

ELIZABETH T. MACNEIL SCHOOL OF NURSING
2026–2027
STUDENT HANDBOOK



Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing

7900 West Division Street

Parmer Hall 400

River Forest, IL 60305

<https://www.dom.edu/academics/majors-programs/bachelor-science-nursing>

The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree at the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) at Dominican University Borra College of Health Sciences is accredited by the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education \(CCNE\)](#) and approved by the [Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation](#).

Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) Program Approval

The IDFPR has approved the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program at Dominican University, Borra College of Health Science. The IDFPR address is 320 W. Washington St., 3rd Floor, Springfield, IL, 62786. Telephone (217)785-0800.

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Program Approval

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing at Dominican University is accredited by the CCNE. The CCNE address is 655 K Street, NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001. Telephone (202) 887-6791.

Important ETMSON Dates:

Fall Semester		Spring Semester	
Date	Event	Date	Event
08/21/2026	Junior Orientation	01/11/2027	First day of Spring Classes
08/24/2026	First Day of Fall Classes	01/18/2027	Martin Luther King Jr. Day No Classes/No Clinical
09/07/2026	Labor Day No Classes/No Clinical	01/19/2027	Add/Drop Deadline for Spring
08/31/2026	Add/Drop Deadline for Fall I and Fall III Courses	03/05/2027	Last Day of Spring I Classes
10/15/2026	Flu Shot Due	03/08/2027 through 03/14/2027	Mid-Semester Vacation No Classes/No Clinical
10/16/2026 through 10/18/2026	Long Weekend No classes/No clinical	03/25/2027 through 03/28/2027	Easter Break No Classes/No Clinical
10/26/2026	Add/Drop Deadline for Fall II Courses	04/07/2027	Scholarship & Ideas Expo No Classes/No Clinical
11/04/26	Caritas Veritas No Classes/No Clinical	TBD	BCHS Health Fair
11/09/26	Registration Begins	03/25/27 through 03/28/27	Easter Break No Classes/No Clinical
11/27/2026	Last Day to Apply to Graduate Spring 2027	04/07/2027	Scholarship & Ideas Expo No Classes/No Clinical
11/25/26 through 11/29/26	Thanksgiving vacation No Classes/No Clinical	TBD	BCHS Health Fair
12/07/2026 through 12/11/2026	Finals Week	05/03/2027 through 05/07/2027	Finals Week
TBD	Pinning Ceremony	TBD	Pinning Ceremony
12/13/2026	Winter Commencement	05/08/2027	Candle and Rose Ceremony
01/08/2027	Degree Conferral	05/09/2027	Commencement

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Section I: Welcome to Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing

Welcome to the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing

Welcome to the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) at Dominican University's Borra College of Health Sciences. By choosing nursing, you have entered a profession founded on compassion, scientific inquiry, ethical practice, and a lifelong commitment to serving others. Your journey will challenge you academically, personally, and professionally while preparing you to make meaningful differences in the lives of individuals, families, and communities.

The Bachelor of Science (BSN) program at ETMSON is intentionally designed to prepare graduates who are clinically competent, professionally accountable, and ready to meet the evolving demands of modern healthcare. Through rigorous coursework, simulation, clinical experiences, and evidence-based practice, students develop the knowledge, skills, and clinical judgement necessary to provide safe, high-quality, patient-centered care.

Success in nursing requires more than academic achievement. It requires integrity, resilience, professionalism, effective communication, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Throughout your education, faculty will challenge and support you in developing these qualities while preparing you for success on the [National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses](#) (NCLEX-RN) and entry into professional nursing practice.

This handbook serves as your guide throughout the nursing program. It outlines academic expectations, clinical requirements, professional standards, and available student resources. Students are responsible for becoming familiar with the policies contained within this handbook and complying with all program requirements. While every effort is made to maintain consistency, policies may be revised as professional standards, accreditation requirements, regulatory expectations, or University policies change.

We, the leadership, faculty, and staff of ETMSON are honored to accompany you on your journey toward becoming a professional registered nurse (RN). Welcome to the ETMSON community!

Statement of Intent and Purpose

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) is part of Dominican University's Borra College of Health Sciences and is dedicated to preparing professional nurses who provide compassionate, evidence-based, and culturally responsive care across diverse healthcare settings. The program combines strong scientific foundations with liberal arts education to prepare graduates who critically think, communicate effectively, and learn with integrity.

In accordance with the accreditation by CCNE, the curriculum is guided by nationally recognized professional standards, including the [AACN Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education](#) (2026), the [American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses](#), and the [Illinois Nurse Practice Act](#).

Graduates of ETMSON are prepared for professional nursing roles in a wide variety of healthcare environments while demonstrating accountability, clinical judgment, ethical-decision-making, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Mission

Consistent with the mission of Dominican University and the Sinsinawa Dominican traditions, the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing prepares professional nurses who:

- Seek truth through evidence-based inquiry.
- Practice with compassion and integrity.
- Advocate for justice and equity in healthcare.

The program fosters intellectual curiosity, professional accountability, and ethical leadership while preparing graduates to provide safe, person-centered care to individuals, families, communities, and populations across diverse healthcare settings.

Philosophy

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing philosophy reflects the belief that nursing is both a science and an art as a humanistic profession. Effective nursing practice integrates evidence-based knowledge, clinical judgment, compassionate care, ethical decision-making, meaningful relationships with patients, families, communities, and interprofessional collaboration with the healthcare team.

Learning is viewed as an active, developmental process in which students progressively build knowledge, acquire clinical reasoning, and develop professional identity through classroom learning, simulation, laboratory experiences, and direct patient care. Faculty serve as mentors and facilitators who foster critical thinking, reflective practice, intellectual inquiry, and lifelong learning.

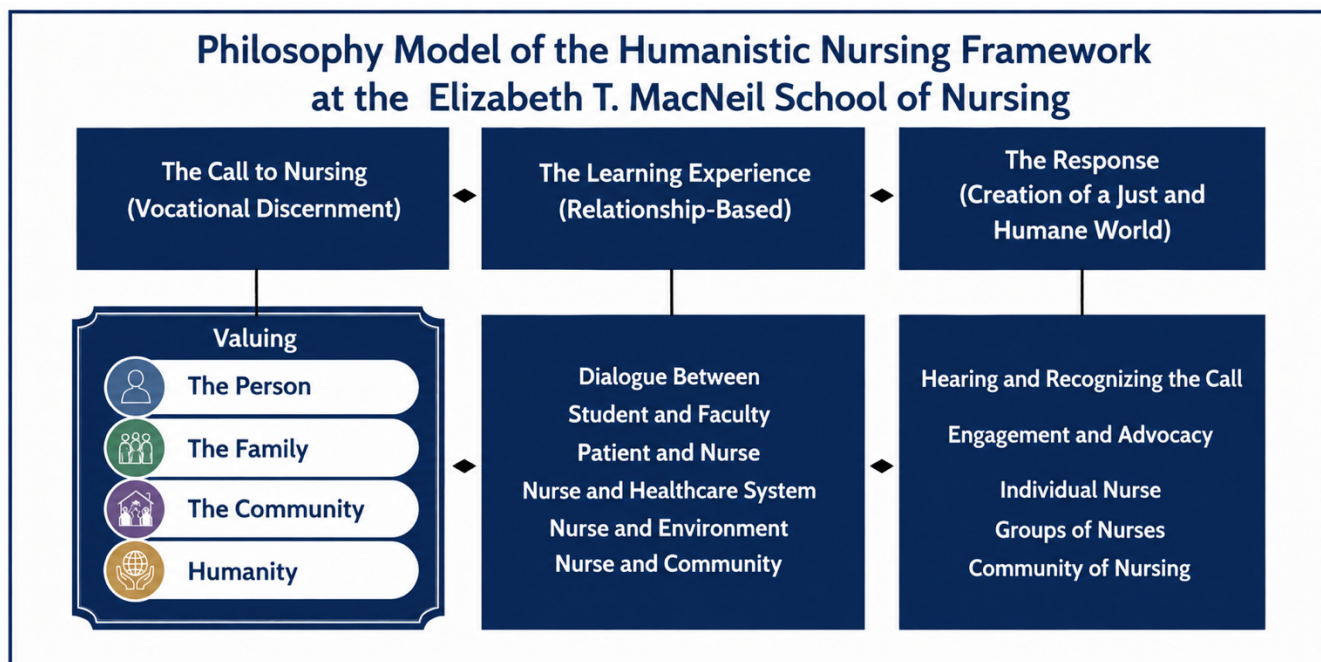
The nursing curriculum is grounded in relationship-based education and guided by the Humanistic Nursing Theory of Paterson and Zderad. Authentic human connection, dialogue, and respect for the dignity and uniqueness of every individual is emphasized in humanistic nursing. This philosophy aligns with Dominican University's commitment to truth, compassion, justice, and service.

The Humanistic Nursing Framework

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing Humanistic Nursing Framework provides the philosophical foundation for nursing education. Adapted from the Humanistic Nursing Theory, the framework emphasizes relationship-centered learning, authentic dialogue, and the development of professional identity.

