

North Country Community College  
**Nursing Student Handbook**  
2018-2019



*Then.....and Now*



**NORTH COUNTRY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

The State University of New York

Welcome!

As Program Director of North Country Community College (NCCC) nursing program, I want to welcome you to the challenging and rewarding profession of nursing. Whether you are a new or continuing nursing student, I congratulate you on choosing nursing as your profession and North Country Community College as your college for education.

In addition to offering the best possible professional education, our faculty strives to provide evidence-based teaching, clinical practices, and continued exposure to current nursing issues. We take seriously our responsibility in preparing knowledgeable, caring, clinically proficient registered nurses and practical nurses. Each faculty member is committed to assisting you in achieving success in school and in your nursing career.

We are committed to your learning. Faculty is experienced in both nursing practice and teaching and will guide you every step of the way. We want to be your partner during your journey through nursing school so that your experience at the NCCC nursing program exceeds your expectations.

Within the pages of this Student Handbook is information and policies that will guide you along your journey. The student policies are congruent with those of the College, publicly accessible, non-discriminatory, and consistently applied. Any differences in the Nursing policies and NCCC general policies are justified by the goals and outcomes of the nursing department.

Once again, I want to congratulate you for being selected from a large group of people seeking entrance into the program. We are your partner in your educational journey!

*Mrs. Sandra Gothard*

Sandra E. Gothard, DNP(c), MSN, RN, CNOR, NEA-BC  
Director School of Nursing  
North Country Community College

## **Disclaimer**

The College and the Associate Degree Nursing Program reserve the right to alter contents of the Student Handbook with notice to students as necessary. Students will be notified of the change in a timely manner, given an electronic copy of the change, and must sign they have received and understand the change. Changes may be necessary as the New York State Board of Nursing Office of the Professions regulations change. The most current information can be found at <http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/nurse/>

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## **Program of Study**

Faculty plan, implement and evaluate both clinical and didactic learning experiences that are sequenced appropriately, kept current, and are attainable with a time frame of two semesters for RN with a total 450-class hours and 660-clinical hours (includes the two semester PN program). The PN program is attainable in two semesters with 210-class hours and 240-clinical hours. The ADN program length of time and the credit hours required to program completion are congruent with the attainment of identified student learning outcomes and program outcomes and are consistent with the policies of NCCC and NYS Education Department Office of the Professions. The curriculum has been developed by the faculty and is regularly reviewed to ensure integrity, rigor, and currency.

The curriculum is based on sound educational principles and follows the philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes identified for the program and for the students. The student learning outcomes are used to organize the curriculum, guide the delivery of instruction, and direct learning activities. The program of study prepares students to practice according to the NYS Department of Education Office of the Professions. The curriculum teaches students to use safe patient care and systematic clinical decision making and incorporates established professional standards, guidelines, and competencies. Student learning outcomes are clearly articulated and program outcomes consistent with contemporary practice.

The Institute of Medicine (IOM, 2011) summarized the current problem facing nursing faculty with regards to nursing education: “The explosion of knowledge and decision-science technology also is changing the way health professionals access, process, and use information. No longer is rote memorization an option. There simply are not enough hours in the day or years in an undergraduate program to continue compressing all available information into the curriculum. There is too much knowledge, too little time, not enough clinical space, and a limited number of faculty to continue teaching nursing using the curriculum models of the past. New approaches must be developed for evaluating curricula and presenting fundamental concepts that can be applied in many different situations rather than requiring students to memorize different lists of facts and information for each situation”.

To address this issue, the NCCC nursing faculty chose to join other colleges in incorporating a concept-based curriculum. The concept-based curriculum approach helps nursing programs handle content saturation and provide a method for content management. Students focus on generalities of the concepts and then apply what they have learned to specific priority exemplars. Concepts can be applied in a variety of clinical settings that will help utilize the current limited clinical sites and prepare graduates for a greater variety of positions given the current job climate.

The course of study balances nursing and non-nursing courses including, physical, biological, behavioral, social and nursing sciences, and include body structure and function, pharmacology, microbiology, nutrition, human growth and development, and emotional health. The course of study includes nursing skills. Learning activities include lectures, audio/visual representations, interactive learning activities, simulation lab, and patient care clinical learning experiences which are hands on and supervised by faculty. Nursing courses are in the four content areas of medical, surgical, maternal/child health, and mental health. The curriculum provides continuity, sequence, and integration of learning. The structure fosters promotion, prevention, rehabilitation, maintenance, and restoration of the health of individuals of all ages. Nursing courses use competencies to prepare students to recognize and analyze

health care needs, select and apply relevant knowledge and appropriate methods for meeting the health care needs of individuals and families, and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursing care. Course content is appropriate to the role expectations of the graduate. It includes professional values, ethics, safety, diversity, and confidentiality issues. Course content addresses the Nurse Practice Act, Standards of Nursing Practice, Unprofessional Conduct Rules, and Delegation Rules. In addition, the curriculum includes cultural, ethnic, and socially diverse concepts that are driven by local, national and global issues. The learning experiences are progressive; the didactic and clinical portions are concurrent. Students have clinical experiences that foster communication and interpersonal relationship skills. Students participate in clinical experiences that are evidence-based and reflect contemporary practice and nationally established patient health and safety goals. Students will be able to meet stated student and program outcomes, including safe practice in contemporary health care environments. Practice learning environments are appropriate for student learning and support the achievement of the student learning and program outcomes.

Students are oriented to technology and are supported by all methods of instructional delivery. The curriculum uses theory, interdisciplinary practice, research and best practices to provide students with contemporary models. Evaluation methods measure student progression in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievements. Evaluation methods are varied and measure program as well as student outcomes. Faculty chooses clinical sites based on the student need to achieve course and clinical outcomes and based on safety. Agreements address responsibilities of both parties - the agency and the program. The agreements are reviewed periodically. Agreements are optional for observational experiences. The partnership between the program and the clinical site functions as a venue to promote excellence in nursing education, enhances the profession, and benefits the community.

## **PROGRAMMATIC GOALS AND ASSESSMENT**

### **Program: Practical Nursing-Certificate/ADN A.A.S. Degree**

**Description:** The Nursing Program adheres to a career-ladder concept in nursing education that provides upward mobility for students, without repetition of previous education and experience. Courses of study in Nursing consist of a two-semester, full-time Practical Nursing Program and a two-semester, full-time Associate Degree Nursing Program for licensed LPNs. Successful completion of the Practical Nursing course of study leads to a Certificate of Achievement, and eligibility to apply for the National Council of Licensure Examination (NCLEX) for licensure as a Licensed Practical Nurse. Completion of the Practical Nursing course of study DOES NOT ASSURE admission into the Associate Degree Nursing Program. Students must apply for entry into this program and compete with all other applicants of that year. Since the Practical Nursing Program and the Associate Degree Nursing Program are separate programs, all individuals, including graduates of the Practical Nursing program at NCCC, must make formal application for consideration for entry into the Associate Degree Program.

### **End-of-Program Outcomes: LPN-Certificate - Upon completion of the Practical Nurse program:**

- The graduates will be reported by the New York State Education Department to have passed the NCLEX-PN licensure exam at a rate equal to or exceeding the national and New York State mean.
- Be employed in a position for which the program prepared them and express satisfaction with the program.
- Students are expected to complete the program in two semesters, Fall and Spring
- Employers will express satisfaction with the competence level of the graduates.

### **End-of-Program Outcomes: ADN A.A.S. – Registered Nursing Program. Graduates are prepared to:**

1. Analyze and apply professional, legal and ethical standards of practice in functioning as a safe entry level nurse Plan and implement culturally appropriate care which is safe and holistic, using critical thinking and information technology
2. Apply critical thinking skills and evidence-based decisions about client care Utilize a process of self-evaluation that fosters personal and professional growth and contributes to life-long learning
3. Prioritize safe, holistic nursing care to promote optimal wellness for diverse groups of clients in a variety of settings
4. Communicate effectively and demonstrate caring with clients, families and members of the healthcare team
5. Examine the entry-level nurse’s responsibility for lifelong learning, continuing education, and professional growth.

Program Outcomes also include:

1. The majority of graduates obtain entry-level positions within six months of graduation in a variety of health care settings appropriate for Associate Degree nursing practice.
2. The first time pass rate on the NCLEX-RN is at the national average.

### **Assessment Tools & Methodology:**

- Certification Testing

- Midterm/Final Grades
- Clinical Competencies
- Kaplan Review and Testing

**Additional Resources:**

- External Advisory Board
- Peer Review (Five-Year Cycle)
- New York State Department of Education Accreditation Self-Study
- Student / Alumni Evaluation





## Mission

North Country Community College provides and exceptional learning and community building experience for all who see it, challenging and supporting all individuals in their educational and personal growth.

