



**2023-2024**

**Practical Nursing  
Program  
Student Handbook**

**This handbook complements the 2023-2024 Student Handbook for Diploma Programs. This handbook covers policies that are specific to the Practical Nursing Program. Both should be considered when looking for guidance regarding the Practical Nursing Program.**

## **Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center**

### ***Practical Nursing Program***

1500 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Altoona, PA 16602

[www.gactc.edu](http://www.gactc.edu) (814) 941-8324

## **Table of Contents**

### **Section 1: Information about the GACTC**

Philosophy  
Conceptual Framework  
Curriculum Objectives  
Plan of Study  
Confidentiality Statement  
Cooperating Agencies

### **Section 2: Admissions**

Admission Requirements  
Readmission  
Audit Policy  
Advanced Placement/Transfer Credit

### **Section 3: Academic Policies and Procedures**

Attendance Policy  
Exam Make up Policy  
Program Schedules  
Grading  
Graduation Requirements  
Classroom Norms  
Disciplinary Procedures

### **Section 4: Student Responsibility**

Drug/Alcohol Policy  
Dress/Appearance

Electronic Devices

Safety Regulations/Lab Behavior & Safety

Section 5: Student Resources and Services

Academic Counseling Program

Class Organization

## Section 1: Information about the GACTC Practical Nursing Program

---

### Philosophy

The faculty of the Practical Nursing Program of the Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center subscribes to the philosophy and mission of the parent institution.

We further believe:

Vocational education is concerned with the total growth of individuals. It is responsive to the diversity of students, their abilities, and varied backgrounds. The opportunity to prepare for Practical Nursing is available to all individuals who meet the admission requirements, regardless of age, race, creed, sex or non-job related handicaps.

Nursing, an art and science, is concerned with the welfare of people and health service to the community. Practical Nursing is an integral part of the nursing profession. It is the faculty's responsibility to facilitate a curriculum that prepares students for entry-level employment as Practical Nurses, capable of functioning as safe practitioners.

Curriculum must be kept current, flexible and must be constantly evaluated to meet the changing role of the Practical Nurse and to keep pace with rapidly evolving technology. The faculty facilitate learning through integration of theory and clinical experiences, which are arranged from simple to complex and which occur simultaneously.

A realistic opportunity to learn and apply knowledge is obtained through the guidance of faculty and provides an atmosphere where individual expression, self-direction and participation in group activities are encouraged.

Education is a continuous life-long process of acquiring knowledge that results in a positive change in behavior. It does not cease upon graduation, but is an on-going process that is facilitated through life's experiences and participation in continuing education programs.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the Practical Nursing Program has the health of the client as its focus for curriculum development. The concepts of **body systems, basic needs, and nursing process/clinical judgment model** are used as interdependent components for providing direction and structure to the program of learning.

**Body systems** are used as the initial method for organizing the curriculum. Comprehension of normal anatomy and physiology is the basis for understanding pathophysiology of the body.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is used as a basis for identifying **basic needs** of the client. The role of the practical nurse is to assist the client in meeting his physical and psychosocial needs in order to achieve his optimal level of health.

The **nursing process**, as an approach to problem solving, and the **clinical judgment model**, as an approach to decision-making, are tools used to organize and implement care. Development of nursing problems, nursing interventions, and evaluation is based on an understanding of anatomy and physiology and corresponding nursing principles and evidence-based practices.

Learning is facilitated by an integrated curriculum which is arranged from simple to complex. The student moves from the acquisition of the simple to more complex knowledge and from the performance of the simple to more complex nursing skills. These skills and knowledge are then shared with the client in client-teaching. The development of positive attitudes toward health care is an essential component of both student and client learning.

