UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation

Undergraduate Pre-licensure Nursing Program

Testing Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide standardized exam development procedures and exam administration conditions to ensure all students in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation Undergraduate Pre-licensure program are provided a fair and consistent opportunity to demonstrate knowledge. For the purpose of this policy, exams can be delivered electronically or via paper/pencil and occur in a proctored environment supervised via live or video technology to ensure integrity of the exam and identity of testers. In addition, exams may be administered using browser-locking technology to prevent the use of external resources. Exams administered in the CONHI Undergraduate Pre-licensure Nursing Program are either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm-referenced exams measure student performance in relation to other testers whereas criterion-referenced exams are designed to measure student performance on a specified set of learning outcomes. Exams may be faculty-created or standardized. Standardized exams are used to provide student and faculty feedback on licensure exam preparedness and program effectiveness as well as determine minimally-acceptable clinical practice competency. The use and development of all exams administered in the CONHI Undergraduate Pre-licensure Nursing Program is guided by the following standards:

1. National League for Nursing Fair Testing Guidelines for Nursing Education Imperative (National League for Nursing Board of Governors, 2012)
2. The Use of Standardized Examinations in Nursing Education, Texas Board of Nursing 3. Education Guideline 3.7.4.a (Texas Board of Nursing, 2017)

Exam Development

According to the UTA Handbook of Operating Procedures (Section 6-503), faculty members are free to develop their own methods of evaluating the performance of students in their classes, but are required to make the methods of evaluation and grading standards to be used known in writing in the course syllabus. Exams administered in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation are designed to measure student learning using best practices in exam
development. To prepare students for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN), faculty will consider the NCLEX-RN blueprint and content distribution (https://www.ncsbn.org/testplans.htm). Since the practice of nursing requires application of knowledge, skills and abilities, the majority of exam items will be written at the cognitive level of application (or higher), which requires more complex thought processing. Possible question types may include: multiple choice, essay, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, multiple response or hotspot. Blueprints will be provided prior to exams.

**Exam Length** Faculty discretion will be used to determine the number of questions to be included in course exams. The following time per question will be used for exams:

- a. SafeMedicate and course exams: 1.5 minutes per question for students in the Pre-Nursing, Junior 1 and Junior 2 semester. Students in the Senior 1 and Senior 2 semester will be allotted 1.3 minutes per question.
- b. For other standardized exams not created by UTA faculty, the time per question is at the discretion of the vendor. For ATI exams, students will receive 1 minute per question.
- c. Exam times do not include time spent providing testing instructions or time to review answers and rationales after the exam is submitted.

**Final Review Week** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Exam Scheduling**

Exams are scheduled by the Lead Faculty in conjunction with CONHI Testing Specialists. A testing schedule for the CONHI is maintained by the Testing Specialists. Any exams given outside the scheduled exam time must be arranged through the Lead Faculty.
During re-scheduled exams, students must comply with all of the testing rules of a normally scheduled exam (e.g. testing environment, dress code, tardiness). Students are not permitted to take exams with students enrolled in another section of the course.

**Scheduling Accelerated Online Program Exams at an Alternate Testing Site** If an Accelerated Online student tests at an approved alternate site, it is the student’s responsibility to forward the test schedule to the site coordinator and schedule date and time for the exam. The student is required to test at the same time as their group. Alternate test times must be approved by the Lead Teacher. The student is required to keep track of the testing center’s availability. The student is responsible for all fees associated with testing at an alternate site. Once a student chooses an alternative testing site, no changes for the semester will be made without the approval of a Program Manager. If the student finds a site that is not on the AO BSN list of approved testing centers, the student will contact them and confirm that they can download our testing software and request approval from the Testing Specialist. Students testing at alternate sites will adhere to the dress code and rules of the testing center.

**Exam Accommodations** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting The Office for Students with Disabilities. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability). Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) within the first week of the semester or as immediately after receipt whether they intend to use their accommodations or not. Accommodations will not be considered without this documentation.

