior to taking the next exam. Students who fail to achieve the minimum required 100% score on at least one medication calculation exam will receive a failing grade for the course and must repeat the course. Failing grades in two or more nursing courses will result in dismissal from the nursing program.

**Achievement Awards**

The Nursing Department may award graduates who have demonstrated significant achievement and excellence. Full time faculty will determine which awards to include at each pinning ceremony and will nominate award candidates who will be voted on by all members of the Nursing Department.

• **Nursing Excellence Award**
  This award will be presented to the graduating senior(s) who faculty determines has/have demonstrated excellence in academic achievement, as evidenced by the cumulative GPA in all nursing courses.

• **Clinical Excellence Award**
  This Award will be presented to a graduating senior(s) who faculty determines has/have demonstrated a high degree of expertise in critical thinking, assessment skills, and nursing interventions while on clinical rotation.

• **Service Excellence Award**
  This award will be presented to a graduating senior(s) in recognition of outstanding performance and commitment to pre-professional, community activities, and/or unique learning experiences which enhance the educational process. The recipient must has/have attained at least a 3.0 or greater total GPA. Students eligible for the Award will be notified by the Dean of Nursing and asked to submit substantiating evidence of their involvement in professional, community, and/or other activities. Students may nominate a peer for this award, or may self-nominate.

• **Nursing Leadership Award**
  This award will be presented to the graduating senior(s) who most clearly demonstrate(s) outstanding leadership ability. Such demonstration includes, but is not limited to, class, college, and community activities.

• **Perseverance Award**
  This award will be presented to a graduating senior(s) who has demonstrated exceptional initiative and shown perseverance in overcoming one or more significant obstacles. The award
recipient(s) will have overcome adversity to prevail in achieving the goal of completing the nursing program.

- Peer Recognition Award
  Students will be asked to nominate a peer who exhibits excellence in scholarship, leadership, personality, and character.

- Dean’s Honor List
  Each semester the Dean will honor those students whose cumulative GPA places them in the top 5% of the class.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Electronic Devices
When students are in classroom, laboratory or clinical settings, cellular telephones and all other personal electronic devices may not be used unless otherwise directed by the instructor. Phone calls, text messaging and emailing are not permitted during learning experiences.

It is a courtesy for students to request permission of individual faculty before taping lectures or demonstrations. For test security reasons, students may not tape test review sessions.

Student Participation in Outside Service Projects While in Uniform
Nursing students sometimes are asked to participate in health fairs, screening programs, and other public or private activities. Students considering participation must request approval from the Dean of Nursing.

Student Communication
A Communication Board is maintained within the Nursing Department where relevant information and notices are posted. Students are responsible for checking the boards whenever they are on campus to be aware of information pertinent to the nursing program. Information may also be provided through syllabus addendums, handbook revisions, e-mail, letters, certified letters, handouts, and class communication. The Vista College website is another important source of information.

Student Dress Code
- Students must wear a watch with a second hand and bring the equipment kit to all laboratory and clinical experiences.
- Vista College identification must be worn on the uniform at all times, clipped or pinned at lapel level.
- Students who require adaptations to the required uniform for cultural and/or religious reasons, or for pregnancy, will consult with Dean of Nursing prior to the first day of class, or when the pregnancy impedes wearing the regular uniform.
- Alternative uniforms may be allowed during campus-sponsored events with approval from the Campus Director, Director of Education, and/or Dean of Nursing.
- Additional dress code requirements may be applied based on expectations of individual clinical sites.
- Students may not chew gum