**Department of Nursing Mission:** The primary mission of the NCCC nursing program for Licensed Practical Nurses and Registered Professional Nurses is to promote excellence in education through the integration of both the art and science of nursing. As faculty, we view learning as a shared undertaking in which students become actively involved, are diligent to duty, and are accountable and responsible in their knowledge of nursing theory, nursing skill, and nursing process. The focus of the NCCC nursing program is to prepare professional nurses who will provide safe and effective health care to diverse populations living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century global community

## FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME / CAMPUS	PHONE	EMAIL
Sandra Gothard, Saranac Lake Director of Nursing	518 891 2915 Ext 1269	sgothard@nccc.edu
Michael Shepard Saranac Lake	518 891 2915 Ext 1320	mshepard@nccc.edu
Lori Bennett, Saranac Lake Clinical Coordinator, Health Officer	518 891 2915 Ext 1708	lbennett@nccc.edu
Tana Hare	518 891 2915	thare@nccc.edu

Saranac Lake	Ext 1321	
Marcie Sullivan-Marin Malone	518 891 2915 Ext 3059	msullivan@nccc.edu
Matthew Fleming Malone	518 891 2915 Ext 3241	mfleming@nccc.edu
Selina LeMay-Klippel, Ticonderoga	518 891 2915 Ext 2212	slemay-klippel@nccc.edu
Lynne Reale Ticonderoga	518 891 2915 Ext 2213	lreale@nccc.edu

Faculty members maintain scheduled office hours each week, as posted on their office doors. Additional appointments are available by mutual consent of the faculty and student. You are advised to e-mail or call the instructor with whom you would like to meet.

A list of adjunct instructors and their respective contact information will be maintained on campus in addition to being distributed to students at the beginning of each semester. It is your responsibility to know how to contact your clinical faculty and the means they would prefer to be contact e.g. email, text message, or phone call.

For any questions regarding clinical and clinical faculty, please contact:  
Lori Bennett, Clinical Coordinator (518) 891-2915 x 1708

## **MASTER PLAN OF EDUCATION/CURRICULUM**

### **Master Plan of Education**

The Standards require all accredited programs to maintain a Master Plan of Education which contains information such as didactic and clinical curricula, program policies and procedures and strategies for assessing program effectiveness. The Master Plan is available for student and faculty review and is located in the Program Director's office.

### **Curricula for Certificate and Degree Programs**

The Practical Nurse certificate and A.A.S. degree plans follow these criteria:

These curricula have been created based upon the NYS guidelines. Successful completion of the Certificate program allows a graduate to sit for the NCLEX-PN. Successful completion of the A.A.S. in the Nursing program meets the requirements for challenging the NCLEX-RN examination.

**The Nursing Programs are very intensive and the following suggestions can help you succeed:**

- **Study:** Acquire the habit of “study first, play later.” For every hour of classroom time, you should expect to study 2-3 hours outside of class. Think of your schooling as a day at work. When you're not in class, go to the library, have a friend quiz you, get extra help from your instructors (all instructors have posted office hours) or take advantage of the learning assistance center (LAC) on each campus. Remember, learn and understand each concept well because your patients will be placing their trust, and their lives, in your hands. Once you're in the clinical setting, you'll be applying the knowledge you've gained every day.
- **Learning Assistance Center:** The College maintains a learning assistance center on each campus. The center has much to offer such as studying and test taking assistance. In addition, free tutoring is available through the LAC.
- **Counseling:** Personal and academic counseling is available to all students. Professional counselors are happy to help you with any issues, big or small. You can set up counseling appointments through your advisor, student services, or directly with the counselors.
- **Math exams:** Each semester that you are enrolled in the nursing program, a dosage calculation exam will be administered. It will be commensurate with your education and the expectations of the clinical area. YOU MUST PASS THIS TEST WITH A SCORE OF 90 OR BETTER IN ORDER TO REMAIN IN THE PROGRAM. There is a maximum of three attempts to pass the test.

## Policies and Procedures



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## **NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE POLICIES**

Associate Degree and Practical Nursing students are expected to abide by the rules and regulations and policies of North Country Community College as set forth in the NCCC Catalog.

Please refer to <http://www.nccc.edu/campus-safety/> where you will find the following policy links:

- The Student Code of Conduct <http://www.nccc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Student-Code-of-Conduct-revised-August-2017-Final.pdf>
- Incident Reports  
[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthCountryCC&layout\\_id=0](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthCountryCC&layout_id=0)
- Response Plans and Procedures
- Sexual Assault Incident Report Form <https://form.jotform.com/43564163148153>
- Emergency Management & Notification <http://www.nccc.edu/emergency-management/>
- Safety Resources – Prevention and Response video

### **TITLE IX STATEMENT:**

North Country Community College is committed to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Because of this commitment and because of federal and state regulations, College faculty are required to report incidents of gender based misconduct and/or sexual misconduct, involving a member of the campus community, to the school’s Title IX Coordinator, **Tara Smith**. College faculty must provide relevant details including the names of those involved in the incident. Requests for confidentiality will be respected but cannot be guaranteed. The information will remain private and the Title IX Coordinator will follow up with the reporting student.

“Gender based misconduct” includes sexual assault, stalking, sexual harassment, dating violence, intimate partner violence, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, and gender based harassment. All students have a right to their body and their safety.

Title IX Coordinator:

**Tara Smith** – [tara.smith@nccc.edu](mailto:tara.smith@nccc.edu) / [titleixcoordinator@nccc.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@nccc.edu)  
518-354-5183

Planned Parenthood:

24 hour Sexual Assault Hotline – 877-212-2323  
Sexual Assault Supportive Counseling  
Saranac Lake – 518-891-0046  
Malone – 518-483-7150  
Essex County – 518-984-0094  
Clinton County – 518-561-0605

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT INCLUDES, BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING ACTS:**

1. Collaborating with another student during an examination administration, preparation of a nursing care plan, or any other requirement without consent of the instructor.
2. Use of unauthorized materials during an examination administration.
3. Altering examination answers after the exam has been graded.
4. Illicit possession of an examination or exam materials.
5. Forgery.
6. Plagiarism that is the presenting of work of another as one's own work
7. Unauthorized use of any MCC computer program.
8. Fabrication of information for use in any academic exercise.
9. The resubmission of previously graded course work by the student to meet a course requirement.
10. Suspected substance abuse and/or mental incapacity.

### **Academic Honesty**

**All faculties shall have the right to examine materials in the student's possession during any academic exercise. In instances of academic misconduct, the faculty may immediately suspend the student from further work on the academic exercise.**

### **Sanctions**

The following actions may be imposed on a student who has committed an act of academic misconduct:

#### I. Possible actions by the faculty member

- a. Notify the Program Director in writing that an incident has occurred and has been dealt with.
- b. Grant no credit for the work (exam or assignment) in question.
- c. Assign a grade of "F" or zero for the work in question.

**If the alleged incident occurs during a final examination, a grade of "I" (incomplete) shall be given the student until a decision by the faculty is determined.**

#### II. Possible actions by the Program Director

- a. The Program Director will investigate any misconduct or reported dishonesty related to testing and preparation of written assignments and document the results of the investigation.
- b. Based on the results of the investigation, the Program Director shall refer the student through academic administration channels. The Program Director shall recommend to academic administration that one or more of the following specific actions be considered:
  1. Issue a warning and place a written report of the incident in the student's permanent record maintained in the Program Director's Office.
  2. Place the student on probation at the College for a specified period of time.
  3. Place the student on suspension from the College for a specified period of time

## **Academic Integrity: A Student's Responsibilities**

All students who enroll at North Country Community College are admitted with the expectation that they will demonstrate integrity in every aspect of their work both for and with other members of this academic community. Once you enroll, you have accepted responsibility for your actions.

### **How does the college define Academic Integrity?**

The Center for Academic Integrity defines ACADEMIC INTEGRITY as a "commitment, even in the face of adversity, to five fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility; from these values flow principles of behavior that enable academic communities to translate ideas into action."

Individual faculty members determine their class policies and behavioral expectations for students. Students who commit violations of academic integrity should expect serious consequences. Offenses will be tracked so that appropriate sanctions can be applied.

### **How serious are the consequences for Academic Dishonesty?**

NCCC faculty take academic dishonesty infractions very seriously and articulate their policies within course syllabus or outline.

The professor's grading system is the first measure of consequence for a student who commits a breach of academic integrity. The grading system can be found in the course syllabus and outline for each class in which the student enrolls. Faculty members and their department chairs may require a meeting with students caught cheating, including plagiarizing, to discuss incidences of cheating and the penalty to be assigned in the course. Academic Integrity policy and procedures apply equally to all courses - whether on campus or online.

### **How is Cheating defined?**

With regard to cheating, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests or examinations
  - (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the professor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems or carrying out other assignments; or (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the NCCC faculty or staff.
- The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

### **What happens to a student identified as having cheated?**

If the student's offense rises to the level of invoking, within the course grading system, penalties of consequence, it is a reportable offense. That is, students who are caught cheating, including plagiarizing,

will be subject to penalties specified in the course syllabus and, in addition, will be reported to Academic Affairs.

**The intent of this policy is to focus all partners in the college—students, faculty, and administrators—on issues of accountability and to increase students' understanding that academic training includes an expectation of academic integrity, the absence of which incurs serious response.**

## **Academic Grievances**

In the event of a conflict between an instructor and a student, the student is encouraged to informally speak to the instructor to reach an amicable solution. If a solution is not reached, an informal meeting may be scheduled with the Department Chair or Director or their representative.