## **Curriculum Objectives**

The graduate is qualified to function as a beginning Practical Nurse, as authorized under the Nurse Practice Act (49 Pa. Code Chapter. State Board of Nursing), in an acute care facility, long-term care facility, and/or other similar community health agency. The Graduate:

- Establishes interpersonal relationships that reflect the dignity and worth of each person through the development of attitudes that contribute to constructive relationships with other members of the health care team and with patients and their families.
- Applies basic biopsychosocial concepts and nursing principles using cognitive abilities and technical skills to meet the needs of individuals throughout the life cycle.
- Assists in the utilization of the nursing process to promote, maintain, restore, and comfort individuals to their highest attainable level of health.
- Practices in accordance with the legal and ethical standards of the practical nursing profession.
- Demonstrates accountability for personal, vocational, and professional behavior by independently seeking new learning experiences.

## **Plan of Study**

The successful student completing the Practical Nursing Program curriculum earns a diploma. The courses are organized sequentially from basic to complex over the span of four levels over the course of one year for full time enrollment and two years for part time enrollment.

There are 1564 hours in the program with 649 hours of theory and 915 hours of clinical. A variety of teaching strategies and learning activities are used, including computer-based instruction, adaptive quizzing, standardized testing, virtual clinical activities, clinical laboratory simulations, group projects and clinical experiences, to name a few. Students are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN exam after successful completion of the program.

## **Confidentiality Statement**

All students are required to sign a Confidentiality Statement at the school and at the request of clinical sites. Students must also complete HIPAA training prior to clinical orientation.

## **Cooperating Agencies**

The Practical Nursing Program partners with several clinical facilities in Blair County. Clinical experiences are determined based on the learning needs of the students and facility availability. Some of the facilities utilized include UPMC Altoona, James E. VanZandt Medical Center, Altoona Center for Nursing Care, Maybrook Hills, The Village at Morrisons Cove, Presbyterian Village of Hollidaysburg, Garvey Manor, Homewood at Martinsburg, Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries, Encompass Health, and Conemaugh Nason Medical Center.

Students are responsible for providing their own transportation to cooperating agency experiences at their own expense. The faculty expects students to adhere to the rules and regulations of each cooperating agency as well as school policies. Clinical experiences may include scheduled out rotations at various clinical agencies.

## Section 2: Admissions

### Admission Requirements

The GACTC Practical Nursing Program welcomes all interested individuals to submit applications for admission into the Practical Nursing Program. Acceptance into the program is based on the following criteria and availability in the upcoming classes:

To be considered for admission for the Practical Nursing (full- or part-time option) program, prospective students must complete the following:

- Application for Admission – click here to access.
- Copy of the applicant's final high school transcript, documentation of completion of a high school equivalency (i.e. GED), or equivalent foreign education as verified by a GACTC-approved credential evaluation service. Applicants who apply during their senior year of high school must provide a copy of their final transcript following graduation from high school.
- PA Criminal Record Information: Applicants must submit a Criminal Background History for employment from the PA State Police that is within 1 year of the date of the application to the GACTC. Applicants must request the background record from the PATCH system at <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>. The PA State Police Criminal Background Check is \$22.00 (fee is subject to change). GACTC reserves the right to deny applicants to postsecondary educational programs based on the results of the criminal background check. GACTC reserves the right to accept an applicant with a criminal background based on the severity, date(s), and frequency of the conviction(s). View PA Criminal Background Directions. Once the background check has been provided to the applicant via the system, please submit to the Practical Nursing office.
- PA Child Abuse Clearance: Applicants must submit a PA Child Abuse Clearance that is within 1 year of the date of application to the GACTC. To request this clearance, please visit <https://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis/public/home> to create an individual account. Please follow the instructions to apply for the PA Child Abuse History Clearance. The purpose of the clearance is School Employee. When your report is ready, (you will receive an email when it is ready), please provide it to the Practical Nursing office. There is a \$13.00 fee for the PA Child Abuse History Clearance (fee is subject to change). The GACTC reserves the right to deny applicants entrance to postsecondary educational programs based on the results of the PA Child Abuse Clearance. View PA Child Abuse Clearance Directions.
- Federal Criminal History Fingerprinting: Applicants must submit a Federal Criminal History Fingerprinting, please visit <https://www.identogo.com/>. There is a \$25.85 fee (fee is subject to change). Please follow the steps on the website. Click on "Get Fingerprinted", select fingerprinting service by state (PA), click on "Digital Fingerprinting", and enter service code (1KG6NX). You must have a current email address to allow correspondence. Click on "Schedule Manage Appointment", choose the form of identification you will be providing. Visit Identogo Center to complete fingerprinting. Applicants must submit the confirmation receipt to the Practical Nursing office.
- TEAS Pre-admission test. Applicants that may have completed courses in a practical or registered nurse program, or have completed the TEAS recently, may not need to complete the TEAS exam. Please contact the Practical Nursing office at (814) 941-8324 or [practicalnursing@gactc.edu](mailto:practicalnursing@gactc.edu) to discuss. To schedule the TEAS exam, please follow these instructions: Create an account at <https://atitesting.com/>. Instructions on creating an account are available here. Once an account is created, you will be able to see available testing dates and locations for the GACTC. The test fee is \$106.00, payable through the ATI website (fee is subject to change). Our website provides helpful resources to prepare for the TEAS exam, please visit <https://www.gactc.edu/adult-education/how-to-enroll/pnadmission/> to access these resources.

