NURSING FACULTY HANDBOOK

Palo Alto College
Associate of Applied Science in Nursing

Southside Education and Training Center
1760 Martinez Losoya Road
San Antonio, Texas 78221

First Edition: Fall 2023

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Department of Nursing!

I am so pleased that you selected Palo Alto College. I would like to extend my warmest welcome. The Palo Alto College Mission is to inspire, empower, and educate our community for leadership and success. Together we are educating professional nurses, changing lives, and improving health care.

The Alamo Colleges District and Palo Alto College are committed to academic excellence and supporting you and your role as a nurse educator.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide basic information to guide you in your role as nursing faculty.

Table of Contents

I. Program Staff & Faculty Directory

Name/Title	Office #	Office Phone	Email
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Staff Rebecca Murillo, BS *Academic Program Coordinator*	209	(210)485-0694	rmurrillo20@alamo.edu
FACULTY			
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Melanie Brady, DNP, MSN, RN, CNE	233		mbrady24@alamo.edu
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Alamo Colleges District Emergency Numbers and Websites

ACD Emergency:	(210) 485-0911	ACD Police Department
ACD Non-Emergencies:	(210) 485-0099	
ACD Weather Line:	(210) 485-0189	
Palo Alto College:	(210) 486-3000	www.alamo.edu/pac

II. Philosophy and Mission

Alamo Colleges Vision

The Alamo Colleges will be the best in the nation in Student Success and Performance Excellence.

Palo Alto College Mission

The Professional Nursing faculty is dedicated to supporting the Palo Alto College Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Direction.

- Palo Alto College Mission: To inspire, empower, and educate our community for leadership and success.
- Palo Alto College Vision: Be the best in the nation in Student Success and Performance Excellence.
- Palo Alto College Core Values: Students First, Community-engaged, Can Do Spirit, Respect for All, Collaboration, and Data-informed.
- Palo Alto College Strategic Directions: Community Empowerment, Employee Empowerment, Maximize Capacity to Serve, Student Empowerment.

Palo Alto College Nursing Core Values

The Professional Nursing Faculty are committed to educating nursing students and embodying the nursing program's core *SCIENCE* values of:

- **S**afety
- **C**ompassion
- **I**ntegrity
- **E**xcellence
- **N**on-judgmental behavior
- **C**uriosity
- **E**vidence based

The Profession Nursing faculty are dedicated to preparing entry-level professional students, who will enter the workforce as compassionate and competent:

- Members of the Profession
- Providers of Patient-Centered Care
- Patient Safety Advocates
- Members of the Health Care Team

The Palo Alto College Associate of Applied Science in Nursing curriculum is developed based upon the belief that safe, entry-level nursing practice is dynamic and requires a balance of knowledge from both the arts and sciences. The foundation for the nursing curriculum is guided by a combination of connecting concepts, including those from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (2023) National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses:

- Caring
- Clinical Judgment
- Communication and documentation
- Culture and spirituality
- Nursing process
- Teaching/learning

Nursing Code of Ethics

Nursing students must be prepared to understand how respect, justice, and integrity are essential elements of nursing practice. Each Nursing Faculty has the obligation to uphold the trust invested in the profession by adhering to the Nursing Code of Ethics for the good of their patients, community and healthcare in general. The American Nurses Association's *Code of Ethics for Nurses (2015)* has Nine Provisions to inform and guide future nurses in ethical practice and professional duties:
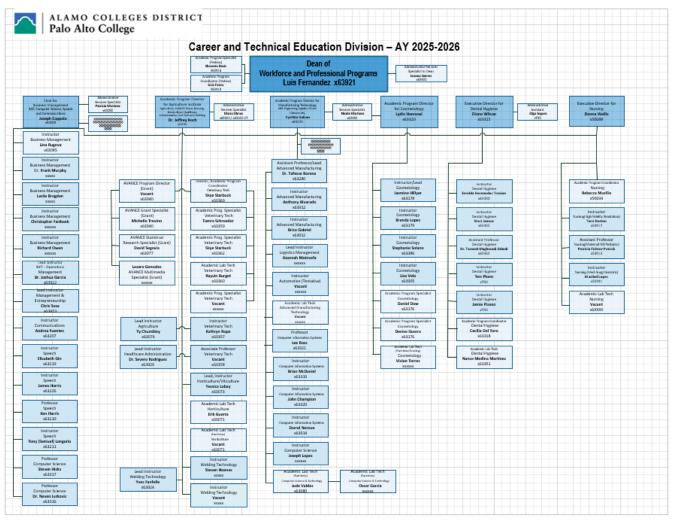
1. The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

2. The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

3. The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

4. The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

5. The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

6. The nurse, through individual and collective efforts, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

7. The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

8. The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

9. The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principles of social justice into nursing and health policy.

Accreditation & Approval

Palo Alto College, one of the five colleges in the Alamo Colleges District, is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools and Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award associate level degrees.

Palo Alto College's Associate of Applied Science in Nursing Program received initial approval on January 25, 2024, from the Texas Board of Nursing.

Organizational Chart

III. PROGRAM PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Professional Nursing Program of Study Purpose

The Nursing Faculty and Staff are dedicated to the ongoing review and improvement of its program in the education of nursing students for careers in health care. The Nursing Program is aligned with Professional Nursing Education Rule 215.9 and prepares nursing students who successfully complete the program to practice as graduate nurses (GN) according to Standards of Practice, per the Texas Board of Nursing's Rules and Regulations.

The objective of the Associate of Applied Science Nursing Program is based not on the mission, vision, values, strategic directions of the Nursing Program and Palo Alto College as well as on governing regulatory requirements and accreditation standards. Additionally, emerging healthcare trends and community needs are given consideration based upon Advisory Committee input. Therefore, curriculum and program evaluation are both a continual dynamic process that empowers faculty to utilize data to drive revisions and improvements.

The Profession Nursing faculty are dedicated to the objective of preparing entry-level professional nursing students who will enter the workforce as compassionate and competent:
- Members of the Profession
- Providers of Patient-Centered Care
- Patient Safety Advocates
- Members of the Health Care Team

IV. CURRICULUM: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Curricular Design

The curricular design of Palo Alto College's Associate of Applied Science in Nursing involved the industry-based Nursing Advisory Committee. Members of this group reflect the cultural diversity of the San Antonio community and included registered nurses, nurse educators, hospital administrators, high school administrators, representatives from child advocacy organizations, representatives from organizations advocating for children and adult with special needs, and other community leaders interested in the quality of nursing education in the area.

Program Degree Plan

A degree plan with course descriptions for the A.A.S. degree will be listed in the PAC Academic Catalog for the 2023-2024 academic year after program approval by the Texas Board of Nursing. The program is intended to be completed in two academic years.

The curriculum is designed to progress from entry-level student or beginner to an advanced level student in the last final semester. The general education courses were carefully selected to provide a foundation to support the nursing course work. The end-of-program student learning outcomes were used to guide course development, sequencing, course objectives and learning activities for the classroom, clinical and laboratory areas.

Nursing Associate of Applied Science	Credit
Prerequisites	
BIOL 2401 - Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
ENGL 1301 - Composition I	3
BIOL 2402 - Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
BIOL 2420 - Microbiology for Nursing and Allied Health	4
	15
Semester I – One 8-Week Session	
RNSG 1105 – Nursing Skills I	1
RNSG 1301 - Pharmacology	3
PHIL 2306 - Introduction to Ethics	3
PSYC 2301 - Intro to Psychology or PSYC 2314 Lifespan Growth & Development	3
	10

	Credit
Semester II - Two 8-Week Sessions	
RNSG 1413 – Foundations for Nursing Practice	4
RNSG 1160 – Clinical Nursing Registered Nurse Foundations	1
RNSG 1341 – Common Concepts of Adult Health	3
RNSG 1162 -Clinical Nursing Registered Nurse Training I	1
	9

Semester IV – Two 8-Week Sessions	Credit
RNSG 1412 – Nursing Care of the Childbearing & Childrearing Family	4
RNSG 1262 – Clinical Nursing Registered Nurse: Childbearing & Childrearing Family	2
RNSG 2213 – Mental Health Nursing	2
RNSG 2160 – Clinical Nursing Registered Nurse: Mental Health	1
	9
Semester V – 16-Week Session	
RNSG 2432 -Enhanced Concepts of Adult Health I	4
RNSG 2262- Clinical Nursing Registered Nurse Training III	2
RNSG 2121-Professional Nursing Leadership & Management	1
RNSG 2130 – Professional Nursing Review & Licensure Preparation	1
	8
Total Degree Plan	60

Total Program Evaluation

Total Program Evaluation provides an organized and systematic foundation to collect, measure and evaluate the essential elements of a nursing education program. Total Program Evaluation provides critical feedback for data-driven program improvement. In addition to Total Program Evaluation, both End-of Course and End-of Program evaluations of Student Learning Outcomes provide additional opportunities for improvement in conjunction with the comprehensive Total Program Evaluation.

