baccalaureate program handbook
A guide to the policies and procedures of the School of Nursing
preface

The purpose of this handbook is to bring together information from various sources about policies and procedures of the Boston College Connell School of Nursing. It is not intended to be a substitute for the catalog, the Boston College website, the schedule of courses, information on official bulletin boards, or course syllabi. Rather, it is to assist you in locating answers to your questions and to help you make the most of your education at Boston College.

This book is possible through the work of the faculty of the Connell School of Nursing who define policies and curriculum, information on the Boston College website (www.bc.edu), and the daily decisions that guide the work of the Office of the Undergraduate Associate Dean. We are committed to your personal and professional development and your success at Boston College.

Catherine Read, PhD, RN
Associate Dean, Undergraduate Program
Boston College
William F. Connell School of Nursing

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introduction

HISTORY OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING

In the mid-1940’s, the late Richard Cardinal Cushing requested that the University establish a baccalaureate nursing program since no Catholic institution in the Archdiocese of Boston offered such a program. Responding to his request, the University opened the Boston College School of Nursing on January 27, 1947, with 35 registered nurses enrolled for a Bachelor of Science in Nursing or Nursing Education. The following September, a group of 27 high school graduates enrolled in the baccalaureate program.

In 1958, the Master’s program was established and offered medical-surgical nursing as a field of concentration. It now offers degrees in advanced practice nursing in seven areas of specialization. The first students entered the PhD in Nursing program in 1988. This was the first nursing doctoral program to be offered at a Jesuit university. It has produced more than 100 graduates who are in various clinical, research, and teaching positions throughout the United States and other countries. An MS/PhD option was introduced in 2000 for individuals seeking preparation in both advanced practice nursing and clinical research. The School of Nursing was dedicated in honor of the late Boston-area businessman and philanthropist William F. Connell on September 12, 2003. The school, now named the William F. Connell School of Nursing, was the recipient of a $10 million gift made by Connell shortly before his death from cancer in 2001. Connell was a 1959 graduate of Boston College and served on the University’s board of trustees for 24 years.

ACCREDITATION

The Connell School of Nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education and approved by the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CONNELL SCHOOL OF NURSING

The mission of Boston College Connell School of Nursing is to prepare professional nurses whose practice reflects a humanistic ethic and is scientifically based, technically competent, and highly compassionate. The Boston College nurse learns to think critically and to develop leadership skills throughout the baccalaureate, master’s, and doctoral programs. The faculty of the school aim to develop and disseminate knowledge for the advancement of professional practice and the improvement of health care by providing an environment that supports the personal development and scholarship of its faculty and students. The mission of the Boston College Connell School of Nursing is in keeping with that of its parent institution, with an emphasis on the development of the whole person. The School of Nursing focuses on preparing each student as a life-long learner, as a health professional, and as a person who will use knowledge in service to others.

The graduate of the baccalaureate program is prepared as a generalist to provide care to individuals, families and groups, arriving at diagnostic, ethical, and therapeutic judgments to promote, maintain, and restore health. The graduate of the master’s program is prepared with advanced knowledge and skill for providing and leading quality patient care. He or she is prepared to advance the discipline through leadership, mentorship, and research-based practice. The graduate of the doctoral program contributes to the development of knowledge through research and theory-building and the dissemination of findings in scholarly forums.
**Philosophy**

Nursing is the art and science of human caring. The recipients of nursing care are individuals, families, aggregates of people, and communities who are sick and well; culturally and linguistically diverse; within all socioeconomic strata; and at all stages in the life cycle. The study of nursing is based on a common intellectual heritage transmitted by a liberal education and the art and science of nursing. Nursing focuses on the life processes and patterns of the individual in the context of the family and the community and also the health needs of the population. Nursing recognizes the contribution of cultural diversity and social environments to the health/illness beliefs, practices, and behavioral responses of individuals and groups.

Nursing education prepares students for the appropriate level of knowledge and skills by building on the liberal arts and sciences. Nursing curricula are logically ordered to provide core knowledge and the application of that knowledge. The preparation for holistic nursing care requires a holistic approach in education, and education is most effective when it involves active participation by the learner. Students are supported in developing clinical skills as well as the ability to think and act ethically. Students are active participants in shaping the learning environment within the School of Nursing.

