



**Pierce College Puyallup
Associate Degree in Nursing
Program**

Student Handbook

Revised 8/05; 3/06; 12/06

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*Pierce College Associate Degree in Nursing
Student Handbook*

WELCOME

Welcome to the Pierce College Puyallup Nursing Program! This handbook is a supplement to the college catalog and the general Pierce College Puyallup student handbook. The purpose of this handbook is to provide you with information that is specific to the Pierce College nursing program. It is important that you **keep and refer to this handbook** throughout your program of study. As policy, procedures, and guidelines change, you will be notified and the handbook will be revised.

The Associate Degree Nursing Program

The Pierce College Puyallup Associate Degree Nursing Program consists of two tracks:

- **The Traditional Program**, 6 quarters in length, for the beginning student or
- **The Bridge Program**, 3 quarters in length, for the student who has an unencumbered Washington State LPN license or has completed the 1st year of an accredited comparable ADN program.

The following opportunities are available to students:

- A student in the Traditional program may apply for certification as a **nursing assistant** after the end of the first quarter. Please see the nursing department for further details.
- A student in either the Traditional or Bridge programs is eligible to apply for licensure and employment as a **Nursing Technician** after completing one clinical quarter in the ADN program and being hired into a Nursing Technician position. See the WACs (246-840-840 to 246-840-905) at the website for more details:
<http://apps.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=246-840-840>
- A student in the Traditional program may apply to take the NCLEX-PN examination at the end of the fourth quarter. Students in the sixth quarter of the program may apply to take the NCLEX-RN examination. Please see the nursing department for further details and approximate costs for these examinations.
- A student in the Traditional Program and in good standing may apply for dual admission into the BSN program at the University of Washington Tacoma in the fourth quarter. Please see the nursing department for details on the Pierce College-UWT dual admission program, including approximate costs and application procedures.

Program Contact Information

Pierce College Nursing Program
1601 – 39th Ave SE
Puyallup, WA 98374
Tel. (253) 864-3272
Fax. (253) 840-8388
Web. www.pierce.ctc.edu/nursing

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

NURSING OFFICE HOURS: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Nursing Program Faculty and Staff

Natural and Social Sciences Division Chair:	Michael Lamka, MS
Director/Nursing Faculty:	Sarah Magnuson-Whyte, MN, RN
Nursing Faculty:	Susan Grabowski, MN, RN Kara Tompkins, MN, RN
Adjunct Nursing Faculty:	Jill Newberry, MS, RN Margaret “Peggy” Williams, ARNP Mary McDonald, MN, RN Christina Rutledge, BSN, MN-Student, RN
Nursing Program Coordinator:	Hope Roberts, BA
Allied Health Pathways Coordinator:	Christina Guillen-Cook, MBA, RN
Admissions & Advising Manager:	TBA
Pre-Nursing Advisor:	Michael Peluso, MEd
Accreditation Coordinator:	Herta Maleike, MEd, RN

ACCREDITATIONS AND APPROVALS

Accreditation

Pierce College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, an institutional body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation and the United States Department of Education.

Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission State Approval

The Pierce College Nursing Program has been approved by the Washington State Department of Health Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission. The next site visit is scheduled for summer 2014.

National Accreditation

This Nursing Program is currently working towards accreditation by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, Inc. (NLNAC) 33rd Floor, 61 Broadway, New York, NY 10006 800-669-1656 www.nlnac.org. The site visit for purposes of accreditation is scheduled for winter 2007.

PHILOSOPHY OF PIERCE COLLEGE

Pierce College Mission

We are a community of learners open to all. Our community is built on a foundation of respect and openness to change. Together, we strive to meet the needs of our diverse community and develop each member's abilities. Our commitment to quality education and teaching excellence prepares learners to live and work successfully in an ever-changing world.

Core Abilities

At Pierce College, we prepare students to live and work in a dynamically changing world by emphasizing whole student development and the five core abilities. Developing these abilities together will help us all meet the Pierce College Mission Statement.

Critical, Creative & Reflective Thinking: A critical, creative, reflective thinker will question, search for answers and meaning, evaluate ideas and information, and develop beliefs that leads to action.

Effective Communication: The effective exchange of messages in a variety of contexts using multiple methods.

Information Competency: Seeks, finds, evaluates and uses information to engage in lifelong learning.

Multiculturalism: Valuing open-mindedness, inclusion, multicultural perspectives and multiple ways of knowing, thinking and being.

Responsibility: Responsibility is the ability to respond by examining the relationship between self, community, and environments, evaluating potential impacts and consequences of actions, and making choices and contributions based on that examination and evaluation.

<p style="text-align: center;">PHILOSOPHY OF PIERCE COLLEGE ASSOCIATE DEGREE IN NURSING PROGRAM</p>
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Philosophy

Students, faculty, and staff of the nursing program interact in teaching and learning processes that empower students to build upon an assimilation of nursing knowledge, scholarship, and skills that lead to the provision of competent and compassionate multicultural nursing care. The philosophy of the Nursing Program is exemplified through the Mission, Vision, Program Outcomes, and Theoretical Framework upon which the entire program is based.

Mission Statement

The Pierce College Associate Degree Nursing program forms a community of learners committed to the discipline of nursing. Our specialized community is built on a foundation of respect and openness to change. Together, we strive to meet the needs of our diverse community for qualified registered nurses and develop each nursing student's abilities in nursing. Our commitment to quality nursing education and teaching excellence prepares learners to live and work successfully as registered nurses in an ever-changing health-care environment.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to promote a multicultural, humanistic nursing program that provides excellence in nursing education through the scholarship of teaching and learning.

Program Outcomes

Nursing Process: The graduate will demonstrate a beginning competence in critical, creative & reflective thinking within the nursing process that serves to provide the foundation for safe, effective care delivery in a wide variety of health care settings.

Communication: The graduate will demonstrate effective communication through the exchange of messages in a variety of contexts using multiple methods.

Professional Role: The graduate will demonstrate responsibility in the registered nurse role by participating as a member of a team to promote holistic, ethical, and compassionate care while functioning within the scope of practice for the registered nurse.

Cultural Competence: The graduate will demonstrate multicultural competence by valuing open-mindedness, inclusion, multicultural perspectives and multiple ways of knowing, thinking and being for clients, families, and colleagues in health care.

Information Competency: The graduate will seek, find, evaluate and use information in health care to support evidence based practice and engage in lifelong learning for nursing practice.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework organizes the program by providing a clear guideline in which faculty can teach and students can learn nursing in an educational milieu that is supportive of the developing entry-level nurse. The theoretical framework operationalizes the Pierce College Core Abilities, the Nursing Program Mission and Vision Statements, as well as the Nursing Program Outcomes.

