

Middle Tennessee State University
School of Nursing
Undergraduate Program Clinical Policy

The Middle Tennessee State University School of Nursing has one undergraduate degree seeking program. Tracks in this program include the Traditional BSN and the RN to BSN options. Students are required to choose one track prior to admission into the program.

The following clinical policy applies to all undergraduate upper-division nursing students in both the traditional BSN and RN to BSN tracks.

Successful completion of clinical objectives must be achieved to receive a passing grade for clinical courses. Students will be active participants in the evaluation process as indicated below:

1. All students are required to meet clinical responsibilities according to individual course syllabi.
2. Any cause for clinical absence must be cleared with the instructor involved and reported to the clinical agency in advance of the time the student is to report to clinical.
 - a. Unexcused absences or absences which affect the student's ability to meet clinical objectives are considered unsatisfactory clinical performance.
 - b. Tardiness or coming unprepared to clinical will be reflected in the clinical grade and may be considered a clinical absence and result in an unsatisfactory grade.
3. All students are expected to be prepared for clinical experiences based on clinical objectives.
 - a. Faculty reserve the right to determine each student's eligibility to participate in clinical experiences based on satisfactory preparation, meeting the School of Nursing and clinical agency's policies, and performance at level of safe practice.
 - b. If any of these are not satisfactory, faculty reserve the right to dismiss the student from clinical for the day.
 - c. Such a dismissal may result in academic or disciplinary actions being taken up to clinical or academic dismissal from the program.
4. Because quality clinical placements are difficult to secure, non-traditional hours will be incorporated into the student's clinical schedule as follows:
 - a. Traditional 8 hour shifts
 - b. Non-traditional 6 to 12 hour shifts

- c. Potential shifts are day, evening and weekend hours.
 - d. Clinical schedules are given to students at the earliest possible date to facilitate planning by the student.
 - e. Clinical hours are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor and or clinical agency.
5. Clinical site locations vary from semester to semester. Each student must have their own transportation to clinical experiences. Students may be expected to prepare for their assigned clinical patient prior to clinical.
 6. All required documents must be current and maintained in a clinical storage system managed by the School of Nursing for each student. All documents must be completed by December 15th for the upcoming spring semester and July 15th for the upcoming fall semester. Those students who do not have updated documents by the deadline will not participate in clinical experiences. The following documentation is needed prior to students going to clinical experiences:

Fitness for Clinical

All students are required to be physically, emotionally, and cognitively able to meet the criteria for clinical as outlined in the Core Performance Standards for Nursing.

1. Students must be able to perform clinical skills without physical or psychological threat to themselves or others.
2. Students who have chronic health conditions which are controlled and do not put themselves or others in danger are eligible to be considered for clinical.
3. Students who have a communicable disease (for example, Tuberculosis, Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B, HIV (+) status), or any other condition that might limit or restrict their ability to perform the essential duties of a clinical experience, may not be compelled to disclose their status. Four (4) options for the student include:
 - a. Making an appointment with the School of Nursing Director to discuss the student's status.
 - b. Any information offered will be held in strictest confidence and disclosed only on a 'need to know basis'.
 - c. In some instances, best practices may recommend that an individualized assessment suggesting specific safeguards for students and patients be conducted.
 - d. Prior to the first clinical experience, all students will receive formal education and instructions in order to follow universal precautions.
4. Students may be asked to present evidence of physical and/or mental health at any time prior to, or during their enrollment in the nursing program.

5. After any change in health status, students must submit a written statement from a qualified health care provider to request permission to return to clinical.
 - a. The statement must be on official letterhead.
 - b. Bear the signature of the healthcare provider.
 - c. At a minimum, contain a statement indicating that the student's condition is not detrimental to the safety or health of self or others.
 - d. If a student has restrictions or conditions associated with the return to work/study, those conditions must also be included in the statement.
 - e. If there are no restrictions or special conditions, the statement must explicitly state this.
 - f. The statement must be submitted to the clinical coordinator and **APPROVED** by the clinical coordinator prior to any attempt to return to clinical.
 - g. The student will be notified by course (D2L) email once the statement is approved.
 - h. This notification will be the indicator that clears the student to return to clinical.

It is the responsibility of the student to share the above requirements with their treating healthcare provider.

It is the responsibility of the School of Nursing to inform all clinical faculty/supervisors that the student is eligible to return to clinical.

Clinical Agency Requirements

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)

1. Current CPR certification is required prior to all clinical rotations.
2. The certification course needed must be the American Heart Association, BLS for Healthcare Providers given by a Level F instructor.
3. It is the responsibility of the student to hold and maintain this credential throughout the program.

Multi-State Criminal Background Check

1. Based on requirements imposed by clinical agencies, students must complete a multi-state criminal background check no earlier than one (1) year prior and no later than 90 days prior to the initial clinical experience.
2. A student may also be required by clinical agencies to maintain a current background check within the 12 months preceding any clinical rotation
3. Students are responsible for contacting the approved vendor who will maintain the records for seven (7) years.
4. Students are responsible for all costs associated with the background check process.

5. Based on the outcome of the criminal background check, clinical agencies may determine a student is not eligible to participate in clinical experiences at a particular facility.
 - a. Students may not be placed at a particular clinical agency if they do not meet the background check requirements for that agency.
 - b. The School of Nursing does not guarantee student placement at any clinical agency as a result of background check information.
 - c. A student's successful completion of the nursing program is dependent on his/her ability to be placed at a clinical site and to successfully complete requirements.