The Boston College School of Nursing instills the values of service to others, truth through scholarly inquiry, and justice through promoting equal access to care for all people. Service, scholarship, and justice in caring include all people in the global community, particularly the under-served. The faculty believe that promoting the physical, psychological, and spiritual aspects of health are essential to understanding the human dimension of holistic nursing care. Nurses engage in partnerships with individuals and groups to promote and optimize wellness. The nurse respects the uniqueness of the person and the individual’s right to choose and actively participate in decisions about health care. Nursing promotes self-determination by empowering clients and advocating for those who cannot do so independently.

**Objectives**

The graduate of the undergraduate program will:

1. Demonstrate a personal philosophy of nursing practice congruent with the Judeo-Christian values that support the intrinsic worth of each human being;
2. Synthesize knowledge from the liberal arts and sciences, nursing theory and research as a basis for clinical decision making;
3. Use ethical, diagnostic, and therapeutic reasoning to:
   a. assess health status
   b. formulate nursing diagnoses
   c. develop nursing outcomes in collaboration with the client
   d. provide therapeutic nursing interventions to achieve outcomes
   e. evaluate client response to outcomes and modify practice accordingly;
4. Collaborate with colleagues and consumers to achieve health care outcomes, optimize health, and promote the well-being of people throughout the life span;
5. Demonstrate the teaching role to meet health needs of others;
6. Use leadership skills to coordinate and promote quality health care;
7. Analyze social issues which have implications for the health of a multicultural society;
8. Practice nursing with sensitivity to the values, beliefs, culture, and diversity of all people;
9. Demonstrate responsibility for continued personal and professional growth.
Dean Read is responsible for all aspects of the undergraduate program, including orientation, registration, the advisement system, student progression, and implementation of the curriculum plan. Students should contact Dean Read for all issues related to their program of study or other concerns.

Maureen Eldredge, Baccalaureate Program Administrator  
Office: Cushing 202  
Phone: 617-552-4925  
Email: eldredgm@bc.edu

Dean Gennaro is responsible for the overall administration of the Connell School of Nursing.

TBA, Associate Dean for Finance & Administration  
Office: Cushing 203

This associate dean is responsible for administrative and budgetary aspects of the Connell School of Nursing, including the work-study and Undergraduate Research Fellow programs.

Patricia Tabloski, Associate Dean, Graduate Programs  
Office: Cushing 202

Dean Tabloski is responsible for the master’s and doctoral programs.

Barbara Wolfe, Associate Dean for Research  
Office: Cushing 443

Dean Wolfe oversees the research initiatives in the Connell School of Nursing.

W. Jean Weyman, Assistant Dean for Continuing Education  
Office: Service Building 211

Dean Weyman is responsible for all programs in the Continuing Education office.

Joyce Pulcini, Chairperson, Department of Nursing  
Office: Cushing 307

Dr. Pulcini provides leadership and support to nursing faculty and students.

Allyssa Harris, Assistant Chairperson, Department of Nursing  
Office: Cushing 302

Dr. Harris assists the chairperson.

Teachers of Record (TORS)

Teachers of Record are professors who are responsible for coordinating faculty and student activities within a course. Their responsibilities include preparing the course syllabus, assigning students to clinical groups, compiling exams, and computing grades.
academic program
(Example shown is for Plan A, Class of 2013)

**Core Courses**

Nursing students take the following University core courses: history (2), social sciences (2), philosophy (2), theology (2), writing, literature, fine arts, and math (MT 180). The natural science core and the cultural diversity core are fulfilled by nursing courses. To identify courses that satisfy the Core in each department, refer to each semester’s schedule of courses or contact the particular department.

**Electives**

The School of Nursing curriculum includes three elective courses. These may be chosen from any area of the student’s interest. Students with Advanced Placement credit for required core courses will take additional electives to complete the 38 courses required for graduation from Boston College.

**Programs**

Some academic programs of potential interest are the Pulse program, Perspectives, and study abroad. Please see the BC website or catalog for more detailed information.

**International Study (Study Abroad)**

Boston College nursing students are encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad. Study abroad enriches awareness of other cultures and assists in the development of fluency in a foreign language. Nursing students may participate in fall or spring semester junior year, fall semester senior year, or in summer opportunities through programs administered by Boston College or through other American colleges and universities. Students interested in studying abroad should choose curriculum Plan B, maintain the minimum 3.2 grade point average, and apply in their sophomore year through the Office of International Programs (in Hovey House). In addition, students should meet with their academic advisors and the Associate Dean for the Undergraduate Program to discuss curriculum issues. Students who plan to study abroad but decide not to go should notify the Associate Dean; clinical placements may not be guaranteed.

**December Graduation**

Students who graduate in December may attend the commencement ceremonies the following May. They may elect to participate in senior week activities the May before or the May after their graduation.