Total Program Evaluation Plan

Evaluation Criteria	Methodology	Frequency of Evaluation	Assignment of Responsibility	Indicators Benchmarks Of Effectiveness	Instructional Effectiveness/ Outcomes
Organization & Administration	Advisory Committee Review	Annually	Nursing Director & Advisory Committee	Meets 215 Rules & Advisory Committee Approval	
Philosophy & Objectives	Advisory Committee Review	Annually	Advisory Committee & Advisory Committee	Meets 215 Rules & Advisory Committee Approval	
Curriculum	Advisory Committee Review	Annually	Nursing Director, Advisory Committee & Curriculum Committee	Meets 215 Rules & Advisory Committee Approval & Curriculum Committee Approval	
Facilities, Resources & Services	Advisory Committee Review	Annually	Nursing Director, Advisory Committee & Faculty	Meets 215 Rules & Advisory Committee Approval	
Clinical Learning Activities	Advisory Committee Review, Student Surveys & Admission & Progression Committee	Per Semester & annually	Nursing Director & Curriculum Committee	Final grade ≥ 76%	
Student Satisfaction: Course, Clinical Site & Faculty	Advisory Committee Review, Student Surveys	Per Semester	Nursing Director & Curriculum Committee	Student surveys use a 1-5 Likert scale. Scores of 3 or above demonstrate	

				acceptable performance	
Student Achievement	Advisory Committee Review, Curriculum Committee Review	Per semester and annually	Nursing Director & Admission & Progression Committee	PAC: 80% will Graduation/Degree Attainment time ≤ 150% & 75% Transfer for BSN ACEN: Graduation on time at 100%	
Student Retention	Advisory Committee Review, Admission & Progression	End of each semester and at program end	Nursing Director, Admission & Progression Committee	PAC Fall 2022 Course Completion Rate: 89.1% Goal: To meet or exceed the Fall 2022 average Alamo Colleges Course Completion Rate of 91.2% PAC Fall 2021-to-Fall 2022 Persistence Rate (Fall to Fall): 61.6% Goal: To meet or exceed the average Alamo Colleges Fall 2021- Fall 2022 Persistence Rate 67.6%	
NCLEX Results	Per Texas BON published data & NCLEX Program Reports	Per cohort	Nursing Director & Faculty	≥ 80% pass rate on first NCLEX attempt & Data from the NCLEX Program Report to identify areas for improvement	
Graduates' Competence	Advisory Committee Review	Per cohort	Nursing Director	≥ 80% Job Placement & Employer Satisfaction with GN Entry-Level Practice	

Faculty Performance	Advisory Committee Review, Student Surveys, Classroom observation, Faculty creation of 180 Portfolios for self-assessment, peer review, and Director review.	Per semester & academic year	Nursing Director & Faculty	Faculty 180 Portfolios must demonstrate either "Exemplary" or "Proficient" performance. Student surveys of their Faculty use a 1-5 Likert scale. Score $\geq$ 3 or demonstrate acceptable performance	
Evaluation Tools	Surveys & Faculty 180 Portfolio: Full time faculty create annually	N/A	Nursing Director & Faculty	Faculty 180 Performance Levels: E = Exemplary P = Proficient I = Improvement Required U = Unacceptable Performance	

Admission Requirements for New Students

Admission to Palo Alto College does not automatically qualify a student for admission to the Nursing program.

Student Selection Criteria

The class size is limited to a maximum of 30 students. The competitive ranking and selection of the nursing applicants is based upon points earned in eight categories. The eight categories are: grade point average (GPA), the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) Math, Science, English and Reading, prerequisites, Critical Thinking Assessment and

Letter of Intent. The points range from a low score of eight to maximum total of 24 points. In case of a tie score, the applicant who submitted all documentation first will be selected. Nursing applicants must submit transcripts from all colleges and universities attended. An applicant who was academically dismissed or withdrawn from another college or university (including nursing programs), for any reason, is not eligible for admission.

GPA

The minimum GPA is 2.6 on a 4.0 scale based on science course. Science courses (Anatomy & Physiology I, Anatomy &

Physiology II and Microbiology) must have been completed within the last five years and grades of less than a "C" will not be

considered. These prerequisites must be four credit courses each.

TEAS

Composite scores or average TEAS scores will not be utilized. A level of Proficient is required for each category.

Prerequisites

Points will also be assigned based upon prerequisite completion (Ethics and Psychology).

Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent must include why the applicant wants to be a nurse and include a description of the applicant's support system. The letter should not exceed two pages or 1000 words in length. Use of artificial intelligence or cognition is prohibited.

Critical Thinking Assessment

Points will be assigned based on Critical Thinking Assessment overall scores. A minimum score of 61% is required.

The nursing student ranking per point criteria may range from a low score of eight to a maximum total of 24 points. In case of a tie score, the applicant who submitted all documentation first will be selected.

Letters of Conditional Acceptance will be sent to the top 30 applicants who meet or exceed minimal ranking criteria. Students

must also meet:

• Background eligibility: Blue Card or Declaratory Order Letter

• Immunization requirements of the clinical partners:

o The COVID-19 vaccine is not required at this time

o Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis within the last 10 years

o Measles: two vaccines or serologic confirmation of immunity

o Mumps: two vaccines or serologic confirmation of immunity

o Rubella: one vaccine or serologic confirmation of immunity

o Varicella: two vaccines or serologic confirmation of immunity

o TB testing/screening criteria: Negative skin or serologic test; if indicated a negative chest x-ray within 12 months; proof of no active disease

o Influenza: proof of immunization is required to attend clinicals

• Drug screening criteria: Negative drug screen

• Current American Heart Association Basic Life Support CPR Certification

• Proof of personal health insurance throughout the two academic years

• Official transcripts from every college attended.

For admission and to be enrolled, all nursing students must meet all of the criteria above and attend new nursing student orientation in person, as assigned, prior to the start of their first semester in the nursing program.

For admission and to be enrolled, all nursing students must meet all the criteria above _and_
attend new nursing student orientation prior to the start of their first semester in the nursing program.

Progression

All nursing courses must be taken in the sequence detailed in the Program Degree Plan. Each course may have a pre-requisite or co-requisite as noted in the course syllabi. Each course must be successfully completed with a minimum grade of 76. All course assignments must be submitted, as detailed in the course syllabi, to receive a final grade. For example, some courses require remediation assignments for successful course completion. Late assignments for didactic courses will incur a 10% deduction per day up to 2 days. Late assignments for didactic courses will not be accepted after 2 days, and a grade of zero will be recorded. No late work is accepted for skills lab, simulation and clinical courses. All students will receive a mid-course progress report.

Grading Rubric:

A minimum grade of 76 % is necessary to receive a passing course grade, in both didactic and   clinical scores. Grades are not rounded.

100 – 90	A
89 – 80	B
79 – 76	C
75 – 60	D (Course failure)
59 – 0	F (Course failure)

Dismissal

Student Withdrawal Policy

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course(s) or from the program, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. Students must meet with the Program Director to withdraw.
2. Students are required to complete an exit interview with the Nursing academic advisor
3. If a student wishes to re-enter after withdrawing from the program, the student must reapply and follow the "Program Re-admission Policy" for re-entry into the program.

Six Drop Rule

Effective as of Fall 2007, students are limited to a total of six (6) course drops during their undergraduate career including a course(s) dropped at another institution as defined in Section 51.907 of the Texas Education Code. A dropped course is defined as a course that an undergraduate student at an institution of higher education has enrolled in for credit but did not complete.

Students should carefully consider the number of courses to take and the time commitment required to be successful. Students with a cumulative total of six (6) drops may not drop a course and will be awarded the grade earned at the end of the semester. A waiver may be available through the Admissions/Enrollment Services office. *For further information on this subject, see PAC Student Handbook under Making the Grade ADD/DROP/WITHDRAW.*

Failure of a Nursing Course

Failure of any RNSG course(s) will result in withdrawal from all co-requisite and sequential RNSG courses for the semester of current enrollment. The student will not be enrolled in the semester(s) following the course failure. The student will not be allowed to continue in the semester and program and must follow the PAC "Program Re-admission Policy" for re-entry into program. Each nursing student is responsible for following all aspects of the Palo Alto College policies as well and the Nursing Program's policies.

