

De Anza College Department of Nursing presents

**The
Nursing Student
Survival Handbook:
A Primer for Success**

Fall 2018

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The Nursing Student Survival Handbook A Primer for Success

Your Nursing Program Faculty is committed to your success! This brief resource is intended to help you succeed in the De Anza Nursing Program. While it is not inclusive of all potential issues, it targets areas with which students most often struggle. This is a challenging and rewarding program that requires your time and dedication. We hope this handbook helps boost your success and avoid these potential struggles.

Studying for Success

1. The Carnegie Unit formula recommends that you study a minimum of 3 hrs/wk for every unit of EACH lecture course. While lab hours are not included in this formula, there will be hours required outside of clinical hours to ensure you are able to engage in the critical thinking process and are thus adequately prepared to safeguard the lives and health of your patients. Therefore, it is essential you plan study time for clinical courses every week as well.

Study time includes the required readings, videos, reviewing notes, participating in weekly study groups, completing case studies, prep questions, clinical paperwork and research such as diagnosis, medication, laboratory test research, care planning, skills practice, and all other assigned preparatory activities or materials for each course. It also includes NCLEX practice questions.

Here are examples to demonstrate application of this concept:

- Theory = 2 units. You should plan at least 6 hours of focused study per week for this course.
- Pharmacology = 1.5 units. You should plan at least 4.5 hours of focused study per week for this course.
- Clinical = 2.5 units. You should plan approximately 7.5 hours of focused time per week to prepare for clinical activities and complete homework.
 - **TOTAL for these courses = 18 hours per week, EVERY week!**

2. You should plan several hours each week in the Skills Lab for skills practice.

3. Your study plan should also include a quiet time(s) and place(s) to study, i.e., reduced distractions such as televisions, video games, cell phone alarms/use, workplace distractions, child care, friends, etc.
4. We strongly suggest you also consistently participate in regularly scheduled study groups with your peers.
5. Your textbooks often have end of chapter questions/activities. We encourage you to include them in your class preparation. If your instructor provides optional study/prep questions, we suggest you complete those. They are provided to help you be successful in the course.
6. Some students use online programs to augment their studies, such as Quizlet, Mometrix, and Picmonics. There are many available. We suggest you use whatever method of study is most effective for you.
7. If you are struggling with your course concepts, please seek help early. We have peer tutors available to assist you in theory, pharm, and clinical coursework, as well as nursing skill acquisition and proficiency. There is a running list in the Skills Lab of available tutors. Your instructor and/or the Skills Lab Associate can assist you with selection of a tutor as needed.
8. There is free online tutoring available. To access this, login to [MyPortal](#), go to the Students tab, and find the Smarthinking Online Tutoring channel link and click to login. You can work with a tutor live (hours vary by subject) or post a question or piece of writing for a response. For more information, go to: deanza.edu/studentsuccess/onlinetutoring/
11. Each instructor has office hours. We suggest you visit your instructor promptly if you are having difficulty understanding course concepts or need clarification of assignments, etc. Your instructors will be happy to assist you in reaching your academic goals.
10. The College often has skills workshops on study skills and test-taking strategies and we encourage you to take advantage of these. For more information about these workshops, go to: <http://deanza.edu/studentsuccess/academicskills/skillsworkshopschedule.html>
11. It is crucial that you do NCLEX practice questions on a regular basis, beginning in Q1. This will help you on your course exams, the Hesi Exit exam (in Q6), and ultimately will contribute to your success on NCLEX.

