Policy # FS-6

POLICY: CLINICAL PERFORMANCE STANDARD
FOR STUDENTS

Adaptation of Policy No 305 from the University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing, Oakland campus.

POLICY: Students whose clinical practice is determined to be dangerous, or potentially dangerous to patients or others will be dismissed from the Nursing Program.

BACKGROUND:
A major aspect of student learning in the Nursing Program occurs in clinical settings with direct student/patient contact. While in clinical courses, students are acquiring knowledge and cognitive and psychomotor skills. In addition, they are developing judgment. Students are expected to perform at the level identified in the curricular level objectives. Safety is a critical component of each clinical course.

Faculty members, the Nursing Program, 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 (2001) requires Provision 8.1 “The profession of nursing is concerned with the promotion of health, welfare, and safety of all people”. (ANA, 2001, p. 23-24). Nursing faculty have this independent obligation as nurses and as faculty members.

Unsatisfactory clinical performance by students is not necessarily dangerous requiring immediate faculty intervention to protect patients or others. Unsafe behavior, however, is always unsatisfactory and requires immediate intervention to protect patients and the public from unnecessary exposure to dangerous, or potentially dangerous, situations. Examples of unsafe behavior include:

(a) medication errors (administering or neglecting to administer) that could result in serious injury, consequence or death, and

(b) performing or neglecting to perform any procedure or administering any medication without direct faculty supervision after specific instruction by the clinical faculty member that this level of supervision is required.

(c) abusive behavior (physical or verbal) to clients, families, or co-workers.

PROCEDURE:

MA original date 5/25/08; FO draft 6/25/08
Approved: FO August, 2008: 10/22/08, 2/20/11, 2/17/14
When a clinical faculty member makes a professional judgment that a student's behavior is
dangerous, or potentially dangerous, to patients or others the faculty should initiate the procedure
outlined below. This procedure is intended to review the specific judgment and is not intended to
be a due process procedure. It is not a substitute for ongoing formative evaluation of student
performance by faculty, ongoing communication between clinical faculty and student, or
documentation of the evaluation process.

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:
   a. immediately relieves the student of direct patient care responsibilities,
   b. communicates the event to the primary teacher (within 1-2 working days),
   c. communicates the event to the Director of the Nursing Program (within 1-2 working
days),
   d. maintains written anecdotal notes and written clinical evaluation form,
   e. provides the Director of the Nursing Program an, objective, detailed description of
      the events or behavior in writing (within 2-3 working days).

2. On the day notified by the clinical faculty member the Director of the Nursing Program
suspends the student from all clinical activities pending the assessment of the faculty
member's concern(s). The Director communicates this suspension in writing to the
student, the clinical faculty member, the primary teacher, and the Vice President for
Academic Affairs.

3. Within 2 days of the suspension if the Director of the Program does not concur with the
faculty member's judgment that the student's behavior in clinical is dangerous, or
potentially dangerous to patients or others then the Director of the Program lifts the
suspension, makes recommendations to the clinical faculty member and the primary
teacher and provides the student with written notice of the findings, expectations,
outcome measures, and plans for future monitoring of performance.

   Within two (2) days of the suspension if the Director of the Program concurs with the
faculty member's judgment that the student's behavior in clinical is dangerous or
potentially dangerous to patients or others and finds mitigating circumstances, then the
Director of the Program, along with the clinical faculty member, and the primary teacher
determines the conditions under which the suspension will be lifted and provides the
student with written notice of the findings, expectations, outcome measures, and plans for
future monitoring of the student's clinical performance.

4. Within 2 working days of the suspension if the Director of the Program concurs with the
faculty member's judgment that the student's behavior in clinical is dangerous or
potentially dangerous to patients or others and does not identify mitigating circumstances,
then the Director of the Program requests a review of the judgment by a clinical faculty
review consultant.

5. If the Clinical Faculty Review Consultant does not concur that the behavior is dangerous
or potentially dangerous to patients or others, then the Director of the Nursing Program
on the day that the written opinion is received from the Faculty Review Consultant, along with the clinical faculty member and the primary teacher, determines the conditions under which the suspension will be lifted and provides the student with written notice of the findings, expectations, outcome measures, and plans for future monitoring of clinical performance.

If the Faculty Review Consultant concurs that the behavior is dangerous or potentially dangerous to patients or others, then the Director of the Program on the day that the written opinion is received from the Faculty Review Consultant dismisses the student from the Nursing Program on safety grounds.

Faculty Review Consultants

All full-time faculty in the Nursing Program who are professional nurses licensed in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are eligible to serve as a faculty review consultant.

The faculty member initiating this process cannot participate as a consultant for the specific review.