Student Handbook – Accelerated BSN

Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University

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1 - Introduction to MCN Undergraduate Program

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Mission

The mission of Mennonite College of Nursing is to educate undergraduate and graduate nursing students to serve the citizens of Illinois, the nation, and the global community. Mennonite College of Nursing acknowledges a particular responsibility to address the nursing and health care needs of urban and rural populations, including those who are vulnerable and underserved. The College of Nursing builds upon the educational foundation previously acquired by students. The College creates a dynamic community of learning in which reflective thinking and ethical decision-making are valued. The College is committed to the promotion of nursing scholarship at the national and international level through research, service, and practice. Mennonite College of Nursing is committed to being purposeful, open, just, caring, disciplined, and celebrative.

Philosophy

At the heart of the College’s philosophy is the belief that all people share a common humanity. Each person must be regarded as having special biological, psychological, sociocultural and spiritual dimensions and possessing the inherent rights and responsibilities of freedom of choice and self-determination. Based on these beliefs, the College strives to grow as a caring community that supports the development of the total individual.

A vital interactive relationship exists between humankind and the environment. Environment affects each person’s biological being and extends beyond physical surroundings to encompass roles, relationships, and societal structures. Because all human beings influence and are influenced by their environment, all must assume the responsibility to protect the social and natural environments in which they share.

Health is a dynamic state influenced by individual, environmental and hereditary factors. State of health, which significantly influences quality of life, is shaped by many factors, including an individual’s decision-making and behaviors. Pursuit of wellness is the right and responsibility of each person. Nursing holds the potential to strengthen each human being pursuing optimal health and achieving a harmony of body, mind, and spirit.

Nursing is a profession that continues to evolve through research, theory, and practice. Professional nursing, encompassing a range of therapeutic interventions aimed at promoting and restoring health, addresses actual and potential health care needs of individuals, families, groups, and communities. Nursing care is delivered in diverse settings in a systematic manner through use of the nursing process.
In providing their professional services, practitioners of nursing manifest role dimensions that are collaborative and independent in nature. Because dynamic social forces influence the nature and scope of nursing practice, critical thinking, effective communication, and caring are abilities required for professional nursing practice in changing environments.

As a profession, nursing adheres to standards of practice and ethical codes as a means of ensuring quality care for all persons. The current Illinois Nursing Act serves as the legal basis for the practice of nursing in the State of Illinois.

Mennonite College of Nursing is committed to cultivating the personal and professional potential of each member of the College community. The faculty believe that learning as a life-long process is promoted when intellectual inquiry, creativity, self-awareness, self-direction, maturity, and responsibility are valued. Learning is a process of developing human potential through the interaction of the individual with the environment. This interaction aims to achieve positive attitude changes, knowledge acquisition, and professional competence.

The faculty of Mennonite College of Nursing believe that the knowledge, attitudes, and skills required for professional nursing are best achieved when built upon a solid foundation of study in the humanities and sciences. The faculty value a liberal arts education, which fosters an understanding of society and provides a humanistic basis for the study of nursing. Baccalaureate nursing education prepares the graduate for the practice of professional nursing and provides the basis for graduate study in nursing. Masters-level nursing education prepares nursing leaders and advanced practitioners, advances nursing scholarship, and provides the foundation for doctoral study.

The College offers a graduate program leading to the Master of Science in Nursing. The College offers a Family Nurse Practitioner Sequence, Clinical Nurse Leader Sequence, Nurse Educator Certificate, and a Nursing Systems Administration Sequence, as well as a Post Master’s Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Certificate. A doctoral program in nursing with a focal area in aging is also offered.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework underlying the curriculum of Mennonite College of Nursing consists of a formulation of the faculty's conceptualization of nursing. It incorporates concepts derived from numerous behavioral and nursing theories, including those developed by Betty Neuman, Dorothea Orem, Martha Rogers, Sister Callista Roy, Madeleine Leininger, and Sister M. Simone Roach. The curriculum is built upon the eight key concepts of humankind, environment, research, legal/ethical/political dimensions, information processing, teaching/learning, health promotion, and management. The development of these eight key concepts leads to four outcome abilities inherent to nursing practice. These outcome abilities are: caring, critical thinking, communication, and professional practice. The relationship of the outcome abilities to the key concepts is shown below.
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It is recognized that these designated outcome abilities and key concepts are closely inter-related. The conceptual framework is best understood through descriptions of and elaborations upon these components.

Caring

Caring is central to nursing. Caring encompasses those acts directed toward self and others, which improve the human condition. The capacity to care needs to be nurtured. This nurturing is dependent on the person being called upon to care for others. Nursing education professionalizes the human capacity to care through the acquisition of the knowledge and the skills needed to fulfill prescribed professional roles. Through the caring attributes of conscience, compassion, commitment, confidence, and competence, nursing positively influences interactions between humankind and the environment. Nursing uses these caring modalities to promote health, healing, and dignity across the lifespan.

Humankind

Human beings are adaptive systems with identifiable subsystems—the biological, the psychological, and the sociological. These subsystems are interdependent and continuously interacting in an ever-changing environment. Humankind moves through time along a developmental continuum beginning with conception and progressing through death. Human development and human fulfillment are achieved through the unfolding of the human capacity to care. People from diverse backgrounds have a caring need that is culture-specific. Nursing influences growth and development of humankind in its attainment of an optimal state of health.
Environment

Environment is the set of circumstances, objects or conditions external to human beings that positively or negatively affect their well-being. Environment encompasses the physical, biological, familial, and sociocultural systems that affect the development of each human being. Humankind has the ability to influence, and be influenced by, its continual interrelationship with the environment. Nursing focuses on positively influencing the humankind-environment relationship.

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking involves the rational examination of ideas. Critical thinking extends beyond the processes of both decision-making and problem solving. Its components include the qualities of insight, intuition, and empathy, along with the abilities to synthesize, reason, and act. The acquisition of critical thinking skills enables individuals to carry out inductive and deductive reasoning. Critical thinking skills are essential to the practice of nursing. Nursing maintains and promotes health of persons by practicing the nursing process—the problem solving methodology of the professional nurse. Critical thinking skills enable the nurse to facilitate optimal adaptive responses for human beings within their environment.