**Exam Scheduling with Accommodations** Students with testing accommodations from the Office of Students with Disabilities, students in the Accelerated Online program and students enrolled in Pre-Nursing courses may test in locations other than the 2nd floor of Pickard Hall.
**Scheduling Exams in the Adaptive Resource Center** Students with accommodations may be eligible to schedule exams in the Adaptive Resource Center. Students must schedule their exams in the ARC no later than 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time and forward their individual ARC Test Request Forms to course faculty. More information about scheduling exams in the Adaptive Resource Center can be found at: [http://www.uta.edu/disability/arc/testing/index.php](http://www.uta.edu/disability/arc/testing/index.php). Students who do not schedule exams and submit Test Request Forms to course faculty within 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time will not receive accommodations.

**Scheduling Exams in the College of Nursing Testing Room** Students with accommodations may be eligible to test in the College of Nursing Testing Room. Students with accommodations who wish to schedule an exam in this room must contact the Testing Specialist no later than 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time and forward confirmation to course faculty. Students who do not schedule exams and notify course faculty within 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time will not receive accommodations.

**Accelerated Online Students with OSD Accommodations** AO students who qualify for testing accommodations through the OSD will be assigned testing site at no additional cost to the student. Students whose official testing site would normally be designated as UTA may use the ARC. If a student’s official testing site is within a clinical facility, UTA will designate an appropriate alternate testing site. Students who make alternative site arrangements not designated by UTA will be responsible for payment of testing fees.

**Exam Administration Procedures**

Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared to test at the scheduled exam administration time. Students must have passwords and access to required software and will not be allotted additional testing time if they arrive unprepared to test. Faculty and staff will not assist with password changes and log-in retrievals. Additional time on exams will not be allowed due to password or access issues. Students are responsible for notifying faculty and rescheduling exams in the event of an excused or unexcused absence.

**Excused Absences** Examples of excused absences include: legal obligation, military obligations, pre-approved university-sponsored events, emergency situations, religious holy days, death of family member, or illness. To be considered for a re-scheduled exam, the student must notify faculty **PRIOR TO** exam start date and time. The student must provide absence-related documentation within 48 hours following exam date and time. Documentation for illness
requires proof of a visit to a healthcare provider. There are no exceptions to this rule. There will be no point deductions for an excused exam absence. The make-up exam may include an alternative questions and/or test format.

**Unexcused Absences** Examples of unexcused absences include: oversleeping, exam date oversight, computer / technical issues, or other reasons not listed in the “Excused Absences” section. To be considered for a re-scheduled exam, the student must notify faculty with their request within 48 hours of the exam due date and time. The exam must be scheduled within 7 days of the original exam due date and time. The make-up exam may include an alternative test format and will have a point penalty of 20 points. Students will only be allowed one 20 point penalty per course, whether it is the result of an unexcused absence or a late submission. A student may only have one unexcused absence per course. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a ‘0’ on the exam. In addition, students will not be allowed to take exam in another section without penalty due to an unexcused absence.

**Exam Tardy** If a student arrives late to an exam, they are only allowed the remaining time to complete the exam. For example, for a 60-minute exam, if a student arrives and has only 13 minutes left, that is all the time they will be given to complete their exam. If a student submits an online exam after the due date and time, they will receive a 20 point penalty on their grade the first time it occurs. If the student submits an online exam after the due date and time for a second time in the course, they will receive a zero for that exam. Blackboard will not auto-submit an exam at the due date and time of the exam. The student is responsible for submitting their exam by the assigned due date and time. Students will only be allowed one 20 point penalty per course, whether it is the result of an unexcused absence or a late submission.

**Testing Room/Environment**

Faculty and exam proctors are responsible for ensuring a secure testing environment with minimal distractions. Students who do not adhere to these procedures will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and/or the Lead Teacher for Performance Improvement Plan implementation. Faculty may assign seats in the testing room.

