

NURSING STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE RN to BSN AND GRADUATE NURSING PROGRAMS

A. PURPOSE

1. Rowan University expects that all students as well as student organizations will conduct themselves responsibly and in a manner that reflects favorably upon themselves and the University. When a student or organization does not act responsibly and violates the University policies, rules, regulations, or standards of conduct, formal disciplinary action may result. The Conduct process reflects the University's concern that students and organizations maintain high standards. The Conduct process attempts to foster personal learning and growth, while at the same time holding individuals and groups accountable for inappropriate behavior.

B. RATIONALE

The rationale for this Nursing Student Code of Conduct is to provide nursing students and nursing faculty a centralized and unifying policy of conduct that will foster professional accountability and patient safety.

C. STUDENT CIVILITY – CIVILITY AND INCIVILITY DEFINED

1. Civility has to do with courtesy, politeness, and good manners. Civility is the awareness and recognition of *others* in all interactions and demonstration of a high level of respect and consideration. In civility, we recognize that no action of ours is without consequence to others or ourselves. We need to anticipate what these consequences will be and choose to act in a responsible and caring way.

2. Uncivil behaviors are acts of rudeness, disrespect, and other breeches of common rules of courtesy. These acts of incivility range from disrespectful verbal and non-verbal behaviors to physical threats to another's well-being. Incivility is a lack of awareness and recognition (intended or unintended) of *others* in our interactions when we fail to give them a high level of respect and consideration. Incivility usually results when one does not anticipate how actions will affect others.

American Nurses Association. (2015). *Code of ethics for nurses*. Silver Springs, MD: American Nurses Publishing.

(See Appendix A for Behaviors of Incivility).

D. CLASSROOM CONDUCT

1. Students in the nursing programs are engaged in preparation for professional practice. Nursing practice is guided by the *ANA Code of Ethics* and *ANA Standards of Professional Practice*, which emphasize respect for others. Students in a professional nursing education program are held to these standards. All communication with faculty and other students should always be respectful.

2. The following are expected behaviors that support the teaching/learning environment:

a. Address the faculty member by title: Professor or Doctor.

b. Arrive to class on time.

c. Notify the faculty member and leave a voice message or email in the event of tardiness or absence prior to class.

d. Students who are disruptive or uncivil may be asked to leave the classroom.

e. Students are not permitted to bring a guest or children to class. If a child accompanies a student to a testing room, the student will need to leave the exam area and forfeit the test.

f. Electronic equipment or devices shall not be used without the express permission and consent of faculty.

3. Behaviors considered disruptive, unruly, or that interfere with the ability of the professor to teach may include:

a. Intimidating behavior.

b. Persistent argumentation, refusal to comply with a direct request, or yelling in class.

c. Gross, lewd, or offensive behavior or gestures.

4. Any threats made against faculty will be reported to the Dean of the School of Health Professions, which may result in sanctions to the student.

5. Any student who violates expected behaviors or engages in disruptive behavior, as explicated above may be sanctioned by the School of Health Professions. In addition, all acts of this nature may be reported to the Department Chair and may advance further to the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs of the School of Health Professions, who may impose further sanctions.

6. Online conduct reflects the same requirements as classroom conduct. Courtesy, politeness, and good manners must be used when students and faculty are involved in online education and/or communication; the same as if the interaction were to take place in person. Behavior must be responsible and caring toward others and individuals should anticipate the consequences of such conduct. Certain issues pertain to online education, these include written or audio discussion and email are assured the same civility as an on-site classroom situation. Students must arrive to an online class or appointment on time and refrain from disruptive behavior with verbal or written side conversation or background noise when connected to a live online class. The written communication for online learning deserves the same amount of formality and respect as face-to-face communication.

E. COMMUNICATION

The following are expected communication behaviors that support the teaching/learning environment:

1. All communication must be respectful and adhere to the standards of professional nursing.

2. Face-to-face and phone communication must be civil and use the highest, most professional level of courtesy, politeness, and good manners.