Students are encouraged to recognize the inherent dignity of every individual while engaging in meaningful relationships with patients, families, peers, faculty, and members of the healthcare team. Through these relationships, students develop the clinical judgment, ethical responsibility, and compassionate presence expected of professional nurses.

The framework reflects ETMSON's commitment to preparing graduates who integrate scientific knowledge with humanistic care while serving individuals and communities with competence, respect, and compassion.



The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing Model of Humanistic Nursing Philosophy
is based on Paterson and Zderad's Theory (Fawcett, 2020)

Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing Program Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the BSN program, the student will be able to demonstrate competency in the ten domains (AACN, 2026) that are essential to nursing practice:

1. **Knowledge for nursing practice:** Synthesize knowledge from the humanities, as well as the natural, social, and nursing sciences as the foundation for critical thinking and clinical decision making.
2. **Person-centered care:** Build upon and apply professional nursing practice knowledge to provide person-centered care that holds the inherent worth and dignity of individuals, families, and communities.
3. **Population health:** Implement professional nursing practice that addresses the health promotion and disease prevention of populations. Consider the complex economic, legal, political, and ethical issues affecting the delivery of care in the global and dynamic healthcare environment to produce equitable outcomes.
4. **Scholarship for the nursing discipline:** Evaluate and integrate research that supports evidence-based nursing practice and enhances clinical practice.
5. **Quality and safety:** Assume responsibility and accountability for professional nursing practice with a focus on consistency, quality, and safety to improve patient outcomes.
6. **Interprofessional partnerships:** Collaborate effectively as a member of the interprofessional team fostering a climate of mutual learning, respect and shared values.
7. **Systems-based practice:** Recognize internal and external system processes that impact care throughout professional practice. Effectively communicate in various healthcare delivery environments to promote care that is sensitive to diverse spiritual and cultural needs.
8. **Information and healthcare technologies:** Apply health information literacy skills to organize and gather data and support clinical decision making. Utilize effective technology to promote quality patient outcomes and align with best practices and regulatory standards.

9. **Professionalism:** Embrace the development of a professional nursing identity and incorporate ethics and values of integrity, compassion, and advocacy.
10. **Personal, professional and leadership development:** Develop the capacity for leadership using self-reflection, commitment to intellectual inquiry and expanding knowledge, and integration of principal theories in leadership for personal and professional growth.

The AACN Essentials: Competencies for Professional Nursing Education

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing is grounded in the [American Association of Colleges of Nursing \(AACN\) *The Essentials: Competencies for Professional Nursing Education*](#) (2026). The AACN Essentials establish the national expectations for graduates of BSN programs. This document serves as the foundation for knowledge, skills, attitudes, and professional behaviors expected of entry-level RNs.

The ETMSON curriculum intentionally integrates the ten AACN competency domains throughout classroom instruction, laboratory experiences, simulation, clinical practice, and professional development activities. These competencies provide a framework for developing clinical judgment, evidence-based practice, person-centered care, quality improvement, leadership, systems thinking, interprofessional collaboration, population health, and professional identity.

Recognizing that healthcare continues to evolve, ETMSON remains committed to continuous curricular improvement by incorporating current evidence, emerging technologies, national professional standards, and revisions to the AACN Essentials. This commitment ensures that graduates are prepared to provide safe, ethical, and high-quality nursing care within increasingly complex healthcare environments.

Students are expected to actively engage in their own learning as they progressively develop the competencies necessary for professional nursing practice. Successful completion of the BSN program reflects achievement of the AACN Essentials and readiness for entry into professional nursing practice.

Section II: Becoming an ETMSON Student

Admission Requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program

Admission to the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) marks the beginning of a student's journey toward becoming a professional RN. The BSN program provides rigorous academic and clinical education designed to prepare graduates for safe, ethical, evidence-based nursing practice in today's complex healthcare environment. Because nursing is both an academic discipline and a practice profession, admission to ETMSON is competitive and selective. Applicants are evaluated not only for academic achievements, but also for their demonstrated readiness to succeed in a challenging curriculum that requires intellectual curiosity, professionalism, accountability, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Admission to the nursing program carries significant professional responsibilities. Students admitted to ETMSON become members of a community dedicated to excellence in nursing education, ethical practice, and compassionate patient care.

Admission Requirements

Applicants must first be admitted to Dominican University before being considered for admission to The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON).

Admission to the BSN program requires successful completion of the following *minimum* requirements:

1. An overall cumulative GPA of 2.75 or greater on a 4-point scale **AND** a cumulative prerequisite course grade average of 2.75 or greater.
2. Completion of all eight (8) prerequisite courses with minimum science grades (see below).
3. Pass the [Assessment Technologies Institute \(ATI\) Test of Essential Academic Skills \(TEAS\)](#) by achieving the minimum composite score of 68%, demonstrating the level of academic preparedness required for admission to the BSN program.

Prerequisite Courses

All prerequisite courses must be completed within five (5) years of the application deadline and meet the minimum grade (see below). If a course is outdated, the course must be repeated unless a CLEP Exam is available. If a CLEP Exam is available for the outdated course, the student must earn a numerical value equivalent to the required prerequisite grade. Nursing courses do not have a CLEP Exam.

1. Prerequisite courses requiring a final grade of "B-" or better:
 - BIOL 152 – Human Anatomy & Physiology I
 - BIOL 252 – Human Anatomy & Physiology II
 - CHS 260 – Introduction to Human Pathophysiology
2. Prerequisite courses requiring a final grade of "C" or better:
 - BIOL 160 – Elementary Microbiology
 - PSYC 212 – Life Span Development Psychology
 - CHEM 101 – General Chemistry I **or** CHEM 120 – Basic Chemistry
 - NUTR 250 – Nutrition
 - MATH 175 – Mathematical Concepts for Clinical Science **or** MATH 211 – Principles of Statistics

Admission Review Process

Admission decisions are made by the *Nursing Admission and Progression Committee* through a holistic review of each completed application.

The committee evaluates applicants based on the established admission criteria, academic performance, prerequisite coursework, standardized testing, and overall readiness for success within a rigorous nursing curriculum. Because enrollment is limited by available clinical placements and faculty resources, applicants who meet the minimum admission requirements are not guaranteed admission.

Qualified applicants who are not immediately admitted may be placed on a waitlist and considered for admission should seats become available.

If a candidate is wait-listed, they are responsible for contacting their assigned DU advisor for any questions or concerns.

Progression in the Nursing Program

Admission to ETMSON is the first step toward earning a BSN degree. Continued progress through the curriculum requires students to consistently demonstrate academic achievement, clinical competence, professional behavior, and compliance with all University and nursing program requirements.

Students are expected to maintain satisfactory progress by successfully completing all required nursing courses with a C- or better, meeting clinical competencies, and demonstrating behaviors consistent with the ethical and professional standards of the nursing profession. Progression within the nursing curriculum is contingent upon continued academic performance, professional conduct, and readiness for increasingly complex classroom, laboratory, simulation, and clinical learning experiences.

Failure to meet academic, clinical, or professional expectations may result in remediation, interruption of progression, course failure, or dismissal from the nursing program as described throughout this handbook.

The School of Nursing reserves the right to:

- Deny admission to applicants who do not meet program standards.
- Limit enrollment based on clinical placement availability and faculty resources.
- Require additional review or documentation as part of the admissions process.

Student Responsibilities

Students admitted to ETMSON accept responsibility for actively participating in their own learning and professional development. Nursing education requires preparation, engagement, accountability, and a commitment to excellence.

Students are expected to:

- Meet all published academic and clinical deadlines.
- Maintain current clinical compliance requirements.

- Demonstrate professionalism in all educational environments.
- Communicate promptly and respectfully with faculty, staff, peers, and clinical partners.
- Accept responsibility for their own learning, clinical preparation, and professional behavior.
- Seek assistance when academic or personal challenges affect their success.
- Uphold the values and standards of Dominican University and the nursing profession.

Commitment to Excellence

The faculty of the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing are committed to creating a learning environment that challenges, supports, and inspires students to achieve their highest potential. Through evidence-based teaching, meaningful clinical experiences, faculty mentorship, and continuous improvement, ETMSON prepares graduates who are ready to enter professional nursing practice with confidence, competence, compassion, and integrity.

Section III: Academic and Professional Expectations

Student Success

Success in nursing school requires integrity, accountability, effective communication, resilience, and a commitment to lifelong learning. From the first day of the program, students are expected to assume increasing responsibility for their academic performance, clinical preparation, professional behavior, and development as future registered nurses.

Professional Values and Ethical Standards

Professional nursing is founded upon ethical practice, integrity, accountability, compassion, and respect for the dignity and worth of every individual. These values form the cornerstone of the nursing profession and guide the behaviors, decisions, and relationships of nurses throughout their careers. At the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing professional identity begins on the first day of the nursing program. Nursing students are expected to demonstrate the ethical principles and professional behaviors consistent with the responsibilities of future RNs. Professional conduct extends beyond the classroom and includes all academic, laboratory, simulation, community, and online learning environments.