The **Roy Adaptation Model (RAM)** is used as the theoretical framework for teaching and learning nursing. The RAM supports the idea that human beings are adaptive systems; each individual has internal processes that act to maintain their integrity. The nurse's role is to promote adaptation for individuals and groups through four adaptive modes (i.e. Physiological Mode, Self-Concept Mode, Role Function Mode, and Interdependence Mode).

Sister Callista Roy's Adaptation Model (RAM) was presented in 1970 as a systems model that focused on the constant interaction between the person and the environment, primarily in how each individual adapts to their environment. Roy defines adaptation as "a positive response that promotes survival, growth, reproduction, and mastery". There are three basic concepts to the Roy model: person or client, adaptation, and nursing.

Person. Roy defines each client as a biopsychosocial-spiritual being, in constant interaction with their environment. One dimension of a client's life is health and illness, which forms a continuum along which they can be located at any given time. At any given point, a client will have a variety of stimuli acting upon them, in which a response is indicated. A positive response to environmental changes requires adaptation.

Environment. Roy defines environment as being all conditions, circumstances, and influences that surround and affect the development and behavior of humans as adaptive systems, with particular consideration of person and earth resources.

Adaptation/Health. According to Roy, the individual and the environment are sources of stimuli that require modification to promote adaptation to the patient, who has an adaptive system with both physiological and psychosocial modes. Adaptation occurs in four adaptive modes that indicate effective or ineffective responses to environmental stimuli: the physiologic, self-concept, role function and interdependence modes.

Nursing. Roy's model also provides a comprehensive understanding of nursing from the perspective of adaptation. When the demands of environmental stimuli are too high or the person's adaptive mechanisms are too low, the person's behavioral responses are ineffective for coping. Nursing supports and promotes the patient's adaptation and coping, with progress toward integration as the goal; thereby contributing to health, quality of life, and dying with dignity.

Education. Nursing education must prepare the workforce to ensure that the public receives the nursing care it needs. This is nursing's professional contract with society.

By utilizing this nursing theory to guide the Pierce College Nursing Program's curriculum, students develop the recognition that nursing practice is comprised of nursing professionals, rather than merely routine technicians. The Nursing Process is the functional way in which students approach their nursing role. The Nursing Program Course Plan will guide the student nurse through this important transformation.

GENERAL INFORMATION (Also see Pierce College Student Handbook)

Pierce College Student Handbook

There are free copies of this handbook available in the Pierce College Bookstore. Please be aware of the Policies and Procedures of Pierce College, which the Nursing Program also adheres to.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The nursing program supports and adheres to the compliance statement of Pierce College Puyallup as follows:

Pierce College Puyallup does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, handicap (or disability) or age in any of its policies, procedures, or practices, in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. This nondiscrimination policy covers admission and access to and treatment and employment in the college's programs and activities.

Special Needs

Students with disabilities who believe they may need accommodation to fully participate in course activities or meet course requirements must register with the Access and Disability Services (ADS) Office, Room 102A in the Administration Building in order to process a request for accommodation. You may call the ADS Office to make an appointment to meet with the ADS Coordinator at (253) 840-8335 or (253) 864-3301 to request accommodation. .

Students who have been approved for accommodations must provide the instructor with the "Approved Quarterly Academic Adjustments, Auxiliary Aids or Services" (green) form provided by ADS.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures and Inclement Weather

Emergency evacuation procedures, inclement weather absences, and other related issues are to be followed per Pierce College Puyallup's Policy and Procedures www.pierce.ctc.edu/policy

Student Grievance Procedure

All students should be free of unfair or improper action by any member of the college community. Any student who believes they have been subjected to unjust action by a staff member or administrator may initiate a grievance action. A copy of the college's grievance procedure can be found at www.pierce.ctc.edu. The nursing program adheres to the college-wide policy and procedure regarding the student's right to grieve.

*Note: If an incident occurs at a clinical site between a student and employees of that site, the student **MUST** adhere to the grievance procedure of the college **first**, before any action is taken at the clinical site.*

NURSING PROGRAM INFORMATION

Registration

The Pierce College Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program is a limited enrollment program. The nursing department controls the registration and reserves places in each class for all nursing students throughout the entire program. It is your responsibility to acquire a schedule and register each quarter using the standard Pierce College Puyallup registration process. Only registered students will be allowed to attend nursing classes, including clinical classes.

Program Expenses

The anticipated cost of the Pierce College Puyallup six-quarter nursing program is approximately \$8500; the three quarter LPN-ADN Bridge is approximately \$4500. This includes items such as tuition, testing, fees, books, supplies, student uniforms and accessories, and student health fees. The majority of the cost occurs at the beginning of the first quarter. All costs are the responsibility of the student. Financial assistance information is available through the college's Financial Aid office.

Informing Students of Program Changes

Policies, procedures, and guidelines are communicated to students by means of the Pierce College Puyallup Associate Degree in Nursing Program Student Handbook. The handbook is revised regularly to provide current and accurate information. **A student signature is required attesting to the fact the student has received and accepts the policies and guidelines contained in this Student Handbook** (see pages 33 and 34 and of this handbook).

Changes in policies, procedures, and guidelines will be announced to each class by the faculty and copies of the revised policy will be posted in the classroom and on the bulletin board outside the nursing office. Instructors will answer student questions regarding stated changes.

In addition, each quarter there may be a scheduled time, or discussion period, in which students and the Nursing Program Director will discuss the curriculum. Discussion should be focused on how the students are finding their nursing educational experience at that time in the program. This is a time in where the students can informally discuss curriculum issues – what is working well, suggestions for improvement, etc. The aim is to involve the students in the academic process so that they are ensured an active role in their nursing education.

If, at any time throughout your program of study, you have any questions or problems or you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact any of the nursing faculty, the nursing director, and/or the nursing program coordinator. Our primary goal is your success, both during nursing school and eventually as a member of the nursing profession.

**The Nursing Program's web site is www.pierce.etc.edu/nursing
The office phone number is 253-864-3272**

Student-Instructor Communication

Instructors have mailboxes in the nursing office. All full-time instructors have scheduled office hours, which are posted outside their office doors. Students are encouraged to contact their instructors or the Nursing Director in person, via phone or email if they wish to discuss their progress, a problem, or need other help related to completing their studies.

Extra Credit

Occasionally, extra credit assignments will be offered. This is up to the instructor and will be announced via email, or in the classroom, sometime within the designated quarter. Extra credit will be offered only if deemed to be appropriate to the student's learning experience.

Transportation to Clinical Sites

Each student must make their own arrangements to attend required clinical experiences. It may be necessary to go to the clinical areas several days a week. Carpooling is encouraged as much as possible, but clinical assignments cannot always be made according to convenient geographical locations.

NURSING PROGRAM POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

Current Contact Information

You **must** keep your most current address, phone number(s) and email on file with the nursing office. Be sure to include all applicable phone numbers (cell phone, emergency number, etc.). This information will be kept strictly confidential.

