Table of Contents

I. Introduction ........................................................................................................... 4
Welcome Undergraduate Student Handbook .................................................. 4
About the College of Nursing ............................................................................. 5
Accreditation ......................................................................................................... 6
Educational Philosophy ....................................................................................... 6
Educational Opportunities .................................................................................. 6
Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programs ....................................................... 6
Health Science Minor .......................................................................................... 6
Graduate Nursing Programs ................................................................................ 7

II. University and College Information for Students ..................................... 8
Undergraduate Catalog (Bulletin) ....................................................................... 8
Student Conduct Code ....................................................................................... 8
College of Nursing Policies ............................................................................... 8
Technical Standards for Nursing Students ....................................................... 8
Accommodations for Students with Disabilities .............................................. 9
Affirmative Action / Equal Employment Opportunity / Title IX .................... 9
Language Proficiency Requirements .............................................................. 9
Release of Information ...................................................................................... 9
Communication with Faculty ............................................................................ 9
Resources ............................................................................................................ 10
Student Involvement .......................................................................................... 10

III. Academic Advising ....................................................................................... 11
Assigned Advisors ............................................................................................. 11
Transfer Course Permission and Transcript Evaluation .................................. 11
Registering for Courses ..................................................................................... 12
Adding and/or Dropping a Course ................................................................... 12
Withdrawal from Nursing and / or the University ........................................ 12
Site Transfer Requests ...................................................................................... 12

IV. College of Nursing Professional Standards ............................................ 13
Professional Standards ....................................................................................... 13
Unsafe Behavior during Nursing Courses ....................................................... 13
Patient Privacy ..................................................................................................... 13
Legal Issues ......................................................................................................... 14
Appearance ......................................................................................................... 14
Other Professional Requirements ..................................................................... 14

V. College of Nursing Academic Standards ................................................. 16
Student Academic Integrity and Appeals ......................................................... 16
Grade Appeal ....................................................................................................... 16
Course Grading Scale ........................................................................................ 16
Final Examinations .............................................................................................. 16
Grades Needed to Continue in the Nursing Major ........................................... 16
ATI Protocol for Students .................................................................................. 17
Grade Reports ..................................................................................................... 17
    Midterm .......................................................................................................... 18
    Final Grade Report ......................................................................................... 18
Absences ............................................................................................................ 18
Injuries, exposures, or needle sticks ................................................................. 18
Travel with State Cars ....................................................................................... 18

VI. Senior Exit and Graduation Process ............................................................ 19
Exit Survey and Interview with Leadership ................................................. 19
Requesting a Reference or Recommendation ............................................... 19
Registration for NCLEX and State Licensure ................................................. 19
Pinning and Annual Commencement Ceremonies .......................................... 19
Diplomas ............................................................................................................. 20
Transcripts .......................................................................................................... 20

Specific Information for RN Upward Mobility ............................................... 21
The Undergraduate Student Handbook is designed to be a resource to academic procedures and policies specific to undergraduate nursing students. Students should use the handbook as a first point of reference for questions concerning the program of study, course scheduling, or academic policies, and refer to online policies for additional clarification.

Advisors and faculty are prepared to assist students throughout the nursing program and in planning for a career after graduation. South Dakota State University has a number of resources to assist students and opportunities for student participation at the university and college levels. Please utilize these and all that they offer.

You have embarked on an exciting and rewarding journey. We are here to assist and support your educational and career endeavors. While you are primarily responsible for your own success, many individuals are ready to assist you in your efforts. On behalf of the Dean, faculty, and the staff of the College of Nursing, we wish you success with your academic studies and pursuits.
Undergraduate Student Handbook

The Undergraduate Student Handbook is designed as a guide to help students in their educational pursuits. The Undergraduate Student Handbook directs students to services, procedures, policies, and requirements of the South Dakota State University College of Nursing. The purposes are to:

1. provide guidance for new and continuing students.
2. describe general expectations and resources.
3. inform students of their rights and responsibilities.