The ETMSON endorses the [National Student Nurse Association \(NSNA\) Code of Ethics](#) as the guiding ethical framework for nursing students. The NSNA Code of Ethics establishes the professional responsibilities of students during their educational preparation and serves as a bridge to the [American Nurses Association \(ANA\) Code of Ethics for Nurses](#), which governs professional nursing practice after licensure. Together, these ethical frameworks support the development of nurses who demonstrate honesty, integrity, accountability, patient advocacy, respect for human dignity, and a commitment to lifelong learning.

Students are expected to demonstrate these professional values by:

- Upholding honesty, integrity, and accountability in all academic, simulation, and clinical activities while accepting responsibility for personal actions, decisions, and professional conduct.
- Respecting the dignity, rights, and privacy of every individual.
- Advocating for safe, equitable, and evidence-based nursing care.
- Maintaining patient confidentiality and safeguarding sensitive information.
- Providing compassionate, culturally responsive and person-centered care.
- Communicating respectfully and collaborating effectively with faculty, peers, patients, families, and members of the healthcare team.
- Seeking opportunities for lifelong learning, self-reflection, and continuous professional development.

Professional behavior is continuously evaluated throughout the nursing program and is considered an essential component of students' success and professional formation. Failure to uphold these ethical and professional standards may result in academic or disciplinary action in accordance with Dominican University policies and the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing Handbook.

Professional Communication and Civility

A respectful learning environment is essential to academic success and professional development. Students are expected to contribute to a culture of civility by demonstrating courtesy, professionalism, and respect in all interactions with classmates, faculty, staff, patients, families, and healthcare professionals.

Incivility, including but not limited to, disruptive behavior, intimidation, bullying, harassment, discrimination, retaliation, threatening language, or disrespectful verbal, written, or electronic communication is inconsistent with the values of the nursing profession and the Dominican value of Caritas et Veritas. These behaviors will not be tolerated and may result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal.

Academic Integrity

Professional nursing is founded upon honesty, accountability, trust, and ethical conduct. These same principles govern academic work at ETMSON. Students are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of academic integrity in all classrooms, laboratory, simulation, clinical, and online learning environments as outlined in the Dominican University [*Student Handbook and Code of Conduct*](#).

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- plagiarism.
- unauthorized collaboration.
- falsification of records.
- cheating.
- unauthorized use of artificial intelligence (AI).
- purchasing assignments.
- submitting work completed by another individual or yourself in another course.
- altering academic documents.

Students are expected to comply with the Dominican University Student Handbook, Student Code of Conduct, and all course-specific policies regarding academic integrity.

Violations of academic integrity may result in assignment failure, course failure, disciplinary action, dismissal from the nursing program, or other sanctions consistent with University policy.

Professional conduct is continuously being evaluated. Behavior that compromises patient safety, violates ethical standards, or reflects unprofessional conduct may result in immediate removal from the clinical setting and further academic action.

Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Nursing students will maintain professional behavior and [*proper technology etiquette*](#) at all times when using electronic devices:

- Electronic devices may be used only when authorized by faculty for class activities.
- Cell phones and mobile devices are not allowed to be out/used during class, simulation, or clinical experiences.

- All “smart watches” or like devices are removed prior to all testing situations.
- Students are not allowed to take photos or audio/visual recordings at the clinical sites.

Technology must be used in a manner consistent with academic integrity, patient confidentiality, and professional nursing standards. Consistent with guidance from the American Nurses Association (ANA), artificial intelligence (AI) is recognized as a tool that may support learning; however, it must not replace professional judgment, critical thinking, or clinical decision-making. The use of AI is permitted only with faculty approval. When approved, AI use must be appropriate to the assignment and clearly disclosed.

Students are responsible for:

- Ensuring all submitted work reflects their own understanding and clinical reasoning.
- Verifying the accuracy and appropriateness of any AI-assisted content.
- Disclosing AI use, including the platform used and how it contributed to the work.

Unauthorized or inappropriate use of AI, including submission of AI-generated work as original work, constitutes a violation of academic integrity.

Violations may result in:

- Assignment failure.
- Course failure.
- Referral for academic or disciplinary action.

Faculty reserve the right to:

- Determine if and how AI may be used in their course.
- Require students to demonstrate authorship of submitted work.
- Request drafts, process documentation, or other evidence of original work.

Use of AI in clinical, simulation, or patient-care decision-making is **strictly prohibited**. Students are expected to rely on approved clinical resources, course materials, and faculty guidance in all patient care situations.

According to the ANA (2026), development of AI literacy is considered part of professional nursing education. Students are expected to engage in responsible, ethical, and informed use of technology consistent with professional standards. For more information, refer to [Artificial intelligence \(AI\) in nursing practice: Consensus findings from the ANA AI in nursing practice think tank](#) (ANA, 2026).

Title IX

Dominican University is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and the school policy prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual misconduct, including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking is prohibited.

Dominican University encourages anyone experiencing sexual misconduct to talk to someone about what happened, so they can get the support they need, and Dominican University can respond appropriately. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, want more

information about filing a report, or have questions about school policies and procedures, please contact the DU Title IX Coordinator. More information can be found at: [Title IX Policy](#)

Dominican University is legally obligated to investigate reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, but it will consider a request for confidentiality and respect to the extent possible. Teachers are also required by the University to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. We must provide the University Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident.

Professional Development Opportunities for Nursing Students

Nursing students may be invited to represent their peers on ETMSON committees. They are invited to participate in University and nursing organizations on campus and in the community. Students can engage in governance through the following avenues:

- Participate in course surveys, end-of-program survey, and the alumni survey.
- Participate in student forum activities such as Town Hall meetings when available, course evaluations, and office appointments.
- Membership in the [National Student Nurses Association \(NSNA\)](#) and the Dominican University Student Nurses Association (DUSNA) is strongly encouraged.

Attendance

Attendance is *mandatory* for the following activities:

1. Class lectures
2. Laboratory sessions
3. Clinical experiences
4. Simulation experiences
5. Clinical skills and IPE
6. Exams and quizzes

A student unable to attend any of the above learning activities must contact the instructor prior to the missed activity. Failure to do so may result in a failure for the missed activity. Prior notification does not necessarily assure an excused absence. Students may be asked to submit a note from a healthcare provider allowing them to return to normal activities.

Two missed clinicals within a course will require a meeting with the course faculty member and Associate Dean of Nursing and may result in withdrawal from the clinical and associated didactic course. An academic alert may be issued for any missed clinical experience.

Course Syllabus

Students will be provided with a syllabus for each nursing course that outlines course information, required textbooks and materials, learning objectives, assignments, examinations, course expectations, grading requirements, and the tentative course calendar. The syllabus serves as the primary guide for course requirements and expectations and should be reviewed regularly throughout the semester.

Students are expected to:

- Read the entire course syllabus before the first scheduled class.
- Seek clarification from faculty regarding any course requirements or expectations they do not understand.
- Monitor course activities, assignments, examinations, and due dates.
- Review the syllabus regularly to guide course preparation and ensure timely completion of requirements.
- Accept responsibility for meeting all course requirements and deadlines.

Students are responsible for monitoring and meeting published course deadlines. Faculty are not responsible for providing individual reminders of upcoming due dates. Students are encouraged to use a calendar or planner to organize course responsibilities and effectively manage their time.

NOTE: Syllabi are subject to modification. In the event of syllabi changes, the course faculty will notify the students of any changes.

Cancellation of Classes

Classes may be cancelled due to faculty illness or inclement weather ([Dominican University School Closure Policy](#)). If a didactic class is cancelled, an announcement will be posted in Canvas. If all or part of a clinical experience is cancelled, students will be notified before the scheduled start time by their clinical instructor or the Associate Dean of Nursing. If Dominican University cancels classes due to inclement weather, clinical will also be canceled. On-campus classes and labs may be held via Zoom at instructor's discretion.

Assignments

All assigned work is to be submitted to the Canvas course shell on the announced due date and time. No assignment will be accepted by email. A 10% reduction per day will apply to late submissions.

APA style/format is required for all written work. For detailed information and help on APA Style see <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

ATI Technology Institute (ATI)

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) integrates Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) resources throughout the nursing curriculum to support academic success, evaluate student achievement, and promote NCLEX-RN readiness. ATI resources include tutorials, practice assessments, proctored examinations, and other learning activities that provide students with opportunities to assess their knowledge and strengthen performance in key nursing content areas.

ATI assessments are administered throughout the curriculum and provide benchmarks of students' performance in comparison with nursing students nationally. Fees associated with ATI products and assessments are charged to the students' tuition account.

Students are responsible for navigating the ATI platform and completing all assigned ATI activities and assessment as outlined in individual course syllabi.