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE:** Some criminal offenses could be cause to deny acceptance into the program and/or could prevent licensure as a practical nurse by the State Board of Nursing. If students have a criminal history, they are expected to indicate so truthfully on the application. Students **MUST** notify the Practical Nursing Coordinator within 30 days of a known change to the student's criminal history. The PN Program may request updated Clearances at any time.

Upon submission of the admissions requirements and completion of the TEAS exam (if applicable), the applicant will be scheduled for an interview with the Practical Nursing Coordinator or Practical Nursing faculty member. After review of all admissions requirements, the applicant will be notified about admission into the program. After receiving acceptance to the program, a \$100.00 non refundable registration fee is due. Payments may be made online via GACTC Student Portal, cash or check, payable to the GACTC. Upon acceptance to the GACTC Practical Nursing Program, new students will receive information about the required CPR certification, physical exam, drug screening, and other health related requirements.

We recommend meeting with our admissions counselors to review intended program expectations, recommended academic preparedness, program format, tuition, and financial aid information. Remedial coursework and/or tutoring may be recommended to ensure a student's success in an intended program. Please contact the Continuing Education Office for additional information.

Upon admission to the GACTC diploma program, a \$100.00 registration fee is required for all diploma programs. The registration fee is non-refundable. The GACTC reserves the right to deny admission and/or readmission to any student for an adult education program if, in the opinion of GACTC administration, his/her admission is not in the best interest of the student or GACTC. Students will also review and sign an Enrollment Agreement upon admission to the GACTC diploma program.

### **Readmission**

When progression is interrupted for academic or personal reasons, the student may request in writing to be readmitted. In order to be considered for readmission, the student must comply with the re-admission requirements listed below or as otherwise stated by the Practical Nursing Program Coordinator:

- No outstanding financial obligations to the Program or GACTC
- Completion of a new application
- Faculty approval
- Urine drug screen
- One step PPD (or two step if annual one step documentation is not available)
- Medical clearance for full duty if the interruption in progression is medical in nature
- PA State Criminal, Child Abuse, and FBI Clearances
- Valid certification in American Heart Association CPR Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers that expires after the anticipated graduation date

## **Section 3: Academic Policies and Procedures**

### **Attendance Policy**

It is essential for students to attend and be punctual for all classes and clinical experiences to provide sufficient opportunity to meet all course and program objectives. Lack of attendance will minimize the student's ability to achieve course objectives and may lead to academic probation or dismissal from the program.

Additionally, the student must complete 1500 program hours in order to graduate to meet Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing requirements. The scheduled curriculum is 1564 hours.

Attendance is taken for all class and clinical days. When a sign in sheet is utilized for attendance, students must sign in and out for themselves. DO NOT sign other students in or out. **The student is responsible for reporting any time that he/she will be absent and anytime that he/she will be late arriving.** Notification is required for both class and clinical

days. To report an absence or late arrival call (814) 946-8490 and leave a message on the answering machine or with whoever answers the phone. Notification should occur an hour prior to the start time. Failure to call off is considered a “no show” or “abandonment” of patient care. Continued “no show” behavior can lead to termination from the program.