Assignment preparation

1. It is strongly suggested that you do not procrastinate in preparing assignments, scholarly papers, etc. In fact, we suggest you begin your work early.
2. There is drop-in tutoring available to preview and tutor you with a written academic paper in the WRT Lab on campus (*not for care plans or clinical paperwork*). For location and hours, go to:
<https://www.deanza.edu/studentsuccess/wrc/>
3. If your instructor offers to preview work in advance of the due date, we suggest you take advantage of this. Please note and respect instructor guidelines and restrictions for methods of reviewing work and dates/times available for this, etc.
4. If you are required to submit your assignment in hard copy (on paper) and you do not have a printer, you must remember to plan time and find a place to print it out before the submission date and time. You may be able to print in the Resource Room. There are also multiple places to E-print on campus. See My Portal for more information, under the Students tab. You can also print at commercial sites, or perhaps through a fellow student. If you do have a printer, please make sure you have adequate ink and paper well in advance of a due date to avoid last minute stress and/or a late assignment submission.

Time management

1. Create *and stick to* a study calendar. Plan a realistic schedule of days, times, and locations to complete study hours. Put this schedule on your calendar. Also include exam and assignment due dates on your calendar.
2. Give yourself extra time before exams to review all notes, readings, videos, prep questions, concepts, etc.
3. Look ahead at least two weeks out at least once a week to review assignment, paper and project due dates and exam dates so you can plan extra time if needed and won't have to scramble or rush to prepare.
4. Prioritize your study time appropriately. Looming exam and assignment due dates are stressful.
5. It is also important that you are timely with mandatory program due dates, such as paying for Hesi on time, submitting your QFT/Xray, titers, and current CPR card, doing your annual background check/drug screen, etc. Not doing these things may place your enrollment at risk; these items involve outside parties who are not flexible with us and this is *outside of our control*.

6. The College often has skills workshops on time management and study skills strategies and we encourage you to take advantage of these. For more information about these workshops, go to:

<http://deanza.edu/studentsuccess/academicskills/skillsworkshopschedule.html>

Civility and Professional Behavior

1. In a perfect world, we'd all get along just fine; however we know reality does not allow for a perfect world. We're sure you want to feel and be viewed as professional and compassionate.
2. You are encouraged to be kind to your fellow students and faculty even if they're not your favorite people. Continue to work together – you might find a common interest around which you can bond.
3. In the event you just don't care for someone, remember that we don't always like the people with whom we must work. It is your responsibility to remain professional, civil, respectful, and keep your sights on the goals - - becoming the best nurse you can be and giving the best patient care possible.
4. Civility and respect are expected in this program. Spreading gossip, making negative comments about other students, faculty members or patients, talking over others, isolating individuals, giving unsolicited advice or opinions and the like, is intrusive, unprofessional, and unacceptable.

Jobs, volunteering, and extra credit = Time

1. Nursing school is rigorous and demanding. Many students make the mistake of scheduling their job/volunteering hours during much of the time they are not actually scheduled to be in class without planning for time to prepare, study or complete assignments or homework as well as to get adequate sleep, nutrition, and restorative time. This is detrimental to your opportunity for success in this program and often produces disastrous results. We strongly encourage you to cut back on job hours and outside commitments to the fullest extent it is possible. It is important that you do this BEFORE your success is in peril. Waiting until you are failing a course may be too late.
2. Some instructors offer extra credit opportunities. If you choose to participate in extra credit opportunities, you'll need to have some extra time to attend. It is important that you do not ignore or procrastinate your regular studies to do extra credit. Working too much may impede your opportunity to earn extra credit points to boost your grade and enrich your experience.

College of Business Management and Study Skills
situation and we encourage you to take advantage of these. For more information
about these workshops go to:
http://www.collegeofbusinessmanagement.com/workshops/

Classroom and Professional Behaviors

1. In a perfect world, we'd all get along just fine, however, we know reality does not
allow for perfection. We're sure you want to, but will be viewed as professional
and courteous.

2. You are encouraged to be kind to your fellow students and faculty every day. Be
not your harshest critic. It's fine to want to be better - you might find a common
interest ground which you can bond.

3. In the event you just don't care for someone, remember that we don't always like
the people with whom we must work. It is your responsibility to remain
professional, civil, respectful, and keep your sights on the goals - becoming the best
at what you can be and giving the best patient care possible.