Research

The theoretical basis for nursing is derived from the humanities and sciences. Building on these disciplines, research in nursing establishes a theoretical and scientific foundation for nursing as a humanistic science. Nursing research contributes to professional practice by defining and expanding the knowledge base of nursing. Research aids in the identification and resolution of health problems and provides information vital to health promotion. The professional nurse uses critical thinking skills to analyze research and integrate findings into nursing practice.

Legal/Ethical/Political Dimensions

The legal, ethical, and political dimensions of society contribute to the structure and function of the health care system. The legal dimension of professional nursing practice deals with the analysis of situations in relationship to their conformity with laws, while the ethical dimension analyzes conformity with accepted standards of behavior. The political dimension of professional nursing practice deals with the analysis of situations in relationship to their impact upon the nursing profession and determination of means in which nurses can impact political situations. Critical analysis of these issues provides the
nurse with the information needed to serve as an advocate in the preservation of individual, group, and community integrity.

Communication

Communication is the meaningful interpersonal exchange of information and ideas. Humankind engages in continuous and dynamic interactions. These interactions may involve verbal, nonverbal, or written forms of communication. Such interactions may be social in nature or of therapeutic value. Regardless of its form or type, effective communication is essential in nursing for the development of a helping relationship. Nursing can then have a positive influence on health through the use of goal-directed communication with patients, families, and members of the health care delivery team.

Information Processing

The ability of human beings to send and receive information extends beyond verbal, nonverbal, and written communication. Information processing involves the use of technological systems to obtain the information needed to solve problems encountered in professional nursing practice. Information obtained in this manner is evaluated by the nurse through the use of critical thinking skills. Use of this information results in nursing actions vital to the promotion of positive health care outcomes.

Teaching-Learning

Principles of the teaching-learning process are applied by the nurse to self, individuals, groups, and health team members. Teaching-learning is an individualized, goal-directed process resulting in a change in knowledge, attitudes, and skills which enhance human development. Essential to the teaching-learning process is the development of mutual trust and respect between the teacher and the learner. Teaching-learning transactions are designed to positively influence the nurse-patient relationship.

Professional Practice

Professional practice in nursing is essential to the health care system. The primary focus of professional practitioners is the bio-psycho-social responses of human beings to actual or potential health problems. The professional practitioner assists humankind in the establishment of responsible self-care behaviors for the achievement, restoration, and maintenance of optimal functioning throughout the lifespan.
Knowledge of health promotion and management theories characterize the professional practice of nursing.

Health Promotion

The essence of professional nursing practice is the interaction with human beings throughout the health-illness continuum. Health promotion activities assist the individual in attaining, maintaining, or enhancing a state of well-being. Nursing recognizes that the defining characteristics of a state of well-being vary among human beings. The professional practice of nursing fosters health promotion through use of the nursing process. This process consists of five interrelated steps, including assessment, diagnosis, planning, intervention, and evaluation.

Management

Management is an interpersonal, goal-directed process based on selected theories and concepts. The professional nurse uses management principles to plan, organize, direct, and control resources. These principles are applied in the management of self, individuals, and groups. An understanding of management functions and leadership roles is essential for professional nursing practice.

Summary

The conceptual framework describes inter-related outcome abilities and key concepts upon which the nursing curriculum is based. The eight key concepts of humankind, environment, research, legal/ethical/political dimensions, information processing, teaching/learning, health promotion, and management constitute the basis of the Mennonite College of Nursing curriculum. These key concepts are organized within four outcome abilities of caring, critical thinking, communication, and professional practice. These outcome abilities serve as measures of the student’s progression through the curriculum.

Terminal Outcome Abilities

Upon completion of the baccalaureate nursing program, the graduate will possess the following terminal outcome abilities.
Caring: The student will use a variety of caring modalities that promote health, healing, and dignity throughout the life span.

Key Concept: Humankind

a. Demonstrates nursing care that is person-centered, protective, physically comforting and emotionally supportive.

b. Demonstrates the attributes of professional caring including compassion, competence, conscience, commitment and confidence.

c. Assesses the biological, psychological, spiritual, social and cultural needs of individuals, families and groups across the lifespan developmental continuum.

d. Demonstrates cultural sensitivity by implementing the nursing process with individuals, families and groups that reflects cultural competence.

Key Concept: Environment

a. Assesses environments that influence the health of individuals and families.

b. Manages a safe environment to promote health and safety of individuals, groups and self.

c. Takes an active role in designing solutions for dealing with environmental problems that affect health.

Critical Thinking: The student will use critical thinking to make judgments and develop therapeutic nursing interventions for optimal health.

Key Concept: Research

a. Demonstrates, evaluates nursing research principles and applies to nursing practice.

Key Concept: Legal/Ethical/Political Dimensions

a. Describes the legal, ethical and political role dimensions of the professional nurse in planning, implementing and evaluating care for individuals, families and groups.

b. Evaluates the effects of legal and ethical decisions in facilitating optimal outcomes for individuals, families and groups.

c. Evaluates the impact of legal, ethical, and political decision-making on professional nursing and the healthcare delivery system.
Communication: The student will communicate effectively with individuals, families, and groups.

Key Concept: Information Processing

a. Consistently demonstrates knowledge of effective communication principles and applies this knowledge during professional interactions with individuals, families and other health care professionals.

b. Demonstrates knowledge of legal and ethical issues in accessing and using information technology in academic and professional nursing practice.

Key Concept: Teaching/Learning

a. Develops, implements and evaluates teaching/learning plans for individuals, families and groups.

Professional Practice: The student will assume accountability for professional practice in contemporary society through the application of theory-based knowledge.

Key Concept: Health Promotion

a. Demonstrates effective use of the nursing process in providing therapeutic nursing interventions for individuals and families.

b. Demonstrates effective use of therapeutic nursing interventions in assisting individuals, families, and groups to progress toward their optimal level of health.

Key Concept: Management

a. Assists individuals to use organizational structures within their environment to meet health needs.

b. Demonstrates organizational skills and priority setting in the delivery of nursing care to individuals and their families.

c. Evaluates effectiveness of organizational structures within the health care system to meet the needs of individuals and their families.

d. Uses management and leadership theories; assumes responsibility for the delivery of nursing care to individuals, families and groups.

