

**SECTION IV (of BSN Student Handbook)**  
**The College of Nursing Honor Code**  
(Revised: September 2018)

**A. Introduction**

Honesty, integrity and high ethical standards are central to the practice of professional nursing. Professional nursing recognizes and addresses the health care needs of a global society, communities and their members. Professional nursing education encompasses a humanistic orientation and a dedication to basic ethical principles. Nursing education requires immersion in the values of nursing; caring, compassion, confidentiality, collaboration, discipline, evidence-based practice, critical thinking, respect, and dedication to the highest standards of ethical behavior.

As a student nurse, professional behavior is necessary to prepare for professional practice. As a professional nurse, standards of behavior are expressed in the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements. These values are central to patient-centeredness, patient advocacy, and providing care that leads to the best patient outcomes.

Nursing students become part of the University of Iowa “College of Nursing Community”, which includes faculty and staff. It also includes professional colleagues at agencies where students have clinical experiences. The nursing community includes College of Nursing alumni and members of professional nursing associations as well as nurses from other institutions.

Participation in the Honor Code provides evidence to the University of Iowa College of Nursing community that the integrity of its members is unquestioned and accepted by those in the academic, clinical, and research communities. Participation in the Honor Code confers upon students the responsibility to respect and protect the integrity of the University of Iowa College of Nursing. It also provides evidence that the learning environment is safe and equitable regardless of the student’s gender, race, religion, or sexual orientation. Students and faculty together establish and maintain and protect trust in these beliefs.

Mutual respect and trustworthiness between the faculty and students is necessary to promote optimal learning. For optimal learning to take place, students are expected to have a commitment to attending and actively participating in all classes. When a student chooses to study at the College of Nursing, they join a conversation among scholars, professors and students, one that helps sustain both the intellectual community here and in the larger world of nurse-scholars. The tests that are taken, the papers that are written, the clinical experiences that are completed—all these are ways in which students contribute to this conversation.

The College of Nursing presumes that the work for any course or any experience is the student’s own contribution to that scholarly conversation, and it expects the student to take responsibility for that contribution. This means that you should only present ideas that are original, or, if ideas of others are presented, that they are properly attributed. Failure to do so constitutes academic dishonesty.

Students at the University of Iowa College of Nursing are expected to demonstrate honesty and integrity, and to behave in a manner consistent with that of a professional nurse. You must assume personal responsibility for being in the appropriate physical and mental condition necessary to provide safe nursing care and to have the knowledge and skills necessary to provide this care.

All College of Nursing students will sign an attestation to confirm that they have read and understand the College of Nursing Code of Academic and Professional Behavior.

### **B. Applicability**

The Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior applies to all undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Nursing. Students are also required to comply with the University's Code of Student Life (<https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/>).

Students will sign an attestation indicating they have read and abide by the policies and expectations outlined in the BSN Handbook, The College of Nursing Honor Code, and the ANA Code of Ethics upon admission to the College of Nursing and/or beginning the nursing major coursework.

### **C. Definitions of Unacceptable Behavior**

The following behaviors are examples of violations of the Student Code of Academic and Professional Behavior. Unacceptable behavior is divided into three categories: academic, clinical, and personal. The list does not include all behaviors that may be violations of the Student Code. In addition, attempts at misconduct as well as completed acts are violations of the Student Code.

In cases involving clinical misconduct, the student will be removed from the clinical setting. An immediate review of the conduct will be completed by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and the Executive Associate Dean, in consultation with officials at the agency where the conduct occurred. Sanctions will be imposed at the conclusion of this review. All incidents of clinical misconduct will be handled on a case-by-case basis with sanctions determined by the severity of the misconduct, the potential risk to patients and the nature of the setting. Decisions on sanctions for clinical misconduct are not negotiable or subject to appeal.

#### **1. Academic Misconduct**

- a. Not attending and actively participating in class, as articulated in the course syllabus.
- b. Plagiarism: taking credit for another person's work or ideas regardless of the medium, stealing other's results or methods, copying the writing of others (including content from electronic sources) without properly citing the source; or taking credit falsely in any other manner.
- c. Cheating includes: using or attempts to use unauthorized notes, collaborating with others without permission to do so; using study aids, technology, information from another person on an exam, report, paper or other evaluative document; during online testing using the internet to search for unauthorized answers; providing/accepting online testing code when not in class, unauthorized altering of a graded work, then submitting it for re-grading; allowing another person to do all or part of one's work and to submit the work under one's own name; using notes or texts for an on-line exam, unless explicitly allowed by the faculty.
- d. Falsification of data: dishonesty in reporting results, ranging from blatant fabrication of data, improper adjustment of results and gross negligence in collecting and analyzing data, to selective reporting or omission of conflicting data for deceptive purposes.
- e. Aiding and abetting dishonesty: providing material, information or assistance to another person with the knowledge or reasonable expectation that the material, information, or assistance would be used to commit an act that would be prohibited by the Student

Code.