4. Civility and respect are expected in this program. Spreading negative
negative comments about other students, faculty members or subjects, talking over
other talking individuals, giving unsolicited advice or opinion and the like is
inappropriate and unacceptable.

Join a Volunteer (or Student) Club

1. Many schools in general and dentistry and dental schools in particular make the mistake of
excluding their job/volunteer hours during much of the time they are
usually scheduled to be in class without planning to have to prepare study or
complete assignments or homework as well as to get a quality education and
restorative time. This is detrimental to your opportunity for success in this program
and often produces disastrous results. We strongly encourage you to not be on
job hours and outside your classroom to the extent that it is possible. It is
important that you do this if your success is in being. Working while you are
taking a course may be too late.

2. Some institutions offer extra credit opportunities. If you choose to participate in
extra credit opportunities, it will need to have some extra time in school. It is
important that you do not allow your regular school to be extra
credit. Working too much may impact your opportunity to earn extra credit hours
to boost your grade and enrich your experience.

3. Clinical courses require a makeup for all missed clinical days. You'll need time to complete makeup hours (hour for hour), usually within 2 weeks (less if your absence is within Weeks 10 or 11).

Scholarships and Financial Aid

1. You are encouraged to apply for all available scholarships. This will help with your financial burden and stress, and allow you to work less. Some are listed below. Write one good, 1-page "My Story" statement. This statement can be used for all scholarships by fine-tuning it to address any specific requirements of a scholarship. When applying for a scholarship, it is critical to address each and every line, box, direction, etc. and attach everything they ask for. Incomplete applications are usually not considered for an award.

- Many scholarships are found on your My Portal page, Student tab. Look for the "AcademicWorks Scholarships" login.
- Fall quarter: the Kaider Scholarship is a very generous scholarship due just after school starts every fall.
- Winter quarter: check the school's AcademicWorks site for a multitude of available scholarships. Some nursing favorites are:
 - the Judith Clavijo Scholarship
 - the 40 & 8 society (La Société des 40 et 8)
 - the Galina Family Scholarship
 - the Consuelo "Connie" Yokum Scholarship
 - the SNO Scholarship
 - the DAC Nursing Alumni Scholarship

But there are MANY! You can and should apply for non-nursing scholarships too. Some are small but they do add up!

- Other scholarships may be offered throughout the year. Check the Financial Aid site and the bulletin boards in the Skills Lab and Resource Room periodically. Please note that the due dates are often soon after the flyers are sent to us, so be prepared to act quickly.
- Some local hospitals and community agencies offer scholarships, so look around. A little research may bring you great reward.

2. Textbooks are expensive. Often, publishers offer the texts at a lower rate with free shipping. Amazon is also a good source.

3. The required first quarter books will be used throughout the program. Some future classes use a text just for the course/quarter. If you are struggling with book purchases, you might rent a text, share a text (especially for the 6 week courses), see if you can borrow one from an upperclassman, use one in the Resource Room (cannot take home), or see if a text is available in the Reserve Room in the library. There are sometimes emergency book vouchers to help offset bookstore costs available from the Division for students in financial need. Check with your instructor or resource staff for availability.

4. If you are struggling financially, please check in with Financial Aid and the Nursing Program Director to explore any options available.

Skills Practice and Testing

1. To ensure your safety and success in the clinical setting, it is important to practice your skills *each week* in the Skills Lab throughout the program. This will also help you prepare for quarterly Skills Testing. Open hours are posted on the Skills Lab door but the lab is often open earlier.

2. You will be responsible for being proficient in all learned skills throughout the program (i.e., when you are in Q4, you need to be prepared to perform and be tested on skills learned in Q's 1, 2, & 3, in addition to the Q4 skills. As with any test, cramming before Skills Testing is not effective. Ongoing practice of current and previously learned skills will ensure you are prepared and safe, and ready for skills opportunities in the clinical setting, and will be better prepared for Skills Testing and beyond.