A student who is non-compliant with the dress code will receive a written Professionalism Warning. Any student found to have a dress code violation that may negatively impact patient, staff and/or student well-being or safety is ineligible to remain in the clinical area and will receive an absence for the clinical day.
### Dress Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALLOWED</th>
<th>NOT ALLOWED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniforms</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issued by the College</td>
<td>Non College-issued scrubs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neat and clean</td>
<td>Wrinkled, dirty, torn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacket issued by the College</td>
<td>Hoodies, sweaters, sweatshirts, other jackets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plain long sleeve white or black t-shirt under top</td>
<td>Other color t-shirts, short sleeve, embellished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pants no longer than the top of the shoe</td>
<td>Extra-long or sagging pants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-porous, closed toe and heel shoes</td>
<td>Shoes with logos, color or porous material; Clogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or brown unadorned headband, 1” or narrower</td>
<td>Head coverings such as hats, caps, or bandanas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Adornments</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jewelry – wedding band, one other small ring, small stud earrings. If earlobe gauges are worn, they must be in a neutral color,</td>
<td>Large or hoop earrings, necklaces, bracelets, spike or other pierced cartilage earrings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visible piercings and tattoos must be covered with make-up or small natural-colored bandages</td>
<td>Jewelry in piercings (oral and dermal) that cannot be disguised or covered must be removed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Hygiene</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fingernails – clean, short, smooth, clear or light-colored nail polish (not chipped)</td>
<td>False/enhanced nails, bright or dark polish colors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hair – natural tones, clean, neatly styled, off the collar and pulled back from the face. Long hair secured in the back.</td>
<td>Unnatural hair colors, unsecured hair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beards/mustaches neat and closely trimmed</td>
<td>Other facial hair such as long sideburns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makeup – minimal, natural looking</td>
<td>Extreme or dark colors, heavy make-up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean, fresh-scented</td>
<td>Offensive body odor, cigarette smells, heavy cologne or after-shave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Conduct

Students must observe the Vista College code of conduct and govern themselves in a professional manner. Students will be held responsible and accountable for exhibiting personal and emotional characteristics considered important by the nursing profession. Student may be dismissed from the program for exhibiting inappropriate or unethical behavior, or professional misconduct.

The Student Conduct and Discipline policy may be found in the College Catalog as well as additional offenses considered misconduct which may result in dismissal for the college.

**Student Conduct**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACCEPTABLE</th>
<th>NOT ACCEPTABLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behaviors include but are not limited to:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arriving on time and prepared for all learning experiences</td>
<td>Missing, arriving late and/or being unprepared for any learning experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing prompt and direct notification if late or absent to class or clinical</td>
<td>Failing to notify or communicate with instructors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrating honesty, courtesy and respect when communicating with faculty, staff and peers</td>
<td>Demonstrating rude or inappropriate behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using culturally sensitive, as well as educationally and developmentally appropriate, language in all interactions</td>
<td>Fighting, threatening or intentionally harassing another person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining patients’ rights to dignity, privacy, and confidentiality</td>
<td>Breaching patient confidentiality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

Vista College requires all students, faculty, and staff to conduct themselves and produce academic work in an ethical manner. Students are expected to adhere to the highest academic standards.

Plagiarism is defined as the use of another person’s or a group’s words or ideas without attribution of the source of that information, resulting in the false representation as one’s own work. More specifically, to avoid plagiarizing, a student or other writer must give credit when he/she uses:

- Another person’s idea, opinion, or theory
- Any facts, statistics, graphs, drawing - any piece of information that are not common knowledge
- Quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words
- Paraphrases of another person's spoken or written words
- Another person’s data, solutions, or calculations without permission and/or recognition of the source, including the act of accessing another person's computerized files without authorization

It is the responsibility of the student to know what constitutes plagiarism, so even unintentional plagiarism is actionable. Ignorance is not a legitimate defense against a charge of plagiarism. Cheating, falsifying work or plagiarism will not be tolerated. The penalties for these offenses are as follows:

- First offense - "0" on the assignment or test
- Second offense - "F" for the course.
- Third offense - "F" for the course and may be expelled from the college.

Copyright infringement is using someone else’s ideas or material, which may include a song, a video, a movie clip, a piece of visual art, a photograph, and other creative works, without authorization or compensation, if compensation is appropriate. The use of copyright material without permission is against federal law and penalties may include fines and/or imprisonment. Students, faculty, and staff must avoid copyright infringement.