- f. Violating instructions regarding completion of assignments: although independent study is recognized as a principal method of learning, at times students benefit from studying in groups and discussing assignments and laboratory experiments. When material is to be turned in for evaluation or inspection, it is up to the student(s) to comply with the terms of the assignment and to determine what cooperation, if any, between them is permitted by the instructor.
- g. Falsification of academic record and official documents: without proper authorization, altering documents affecting academic records, forging signatures of authorization, or falsifying information on an official academic document, form, grade report, letter of permission, clinical record or any other official document.

## 2. Personal Misconduct

Attendance at the University of Iowa College of Nursing and participation in the care of others is a privilege that imposes certain obligations on students, including the responsibility of behaving in a professional and ethical manner. This means students must present a professional and positive image of the profession, the College and themselves. Nursing students are expected to conduct themselves with honesty, dignity and professionalism.

- a. Commission of a crime: engaging in illegal or criminal activity that would impact the student's ability to obtain or maintain a professional license or employment in the nursing profession. The results of criminal proceedings will not be determinative of proceedings under this Code of Conduct.
- b. Sexual and other unlawful harassment: this includes not only sexual harassment but also bullying, hazing, stalking, repeatedly sending e-mails, making phone calls or transmitting documents that are uninvited and are unwanted, making threats, and any other wrongful conduct that seriously interferes with the work or study of any member of the College of Nursing community. This also includes violations of the University of Iowa's policy on sexual harassment. <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/anti-harassment>; <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct>
- c. Disruptive behavior: Obstructing or disrupting classes, team projects, talks or other presentations, or other activities or programs of the College of Nursing and obstructing access to college facilities and events. Excluded is any behavior protected by the First Amendment freedom of speech and artistic expression.
- d. Acquire or using drugs and alcohol: acquiring, using, possessing, selling or distributing illicit drugs (including use of prescription drugs) or alcohol; illegally acquiring, using, selling, possessing or distributing illicit drugs or alcohol; or using prescribed, over-the-counter or illicit substances in such a manner as to impair one's judgment as a nursing student, including being in a class or clinical setting under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or prescribed drugs inconsistent with prescribed use.
- e. Violating computer use policies: violating the University's Information Technology Policies and Guidelines that define proper and ethical use of computers.
- f. Obstructing the investigation of a possible violation of this code: including making dishonest or misleading statements either orally or in writing, including e-mails; other falsification of information; altering, destroying, or deleting relevant documents; and any other act that obstructs or hinders an investigation.
- g. Inappropriate use of social media: posting derogatory, negative, or untrue information about peers, faculty, other professionals, or clinical sites. Inappropriate social media use

involves communicating material that violates University policies, College of Nursing policies, Honor Code, HIPAA rules, or state or federal statutes. Internet postings that violate these principles include, but are not limited to, sharing of confidential information, content construed as “bullying”, images or language that represent partial or total nudity, sexual activity or misconduct, underage alcohol consumption, illegal acts, use of illegal drugs or other controlled substances, hazing activities, tobacco use, obscene gestures, and cheating.

- h. The College of Nursing believes in protecting the students’ rights of freedom of speech, expression and association, including their right to use social media. The College of Nursing also believes in protecting the rights of patients with whom students interact, the rights of faculty members, the rights of other students, and the public at large. Students are expected to monitor their own social media use and post only statements and images that appropriately represent them, the College and the profession to the public. Students may also refer to the University of Iowa information on freedom of [speech](#) for further information.

### 3. Clinical Misconduct

1. The Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements applies to University of Iowa Nursing students. The COE is accessible [here](#). In addition, the following conduct is considered unacceptable in the clinical area:

- a. Violations of the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses are unacceptable. Nursing students are expected to maintain compassionate and caring relationships with colleagues and others, treat all individuals with integrity and respect, and utilize the Code of Ethics for Nurses as a guide for their practice at all times.
- b. Providing nursing care in an unsafe or harmful manner: this includes carrying out a procedure without competence or without the guidance of a qualified person; negligently, willfully or intentionally doing physical or mental harm to a client; exhibiting careless or negligent behavior in connection with the care of a client; refusing to assume the assigned and necessary care of a client and failing to inform the instructor and nursing staff so that an alternative means of providing care can be found.
- c. Violating HIPPA and disrespecting the privacy of a client: this includes using sufficient information about a client (full name, last name or patient information of any sort that could identify the patient) in written assignments that will be removed from the clinical area such that the patient could be identified; accessing health records of non-assigned patients, discussing confidential information in inappropriate areas, discussing confidential information about a patient with third parties who do not have a clear and legitimate need to know in violation of HIPAA; and referencing or discussing patients on social networking sites and devices.
- d. Falsifying patient records or fabricating nursing care or patient experiences: this includes fabrication in written materials and verbal reports for the clinical area as well as written material and verbal reports for the College of Nursing. It also includes fabrication or exaggeration of the number of hours reported as being completed for clinical experience.
- e. Failing to complete nursing care or nursing tasks as assigned in a competent and thorough manner.
- f. Failing to document care accurately and completely.
- g. Failing to report error or omission in treatment or medication: failure to report the error or omission to the appropriate people including nursing staff on the unit and clinical instructor.

