

Pikes Peak State College (PPSC)

**Practical Nursing Student Nurse Handbook (Fall 2026 – Summer
2027)**

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1. Welcome & General Provisions

Welcome Letter

On behalf of our faculty and staff, we would like to welcome you to the Pikes Peak State College (PPSC) Practical Nursing (PN) Program. We hope that the knowledge you obtain will help you meet the challenges and changes of the healthcare profession.

Your educational experience here will be rigorous and demanding, yet rewarding. Learning in nursing is a lifelong process. Our full-time faculty, part-time instructors, and community agency partners are all dedicated to supporting your success.

During your time in the program, you are expected to be responsible, accountable partners in this educational process. Please review this handbook carefully and keep it as a continuous reference. You will be asked to sign an acknowledgement confirming that you have read and agreed to adhere to all policies.

Program Leadership & Faculty:

Carmen Luttrell, MSN, RN — Director of Nursing Education Practices (DNEP)

Handbook Provision & Governing Authority

This Nursing Student Handbook contains pertinent policies current through its date of issuance. These policies operate in conjunction with general PPSC college policies. If any provision in this handbook conflicts with state or federal law, State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education Policies (BPs), or Colorado Community College System Procedures (SPs), the higher-level laws and policies supersede this handbook.

The faculty and Director of Nursing Education Practices reserve the right to change nursing program policies. Students will receive timely written notification of changes via D2L, official college email, and classroom/lab announcements.

Note: Nothing in this handbook constitutes an express or implied contract. PPSC reserves the right to modify, change, delete, or add policies as deemed appropriate.

2. Mission Statement & Philosophy of Nursing

College Mission Statement

To provide high-quality educational opportunities to all with a focus on student success and community needs, including occupational certificates, associate and bachelor's degrees, transfer pathways, and career/technical adult education.

Practical Nursing Program Mission Statement

"To provide quality nursing education that prepares the learner to become a member of the profession meeting the needs of a diverse population, in an ever-changing health care environment in both rural and/or urban settings."

Philosophy of the PPSC Nursing Program

The curriculum is built upon five foundational core concepts:

- **The Individual:** A unique, holistic being encompassing biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions deserving of dignity, autonomy, and respect.
 - **Health:** A dynamic continuum extending from high-level wellness to the cessation of life, shaped by personal choices, environment, and healthcare interventions.
 - **Nursing Practice:** A humanistic, scientific discipline utilizing evidence-based practice, critical thinking, and empathetic caring to meet the holistic needs of individuals, families, and communities.
 - **Teaching & Learning:** A cooperative, continuous process progressing from simple to complex concepts, where the ultimate responsibility for learning rests with the student.
 - **The Profession of Nursing & The LPN:** The Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) provides direct care for medically stable clients with predictable outcomes under the supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN), physician, podiatrist, or dentist.
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3. Accreditation & Curriculum Framework

Accreditation & Regulatory Approvals

- **Institutional Accreditation:** Higher Learning Commission (HLC), North Central Association (30 North LaSalle Street, Suite 2400, Chicago, IL 60602; Phone: 312-263-0456).
- **State Board Approval:** Phase II Approval from the Colorado State Board of Nursing (1560 Broadway, Suite 1350, Denver, CO 80202; Phone: 303-894-2430).
- **ACEN Candidacy:** Candidate for initial accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN; 3390 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 1400, Atlanta, GA 30326; Phone: 404-975-5000). Effective July 21, 2025; expires Fall 2027.

Curriculum Plan (Total Required Program Credits: 43)

Prerequisite Semester (7 Credits Total)

- **ENG 1021:** English Composition I — 3 Credit Hours

- **BIO 1006:** Basic Anatomy & Physiology — 4 Credit Hours (*Must be completed within 7 years of admission*)

Semester 1 (12 Credits Total)

- **NUR 1001:** Pharmacology Calculations — 1 Credit Hour
- **NUR 1002:** Alterations in Adult Health I — 4 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1003:** Basic Assessment for the Practical Nurse — 1 Credit Hour
- **NUR 1005:** Practical Nursing Arts and Skills — 6 Credit Hours

Semester 2 (12 Credits Total)