As a consequence of expanded availability of digitized files and computing, peer-to-peer file sharing has become common place. However, making a copyrighted material available to others through the use of file sharing networks is also prohibited and is considered copyright infringement.

Student Concerns

A prompt and equitable process for resolving student concerns is available to any student who believes that a school decision or action has adversely affected his/her status, rights, or privileges. Students must address their concerns about an educational program by following the Nursing Department’s Appeal Process outlined below and in Appendix A.

Informal Resolution

Students who identify a concern may have it addressed expeditiously without the need for the issue to go to the Appeal Committee.

- Students must first make a reasonable effort to resolve the issue with the instructor or staff member involved
- If not satisfied with the outcome, the student may complete a Student Issue/Concern Form and meet with the Dean of Nursing or designee
If unsatisfied with the outcome, the student may file a Formal Appeal

Student Concern/Issue Form, found in Appendix B, provides for documentation of the concern, discussion with the faculty member or administrator, and desired outcomes, and is completed when students meet with faculty or administration regarding a concern.

Formal Nursing Appeal
The Nursing Department Appeals Committee acts upon requests for exceptions to existing academic policies and requirements. The committee works to find equitable and reasonable solutions supported by evidence.

- The Appeal Committee consists of at least five members which include representatives from nursing faculty, nursing leadership and campus leadership. Nursing Department personnel must represent a majority of the Appeal Committee.
- For a Formal Appeal, the student must complete and submit a Formal Appeal Form, found in Appendix C, within 72 hours of the event.
- The Appeal Committee will convene within five (5) business days of receiving the appeal form to evaluate the student’s appeal based on the following:
  - Appeal form and supportive documentation
  - Student academic performance
  - Impact of significant non-academic issues
  - Student interview, if she/he desires to present her/his case to the committee
  - Additional documentation provided by the student
- The Appeal Committee will provide the student with a formal response to the appeal within 48 hours.
- If the decision of the Appeal Committee is unsatisfactory to the student, she/he may request a review by initiating Step 3: Formal Grievance within 72 hours of receiving the Appeal Committee’s decision.

Formal Grievance
In instances where all other attempts at resolution have failed, a student may direct unresolved issues to Education Futures Group (EFG). The grievance must contain:

- The issue for which the student is filing the grievance
- Any documentation provided to the appeal committee
- Additional documentation which may assist in making a decision about the grievance

The grievance should be sent to:
Education Futures Group
Attn: Compliance
300 N. Coit, Suite 1400
Richardson, TX 75080
compliance@vistacollege.edu
972-733-3431

STUDENT HEALTH
Students are required to maintain health status sufficient to meet all requirements of the nursing program.

- Student must successfully complete all required immunizations by week 12 of the first semester
- If applicable, students who are absent and miss a campus-based clinic or scheduled clinical appointment are responsible for completing immunizations at their own expense within the time requirement provided
- Students are responsible for all financial obligations incurred with any illness/accident
- Students are encouraged to carry personal health insurance

Revised 4/26/2018 pg. 12
• The process for requesting American Disabilities Act accommodations are outline in the school catalog.

**Admission Drug Screening**
Applicants are required to have an 11-panel substance drug screening prior to sitting in any classes. Screening methods include via urine, blood or hair follicle analysis. A positive drug screen will result in cancelation of the candidate’s application. Refusal of drug testing will result in cancelation of the candidate’s application.

**Immunizations**
Due to the nature of required clinical experiences in a variety of the healthcare settings, the Nursing Department has specific health and immunization requirements for students. Nursing students are required to maintain current immunity for the following throughout their educational experience:

- Documentation of immunity to Measles, Mumps and Rubella
- Documentation of immunity to Varicella
- Annual documentation Tuberculin testing (PPD) with results <3 months prior to the start of the program -OR- Submission of a chest x-ray and TB Questionnaire for students known to be PPD positive
- Documentation of Hepatitis B vaccination or proof of immunity
- Td (Tdap is recommended) within the past 10 years
- Documentation of seasonal flu vaccination as required by clinical facilities

**CPR Certification**
Students must maintain current CPR certification which includes “one person and two person” rescue and care of adults, children, infants, and choking resuscitation. Students are required to have a copy in their student file an American Heart Association (AHA) Healthcare provider card. CPR certification by any other provider will not be accepted. Students will be required to have the proper CPR certification prior to the start of clinical rotation. Students will NOT be permitted to attend clinical without current CPR. If a student’s CPR card expires, the student will be required to obtain the AHA Health provider card. It is the student’s responsibility to renew and pay for CPR certifications and to ensure that CPR certification is current.