The Undergraduate Student Handbook should be used in conjunction with syllabi and other materials distributed during orientation, registration, or by faculty and administrative offices. The College of Nursing reserves the right to change policies and procedures without prior notice. Changes are often made in response to university or partnership policy changes. This handbook is not intended to be and should not be regarded as a contract between the University, College, and/or any student or other person. The College of Nursing will post a notification to students when changes in procedures or policies are made. You will be accountable for those changes.

Details of policies discussed in this Student Handbook are available online in the College of Nursing Handbook. Questions can be answered by Nursing Student Services personnel or by a faculty advisor.

About the College of Nursing
The College of Nursing began in 1935 with the goal of educating nurses to meet the health care needs of the people of South Dakota and beyond. Approximately one third of the newly licensed registered nurses in South Dakota are South Dakota State University graduates. The College’s mission, vision, and values may be accessed at the College of Nursing Handbook.

Accreditation
The baccalaureate, master’s, and DNP programs at South Dakota State University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6792. The programs are also approved by the South Dakota Board of Nursing. More information is available on the College of Nursing website.
**Educational Philosophy**
Undergraduate education of nurses and other health care professionals is essential to the health and quality of life in the state, region, and nation. Education is a self-directed, yet interactive lifelong process that empowers learners to think critically and grow toward their potential as individuals and contributing members of the nursing profession and society. Being self-directed means that students will be expected to read material that may not be covered in class. Students should also seek information through the library and other sources.

The essential components of professional nursing education include liberal education, professional values, clinical reasoning, and role development. The role of faculty is to guide, direct, facilitate, and evaluate learning while encouraging curiosity, creativity, and independent critical thinking so that you are prepared for practice in a rapidly-changing health care environment and in multiple settings. Professional nurses are expected to continue to learn and stay current in health care and nursing.

**Educational Opportunities**

**Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program**

Undergraduate education provides students opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed for basic entry into professional nursing practice. This education provides the foundation for the development of professional knowledge, critical thinking, ethical decision-making, leadership skills, and pursuit of high standards in health care to influence quality health outcomes. Students are prepared to practice in hospital and non-hospital settings.

There are three options in the BSN program. The standard program is offered at the Brookings, Rapid City, and Sioux Falls sites. The accelerated program is designed for students who have earned a bachelor’s degree and can commit to completing the entire nursing program in one year. The accelerated programs are offered at the Sioux Falls and Aberdeen sites. The RN Upward Mobility or RN to BSN program is offered on-line. Students should talk with their advisor about the specifics of each option. Application processes and dates are available on the [College of Nursing website](http://example.com).

**Health Science Minor**

The health science minor offers nursing and other professional students the knowledge and skills to promote health, prevent disease, and protect the environment. Other minors are also available. Information about options for a minor is available from the student’s advisor.
Graduate Nursing Programs

It is never too early to think about graduate education, even for students who have not completed a bachelor’s degree. A Master’s education prepares nurses for advanced practice in nursing or for specialty areas of nursing practice. The advanced professional nursing role relies on best practices and evidence-based research with a focus on evaluation of health outcomes and process. The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in nursing prepares the nurse scholar to influence health care through leadership in education, policy, research, nursing theory, and knowledge development. Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) education prepares the nurse clinician for advanced practice in a primary care role and to influence health policy and systems. Students will hear more about the options and roles as they continue their education.
II. University and College Information for Students

Undergraduate Catalog (Bulletin)
The University currently provides an Undergraduate Catalog on-line. The catalog, which is in effect at the time a student is admitted to SDSU, is a guide for students that provides academic rules and regulations.

Student Conduct Code
As a student enrolled in the College of Nursing, you are a part of the total university community, with freedoms and responsibilities inherent in that capacity. The Student Conduct Code is the basic guideline reflecting university-student relations. You also have the responsibility to act appropriately while a student; the Student Conduct Code outlines those responsibilities.

College of Nursing Policies
College policies are available online in the College of Nursing Handbook. There are resources that pertain to all students under College Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines. There are also specific resources that pertain to undergraduate students under Undergraduate Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines. Please make time to review those and access them as needed.

Technical Standards for Nursing Students
The SDSU Technical Standards for Admission, Academic Progression, and Graduation, or Technical Standards, are an integral component of the SDSU CON academic requirements. See Technical Standards for details.