After the informal procedure has been exhausted, a formal complaint may be made in writing. The proper appeal route is:

- The Instructor
- The appropriate Program Chair or Director
- The Vice President for Academic Affairs
- The President

## **Attendance**

Regular and punctual attendance is expected of all students, and each instructor should maintain a complete record of attendance for the entire length of each course. Students will be counted absent from class beginning with the first official day of classes. Students, whether present or absent, are responsible for all material presented or assigned for a course and will be held accountable for such materials in the determination of course grades. In the case of online and hybrid courses, attendance will be determined in terms of participation, as described in the course Syllabus and Outline.

Professional responsibility is determined by the student's attendance and dependability in the clinical and classroom areas. A student's final grade and / or program status will be adversely affected by absenteeism and tardiness. College policy is that if a student misses more than 20% of scheduled classes they will receive an "F" grade for the course.

## **Theory Attendance/Absences (Includes Theory and Skills Lab)**

Absence from 20 percent of scheduled lecture and/or laboratory meetings will be taken as evidence that a student does not intend to complete the course. Unless an instructor has reason to believe the student will complete the course, the student will be withdrawn from the course with a grade of W. If the student's 20 percent absences are reached after the official drop date (the 60 percent point in the semester or term), the instructor may assign a W if the student is passing and requests to be withdrawn. However, if a student who is not passing reaches the 20 percent point after the official drop date, the



student will receive an F. Each absence will count toward attendance requirements in each course. Students will be permitted to make up class work and assignments missed due to absences caused by:

- (1) Authorized participation in official college functions
- (2) Personal illness
- (3) An illness or a death in the immediate family
- (4) The observance of a religious holy day.

Also, the instructor has the prerogative of determining whether a student may make up work missed due to absences for other reasons. It is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor of the reason for an absence and to do so in a timely fashion. A student not present during the taking of attendance at the beginning of class has the responsibility to notify the faculty/instructor BEFORE leaving the scheduled class period. If the student fails to notify the faculty/instructor BEFORE leaving the class period, the absence will remain and will count as part of the 20 per cent of theory absence. The student is the only one that may verify that he/she is present. At **NO TIME** may one student sign in for another student.

## **Clinical Attendance**

**(Includes on-campus clinical, off-campus clinical, skills lab, and other assignments)**

Clinical experiences are treated like a professional job, are provided according to the Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations, and are in compliance with accrediting bodies. The student is expected to have regular and punctual attendance to all clinical experiences as scheduled and is responsible for travel to the clinical experience. Lunch time may not be counted as clinical hours, according to regulatory policy.

As in a professional job and per Board of Nursing and accreditation protocol, the student is expected to be in the clinical agency prepared to begin assignment at the designated time. Students must complete the designated hours in order to be successful in each course and progress to the next semester. If a student does not complete all the designated clinical hours for which they are enrolled, the student will receive a non-credit and will not be able to progress to the next level. For a student to progress in the nursing program **ALL** clinical objectives and hours must be satisfactorily met.

**The Department of Nursing has a zero tolerance for clinical absence.**

If a student has extenuated circumstances on a clinical day, **the student must notify their clinical instructor at least one hour prior to the scheduled clinical start time.** The student may not ask a family member or friend to report the absence and the nursing faculty and clinical coordinator will determine what qualifies as an "extenuated circumstance." (Examples of extenuating circumstances are acute illness of self or death of immediate family). **Documentation of extenuating circumstance is required.**

Given the faculty has determined the absence is a result of "extenuated circumstance," and proper notice is given by the student per protocol, the student will be given a clinical make up day. The alternative assignment will be determined by the clinical faculty and clinical coordinator, based on which objective/s were missed due to absence.

Please note if a student is absent from clinical on a day in which there are no like alternative assignments the student may be withdrawn from the clinical course and may be unable to progress in the program. (Examples whereby like alternate assignments cannot be duplicated in the event of absence - demonstrating proficiency in administration of PO meds to an actual patient, collecting actual patient data for nursing process or other assignments). In the event there is an alternative assignment offered, it will be proportional to the clinical day missed. A clinical day is defined as the experience assigned to the student for the day missed.

The student who is assigned to a preceptor clinical experience is required to share objectives with the preceptor and attain a signature from the preceptor, which the student will submit to the clinical coordinator the first day upon returning to campus. As with any job, tardiness and/or failure to notify the clinical instructor of an absence will be considered unprofessional and the student may be dismissed from the program.

In summary, the clinical experience is treated like a professional job in which the student is expected to be prepared, arrive to clinical on time, contact NCCC clinical faculty if issues or absence is necessary and meet all clinical objectives in order to progress in the program. Accrediting agency mandates from the NYS Department of Education Office of the Professions supersedes the NCCC absence policy.

Students who miss clinical time will be expected to make up this time during assigned makeup schedules provided by the Clinical Coordinator. The cost to the student for the clinical makeup session **may be up to \$350.00 out of pocket expense for an eight-hour day.** This is not covered by financial aid.

## **Clinical Assignments**

Students are expected to provide, without discrimination, nursing services regardless of the age, disability, economic status, gender, national origin, race, religion, health problems, or sexual orientation of the client served. Students are required to meet the work force standard of providing care to any and all clients assigned to their level of responsibility.

## **Clinical Evaluation Guidelines and Final Grade Criteria**

Clinical evaluation is a teaching method used to assist the student in clinical practice, progression and enhancement. In order to provide the maximum learning experience, the faculty believes it is essential for the student to be actively involved in the identification of personal strengths, weaknesses and activities to promote or strengthen these attributes. The student's clinical progression throughout the program will be reviewed and considered in guiding and determining clinical activities in each course to assist the student in performing at the expected level of competency.

The clinical evaluation tool reflects the student's level of competency. Pass or Fail will be the final grade assigned for each clinical course.

## **Clinical Grade**

Clinical grades are pass / fail. They are based on clinical assignments, attendance, timeliness and competency of skills. See the clinical evaluation form for further detail. If you do not pass clinical, you will be dismissed from the program.

## **Clinical Related Problems**

Repeated inappropriate behavior and unsafe practice are grounds for requesting that the student leave the clinical facility. If the problem is not resolved, the student can receive a clinical failure grade in the nursing course. Also, the student may be dismissed from the program during the semester if repeated inappropriate behavior and unsafe practice occurs.

Some examples of inappropriate behavior and unsafe practice include but not limited to:

1. Attending clinical while under the influence of any substance affecting a student's ability to respond in a reasonable and acceptable manner.
2. Performing unsafe nursing care thereby causing physical injury or emotional stress to a client.
3. Failing to maintain patient confidentiality.
4. Falsifying any information concerning the client, staff and peer group.
5. Inability to perform skills learned in skills laboratory.
6. Performing skills that are not appropriate for level of practice.
7. Removing any items from a client's room or hospital without permission.
8. Inappropriate use of social media.
9. Any act that is identified as Unprofessional Conduct in RULE §29.1 of the Board of Nursing <http://www.op.nysed.gov/title8/part29.htm>.

The student is further expected to exhibit professional behavior in appropriate dress, attitude and conduct. Students will abide by hospital policies.

An applicant or a student who is denied rotation privileges by any of the clinical affiliated agencies may not be eligible for continuation in the program. The denial must be in writing from administration of the agency denying privileges.

## **Clinical Release Forms**

Students must abide by rules and policies of clinical agencies where hospital lab assignments are provided. Since clinical affiliations are not liable for injuries or communicable diseases, students may be requested to sign and acknowledge liability release forms of area hospitals.

## **Clinical Visitation**

Students are not allowed to visit clients in the hospital on other units during clinical time. Students are not allowed to wear their uniform, lab coat or other emblems identifying them as a nursing student or become involved in performing client care when making a personal visit to a client in the hospital or other clinical agency at any time.

## **CPR Certification**

All students must complete an American Heart Association, Health Care Provider, CPR course prior to enrollment in the nursing programs and must maintain this specific CPR certification during enrollment. Students will not be allowed into the clinical setting without American Heart Association, Healthcare Provider CPR completion and will be counted as absent or may be dropped from the course. (No on-line courses will be accepted).

## **Nursing Program Communication**

North Country Community College provides an e-mail account to each student. ***This is the only e-mail address that will be used to send you important notifications and information from the College and faculty.*** You are responsible for checking your College e-mail account on a regular basis.

In addition, all students are required to ensure that their physical contact information is current, such as an accurate mailing address and telephone number and correct name. The programs are not responsible for the potential loss or mishandling of documentation due to incorrect information.

Full-time nursing faculty use the student portal as a means to effectively convey information, post pertinent resources and documents, and to post grades. It is your responsibility to effectively monitor both your e-mail and student portal.

Students are responsible for understanding how to access the student portal for purposes of: submission of assignments; accessing for document retrieval; and maintaining the privacy of their assigned username and password.

Students should be fully logged out of a work station before leaving the area, or allowing another student to log on. This will protect your privacy and discourage others from doing things in your name.