Student Responsibilities

The student is expected to:
a. Demonstrate initiative, self direction, and be active in the learning process.

b. Be prepared for clinical (including completing assigned reading and designated written work prior to clinical). Failure to prepare for the clinical experience may result in dismissal for that day.

c. Adhere to College policies concerning image, dress code, code of conduct, and attendance.

d. Contact the instructor according to College attendance policy and initiate arrangements for any make up activities in the case of an excused absence.

e. Be present at the clinical site during the specified clinical hours and communicate with the instructor (and preceptor if applicable) any plans to leave the clinical site during these hours.

f. Promptly inform instructor and/or preceptor of problems encountered in the clinical setting that require their immediate attention and/or intervention.

g. Maintain confidentiality of all client information.

h. Be accountable for nursing laboratory equipment and supplies. Adhere to all clinical nursing lab rules and procedures (refer to 10 - Clinical Simulation Lab - 31).

i. Be responsible for transportation to clinical agencies and clinical related activities.

j. Participate in self evaluation at mid semester and semester's end using the course-specific Clinical Evaluation Tool.

k. Participate in a structured evaluation of the course, instructor, clinical agency, and program.

l. Maintain open lines of communication with instructors in the event of academic difficulty so appropriate interventions can be implemented.

m. Maintain assertive communication when interacting with college instructors and personnel.

2 - Academic Policies and Procedures

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Clinical Suspension

Clinical suspension may be imposed on a student if the clinical instructor judges the student to be unsafe due to performance deficiencies or health problems. During the time of a suspension, health permitting, the student may attend theory classes but no clinical sessions.
In the event that the student is judged to be unsafe to practice due to performance deficiencies, the clinical instructor has the right and responsibility to impose a one-day clinical suspension. The Undergraduate Program Director will be notified of such action. Should additional clinical suspensions be imposed in the course of a semester, the Associate Dean will review the facts of the case to determine if continued clinical suspension is warranted. The clinical suspension remains in effect until the situation is resolved.

In keeping with the academic policies of the College, the outcome of a clinical suspension is determined by:

a. The nature and severity of the problem necessitating the suspension

b. The duration of the suspension

c. The student's academic standing at the time of the suspension

Professional Image

Nurses are professionals. Appearance and behavior are as much a part of the professional nurse as are professional education, nursing skills, clear mind, abundant energy, empathy, and the intent to facilitate healing. Clothing, hygiene and demeanor all communicate an attitude. It is expected that students, in consultation with faculty, choose grooming styles that do not interfere with patient care. When students dress and act like professionals, then peers, other professionals, and the public will accept them on that basis.

It is the student's responsibility to develop and maintain a professional image. Such an image should be evident in all business and professional settings. Personal appearance and behavior are not only a reflection of the individual, but also on the College of Nursing and the profession as a whole.

Dress Code

The Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University student dress code is established to ensure high standards for professional appearance in conjunction with consideration for patient and personal safety.

a. The complete College uniform is to be worn whenever the student is participating in clinical experiences; see individual course syllabi for exceptions.
b. The College uniform must be worn only when participating in clinical experiences, or when asked to do so for official college functions. The uniform may not be worn when functioning as an employee or attending social events.

c. The complete uniform includes the designated MCN white uniform, MCN polo shirt, MCN lab coat (all purchased at Star Uniform), white professional-looking shoes, hose/socks, picture I.D. badge (purchased from the Redbird Card Office), and watch with second hand. The ISU picture I.D. badge must be worn for identification purposes unless your clinical instructor directs you otherwise.

d. Hair must be clean and groomed, pulled back and off the shoulder, and away from the face. Facial hair should be clean and trimmed. Necessary hair accessories should portray a professional image. If in doubt, students should consult with the clinical instructor.

e. Jewelry, which may be worn with the uniform, includes: wedding band, watch that indicates seconds, and 1 pair of non decorative earlobe posts. No other jewelry is acceptable.

f. No perfume, cologne or strong fragrances should be used. Many patients, family members, and/or staff members are allergic to the scent of these items.

g. Fingernail polish and/or acrylic nails are not allowed, due to mandatory infection control policies in clinical agencies. Nail length should permit safe, comfortable nursing care.

h. Tattoos must be covered and not visible during clinical.

i. When picking up patient assignments or traveling to clinical sites where the student will change into scrubs, clothing worn under the lab coat must be professional. Professional attire under lab coat includes blouse/shirt, dress pants, skirt or dress, and hosiery. No jeans, shorts, T-shirts or sweat suits should be worn with the lab coat. For reasons of asepsis students should consider bringing a change of clothes when they must be involved in other activities before or after clinical.

Code of Conduct

The primary purpose of the College is to function as a community of individuals working together in the pursuit of knowledge and the advancement of the nursing profession.

The faculty and staff of Mennonite College of Nursing adhere to the Illinois State University code of student conduct as outlined in www.studentaffairs.ilstu.edu/downloads/code_of_student_conduct.pdf

The values included

a. Character

b. Conscience
c. Civility

d. Citizenship

e. An Appreciation of Diversity

f. Individual and Social Responsibility

Confidentiality

Confidentiality of patient information is expected. Only relevant information obtained from or about a patient may be disclosed to the health care personnel, faculty, and peers involved in the individual's care. Breach of Confidentiality can lead to expulsion from the College of Nursing.

Attendance

Based on the assumption that academic success is the student’s primary goal, students are expected to attend class and they are required to attend clinical and laboratory experiences. Following are the policies and procedures for the make up of missed examinations and clinical/laboratory experiences.

Attendance at all clinical and lab days as assigned is required. Students are required to make up all excused clinical days as determined by the clinical instructor and the clinical lab coordinator. These make-up hours must be clinical hours arranged between the student and faculty member/clinical lab coordinator. Three options that might be considered include the following:

a. The student will arrange to make up clinical time with permission of another clinical instructor, on a different day, at a clinical site to which he/she is oriented.

b. The student will make up clinical time with his/her instructor, at their designated facility, on an arranged date and time.

c. If none of the above is possible, the course leader may offer another alternative in consultation with the Undergraduate Program Director.

If the student misses three or more clinical days, the faculty member may grant permission for one clinical day to be made up by attending a conference or workshop that is deemed appropriate to the course/clinical content, but all other clinical days must be completed at a clinical site to meet the minimum 96 hours of clinical practicum.