Key areas of the technical standards in nursing include:
- observation
- communication
- motor movement
- intellectual, conceptual and quantitative abilities
- behavioral and social attributes
- ability to manage stressful situations.

Nursing students must meet all of the requirements of the Technical Standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to successfully progress through and graduate from the program. These requirements pertain to student conduct regardless of the setting (e.g. classroom/didactic, office, on-campus simulation, off-campus clinical, email communications, etc.).

Students interested in applying for admission to the College of Nursing should review the Technical Standards to become familiar with the skills, abilities, and behavioral characteristics required to complete the program.

Students newly accepted into the major sign a document as part of CastleBranch Clinical Requirements acknowledging acceptance of the Technical Standards.
Students who have questions about whether they are able to meet the technical standards should contact the SDSU Director of Disability Services at 605-688-4504 or online at Disability Services.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Accommodations for students with disabilities are available. Any student who feels he/she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the SDSU Director of Disability Services. No accommodations will be made without appropriate documentation verifying a student’s disability. Once the Director of the Disability Services office has received a request from the student for accommodation and documentation of disability has been made, a determination of appropriate accommodation(s) will be made. These decisions are made based on the Civil Rights Law: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Any further questions should be referred to the SDSU Director of Disability Services at 605-688-4504.

**Affirmative Action / Equal Employment Opportunity / Title IX**
South Dakota State University and the College of Nursing are committed to maintaining a campus environment free from discrimination and harassment as articulated by federal law and university policy. If you feel that you have been discriminated against, harassed verbally, physically, or emotionally, or have experienced an assault or violence, please contact someone immediately. The Equal Opportunity Officer/Title IX is available online at Title IV/Equal Opportunity or by phone 605-688-4128. Emergencies at the Brookings site should be reported to the SDSU Police Department at 605-688-5117. Emergencies at other sites should be reported to the local police of that city. Additional information and resources are found at Safety and Security.

**Language Proficiency Requirements**
As the nurse is a professional who deals with human lives, it is mandatory that a higher level of English fluency be met in order to ensure the safety of clients and students. The College of Nursing requires all students who meet the definition of student with English as a Second Language complete the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or an accepted substitute. English as a Second Language is defined as a student who was instructed and spoke primarily in a language other than English in the K-12 grades, or primary and secondary schooling. The minimum TOEFL score required for admission to the nursing major is 84 (iBT), with a minimum speaking score of 26. The required IELTS band score for admission to the nursing major is 6.5, with a minimum of 6.0 in each module. The TOEFL or IELTS is required for all students for whom English is a second language, regardless of residency status. These scores are required before the student will be accepted into the major.
Release of Information
The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (also known as the Buckley Amendment) is a Federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's personal education records kept at the University. The law provides that the institution will maintain the confidentiality of each student's education records and covers matters relating to access to student records and the disclosure of such records. The Registrar or designee is the SDSU official who coordinates inspection, review, and/or disclosure procedures for student’s records, which include admissions, personal, and academic records. Questions related to release of student record information can be addressed with the Registrar’s Office 605-688-4121 or 800-952-3541 or the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs 605-688-4493.

Communication with Faculty
Students who have questions or concerns regarding course attendance requirements, grades on assignments or exams, etc. are expected to follow the communication links outlined in the Guideline for Communication of Undergraduate Student Program Concerns.

Resources
There are a number of resources to help you be successful. Resources differ based on the program location so check with your advisor or faculty member for the specifics.

Student Involvement
Students are encouraged to be involved in university and college activities. Activities listed here are specific to the College of Nursing. There are additional activities available to students at the university level.

Within the undergraduate nursing program, students have representation on semester faculty teams. The elected student representative(s) participate in general course discussions and provide input to the semester faculty team. Student representatives are not included in discussions regarding the performance of other students.

The College of Nursing has Nursing Student Ambassadors at each site. Check with academic advisors on the application process. Ambassadors assist with a number of events and activities representing the college to future and current students, families, and the public.

Student Nurses Association chapters are active at each site. They have informational meetings with speakers, fund raising projects to support community service activities, and participate in state and national association activities.