## **Suggestions on helpful information for students**

Build a relationship with your faculty –faculty are one of the most valuable resources available to you, so don't be afraid to ask them questions. Here are some tips to help you get the answers you need:

- Be positive. When you ask your instructor a question, set the right tone by being formal and polite – you are in a professional study program.
- Be specific. General details make it difficult for your instructor to respond to your needs.

- Be prepared. Look at your syllabus at the beginning of the week and ask questions long before an assignment is due.

Above all else, remember that your faculty is your advocate and by design will be giving you feedback to help you become a better student and professional nurse. While interpreting constructive criticism can be difficult, it will increase your ability to complete the program successfully. Faculty comments should not be taken personally. Your program is a journey – follow the tips above to help your instructor to help you.

Best practices for good online interactions – The tone of your writing – how you come across to the reader is important. When drafting any discussion post or email, remember the acronym WRITE:

- Warmth. Always consider the intent of your writing. If you think the post sounds rude, your reader will probably think so, too.
- Responsiveness. Your classmates may be on email or online at different times. By responding to a question as soon as you see it, you can build positive relationships with your peers.
- Inquisitiveness. See to learn from classmates and your instructor. By asking questions, you show that you care about what they think.
- Tentativeness. When you express an opinion, use phrases like “from my point of view” or “my understanding is” to show other students and instructors that your opinion is yours – and not the final word on the topic.
- Empathy. Remember the golden rule – treat classmates and others the way you would like to be treated.

Email communication tips – Whenever you write an email or communicate with classmates and faculty, consider these five pieces of advice:

1. If you find yourself in a heated class debate, make sure you only respond when you are calm and collected.
2. Say what you really mean – sarcasm does not translate to professionalism
3. Type in sentence case – using all capital letters appears if you are yelling.
4. Stick to two paragraphs, keeping the most important information first.
5. Forward email messages only when they relate to coursework. Jokes, virus warnings, and chain letters are spam that will annoy recipients.

Example of an unprofessional email communication to a faculty member:

Hey,

How could I possibly get a C on this week’s assignment? I followed all of the directions to a T, and you still marked me down. This grade is UNFAIR! I want you to look at it again and grade it fairly this time!

**Example of a professional email communication to a faculty member:**

Hi, Dr. /Professor Smith.

I have a question about my grade on this week's assignment. I received a C, and I thought I followed all of the directions very well. I would appreciate getting some clarification from you so I can improve my work next time. Can we schedule a time to talk about this?

Thank you,  
Jane

## **Nursing Professional Behavior**

Appropriate professional behaviors are expected of all students. Experience shows that behaviors demonstrated in the classroom do have an impact on clinical practice. When you meet with your advisor, these professional behaviors will be reviewed and assessed.

Four professional behaviors have been identified. These are expectations of you that apply equally in the classroom and clinic. Each is clarified with a list of supporting behaviors. This list is not intended to be all-inclusive or exhaustive.

1. ***Demonstrate dependability and punctuality.***
  - ✓ Attend all classes, labs, and scheduled appointments with advisor.
  - ✓ Arrive for class, lab, and clinical with ample time to be prepared to participate at the designated starting time.
  - ✓ Leave class, lab, and clinical at the stated time or when dismissed.
  - ✓ Contact instructor by phone or e-mail ***prior*** to absence from class.
  - ✓ Complete and turn assignments in on time.
  - ✓ Accept responsibility for actions and outcomes. Be prepared to make a plan to correct unacceptable behaviors.
  - ✓ Take full advantage of time available in labs by staying on task and involved. Use time effectively.
2. ***Work effectively and respectfully in the clinical setting***
  - ✓ Stay in assigned areas unless permission granted by College staff or Clinical Instructor.
  - ✓ Accept assignments from Clinical Instructor.
  - ✓ Maintain the comfort and safety of all patients at all times.
  - ✓ **Continually maintain patient confidentiality.**
  - ✓ Refrain from personal business while in the clinical setting.

- ✓ Demonstrate a positive attitude toward feedback and develop a plan of action in response to critical feedback.
  - ✓ Critique your own performance and share that self-assessment.
  - ✓ Maintain professional demeanor at all times.
3. ***Work effectively and respectfully with peers and instructors, demonstrating mature communication skills***
- ✓ Avoid interrupting others.
  - ✓ Respond during interactions using appropriate verbal and non-verbal styles.
  - ✓ Communicate in a respectful manner.
  - ✓ Share fully with project partners in accomplishing any assigned task.
  - ✓ Use correct grammar and expression in verbal communication.
  - ✓ Do not use offensive statements, language or actions.
  - ✓ Write legibly and complete assignments with acceptable quality.
  - ✓ Listen actively.
  - ✓ Accept that your own knowledge has limits, and be prepared to defer to those who are more knowledgeable.
  - ✓ Consult with an instructor when a student's behavior endangers another person, or in the event of an ethical breach of conduct.
4. ***Assume responsibility for personal and professional growth***
- ✓ Recognize problem or need.
  - ✓ Assume responsibility for own actions.
  - ✓ Demonstrate a positive attitude toward feedback.
  - ✓ Maintain an open line of communication with the individual(s) offering critique.
  - ✓ Develop a plan of action in response to feedback.
  - ✓ Assume responsibility for your own learning.

## **Nursing Code of Ethics**

### **Code of Ethics for Nurses**

**American Nurses Association (ANA, 2015)**

<http://nursingworld.org/DocumentVault/Ethics-1/Code-of-Ethics-for-Nurses.html>

The Code of Ethics for Nurses serves the following purposes:

- It is a succinct statement of the ethical obligations and duties of every individual who enters the nursing profession
- It is the profession's nonnegotiable ethical standard
- It is an expression of nursing's own understanding of its commitment to society

### **Code of Ethics for Nurses**

The nurse, in all professional relationships, practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth and uniqueness of every individual, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group or community.

The nurse promotes, advocates for, and strives to protect the health, safety, and rights of the patient.

The nurse is responsible and accountable for individual nursing practice and determines the appropriate delegation of tasks consistent with the nurse's obligation to provide optimum patient care.

The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to preserve integrity and safety, to maintain competence, and to continue personal and professional growth.

The nurse participates in establishing, maintaining, and improving health care environments and conditions of employment conducive to the provision of quality health care and consistent with the values of the profession through individual and collective action.

The nurse participates in the advancement of the profession through contributions to practice, education, administration, and knowledge development.

The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public in promoting community, national and international efforts to meet health needs.

The profession of nursing, as represented by associations and their members, is responsible for articulating nursing values, for maintaining the integrity of the profession and its practice, and for shaping social policy.



## GRADE POINT AVERAGE (G.P.A.)

Students in the nursing programs must maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5, and are **required** to achieve a final course grade of at least 73 in the nursing courses and all requisite program courses in order to progress and graduate from the program.

For more information on the NCCC grading system and computation of cumulative averages, please refer to individual course syllabi and the College catalogue located on the North Country Community College website.

The following policy applies to all testing environments. Testing accommodations are made on a prescribed basis. We are testing nursing concepts and in order to be thorough and fair, our test questions come from multiple sources.

All tests are timed. A rough guideline for exams is 50 questions in 60 minutes.

Your prompt attendance is imperative. In cases where you are up to 10 minutes late, you may take the exam, but your time is finished with the rest of class. Example: The exam begins at 9:00, and ends at 10:00. You arrive at 9:10 and take the exam – you must turn it in at 10:00 with your classmates. If you are more than 10 minutes late to an exam, you will be required to take the make-up exam.

Make up exams are administered within 3 days of the original exam. Make up exams are to be taken in the LAC, under supervision. Due to the increased number of questions, more time may be allotted to complete the exam. The grade is calculated as follows: 50% of grade is the multiple-choice portion, and the remaining 50% may be derived from short answer / essay / fill in the blank questions. Students will have one opportunity for a makeup exam. Should a student miss a scheduled make up exam they will receive a grade of 0 (zero).

Mid-term and Final exams are cumulative.

1. Students will leave **all** personal possessions (books, papers, bags, purses, and electronic equipment, including cell phones, mp3 players, etc.) in the front of the room. **Cell phones are to be turned off.**
2. Bring only a #2 pencil, an eraser, a calculator and a scantron (if applicable) to your seat.
3. No hats or caps of any kind are to be worn.
4. No food or drink is allowed in the testing environment.
5. Students may not leave the testing environment for any reason until all exams are complete.
6. Students violating this policy will receive a zero on the exam.

Grades will be posted on the class portal approximately one week after the exam. Interested students may attend a scheduled faculty-led exam review. Questions are no longer up for discussion after 2 weeks have elapsed, or until the next exam is administered – whichever comes first.

We urge you to pay attention to your grades as posted on the portal. It is your responsibility to be aware of your grades and their implication for your education. It is to your benefit to be proactive in seeking help with understanding the course content.

## **Dismissal from the Program**

Students in the nursing programs may be dismissed for a variety of reasons. The majority of these are clearly defined in the Group I section of the Counseling Report (on the following pages).

In addition, students may be dismissed for the following reasons:

- If a student scores below a C (73) in any course required in the program's curriculum.
- If a clinical site or instructor requests that a student does not pass a clinical rotation, the situation will be reviewed and a determination will be made as to continuing in the program.