- **NUR 1010:** Pharmacology for Practical Nursing — 3 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1004:** Alterations in Adult Health II — 5 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1070:** Clinical I: Application of Practical Nursing Skills When Caring for Adults — 2 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1071:** Clinical II: Application of Adult Health — 2 Credit Hours

Semester 3 (12 Credits Total)

- **NUR 1011:** Advancement into Practical Nursing — 1 Credit Hour
- **NUR 1013:** Basic Concepts of Maternal-Newborn Nursing — 2 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1014:** Basic Concepts of Pediatric Nursing — 2 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1015:** Basic Concepts of Mental Health Nursing — 1 Credit Hour
- **NUR 1016:** Basic Concepts of Geriatric Nursing — 1 Credit Hour
- **NUR 1072:** Clinical III: Application of Basic Concepts of Maternal, Newborn, and Pediatric Nursing — 2 Credit Hours
- **NUR 1073:** Clinical IV: Advanced Applications in Adult Health — 3 Credit Hours

4. Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) & Program Outcomes

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the PPSC Practical Nursing Program, graduates are prepared to:

1. Provide safe, quality, person-centered nursing care in diverse healthcare settings using basic research, evidence, and patient preferences.

2. Engage in critical thinking and clinical judgment within the practical nurse scope of practice.
3. Participate in performance and quality improvement activities to enhance patient care.
4. Collaborate effectively with interdisciplinary healthcare teams, clients, and support networks.
5. Utilize information technology to support and document clinical care planning.
6. Manage patient care across diverse settings through planning, organizing, and direct delivery.
7. Function strictly within the legal, professional, and ethical standards of practical nursing.
8. Foster a caring, culturally competent, and compassionate healthcare environment.

Program Performance Indicators

- **NCLEX-PN Licensure Pass Rate:** At least 80% first-time pass rate within 12 months post-graduation.
- **Program Completion Rate:** At least 60% of students complete the program within 100% of standard timeframe.
- **Job Placement Rate:** At least 90% of surveyed graduates employed as an LPN or enrolled in advanced nursing education within 12 months.

5. PPSC Student Standards of Conduct & Professional Expectations

Students must follow the PPSC Student Code of Conduct, CCCS Board Policy BP 4-30, and System Procedure SP 4-30a.

Core Standards

1. **Safety First:** Safe nursing practice is mandatory. Any error or near-miss must be immediately reported to the clinical instructor and preceptor.
2. **Absolute Record Integrity:** Any falsification of medical records, simulation charts, or coursework results in immediate program dismissal.
3. **Facility Compliance:** Strict adherence to all clinical partner policies and safety rules is required.
4. **Professional Demeanor:** Civility, courtesy, and respect toward peers, faculty, staff, and clients are mandatory across all learning environments.

6. Student Concerns, Academic Honesty & FERPA

Instructional Concerns Resolution Sequence

- **Step 1:** Schedule a formal conference with the course instructor to resolve the matter directly.
- **Step 2:** If unresolved, submit a written statement to the Department Chair or Director of Nursing Education Practices (DNEP).
- **Step 3:** If unresolved, appeal in writing to the Executive Dean of Instructional Services. Final appeal rests with the Vice President for Instructional Services.

Academic Honesty & Integrity

Violations of academic honesty result in severe disciplinary sanctions up to expulsion:

- Plagiarism (submitting work of others without complete attribution).
- Self-plagiarism (reusing previously graded work without explicit instructor approval).
- Unauthorized test aids, test banks, or proctoring breaches.
- Unauthorized collaboration on independent coursework or clinical paperwork.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

All student educational records are confidential. Faculty will communicate grades and academic progress exclusively through official PPSC student email and D2L shells. Personal email communications are prohibited under FERPA guidelines.

7. Social Media, Electronic Devices & Communications

Social Media Standards (NCSBN Guidelines)

- Never post Protected Health Information (PHI), client photographs, clinical site identifiers, or patient scenarios online.
- Maintain professional boundaries: never connect with current or former patients on personal social accounts.
- Do not post clinical rosters, scheduling details, or copyrighted course materials.
- Personal postings in PPSC scrub uniform or bearing PPSC insignia are subject to institutional code of conduct standards.

Electronic Device Rules

Cell phones, smartwatches, and tablets must remain silenced during class, lab, simulation, and clinicals. At clinical agencies, mobile devices may only be used for approved clinical references in non-patient private break areas.