Program Re-admission Policy
If a student wishes to return to the program, the following actions must be followed:
1. Student must have met with the Program Director prior to dropping to be eligible for consideration for re-admission.
2. If the student institutionally withdrew, supporting documentation must be provided which will aid in the decision of eligibility for re-entry.
3. There is **no automatic admission back into the program**; the program interview panel will have the final decision.
4. Students are only allowed a **ONE-TIME** re-admission to the program.

Program Dismissal
1. If any nursing student has two course failures, for any reason, the student is permanently withdrawn from the Nursing Program, is not eligible for re-admission ,and cannot re-apply to the Nursing Program.
2. Any act of gross neglect or abuse of a patient or family may result in permanent withdrawal from the Nursing Program.
3. Privacy violations may lead to permanent withdrawal from the Nursing Program.

Communication and Concerns
Nursing students should address questions and concerns starting with their faculty and then may contact Donna Wallis, Director of Nursing at 210-485-0866 or per email at dwallis3@alamo.edu

Grievance
All students must follow the process in the Palo Alto College Student Handbook.

If a student feels unfairly treated, the student has the right to file an academic grievance. The grievance procedure is intended to provide equitable and expeditious resolutions. Nursing faculty are responsible for classroom management, teaching methods, testing, and the evaluation of student performance; therefore, students are encouraged to use this procedure only for adequate cause (i.e., only when there is clear and convincing evidence that the faculty has treated the student unfairly, arbitrarily, or capriciously). The student begins the process by meeting with the faculty. If the student is not satisfied with the faculty's decision, the student may appeal to the department director.

V. PROGRAM OUTCOMES

End of Program Learning Outcomes

The curricula and Program Specific Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) of the Associate of Applied Science Nursing program are based on the mission, vision, values, strategic directions of the nursing program and Palo Alto College as well as on governing regulatory requirements and accreditation standards. The nursing graduate will demonstrate competence, per the Texas Board of Nursing's associate degree scope of practice level, in the four main nursing roles:

- Member of the Profession
- Provider of Patient-Centered Care
- Patient Safety Advocate
- Member of the Health Care Team

Program-specific student learning outcomes, based on the four main nursing roles, are:
1. Uses clinical reasoning and program knowledge, evidenced-based practice outcomes, and research-based policies and procedures as the basis for decision-making and comprehensive, safe patient care. (Member of the Profession & Patient Safety Advocate)
2. Demonstrates skills in using patient care technologies and information systems that support safe nursing practice. (Provider of Patient-Centered Care)
3. Promotes safety and quality improvement as an advocate and provider of nursing care. (Patient Safety Advocate)
4. Coordinate, collaborate and communicate with diverse patients, families, and the interdisciplinary health care team to plan, deliver, and evaluate care. (Member of the Health Care Team)
5. Adheres to standards of practice values within legal, ethical, and regulatory frameworks of the professional nurse. (Member of the Profession)
6. Demonstrates knowledge of delegation, management, and leadership skills. (Member of the Health Care Team)

Program Outcomes

Annual Licensure Examination Pass Rate
The program's annual licensure examination pass rate will be at least 80% for all first-time test-takers, per the Texas Board of Nursing's annual 12-month measurement period.

Program Completion Rate
60% of students will complete the program within five consecutive semesters from the first day of the first nursing course.
75% of graduates will transfer to a BSN program within two years.

Job Placement
The program will have 80% or greater of the PAC graduates find employment as an RN within 6 months of program completion.
80% of employers will be satisfied with PAC graduate's entry-level practice.

Course Learning Outcomes

Student learning outcomes are found in each course syllabus.

VI. DIRECTOR

Qualifications

Each professional nursing education program shall be administered by a qualified individual who is accountable for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the professional nursing education program.

The Director shall:

(1) hold an unencumbered current license or privilege to practice as a registered nurse in the state of Texas;
(2) hold a master's degree or a doctoral degree in nursing;
(3) hold a doctoral degree, if administering a baccalaureate or master's degree program;
(4) have a minimum of two (2) years teaching experience in a professional nursing education program;
(5) have demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities in administration within a professional nursing education program;
(6) not carry a teaching load of more than three (3) clock hours per week, if required to teach;
(7) hold monthly meetings and ensure minutes are recorded.

Job Description/Responsibility

The Director of the Nursing program is responsible for all aspects of department leadership and has responsibility for all accrediting body standards and Texas Board of Nursing Rules.

Alamo Colleges District
Executive Director of the A.A.S. Nursing Program
Job Description

Job Code 14247

Description of Work

Responsible for the coordination, administration, and operation of the A.A.S. Nursing program.
Provides leadership and assumes responsibility for evaluation of the Nursing program continuing
education curricula as required by various licensing and accrediting agencies specifically Board
of Nurse Examiners (BON), Accreditation on Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN),
and Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS*

- Leads the administration and operations, including the budget, of the A.A.S. Nursing
  program, as well as courses and clinical facilities in order to maximize the learning
  opportunities for students. Develops, evaluates, and revises curricula of the nursing
  program for compliance with licensing, accrediting, agencies, and College policies
  and procedures. Updates the nursing program in order to meet community and student
  needs.
- Provides technical program information and assistance to faculty, administrators,
  staff, clinical agencies, and health facilities to promote the nursing, programs.
  Disseminates research findings on health education issues to the faculty and staff and
  other agencies as appropriate.
- Assists with the promotion and marketing of the College image and articulation of
  the programs in the College service area. Maintains close liaison and harmonious
  relationships with area hospitals, related health care facilities, other Alamo Colleges
  District's nursing programs and educational and public agencies to foster strong
  working relationships.
- Prepares and reviews state and national reports required by accrediting and
  governmental agencies, including but not limited to the Board of Registered
  Nursing, approval authority to maintain and enhance the standards of the
  programs.
- Oversees evaluation of student files for individuals entering the nursing program,
  including advising and notifying students of entrance status to the programs.

- Oversees the hiring process, supervision and evaluation of the recruiting of faculty and classified staff for the nursing program.
- Develops and administers the annual budget, maintains cost control of the budget and seeks additional funding sources. Prepares and administers grants, as appropriate.
- Represents the College in local and state meetings related to the nursing, program, standards, and accreditation.
- Perform other duties as assigned.

QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT

EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

- Master of Science in Nursing degree.
  - The RN-BSN Nursing Program requires a Doctorate degree in Nursing, Leadership, Education, or related field.
- Three years of experience in college administration management or nursing program development.
- Three years of teaching at a college level with a record of increasingly broad responsibilities.
- Three years of varied clinical experience.
- Must meet requirements for "Director" according to Texas Board of Nursing regulations.

PREFERRED EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE

- Five years of experience in college administration management or nursing program development.
- Experience with concept-based curriculum.
- Experience with curriculum development at the Program level.
- Experience with assessment and evaluation of program outcomes based on accreditation standards.
- Experience with data interpretation and analysis for program outcomes.

LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

- Must possess and maintain a valid, active Registered Nurse license issued by the Texas Board of Nursing.
- Must possess and maintain a valid Texas driver license. Must be insurable through the organization's insurers.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge of laws, rules, and regulations applicable to Texas Community Colleges and Nursing/Nursing Education.
- Knowledge of the teaching-learning process with special knowledge about vocational educational programs.
- Knowledge of Texas Board of Nursing rules and regulations and national accrediting bodies' accreditation guidelines.
- Ability to provide leadership, stimulate cooperation and collaboration of instructional staff and participate in professional organizations in health care and education.
- Demonstrated ability to lead the administration of a nursing program, including supervision, evaluation of staff.
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively with vocational advisory committees, College committees, and accrediting and licensing agencies.
- Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing, and to work effectively with students, colleagues, staff, and others is essential.
- Ability to work with students who have a wide range of skills, motivation, and academic, or vocational goals.

SUPERVISION EXERCISED

Supervises staff and faculty.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

No extraordinary physical requirements.

SECURITY SENSITIVE

Specific job requirements or physical location of some positions allocated to this classification may render the position security sensitive, and thereby subject to the provisions of section 51.215 Texas Education Code.

Reviewed 8/13/25

Terms of Employment
The Executive Director of Nursing works full-time, year-round.

Workload
The Director shall not carry a teaching load of more than three (3) clock hours per week if required to teach.

VII. FACULTY

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Qualifications

Faculty Qualifications and Responsibilities:
 (1) Documentation of faculty qualifications shall be included in the official files of the program.
 (2) Each nurse faculty member shall:
- Hold a current license or privilege to practice as a registered nurse in the State of Texas;
- Show evidence of teaching abilities and maintaining current knowledge, clinical expertise, and safety in the subject areas of teaching responsibility;
- Hold a master's degree or doctoral degree, in nursing.