Counseling Forms can be completed by program faculty as soon as any of the following misconducts are known and reported to the appropriate course instructor. Student may be counseled in both the clinical and college settings. Instructors have the right to dismiss student from clinical for the day due to health, safety, or performance.

## **GROUP I OFFENSES**

### **ANY OF THESE ACTIONS CAN RESULT IN IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL FROM THE PROGRAM**

1. Possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while at the clinical site or on College property. Presenting to the clinical site smelling of alcohol. Presenting to the clinical site with extremely poor hygiene such that the clinical site refuses your attendance due to the lack of professionalism demonstrated.
2. Theft, abuse, misuse or destruction of the property or equipment of any patient, visitor, student, hospital or hospital employee, the College or College employee.
3. Disclosing confidential information about any patient. This includes the use of social networks, verbal, written communication, any photo or electronic devices.
4. Immoral, indecent, illegal, or unethical conduct at a clinical site or on College property.
5. Possession of weapons, or wielding or threatening to use any type of weapon at a clinical site or on College property.
6. Assault on any patient, visitor, student, clinical site or College personnel.

7. Misuse or falsification of patient, student, clinical site or College records.
8. Removal of patient, student, clinical site or College records without authorization.
9. Plagiarism or any identified academic dishonesty. Academic Honesty: It is imperative that the highest standards of behavior in regards to academic honesty be observed. Academic integrity regarding doing one's own work must be regarded as a cornerstone of what we are all about in higher education. Cheating, in any form, is NOT a behavior which will be tolerated. You are expected to do your own work concerning examinations, homework assignments, and papers. Plagiarism in any form is dishonest. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with College Procedures and may result in your failure of the class and/or dismissal from the college.
10. Engaging in disorderly conduct that could ultimately threaten the physical well-being of any patient visitor, student, and clinical site or College personnel.
11. Insubordination and refusal to follow instruction.
12. Inconsiderate treatment of patients, visitors, students, clinical site or College personnel.
13. Failure to perform responsibilities, or failure to exercise reasonable care in the performance of responsibilities.
14. Violation of safety rules and regulations or failure to use safety equipment provided.
15. Unauthorized use of equipment.
16. Threatening, intimidating, and coercing other students, patients, visitors, clinical site or College personnel.

## **GROUP II OFFENSES**

It should be understood that there will be sufficient and proper documentation maintained at all levels for either Group I or Group II offenses. Group II offenses are sequential. The first report, regardless of the infraction, counts as one offense. In the event that a student commits a subsequent infraction, that is a second offense.

1. Lack of appropriate level of performance following documented discussion with faculty and/or clinical staff to include, but not limited to the following: negative attitude; perceived lack of motivation; inappropriate communication; failure to accept constructive criticism; overall unprofessional conduct.

**Policy: DISMISSAL** (cont.)

2. Leaving the clinical area without proper authorization.

3. Sleeping during scheduled clinical or class hours.
4. Restricting or impeding clinical or class output.
5. Any clinical or class absence. Failure to personally notify your clinical instructor (or clinical site designee) or course instructor prior to the absence. There will be no changing of clinical sites.
6. Failure to be ready for your clinical assignment at the starting time.
7. Smoking in restricted areas.
8. Unauthorized soliciting, vending, or distribution of written or printed matter.
9. Individual acceptance of gratuities from patients or others.
10. Inappropriate dress or appearance. Acceptable attire is described in this handbook.
11. Failure to follow program policies regarding direct or indirect supervision while providing nursing care.
12. Unauthorized possession and utilization of personal electronic devices (i.e., laptops, e-readers, cell phones, mp3 players, etc.) while in the clinical setting with the exception of break or lunch (if allowed by the clinical site).
13. Bereavement leave greater than the allotted 3 days.

### **Group II infractions will result in the following actions:**

- 1st Report: Written warning and counseling.
- 2nd Report: Written warning and counseling; 5-point deduction from final course grade.
- 3rd Report: Failing final course grade and program dismissal.

For example, the student is appropriately counseled for “Leaving the clinical area without proper authorization,” resulting in their first report. If the student commits the same infraction or any other infraction, it will be treated as a second offense.

A formal academic appeals process is available to the student and can be found in the North Country Community College Catalog and will be reviewed with the student. The Catalog is available at [www.nccc.edu](http://www.nccc.edu). In the section “College Policies,” you will find the Code of Conduct, which includes detailed information in Section IV: Formal Procedures regarding the appropriate course of action to follow.

## Records Access

It is the policy of the program that all program-related records kept on any individual student are available for inspection by that student within two business days after receipt of written/signed inquiry. Records will not be removed from the program office for any reason other than at the request of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, or President of the College, in regard to an academic issue.

Students who wish to see their records should draft a formal written request and submit it to program faculty. A mutually acceptable appointment will be made between program faculty and the student within two business days. Student records are treated as confidential to third parties. Information will only be released to others with the student's written permission.

Records release forms can be obtained from the Records Office.

## Health Physical

The College, program, and clinical education settings require that students have a health physical at least yearly, and possibly every 6 months, if required by a clinical site. The exam is performed by the student's family physician and at the student's own expense. This applies to both first and second year nursing students.

Students entering the program are required to have their health physical prior to the start of the fall semester classes. The completed health physical form must be in the office of the health Records Officer prior to the beginning of the fall semester. Failure to comply will result in the student being withdrawn from the program.

Second year students are required to have a yearly physical completed prior to the start of the fall semester. The completed health physical form must be in the office of the health Records Officer in the School of Nursing. Failure to comply will result in the student being removed from all current nursing courses.

Please note:

- It is YOUR responsibility to contact the health records officer to determine that all of your health information is current, as per program guidelines. You must contact the health records officer for the appropriate forms for health information. (518) 891-2915 Ext 1708
- We strongly urge you to maintain personal copies of all health information submitted to the college.
- Health records will be returned to you at the completion of the academic program. These records are no longer stored by the Nursing Department.

## Immunizations and TB Skin Test

The College, program, and clinical education centers require that all students in the program have the following immunizations: **Rubeola (measles), Rubella (German measles), and mumps**. Nursing students exempt from the immunization due to birth date prior to 1/1/57 must provide information only concerning rubella immunization or rubella antibody titer.

All clinical education centers affiliated with the program require that students have a yearly Mantoux TB skin test. In addition, each clinical setting may require additional health related documentation that must be completed dependent upon facility protocol. In the event of a positive skin test, separate protocols exist for chest x-rays.

All forms concerning immunizations and TB skin tests (or chest x-rays) are required to be on file with the health records officer prior to the start of the semester (for first year students) and prior to the current expiration date for second year students. Failure to comply will result in the student being barred from attending classes or clinical. (These absences will count against you and will be documented as Group II infractions).

Please note:

- It is YOUR responsibility to contact the health records officer to determine that all of your health information is current, as per program guidelines. You must contact the health records officer for the appropriate forms for health information.
- We strongly urge you to maintain personal copies of all health information submitted to the college.
- Health records will be returned to you at the completion of the academic program. The Nursing Department no longer stores these records.

## Communicable Disease

Due to the nature of the clinical work that the nursing student performs, it is evident that she/he may find her or himself caring for a patient with a communicable disease, or one who has little or no immunity to a communicable disease. Therefore, it is the policy of this program that each student will follow the exposure control policies of the clinical education affiliate in which they are assigned.

Students developing signs or symptoms of communicable diseases that pose a hazard to the patients they serve or other clinical personnel, shall report this immediately to the clinical instructor. If warranted a clinical site incident / injury form must be completed and a copy sent to the health records officer of the college.

“**Communicable disease**” means an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or via an animal, vector or the inanimate environment to a susceptible animal or human host. <https://www.cdc.gov/>

## Hepatitis-B Vaccine

The Nursing Program at North Country Community College provides the following information to advise its students as to the risks associated with their chosen occupation. This will enable each student to determine whether they wish to be vaccinated at their own expense.

Certain groups of health care workers are at risk of contracting Hepatitis-B through exposure to blood or accidental inoculation. An inactivated hepatitis-B vaccine has been developed to prevent hepatitis-B virus infection, a potentially fatal disease, in health care personnel. Studies on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine have shown it to be without serious side effects.

Vaccination consists of three separate doses of the vaccine, given at time zero, 1 month and 6 months. Optimal protection is not conferred until after the third dose. For more information, contact the Program Director.

## Influenza Vaccine

Per the Public Health and Health Planning Council (PHHPC), Public Health Law Sections 225, 2800, 2803, 3612, and 4010; which are now located in a new Section 2.59 of the State Sanitary Code within Title 10 of the New York Code Rules and Regulations (10 NYCRR) entitled; “Prevention of influenza transmission by healthcare and residential facility and agency personnel:”

All students must receive an influenza vaccine. If they are unable to, due to a medical exemption (as defined in the above-mentioned document which will be provided to students upon request), a medical professional must sign off on a New York State Department of Health Medical Exemption Statement for Health Care Personnel for Influenza Vaccine. The student will then provide the **original signed document** to the health officer at the College, which will then be transmitted to the clinical site. *Again, we urge you to maintain personal copies of all health information submitted to the college. We further suggest that you have these documents available during your clinical experiences for possible examination by appropriate clinical site personnel.*

If a student is medically exempt, it is their responsibility to purchase and consistently wear a procedure or surgical mask at all times during their clinical rotation during flu season. The end of flu season is determined by the NY State Department of Health Commissioner; it is not on the authority of the college or clinical site.