**Check-In Procedures** Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of the exam. To be admitted into the testing room, students must provide a MaviID or a government-issued photo ID. Students may be required to provide a calculator, scantron, and/or earplugs. Faculty and staff will not assist with changing passwords or troubleshooting access issues for log in. Proof of identification will also be required upon exam submission.
During the Exam Once the exam has started and log-in sheets have been passed out, students are expected to remain in the testing room and complete the test. In the event of an emergency or scheduled break, the student will turn in materials to the proctor prior to leaving the testing room. Faculty and staff will not answer questions related to exam content during exams. Once students have finished the exam, all materials distributed before the exam must be returned. Students who leave the testing room with exam-related documents or materials will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for academic dishonesty.

Unauthorized Devices and Materials Students are prohibited from having unauthorized devices and materials the immediate testing area. Unauthorized devices include, but are not limited to: cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, alarms, cameras. Unauthorized materials include, but are not limited to: cheat sheets and notes written on clothing, skin, and personal items. Faculty and staff will conduct visual inspection of clothing and personal items brought to the immediate testing area prior to testing. Any student found with an unauthorized device or material in the immediate testing area will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for an Honor Code Violation.

Cheating Behaviors Cheating behaviors will not be tolerated in the testing environment. Behaviors may include: looking at others papers or screens, copying answers from other students, allowing students to copy or look at answers, using unauthorized devices or material in the testing environment. Any suspicious behaviors will be documented by the proctor and reported to the Lead Faculty for follow up. Students referred to the Office of Student Conduct for cheating will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan or Counseling Record /Incident Report (Pre-Nursing students). The exam grade will be a “0”. For upper division courses, students who cheat will not be eligible to receive a Clinical Excellence Award or Letter of Recommendation for the specified course and will complete a written assignment that includes references to American Nurse Association (ANA) and National League for Nurse (NLN) Standards and core values regarding professional integrity.

Distractions and Disruptive Behavior Faculty and staff will make every effort possible to provide a testing environment that is free from distractions and disruptions. Any student behavior that may cause a distraction is considered inappropriate for the testing environment. Distractions and disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to: audible sound from a cell phone or electronic device that is secured in a bag in a designated area for personal items in the testing environment; reading or talking aloud; excessive bodily movements; frequent and
excessive coughing; creating noises, such as tapping sounds; or causing a disturbance. In certain testing locations, electronic devices may be allowed to be stored in a designated area of the testing environment and must be turned off so as not to cause a distraction. If a distraction or disruption is due to an audible sound from a cell phone or electronic device, the student will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (or if Pre-Nursing, “Counseling Record /Incident Report”). There will be an automatic point deduction penalty of 20 points from the exam grade. All distractions and disruption will be documented on the “Proctor Exam Report” and provided to the Lead Teacher or designated course faculty.

**Post-Exam Procedures**

Once all students enrolled in the course have completed testing, faculty will conduct reviews of exam statistics and make subsequent adjustments to ensure exams are valid measures of student learning. Students wishing to review their exam must follow faculty-designated processes. Students may have an opportunity to provide feedback on exam at the exam site. However, discussing exam items and taking written materials from the testing site will result in referral for academic dishonesty.

**Exam Integrity** After any and all exams, there must be no electronic or face-to-face discussion with students from other sections of the course or with students who have not taken the exam. Discussion of exam questions outside the classroom is considered collusion to cheat and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Students who are aware of other students discussing exam questions are expected to report and failure to do so is also considered collusion and scholastic dishonesty. Students and faculty are expected to adhere to the rules regarding academic integrity set forth in Policy 9 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures (https://www.uta.edu/policy/hop/9).

**Scoring** In order to successfully complete an undergraduate nursing course, students must obtain a 70% weighted average on proctored exams. Exam grades are rounded to two decimal places (i.e., 85.679=85.68) but there will be no rounding for final course grades.

**References**