CPR/HIV/First Aid

Prior to the **beginning** of the nursing program, and then throughout the program, you are required to show proof of a valid **American Heart Association or American Red Cross CPR card**. Please make sure your card is for **Healthcare Provider or Professional Rescuer**. CPR classes are offered throughout the year at various locations. If you need more information about where classes are offered, please contact the nursing program coordinator. You must provide a copy of your current CPR card to the nursing program coordinator.

A current **First Aid** card is required for all entering students who do not hold an LPN license.

A 7-hour HIV training course must be completed *prior to* beginning the ADN program. Proof of completion of this course must be submitted to the Program Coordinator. Any student who has yet to complete this requirement will not be allowed to participate in clinicals and this will be considered an unexcused absence.

Immunizations

Immunizations must be kept current in the student's file **or the student will not be able to start or continue his/her clinical rotations**. A student file checklist, listing all required elements for each student nurse will be handed out to each student during the orientation session at the beginning of the program. Ongoing students will be made aware of any changes in requirements as the program progresses. It is the *student's responsibility* to ensure their file is continuously updated and complete.

Children in Class

Under **NO** circumstances are children to accompany you to class, skills laboratory, clinical, or scheduled conferences with instructors. If this occurs, you will be asked to leave. Your absence will be considered unexcused.

STUDENT CONDUCT AND PERFORMANCE

Board of Nursing Standards of Competent Performance

The Pierce College Puyallup Associate Nursing Program adopts and adheres to the legal standards of competent performance as defined by the Washington State Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission.

American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics

The development of a code of ethics is an essential characteristic of a profession and provides one means whereby professional standards may be established, maintained, and improved. A code indicates a profession's acceptance of the responsibility and trust with which it has been invested. Each practitioner, upon entering the profession, inherits a measure of that responsibility and trust and the corresponding obligation to adhere to standards of ethical practice and conduct set by the profession.

Preamble

The Code for Nurses is based upon belief about the nature of individuals, nursing, health, and society. Recipients and providers of nursing services are viewed as individuals and groups who possess basic rights and responsibilities and whose values and circumstances command respect at all times. Nursing encompasses the promotion and restoration of health, the prevention of illness, and the alleviation of suffering. The statements of the code and their interpretations provide guidance for conduct and relationships in carrying out nursing responsibilities consistent with the ethical obligations of the profession and quality in nursing care.

1. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.
2. The nurse safeguards the client's right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature.
3. The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person.
4. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions.
5. The nurse maintains competence in nursing.
6. The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities, and delegating nursing activities to others.
7. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession's body of knowledge.

8. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.
9. The nurse participates in the professions efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care.
10. The nurse participates in the profession's effort to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentations and to maintain the integrity of nursing.
11. The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.

Reference: American Nurses' Association Code of Ethics, 2002

<http://nursingworld.org/mods/mod580/code.pdf>

Student Accountability

The Washington State Nurse Practice Act requires its practitioners to be fully accountable for their clinical decisions and actions. Each nursing student is legally accountable to the level of her/his preparation and does not function under the licensure of another nurse. Accountability is the quality or state of being responsible and answerable for one's decisions, actions, and behaviors. Nurses committed to interpersonal caring hold themselves accountable for the well-being of clients entrusted to their care and are accountable to their patients and their colleagues. They are legally and ethically responsible for any failure to act in a safe and prudent manner. The Washington Nurse Practice Act gives nurses and student nurses the right to perform a broad range of dependent and independent functions. Enjoying this privilege means that they also assume legal and ethical responsibility for safe and effective performance at all times. Standards of practice have been developed by professional organizations which serve as guidelines in maintaining quality practice.

For the Pierce College Puyallup nursing student, accountability means that she/he will be, at all times, willing to learn and practice nursing with commitment and with personal integrity. It means being attentive and responsive to the needs of individual clients and colleagues. As the student acquires nursing knowledge and skills, she/he will assume professional responsibilities and develop competencies which will shape her/his attitude of caring. This attitude of caring and being accountable develops as the student becomes sensitive to the ethical and legal implications of nursing practice. In nursing, we all share a common goal of providing the highest quality of care to all individuals entrusted to our care. To successfully achieve this goal, the student should be dedicated to the following actions:

- Sharing ideas, learning experiences, and knowledge
- Upholding the philosophies and policies of the college, the nursing program, the clinical agencies within which the student practices, and the Washington Board of Nursing
- Maintaining the highest ideals, morals, personal integrity, and ethics possible

- Making a commitment to being fully accountable, responsible, and answerable for her/his academic and clinical decisions, actions, and behaviors

In being dedicated and committed to practicing the principles of accountability, the Pierce College Puyallup Associate Degree Nursing Student can have the personal and professional satisfaction of knowing that she/he is doing everything possible to promote trustworthiness in both conduct and actions.

Student Legal and Ethical Requirements

The nursing student is expected to abide by the following legal and ethical requirements:

1. Be prepared for clinical assignments.
2. Consider all information obtained regarding the patient's status as strictly confidential, in accordance to HIPAA (Health Insurance Privacy and Accountability Act) policy, and not to be discussed with anyone except instructors, peers, and significant hospital personnel. Learning experiences in the clinical area are to be shared during pre and post conferences and other related professional sessions.
<http://aspe.hhs.gov/admsimp/pl104191.htm>
3. Submit reports of patients to instructors using patient initials only; never the patient's full name.
4. Remove the name of the patient if any information is obtained from the patient's chart and used away from the nursing unit.
5. Consult with the instructor if the student feels that circumstances regarding the patient will hamper him/her from giving effective care (e.g., personal friend).
6. Maintain a professional attitude at all times when caring for patients.
7. Channel any criticism of an agency, an individual, or an instructor through the Director of the Nursing Program. In order to engender confidence and trust in our program, students should refrain from critical discussion outside the school or with other students.
8. Be honest at all times. A student who would cheat on a test ultimately is cheating patients. A student who is less than completely honest in the clinical area jeopardizes patient safety and is subject to termination from the nursing program.
9. Be responsible for his/her own learning, and help promote an atmosphere which facilitates maximum learning for his/her classmates. A student will not obstruct the learning process of others by causing undue anxiety for any reason, including monopolizing instructor's time.
10. Conduct himself/herself at all times in a professional manner.
11. Seek necessary patient referral (with instructor approval) to help solve patient's social problems.
12. Be responsible for reading and familiarizing self with printed college and nursing department policies and procedures.

Failure to abide by these regulations may be grounds for dismissal from the nursing program.

Student Employment

Students are advised to weigh employment carefully, as nursing school has a very demanding curriculum. Employed students have a responsibility, personally and professionally, to engage in only those activities that fall within their job description. They have a responsibility to refuse to participate in activities that they have not been legally licensed to perform.