- h. Engaging in behavior that is contradictory to professional decorum.
- i. Being involved in the unauthorized manufacture, acquirement, use, possession, or distribution of a controlled substance.

Following an incident of clinical misconduct, the student's status in the College of Nursing will be determined by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and the Executive Associate Dean.

#### **D. Reporting Procedure for Suspected Infraction**

All members of the nursing community—faculty, administrators, staff, and students—have a responsibility to report any reasonable suspicion that a student has violated The College of Nursing Honor Code. A report must be made to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs. Anyone not sure of whether or not to report a suspicion should consult with the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs before making a decision not to report the suspicious behavior.

All reports of suspected misconduct are confidential and the identity of anyone reporting misconduct is confidential.

All faculty members are required to report all incidents of academic misconduct (plagiarism, cheating, falsification of data, violation of nursing standards) that occur in their courses to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs. The faculty member may impose a sanction in the course, including consultation with the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs. If a sanction is limited to penalties within the course, and there is agreement among the faculty, student and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, the matter is resolved. It is important that all faculty report all misconduct so that there can be fairness in the application of The College of Nursing Honor Code across the entire student body.

Cases involving personal misconduct will be reported to and handled by the Executive Associate Dean, and Associate Dean for Undergraduate and Programs with input, as appropriate, from faculty. Before imposing sanctions regarding personal conduct, there should be consultation with appropriate individuals. Sanctions regarding personal conduct include, but are not limited to, warning, counseling, restitution, apology, community service, disciplinary probation, and suspension or expulsion from the College. If the student agrees with the sanction, and the Executive Associate Dean approves, the matter is closed.

If a student has a second violation of the standards of behavior outlined in The College of Nursing Honor Code, it is expected that more serious consequences will result. The student's conduct will be evaluated closely, measured against the expectations for professional behavior, and feedback sought from faculty about the student's overall conduct and fitness for professional nursing before a decision on sanctions is rendered by the Assistant and Associate Deans.

#### **E. Procedure/Sanctions**

When an incident of misconduct is reported, the faculty member or Associate Dean for Undergraduate programs will meet with the student, discuss the behavior and discuss possible sanctions. Sanctions are determined dependent on the type of misconduct. See table below:

1. Academic Misconduct:

Sanctions for *academic misconduct* within the course include, but are not limited to, re-doing an assignment, re-taking an examination, undertaking an additional assignment, receiving a reduced grade, warning, suspension, expulsion. If the faculty member and the student agree with the sanction, and it has been reported to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, the matter is closed.

VIOLATION	SANCTION
Violation of Attendance Policy	See course syllabus
Any violation of Academic Integrity	Case by case basis. Sanctions could range from Academic Integrity seminar to course failure and/or dismissal from the College of Nursing.

If the student disagrees with the sanction, the student can appeal to the Hearing Panel appointed by Council on Student Affairs, Admission and Progression. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs will provide the student with a copy of the "Procedure on Appeal".

2. Personal Misconduct:

LEVEL OF INCIDENT	SANCTION
Violation of law	Sanctions addressed by law enforcement and the Office of Student Accountability. If incident takes place in clinical sanction could range from course failure to dismissal.
Disruptive Behavior	Sanctions could range from meeting with faculty/Associate Dean to course failure. Repeated incidents could lead to dismissal.
Substance Abuse	See substance abuse policy
Social Media	Case by case basis. Sanctions can range from probation to dismissal.
Professional Misconduct/Violation of Honor Code (Non-Clinical)	Case by case basis. Sanctions could range from meeting with faculty/Associate Dean to course failure. Repeated incidents could lead to dismissal.

If the student disagrees with the sanction, the student can appeal to the Hearing Panel appointed by Council on Student Affairs, Admission and Progression. The Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs will provide the student with a copy of the "Procedure on Appeal".

3. Clinical Misconduct:

In cases involving clinical misconduct, the student will be removed from the clinical setting. An immediate review of the conduct will be completed by the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs and the Executive Associate Dean, in consultation with officials at the agency where the conduct occurred. Sanctions will be imposed at the conclusion of this review. All incidents of clinical misconduct will be handled on a case-by-case basis with sanctions determined by the severity of the misconduct, the potential risk to patients and the nature of the setting. Decisions on sanctions for clinical misconduct are not negotiable or subject to appeal.