Job Description/Responsibility

Responsibilities of Nursing Faculty include:

- supervising of students in clinical learning experiences – Note Rule 217.12(1)(G) related to Unprofessional Conduct states that "Failure of a clinical nursing instructor to adequately supervise or to assure adequate supervision of student experiences" is a violation of safe nursing practice;
- following Rules 215.10 when supervising students in clinical learning experiences;
- supervising all initial nursing procedures performed by students in the clinical area and determining that the student is competent before allowing the student to perform an actual procedure independently;
- participating in developing, implementing, and evaluating the curriculum; and
- participating in the development, implementation, and enforcement of standards/policies for admission, progression, probation, and dismissal of students, and in advisement and counseling of students.
- Faculty will attend monthly Nursing Department meetings as well as Curriculum Committee and Admissions and Progression Committee meetings.   Meeting minutes will be kept by the Academic Program Coordinator.

Full-Time Teaching Faculty Job Description

DESCRIPTION OF WORK

Full-time members of the faculty are professional educators who have the primary responsibility of fulfilling the institution's mission, vision, values, strategic plan, Board of Trustees' charges and educational philosophy, and primary goal of providing a quality education for all students attending the colleges. Faculty members are classified according to the ranks of Instructor, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor. Faculty members are subject to Board policies, including academic freedom, and are also bound by its accompanying responsibilities. They are directly responsible to a discipline coordinator and/or department chair and have responsibilities through the administrative structure at their respective college and to the district. The relationship of the faculty member to the student is one of leader, teacher, adviser, mentor, and facilitator of learning.

Faculty job descriptions are defined for Full-Time Teaching Faculty, Adjunct Teaching Faculty, Librarian Faculty, and Counselor Faculty. Faculty Chairpersons have a separate job description.

FACULTY POSITION CRITERIA

A faculty position must meet the following criteria:

1. A regular, full-time position.

2. A position wherein the primary functions performed are those of teaching assigned credit courses on a regular basis.

3. A position which requires certain minimum academic qualifications according to Alamo Colleges District's Procedure D.2.3.2.

DUTIES

The cyclical nature of teaching and learning forms the basis of duties for the institution's faculty. To strive for continual improvement of student success, faculty members must plan an optimal learning environment; provide high quality instruction and advising; assess themselves, their students, and their teaching techniques in order to increase effectiveness; continue their own professional development; actively participate in MyMAP, AlamoINSTITUTES, and AlamoADVISE processes; and participate in the shared governance process to ensure policies and procedures remain focused on maintaining high standards while providing appropriate support for student needs.

Manage classes and learning environments:

a. Maintain attendance records, submit grades on time, and provide constructive feedback as well as other relevant information to students throughout the semester. Create and maintain accurate syllabi that incorporate departmental, college, cross-college, and instructor requirements.
b. Participate in the selection of appropriate materials to support academic departments' course curriculum in accordance with the Alamo Colleges District's Guidelines for Selection of Instructional Materials.

    c. Work with students and employers in occupational settings as required by or appropriate to the academic discipline.

    d. Conduct classes punctually and in accordance with the prescribed meeting schedule.

Deliver effective instruction:

    a. Assume primary responsibility for and exercise oversight of the curriculum in conjunction with the Board of Trustees' policies, ensuring both the rigor of programs and the quality of instruction.

    b. Consider individual differences of students in order to design and support a range of appropriate learning activities.

    c. Use technology in a manner appropriate to the nature and objectives of courses and programs and communicate clearly to students the expectations concerning the use of such technology.

    d. Use a variety of techniques to assess student learning as applicable by academic discipline and specific course.

    e. Integrate concrete, real-life situations into learning experiences to encourage critical thinking, interdisciplinary skills, and teamwork.

    f. Employ methods that develop student understanding of discipline-specific thinking, practices, and procedures, as well as interdisciplinary applications, to create academic literacy.

Assess student learning:

    a. Collaborate with colleagues both across colleges and within individual departments in the construction and continuous improvement of measurable learning outcomes to include the THECB core curriculum objectives and additional institutional objectives.

    b. Design assessments that measure or demonstrate student growth.

    c. Sequence learning opportunities throughout advising, courses, and programs to build student understanding and knowledge.

    d. Align assessment with learning opportunities.

Promote continual improvement as part of the cycle of teaching and learning:

    a. Develop and revise curriculum and instructional materials as needed.

    b. Use department-designated learning outcomes to plan, develop, and document the effectiveness of teaching activities.

    c. Complete all mandatory performance evaluation measures within specified time limits, e.g., Title IX training.

    d. Share best practices with colleagues in formal or informal settings.

    e. Participate in instructional, departmental, or institutional research to improve educational effectiveness.

    f. Support the online student survey process.

    g. Evaluate teaching and assessment practices to continue improving them.

Support learning through student engagement:

    a. Create a positive classroom atmosphere that encourages active and collaborative learning,

student effort, academic challenge, student and faculty interaction, and support for learners.
   b. Be available to students during posted office hours.
   c. Use technology to assist in communication with students.
   d. Encourage a sense of community among students for learning both inside and outside the classroom.

Provide student advisement:

   a. Help students develop academic habits for college success by reinforcing the Student Success Policy and Procedures and the Student Responsibility for Success Policy.
   b. Advise students about program, career, or transfer options to help them make informed academic decisions leading to degree or certificate completion.
   c. Make students aware of and refer them to the appropriate student and academic support services available at their colleges or elsewhere in the district.

Pursue professional development:

   a. Stay current in academic fields, e.g., by belonging to professional societies, reading discipline-specific journals, studying pedagogy, attending conferences, or making presentations.
   b. Maintain required professional credentials, licensing, and continuing education hours as disciplinary standards dictate.
   c. Engage in professional education which enhances both disciplinary and pedagogical/andragogical knowledge, e.g., by taking graduate courses or internal classes offered through college or district professional development organizations.
   d. Contribute to one's academic discipline through research and publication or other endeavors as appropriate.

Participate collegially in department, college, cross-college, discipline-specific, district, and community service activities:

   a. Serve on and play an active role in department, college, cross-college, discipline-specific, and/or district committees.
   b. Participate in service through appropriate discipline-specific organizations, educational organizations, statewide boards/ committees or community activities.

c. Assist in policy development and other governance matters within one's discipline, department, college, or at district level or across the colleges.

And other duties as assigned.

SECURITY SENSITIVE

Specific job requirements or physical location of some positions allocated to this classification may render the position security sensitive, and thereby subject to the provisions of section 51.215 Texas Education Code.

Terms of Employment

Faculty will have a three-month, nine-month, or 12-month contract, depending upon program needs.

Workload

The Palo Alto College Nursing Faculty workload is based upon the Alamo Colleges District Faculty Teaching Loads per the Human Resources Department and is available on Alamo Share.

General

Most full-time faculty are hired for nine-month assignments. Faculty have the opportunity to accept summer assignment based on the summer schedule requirements. Adjunct faculty should be hired on a per course basis.

Colleges will maintain a 50/50 ratio of full-time and adjunct faculty and will strive for 55% of sections to be covered by full time faculty with the other 45% to be covered by adjuncts or full-time faculty overloads.

Loading for courses will be the same for all parts of term during fall, spring, and summer terms.

Effective January 1, 2020, High-Wage High-Demand programs will have stipends for Full-time Faculty and Adjunct Faculty. Effective January 1, 2021, Full-time Faculty and Adjuncts who attain their Quality Matters APPQMR Certification, will have also be eligible for stipends for instructional workload. See guidelines below.

The guidelines which follow will be used in assigning teaching loads. All faculty assignments will be loaded in FLAC, the Banner Faculty Load and Compensation System, for payment. Due to the uniqueness of the various programs, a faculty member's workload may consist of one or various combinations of courses, laboratories, and compensation for non-instructional work assignments above and beyond normal faculty service to the department, college or college district. As part of the continuing review and update of the faculty teaching loads, the Alamo Colleges will review the faculty loading practices of its peers once every five years.

Guidelines for Full-Tune Faculty Loading

Standard Full-Time Faculty Loads

1. Full-time faculty includes all faculty teaching 12 or more workload units.
2. Faculty loads are determined by workload units. Workload units for different types of courses are defined below.
3. The standard work week for full-time faculty is 40 hours.
4. A standard teaching load for a faculty member during the nine-month contract year is thirty workload units, fifteen units per semester. The faculty contract is for the two long terms starting the week before each fall and spring term through the

final class day of the fall and spring term. In addition, each faculty member will work two additional days to be identified by the college president.