In the event of multiple excused absences, or the timing or the excused absences, faculty and administration will review the situation regarding progression in the program.
Final Exams

It is expected that the printed final exam schedule in the course syllabus will be followed. However, in the event of extenuating circumstances, a student's request to take the final exam at a time other than the scheduled will be considered by the instructor. Validation of circumstances is required when the request is submitted.

Missed Exams

In the event of illness or other circumstances resulting in an absence on the day of an exam, it is expected that:

a. The student must contact the faculty member in person or via telephone, or in certain situations by significant person, prior to the absence. Excuses sent via classmates at exam time are not acceptable.

b. The student must contact the instructor as soon as she/he has returned to school to arrange a time for taking the exam.

c. Depending on the length and reason for the absence, the exam must be made up within one week after returning.

It is the faculty's decision whether or not an alternate exam will be offered. It is expected that the faculty will be understanding in making a decision about taking a missed exam, however, patterns of absences will be monitored. Verification may be required to avoid abuse.

Transportation Requirements

Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University considers it the students' responsibility to provide their own transportation to all classes and clinical sites.

Disability Concerns

Illinois State University's Division of Student Affairs maintains a unit on Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall. According to their website: “Illinois State University provides a welcoming atmosphere for individuals with disabilities by assisting each in functioning independently within the University community and providing equal access and opportunity in accomplishing educational, professional and personal goals. As a unit of the Student Affairs Division, Disability Concerns is the designated office to
provide approved accommodation services for students, faculty, staff, and guests with disabilities. Disability Concerns obtains and maintains documentation of disability, certifies eligibility for services, determines reasonable accommodations, and develops plans for providing such accommodations. This is accomplished in a confidential manner to ensure equal opportunity for participation in all courses, programs, activities and employment offered by Illinois State.”

Students may learn more about the office of Disability Concerns at www.disabilityconcerns.ilstu.edu

Student Grievance

Mennonite College of Nursing endorses the Student Grievance Process of Illinois State University as outlined in the following website: http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/about_us/crr.shtml

As outlined in this policy, “A grievance is defined as a complaint arising out of any alleged unauthorized or unjustified act or decision by a member of the University community which in any way adversely affects the status, rights, or privileges of any student. Typically, grievances are a response to an action that has been taken against a student by a faculty or staff member that is without justification or basic fairness. Most often, grievances arise based on a student’s belief that a grade awarded in a class was unfair and not in accordance with the work performed. In other cases, students might be deprived of their status, rights, or privileges based on an arbitrary and/or capricious action.”

Students can determine if an action can be challenged through the grievance process by contacting Community Rights & Responsibilities at 309-438-8621.

Student Grievance Procedure:

Informal Process

a. If a student has a grievance or complaint, the student should attempt an informal resolution with the faculty or staff member in question.

b. If this proves unsuccessful, the student should seek informal resolution with the course leader (for clinical courses).

Formal Process

a. If an informal resolution is not successful, the student may proceed to initiating a formal complaint/grievance.

b. To initiate the formal process, the student must file a written formal complaint within 30 working days of the alleged grievance. The written complaint must:

   i. Be word processed
ii. Be signed and dated

iii. Include student’s current address and phone number

iv. Be concise and specific, with names and dates wherever relevant and possible

v. Clearly state the act or decision being challenged

vi. Clearly state why the act or decision is unauthorized or unjust

vii. Briefly describe attempts to reach an agreement through informal discussions with the instructor and/or course leaders.

c. Failure to include all required information will result in a delay of the grievance process. Written complaints will not be reviewed until all information is provided.

d. The Program Director will review the formal complaint and meet with the student and/or faculty/staff member within 10 working days of receipt of the complaint.

e. The Program Director will attempt to facilitate resolution of the grievance at the College level. Community Rights & Responsibilities is available to provide a 3rd party mediator for internal grievance meetings. When this service is requested, the student should contact Community Rights & Responsibilities a minimum of 3 days prior to the scheduled meeting with the Program Director to arrange for a mediator to be present.

f. If a resolution is not achieved within the College, a grievance request may be filed by the student with the University Community Rights and Responsibilities Office or the Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action as appropriate. Community Rights & Responsibilities is responsible for coordinating the formal student grievance process at the university level. This process exists to provide students an opportunity to request that the University review actions or decisions of University faculty and staff members. The Student Grievance Committee is responsible for reviewing student complaints and investigating cases it deems necessary of investigation.

g. Information about the grievance process can be obtained through the Illinois State University Community Rights and Responsibilities website at http://www.deanofstudents.ilstu.edu/about_us/crr.shtml

Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background checks are becoming standard requirements by many healthcare institutions. Because the clinical experience is an essential component of the curriculum, students unable to participate, could not successfully complete the curriculum. Criminal background checks and fingerprinting are also required in many states to apply for licensure. Effective January 2007, all
Mennonite College of Nursing prelicensure students will be required to complete criminal background checks prior to enrollment. Students who have been convicted of committing or attempting to commit certain crimes specified in the Health Care Worker Background Check Act (225 ILCS 46/5, et seq.) (hereafter “the Act”) may be ineligible to continue in the nursing program. Students who do not give permission to conduct the criminal background check will be barred from enrollment in the nursing program at Mennonite College of Nursing.

Policy:

Mennonite College of Nursing requires that all prelicensure students complete criminal background checks. The criminal background checks will be conducted through a company selected by Mennonite College of Nursing. The cost associated with the background check process is the responsibility of the student. It should be noted that students receiving a positive criminal background check, whose offense prohibits them from being hired by a health care employer under the Act, must obtain a waiver from the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) to continue in the nursing program.

