

Professional Standards Policy

All students of the University and, to the extent applicable, all student organizations are expected and required to obey federal, state, and local laws, to comply with the policies of the West Virginia University Board of Governors (WVU BOG), with institutional or campus rules and regulations, with directives issued by any University official, and to observe standards of conduct appropriate for an academic institution. Any alleged violation to the Campus Student Code will be reported to the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

Students are expected to adhere to academic requirements and standards in all academic settings, such as classrooms, laboratories, and clinics, and during any activities that are part of academic requirements such as clinical and observational experiences. In addition, all students in the WVU SON are expected to uphold and demonstrate professional and personal moral standards as defined and described in the following documents:

- West Virginia Code and Legislative Rules; Section 30-7 and Title 19
- American Nurses Association Standards of Practice
- American Nurses Association Code for Professional Nurses
- American Nurses Association Code of Ethics

The WVU SON graduate student is expected to practice with responsibility and accountability as a professional nurse and professional nursing student. The ultimate goal of nursing practice is to promote health while preventing harm to others. The WVU SON believes that this goal will be attained if the student's daily nursing practice is guided by the Standards of Professional Practice. These standards reflect minimum acceptable professional conduct.

- The role of the professional nurse involves demonstrating attitudes, values, and behaviors consistent with professional nursing practice. Behavior in conflict with professional nursing practice is inconsistent with professionalism and will not be tolerated.
- Unprofessional behaviors consist of actions that do not demonstrate the minimum behaviors described as acceptable nursing practice. Incidents may be a single event or a pattern of behaviors.
- Professional Standards include, but are not limited to:
 - i. Maintain professional integrity,
 - ii. Practice within boundaries of the nursing student role,
 - iii. Comply with the policies and procedures of the WVU SON, course syllabi, the clinical agency, and the West Virginia RN Board (WVBON),
 - iv. Demonstrate behaviors consistent with expectations outlined by program outcomes and competencies.
 - v. Maintain patient privacy and confidentiality at all times
 - vi. **Maintain HIPAA privacy laws at all times, including documentation of clinical hours/experiences in the TYPHON log.**

The WVBON requires that the program report misdemeanors or felonies and that applicants for licensure undergo a criminal background check and provide an explanation of any criminal incident. Depending on the Board's action, applicants for licensure may be barred from taking the NCLEX-RN, disciplinary action may be applied, and/or the nursing license may be

restricted. An active, unencumbered nursing license is required to remain in some WVU SON programs.

Students are expected to demonstrate knowledge, attitudes, professional values, personal qualities, and behaviors consistent with the nursing role. Therefore, there is tangible link between professional role and academic achievement. Students who violate WVU SON professional standards and/or policies outside the purview of the [Campus Student Code](#) may receive a penalty for failing to meet academic or professional requirements or standards, including but not limited to a final grade reduction or other penalties. See [Graduate Academic Penalties](#). Violations of WVU SON professional standards and/or policies unrelated to clinical experiences will be reviewed on an individual basis. Any violation that could potentially alter progression through immediate course failure, program dismissal, delay in graduation, or university suspension/expulsion will be referred to the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the [WVU Student Conduct process](#)

A faculty member witnessing a violation that interferes with the ability to meet immediate classroom, clinical, or safety has the discretion to dismiss the student from the experience. In this instance, the program director must be notified that the student was dismissed and if SON personnel believe it is necessary to suspend student participation of certain activities until resolution has been completed and documented.