

Policy: Attendance

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish the requirements and expectations for student attendance at all orientations, classes, seminars, laboratories, and clinical experiences throughout the Bachelor of Nursing (BN) Programs.

Attendance is a fundamental expectation within the BN Programs and reflects the core professional values of accountability, collaboration, and integrity. Consistent attendance and active participation are essential for academic success and for the development of clinical reasoning, clinical judgment, and teamwork skills required for nursing practice.

As future registered nurses, students in the BN Programs are preparing to enter a highly respected and trusted profession in which reliability and professional presence directly impact patient safety and team functioning. Demonstrating accountability through regular attendance is an essential component of developing into a competent, ethical, and collaborative healthcare professional.

DEFINITIONS:

Absence: Not being physically present to participate in the scheduled activities of a course.

Fitness to Practice: Is the capacity to meet the CRNA *Practice Standards* and the Canadian Nurses Association *Code of Ethics for Nurses*, through professional conduct, clinical competence and the ability to provide safe and effective care. Being fit to practice includes having the physical and psychological (emotional, behavioral and cognitive) capacity to fulfill all aspects of nursing practice.

Nursing Praxis: Encompasses all orientation, simulation, laboratory, and clinical experiences, including associated components, activities, and scheduled hours, required for the development of competencies essential for the professional practice of a baccalaureate-prepared registered nurse.

POLICY SCOPE:

This policy applies to all students in the BN Programs. Exceptions are as follows:

1. **Athletic Team Participation:**

Students who are members of official athletic teams at the University of Lethbridge or Lethbridge Polytechnic and have team obligations that may conflict with theory, lab, or praxis courses must:

- Provide each instructor with a schedule of athletic commitments (from the coach) at the start of the course, or as early as possible.
- Discuss potential absences with instructors to determine if they can be accommodated without compromising course outcomes or required praxis hours.

Failure to provide the schedule at the start of the course may jeopardize permission to attend athletic events. Students are also required to consult an academic advisor each semester to plan courses in a way that minimizes conflicts with athletic commitments.

2. CNSA Conference Attendance:

Students may be granted permission to attend one annual or regional Canadian Nursing Students' Association (CNSA) conference during course or praxis time per academic year, provided participation does not negatively affect achievement of course objectives. Travel time allowance is assessed and approved per conference. Permission is granted to students who:

- Are in good standing in the BN program, and
- Follow the application process outlined in the ***BN Programs Guideline: CNSA Conference Delegate Application Form***.

3. NESA Governance Committees:

Student participation on NESA governance committees is encouraged to incorporate student perspectives into program decision-making. Whenever possible, meeting dates and times will be scheduled to avoid conflicts with classroom or praxis commitments. (See ***BN Programs Guideline: Student Participation in BN Programs Governance***)

POLICY STATEMENT(S):

1. Purpose

This policy establishes expectations for attendance, participation, and fitness to practice for students in the BN Programs. Adherence reflects accountability, integrity, and professional conduct consistent with:

- **Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses** (Canadian Nurses Association, 2025)
- **CRNA Practice Standards for Regulated Members** (College of Registered Nurses of Alberta, 2023)

The policy ensures students engage safely and competently in theory, lab, seminar, and praxis components of the program.

2. Attendance Requirements

a) Mandatory Attendance:

- Attendance at all scheduled theory, lab, and praxis components is required. Missing praxis days increases risk of unsuccessful course completion.
- Orientation sessions are mandatory. Missing a praxis orientation session will result in withdrawal from the praxis course and co-requisite theory/lab courses with a grade of "W." Students will be re-sequenced at the next available offering.
- Due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g., unit closure, weather or road conditions, or instructor illness), scheduled praxis experiences may be modified, cancelled, or rescheduled. Praxis

instructors will notify students as soon as reasonably possible of any changes to scheduled praxis hours or shifts (see BN Programs Guideline: Practice Day Cancellation).

b) Lab Requirements:

- Students must notify both lab and praxis instructors if a session is missed.
- Missed lab sessions must be made up, arranged, and attended at the Simulation Health Centre/Hub with a BN-prepared facilitator.
- Students must complete required lab practice and skill validation **before performing skills in the praxis setting**.
- Students are accountable for ensuring they are prepared to practice safely and according to program and professional standards. Failure to meet these expectations will result in being deemed unprepared for clinical praxis, affecting course progression and program standing.

c) Scheduling:

To ensure fitness to practice and avoid learner fatigue, students must adhere to the following scheduling regulations:

- Maximum 12 hours in a 24-hour period.
- Maximum 84 hours in a two-week period.
- No overtime and no short shifts.