Please note that flu season, historically, has been declared for a few as eleven weeks, or as long as twenty-two weeks. The NYSDOH Commissioner might designate influenza “prevalent” in specific areas, thereby effectively increasing the amount of time a mask would be required to be worn.

**Students can be dismissed from clinical due to non-compliance, per NYSDOH.**

# *Clinical Education Policies and Procedures*



## **CLINICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **PURPOSE**

Clinical Education is an integral part of the curriculum of the Nursing Programs at North Country Community College. It is during the clinical education component that the student is given the opportunity to apply knowledge and skills learned in the classroom and laboratory settings to actual patients under the supervision of a Registered Nurse assigned the Clinical Instructor role at each clinical site.



## Technical Standards

As you begin your education and career in Nursing, it is important for you to know what will be expected of you in terms of required physical demands and general skills and abilities in the clinical setting. Please read through the following pages carefully. If you feel that you cannot perform any of the tasks listed, please contact the Nursing Program for clarification and further discussion.

- Lift and carry light objects such as charts and equipment items without assistance.
- Push/pull equipment requiring force of 10-30 pounds on linoleum and carpeted floors.
- Use assist devices for lifting or transferring patients over 300 lbs.
- Push/pull patients in chairs.
- Manipulate equipment through doorways and into close fitting areas.
- Stand, walk up to 75% of a twelve-hour day.
- Stoop, bend, squat, reach overhead as required to reach equipment.
- Demonstrate coordination in patient treatments/procedures.
- Demonstrate eye hand coordination, manual and finger dexterity and sensation.
- Tolerate wearing gloves and other protective equipment.
- Demonstrate skills to continuously comprehend and communicate with patients, physician, staff and faculty.
- Distinguish sounds with background noise ranging from conversational levels to high pitched sounding alarms. Must be able to hear verbal communication as well as sounds that indicate changes in a patient's condition, i.e. breath and heart sounds, blood pressure.
- Operate equipment required in health care delivery.
- Maintain attention spans requiring from 10-60 minutes to perform minimal to fine detailed tasks related to nursing functions.
- Remember multiple messages and information.
- Elicit a health history from patient/family.
- Use correct body mechanics.
- Use appropriate hand washing technique.
- Gown, glove, and mask appropriately.

## Clinical Education Requirements

All Nursing students will be completing an extensive amount of clinical education, which includes laboratory time at the college.

**Clinical time is a requirement of the NYS Office of the Professions and the Federal Education Department and is mandatory. Clinical time that is missed due to an allowable absence (see Clinical Attendance Policy) will require make-up sessions at a cost to the student. The Clinical Coordinator will determine available sessions and fee to the student.**

Prior to caring for patients in the clinical setting students must demonstrate a basic competency of the required nursing skills, these include but are not limited to, bed changing, bed baths, dressing change, Foley catheter insertion, tracheostomy care, vital signs and medication administration.

Students will have the opportunity to learn and practice the required skill in the nursing laboratory. Each student must demonstrate a basic competency of the required skill on a designated day and time by a nursing instructor. Should a student fail to demonstrate basic competency on their first testing attempt they will have a second attempt. Second attempts must be after a period for remediation and practice and will be conducted by an alternative faculty member. Students unable to pass after two attempts will not be cleared for clinical practice and dismissed from the program.

Should a student struggle with lab skills during a clinical experience they will be referred to the nursing lab for practice and remediation prior to returning for their next clinical experience.

All clinical education courses in nursing are competency-based, as per the course syllabus.

## Appearance Code

The general intent of this code is to present a professional and hygienic appearance to our patients and co-workers. Each student will have as a standard part of his / her uniform:

1. North Country Community College patch, **sewn** (not pinned or taped) to the uniform on the left upper sleeve;
2. North Country Community College student picture ID name tag to be worn on the uniform and easily visible; and an NCCC student name pin (purchased from the college bookstore)
3. Pen and pocket size notebook.

All first-year nursing students are required to dress in a **hunter green scrub top**, with a **North Country Community College patch** sewn to the left upper sleeve, and **white scrub pants**. Second year students are required to wear **white scrubs top and bottom** with the **North Country Community College patch** on the left upper sleeve. Certain clinical rotations may have alternative requirements, which you will be informed of prior to the beginning of that rotation.

Uniforms are purchased independently and should meet the above guidelines. Please see program faculty if you have questions.

Students' footwear should consist of a white shoe or sneaker. Colors are not permitted. For safety reasons, shoes must totally enclose the foot so clogs must be worn with the back strap in place. **Sandals or open-toed shoes are not acceptable.**

Hair styles and hair color are to be conservative, as determined by program faculty. Male students will be clean shaven or have neatly trimmed beards / mustaches. For health and safety reasons, any student with shoulder length or longer hair will be required to keep their hair tied back, up and off the shoulders.

Jewelry for students should be conservative. No long necklaces or dangling earrings should be worn as patients may inadvertently grab at them if they feel unsteady, or if they are disorientated. **Ornate earrings, rings, and bracelets are out of place in a professional medical setting.**

**NO VISIBLE** body piercings, with the exception of the ears, **including but not limited to:** tongue; lip; eyebrow; cheeks piercing. Tattoos must be covered in accordance with school and clinical facility policy.

Fingernails must be short and well-trimmed as to not cause damage to the patient or equipment. Nail polish is not permitted. **ACRYLIC NAILS ARE NOT PERMITTED IN THE CLINICAL SETTING.** They can harbor pathogens, and pose a risk to vulnerable patients.

## **Student Identification – Name Tag**

Each student will be provided with NCCC student photo identification. Students must be properly identified when on a clinical rotation with a NCCC student badge. In addition to the school photo ID students need to purchase from the College Bookstore a NCCC student name pin and wear it to each clinical assignment.

## **Confidentiality**

Under applicable state and federal laws of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), it is important that all students in the Nursing programs understand that **confidentiality is a critical element in the healthcare setting.**

Students are **not** to discuss any patient, condition, treatment or clinical site-related issue outside the line of duty. Social networking (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), text messaging, personal blogging, photographs, social media and casual conversation that alludes to or divulges any clinical-related information is cause for immediate review and dismissal from the Nursing programs at North Country Community College if the student is found to be in violation of the law, or the College policy.

See North Country Community College's policy on confidentiality of health information. A copy of this form is to be signed by all students attending clinical and is to be kept on file in the Records Office.

## Bereavement Leave

Students who experience a death in their “family” (*faculty to review with student*) will be given up to 3 days without penalty. Time used in addition to the 3 days will be based on individual circumstance.

## Drug and Alcohol Use and Testing

North Country Community College Nursing Programs have a vital interest in maintaining a safe and healthy environment for our students, faculty and those we care for in the clinical areas of our programs. Being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol poses serious safety and health risks to the user and others in their environment.

The use, sale, purchase, transfer, possession or being under the influence of alcohol or drugs poses unacceptable risks. North Country Community College Nursing programs have the right and obligation to maintain an illegal drug- and alcohol-free environment. If there is reasonable belief that a student is under the influence of alcohol, illegal or misused drugs, the student will be referred to the Office of Campus and Student Life.

While drug and alcohol abuse is a medical problem, and often a legal problem, it is **ALWAYS** unacceptable in our nursing program. Most employers of nurses conduct pre-employment, random and for-cause testing, and we are simply following that professional practice as will be encountered in the professional arena.

### **Purpose:**

This policy is in addition to the College Policy on Alcohol and Other Drugs, located in the college catalog. It outlines the goals and objectives of the North Country Community College Nursing Program's drug and alcohol use and testing program, and provides guidance to staff and students concerning their responsibilities.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all students in the Nursing Programs at North Country Community College, at all campuses.

### **Definitions:**

Alcohol – means any beverage that contains ethyl alcohol (ethanol), including but not limited to, beer, wine and distilled spirits.

Drug Testing – means the scientific analysis of urine, blood, saliva, hair, breath or other specimens of the human body for the purpose of detecting a drug or alcohol.

Illegal Drug – means any drug which is not legally obtainable; any drug which is legally obtainable but has not been legally obtained; any prescribed drug not being used for the prescribed purpose; any over the counter drug being used at a dosage level other than recommended by the manufacturer or being used for a purpose not in accordance with bona fide medical therapy. Examples of illegal substances: marijuana, hashish, cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, or phencyclidine (PCP).

Legal Drug – means any prescribed drug or over the counter drug that has been legally obtained and is being used for the purpose for which it was prescribed or manufactured.

Reasonable belief – means a belief based on objective facts sufficient to lead a prudent person to conclude that a particular student is unable to satisfactorily perform his or her duties due to drug or alcohol impairment. Such inability to perform may include, but is not limited to: decrease in the quality and quantity of production, judgment, reasoning, concentration and psychomotor control or marked changes in behavior. Deviations from safe working practices, sleeping in the class or clinical environment, and erratic conduct indicative of impairment are examples of “reasonable belief” situations.

