

**FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF NURSING
PRE-LICENSURE BSN PROGRAM**

STANDARDIZED TESTING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A primary outcome measurement for the pre-licensure program is graduate performance; first-time pass rate on the NCLEX-RN. Students must be prepared for this licensure exam within the context of the Nursing program, with consistent testing practices that reflect the NCLEX-RN.

- 1) Instructor designed NCLEX-focused exams will adhere to pre-determined criteria as outlined in the Testing Procedure. Students must pass the objective testing category to progress in the program.
- 2) Students will be required to take nationally normed tests (i.e. Kaplan) throughout the curriculum. In the last semester of the curriculum, students will be required to take a comprehensive predictor exam.

**FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY
PRE-LICENSURE BSN PROGRAM
TESTING POLICY**

Nursing faculty will adhere to a standardized testing policy and procedure for the following NURS courses in the pre-licensure program:

NURS 261, 264, 360, 361, 370, 371, 460, 461 & 470

The Test Plan addresses the following components:

School of Nursing Grading Scale

A	95-100	C	75-78
A-	92-94	C-	72-74
B+	89-91	D+	69-71
B	85-88	D	65-68
B-	82-84	D-	62-64
<u>C+</u>	<u>79-81</u>	F	61 and below

NURS Course Exams (instructor generated tests)

1. Pre-determined progressive leveling of cognitive questions by semester; gradually decreasing knowledge and comprehension and increasing application questions (see guidelines for instructor generated tests).
2. All steps of the Nursing Process will be consistently included in tests for each course.
3. The Client Needs categories, as defined by NCLEX, will be addressed as appropriate for each course to include:
 - a. Safe, Effective Care Environment
 - b. Physiological Integrity
 - c. Psychosocial Integrity
 - d. Health Promotion and Maintenance
4. A mechanism for student review of unit tests will be provided by the instructor as an opportunity for further learning.
5. Final exams will be comprehensive and include between 50-75 NCLEX-style test questions.
6. Final exams will comprise a minimum of 30% of each course grade.
7. It is recommended that newly developed or revised tests/exams are reviewed by at least one faculty peer in addition to the faculty developing the test, regarding the above criteria for consistency among faculty.
8. All tests/exams will be subjected to a full item statistical analysis to determine internal consistency, reliability, and item discrimination ratios for the purpose of test item revision.

9. For the designated NURS courses, students will be required to earn an average passing grade (79% or higher) in the NCLEX testing category (NCLEX testing category is defined as: unit tests or exams and the final exam but excludes quizzes) in order to pass the course.
 - a. This policy will be reflected in the each of the designated course syllabi.
 - b. It is recommended that at least 79% of the course grade be associated with NCLEX testing.

GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTOR-GENERATED TESTS

1. Each designated NUR course will develop tests/exams using the following guidelines for cognitive leveling of test questions:

Cognitive Level of Items	NURS 261/264	NURS 360/361	NURS 370/371	NURS 460/461	NURS 470
Knowledge	40%	20%	0-10%	0-10%	0-10%
Comprehension	40%	30%	10-20%	0-10%	0-10%
Application or higher	20%	50%	80%	90%	90%
Dosage calculations	N/A	10% of application questions			5%

*Percentages are approximations; left up to faculty judgment.

Knowledge questions: Recall facts and specific information; Memorization of specifics

Comprehension questions: Tests understanding; Ability to describe and explain material.

Application questions: Use of information in a new situation; Ability to use knowledge in a new situation

Analysis questions: Ability to break down material into component parts and identify the relationships among them.

2. It is recommended, in addition to cognitive leveling, all designated NUR course tests/exams are developed to mirror the NCLEX-RN test plan as follows:

Client Needs	Percentage of Items from Each Category/Subcategory
Safe and Effective Care Environment	
• Management of Care	17-23%
• Safety and Infection control	9-15%
Health Promotion and Maintenance	6-12%
Psychosocial Integrity	6-12%
Physiological Integrity	
• Basic Care and Comfort	6-12%
• Pharmacological and Parenteral Therapies	12-18%
• Reduction of Risk Potential	9-15%
• Physiological Adaptation	11-17%

Adapted from the 2021 NCLEX-RN Test Plan

3. It is recommended that course faculty in designated NUR courses complete a Nursing Course Test Construction Blueprint (see Appendix) for each test/exam.