Full time classes operate from 8:00 am – 4:00 pm during Levels I, II, and III. Classes operate from 7:30 am – 3:30 pm during Level IV. Full time clinical starts at variable times depending on the facility that you are assigned to, but generally from 6:30 am – 2:00 pm. One hour is scheduled for lunch on class days during which time students may leave for lunch and return. One half hour is scheduled for lunch on clinical days (whether at school or a cooperating agency) and students may not leave for lunch on clinical days. Part time hours vary, the hours are scheduled Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings and every other weekend during the day.

If a student needs to leave class or clinical early, the student must notify the instructor for that class or clinical of their early departure prior to the start of class or clinical. Late arrivals and early departures are counted as absent time. Absent time is calculated in 15 minute increments. Due to patient assignments at the clinical sites, late arrivals at clinical of more than 30 minutes are not permitted. If you are more than 30 minutes late, you will be sent home and considered absent for the full day. Simulation lab is considered to be clinical time; therefore, absence from simulation lab counts as clinical absence. On class days, students who leave for lunch have to sign out and sign back in with the time.

**Student employment should not interfere with class or clinical hours.** Additionally, students may not be employed as a licensed practical nurse unless they are licensed as such. Students are not permitted to work from 11 pm to 7 am prior to clinical days.

Students can miss no more than 14 hours of clinical per program period. Any clinical absence beyond 14 hours must be made up by doing clinical make-up at a time and date determined by instructor availability and at the student’s cost per current hourly rate. Make-up time is scheduled in no less than 4 hour blocks. Make-up time should be completed in the same level in which the absent time occurred. Exceptions to this will be made at the discretion of the program coordinator when instructor availability does not allow.

It is the student’s responsibility to obtain materials and assignments within 24 hours of the student’s return from an absence.

Students who are pregnant may continue in the program with documentation from the student’s physician that the student can safely continue with full participation in class and clinical activities. Students who are pregnant or become pregnant during the program must notify the program coordinator in writing as soon as possible. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the program coordinator of any changes in health status during the pregnancy. It is also the student’s responsibility to provide documentation from the physician that the student can return to full duty after delivery. Absent time missed due to the pregnancy and/or delivery must be made up per the make-up policy. \*See Leave of Absence policy.

Students are required to be in attendance for all intravenous therapy classroom and clinical hours in order to graduate and obtain an IV certificate. Any absent time during this component of Pharmacology I will require makeup at the student’s expense.

### **Exam Make-up Policy**

In the event that a student is absent for an exam, the student will be afforded the opportunity to make up the exam. However, 5% points will be deducted from the student’s total score on the exam. Students must contact the instructor within 24 hours of the missed exam to arrange to make up the exam. The exam must be made up within two school days of return to school (class or clinical) from the absence. If the student does not follow the exam make-up policy and does not take the exam, the student will receive a zero. If a student arrives late for an exam, it will be at the instructor’s discretion whether or not the student will take the exam upon arrival or at a later designated time.

## Program Schedules

A program calendar is provided to students with the acceptance letter. Students will receive a weekly schedule throughout the program.

## Grading

Final course grades will be distributed to students four times a year at the end of each level. Whenever possible the report cards will be distributed within 2 weeks of the last day of the level.

Students are required to achieve a minimum of a 75% final course grade for each course and satisfactory clinical evaluation for each course/level. Students not achieving a 75% final average for a course will be given an unsatisfactory clinical grade for that course. **If a student fails either the theory or the clinical component of a nursing course, the student fails the entire course. Students must also meet requirements in clinical paperwork, conduct, attendance and financial obligation to the school to progress to the next level.** Students on probation can advance to the next level, but must demonstrate progress towards meeting objectives. Failure to do so will result in course failure.

Students must achieve an 85% on the Pharmacology I midterm in order to administer medications at all clinical facilities. Students must achieve an 85% on the IV Comprehensive Exam in Pharmacology I in order to receive an IV certification and pass the course.