A Nurses Christian Fellowship group may be available at each site.
III. Academic Advising
Academic advising is formal and informal guidance intended to help you investigate, identify, and accomplish individual academic and career plans. The process of academic advising is an important part of the successful completion of the nursing major and graduation requirements. Advisors are able to provide you with assistance in course selection and scheduling, academic issues, application to the nursing major, and information on campus resources. For detailed information on the purpose of advising and the role of the advisee, see the SDSU Undergraduate Catalog.

Assigned Advisors
Students are assigned to an academic advisor who will assure that they meet the academic requirements for graduation and help them with resources for success. Students work closely with their advisor throughout their academic career. Students who wish to request a change in advisor may do so by contacting the Director of Nursing Student Services.

Advisors assist students with the following:
- Registering for classes
- Nursing major application process
- Dropping courses or making significant schedule adjustments
- Academic difficulties (including mid-term deficiencies)
- Academic petitions
- Finding or using university information and academic resources
- Transferring to another college or university
- Changing majors at SDSU
- Identifying equivalent courses at other universities

Transfer Course Permission and Transcript Evaluation
Current SDSU students should see their advisor before enrolling in support courses at other colleges and universities that have not been approved to replace a SDSU support course. When these courses are taken at colleges or universities outside the South Dakota Board of Regents System (SDBOR), students must have official transcripts sent and evaluations processed through the Records & Registration Office. Once courses are evaluated, the student can check the electronic system to see how their courses officially transferred to SDSU. Students should keep in mind that the transcript evaluation process may take several weeks to finalize. Having all transfer work evaluated in a timely manner is important to ensure accurate advising and graduation.
Registering for Courses
After meeting with their advisor, students in the nursing major will be registered for all nursing curriculum courses through the College of Nursing. However, students must work with their advisor before registering for other necessary general education courses or minor courses. Students are expected to meet with their advisor at least once per semester.

Adding and/or Dropping a Course
Procedures for adding or dropping a course are outlined in the SDSU Undergraduate Catalog.

Withdrawal from Nursing Major or the University
Students desiring to withdraw from the nursing major or the University should consult their advisor prior to the withdrawal. Withdrawal from the nursing major can be done through the College of Nursing. Students desiring to withdraw from the University should contact the Registrar’s Office at 605-688-6195 to initiate the withdrawal process.

Site Transfer Requests
On rare occasions, students may be allowed to transfer from one nursing major program site to another. These requests must be submitted in writing to the Director of Nursing Student Services for review and decision. Requests for site transfers are approved on a space-available basis and only for extenuating circumstances; written documentation must be provided. The student should contact their academic advisor for further information.
IV. College of Nursing Professional Standards

Professional Standards
Nurses have ethical and professional standards to maintain in working with clients or patients. As members of the health care team students are expected to demonstrate professional conduct and behaviors consistent with professional nursing and the *Code of Ethics for Nurses. Unethical, dishonest, or illegal conduct that is inconsistent with the Code of Ethics for Nurses may result in dismissal from the nursing major.* Student conduct concerns are handled by the Vice President of Student Affairs.

Unsafe Behavior during Nursing Major Courses
Student behavior may be considered unsafe in the clinical, simulation, or classroom setting if it endangers self or others. Unsafe or unacceptable clinical performance occurs when there is harm or potential harm. This can be determined by the faculty or nursing staff in the area. Clinical includes acute, ambulatory, community and simulation learning experiences. Unsafe or unacceptable care may occur when procedures are carried out incorrectly, care is not delivered in a timely manner, assessments are inaccurate or changes are not reported. Some examples include:

- inability to complete care/assignment within the established time period,
- inappropriate or untimely communication,
- evidence of behaviors by the nursing student that reflect an impaired state,
- evidence of inadequate preparation for clinical activities,
- incorrect or inadequate assessment/intervention, and
- dishonesty.

If a student is not prepared for clinical, the faculty member may ask the student to leave, which will result in an unexcused absence. A Notification of Concern document will be initiated by the instructor. The faculty member will work with the student to correct the performance. Should a student’s behavior continue to be unsafe the faculty member can choose to remove the student from the clinical area at the time of the occurrence or for the rest of the semester.