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**Curriculum Plans A & B**

Approximately one half of the sophomore class will start the clinical nursing sequence during the fall semester of the sophomore year (Plan B); the other half of the class will start the nursing sequence during the spring semester of the sophomore year (Plan A). Information about the options is given in the Professional Nursing 1 course in the spring of freshman year. Plan B is required for students who plan to study abroad. The Associate Dean will make every attempt to honor requests, although several factors must be considered.
The CSON Academic Standards Advisory Committee meets at the end of each semester to review the records of students with course failures, course deficiencies, low GPAs, or other academic concerns. Decisions about progression in the program are made by this committee in accordance with the policies described below and other relevant university policies.

**Good Academic Standing/Warning Status**

In order to remain in good academic standing, the student must maintain a cumulative average of 2.0 in nursing courses and a 1.67 overall GPA. If a student’s grade point average falls below the minimum standard, he or she will be placed on warning status for one semester during which the grade point average must be brought up to the minimum. If the student fails to attain the minimum GPA, the student will be dismissed from the School of Nursing. A student may be on warning status only one semester. A student who does not follow the School of Nursing curriculum for two semesters will be dismissed from the School of Nursing. A student who fails to demonstrate performance consistent with professional nursing will be subject to review and possible dismissal by the faculty of the School of Nursing.

Beginning with the class entering in September 2008 (Class of 2012), students must achieve a minimum GPA of 2.0 in the following courses: BI130, 131, 132, 133 (anatomy & physiology lectures and labs), CH161, 163 (Life Science Chemistry with lab), and MT180 (statistics). The records of students who have not met this requirement (or who have withdrawn from any of those courses) will be reviewed at the May meeting of the Academic Standards Advisory committee, and will be notified of progression decisions by the associate dean.

Students must achieve a grade of C- or higher in nursing courses, (i.e., courses with a prefix NU). If the student does not meet the minimum requirement of a C-, the student will be required to retake the course before advancing in the curriculum. The student will be placed on warning status and may be unable to progress in the curriculum. A student may repeat a nursing course one time after withdrawing or not achieving a C-. Students who withdraw because they are failing or fail more than one nursing course may be dismissed from the School of Nursing.

**Deficiencies**

Students in the School of Nursing are expected to have passed 9 courses by the beginning of the second year, 19 courses by the beginning of the third year, and 29 courses by the beginning of the fourth year. A total of 38 courses, including all core and nursing courses, is required for graduation. If a student withdraws from a course, fails a course, or underloads (i.e., takes fewer courses than in the curriculum plan), the student incurs a deficiency. Deficiencies should be made up as soon as possible. In some cases involving science or nursing courses, a deficiency will prevent a student from moving on in the curriculum. A deficiency may be made up by taking courses in the summer at Boston College or at another accredited four-year college. Every make-up course must be authorized in writing by the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program prior to registering for the course.

**Student Athletes**

School of Nursing professors make every effort to accommodate the needs of student athletes. It is the student’s responsibility to communicate with their professors before the beginning of the semester to discuss time schedules. Academics must come first in the case of a conflict.

**Learning or Physical Disabilities**

Students with a disability and who will be requesting accommodations should register with either Kathy Duggan (kathleen.duggan@bc.edu), Associate Director, Academic Support Services, the Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities and ADHD) or Suzy Conway (suzy.conway.1@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for Students with Disabilities (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

**Class Attendance**

Students are expected to attend classes regularly, take tests, and submit papers and other work at the times specified by the professor on the course syllabus. Students who are absent repeatedly from class or practica will be evaluated by faculty responsible for the course to ascertain their ability to achieve the course objectives and to continue in the course. Students are expected to notify faculty prior to a scheduled clinical laboratory session or scheduled examination if they will be absent or tardy. Professors may include, as part of the semester’s grades, marks for the quality and quantity of the student’s participation in class.

Professors will announce, reasonably well in advance, tests and examinations based on material covered in class lectures and discussions, as well as other assigned material. A student who is absent from class on the day of a previously announced examination, including the final examination, is not entitled, as a matter of right, to make up what was missed. The professor involved is free to decide whether a make-up will be allowed.
A student who is absent from class is responsible for obtaining class materials and information about announced tests, papers, or other assignments.

In cases of prolonged absence the student or a family member should communicate with the Associate Dean as soon as the prospect of extended absence becomes clear. The academic arrangements for the student’s return to classes should be made with the Associate Dean’s Office as soon as the student’s health and other circumstances permit.