5. Teaching loads less than fourteen workload units per semester must be approved by the Dean/Vice President based upon recommendation by the Department Chairperson/appropriate supervisor. Any reduction during semester will be made up in the following semester to maintain the nine-month standard workload of thirty workload units.

6. Any faculty member with an anticipated load of less than thirty workload units will be assigned additional duties by the Department Chair/appropriate supervisor in consultation with and as approved by the Dean/Vice President if the adjunct and/or overload assignments planned for other faculty cannot be reassigned to create a full load for the faculty member. Under some circumstances those duties may be assigned in the summer if such an assignment is necessary or timely to the needs of the college.

7. Loads for full time temporary faculty will follow the same guidelines as all full-time faculty.

8. Adjunct faculty may be scheduled for fewer than 12 workload units per fall or spring semester.

9. Full-time Faculty in designated high-wage high-demand programs will receive an annual stipend, paid over the entire academic year.

10. Full-time Faculty who have attained their Quality Matters APPQMR Certification will receive an annual stipend, paid over the entire academic year.

Overload Assignments for Full-Time Faculty

Workload units above the standard 15 per fall and spring semester will be paid as overload (equivalent to adjunct pay). Fulltime faculty are limited to two courses, not to exceed 8 workload units, of overload during the long semesters plus two workload units beyond two overload courses if needed to perform non-instructional duties on release time. Overload work will be performed outside the 40-hour standard work week. Any exception to the maximum for extenuating circumstances must be approved by the Dean/Vice President, President, and Chancellor. There is no entitlement to overloads. Overloads are assigned per semester and are not guaranteed even if overloads have been assigned previously.

Release Time Assignments for Full-Time Faculty

Release time assignments shall be approved by the college Vice President and President. Release time will be part of the standard workload units and will be loaded into FLAC.

Summer Assignments for Full-Time Faculty

Seventeen workload units are the maximum allowed for full time faculty during the summer term. Full-time faculty may teach up to 12 workload units at 130% of the adjunct pay rate, or at 130% of the adjunct high-wage high-demand and/or APPQMR pay rates if applicable. For each 3-hour workload units, the faculty member agrees to serve 15 hours during the part of term in which the courses are scheduled (i.e., 6 workload units taught during the first 5-week summer part of term require 30 hours of work above the class time over the 5 weeks). Full-time faculty wishing to teach in summer must teach at the 130% rate for the first 12 workload units scheduled. Faculty teaching above 12 hours but no more than 15 will be compensated at the adjunct rate, or at the adjunct high-wage high-demand and/or APPQMR pay rates if applicable for the units above 12. Two additional workload units may be assigned for non-instructional work at the adjunct rate. Fall and spring full-time temporary faculty will be compensated at the adjunct rate, or at the adjunct high-wage high-demand and/or APPQMR pay rates if applicable, and adjunct workload guidelines will be followed for summer assignments.

Non-Instructional Workload/Assignments

Non-instructional workload is loaded as release time calculated at the rate of 42.67 work hours per workload unit during a regular 16-week semester and during the summer sessions: summer I, summer II and Maymester.

Guidelines for Adjunct Faculty Loading

Adjunct faculty will be assigned fewer than 12 workload units (instructional and non-instructional) during the long terms (fall and spring) and no more than a total of nine units in the summer term (Maymester, Summer I and Summer II). Adjunct faculty are hired on a per-semester basis and there is no entitlement to renewal of a contract. Non-instructional workload for adjunct faculty is calculated at the rate of 42.67 work hours per workload unit during the long terms and for the summer.

Workload Unit Definitions

1. A workload unit is defined as one faculty lecture hour. One faculty lecture hour is 16 instructional contact hours. One instructional contact hour is equal to 50 minutes.

2. Classes have defined semester credit hours, lecture hours, and lab units as applicable which are identified in the eCatalog. Many are 3-3-0 (3 semester credit hours—3 lecture—0 lab). Some have combinations of lecture and lab hours (e.g., 3-3-1).

3. Decimals are used to define a portion of a workload unit, not a fraction.

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4. Private music classes will be limited to music majors.

5. Teaching loads are determined as follows

6. Compliance with accrediting agency guidelines or cooperative agency agreements may require variation from these guidelines. Such variations must be approved by the college Vice President, President, and Chancellor.

Class Assignment Definitions	Workload Units
Lecture	1 workload unit per lecture hour

Laboratory
 	
Faculty member provides supervision; introduces information; schedules the lab work; provides individual skills instruction
	0.75 workload unit per faculty class contact hour per week
	
	   Example: 2 laboratory hours in course of 3-3-2
	   2 lab hours x 0.75 = 1.334
	
	   Effective January 1, 2020, lab loading will be 0.75, from 0.667 workload units per faculty class contact hour per week.

Nursing Clinicals As identified by SAC and SPC and approved by Vice Presidents	1 workload unit per laboratory hour

Practicums, Internships, Cooperatives	0.125 workload unit for each student per credit hour of course
	
	   Example: 5 students enrolled at census 1 credit hr. class = 0.125 x 5 x 1 = 0.625
	   2 credit hr. class = 0.125 x 5 x 2 = 1.25

Private Music Lessons	0.375 workload unit for each student per credit hour of course
	
	   Example: 3 students enrolled at census
	   1 credit hr. class (30-minute lesson) = 0.375 x 3
	   2 credit hr. class (1 hr. lesson) = 0.375 x 3 x 2

Workload Examples

When determining faculty loads (full time, overload, and adjunct)

Each lecture hour = 1 workload unit

Each lab hour = 0.75 workload unit

For example, a 3-3-2 course (3 semester credit hours—3 lecture hours—2 lab hours). The class meets 5 hours a week and the student will earn 3 credit hours.

Loading units for the 3-3-2:

   3 lecture hours = 3 workload units

   2 lab hours x 0.75 = 1.5 workload units

   Total workload units = 4.5 workload units

Full-time faculty member example Workload units

Class #1 is a 3-3-0	3 for lecture + 0 for lab =	3
Class #2 is a 3-3-1	3 for lecture + 0.75 for lab =	3.75
Class #3 is a 3-3-0	3 for lecture + 0 for lab =	3
Class #4 is a 4-3-3	3 for lecture + 2.25 for lab =	
	Total Regular Load 5.25 15 workload units	
Class #5 is a 3-3-1	3 for lecture + 0.75 for lab =	3.75
Class #6 is a 3-3-1	3 for lecture + 0.75 for lab =	3.75
	Total Overload 7.5 workload units	

Adjunct faculty member example Workload units

Class #1 is a 3-3-1	3 for lecture + 0.75 for lab =	3.75
Class #2 is a 3-3-0	3 for lecture + 0 for lab =	3
	Total Adjunct Load 6.75 workload units	

Release Time Factor for Non-Instructional Workload

Regular 16-week Semester:	42.67 Work Hours = 1 Work Load Unit
Summer I, II and Maymester:	42.67 Work Hours = 1 Work Load Unit

Orientation

Faculty receive helpful information from the Alamo Colleges District and from the Palo Alto College Teaching and Learning Center. All new full-time and part-time (adjunct) faculty are invited to a 2-week training called New Faculty Orientation (NFO) before the start of their first semester teaching. NFO covers traditional and emerging best practices in pedagogy techniques as well as expectations of faculty members.

All faculty receive access to a Canvas course called the PAC Faculty Resource Guide (FRG). The FRG is curated and updated by a team of faculty who consistently and regularly update the resource. The FRG contains several documents and processes that are a critical part of faculty responsibilities. Faculty receive additional training during the campus Convocation Week which is held the week before the semester begins in August and January. Training topics vary, but will typically include academic assessment, syllabus development, emerging pedagogical topics, and Canvas course design training.

The Nursing Director will be responsible for all new Faculty and Staff Orientation. A personalized plan plan will be developed based individual needs, past experiences and specialty expertise. The Nursing Director will meet with the new Faculty and/or Staff bi-weekly for the first semester of employment.

Faculty Organization

All instructors (adjunct or full-time) are invited to join and attend faculty senate meetings. Meetings are typically held on the third Friday of the month from 1:00 - 2:30 PM via Zoom. For the Zoom link, please email the PAC Faculty Senate President.

Faculty Development

New full-time faculty are invited to the New Faculty Orientation (NFO). NFO is a year-long professional development opportunity. Faculty may attend four-to-six-day long trainings over a variety of pedagogic topics. New adjuncts are invited to participate in the Adjunct Faculty Certification Program (AFCP). AFCP uses a cohort model and offers several cohorts throughout the academic year. Faculty participate in asynchronous components and the training culminates with a live presentation demonstrating techniques learned through the program.