Students will not be allowed to work the hours of 2300 to 0700 the night prior to clinical due to alertness and safety issues.

Unacceptable Classroom and Clinical Site Behavior or Performance

If an instructor identifies a student who is performing in an unacceptable manner, the instructor will meet with the student to discuss the behavior or deficiency. The action will then be documented via the disciplinary warning/disciplinary action procedure as defined below, under the sub-title: Failure to Meet These Standards (see page 21 of this handbook).

Areas that constitute unacceptable behavior include but are not limited to:

1. Interfering with the learning of others.
2. Excessive tardiness.
3. Talking in class. If there are comments pertinent to the topic of discussion, they should be shared with the entire class. An undercurrent of side conversations or non-class related activities are disturbing to the learning atmosphere and are considered unprofessional behavior. Repeat offenders may be asked to leave the classroom.
4. Intimidation of students or faculty.
5. Inappropriate dress in the clinical setting (i.e., sunglasses, hats, caps, etc.)
6. Pagers or cell phones during class time or clinical. These should be placed on vibrate.
7. Dishonesty.
8. Bringing food and drinks into the clinical lab setting. This environment is designed to approximate a patient care environment and contains items that could be damaged by spills.

Failure of the student to correct the deficiency and/or meet the stated objectives may result in failure of the course. For additional responsibilities refer to the following in the Piece College Puyallup General Catalog.

STUDENT UNIFORM/ APPEARANCE AND BEHAVIOR

The Student Uniform

Only the approved Pierce College Puyallup Associate Degree in Nursing student uniform is to be worn in the clinical area or for special events as designated by the Director, and/or faculty, according to the following specifications:

1. Uniforms are to be clean, pressed, and in good repair at all times.
2. Uniforms should not be worn outside the clinical area (i.e. to a place of employment, to the grocery store, while shopping, etc.). If the student is required to return to Pierce College (any locations) campus during or after clinical, a clean lab coat may be worn over the uniform.
3. Shoes are to be white leather nurses shoes with rubber heels. No clogs, canvas tennis shoes, high tops, boots, or shoes with open toes or heels are permitted. Shoes and laces must be clean and in good repair at all times.
4. A wristwatch with a second's indicator, bandage scissors, stethoscope, and a name pin are considered essential parts of your uniform.
5. The approved lab jacket may be worn in the clinical setting.
6. The Pierce College Puyallup-issued name badge must be worn and visible at all times while the student is in uniform.

Uniforms may be purchased at Whistle Workwear at the South Hill Mall in Puyallup, WA. See the Program Coordinator for further details.

Professional Appearance

The appearance of a caregiver affects the response of the client/patient. The goal for the nursing student is to be able to establish an effective professional relationship with a wide variety of patients. In addition, any caregiver has responsibilities for health and safety both for self and others in the clinical environment. The following standards support those important goals.

1. For research in the hospital and for attending clinical experience outside the hospital, the student will wear professional looking street clothing, lab jacket, and the Pierce College Puyallup-issued name badge. Professional street clothing may include dresses, skirts, or pants, provided that these are in good repair, pressed, and represent conservative attire. Length of skirts and dresses must be no higher than 2 inches above the knee. Jeans, denims, sweatshirts, sweat pants, tank tops, low-cut tops or dresses, halter tops, and miniskirts are not considered professional attire.
2. Hair should be clean and styled conservatively, and up off the neck/collar. Only neutral-colored, plain hair clips may be worn. Ribbons, colored bands, or other hair ornaments are not allowed. Hair that falls forward over objects and surfaces may spread infectious agents.

3. Acceptable jewelry is limited to a wedding ring/set and one pair of small gold, silver, or pearl studs for pierced ears. Visible pierced areas other than earlobes may **not** be ornamented. Rings are a reservoir for infectious agents. Dangling earrings may be grabbed by the cognitively impaired patient causing serious injury to the caregiver.
4. Gum chewing is not permitted while wearing the school uniform or professional attire with the lab coat. Gum chewing interferes with effective communication.
5. Do not wear excessive perfume, cologne, aftershave or powder. These fragrances may be offensive to patients and may cause/increase nausea in the vulnerable patient.
6. The scent of smoke should not be detectable on the breath or clothing. The breath of a student who smokes may be offensive to patients and may cause/increase nausea in the vulnerable patient.
7. The fingernails are to be kept short (not to exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ inch past the end of the finger), clean, and well manicured. Students may wear only clear, white, or neutral shades of nail polish. Artificial nails of any type must not be worn while providing direct patient care. Longer nails and artificial nails have both been implicated in spreading infection to vulnerable patients.
8. Necklaces must not dangle and must be worn inside clothing. Dangling necklaces may be grabbed by the cognitively impaired patient causing serious injury to the caregiver.
9. In clinical settings, tattoos/body markings must be concealed.
10. Beards and mustaches must be neat and trimmed, not to exceed one inch in length. Longer facial hair makes it difficult to wear masks as required in some situations and may make masks ineffective.

Professional Behaviors

The Pierce College Puyallup Associate Degree nursing student is expected to conduct himself/herself in a professional manner at all times while in uniform and/or while representing the school. The following standards of professionalism are considered mandatory for all nursing students:

1. Preparation (for both lecture and clinical)
2. Effective communication (both verbal and non-verbal)
3. Enthusiasm/positive attitude
4. Effective team work/cooperation
5. Accepts and benefits from constructive criticism
6. Recognition of the impact of one's behavior on others, especially patients; modification of inappropriate behavior
7. Accountability/legal and ethical responsibilities

8. Professional Boundaries

Failure to Meet These Standards

Disciplinary Warnings: Disciplinary warnings will be issued, first verbally and then in writing, for the conditions below. If a student receives a written warning, that student has the opportunity to review this document along with a student witness (student's choosing) and the issuing faculty member in attendance. This written warning must be filed, by the issuing nursing program faculty member, within five working days of the occurrence and/or once faculty is made aware of this occurrence. Some examples include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Excessive clinical absenteeism (as per guidelines mentioned previously)
2. Failure to maintain a safe and prudent care delivery
3. Inappropriate activity between student, staff, patient and/or family
4. Theft
5. Patient abuse
6. Student actions demonstrate the potential to cause harm to self or others.
7. Failure to follow the Policies and Procedures as outlined in the Pierce College and Pierce College Nursing Program Student Handbooks.

Once a written warning is issued and reviewed, the student has five working days to respond, in writing. Once this occurs, both the written warning and the student's response will be filed with the nursing program director, who will initiate the *Review Process for Disciplinary Action* (if warranted).