In some instances, a student misses too many classes or clinical days to satisfactorily complete the course. In such cases the student should discuss withdrawing with the professor and academic advisor. All withdrawal requests are signed by the Associate Dean.

**GRADE EQUIVALENCIES**

The following conversion chart is used to compute grades for undergraduate nursing courses:

- A  94-100%
- A-  90-93%
- B+  87-89%
- B   84-86%
- B-  80-83%
- C+  77-79%
- C   74-76%
- C-  70-73%
- D+  67-69%
- D   64-66%
- D-  60-63%
- F   below 60%

**LATE PAPERS / PROJECTS**

Students are responsible for submitting all written work for a course to the instructor by the published deadline. Professors are not obliged to accept any work beyond the deadline or to grant extensions. If a student has a legitimate reason for being unable to submit work on time the student may request a dean’s letter of explanation, but all arrangements for submission of the work must be negotiated directly between the student and professor.

**COURSE EXTENSIONS**

If any course work will be submitted after the final examination, a formal extension is required from the professor. The instructor is under no obligation to grant an extension. When work is not completed on time, the professor submits an Incomplete (I) as a grade. All such grades will automatically be changed to an F on March 1 for the fall, August 1 for the spring, and October 1 for the summer unless the professor has removed the Incomplete by changing the grade. No incompletes will be granted in nursing courses at the end of the fall semester.

**LOST WORK**

It is the student’s responsibility to see that the instructor receives the work submitted. The student should always make a copy of a paper or project before it is submitted, especially if it is mailed or left at a department office.

**ACADEMIC EVALUATION DISPUTES**

Students have the right to know which components of a course comprise the final grade, to be graded fairly in relation to the other students in the course, and to understand why a particular grade was given. The instructor has the right to determine which course components will be graded, the weight that will be given to each, and the responsibility to grade students consistently. The instructor is also expected to provide a syllabus specifying dates for assignments and examinations and the weight given to each course component in determining the final grade. Students who believe that they have been graded unfairly should first meet with the instructor, bring a copy of the paper or exam in question, and request an explanation for the grade. Students who have discussed the grade with the instructor and still feel that the grade was unfair may appeal to the Teacher of Record and/or the chairperson. If this discussion does not produce a satisfactory resolution, a formal appeal may be filed with the Associate Dean for the Undergraduate program.

**MAIL ROOM**

Each student has a mail folder located in the student lounge, Cushing 211. Students are responsible for the materials in their folders. The bulletin boards in the student lounge hold information about job opportunities for students and other information that may be of use.

**EMAIL**

Students are required to check their Boston College email on a regular basis, because important announcements and opportunities are communicated from the Associate Dean’s office by email.
academic and professional integrity

(SEE THE BOSTON COLLEGE CATALOG OR STUDENT SERVICES WEBSITE FOR THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY)

Nursing students are expected to have high standards of integrity in both the academic and clinical settings. Integrity is a reflection of the respect that one holds for oneself and others. It is reflected by a student’s behavior in class and in the clinical laboratory. It is expected that students arrive for class on time and refrain from talking, using cell phones, viewing websites or email on electronic devices, or otherwise making a disturbance. Professors may prohibit the use of computers or other electronic devices in the classroom. If a student’s behavior is disruptive, she/he will be asked to leave the classroom. It is up to the professor whether a latecomer will be allowed to enter the classroom.

The following are definitions of terms that deal with issues of integrity:

Cheating is any fraudulent or dishonest presentation of work. This includes unauthorized aids in exams or other academic exercise submitted for evaluation; the falsification or fabrication of data; copying from another student’s work; unauthorized cooperation in doing assignments or examinations; the use of purchased term papers; and dishonesty in requests for extensions of assignments or make-up examinations.

Plagiarism is the act of taking the words, ideas, data, illustrations, or statements of another person or source, and presenting them as one’s own. Each student is responsible for learning and using proper methods of paraphrasing and footnoting, quotation, and other forms of citation, to ensure that the original author, speaker, illustrator, or source of the material used is clearly acknowledged.

Collusion is assisting another student in an act of dishonesty. However, students must learn to work cooperatively rather than competitively, and learn to use the works and ideas of others without violating intellectual honesty.

ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Ethical behavior in clinical situations is based on the American Nurses’ Association Code for Nurses and federal regulations related to patient information privacy (HIPAA). Students are expected to protect patients’ confidentiality and to be honest in any documentation regarding the patient’s condition and their own assessments and interventions. Students are expected to maintain high professional standards, including being physically, intellectually, emotionally, and academically prepared when caring for patients.