**Liability and Health Insurance**
While students are participating in assigned clinical experiences, students are covered under Vista College’s General Liability Policy. Students are encouraged to carry a personal health/accident insurance policy. Students who do not have health insurance may obtain information about free or low cost health care from the College.

**Injury/Accidents**
If a student is injured during the clinical experience, he or she must inform the instructor immediately, to initiate the reporting process. Agreements with clinical facilities demand specific procedural steps that faculty and students are expected to follow.

Students involved in an accident or who are injured while on campus are responsible for reporting the circumstances immediately to a staff member. Failure to report an incident and to complete appropriate documentation may result in dismissal from the program.

**Exposure Guidelines**
Nursing Department Accidental Needle Stick Procedures establish the policy and protocol for accidental needle sticks that occur at on campus or at a clinical site. It is expected that students, faculty, or staff who are involved in an accidental needle stick receive immediate medical attention and are offered counseling.
evaluation, and treatment, as necessary. The protocol calls for immediate action in providing medical evaluation, treatment and follow-up to students, faculty and staff involved in an exposure incident. In accordance with OSHA regulations, these procedures must be strictly followed.

**Latex Allergy/Sensitivity**

Latex is used in a variety of medical products including, but not limited to, gloves, blood pressure, equipment, tourniquets, urinary catheters, and certain skin barriers such as Tegaderm. Allergic reactions range from mild to severe. Students who experience allergy symptoms should

- Cease contact with the product and notify the faculty member
- Notify a primary health care provider and/or seek immediate emergency medical care, if necessary

**For-Cause Drug Screening**

If a nursing faculty member has reasonable cause to suspect the ability of a nursing student to perform the requirements of the program due to impairment by alcohol, prescription or non-prescription drugs, the student will be reported to the Dean of Nursing. Administration reserves the right to require random drug screening from any student at any time during the program if there is reasonable cause to believe the student may be impaired due use/misuse of, or being under the influence of, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs or prescription or non-prescription drugs.

- Observed behaviors that may result in for cause assessment:
  - Inappropriate and/or unprofessional behavior
  - Odor of suspicious nature
  - Unkempt appearance
  - Clinical behavior inconsistent with level in program
  - Slurred speech
  - Involvement in an incident or occurrence requiring an incident report
  - Speech patterns which indicate interruption of thought processes
  - Inappropriate affect
  - Unsteady gait
  - Confusion
  - Sleeping during educational activities
  - Written statements of attestation by peers, campus or clinical faculty or staff of alcohol or drug use or impaired behavior

- If any of these behaviors cause the faculty or clinical instructor to suspect the student may be impaired by alcohol or drugs, the following steps will be taken:
  - The instructor will remove the student from the classroom, lab, patient care, or other assigned work area and contact the Dean of Nursing immediately.
  - Upon the student’s oral consent, the Dean of Nursing or designee will arrange for transportation to take the student to a designated medical service facility for drug testing. The cost will be paid by the College.
  - The student must have picture ID in his/her possession.
  - After testing, the student should call the transportation service for transport home; the cost will be paid by the College.
  - Students who provide written attestation confirming alcohol or drug use still require drug testing.
  - The College will pay all costs associated with the for-cause drug testing.

- If a student refuses for-cause testing
  - The instructor will remove the student from the classroom, lab or clinical setting pending a full investigation. The Dean of Nursing will be immediately notified of the situation.
- The instructor will arrange for transportation to take the student home. If the student refuses transportation, the student should be informed that security/law enforcement will be notified.
- Refusal of for-cause drug testing will result in dismissal from the program.