ATI RN Content Mastery Assessments

1. Students are required to complete the following RN Content Mastery Assessments:
 - a. RN Fundamentals in NURS 314
 - b. RN Pharmacology in NURS 322
 - c. RN Adult Medical Surgical in NURS 324
 - d. RN Mental Health in NURS 333
 - e. RN Nutrition in NURS 415
 - f. RN Community Health in NURS 432
 - g. RN Maternal Newborn in NURS 434
 - h. RN Pediatrics in NURS 435
 - i. RN Leadership in NURS 445
2. These exams are administered only once and will count for 10% of the course final grade based on the level proficiency:
 - a. Level 3 = 10/10
 - b. Level 2 = 9/10
 - c. Level 1 = 7.6 /10
 - d. Below Level 1 = 7/10
3. All students regardless of the mastery level earned are expected to complete the CMS Focused Review, and quiz if applicable, as a part of the remediation process.
4. Students' individual ATI Pulse score may be used to determine placement for clinical in role transition (NURS 445/245).

Students are also required to complete additional ATI assessments:

- ATI Critical Thinking Assessment: Entrance
- ATI Critical Thinking Assessment: Exit

RN Comprehensive Predictor (CP) Proctored Examinations:

1. Students are required to complete an ATI RN Comprehensive Predictor (CP) proctored exam while enrolled in the NURS 445 course
2. Students will have two (2) attempts to earn the expected 90% "Predictability" score for the Comprehensive Predictor.
3. Students earning less than 90% are required to complete Virtual Assessment Technologies Institute (VATI) program and achieve a "green light" in order to receive the [ED-NUR \(Certificate of Education\) form](#).

Virtual Assessment Technologies Institute (VATI)

VATI is a 12-week online modular program to engage students in an individualized remediation plan before systematically progressing through assessment modules. Students achieving less than a 90% predictability on the comprehensive predictor are required to achieve a "green light" in order to receive the [ED-NUR \(Certificate of Education\) form](#). Details on VATI will be provided to students in NURS 445.

Advising

Nursing students will be assigned a nursing faculty member as their advisor. All students are required to meet with their advisor each semester for course planning prior to registration.

Academic Alerts

Faculty and staff use academic alerts to communicate concerns about student progress in a course. An [Academic Alert](#) is meant to start a conversation with the student's professor about how to be more successful in a course or the program. Alert messages are also sent to [Student Success & Engagement \(SSE\)](#) staff and the nursing advisor. Students may receive an email, phone call or text from a staff member of SSE to offer support. The SSE staff can help connect students to tutoring, resources on campus or off campus, or just be a listening ear to talk through challenges.

What should students do if they get an alert?

- Consider the concerns and guidance shared by the faculty member.
- Respond promptly to communication from faculty and SSE staff. Be open about circumstances that may be affecting your academic progress so appropriate support and resources can be identified.
- Follow through with the plan developed with faculty and/or SSE staff.

Self-Referrals

Students who need support with academic concerns, personal circumstances, or other challenges may submit a self-referral to SSE. An SSE staff member will contact the student to provide assistance and connect them with appropriate resources. To request support, students may access the STARS Assistance Link and click [Ask for Help](#).

Accommodations and Disability Access (ADA)

If a student has a disability that qualifies for academic accommodations, please contact the [Accommodations and Disability Access \(ADA\)](#) office to make a request. Students requesting accommodations for the first time should complete the Confidential Request for Accommodations form, which can be found [here](#). Students must then submit appropriate documentation and attend an intake meeting to engage in an interactive process and determine eligibility for accommodations. Accommodation requests can be made at any point in the semester.

Once eligibility is determined, the ADA Office will provide students with a *Letter of Approved Accommodations*. Students must share the letter with each professor by the end of the first week of every semester. Students must meet with each professor to discuss how the approved accommodations will be implemented in the course.

If an accommodation involves a clinical setting or practical skill, the ADA Coordinator should be consulted to determine the reasonableness and appropriate implementation of the accommodation within that setting.

Students approved for accommodations after the start of the term must promptly provide the *Letter of Approved Accommodations* to their faculty and discuss implementation. Faculty may provide accommodations only after receiving the letter **and** discussing the approved accommodations with the student. **Accommodations are not retroactive.**

Students must submit their *Letter of Approved Accommodations* and discuss implementation with the faculty at the beginning of each term, even if the same accommodations were provided in a previous semester. Addressing accommodations early helps ensure appropriate support and promotes student success.

ADA Exam Procedure

- A student with accommodations is responsible for making arrangements with the ADA Office to schedule their exams in the Academic Success Center (ASC). If exam accommodation is provided in the ASC, students must complete the online Exam Accommodation Request form, at least one week in advance of each exam. The form will not allow a student to submit a request with less than one week's notice. During the semester, accommodated exams can be proctored in the ASC between 8:30-5:00pm M-F, and between 8:00-5:00pm, during finals week.
- BSN faculty recommend that students submit Exam Accommodations Request Forms for all of their scheduled exams, at the start of the semester. This ensures faculty and students have clarity, and students will not have to worry about the deadlines for submitting requests.
- Students with approved exam accommodation must take their exams at the same time as the rest of the class, unless an extended time accommodation would make the student late for another class, or the ASC is not open at the time of the class. If an exam needs to be taken at another time, the faculty and student should agree on an alternate time, which must be within 24 hours of the original exam time.
- Students should address all questions and concerns regarding approved accommodations with the ADA officer.

ADA Exam Requirements

1. You must bring a fully charged laptop to the testing center.
2. You must provide proper identification (school-issued ID or driver's license) to the Proctor before the exam.
3. If ATI is required for testing, you are responsible for ensuring the software is up-to-date and in working order at the time of testing.

NOTE: Approval of accommodations at the University does not automatically allow testing accommodations for the NCLEX. Refer to [Pearson Understanding Test Accommodations](#) for requesting accommodations and documentation of disability.

General Examination and Testing Expectations

Examinations and quizzes are administered to evaluate student achievement of course and program learning outcomes and to prepare students for success on the NCLEX-RN. All assessments are conducted in a secure, standardized testing environment consistent with professional nursing standards and academic integrity expectations.

All nursing examinations and quizzes will be administered:

- In-person, on campus.
- Using the ATI Custom Assessment Builder using Proctorio, a secure lockdown browser.
- With a minimum of two (2) faculty and/or staff proctors present for all exams.

Students must adhere to the following requirements for all examinations and quizzes:

- Students must present a valid, government- or University-issued photo ID prior to testing.
- Students must arrive on time and be seated and ready to begin testing at the scheduled start time.
- Late entry may not be permitted and may result in inability to test.
- Only a photo ID and a fully charged computer are permitted at the testing station.

The following are strictly prohibited during testing:

- Cell phones, smart watches, or electronic devices.
- Books, notes, or study materials.
- Food or beverages.
- Bags, backpacks, or personal items.

All personal items can be stored in a designated locker located on the 4th floor in Parmer Hall or left at home on examination days.

Testing Environment and Security

All testing sessions are monitored in real time by proctors and video recorded through secure proctoring software. Any behavior that may compromise exam integrity is strictly prohibited.

Students are expected to:

- Remain in their seat for the duration of the exam.
- Always maintain visual presence on camera.
- Refrain from communicating with others during testing.
- Follow all instructions provided by faculty and proctors.
- Hats, caps, hoods, or other head coverings are not permitted in classroom, laboratory, simulation, or clinical settings unless required for documented religious observance or approved accommodation.
- Religious head coverings, including hijabs, are respected and accommodated in accordance with applicable nondiscrimination laws and University policy. When visualization or assessment of the ears is necessary for clinical safety, identification, equipment use, testing, or academic integrity, it will be conducted privately and respectfully to protect the student's dignity, privacy, and religious practices.

Academic Integrity and Testing Conduct

All examinations are subject to Dominican University's Academic Integrity and Student Code of Conduct policies.

The following behaviors are considered violations of testing integrity, including but not limited to:

- Accessing unauthorized materials or devices.
- Looking away from the screen in a manner suggestive of external assistance.
- Communicating with another individual during the exam.
- Attempting to copy, record, photograph, or reproduce exam content.
- Use of artificial intelligence or external resources during testing.

Testing Irregularities and Reporting

Any suspected or confirmed testing irregularity will be documented, reported, and reviewed.

Irregularities may include:

- Proctorio flags (e.g. eye movement, multiple screen use, absence from camera).
- Proctor observations.
- Technical anomalies or multiple exam attempts.

All irregularities will be:

- Reviewed by the ATI Test Security team, faculty, and/or University leadership.
- Reported to appropriate University offices as needed.
- Addressed in accordance with academic integrity and conduct policies.

Students may be required to:

- Meet with faculty or program leadership.
- Provide an explanation of testing behavior.
- Participate in a formal review process.

Confirmed violations may result in:

- Exam failure.
- Course failure.
- Referral for disciplinary action.
- Dismissal from the program.

Student Responsibility and Accountability

Students are responsible for:

- Understanding and adhering to all testing policies.
- Ensuring their technology is functional prior to testing.
- Complying with all proctoring procedures.

Failure to comply with testing requirements may result in inability to complete the exam and/or academic penalty.

Office Hours

Faculty office hours are listed in the course syllabus. To schedule an appointment during office hours, follow the instructions in the syllabus and Canvas. Students are encouraged to schedule meetings regularly for questions, concerns, and learning support.