SANCTIONS AND PROCEDURES

Faculty and students have a responsibility to take appropriate action when they detect any form of academic or professional dishonesty. Professors may handle minor infractions themselves. Students should bring the incident to the attention of the professor or chairperson of the department. Behavior that is deemed unethical or unprofessional may result in a student’s dismissal from the School or the University.

CORI CHECKS AND QUALIFICATION TO TAKE THE NCLEX

Graduates of the School of Nursing must pass a national examination (NCLEX-RN) in order to become licensed to practice as a Registered Nurse. In addition to academic preparation, licensure as a Registered Nurse requires that the individual be of good moral character and disclose prior court convictions. Health care agencies require that all personnel who care for patients undergo a criminal offense record investigation (CORI). Information about this procedure will be discussed prior to registering for clinical nursing courses.
academic advisement

It is the student’s responsibility to take advantage of the advisement system. Each student is assigned a faculty advisor from the School of Nursing. That assignment is permanent unless the student requests a new advisor or the faculty member leaves Boston College. Students should meet with their advisors on a regular basis but must meet with them prior to registration in the fall and spring. The faculty advisor will give the student the access code number required for online registration. Students are expected to keep their advisors informed about their academic progress and to seek assistance with problems in a timely way.

support services

The Connors Family Learning Center located in the O’Neill Library provides services for students that enhance academic performance. Here students may request tutoring, help in test-taking, and learn about strategies for academic success. Free tutoring is available for most courses.

The Counseling Service assists students with concerns about personal adjustment and emotional well-being. Counseling services are confidential. Students may contact a counselor directly in any one of the counseling offices on campus (Gasson 108, Fulton 254, Campion 301) or call (617)552-3310 to make an appointment.

The Simulation Laboratories located on the fourth floor of Cushing Hall are state-of-the-art centers where students complete classwork and practice clinical skills.

The Kennedy Resource Center on the fourth floor of Cushing Hall is a place where students may view videos, work with interactive video programs, and take advantage of other materials as adjuncts to their readings.
clinical laboratory

Off-campus clinical nursing experiences begin in the sophomore or junior year in Adult Health I Clinical, and are an essential component of the curriculum. Here the student applies the knowledge gained in the classroom and through assignments in real-life situations under the direct guidance of a faculty member. The School of Nursing is fortunate to be able to take advantage of health-care institutions in a city known worldwide for excellence in nursing and medicine.

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Nursing students have health requirements beyond those of every Boston College freshman. These requirements are mandated by the agencies used as clinical practice sites, and include an annual screening for tuberculosis (PPD), evidence of immunity to varicella (chicken pox), and an updated tetanus shot as needed. Students who are out of compliance with these requirements will not be allowed to attend clinical practice sites and will have their online course registration privileges blocked. Additional physical examinations and/or other health data may be required by the School of Nursing, and all requirements are subject to change.

CPR

Students are required to be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) prior to enrolling in NU230 (Adult Health I) and maintain that certification. CPR certification must be at the health care provider level and provide hands-on training related to resuscitation of adults, infants, and children. Appropriate courses would include the American Heart Association “Basic Life Support (BLS) for Health Care Providers” or the Red Cross “CPR for Professional Rescuers.”

LIABILITY INSURANCE

All students are covered by the University liability insurance policy when they are enrolled in a course with a clinical component. This insurance covers the student only for activities directly related to the School of Nursing courses. This insurance does not cover a student working as an aide, nurse assistant, independent consultant or volunteer during an emergency/disaster. Students who work in health-care related jobs during the school year or summer are not practicing as nursing students. They are either independent contractors if working directly for a patient/client, or are employees of an agency. As independent contractors, students must not practice nursing without a license and may not perform nursing procedures.

TRANSPORTATION TO CLINICAL

Students are responsible for their own transportation to clinical sites. Students generally travel in groups and use public transportation. Parking is very expensive at local health care agencies and cannot be paid for by the school. Some nursing students are allowed to bring cars to campus, although space in the Boston College lot is limited, costly, and determined by lottery for upperclassmen only. Travel options and safety concerns will be discussed in the first clinical nursing course.
UNIFORM POLICY

Certain standards are expected of students who represent the School of Nursing in its partnering agencies. Students are responsible for adhering to the following uniform policy:

The uniform is worn only when a student is functioning as a Boston College nursing student under the guidance of Boston College School of Nursing faculty. Boston College School of Nursing students obtain their uniforms and name pins from the Boston College Bookstore prior to entering Adult Health I clinical.