LEVEL OF INCIDENT	SANCTION
Professional Misconduct	Possible removal from clinical setting. Remediation/guidance and no return to clinical until demonstrated competency. Sanctions could range from failure of assignment/course to dismissal.
HIPAA Violation	Removal from clinical unit. Sanctions can be up to and including dismissal.
Incident that does not cause harm to patient due to lack of knowledge.	Remediation and guidance to critical nursing content. Return to clinical with demonstrated competency.
Patient Safety Issue – risk of harm to patient but no harm caused.	Immediate removal from clinical setting. Remediation and no return to clinical until demonstrated competency. Sanctions could range from failure of assignment/course to dismissal.
Harm to patient	Case by case basis. Sanctions could range from failure of course to dismissal/expulsion.

#### **F. Procedure on Appeal (Academic or Personal Misconduct Only)**

If a student wishes to appeal a decision made by a faculty member regarding academic misconduct, the student will submit a written request for a review of the decision to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs within ten days of the faculty member's decision.

The appeal will be submitted to a Hearing Panel, appointed by Council on Student Affairs at the beginning of the academic year, consisting of two faculty and one representative student. The panel will select one of the two faculty to serve as chair. If the student has concerns about potential bias of a member of the Hearing Panel, the student can submit a request in writing to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs, with rationale, for substitution of another member. The Chair of the Council on Student Affairs will approve or disapprove the request for a substitute and the decision is final.

The hearing procedures are as follows:

1. No later than one week before the hearing, the accused student and the faculty member, assisted by the Felton Student Success Center will submit to the Hearing Panel, in writing, all documents that each party would like the Hearing Panel to review and a list of witnesses whom they would like to have submit testimony before the Hearing Panel. If the accused student wishes to have a personal advisor accompany him or her, the accused student must submit the name of the advisor and state whether the advisor is an attorney.
2. No later than five days before the hearing, the Hearing Panel will provide each party with a hearing packet that includes all documentation that has been submitted for review.
3. The Hearing Panel can hear testimony from any party whose testimony it deems relevant, including, but not limited to, the person who reported the infraction, other witnesses and the course faculty. The Hearing Panel may limit testimony based on redundancy or lack of relevance.
4. The Hearing Panel may review any documents or evidence it deems relevant.

5. The accused student will have the opportunity to appear before the Hearing Panel to present his or her case and remain present while all testimony is presented. The accused student may review all documents considered and may question witnesses. The accused student may bring an advisor to the hearing. However, the role of the advisor is to support and advise the student, not to participate in the proceedings.
6. The hearing is closed to the public.
7. The Hearing Panel may conduct the hearing even if the accused student is absent and reasonable attempts to contact the student have been made, or if the student declines to appear before the panel. The Hearing Panel will review findings and make recommendations based on the information presented to them during the hearing without the student's participation.
8. After the case is presented, the chair of the Hearing Panel will prepare a written report containing the factual findings and statements of any sanctions to be imposed. The vote of the majority of the Hearing Panel, including the Chair of the panel will determine whether the student is found responsible or not responsible for the alleged violation. The decision will be based on the totality of the circumstances and final sanctions will be determined by the Hearing Panel with input from the reporting faculty.
9. The Hearing Panel's decision will be communicated in writing to the student. Copies will be distributed to the reporting faculty member, the Felton Student Success Center and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs of the College of Nursing.
10. The decision of the Hearing Panel is effective immediately. If an appeal is planned, the student can ask the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs for a delay in implementation until the appeal process is completed.

#### **VII. Appeals from the Decision of the Hearing Panel**

The student may submit a written appeal of the decision, sanction, or both, within five business days of receiving written notification of the decision of the Hearing Panel. The appeal must be submitted to the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs or their designee and be based on at least one of the following reasons:

1. There were violations of procedure that seriously compromised the investigation and/or conclusions.
2. The evidence clearly does not support the findings.
3. The sanctions are excessive in relation to the violation.
4. There is significant new evidence not reasonably available at the time of the investigation.

The Associate Dean or their designee will determine if the appeal meets the above conditions. If there is evidence that the appeal should be reviewed, the Associate Dean or their designee will review the appeal. If not, the Associate Dean or their designee will inform the student the case is closed. The Associate Dean or they/them designee will issue a written report regarding the review within four weeks of receiving the appeal.

The decision of the Associate Dean or their designee is final, and no further appeals are allowed.

#### **VIII. Confidentiality**

Records created under this policy are governed by the same confidentiality and file retention as apply to other student records. Discussions during the hearing are confidential and disclosure of the contents of discussions that took place during the hearing may subject the person who violates confidentiality to disciplinary action.