



UNSAFE CLINICAL PRACTICE

Faculty members, the school and the university have a responsibility to patients, the public, and the staff of clinical settings to protect them from unnecessary exposure to dangerous situations. The right of patients and the public to safety is paramount and supersedes students' learning and skill acquisition needs. The American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses with Interpretive Statements requires that "the nurse acts to safeguard the client and public when healthcare and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person." Nursing faculty has this independent obligation as nurses and as faculty members. Safety is a major aspect of student learning and a critical component of each clinical course. Practice may be considered unsafe when a student fails to use the nursing process effectively by engaging in one or more of the following activities:

1. Failure to recognize the need for assistance with nursing actions.
2. Failure to take nursing action when such action is essential to the health and safety of the client.
3. Attending clinical experiences while under the influence of alcohol, controlled substances or other alterations in mental status.
4. Failure to recognize the influence of one's own attitudes and behaviors on the care of clients.
5. Lying or deliberately giving inaccurate information relating to clinical experience.
6. Performing activities which are detrimental to the health and safety of the client.
7. Failure to assume responsibility for completing nursing actions.
8. Performing activities outside the nursing student role.
9. Refusal to provide instructor or preceptor-supervised client care.
10. Refusal to provide assigned client care.
11. Failure to prepare for client care responsibilities.

It is the faculty's responsibility to determine the ability of the student to provide safe nursing care. Evidence of unsafe clinical practice can result in the removal of the student from the clinical area temporarily or permanently. Permanent removal from the clinical area on the basis of unsafe clinical practice will be considered grounds for failure of the course resulting in a grade of "F" and dismissal from the school.



Procedure:

1. When the clinical faculty member makes a professional judgment that the student's behavior is dangerous or potentially dangerous to patients or others, the faculty member relieves the student of direct client care responsibilities and the student is suspended from clinical until further investigation of the incident. Faculty notifies the Department Head immediately.
2. Within two working days, the Department Head selects two faculties (not assigned to the course). These two faculties will independently review the incident with the clinical faculty member and the student separately. The two-member faculty team then makes a recommendation to the Department Head of either remediation (with expectations, outcomes measures, and plans for monitoring clinical performance) or dismissal to the Dean.
3. Within the next two working days, the Dean will review the incident and recommendations, and will then notify the student in writing of the decision to lift the suspension (with expectations, outcomes measures and plans for monitoring clinical performance) or the decision for dismissal from the program.
4. Within the next two working days, the student may appeal the Dean's decision to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. The Vice President for Academic Affairs will notify the student in writing within two days of the decision to uphold the suspension or to lift the suspension and reinstate the student. The decision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs is final.

Faculty Approval: 8/27/04

Faculty Review: 5/2/2008

Revised 10/2011