Disciplinary Action: Based on the criteria mentioned above, there will be a series of disciplinary steps before dismissal from the program can occur. These are as follows:

Steps during the *Disciplinary Warning* process:

1. Verbal Warning
2. Written Warning

Steps once the process has entered the *Review Process for Disciplinary Action*:

1. Discussion/Interview Period
2. Decision/Remediation Plan
3. Removal from Program (if deemed necessary)

The *Review Process for Disciplinary Action* is a chance for the program director, nursing faculty/staff, a representative from student services (or ombudsperson), and the student (along with a student witness of their choosing) to discuss the incident in question during the Discussion/Interview Period. This process will conclude once all sides have had the opportunity to fully present their views. The final decision (regarding the initiation of a *remediation plan* or *dismissal from the program*) will be made by the program director, select administrators, and/or nursing faculty. Once a decision, by the nursing program, has been reached, the student has a right to appeal the decision by initiating the Pierce College Student Grievance Policy.

Drug and Alcohol Screening

The Pierce College Puyallup Nursing Program maintains contractual arrangements with clinical agencies used in the education of nursing students. For currently enrolled students, drug and

alcohol screening is mandatory when there is probable cause and/or reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs while in the clinical setting. Refusal to be tested may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

Students with verified positive test results for alcohol, any illegal drug or the abuse of prescribed or over-the-counter medication or mind altering substances will be given reasonable opportunity to challenge or explain the results. Where results are confirmed and no medical justification exists, students will not be allowed to participate in clinical activities, thus they may not meet the clinical objectives required for successful completion of the nursing program.

If a student, who has been readmitted into the nursing program after successfully completing a rehabilitation program, fails a subsequent drug or alcohol test, the student will be dropped from the program and will be disqualified for readmission.

All information regarding drug and alcohol testing and resulting actions (i.e., rehabilitation, dismissal) will be kept confidential and maintained by the program director.

Absences and Tardy Policy

The purpose of the absence and tardy policy is to ensure quality education for the student. Because of the large volume of material covered each day and because clinical laboratory experience validates learning objectives, it is extremely important that absences and tardiness be kept at an absolute minimum. Attendance and punctuality are considered important professional responsibilities both in the classroom and in the clinical laboratory.

The maximum number of allowable lecture hours which a student can miss per quarter is variable. *As all students are adult learners, **the student is responsible for obtaining the missed material.*** If a student is going to miss a theory class, they must contact the instructor (via email or phone) at least an hour before class is to begin. For clinical rotations, each student is allowed one excused incident per quarter. However, the student is still responsible to make-up the hours. The clinical instructor is responsible for determining the make-up assignment. If a student is going to miss a clinical shift, they must notify both their clinical instructor and the student team leader or staff charge nurse a minimum of two hours before their shift is to begin.

A student exceeding the maximum number of hours which can be missed may petition the nursing faculty and program director by letter for a variance of the policy based upon extenuating circumstances. The letter must be submitted within five (5) school days of return to school from the absence. Failure to follow these guidelines may result in academic failure of the course.

Clinical Injury or Illness Policy

When a student receives an injury or becomes acutely ill in the clinical laboratory, the instructor or designated responsible party shall be notified. A determination shall be made if the student is in need of Urgent Care, Emergency Care, or Primary Care Provider.

SAFE PRACTICE GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Infection Control Precautions

1. Handle any moist secretions of all clients as potentially infectious.
2. Wash hands before and after all client or specimen contact.
3. Wear gloves for potential contact with blood or body fluids.
4. Wear gloves if splash with blood or body fluids is anticipated.
5. Wear mask if airborne transmission is possible.
6. Wear protective eyewear if splatter with blood and body fluids is possible. Wear gown if clothing apt to be soiled.
7. Place used syringes immediately in nearby impermeable container. Do not recap or manipulate needle in any way.
8. Treat all lines soiled with blood and/or body secretions as potentially infectious.
9. Process all laboratory specimens as potentially infectious.
10. Follow agency policy regarding resuscitation during respiratory arrest.

Medication Policy

Beginning students will give medications to a patient only after they have demonstrated satisfactory performance in the skills laboratory and then only under the supervision of their instructor. Students will be given a copy of the medication administration policy and procedure for the health care agency assigned and are expected to administer medications in accordance with that policy.

Students will administer patient medications, utilizing the five rights of medication administration at all times.

Students will never give intravenous medication unless under the direct supervision of an instructor or staff nurse designated by the instructor. Any deviation or alteration in medication procedure, technique, etc. must be reported to the clinical instructor immediately.

Medication Errors: Errors are to be reported to the primary nurse and instructor.

Documentation will consist of error made and any appropriate incident or quality assurance report for the facility. Additionally, students will complete a one-page paper describing the incident, how the incident occurred, identify legal ramifications and problem-solving methods

that should be used in order to prevent future errors. A disciplinary warning/disciplinary action form may be completed based on the type of error and the whether the error is a part of a pattern.

Intravenous Saline Flush Policy

The standard of practice is that students will only work with IV lines and equipment under the supervision of a Registered Nurse. Nursing students may independently perform peripheral IV flushes according to the clinical agency's policy and procedure after having been cleared by their instructor. Student must meet the following criteria:

Knowledge related to:

- a. the purpose of the flush
- b. the agency protocol for the flush

Demonstrated skills:

- a. satisfactory performance in skills lab
- b. signed/approved for independent function on skills check list
- c. identification of the physician's order and/or hospital protocol regarding the flush

The student will follow the agency procedure specific to the age and type of patient needing peripheral IV saline or heparin flushing (refer to the hospital's Procedure Manual and/or approved clinical protocol specific to the clinical unit).

Charting

Each student will perform their own charting. All charting must be signed off by the primary nurse that the student is working with, as specified by the individual clinical facility.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

Student Grading Policy

Students will receive a numerical theory grade and a Pass/Fail clinical grade. Any student who receives less than a grade point value of 2.7 (80%) for the course in theory or a “Pass” grade for clinical work will fail the course.

At the midpoint of each quarter, the instructor will complete a Mid-Term Evaluation for every student so that they are aware of their academic standing in the course. If it is determined that the student may require additional assistance, they will be referred to the Allied Health Pathways Coordinator. The Allied Health Pathways Coordinator, in collaboration with the Instructor, will then determine a Plan for Success for the student. However, if the student fails at the end of the quarter, they will be required to withdraw from the program (see Withdrawal/Readmission).

Clinical Pass or Fail grades will be based upon the student’s satisfactory clinical performance of course objectives, care plans, assigned written work and other requirements as indicated in the course syllabus.

In the 6th quarter of the program, in NURS 233, the nursing department will select a NCLEX-RN predictor (i.e. the HESI or ATI) that each student must take to pass the class, per the course outcomes. *The student must achieve a determined “passing” score in order to pass NURS 233.* The test may be retaken as many times as required to receive a passing score. *Please note that the student will not graduate from the program until this is achieved.* The department will pay for the first two exams; any additional tests will be at the student’s expense.

Testing

One minute per question will be the allotted time for multiple-choice exams. If a student is tardy, they will not be granted the minutes missed by their tardiness.