The uniform consists of:

- Maroon scrub pants and top (abdomen must be fully covered).
- Lab coat
- Official name pin specifying the student’s first and last name and “Boston College Connell School of Nursing” is worn on the uniform shirt.
- Predominantly white shoes
- Nails must be trimmed; neutral polish may be worn; no artificial nails are allowed as they harbor microorganisms
- Hair is worn off the collar and appropriately styled
- Make-up should be kept to a minimum
- Jewelry such as watches, wedding bands, Sigma Theta Tau pins, and small studs in ear lobes may be worn. Jewelry in the nose, tongue, or other sites on the face is not acceptable.

In courses where the uniform is not required (e.g., Community Health, Psychiatric Nursing), students are expected to dress appropriately and professionally. For clinical preparation days where lab coats are required instead of uniforms, professional dress usually includes a skirt or full length slacks and closed-toed shoes. Jeans or other casual attire are inappropriate. Note that some affiliating agencies have policies prohibiting visible tattoos and/or any facial jewelry.

PROCEDURE FOR PROTECTION FROM COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The Health Assessment, Adult Health II, Child Health, and fall Community Health courses will include content on standard precautions. The information will be consistent with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Students will sign a form in the above identified courses indicating that they have received information about reducing the risk of exposure to pathogens. This form will be updated every year and the signed form will be placed permanently in the student record. Current policies consistent with existing OSHA and CDC guidelines will be posted in the Simulation Laboratory.

If a student, while engaged in clinical practice activities, has an exposure to potentially infected body fluid from a client, the student should do the following:

- a. Immediately remove soiled clothing and wash the exposed area with soap and water.
- b. Notify faculty member.
- c. Report to nearest emergency room on site at the agency or as directed by the University Health Service within 1-2 hours.
- d. Identify self as student with a possible HIV/HBV exposure.
- e. Give close attention to filling out the Incident Report for the agency, School of Nursing and University Health Services. A copy of the agency report form must be forwarded to the Office of the Associate Dean within 72 hours of the exposure.

Students who have been exposed to tuberculosis should go to the University Health Service or to their primary health care provider.

Boston College will assume the financial responsibility, if necessary, for emergency assessment and interventions through the first 72 hours after the exposure incident occurs. No member of the Boston College community, either student or faculty member, shall be denied medical evaluation and counseling based on immediate fee-for-service. The School of Nursing will keep a confidential record of medical treatment and evaluation according to OSHA standards.
registration policies

(detailed information is published in the schedule of courses)

How to register for courses

Prior to the registration period each semester, students must meet with their faculty advisors to have course selections approved and obtain their registration access codes. The Registrar will assign the student a registration time; this determines the earliest time at which a student will be able to register online. The student may register at this assigned time or anytime later, but the likelihood of a course being closed increases the longer the student waits. It is imperative that students register for clinical nursing courses, because clinical group assignments are made from the course roster.

Drop/add/change courses

Students may drop or add a course any time after they have registered until the end of the drop/add period (see date published in the University catalog). Drop/adds after that time must be approved by the Associate Dean.

Taking a course Pass/Fail

After the first year, students may register on a Pass/Fail basis for electives only. This option is designed to allow students to explore fields of study without being unduly concerned about grades. In a Pass/Fail course, the student must do all of the work required to achieve a passing grade. If the student passes, the grade will not be averaged into the GPA. If the student fails, the F will be included in the GPA. Students may register for a course on a Pass/Fail basis by securing the approval of the faculty member teaching the course and the Associate Dean of the Undergraduate Program. Course registration may be changed from graded to Pass/Fail during the drop/add period.

Overload

Students must enroll in a minimum of four 3-credit courses each semester to be considered full time. An overload is enrollment in 6 or more courses in a semester. Normally, students may take an overload if their GPA was at least 3.0 the previous semester. Sixth courses may be added in the drop/add period at the beginning of each semester.

summer courses

Students who wish to take courses over the summer to make up a deficiency or complete a requirement with a time conflict during the regular school year (e.g., students studying abroad who need to fulfill core requirements) should complete an Undergraduate Course Approval Form (available on the Student Services webpage). The completed form (with a copy of the course description) should be submitted to the associate dean prior to registering for the course. Core courses must also be approved by the relevant Boston College department. All courses must be taken at accredited four-year colleges. Certain courses from community colleges may be approved by the associate dean under special circumstances.