Communication & Email Etiquette

Email is the most effective way to communicate with faculty and staff. Students must check their DU-issued email regularly and maintain professionalism in all communications. Faculty will respond within two business days when classes are in session. Email responses may be delayed due to weekends, holidays, and University closures.

Graduation Requirements and NCLEX Eligibility

Dominican University Borra College of Health Sciences awards the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree, conferred at the end of the semester with satisfactory completion of all requirements.

Upon successful completion of the ETMSON program and all University graduation requirements, the Associate Dean of Nursing will complete and provide the [ED-NUR \(Certificate of Education\) form \(IL 486-1031\)](#) to the student upon completion of the ETMSON program and who is in good standing as a graduate student meeting University requirements:

1. Has attained a minimum of 76% or “C-” in all nursing courses.
2. Has completed the required (124) credit hours designated in the curriculum and per University graduation requirements.
3. Official transcripts from previous colleges attended must be on file with the registrar’s office.
4. Files an intent to graduate form with the Office of the Registrar by the announced deadline.
5. Has achieved a 90% or greater on the ATI Comprehensive Predictor exam **or** has completed the VATI program (if required) and achieved the “green light”.
6. Does not have a hold or outstanding balance with the Office of Student accounts.

See additional graduation requirements at <http://bulletin.dom.edu/>

NCLEX Testing Accommodations

For information on testing accommodations refer to [The Illinois Department of Financial & Professional Regulation \(IDFPR\)](#). Students requesting accommodations must submit the following:

1. A Reasonable Accommodation Request form: [F1766ts \(illinois.gov\)](http://www.idfpr.com/forms/F1766ts).
2. Current documentation from a physician, psychologist, psychiatrist, or other appropriate healthcare professional certifying the disability.
3. Documentation of special services and testing accommodations received in previous educational institutions because of the disability.
4. A letter describing the specific disability, when/ how it was first identified, and accommodations being requested because of the disability.

Section IV: Clinical Information

Clinical Eligibility Requirements

All nursing students must present evidence of meeting health and safety requirements prior to clinical experiences. Before starting clinical, students must complete and submit the following:

- Physical Examination (annual requirement)
- Immunization Records and Titers: Titers showing immunity for measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B.
- TB Testing (QuantiFERON TB Gold annually – some sites require six months before start of clinical)
- American Heart Association (AHA) Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification (CPR)
- Background Check
- Drug Screen
- Current Health Insurance
- Valid Driver's license/auto insurance (if driving to clinical)
- Site orientation (if required)

Students who do not provide the required documentation will not be allowed to continue in nursing courses with a clinical component. All required documentation must be submitted by the deadline. An orientation may be required for clinical rotations. Falsification of any healthcare document is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Immunization Requirements

In accordance with the [Illinois Department of Public Health](#), [OSHA](#), and the [CDC](#), the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing complies with recommendations for vaccinations, including those specifically for healthcare personnel. Proof of compliance is required. Please see the National Vaccine Center for details <http://www.nvic.org/Vaccine-Laws/state-vaccine-requirements/illinois.aspx>

If after multiple attempts, a student does not seroconvert to demonstrate immunity with the required immunizations, a Seroconversion form must be completed through the clinical placement office. This form requires the signature of a provider. The Seroconversion form will need to be uploaded to [ProjectConcert](#).

Ten-Panel Drug Screen

1. Dominican University and its clinical partners maintain drug-free environments. Clinical partners require students to complete a drug screen before participating in clinical experiences.
2. Students must complete a 10-panel drug screen upon admission to ETMSON and annually thereafter while enrolled in the program, following the required process through [Verified Credentials](#).
3. The required 10-panel drug screen must indicate a negative result. Students who receive an inconclusive or diluted result must meet with the Associate Dean of Nursing within two (2) business days.
4. Marijuana remains prohibited under federal law. Medical or recreational marijuana use may therefore result in a positive drug screen and affect a student's eligibility to participate in clinical experiences.
5. ETMSON and its clinical partners reserve the right to require additional drug screening during the program when there is reasonable suspicion of substance use or impairment.

A positive drug screen, refusal to complete required testing, falsification of records, or findings that restrict clinical placement eligibility may result in:

- Removal from clinical courses.
- Delay in progression.
- Dismissal from the nursing program.

Criminal Background Checks for Nursing Students

1. All students must complete a background check before entering or returning to the nursing program.
2. Students must print the two (2) required forms from [Verified Credentials](#), and take them to an [Accurate Biometrics location for fingerprinting](#).
3. Students must personally deliver the **sealed** background check envelope to the Nursing Office. Opened envelopes will not be accepted, and the student will be required to repeat the background check at their own expense.
4. Background checks must be completed within one year of the application date for the applicable admission cycle.
5. Applicants with a conviction may contact the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR) at 1-800-560-6420 with questions regarding eligibility for licensure or license renewal.
6. Illinois statute prohibits healthcare employers from knowingly employing or retaining individuals convicted of certain criminal offenses in positions involving direct patient care or access to patients or long-term care residents (225 ILCS 46/25).
7. In addition to felony convictions, some clinical partners may restrict students with certain misdemeanor convictions from participating in clinical experiences.
8. Students must renew their background check annually, at their own expense, while enrolled in ETMSON.
9. Background check and drug screening results may affect admission, continued enrollment, and eligibility to participate in clinical experiences.
10. Information identified through a criminal background check may result in denial of admission or dismissal from the nursing program.
11. Students must sign an *Authorization for the Release of Student Information Acknowledgement* form permitting ETMSON to share required information with clinical partners upon request.
12. Some clinical partners may require additional or expanded background checks. Results may differ from previous background checks, and any associated costs are the student's responsibility. See Illinois State Law 225 ILCS 46/25 and IL Adm. Code 955 Section 955.160 for applicable disqualifying conditions.
13. Background check findings may prevent a student from participating in required clinical experiences. If an appropriate clinical placement cannot be secured, progress in the program may be delayed or the student may be unable to continue in the program.
14. The ETMSON does not provide applicants or students with copies of the background check results.

Clinical Management Systems

ETMSON utilizes electronic clinical management systems to support student compliance, clinical documentation, communication, and experiential learning. Students are responsible for maintaining active accounts, monitoring program communication, and completing all required documentation within the designated systems by published deadlines. [Verified Credentials](#) is used for management of clinical compliance requirements and background screening. [ProjectConcert](#) is used for tracking clinical documentation, clinical placement requirements, and clinical hours.

Students are responsible for:

- Learning how to appropriately use both platforms.
- Monitoring their accounts regularly.
- Uploading all required documentation by established deadlines.
- Maintaining accurate and current records throughout the program.

Failure to appropriately maintain required documentation in Verified Credentials or Project Concert may result in loss of clinical eligibility and/or inability to participate in clinical experiences.

Clinical Health Requirements Compliance

All nursing students must maintain full compliance with Clinical Health Requirements (CHR) and submit required clinical documents by the published deadline each term. This ensures adherence to institutional, clinical agency, and state regulatory standards as defined by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials (2021), American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics, and Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) guidelines for healthcare personnel.

Students are responsible for timely submission of all clinical compliance documentation (e.g., immunizations, titers, background checks, CPR certification, insurance verification, and other site-specific requirements). Students will be given one (1) month to complete CHR documents after the initial notification from the Clinical Placement Office. Failure to meet deadlines jeopardizes the student's eligibility to participate in clinical rotations and may result in course failure.

Process

1. Notification Deadline
 - A. Each student will receive written notice (via University email and/or clinical compliance platform) specifying:
 - The list of required CHR documents.
 - The exact submission deadline (one month from initial notification).
 - Instructions for uploading or submitting required forms.
 - B. The deadline is firm. Extensions are only granted by the Associate Dean of Nursing under extenuating circumstances documented in writing.
2. Missed Deadline – Initial STAR Tracker Alert if the student fails to meet the CHR submission deadline:
 - A. A STAR Tracker alert will be issued immediately by the Clinical Placement Office. The Student Success & Engagement (SSE) Office and the student's nursing advisor will be alerted.
 - B. The alert will note "Non-Compliance with Clinical Health Requirements"

3. Required Meeting with Nursing Advisor
 - A. Within 48 business hours, the student must schedule and complete a meeting with their nursing advisor to review the non-compliance, develop a corrective action plan, and discuss the potential consequences of continued non-compliance.
 - B. The nursing advisor will:
 - Discuss barriers to submission and review the CHR policy expectations.
 - Document the meeting and the student's plan of action in STAR Tracker.
 - Following the meeting the student will be given seven (7) additional business days to submit all missing or incomplete CHR documentation.
4. Continued Non-Compliance – Associate Dean of Nursing Meeting
 - A. If the required CHR documentation is not received within seven (7) business days, the student will be required to meet with the Associate Dean of Nursing.
 - B. The meeting will be documented in STAR Tracker summarizing:
 - The nature of non-compliance.
 - The student's explanation or mitigating factors.
 - The outlined expectations and potential consequences.
 - C. A formal letter will be issued to the student and sent via confirmed-receipt University email. The letter will state:
 - The date the student will receive a “fail” (“U” unsatisfactory) grade for the clinical course.
 - That the student must retake the clinical and corresponding didactic course in the next available semester.
 - The rationale for this decision and the steps for readmission or reentry into the program if possible.
 - D. A copy of this letter will be sent to:
 - The Student Success and Engagement (SSE) Office
 - The Nursing Advisor
 - The Borra College of Health Sciences Dean's Office
5. Re-Entry and Compliance Monitoring for Students returning after a clinical failure due to CHR non-compliance must:
 - Meet with their nursing advisor and the Associate Dean of Nursing prior to course registration.
 - Submit all CHR documentation and maintain compliance throughout the program.
 - Failure to meet future CHR deadlines may result in dismissal from the nursing program at the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing at Dominican University.