8. Student Support, Organizations & Crisis Fund

- **PPSC Student Nurse Council (PPSC SNC):** Student leadership organization affiliated with the Colorado Student Nurses Association (CSNA) and NSNA.
 - **Nursing Student Crisis Fund:** One-time emergency financial grant (up to \$750) available to students facing severe unforeseen crises that threaten program completion. Inquiries should be directed to faculty advisors or the DNEP.
 - **Outside Employment:** Because of academic rigor, outside work should be limited. Clinical and class schedules will not be adjusted to accommodate outside work shifts.
 - **Liability Insurance:** Students are covered by PPSC's blanket professional liability policy while performing within their student nurse role.
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9. College Policies: Non-Discrimination, Title IX, Weather & Safety

- **Title IX & Sexual Misconduct:** PPSC strictly prohibits discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, and retaliation under CCCS SP 19-60.
 - **Inclement Weather & Snow Closures:** General campus closures do not automatically cancel clinical rotations. Students must follow the designated clinical communication chain.
 - **Child Policy:** Children are strictly prohibited from classrooms, skills laboratories, simulation suites, and clinical agencies.
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10. Health Requirements: Drug/Alcohol Screening & Criminal Background Checks

Zero Tolerance Policy

PPSC enforces zero-tolerance for illegal drugs, marijuana (medical or recreational, including CBD containing THC), and alcohol.

Testing Requirements & Sanctions

- **Admission Screening:** Criminal background checks and 10-panel drug screens are mandatory prior to program entry.
 - **Reasonable Suspicion Testing:** Suspected impairment will result in immediate testing at student expense via taxi transport.
 - **Positive Screen Penalties:**
 - First Positive: One-semester suspension from the program.
 - Second Positive: Dismissal from the program with a mandatory one-year waiting period to re-apply.
 - Licensed Individuals: Positive drug screens for licensed CNAs or LPNs are reported to the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA).
 - **Refusal to Test:** Refusing a drug test is treated as a positive result and leads to immediate dismissal.
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11. Technical Standards & Essential Skills Requirements

Students must meet the following functional technical standards with or without approved ADA accommodations:

Essential Functional Abilities Table

Functional Ability	Standard Description	Clinical & Lab Performance Examples
Gross Motor Abilities	Physical endurance, mobility, and strength to carry out safe patient care.	Lifting/supporting at least 50 lbs, performing CPR compressions, transferring clients, operating in confined trauma suites.
Fine Manual Dexterity	Fine motor control to manipulate small clinical instruments safely.	Calibrating 1 mL insulin syringes, inserting indwelling urinary catheters, sterile suctioning, changing dressings.
Sensory & Perceptual	Auditory, visual, tactile, and olfactory acuity to assess clinical changes.	Auscultating lung/heart sounds, observing skin pallor/cyanosis, palpating pulses, detecting hazardous smoke or

		odors.
Interpersonal & Behavioral	Emotional stability and maturity to care for diverse populations under stress.	Maintaining composure in emergencies, accepting constructive critique, establishing empathetic client rapport.
Cognitive & Quantitative	Rapid mathematical calculations, clinical reasoning, and synthesis of data.	Calculating dosage formulas accurately, interpreting medical records, prioritizing conflicting emergent demands.
Punctuality & Work Habits	Professional adherence to policies, attendance, and assignment deadlines.	Reporting to clinical shifts on time, completing documentation by due dates, adhering strictly to dress codes.

12. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) & Accommodations

Pikes Peak State College provides reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities through Accessibility Services.

- **Office Contact:** Accessibility Services at **719-502-3333**.
 - **Advance Timelines:** New students should connect 6–8 weeks prior to the term; returning students 4–8 weeks prior.
 - **Non-Retroactive Policy:** Accommodations must be presented during week one of each semester and cannot be applied retroactively.
 - **Essential Skills Exemption:** Accommodations cannot waive essential technical competencies, core clinical objectives, or patient safety mandates.
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13. Academic Policies: Grading, Testing, Progression & Evaluation

Academic Grading Scale

- **A:** 90.00% – 100.00%
- **B:** 83.00% – 89.99%

- **C:** 77.00% – 82.99% (*Minimum required passing score for all nursing courses*)
- **D:** 69.00% – 76.99%
- **F:** Below 69.00%

Note: Percentages are **not rounded** (e.g., 76.99% is recorded as 76%, resulting in a failing grade of D).