In order to be eligible to receive a final course grade, students must attain a minimum of a 75% exam grade calculated by adding the student's unit exam grade twice to the final exam grade and dividing by three. If the student meets the requirement, the final course grade is calculated by adding the unit exam grade twice, final exam grade, and the assignment grade and dividing by 4. In circumstances in which the exam grade is less than 75%, the final course grade will be the exam grade. The assignment grade is not averaged in. Final course grades will be calculated to the hundredth and rounded to the nearest whole number.

### Theory Grading Scale

- A = 92-100%
- B = 84-91%
- C = 75-83%
- D = 70-74% (failing)
- E = 69% and below (failing)

### Clinical Grading Scale

- S = Satisfactory
- U = Unsatisfactory
- P = Probation

Assignments must be submitted by the due date. Late assignments may be subject to loss of points or zero points. Instructors will identify assignment submission and grading policies on their course outline.

Grades for courses that a transfer student (from another program) successfully challenges will be noted on the student's transcript as a "T." The grade earned on the course challenge exams will be used for the purpose of determining QPA, GPA and class rank. For students being readmitted, grades for successfully challenged courses will be taken from the grade earned in the prior enrollment.

## Academic Achievement Benchmarks

High Honors: All course grades = 92-100%  
All clinical grades = Satisfactory  
Must be in good standing related to attendance and behavior

Honors: All course grades 84-91%  
All clinical grades = Satisfactory  
Must be in good standing related to attendance and behavior

## Graduation Requirements

For a student to be eligible to receive the credential from their program of study and graduate from the GACTC Practical Nursing Program, the student must meet the following criteria:

- Complete all program courses and achieve at least a 75% for all courses
- Complete a minimum of 1500 program hours
- Complete all clinical make up hours
- Complete 6 hours of community service
- Satisfy all financial obligations owed to the school.

Extenuating circumstances that prevent a student from attending class will be evaluated by the Practical Nursing Coordinator as it relates to fulfilling program requirements. A determination may be made to waive the policy if justification is provided and all other academic and financial requirements are met.

## Classroom Norms

The faculty and students will collaborate to develop a supportive, respectful, engaging, considerate and educational classroom culture.

Behaviors that support classroom norms include:

- Use of electronic devices during any type of instruction, including independent study, must be for educational purposes ONLY. No texting, personal phone calls, social media use, shopping or movie watching permitted.
- Maintaining a quiet environment during independent study
- Raising your hand and waiting to be called on
- Avoiding excessive exits from the classroom during instruction
- Requesting permission to record class activities or to take pictures of students, instructors, or class materials
- Participating appropriately in group activities
- Arriving on time
- Being respectful of all others in all interactions

## Disciplinary Procedures

When an unacceptable behavior occurs, or a student is not meeting course objectives, or other disciplinary concerns arise, the following will occur:

1. The faculty member with knowledge of the issue will initiate a meeting with the student.
2. The incident will be documented by both the faculty and the student.
3. An expected outcome for the student will be identified.
4. The Program Coordinator will be notified by the faculty if the outcome is not met satisfactorily.

When outcomes are not met, and behaviors continue to be repeated, the Program Coordinator has the discretion to place the student on probation, suspend the student, or terminate the student depending on the individual circumstances. Students can progress to the next level while on probation. However, if progress toward the identified outcome is not achieved within the time frame identified, the student can be dismissed from the program.

The faculty and staff at the GACTC PN Program want you to succeed. We will work with you to resolve any issues that you are experiencing. However, the ultimate responsibility for meeting program expectations resides with the student.

### **Section 3: Student Responsibility**

#### **Drug/Alcohol Policy**

\*\*In addition to the following information, please see the Drug-Free Workplace and Drug/Alcohol Testing policies in the Post-Secondary Student Handbook & Catalog for Diploma Programs.

##### **Purpose:**

The Practical Nursing Program at the GACTC recognizes that the abuse of controlled substances is a serious problem with legal, physical and social implications for the whole community. As an educational institution, the GACTC strives to prevent abuse of controlled substances.