3. Email is a rapid and efficient form of communication. Those receiving an email cannot always understand the sender's frame of mind or the context of the communication. Care should be taken to avoid unintended interpretations. Emails should be responded to promptly; this can be accomplished by checking your official Rowan account daily. Accounts must be maintained to ensure functionality. For most accounts, this requires routine actions such as archiving and deleting unnecessary emails.

4. The content of email communication must be respectful and courteous and in a writing style appropriate for the business and/or educational environment. (See Appendix B for further guidance on email communication.)

5. Use proper spelling, punctuation, grammar and salutation.

American Nurses Association. (2015). Scope and Standards of Practice. Silver Springs, MD: American Nurses Publishing. . (Standard 10).

American Nurses Association. (2015). Code of ethics for nurses. Silver Springs, MD: American Nurses Publishing. . (Provisions 1.5, p. 9).

F. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Rowan University Department of Nursing recognizes that social media use is prevalent in today's society. Many websites and applications are commonly utilized by the public. Students should be aware that posting certain information and/or images on social media sites may be viewed as unethical, unprofessional, and in some cases, illegal. Students are referred to and expected to comply with the Rowan University policies on privacy, professionalism, discrimination, and harassment.

Some social media guidelines to consider...

1. Students should monitor their online presence as well as online site policies and privacy settings. Students are encouraged to maintain up-to-date use of privacy settings to limit the unknown or unwanted access to profiles or applications. Students should note that those with permission to view information may have the ability to share it without the student's consent. Therefore, all postings (information, photos, and videos) should be considered public and potentially visible to anyone at any time.
2. Posting information and images online should be considered permanent. Deleting a post does not ensure removal. Data can be recalled and retrieved as it is often archived online, or others may have recorded a student's postings prior to removal.
3. Students should represent themselves in a mature, professional, and responsible manner. Uncivil or disrespectful language used in communications is considered unprofessional and therefore not acceptable. Potential employers, licensing boards and healthcare facilities may screen social networking sites.
4. Social media use can be a helpful tool, but users must realize that statements made online are considered to represent the views of an individual as if spoken verbally or written. Communicating something electronically carries no less weight than communicating it in any other way. It is considered unprofessional to criticize classmates, peers, preceptors or university faculty/staff. Damaging the reputation of another is also considered to be unprofessional behavior and could result in personal liability if found to be defamatory in a court of law. Actions online are subject to legal ramifications. *Users should consider ALL possible consequences before writing/posting/sharing.*

Rowan University and the Department of Nursing reserve the right to discipline students using social media in a manner which violates applicable Rowan University or Nursing policies, rules and regulations. Social media use must comply with these policies as well.

5. Posting patient information. Students may not post or otherwise disclose patient information in violation of a federal or state law or applicable professional ethics and healthcare facility policies. This includes cases or pictures. Removal of an individual's name does not constitute proper "de-identification" of protected health information. Furthermore, inclusion of data such as age, gender, race, diagnosis, date or location of evaluation may still allow the reader to recognize the identity of a specific individual. Students may not take or post photos of patients or health care environments/rotation/ preceptorship sites. Photos may contain background identifying features of which the student may not be aware.

6. Posting class, program, or curriculum information. Students should not share information about program curriculum or exams in any way that violates Rowan University or the Department of Nursing academic misconduct policies. This includes information on classroom content. Students are not permitted to record the discussion or review of quiz or exam questions. Permission to record or stream a lecture is at the discretion of the faculty who is providing the course content. All recorded material is for the individual student's studying purposes only. Any other use, duplication,

sharing, or posting of the lecture material is prohibited. Picture taking of any type without the faculty's authorization is also prohibited. Students taking photos of learning materials (clicker questions, etc.) or violating this recording policy will be subject to disciplinary action including a referral to the Department Chair and possibly the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs in the School of Health professions.

7. **Misrepresentation.** In posting information on social networking sites, students may not present or represent themselves as official representatives or spokespersons for Rowan University or the nursing programs.

