The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) College of Nursing & Health Innovation (CONHI) is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment for students, faculty, staff, clients, and visitors. In order to provide a safe learning environment, students must be able to perform with reasonable skill in a safe, secure, productive, and effective manner, and remain able to do so through the entire time they are a student at UTA.

All students are expected to be in good academic standing throughout the program. Good academic standing standards for nursing students include maintaining professional behavior, personal accountability, academic integrity and upholding the Code of Ethics for Nursing Students. Failure to meet these expectations may result in course failure or dismissal from the program. Good academic standing extends beyond the classroom and is an expectation during clinical labs, healthcare facilities and in the community.

In the clinical setting, students must be fit for duty and are expected to perform in a safe manner without signs of impairment. Students exhibiting one or more signs of impairment directly before or at any time during a clinical rotation shift must be immediately addressed. (See Impaired Observation Checklist [IOC]*). Impaired students are not fit for duty and pose significant health and safety risks to themselves and others. Impaired students must be evaluated by a qualified healthcare professional, follow the recommendation for treatment if applicable, receive the recommendation from the healthcare provider to return to the program, and provide documentation they are able to safely return to the program. Specific instructions are provided in the procedure section of this document.

Pre-licensure Nursing Students

All pre-licensure nursing students are required to complete and pay for a urine drug screen prior to attending/participating in clinical. Students who are out of clinical setting for a semester are required to repeat and pay for the urine drug screen.

The urine drug screen must be completed within thirty days prior to the start of clinical at an approved screening center (UTA Health Services or approved vendors). Results r/t the drug screen are confidential and are only disclosed to the Dean (or designee) and Clinical Coordinator(s). ALL prescription medications must be brought to the appointment in their original bottles when completing the drug screen.

- Nursing students, who have a positive urine screen, without prescription documentation, will not be allowed to participate in clinical and will...

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need to drop clinical course(s). The student is strongly encouraged to seek evaluation to determine if s/he is safe to be in the clinical setting.

• Nursing students who have positive results, related to alcohol or drugs, on their Group One CBC will be required to obtain a declaratory order (DO) letter from the Board of Nursing (BON). The student will have a random drug screen each semester the student is enrolled in a clinical course.

• Any CONHI student who exhibits impaired behavior, based on the IOC, in the clinical setting, will be required to submit a drug screen. The required test is based on the suspected substance and may include blood or urine sample(s).
  o Student who refuses or does not show up for the screening test for cause/impaired behavior will not be allowed to return to ANY clinical setting and will earn a failing grade.
  o Student must complete the testing on the day of referral.
  o Student tested for cause cannot return to clinical until results are returned.
  o **Student is solely responsibility for substance abuse testing, evaluation, and treatment.**

• If positive results are due to alcohol or substance abuse, the student must be evaluated by a qualified healthcare professional, follow the recommendation for treatment if applicable, receive the recommendation from the healthcare provider to return to the program, and provide documentation they are able to safely return to the program.

Registered Nurses

If a student is a registered nurse and has a positive drug screen, the student will be referred to the state BON where the student is licensed. Student must comply with the BON requirements prior to returning to clinical courses. Failure to complete a BON requirement will result in dismissal from the CONHI. Students who refuse to participate in a BON Program will be ineligible to continue at UTA and will be dismissed from the CONHI.

Procedure

When a faculty member or preceptor personally observes or receives reliable information that student may be impaired, the faculty member or preceptor will assess the student using the Impaired Observation Checklist (IOC) [Checklist provided below].

If IOC results confirm impairment, the student will be removed immediately from the clinical setting and will be required to submit to the appropriate screening test (blood alcohol level when alcohol is suspected and 10 panel urine scree for other substances).

Student may **not** drive to the testing/screening center. Student may call someone to transport to the testing/screening or use a transportation system, such as taxi, etc.
Depending to the level of impairment, student may be referred to the facility emergency department for evaluation and care. All screening tests, evaluations, and treatments costs are the responsibility of the student.

The screening lab must adhere to the following:

- Maintain chain of custody,
- Confirmation GCMS (gas chromatography and mass spectrometry). This is where they break down your sample and analyze it chemically to determine what is in there (confirmation of presumptive positive urine specimens)
- Initial screen must include split sampling method
- Blood alcohol level must be drawn, if alcohol involvement is suspected.

If a student exhibits behavior of impairment, based on the Impaired Observation Checklist, and refuses to complete the drug screen, the student will be ineligible to return to clinical setting and will fail the course.

Student may not return to the clinical facility until results are received.

- Student with negative screening results may return to the clinical setting.
- Student with positive results must be evaluated by a qualified healthcare professional (psychiatric mental health provider or substance abuse provider), follow the recommendation for treatment if applicable, receive the recommendation from the healthcare provider to return to the program, and provide documentation they are able to safely return to the program. Upon return to clinical courses, random drug screens will be conducted each semester.

Students must sign an attestation with each clinical course verifying they will adhere to the substance abuse policy. Any student suspected of impairment and supported by the IOC will be required to submit a screening test. All expenses, testing, evaluation, and treatment, will be the responsibility of the student. Student cannot sign a consent document, when impaired.
Student: ________________________  Student ID: __________________

Date: ________________  Time: _______________  Location _______________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observations/Assessment</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Smell</strong> of Alcohol or Marijuana on breath or person</td>
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<td><strong>Speech:</strong> Slurred, Confused, Fragmented, Rapid, Slow, Unusually loud or soft</td>
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<td><strong>Disorientation:</strong> Is the student confused about where she/he is, what day it is, what time it is? Is the student forgetful? Decreased alertness?</td>
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<td><strong>Personality:</strong> Significant change in personality such as mood swings; euphoria, depression, abusive behavior, violence, secretiveness, insolence, insubordination, irritability, moodiness, tendency to isolate self</td>
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<td><strong>Social Changes:</strong> Avoids social gatherings, eats alone</td>
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<td><strong>Apparent inability to focus on work:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Shaking or trembling of hands</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Skin:</strong> Pale, flushed, excessive perspiration</td>
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<td><strong>Needle marks on arms, unusual sneezing or nasal congestion:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Eyes:</strong> Bloodshot, dilated pupils, pinpoint pupils</td>
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<td><strong>Blank stare on expression</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Appearance:</strong> Deteriorating and/or changes in appearance such as change in dress, unkempt appearance, flushed complexion</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Energy:</strong> Displays weariness, fatigue, exhaustion, excessive yawning, sudden or unpredictable change in energy level, unusually energetic</td>
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**Class/Lab/Clinical Time:**
A pattern of tardiness, prolonged breaks, unexplained departures from class, lab or clinical, disappearance from class, lab or clinical, excessive absenteeism, late assignments with elaborate excuses for not meeting deadlines, avoiding group work, unsafe clinical performance/placing clients at risk, impaired judgment in the clinical area, deteriorating productivity (Circle all that apply)

**Student states consumption of alcohol or ingesting drugs,** including (over-the-counter or prescription) that adversely affects the student's ability to practice nursing or perform classroom and clinical duties with reasonable skill and safety

**Careless performance** of work (describe)

**Additional Comments:**

Based on my observations, I have a reasonable suspicion that _________________ (student) may be impaired and could be a danger to self or others. I request further assessment and evaluation to determine the cause of the suspected impairment.

________________________________

Faculty/Preceptor name (printed)  Signature  Date:

**To be completed by the student** to be referred (optional). Are you taking any medications, or is there any other information you believe might explain your behavior?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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