Withdrawal from a course

If a student wishes to withdraw from a course after the drop/add period is over, she/he must request approval from the academic advisor and/or Associate Dean. When a student withdraws from a course, a “W” will appear on the official transcript, but no grade is averaged into the GPA and no credit is given. The decision to withdraw should be considered carefully. A withdrawal may constitute a course deficiency and affect a student’s academic status, so a low passing grade may be preferable to a withdrawal under some conditions. Withdrawals must be completed before the posted deadline each semester. After the deadline, withdrawals will be approved only in the most exceptional circumstances.

Withdrawal from the School of Nursing

Students in satisfactory academic standing (minimum of 1.67 in non-nursing and 2.0 in nursing courses) may take a leave of absence from the School of Nursing with a guarantee of readmission. If a student takes a leave of absence after Drop/Add time, but before the deadline for course withdrawals, a grade of “W” for all semester courses will be listed on the transcript. Although readmission is guaranteed, conditions of readmission as a full time student may be specified by the Associate Dean.

In the case of a leave of absence or voluntary withdrawals, the student must complete a Withdrawal Form available from the Undergraduate Administrative Assistant, discuss plans with his/her advisor, and secure permission of the Undergraduate Associate Dean. The student must apply for readmission from a Leave or Withdrawal through the Associate Dean’s Office at least four months before the start of a semester in which she/he plans to return if the student will be entering a clinical course.
academic and special opportunities

DIRECTED INDEPENDENT STUDY

Junior and senior students are encouraged to develop a proposal for Directed Independent Study. This option allows an eligible student to study an area of nursing that is not part of the required nursing curriculum or that the student wishes to pursue in greater depth. A cumulative grade point average of 3.0 is a prerequisite. Guidelines and an application for Directed Independent Study (NU299, 3 credits) are available from the Administrative Assistant for the Undergraduate Program or on the “forms” link of the Undergraduate Nursing webpage. A student should initiate the approval of the proposed Independent Study prior to registration. Faculty supervising the Independent Study submit the proposal to their chairperson for approval. Once the proposal has been approved, the Assistant for the Undergraduate Program will issue the correct section of NU299 to the student.

FIFTH YEAR B.S./M.S.

This program enables students to graduate with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in five years. Students take graduate courses their junior and senior year and during the summer after graduation. They complete the master’s degree in one additional year of study, or opt to enroll in the program on a part-time basis. In order to qualify for this program, students must maintain an academic average of 3.2, pass all nursing courses with a B or above, pass the nursing license examination, and complete all application requirements. Students should review the master’s program Plan of Study with their academic advisor by the end of their junior year. The program is described on the graduate nursing webpage (www.bc.edu/schools/son/programs/masters/programs.html). The application deadline for those who plan to enroll full time in the fifth year is March 15. Clinical preceptors will not be available for students applying after that date, although part time study will be allowed.

GRADUATE COURSES

Selected undergraduate students may take up to two master’s courses as part of their elective requirement. These credits would count toward the master’s degree at Boston College Connell School of Nursing. Permission of the course instructor, academic advisor, and Associate Dean is required (see “Permission for Undergraduate student to enroll in Graduate Nursing Course” form on the undergraduate nursing website).

UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOW PROGRAM (UGRF)

Boston College established the Undergraduate Research Fellows Program to enhance the academic experience of undergraduates by cultivating their research skills and fostering mentor relationships between undergraduates and faculty. The program provides a stipend for a student’s assistance on a faculty member’s research project. Students interested in this opportunity should contact the Associate Dean or visit the UGRF page on the CSON Research website.

MINORS

Nursing students may minor in another subject by completing the requirements outlined in the University Catalog. In addition, nursing students may complete a CSON Hispanic Studies minor by completing any six Romance Language courses in that study area. Interested students should meet with the Associate Dean to discuss this option.

FELLOWSHIP AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities for undergraduate students to obtain grants, fellowships, and other awards. Some examples include Advanced Study Grants for independent summer travel/projects and the Houston and Truman Fellowships. Complete details are available on the website at www.bc.edu/offices/ufel.

GLOBAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

The Connell School of Nursing has instituted a Global Health Initiative that involves travel to Nicaragua as part of the Community Health Clinical rotation. Complete details are available on the CSON Undergraduate Program website.