Stepwise Final Grade Calculation Sequence

- **Step 1:** Average all exams and quizzes. The student must achieve a minimum composite score of **≥ 77.0%**. If < 77.0%, the student receives a failing course grade.
- **Step 2:** If Step 1 meets or exceeds 77.0%, add coursework, quizzes, and assignment points.
- **Step 3:** Deduct any applicable professionalism penalties (e.g., late clinical paperwork).
- **Step 4:** Verify satisfactory clinical/lab evaluation completion.

Examination & Proctoring Protocols

- Desks must remain completely clear except for faculty-provided pencils, approved basic calculators, and scratch paper/whiteboards.
- Smartwatches, cell phones, bags, hats, and sunglasses are prohibited in testing environments.
- Missed exams require faculty notification prior to test time. Unexcused makeups incur an automatic **15% penalty**.

14. Skills Lab & Simulation Policies

1. **Invasive Procedure Prohibition:** Injections, IV starts, and tube insertions may never be performed on fellow students or live actors.
 2. **Attendance:** Two lab absences within a semester may result in course failure. Each lab tardiness incurs an automatic **1% theory grade deduction**.
 3. **Safety & Housekeeping:** Electrical cords must not cross walkways; clean water spills immediately; dispose of all needles/sharps in rigid biohazard containers; return manikins to their designated spots.
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15. Clinical Policies: Compliance, Professionalism & Safety

- **CastleBranch Compliance:** Immunizations, annual TB screening, and BLS CPR must remain valid throughout the term. Expired documents prevent clinical site entry.
 - **Safe Practice Mandates:** Students must pull and administer medications under instructor/preceptor supervision and document immediately under their own credentials.
 - **Unit Confinement:** Students must remain on their assigned units and may never leave without explicit instructor authorization.
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16. HIPAA & Protected Health Information (PHI)

Breaches of patient privacy result in immediate clinical failure and program expulsion.

Prohibited Actions

- Printing, downloading, or photographing any portion of the electronic medical record (EMR).
- Leaving confidential charts or papers unattended in common areas.
- Discussing patient clinical scenarios in hallways, cafeterias, transit shuttles, or online.

The 18 HIPAA Identifiers

1. Patient name and initials
2. Geographic subdivisions smaller than state (street address, city, county, ZIP)
3. All date elements except year (birthdate, admission date, discharge date, date of death)
4. Phone numbers
5. Fax numbers
6. Email addresses
7. Social Security numbers
8. Medical Record numbers
9. Health plan beneficiary numbers
10. Account numbers
11. Certificate/license numbers

12. Vehicle identifiers and serial numbers
 13. Device identifiers and serial numbers
 14. Web URLs
 15. IP addresses
 16. Biometric identifiers (fingerprints, voiceprints)
 17. Full-face photographic images
 18. Any other unique identifying characteristic
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17. Clinical Dress Code, Appearance & Grooming

- **Scrub Uniform:** Solid Hunter Green scrub top and pants (or knee-length Hunter Green scrub skirt/dress). Clean, pressed, and proper fitting.
 - **Emblem Patch:** PPSC nursing patch sewn to the left sleeve, 2 inches below the shoulder seam.
 - **Footwear:** Solid white, closed-toe, closed-heel, non-canvas, non-mesh shoes with white laces and white socks/hose.
 - **Jewelry:** Analog watch with second hand (or silenced smartwatch), plain wedding band, up to two pairs of small stud earrings ($\leq 1/8$ " diameter). Visible body piercings must be removed or fitted with clear/flesh retainers.
 - **Nails & Hair:** No artificial nails, acrylics, wraps, tips, or colored polish. Natural nails must not extend past 1/4 inch from fingertips. Hair must be clean, natural human color, and secured completely off the collar.
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18. Clinical Absences, Tardiness & Return to Practice

- **Reporting Tardiness:** Notify clinical instructor via Microsoft Teams before start time. Arriving > 10 minutes late results in dismissal for the day with an unexcused absence. Arriving < 10 minutes late incurs a **1% theory deduction** for the 1st incident and **2%** for the 2nd.
- **Clinical Absences:** All missed hours must be made up. Makeups are subject to clinical faculty and space availability; uncompleted hours result in course failure.
- **Late Clinical Paperwork Deductions:**
 - 1st Occurrence: 1% Theory Grade Deduction