Practical nursing students at GACTC are subject to the rules and regulations of our affiliating clinical agencies.

Additionally, the Practical Nursing Program upholds the Standards of Nursing Conduct as outlined by the Pennsylvania State Board of Nursing. We implement this policy to safeguard the patient from potential incompetent practice by an individual under the influence of a controlled substance.

##### **Drug/Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy:**

All incoming students are subject to urine drug screening during orientation to the program as scheduled by the GACTC PN Program. Positive urine drug screening results can be cause for immediate dismissal. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a licensed healthcare provider will not be considered in violation of this rule as long as the student can safely and competently participate in the program and as long as the student has provided any requested documentation. In some circumstances, a student may be referred to the Pennsylvania Nurse Peer Assistance Program for evaluation of a student's ability to safely and competently participate in the program if the student has a prescription for a mind altering drug.

If a student is suspected of being under the influence of a dangerous, illegal, or controlled substance, the administration can require that the student be immediately drug tested. Refusal to be tested results in immediate termination from the program.

Students terminated due to a positive drug screening, can be granted readmission at the discretion of the PN Program Coordinator. In this circumstance, the PN Program Coordinator will develop a contract governing the terms of readmission to be signed by the student.

## **Dress/Appearance**

The purpose of the dress code is to implement standards of grooming and attire that project a professional image and are non-distracting in the educational and healthcare environment. Additionally, the dress code adheres to the health and safety regulations of affiliating agencies.

The Practical Nursing Program has adopted two forms of dress to meet these expectations:

1. **Clinical uniform** for clinical, sim lab, skills labs, and class in Levels I & II
2. **Classroom attire** for specified out rotations and class in Levels III & IV

### **Clinical Uniform**

The clinical uniform will be worn without variation for most clinical experiences, including simulation lab, skills lab, some out rotations, and for Level I and II class days. When scheduled to return to school after clinical, students are to remain in uniform for the remaining theory/lab hours unless otherwise directed by the faculty. The clinical uniform should be clean and neatly pressed.

Scrub pants may not drag on the floor. Undergarments must not be visible through or around the uniform. Students may choose to wear a white, black, gray or navy blue short-sleeved or long-sleeved t-shirt under the scrub top. T-shirts are not permitted in the obstetrical area. All t-shirts worn under the scrub top must be tucked into the scrub pants and may not be visible at the waist/hip region.

White, black or gray (light gray, charcoal etc.) healthcare shoes or athletic sneakers are required (no Crocs, Hey Dude's, moccasins, etc). Shoe styles must be closed at the toes and heel. Shoes and shoelaces must be kept clean at all times. Choose a shoe material that will be easy to maintain. Socks must be worn with your clinical shoes. Socks should be basic, neutral colors with no offensive images or words.

No excessive make-up. No perfume, cologne or other strongly scented products. No colored nail polish is permitted when wearing the clinical uniform and/or at any clinical site. Nails must be kept trimmed, clean and short. Tips, fake nails, and acrylics are not permitted. False eyelashes are not permitted.

Hair must be kept out of the face and eyes and needs to be neat and contained at all times when in the clinical uniform and/or at any clinical site. Hair must not hang down below the collar of the uniform. Hair color and styles must be professional looking. Bangs must be above the eyebrows. Hair accessories must be plain. No feather or fake hair components are permitted. Hair may not be any unnatural hair color such as pink, blue, purple, green, etc.

When in the clinical uniform and/or at any clinical site: Jewelry is limited to one watch, one ring with no raised setting, and one small stud-type pair of earrings, one earring per earlobe. All other jewelry and facial piercings are not permitted at any time in the clinical area or while in the clinical uniform. (Includes piercings of the tongue, nose, face and auricle of the ear.) Facial hair must be kept trimmed, neat, or clean-shaven.

Grooming: Students are expected to practice good personal hygiene, dental/oral hygiene, and neatness at all times. There should be no tobacco or other offensive odor on clothing and/or breath.