Alignment with Nursing Standards

- AACN Essentials (2026): Domain 9 – Professionalism; Domain 8 – Safety.
- ANA Code of Ethics: Provision 4 – Nurse accountability for practice standards and responsibilities.
- IDPH Regulations: Compliance with immunization and infection control requirements for healthcare personnel.
- ETMSON Student Handbook: Clinical Participation and Professional Conduct Policies.

Student Note: It is your professional responsibility to maintain current clinical health requirements. Missing a deadline can result in losing your clinical placement and failing the course. Communicate proactively with your advisor if you encounter barriers so that a support plan can be made before deadlines pass.

Clinical Compliance Deadlines and Non-Compliance

Students will receive written notification regarding required clinical documentation, submission procedures, and deadlines through official University communication channels and/or the designated compliance platform. Students are expected to submit all required documentation within the designated timeframe, generally within one (1) month of notification unless otherwise specified. The deadline is considered firm. Extensions may only be granted by the Associate Dean of Nursing under documented extenuating circumstances.

Failure to meet compliance deadlines may jeopardize clinical placement eligibility and progression in the nursing program.

Students who fail to submit required clinical documentation by the established deadline will receive a STAR Tracker alert documenting non-compliance. The Student Success & Engagement Office and the student's nursing advisor will also be notified. Students must meet with their nursing advisor within the designated timeframe:

- Review outstanding requirements.
- Discuss barriers to compliance.
- Develop a corrective action plan

Documentation of the meeting and plan of action will be maintained through STAR Tracker. Failure to resolve clinical compliance within the designated timeframe may require a meeting with the Associate Dean of Nursing. Continued non-compliance may result in:

- Removal from clinical placement.
- Assignment of an unsatisfactory ("U") clinical grade.
- Requirement to repeat the clinical AND didactic portions of the course.
- Delay in progression or dismissal from the nursing program.

Students will receive written communication outlining the expectations and implications for progression in the nursing program.

Fitness for Clinical Participation

Students must be physically, emotionally, cognitively, and professionally capable of safely participating in clinical and simulation experiences. Faculty reserve the right to remove a student from clinical or simulation experiences if the student:

- Appears impaired or unsafe.
- Demonstrates unprofessional behavior.
- Fails to meet clinical expectations.
- Poses a risk to self, patients, peers, faculty, or staff safety.

Student Clinical Practice Guidelines and Regulations

Nursing students practice within the boundaries of the [Illinois State Board of Nurse Practice Act](#), the [ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses](#), and the policies and regulations of the clinical site.

Clinical Expectations

Clinical experiences are essential components of nursing education. Students are expected to demonstrate professional, safe, and ethical behavior and always comply with ETMSON and clinical site policies.

Students are expected to:

- Arrive on time and prepared for all clinical experiences.
- Always wear their student ID above the waist and clearly visible.
- Introduce themselves by name and identify themselves as a Dominican University Nursing Student to patients, families, and clinical staff.
- Demonstrate professional behavior and communication with patients, families, faculty, peers, and clinical staff.
- Follow the policies, procedures, safety requirements, infection-control practices, and directions of faculty and clinical site staff.
- Complete all required clinical preparation, assignments, and documentation.
- Maintain patient privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 \(HIPAA\)](#).
- Remain on the assigned clinical unit unless permission to leave is obtained from the clinical instructor.
- Provide their own transportation to and from clinical sites.
- Refrain from chewing gum while in the clinical setting.

Clinical attendance is mandatory. Students are responsible for arranging transportation, childcare, employment, and personal obligations to ensure consistent and timely participation in clinical experiences.

The use or possession of alcohol, controlled substances, tobacco, or vaping products is prohibited during clinical experiences. Violations may result in immediate removal from the clinical setting and disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the nursing program.

Failure to meet clinical expectations, including unsafe, unprofessional, or inappropriate behavior, may result in removal from the clinical setting, clinical failures, or additional; disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the nursing program.

Standard Precautions and Infection Control

Students are required to adhere to all current infection prevention and control standards, including Standard Precautions, as established by clinical agencies, the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), and applicable public health authorities.

Failure to comply with infection-control standards may result in removal from the clinical setting.

Clinical Injury or Exposure

Students who experience an injury, needle-stick, bloodborne pathogen exposure, or medical emergency during clinical must:

1. Immediately notify the clinical instructor.
2. Follow the clinical site's procedures for reporting, evaluation, treatment, documentation, and follow-up. For needlesticks or bloodborne pathogen exposures, this may include evaluation by the clinical site's occupational health or designated department.
3. Complete all required incident reports. The student and clinical instructor must complete required clinical site documentation and initiate the University incident reporting process.
4. Obtain appropriate medical evaluation and treatment as indicated by the nature of the injury or exposure.

Students are financially responsible for medical evaluation, treatment, and follow-up associated with a clinical injury or exposure unless otherwise covered by personal health insurance or other applicable coverage.

Student-Athletes

Dominican University and ETMSON recognize the important role of athletics in the student experience. Student-Athletes should anticipate scheduling conflicts and communicate with faculty and the Clinical Placement Office as early as possible and follow the Dominican University Student-Athlete Excused Absence Policy in the [Student-Athlete Handbook](#).

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Patient Confidentiality

Protecting patient privacy and confidentiality is a fundamental ethical and legal responsibility of every healthcare professional. The [Health Insurance and Portability and Accountability Act of 1996](#) (HIPAA) establishes federal standards for safeguarding Protected Health Information (PHI) and maintaining patient privacy and confidentiality.

Nursing students must maintain patient confidentiality in all classroom, laboratory, simulation, clinical and professional settings. Before participating in clinical experiences, students must complete required HIPAA education and any confidentiality requirements established by affiliated clinical partners.

Students are expected to:

- Protect the privacy and confidentiality of all patient information.
- Discuss patient information only with authorized individuals and for legitimate educational or patient care purposes.
- Refrain from discussing patients or clinical situations in public or non-secure settings, including hallways, elevators, cafeterias, lounges, restaurants, and public transportation.
- Refrain from transmitting patient information through personal devices, personal accounts, or unauthorized platforms.
- Never photograph, video record, audio record, copy, post, or otherwise reproduce patient information or medical records without explicit authorization.

- Never remove documents containing protected health information (PHI) from a clinical site unless specifically authorized by the clinical site and supervising faculty.
- Dispose of confidential materials according to clinical site policies.

Violations of HIPAA, patient confidentiality, or clinical site confidentiality requirements may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the nursing program.

- as a “Dominican University Nursing Student” to patients and clinical personnel.
- Arrange and provide their own transportation to and from clinical sites.
- Arrive on time and be prepared for all clinical experiences.
- Always maintain patient privacy and confidentiality in accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
- Communicate professionally and respectfully with patients, peers, faculty, and healthcare personnel. Remain on the clinical unit unless permission to leave is granted by the clinical instructor.

Appearance and Grooming

1. Long hair is to be pulled back and secured.
2. Jewelry is limited to a watch, wedding band, and one set of post earrings.
3. Requirements related to body piercings, tattoos and fingernails will follow the clinical site policy.
4. Professional appearance will follow the clinical site policy.
5. Use of perfumes and/or heavily scented soaps/toiletries will follow the clinical site policy.
6. Artificial nails, extenders, wraps, acrylics, and gel polishes are prohibited while providing direct patient care, particularly in high-risk areas like intensive care units and operating rooms. Natural nails should be trimmed to less than 0.5 cm past the fingertip, as long or artificial nails harbor significantly more bacteria and risk tearing gloves (CDC, 2024).

Uniforms

1. Uniforms can be purchased at Walmart stores. Select the Cherokee brand scrubs in Navy Blue.
2. Uniform scrubs must include a navy-blue scrub top and scrub pants; you may choose the pant style you prefer.
3. Uniform patches are to be sewn on the left sleeve of the scrub top.
4. Uniform patches for scrubs can be purchased for \$3.50 each at:
<https://secure.acceptiva.com/?cst=YNecyi>
5. Contact the Nursing Office and bring your receipt to pick up your uniform patches.
6. Uniforms are to be clean and wrinkle-free.
7. Socks must cover the ankle and heel.
8. Closed-toe and closed-heel shoes are to be worn. No clogs, crocs-type or open heel shoes allowed.
9. Wristwatch with a second hand.
10. Stethoscope (will be included in the skills bag).
11. Penlight (will be included in the skills bag).