- 2nd Occurrence: 2% Theory Grade Deduction (3% Cumulative)
 - 3rd Occurrence: 3% Theory Grade Deduction (6% Cumulative)
 - 4th Occurrence: 4% Theory Grade Deduction (10% Cumulative)
 - 5th Occurrence: 5% Theory Grade Deduction (15% Cumulative)
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19. Clinical Incidents, Medication Errors & Disciplinary Actions

Incident & Medication Error Protocols

Any medication error or clinical incident must be reported immediately to the clinical instructor and preceptor. Failure to report a medication error results in clinical failure and potential program dismissal.

Clinical Evaluation Standards

- **NUR 1070 & NUR 1071:** Minimum Average Score = **1.5 (Novice – Assisted)**
 - **NUR 1072:** Minimum Average Score = **2.0 (Assisted)**
 - **NUR 1073:** Minimum Average Score = **2.5 (Assisted – Supervised)**
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20. Progression, Exit & Readmission Policy

- **1st Course Failure:** Complete a mandatory Student Success Plan with the PN Coordinator prior to re-enrolling.
 - **2nd Course Failure:** Dismissal from the Practical Nursing Program. Eligible to re-apply after a two-year waiting period.
 - **Leaves of Absence:** Granted for a maximum of one academic semester in good standing. Leaves exceeding one semester require full program reapplication.
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21. Accident Reporting & Workers' Compensation Procedures

Incident Reporting Steps

1. Report injury immediately to the clinical instructor.
2. Contact Laura Genschorck, Benefit & Risk Coordinator in Human Resources, at **719-502-2005**.
3. Complete the **Student Statement of Injury or Incident** form within **4 days**.

4. Workers' Compensation Administrator: Broadspire (PO Box 14350, Lexington, KY 40512; Phone: 1-800-321-9515).

Designated Medical Treatment Providers

- **Concentra South Academy:** 2322 S. Academy Blvd. | 719-390-1727
- **Concentra Bijou:** 402 W. Bijou St. | 719-302-6942
- **Concentra Rockrimmon:** 5320 Mark Dabling Blvd., Bldg 7, Ste 100 | 719-592-1584
- **Concentra Austin Bluffs:** 4083 Austin Bluffs Pkwy | 719-594-0046
- **Concentra Sisters Grove:** 6011 E. Woodmen Rd., Ste 100 | 719-571-8888
- **UCHealth Occupational Medicine (Garden of the Gods):** 1035 W. Garden of the Gods Rd. | 719-365-3200
- **UCHealth Occupational Medicine (Integrity):** 4323 Integrity Center Point | 719-591-2558

(Note: Free transportation to/from doctor appointments is available for all Concentra locations).

22. Required Student Signature Forms & Agreements

Form 1: Student Confidentiality & FERPA Agreement

"I recognize that all patient health and educational records are strictly confidential. I agree to abide by all HIPAA and FERPA regulations and understand that any breach will result in immediate clinical failure and program dismissal."

• Student Signature: _____

• Date: _____

• Printed Name: _____

• Student S#: _____

Form 2: Acknowledgement of Written Clinical Requirements

"I understand that I am responsible for submitting and maintaining all clinical compliance documentation (TB screening, AHA BLS CPR, and seasonal influenza) in CastleBranch prior to established deadlines. I authorize PPSC to release compliance records to clinical partner facilities."

• Student Signature: _____

• Date: _____

• Printed Name: _____

• Student S#: _____

Form 3: Student Handbook & Syllabi Acknowledgement

"I have read and understand the PPSC Practical Nursing Student Handbook and individual course syllabi. I agree to abide by all academic, clinical, and safety policies contained herein."

- Student Signature: _____
- Date: _____
- Printed Name: _____
- Student S#: _____
- Course/Academic Term: _____

Form 4: Assumption of Risk in Clinical Experiences

"I acknowledge that clinical nursing experiences carry inherent risks, including exposure to bloodborne and airborne pathogens, chemical hazards, environmental hazards, and physical injury. I voluntarily accept these risks and agree to follow all safety precautions and faculty directives."

- Student Signature: _____
- Date: _____
- Printed Name: _____
- Student S#: _____