The lab jacket included in the uniform package, can be worn as a coverup with the clinical uniform as long as it is laundered daily along with the scrub pants and top. No other coverup can be worn with the clinical uniform on the clinical units.

## Classroom Attire/Uniform

Classroom attire can be worn under the following circumstances: class in Levels III and IV unless otherwise directed; specified clinical outrotation experiences; specified dress down days and/or school related activities.

Classroom attire top options include the GACTC polo shirt included with the uniform package; approved GACTC t-shirts provided by the school.

Classroom attire layering options include the GACTC lab jacket or a plain blue, gray or black zip up hoodie of choice.

Classroom attire pant options include khaki pants, jeans, scrub pants.

All clothing must be neat, clean, in good taste, and provide full coverage. Undergarments should not be visible.

All tops must fall to the lower hip region (no skin near the waist is to be visible when sitting or bending etc).

Tops must cover the breadth of the shoulder (4 inch fabric width).

All tights must be covered by a top/tunic/dress that comes to the top of the knee.

Shoes must be closed at the toe and heel, have non-skid bottoms, and be in good condition.

No excessive make-up. No perfume, cologne or other strongly scented products. No colored nail polish. Nails must be kept trimmed, clean and short. Tips, fake nails, and acrylics are not permitted. False eyelashes are not permitted.

Hair must be kept out of the face and eyes and needs to be neat. Hair color and styles must be professional looking. Bangs must be above the eyebrows. Hair accessories must be plain. No feather or fake hair components are permitted. Hair may not be any unnatural hair color such as pink, blue, purple, green, etc.

Grooming: Students are expected to practice good personal hygiene, dental/oral hygiene, and neatness at all times. There should be no tobacco or other offensive odor on clothing and/or breath.

Students can choose to wear the clinical uniform for their classroom attire. HOWEVER, if the student chooses this option, all clinical uniform rules apply.

Jeans that are torn or contain holes are not permitted.

Tight fitting jeans/pants, including yoga pants are not permitted.

Clothing with obscene pictures or wording or that contain tobacco, alcohol, or drug advertisements is not permitted.

The uniform scrub top may not be worn with street clothes attire.

Open back sandals, clogs, boots above the lower knee caps, footwear resembling slippers, moccasins, or high heels are not permitted.

At the beginning of the program, students should follow the classroom attire rules prior to the time that the uniforms arrive. Students can wear a top of their choice as long as it adheres to guidelines for classroom attire.

### **The following is required for both uniform types:**

The GACTC issued student photo ID must be worn at all times when at the GACTC, UPMC, long-term care facility, and all other affiliating agency premises.

ID Badge must be worn above waist level.

Lanyards are NOT permitted.

Body tattoos that may appear offensive are not permitted to be visible at any time (cover with clothing, flesh tone bandages or tattoo covers).

No excessive make-up. No perfume, cologne or other strongly scented products. No colored nail polish is permitted when wearing the clinical uniform and/or at any clinical site. Nails must be kept trimmed, clean and short. Tips, fake nails, and acrylics are not permitted. False eyelashes are not permitted.

No hats permitted inside the building.

\*\*The faculty reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of attire. The dress code is subject to revision at the discretion of the faculty. Any violation of the dress code will be dealt according to the Disciplinary Procedures referenced previously in this Handbook, and the student shall be required to take immediate corrective action by securing appropriate attire.

### **Electronic Devices**

Personal electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops, smart watches etc.) must be turned off while students are in class and at clinical. Students are absolutely prohibited from using personal electronic devices for personal use during class or clinical. On occasion, instructors may give students permission to use a personal electronic device during class or at clinical for educational purposes. This should occur only with instructor permission. Students must abide by facility-specific policies while at clinical sites.

### **Safety Regulations/Lab Behavior & Safety Policy**

While practicing in the lab, your behavior, attitude and attire should mirror the professional behavior you are required to have in the clinical setting. Students must adhere to policies indicated here as well as all of the policies in the Student Handbook.