GLOBAL PROFICIENCY CERTIFICATES

Many CSON students choose to participate in the Boston College Global Proficiency Program. This joint program between Student Affairs, the Center for International Partnerships and Programs, and Academic Affairs is aimed at documenting and promoting Boston College Students who are committed to an international, cross-cultural perspective. Complete details may be found at www.bc.edu/offices/odsd/intercultural/gp.
co-curricular activities & student participation in the governance of the school

Students in the School of Nursing are part of the University community and are encouraged to participate in the wide variety of co-curricular activities available. Some of these activities originate in the School of Nursing and others are for students throughout the University. Some of the School of Nursing activities are listed here; students are advised to look at the Boston College Student Guide for a listing of University activities.

HONOR SOCIETY

Alpha Chi is the Boston College School of Nursing’s chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International, the Honor Society of Nursing. It is a vibrant, active chapter composed of faculty, students, alumnae, and nurses from the community. Students may apply for membership in their junior year.

SCHOOL OF NURSING SENATE

The Nursing Senate is the official representative of the undergraduate students in the School of Nursing. Among its purposes are: to aid in the development of the nursing student; to contribute to standards of nursing education; to serve on School of Nursing Committees; to promote recruitment activities; and to collaborate with Boston College Student Nurses’ Association as well as other nursing related health organizations. Membership consists of all undergraduate nursing students. The governing group of the Senate consists of the elected class officers from each class. The bylaws of the Senate may be obtained from the class officers or the Associate Dean.

STUDENT NURSES’ ASSOCIATION

Boston College Student Nurses’ Association is a local chapter of the National Student Nurses’ Association. This organization enables students to gain a broad perspective of various facets of nursing, including community health, legislation and education. In addition, the group provides an opportunity to travel to state and national meetings and develop leadership skills.

STUDENT INPUT INTO FACULTY PROMOTION AND CONTRACT RENEWAL DECISIONS

Each September, the Associate Dean forwards to the Senate a list of faculty who are up for promotion or contract renewal that year. The Senate collects student responses and forwards them to the Dean’s office; any student may also submit an evaluation directly to the Dean. For promotion decisions, one undergraduate student should be designated by the Senate to present the compiled results at the second tenured faculty meeting in October. For clinical faculty seeking contract renewals, written evaluations must be received by the Dean no later than the first day of classes in January.

STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN FACULTY COMMITTEES

Students are invited to participate in faculty committees, either by appointment through the Senate or by personal invitation from a faculty member. Students are not voting members of faculty committees, but their input is highly valued.
how to prevent problems and where & how to get help

ISSUES OF FINANCES

Given the ever-increasing cost of college, students often find that they must work on or off campus to help support themselves and/or help pay tuition. Student Services in Lyons Hall maintains a listing of work/study and other openings on campus as well as a job registry of off-campus employment opportunities to assist students in finding appropriate work.

Occasionally financial pressures cause students to work longer hours than is realistically possible for someone going to college full-time. If you find yourself in this situation your grades will suffer and you may end up paying additional tuition if course deficiencies require you to make up work. If you find yourself in serious financial difficulties there are several steps you should take:

• Consult a financial aid advisor and get the facts on your eligibility for various grants and low interest loans. A wide variety of programs with differing requirements are available for both middle and lower income families. It is especially important to speak with a financial aid advisor if your family’s income or expenses change significantly. If you complete your financial aid forms promptly, your advisor can help you determine which programs may benefit you and may also be able to suggest other sources of support. Make sure to ask for the current information.

• If you are having specific problems meeting the university’s tuition payment schedule, you should consult Student Services in Lyons Hall to determine whether there is some other payment schedule that could be arranged.

• In some cases it may make sense to take a Leave of Absence for a semester or more to try to save the money necessary for tuition. If so, you should discuss the pros and cons of taking a leave with the Undergraduate Associate Dean.

ADVICE FOR SUCCESS

• Read this handbook and other published information (Undergraduate Catalog, calendars, schedule of courses, web, etc.) carefully. These contain much of the information you need to know.

• Do not assume that deadlines and regulations will be waived because it seems to make sense to you. There are exceptions to every rule, but academic deadlines and regulations are not arbitrary and must be enforced consistently to be fair to everyone.

• Inquire early. Whether you feel that your circumstances warrant special treatment or you are just interested in exploring different opportunities, there are many more options available early than there are later. This is true whether you are concerned about a late paper, international study, health problems, etc.

• Do not let problems become unmanageable because you are afraid or embarrassed to see your professor, advisor, or dean. You can always imagine problems or decisions to be more difficult than they really are, and in any case you will have to deal with them eventually.

• Ask someone who knows. Roommates’ opinions, rumors, and even the experience of others may reflect different circumstances than your own, so you must make the effort to find the person who has the information you need.

• Enjoy your time at Boston College and make the most of it!