10-Panel Drug Screen

1. Based on requirements imposed by clinical agencies, students must complete a 10-panel drug screen no earlier than one (1) year prior to a clinical experience.
2. The student is responsible for all costs associated with this drug screen.
3. The student is responsible for contacting the vendor who will maintain the records for seven (7) years.
4. Based on the outcome of the 10-panel drug screen, clinical agencies may determine a student is not eligible to participate in clinical experiences at a particular facility.
 - a. Students may not be placed at a particular clinical agency if they do not meet the drug screening requirements for that agency.
 - b. The School of Nursing does not guarantee student placement at any clinical agency as a result of drug screen information.
 - c. A student's successful completion of the nursing program is dependent on his/her ability to be placed at a clinical site and to successfully complete requirements.

Student Health Requirements

1. After a student has been accepted to the first semester of upper-division nursing and has been notified by the School of Nursing Admissions Committee, the student must provide the following:
 - a. Admission health history and physical
 - b. An immunization record including:
 - i. Measles, mumps and rubella titers (titer for each) (or proof of 2 doses for measles, mumps, and rubella)
 - ii. Chicken pox titer (or proof of two vaccine doses)
 - iii. Hepatitis B titer (or signed waiver form)
 - iv. Tdap
 - v. TB skin test (prior to 2nd semester and thereafter)

- vi. Flu vaccine (prior to 2nd semester and thereafter) yearly per flu season
- vii. Other immunizations as described by current clinical agency contracts

Guidance Information- Vaccinations and Titers

Hepatitis B

1. School of Nursing requires documentation of positive Anti-HBS surface antibodies (10 or greater)
 - a. In the case of a negative surface antibody/titer, documentation is required of the second booster series of the Hepatitis B vaccine. Follow up with serum surface antibody level as noted above
 - b. If booster series results in a negative serum surface antibody (non-responder), documentation of such is required with a signed waiver and the student will be allowed to continue clinical experiences within the School of Nursing. Further vaccination is not recommended.
2. School of Nursing does allow documentation of informed refusal of Hepatitis B vaccinations by the student. This document must be completed before the student will be allowed to participate in clinical experiences.

Measles/ Mumps/ Rubella

1. School of Nursing requires documentation of immunity in one of the following forms:
 - a. Proof of immunity by a positive titer for measles, mumps and rubella (blood sample- 3 titers total) **OR**
 - b. Evidence of two (2) MMR vaccines given at least four (4) weeks apart on or after the first birthday regardless of birth date.
2. Women who are pregnant or who plan to become pregnant within four (4) weeks should not begin or continue vaccinations. Students who are pregnant and susceptible to measles may be vaccinated early in the postpartum period

NOTE: Pregnancy does not exempt a student from the requirements above. All students must show proof of immunity or vaccination history. Those students who choose not to provide proof will not be allowed to begin or continue clinical experiences in the School of Nursing.

Tuberculosis (TB) Skin Testing

Immediately prior to the student's second semester, a 2-Step TB skin test must be completed.

Directions for 2-Step TB Test:

1. Two PPD (Mantoux) skin tests need to be performed at least 7 to 10 days apart with the results printed out and uploaded to Medatrax. Each TB test requires two visits as each test must be read 48 to 72 hours after it is placed.
2. The date of the second test becomes the anniversary date by which your annual TB test is due. If you are late completing the next year's TB test (even by 1 day) you must complete another 2-Step test.
3. If you have ever had a positive Tuberculosis (TB) skin test in the past, you should not have any more TB tests. Instead, you must provide documentation to the Nursing program of a clear chest x-ray (defined as negative for active tuberculosis). After this initial clear x-ray, it is not recommended that you have an x-ray each year. Instead, you will have a letter from your healthcare provider stating that you show no active signs of TB or you may take a **QuantiFERON Gold blood test**.
4. If there is a positive chest x-ray, the student must be treated and cleared by a physician before beginning or resuming clinical.

Students not cleared by a physician after a positive TB screening will not be allowed to participate in any clinical experiences.

IMPORTANT: If you require an MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) immunization and also need a 2-Step TB test, have the first TB test done by itself, then receive the MMR with the second TB test. Otherwise, the MMR can invalidate the results of the second TB test and you will have to wait six weeks to repeat it.

The TB tests, QuantiFERON Gold test or CXR can be performed by your personal healthcare provider OR by MTSU Student Health Services.

Some of the TB information courtesy of California State University Channel Islands

Flu Vaccines

1. Students participating in clinical experiences in healthcare organizations requiring seasonal flu vaccinations will provide documentation of the vaccination in their student file on the clinical documentation system prior to attending orientation to the facility

2. If unable or unwilling to receive the flu vaccine, a student must sign a waiver prior to attending orientation to the facility.
3. Students unable or unwilling to receive the flu vaccine will be required to wear a mask during their clinical experiences and follow any additional facility policies related to flu season.
4. Faculty may have differing due dates for flu vaccines as indicated in individual course instructions (Flu season is usually October to March each year).

Varicella

1. School of Nursing requires documentation of immunity in one of the following forms:
 - a. Positive titer (blood sample) **OR**
 - b. Proof of two (2) doses of vaccine

Maintenance of Student Health Records

1. Students are required to maintain health records throughout the program. These records are maintained in the documentation storage system
2. The student is responsible for acquiring, uploading and updating health records as part of clinical requirements of the program.
3. If health records are not up to date, the student will not be allowed to attend clinical experiences, resulting in an assessment of unsatisfactory clinical performance for each clinical day missed.

Health and Malpractice Insurance

1. **Health Insurance-** All students are required to carry health insurance throughout the nursing program.
2. **Malpractice Insurance-** All students are required to carry malpractice insurance throughout the nursing program. Annual fees for malpractice insurance must be paid by exact cash, check, or money order in the Nursing Office by dates specified in the admission packet

- a. Students in the RN to BSN program (RN students) are required to show proof of professional malpractice insurance that includes student malpractice coverage.