

The College of Nursing Honor Code

(Revised: July 2024)

A. Introduction

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

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

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

Participation in the College of Nursing Honor Code (hereafter Honor Code) provides evidence to the University of Iowa College of Nursing community that the integrity of its members is unquestioned and accepted by those in the academic, clinical, and research communities. Participation in the Honor Code confers upon students the responsibility to respect and protect the integrity of the University of Iowa College of Nursing. It also provides evidence that the learning environment is safe and equitable regardless of the student’s race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy (including childbirth and related conditions), disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, or associational preferences. Students and faculty together establish and maintain and protect trust in these beliefs.

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

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

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

B. Applicability

The Honor Code applies to all undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Nursing. Students are also required to comply with the University of Iowa [Code of Student Life](#).

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

C. Definitions of Misconduct

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

Unacceptable behavior is divided into three categories: academic, clinical, and personal. The following behaviors are examples of violations of the Honor Code. The list does not include all behaviors that may be violations of the Honor Code.

1. *Academic Misconduct*

The College of Nursing will engage with students on incidences of Academic Misconduct including, but not limited to:

- a. Not attending and actively participating in class, as articulated in the course syllabus.
- b. Plagiarism: taking credit for another person's work or ideas regardless of the medium, stealing other's results or methods, copying the writing of others (including content from electronic sources) without properly citing the source; or taking credit falsely in any other manner.
- c. Cheating includes: using or attempting to use unauthorized notes, collaborating with others without permission to do so; using study aids, technology, information from another person on an exam, report, paper or other evaluative document; during online testing using the internet to search for unauthorized answers; providing/accepting online testing code when not in class, unauthorized altering of a graded work, then submitting it for re-grading; allowing another person to do all or part of one's work and then submitting the work under one's own name; using notes or texts for an on-line exam, unless explicitly allowed by the faculty.
- d. Falsification of data: dishonesty in reporting results, ranging from blatant fabrication of data, improper adjustment of results and gross negligence in collecting and analyzing data, to selective reporting or omission of conflicting data for deceptive purposes.
- e. Aiding and abetting dishonesty: providing material, information or assistance to another person with the knowledge or reasonable expectation that the material, information, or assistance would be used to commit an act that would be prohibited by the Honor Code.
- f. Violating instructions regarding completion of assignments: although independent study is recognized as a principal method of learning, at times students benefit from studying in groups and discussing assignments and laboratory experiments. When material is to be turned in for evaluation or inspection, it is up to the student(s) to comply with the terms of the assignment and to determine what cooperation, if any, between them is permitted by the instructor.
- g. Falsification of academic record and official documents: without proper authorization, altering documents affecting academic records, forging signatures of authorization, or falsifying information on an official academic document, form, grade report, letter of permission, clinical record or any other official document.

2. *Clinical Misconduct*

In addition to the [Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements](#), the following conduct is considered unacceptable in the clinical area, includes, but is not limited to:

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

3. *Personal Misconduct*

The College of Nursing will report incidences of personal misconduct, as defined below, to the Office of Student Accountability.

- a. Commission of a crime: engaging in illegal or criminal activity that would impact the student's ability to obtain or maintain a professional license or employment in the nursing profession. The results of criminal proceedings will not be determinative of proceedings under this Honor Code.
- b. Discrimination and/or Harassment, whether or not sexual in nature, verbal or written, in-person or on-line, in violation of the law or University policy: This may include bullying, hazing, stalking, repeated and unwanted communications, threats, or other wrongful conduct that seriously interferes with the work or study of any member of the College of Nursing community, refer to [Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct](#), [Anti-Harassment policy](#). Violations of these policies are determined through the policies and procedures established by the Office of Institutional Equity, but violations may incur other or additional sanctions imposed by the College of Nursing.
- c. Uncivil behavior: Obstructing or disrupting classes, team projects, talks or other presentations, or other activities or programs of the College of Nursing and obstructing access to college facilities and events. Excluded is any behavior protected by the First Amendment freedom of speech and artistic expression.
- d. The College of Nursing expects nursing students to adhere to the [Code of Student Life Policy Regarding the Use of Illegal Drugs and Alcohol](#).
- e. Violating the University's [Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources](#) that define proper and ethical use of computers.
- f. Obstructing the investigation of an alleged violation of the Honor Code: including making dishonest or misleading statements either orally or in writing, including e-mails; other falsification of information; altering, destroying or deleting relevant documents; and any other act that obstructs or hinders an investigation.