Students who fail to meet appearance or uniform expectations may be dismissed from the clinical experience for the day and may receive an unsatisfactory clinical evaluation.

Clinical Cancellation/School Closure

In the event of inclement weather, the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing follows the [Dominican University School Closure Policy](#). Students will be provided with an alternative virtual simulation assignment by their clinical adjunct faculty member in coordination with the lead course didactic faculty member to replace the in-person clinical for the missed day.

Students are expected to monitor University communication systems, University email, and Canvas, for announcements regarding clinical cancellations, delays, required documentation, or schedule changes.

Simulation and Skills Laboratory Expectations

Simulation and skills laboratory experiences are considered clinical learning environments and are subject to the same professional, behavioral, confidentiality, attendance, and preparation standards as direct patient care experiences.

Students are expected to:

- Arrive prepared and on time.
- Complete all required pre-work.
- Participate professionally and respectfully.
- Maintain confidentiality regarding simulation scenarios and peer performance.

Failure to meet simulation expectations may result in:

- Removal from the simulation activity.
- Unsatisfactory clinical performance.
- Unsatisfactory (“U”) grade.

Simulation Education Center (SEC) Guidelines

1. All users participating in learning activities in Simulation Education Center (SEC) must complete an orientation prior to using the SEC.
2. Students are not permitted in the SEC without an SEC staff member or nursing faculty member present.
3. Students must act professionally that does not disturb lab activities.
4. All users of the SEC are required to always wear gloves when directly interacting with the manikins and task trainers.
5. Food and/or beverages are not permitted in the SEC.
6. Personal belongings are not permitted in the SEC or lab areas.
7. All electronics devices, including cell phones, PDAs, camera phones, and video recorders are prohibited in the simulation center during simulations. All Wi-Fi devices must be on airplane mode when in the simulation center to prevent delays.
8. All simulation equipment should be used for healthcare education.
9. Persons who use the equipment for purposes other than specified will be asked to leave the SEC.
10. Manikins are strictly prohibited from being moved from their beds without the assistance of the SEC staff.
11. Equipment malfunction or misuse must be reported to the SEC staff immediately.
12. Students are strictly prohibited from admittance to the computer control room and/or storage

closets.

13. The SEC should be left in the way it was found.
14. Students are expected to clean up after themselves. All beds should be placed in the lowest position with the head of the bed positioned flat to protect the manikin's neck after each use. Linens should be folded neatly and placed back on the linen cart. All practice equipment should be returned to the simulation staff member.
15. Pencils are the only approved writing devices permitted in the SEC. Ballpoint pens, highlighters, permanent markers, crayons, water washable markers, and any non-lead-based writing devices are strictly prohibited from the SEC.

Section V: Academic Progression Requirements

ETMSON Academic Progression

Progression in the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program is contingent upon successful completion of all academic, clinical, professional, and compliance requirements. Students are expected to demonstrate progression toward safe, competent, and professional nursing practice consistent with program outcomes, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials, NCLEX-RN readiness expectations, and professional standards of nursing practice.

Progression decisions are based upon:

- Academic performance.
- Clinical performance.
- Professional conduct.
- Compliance with program and clinical requirements.
- Demonstration of safe nursing practice.

Failure to meet progression requirements may result in:

- STAR Tracker alerts.
- Required remediation.
- Clinical failure.
- Course failure.
- Delay in progression.
- Dismissal from the nursing program.

Students are responsible for monitoring their academic progress throughout the program and for seeking assistance when concerns arise.

Academic Alerts

Academic alerts are sent to students electronically through the Stars Connect system in the MyDU platform. The purpose is to alert students that their academic progress has fallen below expectations of the course and/or program. These warnings are sent to you by the didactic and/or clinical instructor, advisor, or by the Associate Dean of the Nursing Program.

Grading Policies

Nursing requires a rigorous evaluation of course and program outcomes. The grading scale of the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing is more stringent than that of some other departments within Dominican University.

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing grade scale is:

LETTER GRADE	PERCENTAGE RANGE
A	93 to 100%
A-	90 to 92%
B+	88 to 89%
B	86 to 87%
B-	83 to 85%
C+	81 to 82%
C	79 to 80%
C-	76 to 78%
D	69 to 75%
F	68% and below

Students must meet a minimum grade of 76% (C-) in nursing courses to remain in the program.

The 76% Benchmark Requirement

Students must first achieve a minimum cumulative examination and quiz average of 76% in designated examinations and quizzes identified in the course syllabus to successfully progress in the course. **Grades are not rounded.**

The required 76% examination/quiz benchmark must be achieved independently and cannot be increased by grades earned from other course assignments or activities, including but not limited to:

- Assignment grades.
- Participation points.
- ATI remediation activities.
- Extra credit or bonus activities.
- Other non-designated coursework.

Students who do not achieve the required 76% cumulative examination/quiz average will not successfully pass the course, regardless of the overall course average.

Both the examination 76% benchmark and a final course grade of 76% must be met independently to successfully pass the course with a C- or better.

Medication Math and Dosage Calculation Assessment Policy

Purpose: Safe medication administration relies on ongoing evaluation and accurate dosing. Nursing education should emphasize communication, reconciliation, and evidence-based pharmacologic practices to promote patient safety.

Policy: To ensure safe patient care, ETMSON nursing students are required to achieve a minimum competency rate of 90% on the dosage calculation exam. Only two attempts are allowed. Failure to achieve the required score on the second attempt results in ineligibility to progress and complete the nursing program.

Policy Guidelines

ATI Dosage Calculation RN Fundamentals Assessment – Junior-Level

1. Students are encouraged to meet with their nursing advisor and nursing instructor for extra tips and guidance on how to prepare and pass the assessment.
2. Students enrolled in NURS 322 *Pharmacology in Nursing* must complete the *ATI Dosage Calculation RN Fundamentals Assessment*, a proctored exam on drug dosage calculations and conversions.
Note: This exam may be scheduled outside regular class hours – details will be available in the course syllabus.
3. The test uses fill-in-the-blank questions to answer med math and dosage calculation problems.
4. A score of at least 90% is required to pass.
5. If the student scores less than 90%, the instructor will issue an Academic Alert in the Stars Connect system and request to meet with the student to create an individualized study remediation plan.
6. After meeting with the instructor and before retesting, the student must complete the *ATI Focused Review* together with a *Reflect and Relearn Worksheet* and the *ATI Focused Review Quiz*.
7. The instructor will schedule the retest after a minimum of one (1) week of remediation.
8. The student must earn at least 90% on the second attempt.
9. If the student does not pass the retake, an Academic Alert will be issued by the instructor directing the student to meet with their nursing advisor and the Associate Dean of Nursing to discuss dismissal from the program.

Continuing Med Math and Dosage Calculation Competencies

All clinical courses must include a minimum of four (4) medication math and dosage calculation questions per exam that are aligned with course content and student level.

Clinical Evaluation and Course Progression

Clinical performance is evaluated independently of classroom (didactic) performance. To successfully complete a clinical nursing course, students must demonstrate safe, competent, professional, and satisfactory clinical performance while meeting all course and clinical

objectives. Specific evaluation criteria are outlined in each course syllabus.

Clinical competence is assessed using a standardized clinical evaluation tool that measures students' achievements of course outcomes, clinical competencies, professional behaviors, and ability to provide safe, patient-centered nursing care.

Because patient safety is the highest priority, students who demonstrate unsafe clinical practice, unprofessional conduct, breaches of patient confidentiality, or failure to meet established clinical objectives may be removed from the clinical setting. Clinical faculty have the authority to determine when a student's performance places patients, the clinical agency, or the learning environment at risk.

Successful completion of both the didactic and clinical components is required to pass a nursing course. Failure in either component results in a failure of the course, and the student must repeat both the didactic and clinical components in accordance with program progression policies.

Academic Success and Early Intervention

Purpose: To identify and support students experiencing academic or clinical challenges while promoting successful progression through the nursing program. The process is designed to identify barriers to success, implement individualized strategies for improvement, and strengthen the knowledge, skills, and clinical judgment necessary for safe nursing practice.

Policy: Students experiencing academic or clinical difficulty are encouraged to seek assistance early. ETMSON uses a proactive, student-centered approach to identify concerns, provide support, and promote successful progress through the nursing program.

STAR Tracker *Academic Alerts* will be issued for students identified as academically or clinically at risk. Academic alerts are intended to provide early intervention and connect students with appropriate faculty guidance and student support resources before academic difficulties become barriers.

Academic alerts may be issued for concerns that include:

- unsatisfactory academic performance.
- clinical performance issues.
- attendance deficiencies.
- unprofessional behavior.
- clinical compliance deficiencies.

Based on individual needs, remediation activities may be required to strengthen knowledge, clinical judgment, and professional performance.

Remediation may include, but is not limited to:

- ATI Focused Review assignments.
- faculty meetings/conferences.

- ETMSON leadership meetings/conferences (if applicable).
- NCLEX-style practice questions.
- clinical judgment case studies.
- dosage calculation review.
- clinical skills reinforcement.
- simulation activities.
- individualized academic coaching and success planning.