Procedure:

a. Upon acceptance to the nursing program, students will be provided detailed information regarding the procedure for completing this requirement.

b. Students will be required to sign a consent form (Authorization for Criminal Background Investigation and Disclosure/Consent Form) that allows the College to conduct the criminal background check and to release results of criminal background checks to clinical agencies upon their request. Failure to sign the consent form and provide all necessary information shall result in the student being unable to begin or progress in the nursing program.

c. The criminal background check must be completed by the company designated by the college no sooner than 60 days prior to enrollment in the nursing program. Students may NOT use similar reports on file at other agencies to satisfy this requirement.

d. Background checks must be completed by the dates specified. Additional checks may be required if: 1. clinical agencies require criminal background checks more frequently or 2. the nursing student interrupts his/her program for one semester or longer. In such cases, the student will be required to have another criminal background check. The College of Nursing reserves the right to require an additional background check during the program at the college’s discretion.

e. Results of Criminal Background checks must be submitted to the College of Nursing. Results will be confidentially maintained by the College of Nursing separate from their academic record. Results will be maintained until the student graduates from the University.

f. The student is responsible for all fees for background checks. Costs may be subject to change and are beyond the control of the University or the College of Nursing.
Management of Results:

a. The Undergraduate Program Director or designee will access the electronic report from the selected company.

b. A student whose background check results in a status of “no record” may enroll in clinical courses and continue in the nursing program.

c. A student whose background check results in a positive history (a background check that results in a criminal history) will be notified by the Undergraduate Program Director or designee as soon as possible. Students may view their own results on the vendor website.

d. The Undergraduate Program Director or designee will meet with the student to verify whether the criminal record is valid or invalid.

e. If the student believes that a record or conviction is erroneous, the student may request a fingerprint-based background check. The student is responsible for the cost of fees for fingerprint checks. If the fingerprint check reveals no criminal convictions, the student may continue in the nursing program and enroll in clinical courses. Results must be received prior to the beginning of the semester for the student to remain enrolled.

f. If the conviction is found to be valid and the offense is on the “crimes that disqualify” list from IDPH, the student will be required to secure a waiver from IDPH.

g. The student is responsible for contacting IDPH (217-782-2913) for instructions and an application for waiver. The process for a waiver may take several weeks or longer. The student may not enroll in nursing courses prior to attaining the waiver.

h. The IDPH waiver must be submitted to the Undergraduate Program Director upon receipt.

i. The student may be allowed to continue in the program only after the IDPH waiver has been received by the Undergraduate Program Director. Enrollment will be based on program capacity and availability of courses. If a waiver is not granted, the student will be withdrawn from the nursing program.

j. The college is not responsible for any student being ineligible for coursework, continued enrollment in the program, or subsequent licensure as a registered nurse.

k. The student is responsible for keeping the college updated on any and all changes in his/her criminal background status. False information or failure to disclose correct information at any time may be basis for dismissal from the program.
Family Exclusion Statement

In the interest of providing optimum learning experiences for students, the following points will be considered in scheduling theory and clinical course section assignments. When possible:

a. Students will not be placed in a theory course or clinical setting where a family member* serves as faculty for that course or in that clinical course section.

b. Students will not be placed in a theory course or clinical course section in which another family member* is enrolled as a student.

*Family member includes a student’s spouse, domestic partner, parents, brothers, sisters, and children.

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Advisement Meetings

During each of the year’s four sessions, one or more advising meetings may be required. These meetings are opportunities for students and their advisor to discuss academic progress, identify problems, and find solutions. Students will be given a timeframe in which meeting appointments may be made.

Change of Address Information

All students need to notify the MCN academic advisement office regarding any changes in address or telephone numbers to ensure students receive proper mailings. Students must also update their information through the iCampus Portal, “Update My Address.”

Application for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation prior to specified deadlines. In general, students should apply to graduate no later than four months prior to anticipated graduation date. Students should refer to the Graduation Services website for specific information about graduation.

Commencement Ceremony
All students graduating from Mennonite College of Nursing are invited to attend Commencement ceremonies at the time designated by the University. Accelerated Nursing students may also participate in a celebration hosted by Mennonite College of Nursing at the completion of their academic program. Students are invited to purchase commemorative nursing pins through the college which will be handed to them at their graduation celebration. Information about nursing pins will be provided to students several months prior to the Commencement ceremony & celebration events.

Honors and Awards at Graduation

Each year students and faculty are recognized with college-specific honors and awards at the graduation celebration. Students will be given the opportunity to vote for student and faculty awards.

4 - Career

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Career Preparation

Illinois State University offers students supportive resources in career preparation through the Illinois State University Career Center. Located in the Student Services Building on campus, the Career Center offers a variety of services including career fairs, job search, interview preparation, feedback on resumes and cover letters, mock interviewing, and job placement. Students may find additional information at [http://www.careercenter.ilstu.edu/](http://www.careercenter.ilstu.edu/).

Student Employment

Students in the Accelerated BSN are strongly discouraged from working, due to the intensive demands of study in an accelerated format.

5 - College Support and Organizations

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Student Nurses Association
All undergraduate students are invited to be a part of one of Illinois State’s Registered Student Organizations (RSO): SNA is the Student Nurses Association.

With a strong commitment to community service and outreach, this group focuses on professional development, good citizenship, unified bonds with faculty, and feedback to the college regarding all aspects of undergraduate programming.

**Sigma Theta Tau**

The Mennonite College of Nursing Honor Society was established in 1988 and became a recognized chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI). STTI is committed to fostering excellence, scholarship and leadership in nursing to improve health care worldwide. Membership to the Xi Pi Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau is limited to students who meet the following honor society guidelines:

a. Completed at least one-half of the required upper-division curriculum;

b. Earned a cumulative (MCN) upper-division grade point average of at least 3.0.

c. Rank in the upper 35% of their class.

If invited to join, the student is inducted into the Honor Society at a special ceremony in the Fall.

**6 - Computer Lab**

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Computer Lab

The MCN Computer Lab is located on the 3rd floor in Edwards Hall, Room 305. Computer lab hours are posted each semester. To utilize the computer lab printer, students must have credit on their Redbird ID card.

**7 - Evaluations**

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Faculty/Course Evaluations

Toward the end of each semester, students will be asked to complete written and/or online faculty, course, and clinical evaluation forms. If two or more instructors are teaching a class, an evaluation form will be completed for each. These evaluations are held until after semester grades are submitted to appropriate University personnel. Once the semester grades have been submitted, faculty are given the evaluation data for review. Constructive feedback is used to improving learning in classroom and clinical experience.

Undergraduate Grading and Clinical Evaluation Policies

The following grading scale will be used in all undergraduate nursing courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Grade Point</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-89%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>74-81%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-73%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>65% &amp; under</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Combined unit and final exam scores must be 74% or higher in order for students to receive a passing grade in the course. If the student does not accrue 74% on the combined unit and final exam, the student will fail the course with a D or F, depending on the number of points accrued.