Patient Privacy
Students must comply with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Students must complete required training prior to clinical. Violations of HIPAA may result in sanctions up to and including dismissal from the nursing program as well as federal prosecution, fines, and imprisonment.

The College of Nursing upholds the American Nurses Association (ANA) *Principles for Social Networking* (2011). Students are expected to observe ethically prescribed professional patient-nurse boundaries. Standards for professionalism are the same online as they are in other circumstances. Postings
should not include any private patient information. Remember that patients, colleagues, institutions, and employers may view postings.

**Legal Issues**
Any student charged with a crime, with or without conviction, must notify the Director of Nursing Student Services within 48 hours. Failure to disclose could result in disciplinary action. Some convictions such as fraud, abuse, or assault, may result in being unable to be licensed as a nurse. A pattern convictions of driving under the influence, underage drinking, or drug possession may result in the need for a formal addiction assessment prior to licensing, or dismissal from the program. Future employment as a RN may be limited in some states based on legal violations.

**Appearance**
Appropriate attire is required to present a professional image and to ensure safety in all acute, ambulatory, and community settings. Students are required to adhere to the College of Nursing dress code policy.

Questions related to uniforms or appearance should be directed to Nursing Student Services or the semester coordinator. The College of Nursing has contracts with numerous health care and community agencies. Clinical site policies supersede College of Nursing policies if they are more stringent. For example, in some specialized areas, students will wear the designated uniform of that unit. Consult the faculty member in charge of the appropriate clinical experience concerning any changes in clinical uniform.

Photo ID and name badges are required for all clinical activities. The College of Nursing pays for the first name badge. If the name badge is lost or damaged, the student is responsible for replacement. Contact Nursing Student Services Office for replacement information. The student uniform and name pins are to be worn only for clinical experiences as authorized by the College of Nursing.

**Other Professional Requirements**
All students are required to submit SDSU College of Nursing compliance documents. The required documents can be found on CastleBranch. Documents must be submitted by the stated deadlines for each program. If documents are missing, students will not be allowed to participate in clinical experiences and each absence will be considered unexcused.

The SDSU College of Nursing partners with CastleBranch to manage students' health and compliance documents. The management system allows students to meet the requirements of the agencies where they fulfill the clinical requirements of their coursework by uploading required documents from their own personal computer or device. Depending on clinical agency placements, students may be required to submit additional documents or submit documents to an additional management system.
Please refer to the website for specific criteria. Examples of required documents include but are not limited to:

- Acknowledgement of requirement to meet technical Standards
- Drug screens
- Health Insurance
- Basic life support (CPR) certification
- Immunization records
- Tuberculin test
- Influenza vaccine or denial record
- Criminal background check and finger prints

Providing the required documents may occur on an annual or biennial basis. The system will alert students to upcoming expirations. The required documents must be uploaded and approved in CastleBranch prior to the expiration date. Clinical agencies require this documentation as part of their affiliation agreement with the College of Nursing. A student must meet requirements or the student will not be allowed to attend clinical and it will be counted as an unexcused absence.
V. College of Nursing Academic Standards

Student Academic Integrity and Appeals
Student Academic Integrity and Appeals: The University has a clear expectation for academic integrity and does not tolerate academic dishonesty. *The South Dakota State University Policy 2.4* sets forth the definitions of academic dishonesty, which includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, misrepresentation, and other forms of dishonesty relating to academics. This policy describes how charges of academic dishonesty are handled at the University. Academic Dishonesty is a serious charge. If a student is determined to be guilty of academic dishonesty, it may result in student discipline up to and including dismissal from the University.

Grade Appeal
*The South Dakota State University Policy 2.4* also outlines the process a student needs to follow if he/she feels that a final grade is not accurate. The policy outlines the timeline, process, and the form to be completed. While the process may seem complex, it assures that the student’s issue is addressed with due and fair process.

Course Grading Scale
The Undergraduate Nursing Department grading scale is as follows:
- A = 100-92%
- B = 91-84%
- C = 83-76%
- D = 75-68%
- F = 67% and below
Refer to individual course syllabi for performance standards.