Remediation activities are educational in nature and are designed to strengthen foundational knowledge, clinical reasoning, professional development, and readiness for safe nursing practice and the NCLEX-RN. Completion of remediation activities is required as assigned; however, remediation does not result in the award of additional course points or grades.

Academic Success Plan

Students who meet one or more of the following criteria are required to complete an *Academic Success Plan* before progressing in the nursing program:

- Withdraw from a nursing course.
- Earn an examination/quiz average below 76% (C-) in a nursing course.
- Receive a STAR Tracker *Academic Alert* notice in two or more nursing courses.
- Be identified by nursing faculty as academically or clinically at risk.

Students required to complete an *Academic Success Plan* must contact both the course faculty member and their nursing advisor within 48 business hours of receiving notification to schedule an initial success planning meeting.

During the meeting, students will:

- Complete a self-assessment identifying factors that contributed to their academic or clinical performance.
- Meet with the Office of Student Success & Engagement (SSE), as recommended, to access available academic support services.
- Develop written Academic Success Plan outlining strategies for improvement.
- Submit copies to the course lead, nursing advisor, and the Associate Dean of Nursing.

Review, Reinstatement, and Appeal Procedures

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing (ETMSON) is committed to the fair, consistent, and timely review of academic and clinical progression decisions. Students will be informed of concerns, expectations, and decisions through official University communication and will have an opportunity to seek review in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

Program decisions are based on the objective application of published ETMSON and Dominican University policies, clinical site requirements, and professional nursing standards and will not be arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory.

Definitions:

- **Arbitrary:** based on random choice or a personal whim rather than reason or system.
- **Capricious:** sudden impulsive, unpredictable, or unaccountable changes in mood, behavior, or conduct.
- **Discriminatory:** making a distinction or showing unfair or prejudicial treatment based on a personal characteristic or trait.

Course or Clinical Review

A student who believes an unsuccessful course or clinical outcome resulted from a procedural error, inaccurate information, or inconsistent application of established policy may request a review of the decision.

The student must:

1. Submit a written request for review to the course or clinical instructor within two (2) business days of receiving notification of the unsuccessful course or clinical outcome.
2. Clearly state the basis for the requested review and provide supporting documentation, when applicable.
3. Meet with the course or clinical instructor within two (2) business days of the instructor receiving the request.

The course or clinical instructor will review the information and provide the student with a written determination within two (2) business days of the meeting.

If the original decision is upheld, the student may request review by the Associate Dean of Nursing. The written request must be submitted within two (2) business days of receiving the instructor's determination.

The Associate Dean of Nursing will review the matter, meet with the student within two (2) business days of receiving the request, and provide a written determination within two (2) business days of the meeting.

This review process addresses the course or clinical outcome itself. It is the process in appealing an unsatisfactory course or clinical grade. It is separate from a request for reinstatement to the nursing program.

Request for Reinstatement

If an unsuccessful course or clinical outcome results in the student becoming academically ineligible to progress in the nursing program, the student may request reinstatement to ETMSON. A request for reinstatement does not constitute an additional review of the course or clinical grade; rather, it is a request to return to and continue in the nursing program despite unsuccessful progression.

Reinstatement is not automatic and is considered individually based on the student's academic record, clinical performance, professional conduct, previous remediation efforts, readiness for continued study, and available program capacity.

Students requesting reinstatement must:

1. Submit a Written Request – A written request for reinstatement must be submitted to the Associate Dean of Nursing within two (2) business days of receiving official notification of ineligibility to progress.
2. Participate in the Review Process – The Associate Dean, in consultation with appropriate nursing faculty, will review the student's academic performance, clinical evaluation, professional conduct, prior remediation efforts, and potential for future success in the program.
3. Attend a Reinstatement Meeting – The student must meet with the Associate Dean to discuss the circumstances contributing to unsuccessful progression and readiness to return to the program.
4. Complete an Academic Success Plan – If reinstatement is approved, the student must complete an individualized Academic Success Plan and any required remediation before returning to nursing coursework.
5. Maintain Satisfactory Progression – Following reinstatement, the student must maintain satisfactory academic, clinical, professional, and program performance throughout the remainder of the nursing major.

Reinstatement is permitted only once during enrollment in the nursing major. A student is not eligible for reinstatement if the student:

- Fails the same nursing course a second time; or
- Fails two different nursing courses during enrollment in the nursing program.

Reinstatement is contingent upon available space in both the didactic and clinical components of the curriculum at the appropriate level of reentry.

Students who voluntarily or involuntarily withdraw from the nursing program for one academic year or longer may be required to demonstrate continued competency through examinations, skills assessments, remediation, or other program requirements before returning.

Formal Appeal of Denied Reinstatement or Dismissal

A student who is denied reinstatement or receives a final decision of dismissal from ETMSON may initiate the formal appeal process. ***The formal appeal process is separate from the Course or Clinical Review process.***

Grounds for a formal appeal may include:

- A procedural error that may have affected the decision.
- New information that was not reasonably available when the decision was made.
- Evidence that an established policy was not applied consistently.

Disagreement with an established program policy or dissatisfaction with an academic or clinical outcome alone does not constitute grounds for appeal.

Step 1: Appeal to the Dean

The student must submit a typewritten letter of appeal to the Dean of the Borra College of Health Sciences within five (5) business days of receiving written notification of dismissal or denial of reinstatement.

The written appeal must include:

- A request for reconsideration.
- The specific basis for the appeal.
- A description of the circumstances relevant to the appeal.
- Supporting documentation, when applicable.

The Dean will review the appeal and provide the student with written notification of the decision. Every effort will be made to provide a timely decision; however, the review process may extend beyond the beginning of the next academic term due to the University calendar of official University closings.

Step 2: Appeal to the College Appeals Committee

If the Dean denies the appeal, the student may submit a written appeal to the Borra College of Health Sciences College Appeals Committee within five (5) business days of receiving the Dean's decision.

The appeal must include:

- A request for reconsideration.
- The specific basis for the appeal.
- Any supporting documentation the student wishes to have considered.

The College Appeals Committee may review relevant written documents from the student, nursing faculty, program leadership, and other individuals directly involved in the matter before rendering a decision.

The student will receive written notification of the College Appeals Committee's decision. **The decision of the College Appeals Committee is final.**

Reinstatement Following a Successful Appeal

If a student is granted reinstatement through the formal appeals process, the student must:

- Meet with the nursing advisor and/or Associate Dean of Nursing.
- Complete any required remediation.
- Develop and comply with an individualized Academic Success Plan.
- Repeat required nursing course(s), as applicable.
- Follow the approved progression plan for completion of the nursing program.

- Agree in writing to comply with the conditions of reinstatement. Failure to accept or comply with approved conditions may result in forfeiture of the reinstatement offer.

Student Handbook Acknowledgments

Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the policies and procedures contained in this handbook. Enrollment in the Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing constitutes acknowledgment of these responsibilities.

The Elizabeth T. MacNeil School of Nursing reserves the right to revise, interpret, or modify policies, procedures, and program requirements at any time to comply with changes in University policy, accreditation standards, regulatory requirements, or professional practice expectations. Students will be notified of substantive changes through official University communication channels.

Students will electronically acknowledge the following forms through the designated Canvas link. These acknowledgements supplement the Nursing Student Handbook, University policies, and individual course syllabi.

1. Nursing Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have access to the ETMSON Nursing Student Handbook and am responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with its policies and requirements. I understand that questions should be directed to my nursing faculty, advisor, or ETMSON leadership.

2. Authorization for Release of Student Information

I authorize ETMSON to provide clinical agencies with information required to determine my eligibility for clinical placement, including applicable health, immunization, background check, drug-screening, CPR, and compliance records. I understand that clinical agencies determine placement eligibility and that ETMSON cannot guarantee an alternative placement if I am denied participation.

3. Clinical Responsibilities Acknowledgement

I understand and agree that I am responsible for meeting all clinical requirements, including:

- Completing required clinical hours, orientations, and assigned experiences.
- Arriving on time, in approved clinical attire, with my Dominican University student ID visible above the waist.
- Attending clinical experiences that may occur during day, evening, night, or weekend hours.
- Taking required meal breaks, which are not included in clinical hours.
- Promptly notifying my clinical instructor of absence, tardiness, or approved schedule changes according to course and clinical policies.

- Maintaining professional behavior and communication throughout all clinical experiences.

4. Student Simulation Lab Confidentiality and Consent

I agree to maintain the confidentiality of simulation scenarios and participant performance and will not discuss simulation content with students who have not completed the experience. I authorize Dominican University to record my participation in simulation activities for educational and instructional purposes. I understand that personal recording, photography, or use of mobile devices to record simulation activities is prohibited.

5. Student Simulation Lab Waiver and Release

I understand that any recording created as part of College of Health Sciences coursework must have appropriate authorization from every person appearing in the recording. I am responsible for using and sharing recordings only as authorized and solely for approved educational coursework.

By submitting the electronic acknowledgement, I confirm that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the requirements above.