After 74% is accrued on unit and final exams, grades received on other assignments are added in to determine the final grade for the course. Students should consult individual course syllabi for clarification.

In a clinical course, the clinical experience is evaluated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory by the clinical faculty. There is no separate grade for clinical. If the student’s clinical performance is satisfactory, the grade for the course is the theory (lecture-discussion) grade. An unsatisfactory performance in the clinical setting results in a grade of “F” for the course. There is no separate grade for clinical. A grade of “C” (2.00) must be attained to pass any nursing course.
Academic Progress Reports

Students will receive a Course Progress Report to indicate a performance deficiency if they:

a. Receive a grade less than “C” on a test or major course project.
b. Receive a theory grade less than “C” at any point during the course.
c. Demonstrate unsatisfactory clinical performance.

Students who receive notice of performance deficiencies are responsible for arranging a conference with the instructor within one week of receiving the Progress Report in order to clarify the problem and identify methods to remedy the situation.

Clinical Evaluation Tool

In each clinical course, students will be evaluated at midterm and at the end of the semester according to the terminal outcome abilities of the college curriculum. Each Clinical Evaluation Tool is course specific and students will be oriented to the clinical evaluation process at the beginning of each clinical course. The Clinical Evaluation Tool will be filed in the student’s academic file at the end of the semester.

8 - Health

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Health Insurance Requirements

All Mennonite College of Nursing Students are required to carry and provide evidence of health insurance. Students need to be aware that any preventative health, injuries, illnesses, and/or other conditions associated with being a nursing student are the sole responsibility of the student. Financial obligations relating to the health of the student should be processed through the students’ health insurance policy. Any remaining financial obligations are the responsibility of the student. Proof of student health insurance will be verified at the beginning of each academic year. If a student cannot verify proof of insurance, the student will not be allowed to engage in any clinical activities. Please be aware that Accelerated BSN students are not eligible to purchase ISU Student Health Insurance; you must find a private health insurer.
Blood Borne Pathogens Requirement

All prelicensure students at Mennonite College of Nursing (MCN) receive annual training updates on Blood Borne Pathogens. This material is initially presented to students at the beginning of their junior year as part of Clinical Simulation Lab (CSL) orientation. Students complete subsequent training in the fall of their senior year, via modules on the CSL Blackboard homepage. Upon completion of this training, students are required to sign a Blood Borne Pathogens Training form, which is kept on file in the CSL office.

Students and faculty of Mennonite College of Nursing follow the Illinois State University Blood Borne Pathogens/Infectious Waste Exposure Control Plan prepared by the Environmental Health and Safety Office. This plan can be found at: http://www.ehs.ilstu.edu/research/biosafety/index.shtml

Students and faculty also follow standard precautions and recommendations set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (http://www.cdc.gov).

Student Exposure to Blood/Body Fluids

Upon exposure to blood/body fluids during clinical experience or in the nursing lab, the following actions are implemented:

a. The student immediately reports the exposure to the instructor or lab staff.

b. The clinical agency’s protocol for exposure/injury is followed immediately.

c. Follow-up serologies and medical evaluation can be obtained at the Illinois State University Student Health Services.

d. The student and faculty will complete an Incident Report available on the ISU Environmental Health and Safety website at http://www.ehs.ilstu.edu/downloads/Non-employee.pdf. After downloading and completing the form, the original should be sent to the Environmental Health and Safety address on the form. A copy of the completed form should be delivered to the Mennonite College of Nursing Associate Dean’s Office by the student.

e. As with all healthcare expenses, payment for evaluation and treatment is the responsibility of the student.

Student Health Requirements
All students entering the Nursing Program are expected to be in compliance with all Health Requirements of the broader university and Mennonite College of Nursing.

**Immunization/Health Requirements**

All students admitted to Illinois State University are required, by Illinois Law (Public Act) 85-1315, to provide proof of immunity for tetanus, diphtheria, measles, mumps, and rubella. Documentation of immunity must be complete and on file in the Student Health Service within the first 15 calendar days of the entering semester.

Proof of immunity must include a tetanus/diphtheria booster within 10 years of attendance at Illinois State University; two measles immunizations, both after one year of age and after December 31, 1968; one mumps immunization after one year of age and after December 31, 1967; one rubella immunization after one year of age and after December 31, 1968.

All immunization dates must be signed/certified by a physician or public health official. Immunization dates and certification can be documented on the Health History Report located on the Student Health Service Website. The Health History Report will remain on file at the Student Health Center. International students are required by University regulations to have a TB skin test within 10 days of their arrival on campus.

Copies of student immunization records on file with Student Health Services are available with a signed consent for release and payment of a copy fee.

Copies are available for pickup after 1 p.m. on the next business day, Monday through Friday. Picture identification is required to pick up health copies. Copies can also be mailed to the address specified on the signed consent for release. Further information can be obtained from the Health Information Management Department at (309) 438-3116.

In addition to the immunization requirements referenced above all nursing students are expected to receive a physical examination by a physician or nurse practitioner on the Mennonite College of Nursing at Illinois State University Physical Examination Form provided by the college. This form requires students to provide the physician/nurse practitioner with information regarding any physical limitations. Awareness of one’s physical limitations will help us enable you to succeed in the program and ensure patient safety. Nursing is a rigorous profession requiring physical flexibility and mobility (i.e. lifting patients, moving equipment, and responding quickly in emergencies). Honest disclosure to the physician/nurse practitioner conducting one’s physical examination regarding any mobility issues (i.e. such as a history of back injury with lifting limitations and knee injuries) is a necessity for safe nursing practice.
As part of the physical examination process students will be expected to obtain blood titres to provide proof of immunity from rubella and varicella. Even if a student has been immunized or shows evidence of having had these diseases, he/she will need to obtain these titres-no exceptions. A two-step tuberculosis skin test must be completed by all students no earlier than December 12, 2008. Completion of a three-dose injection series for Hepatitis B is also required. The first two doses must be administered prior to being allowed to participate in clinical activities beginning in the Spring 2009. The second dose should be administered one month after the first dose has been given. The third dose should be administered five months after the second dose has been administered. Students will not be able to participate in clinical activities at the beginning of their second semester at Mennonite College of Nursing if the third dose has not been scheduled to be administered. The physical examination with supporting documentation is due November 14, 2008.

