I. PURPOSE

To establish clear expectations regarding student performance in the clinical setting and to explain the consequences of unsatisfactory, unsafe or unethical student clinical practice.

II. ACCOUNTABILITY

Under the direction of the Dean or designee, the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in conjunction with the Assistant Dean for Clinical Affairs, Academic Assistant Deans and faculty shall implement this policy.

III. APPLICABILITY

This policy shall apply to every student enrolled in a School of Nursing clinical course.

IV. DEFINITIONS

Unsatisfactory clinical practice is defined as a failure to perform up to the minimum standards established for the specific clinical experience.

Unsafe or unethical clinical practice is defined as behavior observed by or reported to faculty that is actually or potentially detrimental to the client, the client’s family and/or to the health care agency. Every student in the program is expected to act in a safe and ethical manner consistent with the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses.

Examples of unsafe or unethical practice include but are not limited to:

- Negligence in patient care.
- Unprofessional behavior either at the laboratory or at the clinical agency.
- Substantiated act(s) of patient abuse, either physical or verbal.
- Ongoing unsatisfactory performance documented by the clinical instructor.
- Neglect of duty with actual cause or potential to cause patient harm.
- Fraudulent or egregious acts.
- Demonstrated and/or documented incompetence.
- Personal conduct that adversely effects the learning environment and/or the instructor’s ability to perform his/her responsibilities.
- Exhibiting aggressive or intimidating behavior (e.g., profanities, threats, loud talking, rudeness, verbal coercion) toward or in the presence of faculty, staff, peers, patients/clients or agency personnel.
- Falsifying a client’s record.
- Violation of HIPAA regulations (i.e. breach of clients’ confidentiality).
- Failure to adhere to principles of safe nursing practice (i.e. safe medication administration).
- Inadequate preparation for clinical responsibilities.
- Inability to recognize limitations and/or failure to seek appropriate help in time-sensitive situations.
- Dishonest communication with clients, families, faculty and/or agency staff.
- Denying responsibility for one’s actions.

V. REFERENCES

School of Nursing policy: Faculty/Student Honor Code
RBHS policy: Student Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures

VI. POLICY

Students have the responsibility to practice competently, without undue risk to themselves or others, and to maintain fitness for duty throughout all clinical hours. When a faculty member makes a professional judgment that a student’s psychological and/or physical condition or behavior is indicative of an inability to perform in accordance with course-specific clinical standards then the student will be asked to leave the clinical area. Any student who demonstrates unsatisfactory clinical performance (see DEFINITIONS section above) may be placed on a clinical remediation plan by the course or clinical faculty member. Any student who demonstrates clinically unsafe or unethical nursing practice (see DEFINITIONS section above) will be dismissed from the clinical area by the faculty and further action may be taken (see PROCEDURES below).

VII. PROCEDURES

A faculty member may remove a student from the clinical area or deny access to the clinical area because of an unprofessional appearance, inadequate preparation or unsafe or unethical practice on that day. Inability to participate in clinical will result in a grade of unsatisfactory for the day and is considered an unexcused absence. If the same student needs to be dismissed from the clinical area on more than one occasion then the student may be removed from the course due to unsafe or unprofessional behavior.

When an incident occurs that a faculty member believes may constitute unsafe or unethical practice the faculty member shall immediately notify the student and instruct
the student to leave the clinical setting. The faculty member shall notify the course instructor and/or the appropriate academic dean immediately following such an incident.

The course instructor and/or academic dean shall inform the Dean or designee of the incident(s) that prompted removal of the student from the clinical setting within five working days. As per the SN Faculty/Student Honor Code, the Dean or designee shall informally resolve the matter or shall refer the matter to the Ethics Committee for a formal investigation and/or hearing.

If the Dean or designee determines the incident to be minor then remedial work or instruction for the student may be required and the appropriate clinical and course faculty will be notified.

If the Dean or designee determines that the incident is serious and therefore merits investigation by the Ethics Committee then the Committee will review the student's clinical performance evaluation(s), academic record and other evidence as per the procedures contained in the SN Faculty/Student Honor Code. Based upon this careful and deliberate review, a recommendation will be made to the Dean or designee, whose decision may include anything from dismissal of the original charge to dismissal of the student from the program of study. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean or designee to the RBHS Executive Vice President for Academic and Clinical Affairs.

Students may not drop or withdraw from any clinical course if their performance has been deemed unsafe.

In the case of unsatisfactory clinical practice or of a referral from the Dean/designee for remedial instruction, the clinical faculty member shall coordinate with the course faculty member on the development of a remediation plan. The process will be as follows:

1. The clinical faculty member will identify the specific skill(s)/behavior(s)/course content that require remediation. A clinical referral form will be completed and given to the student.
2. The remediation plan must begin within 5 business days of the referral date.
3. After the student successfully completes the remediation, the appropriate faculty member will provide documentation and record the date of session(s) and place the form in the student file.

Students who demonstrate consistently unsatisfactory clinical performance are at risk for course failure.
By Direction of the Dean:

SIGNATURE ON FILE

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Dean of the School of Nursing