If a student is unable to take a scheduled exam, it is the student’s responsibility to schedule another date to take the exam. This exam needs to be taken within **one week** from its scheduled date. Students may not review their test unless all the students enrolled in the class have taken it.

A number of proctored exams will be administered during the course of the program. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Entrance Assessment
- Entrance and Exit Critical Thinking Exams
- NCLEX-PN Comprehensive Predictor (for those students electing this option)
- NCLEX-RN Comprehensive Predictor (must pass successfully in order to complete the program)

Evaluation of Clinical Performance

Clinical performance will be documented on the Student Clinical Evaluation Form, by their clinical instructor, at the end of each clinical rotation. The student must receive “Meets Standards” on all of the course outcomes, as outlined on the form, in order to pass each clinical course.

WITHDRAWAL/READMISSION

Withdrawal from the Nursing Program

This policy outlines the procedures to be followed when a student leaves the program before completion for personal reasons or for failure in clinical or theory. Withdrawal from the program may be based on a) illness; b) family emergency; c) clinical failure, or d) theory failure.

Clinical failure is determined by the student not meeting minimum requirements as outlined on the Student Clinical Evaluation Form (i.e. student receives a “Does Not Meet Standards” in any one category). Theory failure is based upon a grade below 80%. A student who does not complete a quarter due to illness or family emergency may be given an incomplete or allowed to withdraw from the program based upon faculty evaluation of the situation.

If an incomplete is given, work must be completed the next quarter according the Pierce College policy. The student does not re-enroll or pay lab fees for the quarter in which he/she satisfies requirements for an incomplete grade. If the student withdraws, they may reapply for admittance to the program. The student will make an appointment for an exit interview with the Program Director.

Readmission into the Nursing Program

The student who must withdraw from the program, for personal or academic reasons, may reapply to the nursing program. In addition to the application procedure as defined by the Pierce College ADN Program, the student must submit a 1 to 2 page Plan for Success. This plan must address the reasons for withdrawal during the first attempt, and outline a proactive plan for success if granted a second chance. Re-admittance will be determined by the Nursing Program Director, faculty, and staff on a space available basis.

Graduation

Once students have achieved all educational goals outlined in the courses throughout the Pierce College Nursing Program curriculum, they are eligible to graduate from the program. Graduates are encouraged to participate in the Pinning Ceremony, which is discussed in the Student Activities section of this handbook (page 26).

CURRICULUM DESIGN

The nursing program is organized into two (2) major components: the pre-requisites (which comprise general education courses, with a focus on biological and social science courses), and nursing courses. The nursing courses are further organized into three (3) distinct areas: nursing theory, skills laboratory, and clinical rotations. The theoretical portion of the nursing curriculum presents concepts and knowledge essential to the practice of nursing. The skills laboratory portion of the curriculum allows the development of manual skills required for nursing practice. The clinical rotation portion of the curriculum provides the opportunity to apply both theoretical knowledge and skills in the direct care of clients and includes a service-learning project. The curriculum is designed to provide the student with a theoretical framework on which to base nursing interventions and a way of processing information to arrive at competent decisions, as well as competence in manual skills basic to nursing practice.

The six (6) quarter sequence of courses provides for progressive development of knowledge and skills. During the first three quarters, students learn basic nursing science and practice basic technical and interpersonal skills in providing care to 1-3 clients whose health/illness problems are stable and predictable. The last three quarters focus on the assessment and intervention processes for clients experiencing unstable and unpredictable illness states, with health care needs of increasing acuity. The emphasis is on problem solving and managing the care of groups of clients.

Implementation of the nursing curriculum is based on the following principles:

- Courses and topics of study are designed so that the student moves from the simple/basic aspects to the complex/more difficult aspects.
- The sequence of topics among nursing courses and between nursing and related science courses is planned to correlate as much as possible.
- Courses are structured to provide didactic instruction, skills laboratory and simulation, exercises, seminars, small group discussions, and direct clinical practice at the high level of correlation.
- Learning expectations are structured by program design and consistent use of theory and laboratory objectives.

THE NURSING PROCESS

The nursing process is a problem-solving process that requires the use of decision-making, clinical judgment, and other critical thinking skills to assess, identify and prioritize client problems, to assign nursing diagnoses with measurable outcomes, to plan care systematically, and to implement and evaluate the results of the care given. The Pierce College Nursing Program has adapted the Nursing Process as defined by the Roy Adaptation Model (RAM). The steps of the nursing process include:

1. Assessment:
 - a. *Assessment of Behavior*: The indicator of how a human adaptive system manages to cope with, or adapt to, changes in health status is behavior. Thus, the first step in the nursing process involves gathering data about the behavior of the human adaptive system and the current state of adaptation by continuously gathering objective and subjective information. This data is continuously updated, validated, and communicated.
 - b. *Assessment of Stimuli*: This is the second step of the nursing process which involves the identification of internal and external stimuli that are influencing the person's adaptive behaviors. Stimuli are classified as: 1) Focal- those most immediately confronting the person; 2) Contextual-all other stimuli present that are affecting the situation and, 3) Residual- those stimuli whose effect on the situation are unclear.
2. Nursing Diagnosis: This involves the formulation of statements that interpret data about the adaptation status of the person, including the behavior and most relevant stimuli. Data collected thus far in the nursing process take the form of statements about the behavior of the human adaptive system that have been observed, measured, or subjectively reported. The nursing diagnosis is an interpretive statement about the human adaptive system. The nursing diagnosis is defined by RAM as a judgment process resulting in statements conveying the adaptation status of the human adaptive system and is used to set patient goals of adaptation.
3. Planning: The third step of the nursing process involves the establishment of clear statements of the behavioral outcomes for nursing care. The nurse establishes these client goals/outcomes and works with the client to promote adaptation.
4. Implementation: The implementation of care best assists the person in attaining established outcomes.
5. Evaluation: The final step in the nursing process involves evaluating the effectiveness of the nursing intervention by comparing the behavior after the nursing intervention and the established goal. Together, the nurse and client identify factors that either positively or negatively influenced goal/outcome achievement. Client response to the plan of care determines whether nursing care should be continued as is, modified, or terminated. If evaluation points to the need to modify the nursing care plan, then the accuracy, completeness, and relevance of the assessment data, as well as the appropriateness of client diagnoses, goals, and nursing interventions, should all be carefully reviewed and modified. During this step of the nursing process the nurse compares actual outcomes with expected outcomes of care and reprioritizes client goals as indicated.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Rainier Nursing Club

Being a member of the Rainier Nursing Club is an optional opportunity. Involvement is strongly encouraged but *not mandatory*. The Rainier Nursing Club finances a few key events within the program. As such, being a member will allow exemption from extra expenses that may be incurred from being a student in the nursing program. Please see a Nursing Club member or officer for any additional information.