The completion of an annual CPR course must be completed by all nursing students no earlier than November 14, 2008, even though some of the cards are issued with a two-year renewal. This annual update policy is consistent with health requirements for nursing students at local hospitals. The CPR course must be one of the following courses, with no exceptions: American Heart Association’s “Healthcare Provider” course or “CPR for the Professional Rescuer” offered by the American Red Cross. Students with CPR instructor status may provide documentation of this status for approval of this requirement.

All students entering the Nursing Program are sent information about these health requirements upon acceptance into the program.

9 - Independent Study/Guidelines/Forms

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Students enrolled in the Accelerated BSN may be eligible to complete an independent study if doing so fulfills graduation requirements for the major. Consultation with one’s academic advisor will assist students in clarifying independent study requirements. Approval to complete an independent study is typically associated with the transfer of coursework from another nursing program.

Independent Study Guidelines

Independent Nursing Study (INS) is an opportunity for in depth exploration of a topic of professional interest. The focus of study may be categorized as follows:

a. A research project
b. A clinical experience

c. A non-clinical professional experience

d. A community service project

e. A transcultural placement

Prerequisites include:

a. Successful completion of basic coursework that supports the area of interest

b. Good academic standing

Procedure

a. Prior to registration the student makes an appointment with the faculty member he or she wishes to have as an INS advisor. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the student’s proposed topic, to determine whether appropriate prerequisites are met, and to determine the appropriateness and availability of the faculty member to serve as the INS advisor.

   i. If the faculty member agrees to serve as the INS advisor, a Permission to Register form is completed by the advisor and the student. Students must have written approval to register for an Independent Study.

   ii. If the faculty member is unable to serve as the INS advisor, the faculty member directs the student to other potential advisors.

   iii. During the initial meeting or at a subsequent meeting, the student and INS advisor discuss the INS guidelines, identify a topic and focus of study and clarify course requirements. In general, guidelines for use of INS credit are:

      1. 1 credit hour (used for theory) = 48 hours of work (based on 1 hour class per week plus 2 hours of preparation = 3 hours per week X 16 weeks = 48 hours)

      2. 1 credit hour (used for clinical) = 32 hours of work

b. Following registration, the student makes an appointment with the designated INS advisor. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss course objectives, learning activities, and evaluation methods. The Independent Study Contract is negotiated and will be finalized no later that the first week of the specified semester. Students who do not comply with this deadline will be required to drop the course.
c. All research projects must first be submitted to the College Research Coordinator for review and students must obtain IRB approval.

d. For observation and/or hands-on clinical experiences, a minimum of one month should be allowed for establishment of institutional contracts. The Undergraduate Program Director is to be contacted by the INS advisor to initiate agency contract development following the student’s initial registration for the INS. Clinical preceptors must meet criteria established by the College.

Roles and Responsibilities

a. The Undergraduate Program Director is responsible for giving final approval for the Independent Study Contract, establishing institutional contracts when needed, providing guidance to all parties involved, and maintaining the Independent Study contract within the student’s academic file.

b. The student is responsible for being a self-directed learner. This involves making initial contact with the potential Independent Study advisor prior to registration and the completion of the course objectives and learning methods sections of the Independent Study contract by the first week of the semester. The student also schedules bi-weekly conferences with the Independent Study advisor in order to assess progress in meeting course objectives. Students who have the privilege of working in clinical, community, and transcultural settings are responsible for being positive professional role models.

c. The Independent Study Advisor is responsible for academic counseling related to course objectives, learning activities, and evaluation methods. The advisor assumes responsibility for forwarding the completed Independent study contract to the Undergraduate Program Director for final approval. Advisors also monitor progress, evaluate course achievement and assign a course grade. When appropriate, feedback is sought from agency preceptors regarding student performance using the Preceptor Evaluation Tool.
MENNONITE COLLEGE OF NURSING
AT ILLINOIS STATE UNIVERSITY

INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT

NAME: _______________________________________________________

SEMESTER: ____________________ YEAR: ____________________

TITLE OF INDEPENDENT STUDY: ________________________________

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

LEARNING METHODS:

EVALUATION METHODS WITH TIMELINE:
COURSE CREDIT ALLOCATION:

By signing below, the Independent Study advisor agrees to be available for guidance, to monitor the progress and to evaluate the experience by means of a final grade.

__________________________________  ________________________
Independent Study Advisor            Date

__________________________________  ________________________
Student                                Date

__________________________________  ________________________
Undergraduate Program Director        Date

Copies to:
Independent Study Advisor
Student
Undergraduate Program Director
Use of Nursing Clinical Simulation Lab

The Clinical Simulation Labs (CSL) are located on the first floor of Edwards Hall, Rooms 111, 112, & 114. The CSL is staffed by the Clinical Lab Coordinator, Assistant Clinical Lab Coordinator, Graduate Assistants and Senior Undergraduate Lab Assistants. Lab staff is available to assist students with practice and proficiency of clinical nursing skills throughout the year. Students may utilize the CSL for supervised practice at any time. When needed, course or clinical instructors may refer students to Lab for additional practice or remediation. Guidelines for remediation are available by contacting the Clinical Lab Coordinator. Specific open lab hours, during which students may practice, are posted on the CSL bulletin board outside the Labs in Edwards Hall as well as under the Clinical Simulations tab on the MCN home page.

In addition to the availability of Open Lab hours, students are assigned designated Clinical Simulation Lab days during each clinical course. Scheduled Lab days are mandatory and failure to attend the scheduled lab day will be grounds for failure of for the clinical course.

Use of Lab Equipment

All students requesting the use of nursing lab equipment for presentation or teaching activities must utilize the “Clinical Nursing Lab Equipment Sign-out form”. This form can be found in (Edwards Hall 112) and must be signed by both the student and a lab staff member before equipment will be released. To facilitate the check-out of any lab equipment, please call (309-438-7844) or email the Clinical Lab Coordinator at least one week in advance of the date requested.