The Nursing Department budget has funds to address nursing specific faculty development and maintains a subscription to Nurse Tim.
Specific faculty development needs will be addressed based upon an annual assessment of learning needs as they relate to nursing program development needs and/or for faculty maintenance of currency in their area of expertise.

Faculty Evaluation

Faculty members are evaluated annually for the first five years of employment and then once every two years or more frequently as necessary for other reasons or as requested by the faculty member for such purposes as promotion and awards. Evaluations shall cover the period since the last evaluation was performed. Faculty are evaluated using the Faculty 180 Portfolio process. Note Faculty 180 is transitioning to SmartPath for AY25-26.

Classroom observations for faculty will be conducted by the Department Director or designee annually for the first five years of employment and then once every two years.

Records Retention

The registrar or designee at Palo Alto College is the custodian of all records for currently enrolled students and for all official academic records. The nursing records will be stored in a safe and secure manner in locked file cabinets in the Records Storage (Room #212. Records will be conveniently retrievable for utilization by authorized school personnel.

The Palo Alto College Nursing program will retain the following items for a minimum of three years:
- Student application and required admission documentation;
- Evidence of student's ability to meet objectives/outcomes of the program;
- Final clinical evaluations;
- Signed receipt of written student policies furnished by manual and/or electronic means;
- Evidence of study receipt of the Board license eligibility information;
- Statement of withdrawal, as applicable.
- Faculty meeting minutes; and
- School catalogs.

Peer Review

According to the Texas Board of Nursing, Peer Review consists of the evaluation of nursing services, the quality of care rendered by nurses, the merits of complaints concerning nurses and nursing care, and the determination or recommendations regarding complaints including:

  a. the evaluation of the accuracy of a nursing assessment and observation and the appropriateness and quality of the care rendered by a nurse;
  b. a report made to a nursing peer review committee concerning an activity under the committee's review authority;
  c. a report made by a nursing peer review committee to another committee or to the Board as permitted or required by law; and
  d. implementation of a duty of a nursing peer review committee by a member, an agent, or an employee of the committee.

There are two kinds of nursing peer review:

a. **Incident-based (IBPR)**, in which case peer review is initiated by a facility, association, school, agency, or any other setting that utilizes the services of nurses; or

b. **Safe Harbor (SHPR)**, which may be initiated by a LVN, RN or APRN prior to accepting an assignment or engaging in requested conduct that the nurse believes would place patients at risk of harm, thus potentially causing the nurse to violate their duty to the patient(s). Invoking safe harbor in accordance with Rule 217.20 protects the nurse from licensure action by the BON as well as from retaliatory action by the employer. (http://www.bon.state.tx.us/practice_peer_review.asp)

Texas Occupations Code, Nursing Peer Review, Chapter 303 and the Texas Board of Nursing, Rules and Regulations, Section 217.19 stipulates creation of a Nursing Peer Review Committee and establishment of due process and procedures for the committee. According to the Sec. 303.0015, "Required Establishment of Nursing Peer Review Committee," for professional nurses, if the entity regularly employs, hires, or contracts for the services of 10 or more nurses, at least five of whom are registered nurses, they shall establish a Nursing Peer Review Committee for the purpose of conducting peer review. To comply with state law, Palo Alto College's Nursing Peer Review Committee will be established, and formed on an as needed basis.

The Professional Nursing Program Nursing Peer Review Committee will have registered nurses as two-thirds of its members, and may have only registered nurses as voting members. The committee includes to the extent feasible at least one nurse who has a working familiarity with the area of nursing practice in which the nurse/faculty being reviewed practices. Additionally, the committee may include an attorney of the college when feasible.

According to Sec. 303.004. Peer Review by Two Entities,

(a) A nurse who, as a temporary agency nurse, faculty member, or similar staff member, practices nursing for an educational institution, health care facility, agency, or entity, or a person other than the person who employs or directly compensates the nurse is subject to peer review by both the employer and the other person.

(b) For the purposes of exchanging information, the peer review committee reviewing the nurse's conduct is considered to be established under the authority of both entities.

(c) The two entities may contract as to which entity will conduct peer review of the nurse

1. Unsafe or unprofessional conduct is reported to the PRC by completing a report to the Nursing Peer Review Committee and submitting it to the Nursing Director.

2. The chairperson calls the PRC into session if indicated. A minor incident as defined by BON, does not need to be reported to the BON or PRC, however, an RN may be reported to the PRC if involved in two documented minor incidents within a 12-month period.

3. If the reported RN is a member of the PRC, the Nursing Director can appoint another faculty member from the same program to serve.

4. If the nurse is employed by two entities, the nurse is subject to peer review by both. The two entities may contract with respect to which entity will conduct peer review of the nurse.

5. Each member of the committee reviews and signs a confidentiality statement prior to beginning the investigation.

6. The PRC initiates a Case Review Report at the first committee meeting which will take place within 7 days of the receipt of the report.

7. Within 72 hours, the reported nurse is given:

   o written notice that their practice is being evaluated and that the PRC will meet on a specified date not more than 30 calendar days from date of notice

   o a copy of the peer review plan, policies and procedures

8. The reported RN/Faculty is provided the opportunity to:

   o review, in person or by attorney, at least 15 calendar days prior to appearing before the committee, documents concerning the event under review;

   o appear before the committee, make a verbal statement, ask questions and respond to the questions of the committee and provide a written statement of no more than 1000 words regarding the event under review.

9. All individuals involved in the fact finding, assessment, and study of events under review read the confidentiality criteria and sign a confidentiality statement which is kept on file.

10. Court procedures and rules and the presence of attorneys are not required, however, should the PRC have an attorney as a member or in a representative capacity, the nurse is entitled to legal representation and parity of participation by counsel. This means that the nurse's attorney is able to participate in the peer review process to the same extent and level as the facility's attorney.

11. A final disposition of the investigation will be made no more than 14 days from the committee meeting stated in the written notice.

12. The reported nurse is given a written notice of the findings of the committee when the review has been completed.

13. The reported RN may submit a written rebuttal of no more than 2000 words within 5 days from the date of the final disposition statement.

14. The rebuttal is submitted to the Nursing Director and becomes a permanent part of the findings.

15. A report of the PRC disposition and the RN reply/rebuttal statement is sent to the Board of Nursing per registered mail within 7 days. If the investigation determines the occurrence to be a minor incident, reporting to the BON is not necessary.

16. All records of the PRC are secured in the office of the Nursing Director for a minimum of three years. After three years, the records will be destroyed.

For additional information about Nursing Peer review (definition, provisions, proceedings, confidentiality, etc.), refer to the Chapter 303 (Nursing Peer Review) of the Texas Occupations Code available on the Texas Board of Nursing website at:
https://www.bon.texas.gov/laws_and_rules_nursing_practice_act_2017.asp#_Toc498606621

https://www.bon.texas.gov/laws_and_rules_rules_and_regulations.asp.html
https://www.bon.texas.gov/practice_peer_review.asp.html

Safe Harbor Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections

Per Rule 217.20, Nursing faculty have a duty to report Conduct Subject to Reporting defined by Texas Occupations Code 301.401 of the Nursing Practice Act as conduct by a nurse that:

(A) violates the Nursing Practice Act (NPA) or a Board rule and contributed to the
 death or serious injury of a patient;
(B) causes a person to suspect that the nurse's practice is impaired by chemical
dependency or drug or alcohol abuse;
(C) constitutes abuse, exploitation, fraud, or a violation of professional boundaries; or
(D) indicates that the nurse lacks knowledge, skill, judgment, or conscientiousness
to such an extent that the nurse's continued practice of nursing could reasonably
be expected to pose a risk of harm to a patient or another person, regardless of
whether the conduct consists of a single incident or a pattern of behavior.

Safe Harbor

Nursing faculty may initiate Safe Harbor, which is a process that protects a
nurse from employer retaliation, suspension, termination, discipline, discrimination, and
licensure sanction when a nurse makes a good faith request for nursing peer review of an
assignment or conduct the nurse is requested to perform and that the nurse believes could
result in a violation of the NPA or Board rules. Safe harbor must be invoked prior to engaging
in the conduct or assignment for which nursing peer review is requested and may be invoked
at any time during the work period when the initial assignment changes.

Whistleblower Protections

Nursing faculty Whistleblower Protections are available to prohibit retaliatory action by an employer
or other entity because the nurse:
 (A) made a good faith request for safe harbor nursing peer review under Rule 303.005(c)
         and this section; or
    (B) refused to engage in an act or omission relating to patient care that would constitute
a violation of the NPA or Board rules as permitted by Rule 301.352. A nurse invoking safe harbor
under this section must comply with subsection (g) of this section if the nurse refuses to engage
in the conduct or assignment; or
    (C) made a lawful report of unsafe practitioners, or unsafe patient care practices or
 conditions in accordance with Rule 301.4025.