Outside Activities

Students are encouraged to limit outside jobs during the school year, and are responsible for ensuring that the job does not interfere with their student responsibilities. Students who plan to work part-time are encouraged to work in a health care setting for added experience. Clinical hours may include evening, night, and occasional weekend shifts, and ***no exceptions will be made for students who are employed.***

Pierce College Puyallup Nursing Program's Pinning Ceremony

A. Purpose:

The purpose of the Pinning Ceremony is to recognize nursing students' successful completion of the requirements for the Associate Degree in Nursing and their qualifications as candidates to sit for the licensing exam as Registered Nurses. This is a Pierce College Puyallup Nursing activity and it is meant to be a culminating experience for eligible nursing students and their families and friends, as well as nursing faculty and staff. To be eligible, students must have met program criteria (be enrolled in the 6th quarter of the program with an 2.7 GPA or above) or have a signed Plan for Success learning contract on file, with the timeline for completion not to exceed one quarter in length. This ceremony is in addition to the Pierce College Puyallup graduation exercises held every June.

B. Planning:

Some classes wish to add individual touches, and if you have new ideas you wish to incorporate, the faculty will consider them. Rainier Nursing Club Officers should schedule an initial planning meeting with the Graduation Coordinator and Program Coordinator **no later than the fifth week of the quarter**. Rainier Nursing Club Officers are responsible for coordinating all student activities and serving as a liaison between the class and Nursing Program, as this student organization funds the majority of the ceremony through student fees and Pierce College student government contributions. The Director should be kept informed of all discussions and plans, either through formal meetings or written memos. Final class voting regarding all planning decisions must be attached. Plans cannot proceed until the Director has given verbal or written approval. Rainier Nursing Program Officers must have at least one final planning meeting with the Director no later than three weeks before the pinning ceremony.

C. Program Format:

The usual format for nursing pinning ceremonies is as follows:

Invitations:

Early in the final quarter (by the fifth week), each student will submit the number of invitations he/she will need for family and friends. The Nursing Program will be responsible for sending invitations to local hospitals, nursing staff, administrators, faculty, and other key members of the community. These invitation need to be postmarked no later than 1 month before the ceremony.

Printed Programs:

The Department of Nursing will be responsible for printing the pinning ceremony programs. These are passed out to attendees as they enter the building and include the order of the ceremony, graduate names, faculty/staff names, and the Rainier Nursing Club's Student Pledge. Other content may be added by the class with the Director's prior approval.

Decorations:

Creativity and simplicity with decorations is encouraged, as students are responsible for putting up and taking down all decorations on the day of the pinning ceremony. Decorations must be approved by the nursing program's faculty and staff.

D. Dress:

The pinning ceremony is a semi-formal event. If in doubt about a chosen outfit, please ask a nursing program faculty or staff member.

E. Format:

Components suggested at the pinning ceremony include:

- a. Welcome Message – given by the Nursing Director
- b. Administration's Message – given by the Vice President for Learning and Student Success
- c. Guest Speaker – may not be a representative of Pierce College. This portion of the program should demonstrate our connection to the community.
- d. Student Speaker – one graduate elected by the class.
- e. History of the Nursing Pin – nursing faculty
- f. Pinning – bestowed by the Nursing Director, with assistance from nursing faculty and staff (Students that still need to complete their Plan for Success will be pinned during the ceremony, but will need to have their pin held in the nursing department until their contract has been completed. The nursing program pin will be supplied by the nursing department and is funded by the student's lab fees.)
- g. Closing Message – provided by member of Pierce College Administration.

The total program should not exceed *one and one-half hours* in length. A program lasting one hour is ideal with a scheduled "greet-and-meet" period one-half hour before the program begins.

TIPS FOR STUDYING AND TEST TAKING

Developing the expert skills expected of the adult learner is essential to being successful in the Pierce College ADN Program. The majority of learning is OUTSIDE the classroom. It is the instructor's duty to *facilitate* your learning. Your job is to fulfill the expectations outlined in each course and enjoy the process of becoming a professional registered nurse!

It is important to read each lecture day's assignment before coming to class, by reading prior to lecture; you have an idea of the concept to be discussed.

Discussions and group activities are designed to give more in-depth knowledge of the concepts than does the book, although they both go hand in hand.

Testing will be aimed at measuring your general knowledge of the concepts and how it related to a specific situation. Rote memorization will not be tested specifically although you will have to memorize certain facts and concepts.

The ideas that follow consider the variables involved in studying, and with modifications for various types of courses, should prove useful.

1. First, determine what work needs to be done. This seems simple enough; however, many students don't know everything that is required in many courses. Consider text reading assignments, special reading, projects, papers, worksheets, observations, etc. Instructors typically take care of this step for the student with a quarter's reading/project syllabus.
2. Next, prioritize the work to be done. Too frequently we do the easiest, shortest, or most interesting project first, regardless of due dates or importance of assignments.
3. Third, study time needs to be planned. A time use chart or weekly study schedule can be helpful. Plan time to read, review and study. Plan to complete lengthy project work in sections. For example, a book report of a 200 page book can be planned in the following manner: read 20 pages per evening (one hour each evening) equaling 10 hours; rough draft of report equaling 4 hours; final draft of report equaling 1 hour.
4. For theory classes, the following sequence is helpful:
 - a. Read material in advance of the lecture covering the subject matter. As you read, highlight or underline important facts, make notes in the margin of the text or take notes on the material. A reading formula such as SQR3 may fit your needs.
Scan - the entire reading assignment.
Question - before reading.
Read - to find the answers to the questions.
Recite - to see how well.
Review - to check learning, relearn or "fix" learning.

- b. Attend discussions and take notes. Hearing the discussion and writing the information down aids learning and enhances understanding. Review these discussion notes and highlighted reading material as soon after the discussion as possible. This will allow you to clarify or expand notes and will reinforce learning.
5. Studying for a test can take a variety of forms:
- a. Above all, do not wait until the last minute to "cram" for an exam.
 - b. As you study, utilize your learning style to establish study patterns. For example, if you learn best visually, develop diagrams and illustrations of the material.
 - c. Anticipate questions as you study.
 - d. Determine the style of test the instructor gives, then write sample short answers and essays, or have others quiz you, asking for fill-ins, true/false and multiple choice questions. If you have access to previous tests given by the instructor, review them for type and style of question.

To make productive use of your study time, try to divide the reading assignment into sections. Read one section then go do something else so your mind will have a chance to "digest" this new information. By breaking the reading into sections, the assignment does not appear to be so overwhelming.

Associate what you are learning to the patients in your rotation. If you can see a patient experiencing what you are reading about, you not only see it in "black and white" but also you get to see the actual thing.