- g. Students are required to use technology for educational and research pursuits in a manner consistent with [University policy](#) and [Research](#), professional standards and ethics (cite & link to American Nurses Association, Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice, (3d Ed. 2015), and applicable laws.
- h. The College of Nursing believes in protecting the students’ rights of freedom of speech, expression and association, including their right to use social media. The College of Nursing also believes in protecting the rights of patients with whom students interact, the rights of faculty members, the rights of other students, and the public at large. Students are expected to be mindful and monitor their own social media use, such as and posting only statements and images that appropriately represent them, the College and their chosen profession. Students may also refer to the University of Iowa information on freedom of [speech](#) for further information.

D. Reporting Procedure for Alleged Misconduct

All members of the nursing community—faculty, administrators, staff, and students—have a responsibility to report any reasonable suspicion that a student has violated the College of Nursing Honor Code. Faculty members are required to report all incidents of academic, clinical, and personal misconduct that occur via the [College of Nursing Report of Misconduct](#) form. Faculty, administrators, staff, and students may consult with the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs before reporting if needed.

All reports of alleged misconduct are private as is the identity of those reporting misconduct.

E. Procedure/Sanctions

1. Academic Misconduct:

The faculty member will notify the student of the alleged misconduct (in writing) and meet with the student to provide an opportunity to discuss the allegation. The faculty member will discuss possible sanctions with the student, and then complete the College of Nursing [Report of Misconduct form](#). If the faculty member, student, and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs agree with the sanctions, the student will be notified of the sanctions, in writing, and the matter is closed. Sanctions for *academic misconduct* within the course are outlined below.

VIOLATION	SANCTION
Attendance Policy	See course syllabus
Academic Integrity	Case by case basis. Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • re-doing an assignment, • re-taking an examination, • undertaking an additional assignment, • receiving a reduced grade, • completion of the Academic Integrity Seminar, • warning, • suspension, • dismissal from the College of Nursing.

2. Clinical Misconduct:

All incidents of clinical misconduct will be handled on a case-by-case basis with sanctions determined by the severity of the misconduct, the potential risk to patients, and the nature of the setting.

In cases involving clinical misconduct, the student will be removed from the clinical setting on an interim basis. The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will notify the student of the alleged misconduct (in writing) and provide an opportunity for the student to share information regarding the allegation and discuss possible sanctions. The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will collect relevant information from the faculty and clinical site leadership.

The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will discuss sanctions with the student and then complete the College of Nursing [Report of Misconduct form](#). If the student and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs agree with the sanctions, the matter is closed. Sanctions for clinical misconduct are outlined below.

LEVEL OF INCIDENT	SANCTION
Professional Misconduct	Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • removal from clinical setting, • remediation/guidance and return to clinical only with demonstrated competency, • failure of assignment/course, • dismissal from College of Nursing.
HIPAA Violation	Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal from clinical setting, • failure of assignment/course, • dismissal from College of Nursing.
Incident that does not cause harm to patient due to lack of knowledge.	Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remediation and guidance to critical nursing content, • Return to clinical only with demonstrated competency,
Patient Safety Issue – risk of harm to patient but no harm caused.	Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate removal from clinical setting, • Remediation and return to clinical only with demonstrated competency, • failure of course, • dismissal from College of Nursing.
Harm to patient	Sanctions could include, but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • failure of course, • dismissal from College of Nursing program.
Incidents of impairment due to drug or alcohol use in the clinical setting	See Substance Abuse Policy for additional information

3. Personal Misconduct:

The College of Nursing will report incidences of personal misconduct to the Office of Student Accountability, who will determine appropriate sanctions.