- **Test results**
  - If the student tests *positive* for prescribed substances, the student must seek medical attention to discontinue the use of the identified substance before being allowed to return to academic activities. This applies to the use of marijuana even if prescribed by a physician for medical purposes.
  - If the results of the test(s) are *positive* for alcohol, non-prescribed legal substances, or other illegal substances the student will be dismissed from the program.
  - If the results of the test(s) are *negative* for drugs, alcohol, prescribed or non-prescribed legal substances, or illegal substances the student will meet with the Dean of Nursing and Director of Education within 24 hours of the test results to discuss the circumstances surrounding the observed behavior(s).
  - If the indicator was behavioral, consideration will be given to a possible medical or psychological condition causing the symptoms and a medical or psychological evaluation may be required before returning.
  - Based on the information provided and further medical or psychological evaluation, if warranted, the Dean of Nursing and Director of Education will make a decision regarding return to academic activities.

- **Continued evidence of impairment for any reason may be required to undergo further evaluation.**
  - Any repeat or rescheduled drug testing will be by hair follicle which traces illegal drug use for past 6 months, and will be at the student’s expense.
  - The College reserves the right to require mental health evaluation or random drug screening when student behavior is considered to be a threat to the welfare of others, and will be at the student’s expense.
Appendix A: Resolution of Student Concern Process

Nursing Resolution of Student Concerns Flow Chart

Step 1: Student Issue/Concern
- Student identifies a concern and meets with the instructor or staff member involved.
  - Concern Resolved
  - Student is not satisfied with the outcome

Step 2: Formal Nursing Appeal
- Student submits a Formal Appeal Form within 72 hours of the event.
- Appeal Committee convenes within 5 business days of receiving the appeal form to evaluate the student's appeal.
  - The Director of Nursing or designee investigates the situation and meets with the student
  - Appeal Committee provides a formal response to the student within 48 of the appeal meeting.
  - Concern Resolved

Step 3: Formal Grievance
- Student submits a written statement to the Compliance division of Education Futures Group within 72 hours of receiving the Appeal Committee’s decision.
- Student is not satisfied with the outcome
  - Continue to Step 2
  - Continue to Step 3
Student Concern/Issue Form

Student Name: ______________________________

Email Address: ________________________________ Phone Number: _______________

Describe your concern/issue in detail including the names of persons, locations, and dates of occurrence (attach any additional documentation, if necessary).

Students are encouraged to discuss their concerns and issues through informal conferences with the appropriate instructor, staff, or student. Have you made an attempt to resolve this issue? If yes, describe the outcome.

What is your desired outcome?

_________________________________________ ___________________
Student Signature Date

_________________________________________ ___________________
Received by DON or designee Date

Written / Verbal (circle one) response provided to the student on ________________.

Date

Include a copy of the response with the final concern/issue form
Original to student file
Copy to student
Appendix C: Formal Appeal Form

Formal Nursing Appeal Form

Student Name: ________________________________
Email Address: ________________________________ Phone Number: _______________

Please state the policy or decision that you wish to appeal
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
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_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Would you like to be present for the appeal meeting? □ Yes  □ No

Meetings may occur at previously scheduled times. However, every effort will be made to accommodate student’s schedules. If you wish to be present, and the meeting schedule can be adjusted, please provide days and times you are available.
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
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_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature: ________________________________ Date: _______________________

Submit this form along with any documentation to the Dean of Nursing or Director of Education.
Nursing Student Handbook

Acknowledgment of Receipt

I hereby certify that I have received the Nursing Student Handbook and will read and be responsible for all information contained in the handbook. My continued enrollment in the nursing program signifies my willingness to abide by the rules and regulations contained herein. I understand that I must comply with all policies as presented in the Nursing Student Handbook as well as those in the Vista College Catalog.

Student’s printed name: _____________________________________

Student’s signature: ________________________________________

Date: __________

This signed statement will be kept in your file.