Final Examinations *(SDSU Policy 2.1)*
The purpose of final examinations is to provide a final evaluation of students’ academic progress for the entire course or since the last examination. Final examinations or other learning experience will be scheduled during the scheduled finals week for courses of two or more credits unless exceptions have been approved by College of Nursing administration. Students should check with the Semester Coordinator at the beginning of the semester to determine the final examination schedule and *plan to be on campus during finals week.*

Grades Needed to Continue in the Nursing Major
- The nursing major is completed in a five-semester sequence. Each course of each semester must be completed before continuing to the next semester.
A grade of “C” or higher is required in all nursing major courses (including prefixes NURS, HSC or PHA). All undergraduate courses with the NURS prefix utilize the University’s ConnectState early alert function, which notifies the student’s Advisor when a student is not meeting course expectations. Students may repeat one failed nursing major course with permission from the College of Nursing Associate/Assistant Deans. A written request to repeat a course must be submitted to the Director of Nursing Student Services. Permission may be granted based on the circumstance related to the failure and based on available space.

Upon failing a second nursing major course, or the same nursing major course twice, the student is dismissed from the program.

A student who fails a course due to unsafe practice in a clinical experience will not be eligible for readmission to the nursing major unless evidence is submitted that unsafe behaviors have been corrected.

Incomplete “I” grades may be given at the instructor’s discretion in appropriate circumstances and per university policy.

All incomplete “I” grades in nursing major courses and other required courses must be satisfactorily removed before progression to the next semester of the nursing major.

A cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher is required for continuation in the nursing major.

Once admitted to the professional major, the College of Nursing requires an exam average of 76% in courses with an “NURS” prefix in order to pass. This excludes NURS 321 and NURS 323. Refer to syllabi for grading guidelines.

**ATI Protocol for Students**
Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) offers an assessment-driven review program designed to enhance student NCLEX-RN success. The comprehensive program offers multiple assessment and remediation activities. These include assessment indicators for academic success, critical thinking, and learning styles, online tutorials, online practice testing, and proctored testing over the major content areas in nursing. Assessments are incorporated into nursing courses once students complete the initial semester of the nursing major. Students should refer to the protocol listed in individual D2L course sites for more information.

**Grade Reports**

**Mid-term**
Mid-term deficiency reports are used to let students know that they are not completing requirements at a satisfactory level. The notification of deficiency is issued through the Registrar’s Office to the student. However, it is not recorded on the student’s official transcript. The ConnectState early alert system also notifies advisors of students’ deficiency reports.
Students should check “Grades” under WebAdvisor shortly after midterm to see if they have received any deficiencies. Students who receive deficiencies may have a C, D, or F in the course at mid-term. It is highly suggested that students who receive a deficiency in a course make an appointment with faculty teaching the course and discuss options for improving their grade. Students can also schedule an appointment with their advisor to discuss other study strategies.

**Final Grade Reports**
Final grade reports at the issues at the conclusion of the semester may be reviewed via WebAdvisor under “Grades.” If a student feels that a grade is not accurate, he/she should first talk to the instructor, following the [Guideline for Communication of Undergraduate Student Program Concerns](#). If there is no resolution, the student can initiate the academic appeal process noted above.

**Absences**
For student absences, refer to [South Dakota State University Policy 2.5 Class Attendance](#). Extended absences should be reported by the student to the Director of Nursing Student Services and/or the Vice President of Student Affairs 605-688-4493.

It is the expectation that all students will be present for scheduled academic events, including orientation sessions. Refer to course syllabi for consequences of unexcused absences. Students who have an unexcused absence from clinical will be billed for payment to makeup the time required, as outlined in the [Billing Procedure for an Unexcused Clinical Absence/Simulation/Community Experience](#).

**Injuries, Exposures, or Needle Sticks**
Students who experience an injury, exposure to blood or body fluids, or a needle stick while in clinical, simulation, or the skills lab are expected to notify the instructor immediately. The instructor will guide the student in accessing any needed medical care and will assist to complete required reports at the agency and for the university. Students are responsible for costs for any needed medical care. The policies with specific instructions and access to required forms are found in the [College of Nursing Handbook](#). Policies differ depending on campus site.