- Practice frequent hand hygiene.
- Keep hands away from face, eyes, mouth and hair.
- Follow the dress code.
- Use correct body mechanics.
- Lock brakes on beds, wheelchairs, stretchers and other equipment with wheels.
- Use all equipment properly, including electrical equipment.
- Report unsafe conditions immediately including spills, broken glass and non-functioning equipment.
- Horseplay or practical jokes are prohibited.
- Keep lab area clean and neat. Always return your area to the way in which you found it.
- Report any injury to the instructor immediately.
- Dispose of needles properly in a Sharps container.
- Do not remove any equipment or product from the lab without instructor permission.
- Notify faculty of any Latex Allergy. Lab equipment may contain latex.
- Cell phones, food and beverages are prohibited in the lab area.

- Pens, markers, povidone iodine and other substances can stain mannequins and are prohibited from use when working closely with mannequins.
- Do not move the location of any mannequin unless directed to do so by an instructor.
- Do not infuse any liquids into the mannequins unless directed to do so by an instructor.
- All equipment and substances in the lab are for **PRACTICE ONLY and not approved for human or animal consumption or use.**

## **Section 4: Student Resources & Services**

### **Academic Counseling Program**

The goal of the Academic Counseling Program is to enhance student learning and maximize positive achievement of learning outcomes. The process involves shared responsibility between the student and the advisor, focusing on assisting learners to acquire more effective and efficient study skills, development of professional work habits, and utilization of educational resources.

Each student will be assigned to an Academic Counselor who is a member of the faculty. The counselor assignments will be posted on the bulletin board. Students are encouraged to seek guidance from their Academic Counselor, a faculty member, the Enrollment Retention Counselor, and/or the Coordinator.

Counselor role includes, but is not limited to:

- Act a point of contact
- Assist students with time management, strategies to prevent procrastination, study skills, etc.
- Inform students of available resources and ensure that student knows how to use/is using available resources
- Assist in the development of problem-solving skills
- Guide students toward choices that will positively affect career path
- Refer students to the retention counselor

Student role includes, but is not limited to:

- Schedule and keep appointments with Academic Counselor
- Notify the counselor of failing exam grades
- Investigate learning resources as directed by the counselor
- Attend workshops, exam reviews, and academic support sessions
- Implement strategies suggested

### **Class Organization**

It is the belief of the Practical Nursing Faculty that class organization promotes leadership ability and enhances the student's degree of responsibility and dedication. Therefore, each class will become fully organized near the end of Level I. An organizational meeting will be chaired by a faculty member and nominations for President will be accepted. Once the office of President has been filled, the meeting will be chaired by the President and officers will be nominated and elected by a majority vote of the class members.

Class Officers will include:

- **President:** Chairs all class meetings; represents the class during the school year and the night of graduation. Keeps faculty informed of class concerns and happenings. Attends program advisory committee meetings.
- **Vice-President:** Assists the President. Takes office of Presidency when the President is absent and assumes the role of the President in any other Presidential absence.

- Treasurer: Responsible for handling class funds; keeps accurate records of fund-raising events; pays bills on time.
- Recording /Correspondence Secretary: Records minutes of all class meetings; reads them to the class at beginning of next meeting; handles all correspondence on behalf of the class such as invitations, Thank-you notes, inquiries, etc.

Appropriate committees will be designated by the Advisor as activities and projects are decided upon by the class. (Library, Humanitarian, Graduation Banquet, Social Activities, etc.)

Class meetings will be held when called by the President. The coordinator or a faculty member shall be properly notified prior to the meeting so they can be scheduled; and therefore, a proper time and place will be designated.

All formal class activities will be under the guidance of faculty and meetings will be conducted according to Parliamentary Procedure. All activities must be approved by the Faculty Advisor and the Coordinator.

Students wanting to make a suggestion or request to the Faculty/Administration may do so through their class president or by accessing the Continuous Improvement form at [www.gactc.com](http://www.gactc.com)

The faculty reserves the right to remove an individual from office if they are on probation for violation of the student code of conduct.

The class will vote on the option of producing a class video for graduation. The video shall display events occurring through the course of their academic attendance.