Organize the material so that you can file it in your memory bank. Assign priorities and establish orders of importance to the material to be learned. Remembering is easier because you have outlined what is important, what is subsidiary, and how the whole fits together. By organizing your material in groupings, you associate like or related points. Place the groupings in the appropriate contexts. If you can remember a part of it, often you can then remember the rest.

Nursing process questions may place a heavy emphasis on assessment of priorities.

What would you do first?

Which is the most important?

What is the long range goal?

What is the short range goal?

When all of the choices are true, look for the key word---first, most, last, least.

How to Take Tests

1. Structure your time.
Allow one minute for each question.

2. Answer the easy ones first.
Go back and answer the more difficult questions. Often by thinking of concept, it unlocks another area or grouping.
3. Attempt to answer each question.
Try to answer each question. Read each question no matter how long it is or how difficult it may look. The question may actually prove to be simple. If the question is long, break it down into its basic elements and tackle each part one by one.
4. Anticipate the answer.
After you have read the question, but before looking at the choices, anticipate the answer. Then check to see if your answer is among them. If you did not find the answer you anticipated, give that answer up. This should act as a warning that something is wrong. You may not have read the question correctly. Do not alter words in an option to make it agree with your anticipated answer.
5. Relate each option to the stem.
Test each actual option against the actual question.
6. Put aside the more difficult questions.
Do not get bogged down with one question. If you have no idea what the answer is after giving the question a serious try, omit it. Return later to the more difficult questions. Watch for a later question that may help you answer the earlier problem question.
7. Focus your reading.
Skim past the "frills". Read the situation and choices quickly, looking for key words. Ignore the unimportant words and zero in on the key words.
8. Identify key words.

What are these key words?	Which of the following <u>is</u> ?
Which one is <u>incorrect</u> ?	Which of the following <u>is not</u> ?
Which one is <u>correct</u> ?	All of the following <u>except</u> .
Which one is <u>most important</u> ?	<u>Ounces</u> or <u>pounds</u> ?
Which one is <u>least important</u> ?	<u>Hours</u> or <u>minutes</u> ?
9. Do not "over think".
Read the questions as they are written. Do not read anything into them. Do not misinterpret them.
10. Answer the condition of the stem.
Know what is being asked. If the question asks, "Which of these is true only sometimes?" the answer will be different than if the question asks "Which of these is never true?" Many test writers are not looking for what is "true" but for what is "important". All of the choices may be true, but only one will be the most important. Do not put down the first answer you read as correct, simply because it is true. It may not be true for the specific situation described or it may be true but not

of major importance to that situation. If the question asks for a reason, the choice you make should be phrased in such a way that it provides a reason. If the question asks for an explanation, the answer should "explain". Ask yourself, "Is the answer to this question likely to be phrased in a positive or a negative manner?" Then look for a choice that meets that criterion.

HINT: Look first for a simple, straightforward, conservative, "garden variety" answer. It will save you time. Give special attention to questions in which each word counts.

11. Patient-Focused Approach is important.
Often overlooked is the focus on the patient. What appears to be a correct answer can be wrong if it ignores the concerns and feeling of the patient.
12. "Feelings" - oriented answers may be emphasized.
Keep the word "feelings" uppermost in your mind. Often the best choice may be one that focuses on "feelings".
13. Watch for those negatives.
If the question asks, "Which of the following is an incorrect treatment?" the incorrect statement is the right answer.
14. Educated Guessing
 - A. General vs. Specific Answer
When you do not know the specific facts called for in a question, immediately turn to your powers of reasoning and search your related experiences. Ask yourself if the question is asking for a general or a specific answer - that will be the clue. For example, "which one of the following is?" gives you the clue that the question requires a specific, not a general, answer.
 - B. Rephrase and think of clinical examples. Paraphrasing the question may help. Change it into simple language. Reduce intellectual or abstract situations to the concrete, if possible. Substitute actual examples for concepts.
 - C. Use process of elimination.
Narrow the options to 2 choices, if possible. Eliminate those answers you suspect are wrong. Eliminate any choices you suspect are true, but are not relevant to the question. If you know enough to eliminate 2 of the 4 choices, there is a 50-50 chance you will guess correctly.
 - D. Guess between 2 choices.
You should guess if the odds are 50-50. If none of the 4 choices look correct to you, do not guess the first time through. Come back to the questions if you have extra time. Something in a later question may give you a clue to the right

answer. If all 4 answers seem to be correct, then go through a process of elimination.

E. Look for patterns among the given options.

Compare the choices with each other. If several options look good, or if none of the options look good, try to identify patterns. If 3 of the 4 choices are similar, focus on the one that is different. It may well be the correct choice.

F. Look for the most comprehensive answer.

Another method of elimination is to look for "telescoping" or "umbrella" answers. Eliminate those options which are contained in another option. If choice "c" takes in "a", "b", "d", then it's likely that choice "c" is the best answer.

G. Avoid Global Terms - all, always, never, none, etc.

If the words "it is always" are contained in an option, 9 times out of 10, it is the wrong answer. This is not a hard and fast rule, but if you are guessing, it is worth eliminating such an option.

H. Find the plausible distractors.

Often time's distractors are placed first or last in the series of options. If you are guessing, take a second look at the middle options.

I. Choose an answer that makes sense.

If you are guessing, select the response you best understand.

15. Use any extra time you may have to check your answers and to look again at questions you have left unanswered to see if now they make more sense.

16. Last hunch may be better than the first hunch. If after you have completed the test, you think you have marked an incorrect choice, change it to what you now believe to be correct. If you are still unsure, then keep your original answer. What you do depends on the new information you may have found during the test, and its effect on your previous decisions.

Student Agreement Form

Please read and sign this form and return it to the nursing office. If this form is not returned, we will assume you are not interested and your space will be given to another applicant.

I understand that nursing students in my class will practice some skills on each other prior to performing these procedures on patients in hospitals. These skills will include such things as physical assessment and personal hygiene (including bathing).

I further understand that there may be some clinical assignments on evening and weekend shifts including Friday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays, and I am willing to work during these hours if necessary.

I have received my Pierce College Associate Degree in Nursing Student Handbook and realize it is my responsibility to read it in its entirety and keep for reference throughout the nursing program. I agree to abide by the policies of the Nursing Department, as well as Pierce College, if I enroll in the program.

Signed: _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

I am not interested in continuing in the nursing program at this time. Please delete my name.

Signed _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Student copy: Please keep this for your records

Student Agreement Form

Please read and sign this form and return it to the nursing office. If this form is not returned, we will assume you are not interested and your space will be given to another applicant.

I understand that nursing students in my class will practice some skills on each other prior to performing these procedures on patients in hospitals. These skills will include such things as physical assessment and personal hygiene (including bathing).

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Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

I am not interested in continuing in the nursing program at this time. Please delete my name.

Signed _____

Printed Name: _____

Date: _____

Department Copy: Please sign and return to Nursing Office