3. Professional Conduct and Safe Participation

- Students will be excluded or removed from learning experiences if deemed unsafe or unprepared.
 - a. A student is considered **unsafe** if behaviors or actions:
 - Pose a risk to clients, peers, or staff;
 - Demonstrate impaired judgment or functioning; or
 - Violate professional boundaries or conduct standards.
 - b. A student is considered **unprepared** if they:
 - Fail to complete required pre-learning activities;
 - Cannot demonstrate essential knowledge or skills for safe participation;
 - Do not bring required materials or equipment; or
 - Arrive late or miss key orientation content, compromising understanding or continuity of care.

Note: These examples are not exhaustive. Instructors may determine other behaviors as unsafe or unprepared based on professional judgment and the learning environment.

4. Fitness to Practice

- Students are responsible for ensuring their fitness to attend theory, lab, or praxis activities. Attending while unwell compromises personal well-being, professional integrity, and safety of others. (**See BN Programs Policy: Fitness to Practice**)

5. Absence Reporting

a) Notification Procedures:

- a. **Praxis:** Call instructor ≥30 minutes before shift and email Practice Coordinator (LP)/Assistant Dean, Nursing (UL).
- b. **Theory/Lab:** Email instructor before class begins.
- c. **NURS 4922 Preceptorship:** Call preceptor ≥30 minutes before shift and email Faculty Advisor.

b) Unexcused Absences:

- a. Unexcused absences constitute unprofessional conduct and occur when a student fails to follow required notification procedures or provide a valid rationale. Such absences may result in academic or disciplinary consequences, including documentation of unprofessional conduct, initiation of an Enhancement Plan, and/or potential impact on course progression.
- b. Professional or personal pursuits are not considered acceptable reasons for absence from scheduled nursing courses. Students are responsible for planning all external commitments outside the established term dates of Lethbridge Polytechnic and the University of Lethbridge to ensure full participation in program requirements.

c) Bereavement:

- a. Bereavement absences are addressed individually in consultation with the Practice Coordinator/Assistant Dean, Nursing.

6. Administrative Tracking:

- a. Praxis hours are tracked via HSPnet
- b. Student Progress Reports are submitted each semester via the institutional learning management system (LMS) (**See BN Programs Guideline: Student Progress Report**).

APPENDIX:

N/A

RELATED POLICIES/ASSOCIATED GUIDELINES:

BN Programs Policy: Fitness to Practice

BN Programs Guideline: Student Participation in NESAs Governance Committees

BN Programs Policy: Professional Conduct

BN Programs Guideline: Student Progress Report

REFERENCES:

- Alberta Health Services (2013). *Student placement agreement*.
<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/careers/cp-stu-spa.pdf>
- Barkley, E. F., Cross, K. P., & Major, C. H. (2014). *Collaborative Learning Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Canadian Nurses Association. (2025). *Code of ethics for nurses*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Nurses Association. <https://www.cna-aiic.ca/en/nursing/regulated-nursing-in-canada/nursing-ethics/2025-coe>
- College of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2019). Entry-level competencies for the practice of registered nurses. <https://cms.nurses.ab.ca/media/p4nel3mq/9-entry-level-competencies-for-the-practice-of-registered-nurses-mar-2019.pdf>
- College of Registered Nurses of Alberta. (2023). *Practice standards for registrants*. www.nurses.ab.ca/media/pphpzbq2/practice-standards-for-registrants-2023.pdf
- University of Saskatchewan (2023). *Attendance Policy*.
<https://nursing.usask.ca/policies/undergraduate.php>
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For the most current policy information, always refer to the official NESA BN Program Guidelines and Forms Website: <https://www.ulethbridge.ca/healthsciences/policies>

Approved by/date: NESA Joint Faculty Council; May 11, 2026