**Travel with State Cars**
State cars may be available for student use for certain situations depending on the site.
VI. Senior Exit and Graduation Process

Exit Survey and Focus Group Discussion with Leadership
It is an expectation that students will complete an online exit survey as part of College program evaluation process. Students will be given an opportunity to participate in a Focus Group discussion with the Assistant or Associate Dean for Undergraduate Nursing prior to graduation. The feedback from graduating students is important for quality improvement in the undergraduate programs. Information gathered through these exit processes will be reviewed and reported in aggregate. No individual student comments or information will be reported.

All graduating seniors will be required to follow the designated process for having a professional photo taken for the Composite photograph prior to the conclusion of Semester 5 coursework. Specific details are available from Nursing Student Services (NSS) at each site.

Requesting a Reference or Recommendation
The student may contact the faculty member or advisor of choice for the recommendation and complete the Request for Recommendation form. Providing additional background information such as the student’s community/college activities and professional or leadership positions held, or scholarships awarded is beneficial. Prior employment should also be included. Allow adequate time for the faculty member/advisor to write the recommendation before the stated deadlines.

Registration for NCLEX and State Licensure
There are two steps students must take to become licensed as a registered nurse. Nursing Student Services (NSS) at each site will assist students to 1) register for the NCLEX (National Council Licensing Exam) through PearsonVue and 2) help students obtain and complete information for State Board Licensure in the state in which the student plans to practice. NSS also provides general information about licensure issues and state compacts.

Licensure and application processes differ by state so it is important to check the state board of nursing website for the state in which the student plans to obtain a license. It is important to begin this process early in the 5th semester as some require a background check, drug screen or other documentation that take time to complete.

The steps to the processes for licensing and links to the state nursing boards are found on the National Council of State Boards of Nursing website.

Pinning and Annual Commencement Ceremonies
The College of Nursing holds a “Pinning Ceremony” for the graduating students at each campus site (Brookings, Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, and Rapid City). The ceremonies are held in December, May, and August. The pinning ceremony recognizes the discipline of nursing.
The university commencement (graduation) ceremony occurs each year in May at the Brookings campus. Since this ceremony is an annual event, students completing their degrees in the previous 12-calendar months may attend. August and December graduates may request to participate in the ceremony by contacting the Registrar’s Office.

There are additional charges associated with ordering academic attire and graduation announcements at CBGrad.

**Diplomas**
Diplomas take approximately 3-4 months to process and be signed. Students must decide how they plan to obtain their diploma, either through mail or picked up on campus. Diplomas are NOT sent to the College of Nursing program sites (Sioux Falls, Aberdeen, Rapid City). While ordering their graduation attire, students indicate how their diploma will be delivered. An additional fee is charged for mail delivery of the diploma.

**Transcripts**
Official transcripts will be available after graduation and final grade approval. There may be a delay for graduates needing final transcripts to complete an out-of-state licensure application. Information on ordering transcripts is found on the Registrar’s Office website.
Registration
Students in the RN Upward Mobility program are registered each semester by RN Upward Mobility staff (advisor or secretary). RN Upward Mobility staff serve as primary campus liaisons for the students. RN Upward Mobility students receive email notification of the registration times each semester, and are asked to refer to page 3 of their personal evaluation letter for the list of university and nursing required support courses to be completed. Students are asked to email or call the RN Upward Mobility office to place course registration requests. The telephone number to call is 1-888-216-9806, option 1. Registration may be viewed or confirmed in WebAdvisor.

Malpractice Insurance Requirements
Registered nurses who are enrolled in the nursing major courses must seek individual malpractice insurance. Since requirements for the amount change, please check with the advisor to determine the required coverage. The RN Students must have proof of malpractice insurance coverage before they can begin components of their clinical courses.

Transportation
RN students in the RN Upward Mobility program are required to provide their own transportation to complete their clinical experience. RNs travel independently to their practicum location for Nurs 385, Health Assessment and Clinical Decision Making and Nurs 416, Community Health.
Appearance
RN Upward Mobility students are asked to wear professional attire when meeting with agency personnel and during population-based clinical experiences. Students must wear their SDSU student name tag. There is no specific uniform requirement for RN-Upward Mobility students.