3. Not being prepared for skills performance may affect your opportunities in the clinical setting and/or success in your clinical course. For example, if you don't practice medication administration in the lab and you cannot perform the safety checks of the medications (e.g., the 3 checks of the 5 rights), you will not be allowed to administer medications to a patient. If this is a critical element of the course that you can't successfully complete, you therefore cannot be successful in the course. Please practice your skills every week so you can be safe and successful!

4. We suggest you practice skills in the Skills Lab with a peer. You can provide each other feedback, coaching, tips, hints, and validation.

5. We suggest you participate in Mock Skills Testing. This session is offered by upperclassmen to give you a chance to perform in a testing environment prior to your Skills Testing date. Critique, coaching and reinforcement of skills performance

will be given. This will give you the opportunity to improve and/or validate your proficiency and prepare for actual Skills Testing.

6. Some skills are available on video. Ask your instructors if they are available in each of your clinical courses so you can take advantage of this valuable resource.

7. If you have questions about skills, the Skills Lab Associate is available for questions and coaching. For persistent questions, ask an instructor.

Advising and Mentorship

1. You will be assigned a faculty member for mentoring and advisement throughout the program. It is your responsibility to access your faculty mentor for advice as needed.

2. The BHES Division has its own counselor for academic advisement. He can be reached at 408-864-8971. His name is Tom Nguyen.

Test-taking, Hesi Exit Exam and NCLEX Preparation

1. When taking an exam, be sure to read the entire question and ALL of the options before selecting an answer. Make sure you are answering the question being asked!

2. You will take at least one Hesi final exam every quarter. Be sure to bring your Hesi testing login. It is often different than the one you use for case studies.

3. It is important that you do the remediation for each Hesi exam. Research demonstrates this helps you retain course information you were not successful with on your exam.

4. Your Hesi exam data trends are available for 2 years. It is recommended that you review your data after each Hesi final for strengths and weaknesses. This will help you focus your energy on areas of weakness in the future.

5. As you begin your final quarter in the program, you will take the first of 2 computerized Hesi Exit Exams. This exam reflects the NCLEX experience. You will take a similar exam during finals week. Both exams will be part of your grade. These exams are considered "high stakes" exams and are often stressful for students. One thing you can do to help ease this stress is to practice NCLEX-style questions, beginning in Q1. You might also consider doing NCLEX preparation activities prior to Q6 and/or NCLEX.

6. To help ensure your success on the Exit Exams and NCLEX, we strongly recommended that you engage in regularly scheduled NCLEX practice. This will also help on course exams. There are many ways you can accomplish this. A few suggestions include:

- Hesi practice exams (included in your Hesi case studies and testing fee)
- Commercial NCLEX preparation/practice programs (many are online, free or for a fee, but there are also some texts in the Resource Room)
- Elsevier Adaptive Quizzing
- NCLEX RN Mastery App
- Mometrix NCLEX Academy

7. When reviewing your NCLEX questions, be sure to review the rationales. This will help you understand why an answer is incorrect, as well as why it is correct. Understanding this will help you be more successful on future questions and exams.

8. Each student has the opportunity to review midterm exam results. Students are encouraged to perform a test analysis using a form available from the instructor. This can provide you with insight into why you missed certain questions and may improve future test-taking abilities.

9. The College often has skills workshops on test-taking strategies and study skills and we encourage you to take advantage of these. For more information about these workshops, go to:

<http://deanza.edu/studentsuccess/academicsskills/skillsworkshopschedule.html>

Rules and Policies

1. We know rules are not fun but they are necessary.

2. Healthcare has many rules, policies, procedures, guidelines, etc. and is governed by many laws, employers, regulatory agencies, and ethics. These are imbedded in much of what you will be doing in the nursing program. Learning to abide by these is part of your professional socialization and education in this program. Helping you learn these is part of our job. We take this very seriously, as patient AND student safety and wellbeing are at stake, as is the privilege of maintaining ongoing clinical placement in our clinical agencies.