VIII. INSTRUCTION AND GRADING

Instructional strategies

Critical thinking and clinical judgment will be positively impacted by a variety of instructional strategies and learning activities. Kolb and Kolb (2005) found that a variety of instructional and experiential learning approaches increased students' engagement and meaning through the individual student's experience.

Instructional strategies include traditional lecture, audiovisual presentations, discussions using Tanner's critical thinking process, flipped classroom activities, small group activities, team projects/presentations, unfolding case studies, computer activities, skills lab activities, simulation lab activities, self-reflection/journaling and faculty-supervised, hands-on patient care in the clinical setting.

The Simulation Lab will assist the students' progress to Bloom's cognitive levels to apply, analyze and evaluate their skills and abilities, along with their nursing faculty. The Simulation Lab will support cognitive development and experiential learning in a safe learning environment (Wan, Ho & Lam, 2019).

Utilization of Tanner's Clinical Judgement Model (2006) for sequential reasoning will provide a useful and active learning framework to develop use of the nursing process, to develop clinical reasoning, to guide decision making, and to anticipate patient needs or changes. Tanner's Model will be utilized across the curriculum, in the skills lab, in the simulation lab, in the classroom, and in the hands-on clinical setting as well as for guiding journaling for self-reflection.

Through application of Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and Tanner's Clinical Judgement Model, students' experiential learning expands their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor skills that are necessary for critical analysis, and safe patient care in nursing.

Instruction

Classroom Expectations
Faculty must ensure that all student adhere to the Palo Alto College value of Respect for All. Should behavioral disruptions interfere with the instruction of the class and the ability of the students to learn or the faculty to teach, the disruptive student may be reported to the Student Conduct Officer in accordance with the Policy F.4.2 Student Code of Conduct.

Classroom Environment
Faculty and students are expected to maintain a classroom atmosphere conducive to learning. The faculty will provide the course content in a manner that will prepare graduates to be successful in the health care workplace.

Classroom Conduct
Professional demeanor and courtesy to peers, faculty, and guests and/or guest lecturers in the classroom setting are essential to the teaching-learning experience. Classroom conduct is expected to demonstrate mutual respect of faculty, students and peers.

Consequences of Unprofessional Behaviors

Consequences are dependent on the disruptive behavior. The faculty should ensure appropriate classroom conduct. Faculty may use the Office of Student Conduct for guidance and assistance with student issues. Students who demonstrate unprofessional behavior will be counseled by their faculty, as part of classroom management.

If a student is non-compliant, the instructor may:
- Stop the lecture and remind student(s) of classroom etiquette.
- Ask the student(s) to respect the rules or leave the classroom.
- Contact the Office of Student Conduct for further assistance.

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

At the start of **every** class, lab, and exam, instructors will ask that all cell phones/electronic devices be silenced and put away.

Recording in Class

Taking pictures, videotaping, or voice recording events in the Nursing Program is prohibited unless permission has been given ahead of time from each individual faculty. If unauthorized nursing-related pictures, videos, or voice recordings appear on the Internet, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, including possible dismissal from the program.

Food and Drink in the Classroom

Consumption of food is **not permitted** in classrooms or labs. Beverages in sealed or capped containers are permitted. Beverages are not permitted in computer labs, skills labs, or the simulation lab. Each student is expected to make sure their seating area is clean prior to leaving the classroom.

Examination Rules

- Students should arrive on time.
    - **No student will be permitted to take any lecture or laboratory exam, including the final, if they are late 15 minutes or more.**
- **No** backpacks, pencil pouches, purses, food, or drink are permitted during any exam.
- Cell phones and other electronic devices are not permitted
    - Failure to do so constitutes cheating and may result in a zero on the exam.
    - Please ensure that these electronics are on silent or off.
- The only items allowed at the desk will include:
    - Pens/Pencils
    - Eraser, if needed
    - Highlighter(s), if needed
    - Scantron(s), if needed
    - Basic calculator (no scientific, graphing or programmable calculators are allowed)
        - There will be NO sharing of calculators
- During the exam, keep all work covered as much as possible.
    - Talking or looking around the room may result in a zero grade for the exam.
    - Cheating or bringing in material with intent to cheat, will minimally result in a zero for the exam.

Testing and Grading

- Faculty will proctor testing in the assigned testing location.
- All personal belongings will be placed in the designated site prior to testing.
- Student arriving more than 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of the exam will not be allowed to take the test and must reschedule
- Students may access a test only during the authorized testing session.
- Scratch paper will be provided for use during the testing session and will be turned in to the proctor before leaving the computer lab.
- In the event of a technologic problem that results in lost time during testing:
    - Students are responsible for raising their hands immediately if their computer locks up during testing.
    - Faculty will document the start and end of lock up time on the white board in the
    - testing center.
    - Timing begins when the first student reports the problem and concludes when all
    - student are back on-line.
    - Faculty timing is official.
    - If the student does not report the problem to faculty during the testing session, no accommodations will be made.
    - If lost testing time is <5 minutes, no accommodations will be made.

- If lost testing time is >5 minutes but <15 minutes:
    - Students who complete the test despite the lost testing time may voluntarily choose to exit the test and leave the testing area. Once the student leaves the testing center, no accommodations will be made.
    Students who do not complete the test or want to make up the lost testing time will remain sequestered in the testing center at end of the testing time. At the conclusion of the testing period, additional testing time to equal, but not exceeding, the amount of time lost will be given. Students who do not complete the test or want to make up the lost time will remain sequestered in the testing center at the end of the testing time
    - At the conclusion of the testing period, additional testing time to equal, but not to exceed, the amount of time lost will be given.
- If lost testing time is > 15 minutes, the faculty will evaluate with the department director and may reschedule the exam
- At the conclusion of any testing period, the student will raise their hand; faculty will record the student's raw score and computer number. If the electronic data in testing software is irretrievable for any reason, the faculty's written record of the student's score will be the official test score.
- Scores displayed at the completion of a test are considered tentative until the results have been reviewed by the faculty.
- Distribution of final scores will be determined by the faculty.
- Students who arrive late will only have the remainder of the designated testing period to complete their exam, as long the late arrival time does not exceed 15 minutes
- Permit student access only to the individual student feedback report during test review.
- Label and file at least one (1) copy of each course exam in the secure drive electronic test file; include answer keys, test blue prints, student feedback sheets and computer analyzed data.
- Maintain files per Board of Nursing and Palo Alto College policy

Exam Analysis and Exam Review

- Following the exam, faculty must review statistical analysis for the exam and its questions. Specifically, question p value (percent of students who answered the question correctly) and point biserial values/discrimination index should be reviewed.
- Review any questions with p value 0.5/discrimination index or less and use point biserial values to consider validity of question and if alternate answers should be considered.
- A traditional *multiple-choice question* with a p value less than 0.25 should be discarded from the exam, points returned to the students who missed it, and the question must be revised before using it again in the future
    A *select all that apply question* with a p value less than 0.2 should be discarded from the exam, points returned to the students who missed it, and the question must be revised before using it again in the future.
- Faculty review should be finalized, and exam grades should be posted to the online management system within 48 hours of exam administration unless an official Alamo Colleges holiday occurs during the 48 hours, or extenuating circumstances exist.

Testing Security

- Faulty maintain test security throughout test development, administration, and test review.
- The faculty and/or academic program coordinator secures test copies and answer key in a safe, secure location prior to administration.
- After administration faculty and/or academic program coordinator secures tests, blueprints, answer keys, student feedback sheets and test item analysis in the test file in the Nursing Department office.

Student Computer Lab Testing Rules

- When entering the room, do so in a quiet and respectful manner.
- Each student will be randomly assigned to a computer station.
- Personal belongings will be kept at the front of the testing room.
- No electronic devices are permitted on your person, including cell phones, smartwatches, Bluetooth
- devices, etc. can be on your person. Place them with your personal belongings and they must be turned off.
- No caps or hoodies are to be worn during testing.
- No food, drinks, gum, candy or lip balm are allowed around the testing computers. No food or drink is permitted in the computer lab.
- Calculators will be provided by the faculty or will be located on the computer.
- If necessary, a blank sheet of paper and a pencil will be provided. The student must turn in the paper at the end of the exam. Failure to return material will result in a grade of zero.