While matters of personal misconduct will be referred to the Office of Student Accountability, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will engage the student in a dialogue regard the personal misconduct for the purpose of mentoring and guidance, with attention to fostering student success in the nursing program and addressing future licensing concerns.

4. Additional Misconduct

If a student has a second violation of the College of Nursing Honor Code, more serious consequences may result. The student's conduct will be evaluated closely, measured against the American Nurses Association Code for Nurses, and feedback sought from faculty about the student's overall conduct and fitness for professional nursing before sanction decisions are rendered by the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs.

F. Procedure for Appeal

1. Academic Misconduct:

A. Reasons for Appeal

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

The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs or their designee will determine if the appeal meets the following conditions.

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

If the appeal request does not meet the conditions above, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will inform the student the case is closed. The Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will issue a written report regarding the review within five days of receiving the appeal.

If there is evidence that the appeal should be reviewed further, the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs will refer the appeal to a Hearing Panel within seven days.

B. Hearing Panel

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

C. Hearing Procedures

- a. A hearing will be scheduled within five days and must occur within 10 days of the Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programs' referral to the Hearing Panel.
- b. No later than five days before the hearing, the appealing student and the faculty member, assisted by the staff in the Felton Student Success Center, will submit to the Hearing Panel, in writing, all documents that each party would like the Hearing Panel to review and a list of witnesses whom they would like to have submit testimony before the Hearing Panel. If the student wishes to have a personal advisor accompany them, the accused student must submit the name of the advisor and state whether the advisor is an attorney.
- c. No later than three days before the hearing, the Hearing Panel will provide each party with a hearing packet that includes all documentation that has been submitted for review.
- d. The Hearing Panel may hear testimony from any party whose testimony it deems relevant, including, but not limited to, the person who reported the misconduct, other witnesses, and the course faculty.
- e. The Hearing Panel may review any documents or evidence relevant to the issue.
- f. The student will have the opportunity to appear before the Hearing Panel to present their case and remain present while all testimony is presented. The student may review all documents considered and may question witnesses. The student may bring an advisor to the hearing. However, the role of the advisor is to support and advise the student, not to participate in the proceedings.
- g. The hearing is closed to the public.
- h. The Hearing Panel may conduct the hearing even if the student is absent where reasonable attempts to contact the student were made, or if the student declines to appear before the panel. The Hearing Panel will review findings and make recommendations based on the information presented to them during the hearing without the student's participation.
- i. After the case is presented, the chair of the Hearing Panel will prepare a written report containing the factual findings and statements of any sanctions to be imposed. The vote of the majority of the Hearing Panel, including the Chair of the panel will determine whether the decision of the faculty member will be upheld, modified or reverse the decision. The decision will be based on the totality of the circumstances and final sanctions will be determined by the Hearing Panel
- j. The Hearing Panel's decision will be communicated in writing to the student within five days. Copies will be distributed to the reporting faculty member, the Felton Student Success Center and the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programs of the College of Nursing.
- k. The decision of the Hearing Panel is effective immediately.

D. Confidentiality

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

2. Clinical Misconduct Appeals:

1. The student may submit a written request to the Dean of the College of Nursing within five days of the date of the dismissal decision letter requesting a review of the Associate Dean for Undergraduate Program's decision. The Dean of the College of Nursing, or their designee, will determine if the appeal meets the following conditions.

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

2. If the appeal request does not meet the conditions above, the Dean of the College of Nursing will inform the student the case is closed, in writing, within 10 days.

3. If the appeal request does meet the conditions above, the Dean of the College of Nursing may uphold, modify or reverse the decision. The Dean will issue a written report, to the student, regarding the review within 10 days of receiving the appeal.

G. Additional Appeal in case of Dismissal from the College of Nursing Program

When a student is dismissed from the College of Nursing due to academic or clinical misconduct and is not satisfied with the results of the formal appeal to the College of Nursing, the student may then request a review of the decision by the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education. Appeals are not heard by the Associate Provost until the Dean of the College of Nursing has responded to the formal appeal from the student.