3. Each student is responsible for knowing and following the policies in the De Anza College Nursing Student Handbook (SHB). You are asked to formally sign an annual statement to this effect, but you are also responsible for periodic review of new or updated policies on the website throughout the school year. You will be held to all policies in the SHB and the updated policy section. These are the “rules” of the

department and are strictly adhered to. Please be sure to review these carefully and periodically, and ask your instructor or the Director for clarification if you have questions about anything.

4. The course greensheet is considered a contract between you and your instructor and contains more “rules” and expectations that you both must abide by. You should be thoroughly familiar with everything on it.

5. You will be presented with rules and expectations of each clinical agency during orientation and whenever they are provided by the agency. These may be written or verbal from your instructor or agency staff. It is your responsibility to know and follow these rules and expectations.

6. You may not agree with these rules, expectations, policies, etc., or you may not understand the rationale for them. You can ask your instructor for the rationale for a rule, but the bottom line is that you need to respect and follow the rules. They are there to make you the best nurse you can be, while protecting yourself and the health of your patients, and to meet the requirements of our clinical agencies, the California Board of Registered Nursing, and other regulatory bodies.

7. We welcome student input and attendance at Nursing Department Policy Committee meetings. Check with the Director for meeting dates & times.

Conflict Resolution

1. Conflict is never desired or easy but sometimes happens, even when both parties are being civil, unselfish and respectful. Following the established chain of command is expected in the profession and in the healthcare workplace. It is our goal to reflect the procedures and expectations of our profession as we help prepare you for the workplace and profession.

2. Since the Nursing Program Director, Assistant Director, and faculty are familiar with professional expectations and regulations, clinical agency requirements, the SHB and Nursing Program policies, we are best prepared to help navigate you through any potential conflict that may occur in this program. We ask that you, too, follow the established professional chain of command when a potential conflict arises.

3. Remember, your instructors are professionals and are dedicated to your success.

4. If you are unsatisfied or are having problems in a course or with an instructor, please speak to that instructor first. We are reasonable human beings and can usually work with you to clarify information, identify misunderstandings or misconceptions, and reach a mutual understanding.

document and are being referred to the board to review and carefully and periodically and self-review of the board for identification of any risks and other significant.

4. The management's role is to understand a connection between your institution and the board's role, and expectations that you both must address by you should be identified in the strategy plan.

5. You will be presented with this and explanation of each clinical agency during orientation and where they are provided by the agency. Please may be written or verbal from your institution or agency staff. It is your responsibility to know and follow these rules and expectations.

6. You may not agree with these rules or procedures, policies, or you may not agree with the rationale for them. You can ask your institution for the rationale, but the rationale is not for you to respect and follow the rules. They are there to make you the best you can be while protecting yourself and the health of your institution and to meet the requirements of our clinical agency, the California Board of Registered Nursing and other regulatory bodies.

7. We welcome student input and advice to improve the program. Please contact the Director for Nursing Program & Times.

Clinical Rotation

1. The rotation is a part of your education and is designed to provide you with a learning experience that is both challenging and rewarding. Following the established plan of rotation, you are expected to follow the rotation plan. It is our goal to reflect the professional and expectations of our profession as we help prepare you for the workplace and profession.

2. Since the Nursing Program Director, Assistant Director and faculty are familiar with professional expectations and regulations, clinical agency requirements, the Staff and Nursing Program policies, we are best prepared to help navigate you through any potential issues that may occur in this program. We ask that you follow the established professional chain of command when a concern arises.

3. Remember your institution is a professional and are dedicated to your success. If you are experiencing an ongoing problem in a course or with an institution, please speak to your institution first. We are available during office hours usually, and you may contact the faculty member directly if you are experiencing a professional and need a mutual understanding.