When lab equipment is returned, both the student and a lab staff member must initial the sign-out form again. Replacement of equipment found to be missing that has not been signed back in will be the responsibility of the last person to whom the equipment is checked out to. Failure to comply with sign out procedures and/or loss or damage to lab equipment will result in the assessment of replacement fees (see sign out form for details).

11 - Orientation

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Orientation

A one-day orientation is held for each incoming cohort of the Accelerated BSN Sequence Option, approximately six to eight weeks prior to the start date. Attendance at this event is mandatory. The goals of this event are:

a. Familiarize students with the mission and philosophy of the College
b. Give students a tour of facilities, including both within the College and the Library
c. Assist students in obtaining their student id (Redbird card) and nursing badge
d. Give students an opportunity to meet their faculty members
e. Interact with the students of the outgoing cohort; this may be the only opportunity to meet your predecessors
f. Meet your classmates

Library Orientation

During Mennonite College of Nursing’s Fall Orientation, students entering the nursing program are required to attend a library orientation. They will be given an opportunity to meet the nursing librarian and become familiar with the titles and location of selected sources that will support their studies at Mennonite College of Nursing. Nursing is a discipline that requires a high degree of information literacy.

12 - NCLEX Preparation/Success Plan

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Preparation for NCLEX-RN

The NCLEX-RN (National Council Licensure Examination-Registered Nurse) is an exam developed by the National Council of State Boards of Nursing, Inc. (NCSBN). Passing the NCLEX-RN is required of a candidate for licensure as a Registered Nurse (RN) by all US state and territorial Boards of Nursing.

Application forms are ordered from the Illinois Department of Professional Regulation and are made available to students in a structured format during the semester that culminates with student graduation. All information related to completion of application will be provided during this required session. The Illinois Department of Professional Regulation requires students applying for licensure in
the State of Illinois to be fingerprinted by a designated vendor approved by the state. Once completed students must then submit the original fingerprinting receipt to the designated staffmember in charge of applications. This original fingerprinting receipt for fingerprinting is required by the state. Fingerprints are only valid for 60 days from the date on the original receipt. The Undergraduate Program Director will arrange a day for the vendor to come to campus for fingerprinting.

College Success Plan 2008-2009

The College Success Plan outlines a path to best prepare prelicensure students for success. Students take a series of mastery exams designed to prepare them for the NCLEX Exam, and ultimately, to excel in the field of nursing.

Purpose: To provide:

a. An assessment of each student's ability to understand and apply theoretical and clinical knowledge related to clinical courses as they progress through the curriculum.

b. An assessment of each student’s preparedness to be successful on the NCLEX-RN.

c. Intervention guidelines and strategies that address any deficiencies a student may demonstrate in understanding and applying theoretical and clinical knowledge related to clinical courses.

Assumptions:

a. Faculty members believe in a unified approach in preparing students to take the NCLEX-RN and function as safe, effective registered nurses.

b. Mastery exams given prior to the completion of each semester are to be used as a guide in determining acquisition of knowledge and application of content area.

c. Exams given during a students’ final academic semester will be used to determine a students’ readiness to take the NCLEX-RN and function as a registered nurse.

d. It is imperative that faculty create an academic culture that is both challenging and caring.

e. All students at the College will participate in success plan testing during all four semesters of the Nursing Major.

f. Faculty members believe that Mastery testing throughout the curriculum is a valid way to assist students in preparing to take the NCLEX-RN and function as registered nurses.

g. Faculty members support use of standardized tests within their courses as a teaching tool; this includes the administration and review of such tests
h. Students will understand the seriousness to which they should approach mastery and readiness testing.

i. Students will actively participate in any proposed interventions for noted deficiencies in knowledge and skill acquisition essential for passing the NCLEX-RN.

Evaluation Criteria

The Success Plan is to be evaluated by the PCC (Prelicensure Curriculum Committee) and CC (College Council) at the end of each semester. A report should be completed by the committee and available to all faculty members. Items to consider in the evaluation process will include:

a. NCLEX-RN pass/fail rates

b. Appropriateness of Mastery exams/Nurse Predictor

c. Alternative approaches to conducting exams

d. Faculty utilization of suggested classroom/clinical interventions

e. Date analysis by faculty at the end of each semester

Success Plan Guidelines

a. All prelicensure students will participate in the Success Plan.

b. Students are required to take each mastery exam as scheduled for the academic year. Exams are administered during scheduled computer lab hours. These hours will vary depending on the level of the student.

c. Mastery exams are secured exams and only administered in the computer lab under the supervision of an exam proctor. Success plan testing proctors include the Success Plan Coordinator Cathi Kaesberg, and the Associate Director of Technology Jeff Grabb, and their designated lab personnel. Unsecured exams are non-proctored and can be taken from any computer with the appropriate specifications. Non-proctored exams can be taken an unlimited number of times.

d. If you have scheduled an exam and are unable to attend the session because of an emergency or illness, please contact the computer lab at 309-438-2701.

e. All students who fail to pass their designated success plan test are required to research each of the “topics to study” that can be found in the “test results” section of the ATI website. Each student
must present evidence that the self-remediation process has been completed prior to attending a review session with Cathi Kaesberg prior to retesting. This “topics to study” documentation should be submitted to Cathi Kaesberg prior to the review session.

f. The Graduate Nurse Predictor (GNP) exam is administered only once. There is no opportunity for remediation and retesting. Students taking the Graduate Nurse Predictor exam are required to achieve a 70% on the exam as designated in the syllabus for Management and Leadership Dimensions (NUR 327). A GNP score less than 70% mandates that the student take the ISU sponsored NCLEX review course. Verification of registration and payment for the course is required before the Management and Leadership Dimensions course grade will be submitted. Students with a GNP score below 70% will receive an “incomplete” for Management and Leadership Dimensions. These students are required to take the ISU sponsored NCLEX review course and achieve a 68% on the post-course readiness test. Paperwork pertaining to NCLEX testing will not be signed and mailed from the College until the student successfully completes the review course. Should the student not assess NCLEX-RN ready following the review course (post-review readiness score less than 65%), an individualized remediation program will be initiated until the student can demonstrate NCLEX readiness.

g. Students are required to comply with all success plan guidelines in order to progress from semester to semester at the College. All students are required to maintain academic integrity for all success plan testing.