Grading Rubric

A minimum grade of 76 % is necessary to receive a passing course grade, in both didactic and   clinical scores. *Grades are not rounded.*

100 – 90	A
89 – 80	B
79 – 76	C
75 – 60	D (Course failure)
59 – 0	F (Course failure)

Standardized Exams

Students in the Nursing Program will be required to take national standardized exams throughout the curriculum. Palo Alto College Department of Nursing utilizes ATI standardized exams. The ATI examinations are intended to measure, document, and track NCLEX-RN readiness. In addition, the ATI assists in evaluating how well the student is retaining essential nursing knowledge and skills for safe practice in the healthcare environment while progressing in the program. The ATI exams will not constitute more than 5%-10% of a course grade; therefore, ATI exams are not high stakes or exclusions exams.

Clinical Assignments

Nursing faculty will comply with all aspects of the Texas Board of Nursing's Professional Nursing Education Rule 215.10 regarding Clinical Learning Experiences. Each nursing faculty shall be responsible for 10 or fewer students who are assigned to direct patient care. Faculty must remain on-site and available to their clinical students at the assigned location for the entire clinical shift. Preceptors will not be utilized at this time.

Clinical Evaluation Tools

Each student will receive an individual clinical evaluation weekly during clinical courses. Each clinical evaluation tool (CET) provides clinical performance criteria and descriptions for 10 performance areas. Each of the 10 performance areas has scoring criteria and may be assigned a score of zero to ten points. The total possible score for the clinical performance ranges from zero to 100 points.

In addition, a tool is provided for faculty to score affective, psychomotor, and cognitive skills as _Satisfactory_, _Needs improvement_ or _Unsatisfactory_. Any _Unsatisfactory_ score requires an improvement plan.

The CET provides an evaluation of each student's Differentiated Essential Competencies in the four primary roles of a nurse, beginning with entry-level and progressing to an advanced role in the final semester of the program. Clinical Evaluation Tools are both formative and summative.

The Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument will used for the Simulation Lab Clinical experience. Samples are included.

Individual Clinical Evaluation: RNSG _____

Student Name/ID: _____   **Faculty:** _____   **Date:** _____

Clinical Performance Criteria	Unsatisfactory Performance consistently fails to meet expectations; requires close supervision and coaching.	Needs Improvement Performance meets expectations with supervision and coaching.	Satisfactory Performance meets expectations; demonstrates performance with some supervisory coaching.	Above Average Performance exceeds expectations; the student needs limited guidance and direction.	Exceptional Performance consistently exceeds expectations; no direction and guidance are required.	Points
Description	0-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10	___/10 **points**
1. Performs in a cooperative and professional manner when completing clinical activities						___/10 **points**
2. Reports on time to clinical, uses time productively, and submits assignments by due date.						___/10 **points**
3. Identifies own learning needs and takes responsibility for own learning.						___/10 **points**
4. Follows policies and guidelines of PAC Nursing, and affiliated agencies (e.g., procedures for call-in, personal appearance).						___/10 **points**
5. Maintains confidentiality by not sharing sensitive health-related information about community members.						___/10 **points**
6. Actively participates in activities including clinical conferences by sharing experiences, findings from literature, information from windshield survey, gathered data, and interviews with key informants.						___/10 **points**
7. Collaborates with community members, stakeholders, classmates and faculty in identifying health concerns, analyzing assessment data, planning, implementing and evaluating planned interventions.						___/10 **points**
8. Uses the nursing process, the assessment process, Tanner's Model of clinical judgement, and other methods as necessary to plan, implement, and evaluate interventions.						___/10 **points**
9. Modifies behavior following input.						___/10 **points**
10. Demonstrates effective use of SBAR skills per oral, written, and technology-based communication.						___/10 **points**

Total points ___/100

Student meets course entry-role DEC criteria (circle the outcome): Member of the Profession Yes/No; Provider of Patient Centered Care Yes/No; Patient Safety Advocate Yes/No; Member of the Health Care Team Yes/No

Student Signature: _____ **Faculty Signature:** _____

Affective Traits:

1. Initiates activities immediately   S   N/I   U
2. Ensures HIPAA compliance   S   N/I   U
3. Maintains clinical dress/appearance standards   S   N/I   U
4. Skillfully adapts to working with others   S   N/I   U
5. Willingly corrects assignments   S   N/I   U
6. Seeks answers to questions, in a timely manner

Psychomotor Skills:

1. Routine tasks are completed within acceptable   S   N/I   U
standards for nursing care
2. Routine tasks are completed within an acceptable time   S   N/I   U
3. Advanced skills (associated with this clinical course criteria   S   N/I   U
that have been previously & successfully checked-off) are
completed within acceptable standards for nursing care
4. Advanced skills (associated with this clinical course criteria   S   N/I   U
that have been previously & successfully checked-off) are
completed with an acceptable time

Cognitive Skills:

1. Transfers knowledge of care concepts & procedures   S   N/I   U
to new situations
2. Recognizes tasks/situations that exceed the current   S   N/I   U
level of training
3. Applies classroom/didactic content in the clinical   S   N/I   U
environment
4. Interprets data correctly (such as lab values)   S   N/I   U
5. Identifies and attempts to solve patient safety issues   S   N/I   U

Key: S: Satisfactory; N/I: Needs Improvement; U: Unsatisfactory (Requires Improvement Plan)

Mid-Course Evaluation: Final Evaluation:

|

Faculty Signature & Date   Faculty Signature & Date

Student Comments   Student Comments
Student Signature & Date   Student Signature & Date

Creighton Competency Evaluation Instrument (CCEI)

Student Name: _____ Staff Nurse Instructor Name: _____	0= Does not demonstrate competency 1= Demonstrates competency NA= Not applicable		Date: ____ / ____ / ____ MM / DD / YYYY

	Circle Appropriate Score for all Applicable Criteria If not applicable, circle NA			COMMENTS:
ASSESSMENT				
1. Obtains Pertinent Data	0	1	NA	
2. Performs Follow-Up Assessments as Needed	0	1	NA	
3. Assesses the Environment in an Orderly Manner	0	1	NA	
COMMUNICATION				
4. Communicates Effectively with Intra/Interprofessional Team (TeamSTEPPS, SBAR, Written Read Back Order)	0	1	NA	
5. Communicates Effectively with Patient and Significant Other (verbal, nonverbal, teaching)	0	1	NA	
6. Documents Clearly, Concisely, & Accurately	0	1	NA	
7. Responds to Abnormal Findings Appropriately	0	1	NA	
8. Promotes Professionalism	0	1	NA	
CLINICAL JUDGMENT				
9. Interprets Vital Signs (T, P, R, BP, Pain)	0	1	NA	
10. Interprets Lab Results	0	1	NA	
11. Interprets Subjective/Objective Data (recognizes relevant from irrelevant data)	0	1	NA	
12. Prioritizes Appropriately	0	1	NA	
13. Performs Evidence Based Interventions	0	1	NA	
14. Provides Evidence Based Rationale for Interventions	0	1	NA	
15. Evaluates Evidence Based Interventions and Outcomes	0	1	NA	
16. Reflects on Clinical Experience	0	1	NA	
17. Delegates Appropriately	0	1	NA	
PATIENT SAFETY				
18. Uses Patient Identifiers	0	1	NA	
19. Utilizes Standardized Practices and Precautions Including Hand Washing	0	1	NA	
20. Administers Medications Safely	0	1	NA	
21. Manages Technology and Equipment	0	1	NA	
22. Performs Procedures Correctly	0	1	NA	
23. Reflects on Potential Hazards and Errors	0	1	NA	

COMMENTS

Total: _____
Total Applicable Items: _____
Earned Score _____

Revised for DEU use 8/20/2013

Evaluation of Clinical Sites

Clinical site evaluation will be based upon the clinical site selection criteria to meet the program and course outcome. Clinical sites will be evaluated annually.

- Does the facility offer an appropriate client variation to allow students to achieve course objectives on a daily and weekly basis? Please list the types of clinical experiences that will be available to the professional nursing students (medical-surgical, maternal-newborn, mental health, pediatrics, etc.).
- Does the facility's average daily patient/client census provide adequate numbers of patients/clients to provide quality clinical experience for each student assigned to the facility? What days of the week are available and what shifts?
- What is the facility's accreditation status?
- Are clearly written facility policies and procedures readily available?
- Does the facility nursing staff model appropriate nursing behaviors?
- Does the facility's staffing pattern provide adequate staff to ensure patient/client safety?
- If the facility is shared with other education programs, is there a clearly understood collaborative arrangement between entities?
- Will the facility staff and resources accommodate multiple education programs?
- Is there a positive attitude among staff toward nursing students on the unit?
- Name of CNE/DON and contact information
- Is there any special Orientation or pre-first day of clinical Orientation for your facility?
- Is there any special software required for clinical scheduling?
- Who is the contact person (with contact information) for clinical scheduling or questions?

IX.   References

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