8. **Harassing or discriminatory postings.** Social media may not violate Rowan University Equality and Diversity Policies. This policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability age, gender identification or expression or other legally prohibited characteristic.

9. **Violating the Acceptable Use Policy.** All social media activities involving use of Rowan's computer and network resources, including all electronic communication systems and equipment, must comply with the Rowan University Acceptable Use Policy.

10. **Inappropriate relationships.** It is considered unethical to establish non-professional relationships with patients including inviting them to social network groups or accepting invitations from them.

11. **Copyright/trademark violations.** Students should seek the proper permission before posting photos, videos, or other media that the students do not own.

12. **Giving medical advice.** Students are not licensed Nurse Practitioners and should not offer medical advice as a medical professional. Students should in no way diagnose, manage, or medically advise any other individual on social media sites.

13. **Recording of Classes** Video or audio recording of classes is prohibited unless faculty permission is granted or a student has an official accommodation. Students are never permitted to tape during the discussion or review of quiz or exam questions. Recordings are for the student's own personal use. Any other use, duplication, sharing, or posting of the lecture material is strictly prohibited.

G. APPENDICES

Appendix A: Behaviors of Incivility

Though the list below is not all inclusive, it contains many of the behaviors listed in the literature on incivility.

1. **Inattentiveness in class**

2. **Absenteeism or arriving late, leaving early**

3. **Yelling at professor in classroom or in clinical setting**

4. **Touching professor in objectionable physical contact**

5. **Dishonesty/lack of integrity**

6. **Disrespectful retorts**

7. **Righteous anger**

8. **Threats to well-being**

9. **Intimidating behaviors such pointing finger in face of professor**

10. **Monopolizing the interactions with faculty or other students (not permitting others to have a turn)**

11. **Persistent argumentation or refusal to comply with a direct request**

12. **Nonverbal disrespectful behavior such as eye rolling, groaning or using inappropriate gestures, etc.**

13. **Attire that may be perceived as offensive to other students or faculty**

14. Gross and/or inappropriate behavior such as foul and/or inappropriate language
15. **Using cell phones or pagers during class**
16. **Holding distracting conversations in class**
17. **Making sarcastic remarks**
18. Demanding make-up exams, extensions or other favors
19. Falsely accusing faculty of misplacing academic work (assignments or exams)

Appendix B: Email

Email Guidelines

Choose email when you want to communicate information rapidly and when the information is better conveyed by computer than by phone or printed copy. Electronic mail is especially efficient when the information would be inconvenient to deliver over the phone.

Etiquette Rules

With e-mail, the student should not assume anything about the sender's frame of mind. Below are some useful Do's and Don'ts the student should consider in avoiding problems.

1. The official Rowan email address is the only appropriate method by which to send University-related information. Emails sent to the Department of Nursing faculty, staff, and administrators from personal accounts such as Gmail, Yahoo, and Hotmail may not be answered.
2. The student should address emails to faculty members, staff, administration, and fellow students with "Dear [Name]" or "Hello [Name]." Emails are professional pieces of correspondence; informal language is not appropriate. When addressing e-mails, proper titles (Professor, Dr. etc.) should be used.
3. All emails should be responded to within 24-48 business hours. If this is not possible, an automatic response should be created letting the sender know that his/her email will be answered at the earliest opportunity.
4. The content within an email is discoverable by law, and as such, correspondence should remain both professional and pertinent to the topic at hand, this also includes information shared on social network sites. A social network site is a public forum.
5. **It is considered shouting when a message is in all capital letters.**
6. Students should review emails for grammar, spelling, punctuation and tone before sending them.
7. The student should not use the "Reply All" function unless necessary to do so. Using it sparingly will import more meaning to the message when it is implemented.

8. Go to these websites for further information on email etiquette:

<http://www.netmanners.com/>

http://careerplanning.about.com/od/communication/a/email_tips.htm

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/outlook-help/12-tips-for-better-e-mail-etiquette-HA001205410.aspx>

Lachman, V. (2003). E-mail etiquette. *Journal of American Society for Long-Term Care Nurses*, 16(1), 4-5, 16.