## **Inclement Weather**

Students attending a clinical rotation must attend clinical unless the college is closed. At times notification of college closure will occur AFTER clinical begins or after you begin travel to the clinical site. **Keep in touch with your clinical instructor** as to clinical cancellations beyond the campus closing or a delayed start to clinical for that day.

**YOUR SAFETY IS OUR PRIMARY CONCERN.** Therefore, use your best judgment. Students traveling to attend class on campus will be required to attend if classes have not been canceled. It is the student’s responsibility to plan ahead for inclement weather.

In the event that the college is closed due to weather or safety related incidents, the following communication resources can be assessed for information:

### **Television**

WPTZ Channel 5

### **Internet**

[www.nccc.edu](http://www.nccc.edu)

[www.wptz.com](http://www.wptz.com)

### **Radio:**

WNBZ	1240 AM (Saranac Lake)
WSLK	106.3 FM (Saranac Lake)
WLPW	105.5 FM (Lake Placid)
WIRD	920 AM (Lake Placid)
WSLP	93.3 FM (Lake Placid/Tupper Lake/Saranac Lake)
NCPR	90.5 FM (Saranac Lake ~ North Country Public Radio)
WICY	1490 AM (Malone)
WIPS	1250 AM (Ticonderoga)

**Register for SUNY Alert** <http://www.suny.edu/sunyalert>

## Student Liability Insurance

All students within the Nursing programs are required to provide proof of Student Nurse liability insurance and to maintain coverage throughout the length of the program. It is the student's responsibility to bear the cost of the insurance.

One affordable option for professional liability insurance is the Nurses Service Organization, [www.nso.com](http://www.nso.com); OR type in "student nurse professional liability insurance" into a search engine, and choose from one of the companies listed.

**Please make sure that you purchase at least \$1,000,000 (one million dollars) for each claim and up to \$6,000,000 (six million dollars) aggregate for your coverage.**

A copy of the Certificate of Insurance is required as proof of insurance, and should be submitted to the Health Records Officer/ Clinical Coordinator.

Please note:

- You should maintain personal copies of all information submitted to the college.

## CPR for Healthcare Providers

All students enrolled in the Nursing programs must be certified in CPR or BLS For Healthcare Providers in the areas of adult, child and infant and use of AED. Proof of certification must be provided to the Records Office.

It is important for the student to understand that CPR certification is **mandatory** when in the clinical setting. CPR certification must be continuously maintained, meaning, a new CPR card with the new expiration date must be submitted to the Records Office PRIOR to the current expiration date. If certification lapses, a student will not be able to attend clinical and will be subject to sanctions for missed clinical. Students are responsible for maintaining validity.

Please note:

- It is YOUR responsibility to contact the records officer to determine that all of your information is current, as per program guidelines.
- We strongly urge you to maintain personal copies of all information submitted to the college.
- We further suggest that you have these documents available during your clinical experiences for possible examination by appropriate clinical site personnel.

American Heart Association Standard is the required CPR certification for all students.

## Incident and Injury Report

During the clinical assignment, the student must report any incident of injury to him/herself or to a patient to the clinical instructor, supervisor or department administrator. Clinical site policy is to be followed in the event of any injury or incident.

All events must be completed using the secure web form for **Incident Reporting** published on the [Campus Safety](#) webpage:

[https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthCountryCC&layout\\_id=0](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthCountryCC&layout_id=0)

## Kaplan Nursing

North Country Community College has partnered with Kaplan Nursing for student success for both the PN and ADN nursing programs. The three major services offered by Kaplan are 1) assisting each student with testing preparation, 2) academic support, and 3) reporting and analysis.

The fall semester you will be introduced to the Kaplan product. The elements of the Kaplan learning are a part of your curriculum and included in your syllabus. It is important to recognize early the help Kaplan Nursing can offer you in a wide range of learning modalities from video, live lecture, practice testing, and much more.

You will receive an email from Kaplan with your secure sign-on information in the fall. **PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THE EMAIL.** If you have not received it by the second or third week of classes, check your spam or junk mail and follow up with your instructor.

Kaplan testing will occur throughout the year in your nursing courses as either homework assignments or as a proctored computerized test. Your faculty will keep you informed and information is included in your course syllabus and Week-at-a-Glance.

The second semester of both the PN and ADN program will include preparation for the National Certification Licensure Exam (NCLEX). This preparation includes a two-day PN review and a three-day ADN live review with an instructor from Kaplan. We will provide advanced notice of the scheduling of the review. Attendance for all days of the scheduled review is mandatory. The live review will occur on one or more weekends.

**Kaplan participation in the testing, quizzes as assigned in your syllabus, and live review are mandatory.**

You will have the option to sit for the live review at another campus if the scheduled dates will not work for you but it is necessary that you complete the full review at the campus of your choice. You cannot do two days at one campus and one day at another campus.

Please speak with faculty if you have questions about accessing Kaplan's website. The resources of Kaplan will help you learn throughout your nursing education in theory and clinical.

**NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE – NURSING PROGRAM  
COUNSELING FORM**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Campus / Clinical Site \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

This report should be completed by the clinical instructor as soon as any of the following misconduct(s) is (are) known and the program's clinical coordinator should be notified.

**Group 1**

\_\_\_\_\_ Possessing or being under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol while at the clinical site or on College property. Presenting to the clinical site smelling of alcohol. Presenting to the clinical site with extremely poor hygiene such that the clinical site refuses your attendance due to the lack of professionalism demonstrated.

\_\_\_\_\_ Theft, abuse, misuse or destruction of the property or equipment of any patient, visitor, student, hospital or hospital employee, the College or College employee.

\_\_\_\_\_ Disclosing confidential information about any patient. This includes the use of social networks, verbal and written communication, and any electronic devices.

\_\_\_\_\_ Immoral, indecent, illegal, or unethical conduct at a clinical site or on College property.

\_\_\_\_\_ Possession of weapons, or wielding or threatening to use any type of weapon at a clinical site or on College property.

\_\_\_\_\_ Assault on any patient, visitor, student, clinical site or College personnel.

\_\_\_\_\_ Misuse or falsification of patient, student, clinical site or College records.

\_\_\_\_\_ Removal of patient, student, clinical site or College records without authorization.

\_\_\_\_\_ Plagiarism or any identified academic dishonesty.

\_\_\_\_\_ Engaging in disorderly conduct that could ultimately threaten the physical well-being of any patient visitor, student, and clinical site or College personnel.

\_\_\_\_\_ Insubordination and refusal to follow instruction.

\_\_\_\_\_ Inconsiderate treatment of patients, visitors, students, clinical site or College personnel.

\_\_\_\_\_ Failure to perform responsibilities, or failure to exercise reasonable care in the performance of responsibilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ Violation of safety rules and regulations or failure to use safety equipment provided.

\_\_\_\_\_ Unauthorized use of equipment.



\_\_\_\_\_ Threatening, intimidating, and coercing other students, patients, visitors, clinical site or College personnel.

## **Group 2**

\_\_\_\_\_ Lack of appropriate level of performance following documented discussion with faculty and/or clinical staff to include, but not limited to the following: negative attitude; perceived lack of motivation; inappropriate communication; failure to accept constructive criticism; overall unprofessional conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_ Leaving the clinical area without proper authorization.

\_\_\_\_\_ Sleeping during scheduled clinical or class hours.

\_\_\_\_\_ Restricting or impeding clinical or class output.

\_\_\_\_\_ Any clinical **and/or** class absence. Failure to personally notify your clinical instructor (or clinical site designee) **and/or** course instructor prior to the absence. There will be no changing of clinical sites.

\_\_\_\_\_ Failure to be ready for your clinical assignment at the starting time.

\_\_\_\_\_ Smoking in restricted areas.

\_\_\_\_\_ Unauthorized soliciting, vending, or distribution of written or printed matter.

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual acceptance of gratuities from patients or others.

\_\_\_\_\_ Inappropriate dress or appearance. Acceptable attire is described in this handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ Failure to follow program policies regarding direct or indirect supervision while providing nursing care.

\_\_\_\_\_ Unauthorized possession and utilization of personal electronic devices (i.e., laptops, e-readers, cell phones, mp3 players, etc.) while in the clinical setting with the exception of break or lunch (if allowed by the clinical site).

\_\_\_\_\_ Bereavement leave up to 3 days.

**Instructor: Please indicate which type of report this is:**

### **Group 1**

\_\_\_\_\_ Dismissal from program

### **Group 2**

\_\_\_\_\_ 1st Report: Written warning and counseling.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2nd Report: Written warning and counseling; 5 point deduction from final course grade.



Reviewed: 7/2019

**Confidentiality**

**North Country Community College  
Workforce/Student Confidentiality Agreement  
Individually Identifiable Health Information**

**IMPORTANT:** Please read all sections. If you have any questions, please seek clarification before signing.

**1. Confidentiality of Employee/Student/Patient/Clinical Client Individually Identifiable Health Information:**

I understand and acknowledge that:

- a) Services and information provided to employees/students/patients/clinical clients are private and confidential;

**6. Remedies**

I understand and acknowledge that:

- a) the restrictions and obligations I have accepted under this Agreement are reasonable and necessary in order to protect the interests of employees, students, patients, clinical clients, North Country Community College, and my employer (if different than North Country Community College); and
- b) my failure to comply with this Agreement in any respect could cause irreparable harm to employees, students, patients, clinical clients, North Country Community College and my employer.

I therefore understand that North Country Community College or my employer may prevent me from violating this Agreement by any legal means available, in addition to disciplinary measures which may result in sanctions in accordance with applicable polices and collective bargaining agreements.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## North Country Community College Policy and Procedure

**Subject:** Confidentiality of Health Information

**STATEMENT  
OF**

North Country Community College is committed to protecting the privacy and confidentiality of health information of the population it serves. Health Information is strictly confidential and should never be disclosed, nor confirmed to anyone who is not specifically authorized under the institution's policies or applicable law to receive the information.

Failure to adhere to state and federal law or local North Country Community College policies and procedures regarding the confidentiality of protected information will be considered a breach of confidentiality and will result in the imposition of appropriate sanctions and disciplinary procedures.

**SCOPE:**

This policy applies to all members of the institution's workforce, whether directly employed by the institution or serving under an alternative arrangement, and to students in appropriate programs of study. It shall include, but not be limited to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- All students participating in a health related program or in any programs of study in which individually identifiable health information may be disclosed or used, e.g. the Wilderness Recreation Leadership program
- Contracted staff (including temporary staff)
- Consultants
- Contractors and subcontractors
- Faculty and credentialed staff

**EDUCATION  
AND  
TRAINING:**

North Country Community College is responsible for providing job appropriate training to its workforce regarding:

- a) the need for confidentiality;
- b) types of information that are considered confidential;
- c) sanctions associated with a breach of confidentiality; and
- d) the institution's confidentiality agreement.

**CONFIDENTIALITY  
AGREEMENT**

Each member of North Country Community College's affected workforce and students in appropriate programs of study will be expected to review and sign North Country Community College's confidentiality agreement. Upon adoption of the policy, this will occur upon an initial or annual hire/affiliation/start of a health-related or other appropriate program of study and shall remain in full force and effect during the member's future employment or program participation thereafter. This signed statement will be maintained in the appropriate employee personnel or student health file. Periodic signature and certification will be requested by the College.

**SUSPECTED**

All breaches of confidentiality should be reported to the local supervisor

**BREACH:** (program director, department or division chair) **OR** the area chair (dean, business manager, president or other individual as appropriate) **OR** the equity officer **OR** the campus privacy official. Failure of the local supervisor, area chair or equity officer to report a breach to the campus privacy official will be considered a violation of this policy. Investigation of a suspected breach of confidentiality will be done in concert with the campus privacy official. Results of such investigation will be reported to the College President for final action, if any.

**SANCTIONS:** Upon a finding of a breach of confidentiality by any employee/student/consultant/contractor/volunteer, the College shall initiate action pursuant to the applicable collective bargaining agreements and/or the NCCC Code of Conduct to implement an appropriate sanction or disciplinary action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Letter of reprimand
- Suspension
- Termination

*For employees not represented by a collective bargaining unit, sanctions may include actions up to and including termination of employment.*

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** August 26, 2003  
 Revised October 6, 2003  
 Final: April 2004  
 Reviewed: July 2018

## **The North Country Community College Nursing Club**

### **Mission**

The North Country Community College Nursing Club will exist to celebrate and enrich the experience of being a nursing student at North Country Community College

Students will be encouraged to demonstrate Professionalism and leadership skills while exemplifying the caring compassionate characteristics of the professional nurse through participation in civic, community, and college events

Club social events may also be planned to promote fellowship and a sense of comradery between class members and between students in the practical nursing and student nursing programs.

### **The Role of the Faculty Advisor**

The faculty advisor serves as a resource person supporting and assisting representatives and nursing students in attaining their identified club goals. The faculty advisor supervises club activities, maintains ledgers for club accounts, deposits monies raised into the Club account, and will facilitate and request withdrawals to satisfy club expenses.

### **The Role of the Class Representatives**

Class representatives participate in the PN/ADN monthly meetings to plan and share ideas. They collect ideas from students that promote club activity and share ideas during monthly meetings. It is the responsibility of the class representatives to inform members of club events and fundraising outcomes. With input from class members, the Club will determine goals for the academic year determine how much money the Club would like to raise, where these monies will be spent, and what community events the Club would like to participate.

Class representatives will create a sense of fellowship and unity within the class and between the programs (PN/ADN). They will encourage participation in community affairs and activities towards attainment of identified goals for the year. The class representative will assist with planning and organizing the pinning ceremony and promote fundraising for the pinning ceremony on their respective campus. In addition, the Class Representatives will assist with mentorship of PN students and participate in a nursing orientation workshop. A nursing representative from each class (PN/ADN) will sit on the Nursing Advisory Board and attend the annual spring meeting.

**Nursing Club is not a forum to voice problems with exams, instructors, curriculum or problems with other students. Representatives should refer the student to take these concerns to their instructor for resolution. If there is no resolution to the concern, the student and instructor should ask for assistance from the Nursing Director.**

### **Suggested Goals and Activities:**

1. Creating health information bulletin boards
2. Attend or initiate a health care event (STI education, contraception information, blood pressure checks, etc.)
3. Holiday parties
4. Bring-a-dish luncheon
5. Create an album
6. Photos for pinning ceremony slide show

## **Pinning Ceremony**

The Nursing Pinning Ceremony is a rite of passage for all nurses and officially notes the end of their academic training and their readiness to sit for their licensure examination. All students who have successfully completed the required nursing courses may participate in the ceremony.

Each campus will have their own pinning ceremony that will include both PN and ADN students. The ceremonies will be held after the completion of final exams and prior to graduation. Each ceremony will be designed by student representatives and faculty on each campus. Invitations and bulletins are the responsibility of the Saranac Lake campus. Guest speakers are encouraged and should be notable professionals from nursing. Clubs may need to plan for honorarium fees or travel and lodging for speakers.

The dress code for the ceremony follows the requirements for dress in the clinical area with the notable exception that all students will wear white tops and bottoms. White Lab coats for the graduating student ADN cohort are an option for the club to determine. PN and ADN student leadership must work together with faculty on planning this special ceremony.

The pinning will be performed by a full-time faculty member or adjunct nursing instructor if the full time faculty members are not available. For the sake of time, only one faculty member will perform the pinning for the PN students and one faculty member for the ADN students.

The number of invited guests of each student may be limited by the size of the facility in which the ceremony is held.

Costs associated with the ceremonies are to be met with funds from each campus nursing club(s).

**NORTH COUNTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
NURSING PROGRAMS  
Travel Acknowledgment: Statement of Understanding**

I understand that clinical experience is a very critical component of the Nursing Programs. I understand that I will be required to travel to **two or more** clinical sites to fulfill my clinical education requirements. Furthermore, I understand that traveling to and from clinical is fully my responsibility and that it is possible that the distance to a particular site could be 75 miles or more (one way). It is further understood that NCCC **IS NOT** responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of my traveling to and from clinical.

Although every attempt will be made to accommodate each student and to keep travel distance to a minimum, I understand that there is no guarantee that I will be assigned to the clinical site(s) nearest to my residence or of my choice.

I understand that there may be required evening or weekend clinical experiences as part of my program requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Print Name**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**



## Handbook

### A. RECEIPT AND ACCEPTANCE OF RESPONSIBILITY

One quality we expect in each student is accountability – being responsible for your own actions. We request that you use this handbook along with the college catalog and student handbook to assist you in your accountability. Your advisor or instructor will be able to clarify any items or answer any questions regarding the policies within this handbook.

#### North Country Community College Nursing Statement of Understanding

I understand the requirements of the NCCC Nursing Program as stated in this handbook, the college catalog and the student handbook. When I begin a nursing course, it is my responsibility to clarify what I do not understand regarding the requirements of the course with the instructor.

\*\*\*\*\*

### B. HONOR CODE

To prepare students for the high ethical standards of Health Professionals, the College expects absolute academic integrity both in the classroom and in clinical practice. Therefore, acts of cheating, attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, stealing of academic work, which includes secured tests or related materials, papers purchased or written by others, or the failure to report an occurrence of academic dishonesty or any violation of this honor code may subject you to the College’s disciplinary procedures as defined in the North Country Community College Handbook. Academic Honesty. Cheating, in any form, is NOT a behavior which will be tolerated. You are expected to do your own work concerning examinations, homework assignments, and papers. Plagiarism in any form is dishonest. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with College Procedures and may result in your failure of the class and/or dismissal from the college.

I have read the above statement and affirm that all the work that I submit in this course will be work that I have completed on my own. I understand that I may not work with anyone else in completing assignments nor may I help others with their assignments.

I have read the above and agree to follow the Honor Code and NCCC Nursing Statement of Understanding

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT NCCC ID

\_\_\_\_\_  
STUDENT’S SIGNATURE