4. Each course test/exam should reflect a “sampling” of course objectives.
5. Each course test should follow test question format recommended parameters:

Incorporates multi-logical thinking

- Requires a high degree of discrimination
- Simulates nurse-client interactions and the nursing process whenever possible
- Asks questions in a positive sense
- Use of concise stems – eliminate extraneous verbiage; only pertinent information in the question stem
- Have a clearly stated rationale for each test item
- Use consistent wording in the stem and the answer choices.
- Keep the length of the choices approximately the same or at least

symmetrical (i.e., 2 long / 2 short, etc.)

- Always have at least four (4) options for multiple choice questions
- Alphabetize the distracter choices for better random answers
- Make the distracters all attractive choices
- Present choices in a logical manner

Avoid:

- Abbreviations
- Use of “all of the above” or “none of the above”
- Negative polarity questions (a negative in both the question stem and answer selection)

GUIDELINES FOR TEST ANALYSIS

Test analysis statistics are available through

- a) Testing Services (Institutional Research & Testing; Timme Center). On the testing service request form (example below), choose (at minimum) the 104-Test Statistic Report and 201 Detailed Item Analysis Report.
<http://www.ferris.edu/HTMLS/Tatfsu/IT/myfsu/Green-Sheet.pdf>
- b) On-line Learning Management System (LMS) (i.e. Canvas). Choose “item analysis” to run statistics on the test in Canvas.

The faculty who wrote the test is responsible for analyzing test results.

1. The following will be considered during the test analysis:
 - a. Level of achievement on mastery items: attempt to have 100%
 - b. Difficulty level: attempt to have 50% on non-mastery items.
 - c. If less than 50% of students answer an item correctly (difficulty level <50%), then follow discrimination (point biserial) guideline. This attempts to measure how well an item distinguishes between the better students and the poorer students. Generally, the higher the coefficient, the better the discrimination, and thus the better the item.

Point Biserial	Recommended Action
0.30 and above	excellent item, no action
0.20-0.29	good item, no action
0.15 – 0.19	acceptable item, may need action
0.10 – 0.14	marginal item, may need action, should be reviewed and possibly edited if reused
0.09 and below	poor item, action necessary, should be reviewed and probably edited if reused

2. Determine what action will be taken if the stats are unacceptable.
 - a. Give credit for more than one choice. (this is the preferred action)
 - b. Nullify the test item by giving credit for all choices.
 - c. Delete the test item from the exam and recalculate with one less total items. (this is the least preferred action)
 - d. If/when appropriate, attempt to have KR-20 of 0.65 or higher
3. These statistics will be used to determine the validity and reliability of the exam. Items and exams without acceptable statistics will be reviewed and revised before using them in subsequent classes.

Adapted from:

Caputi, L. (2010). *Sample nursing program testing policy*. Retrieved from <http://www.lindacaputi.com/>

Indiana State University (2013). *Testing, test writing, and analysis policy*. Retrieved from <http://www.indstate.edu/nursing/pdfs/handbook-personnel-docs/test-writing-analysis-policy.pdf>

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT TESTING

To prepare students for administration of the NCLEX-RN exam, the following rules will apply to students testing within Ferris State University's School of Nursing:

1. Missing an exam for any reason beyond acceptable absences will invoke a minimum penalty of 10-25% of the total test points. Tests will begin promptly as scheduled; late arrivals to class will not be granted extended testing time; you must finish the test within the time period allotted.
2. Approximately 60 minutes (up to 90 seconds per question) will be allotted for each student to take the test individually. During this time, help from any other party in answering test questions will not be allowed. All information sources and personal items must be in a closed backpack/briefcase and placed at the back or sides of the room prior to initiation of the test. Personal items at each desk will be limited to a pen and/or pencil. One transparent water bottle is permissible. Students will be provided with a calculator and scratch paper as needed.
3. When necessary, students may be allowed to leave the testing area to use the restroom. Measures to reduce the possibility of cheating with this practice will be utilized. Suggestions include:
 - a. Electronic testing: Disable backtracking.
 - b. Scantron testing: Collect student's scantron prior to leaving the room and provide a new scantron upon his/her return. Do not allow backtracking.
4. Collaborative or group testing may be used in any course **at the discretion of the faculty** member but is not required. The following criteria are recommended guidelines to be used **at faculty discretion** for collaborative testing in a course.
 - a. Collaborative testing rules must be clearly defined in the course syllabus.
 - b. For a group score of 95-100%, group members may be awarded a 1 question addition to their individual score.
 - c. For group scores of 90-94%, group members may be awarded 0.5 of a question's value to their individual score.
 - d. No more than 2% may be added to a student's individual test scores for collaborative testing following an individual test.
 - e. Collaborative group points will be added to an initial individual test score of 79% - 100%. For individuals earning a 100% score, group points will be added at the discretion of the faculty.
 - f. Collaborative testing will not take place during the final exam.
5. Clear expectations and grading explanations will be provided to students in course syllabi utilizing the above information.

GUIDELINES FOR LEVEL ASSESSMENT USING STANDARDIZED TESTS

Standardized Assessment Exams (nationally normed exams)

1. The School of Nursing has designated Kaplan Nursing as the vendor for the nationally standardized assessment tests to be utilized in the pre-licensure BSN curriculum.
2. Standardized exams are used to gauge learner comprehension, critical thinking, and assist the learner in preparing for the NCLEX.
3. Students will be required to participate in practice assessment tests, case studies, and other activities during each semester of the program as a way to prepare for the proctored standardized assessment tests. Scores and identified areas for growth should be used by students to remediate in preparation for the exit exam.
4. Students will be required to take specified timed proctored assessment tests as part of designated NURS courses throughout the curriculum. Two comprehensive predictor assessment exams will be given in the final semester of the program. Students who earn a score below the recommended score are strongly encouraged to take a review course prior to taking the NCLEX-RN test.

Expectations of the Program Coordinator & Department Secretary for Kaplan logistics

- Submits orders to Kaplan as needed in consultation with faculty
- Distributes resources and keeps appropriate records.
- Communicates with vendor representatives as needed.
- Plan student orientation to Kaplan with Kaplan representative.
- Updates relevant documents; maintains student access codes.
- Ensure delivery of Kaplan materials each semester.

Expectations of Students for use of Kaplan products:

- Participate in practice assessment tests, case studies or other activities during each semester of the program as a way to prepare for the proctored standardized assessment tests. Scores and identified areas for growth should be used by students to remediate in preparation for the exit exam.

Expectations of Faculty teaching a NURS course with a standardized exam incorporated

1. Scheduling and proctoring

- Scheduling will be the responsibility of faculty for the course or the testing coordinator
 - Proctored testing will be scheduled for the weeks 13, 14, or 15 of each semester. Standardized testing will be scheduled in a computer lab (i.e. FLITE) or designated testing center. The standardized exam schedule will be available the first week of each semester.
 - The exams will be given and proctored by SON faculty and/or staff and/or at the designated testing center.
- Handle questions about testing; interface with students.
- Manage timing of proctored exams – it is suggested learners be given 90 seconds per question to assist in preparation for NCLEX.

- Each course **with a standardized exam incorporated** will include a grade for testing. **Standardized testing is worth 5% of the total course grade.**
 - Other Kaplan-related activities or completion of participation in Kaplan-related activities as a prerequisite for taking proctored tests should not be included in the 5% mentioned above.
 - The standardized exams should be worth 3% of the course grade.
 - Remediation is required and should be worth 2% of the course grade.

The following is the suggested grade calculation for proctored testing based on achievement.

Grade Calculation Guidelines for Kaplan Proctored and IEN Exams

Percentile Ranking	Course Grade (3%)	Remediation (2%)
95 th or higher	100	Exempt
51 st – 95 th	100	1.5 hours
40 th – 50 th	90	2 hours
30 th – 39 th	80	2.5 hours
20 th – 29 th	70	4 hours
Below 20 th	60	4 hours

Grade Calculation Guidelines for Kaplan Focused Review Exams

No. Questions Correct	Course Grade (3%)	Remediation (2%)
26-30	100	Exempt
21-25	90	1.5 hours
16-20	80	2 hours
0-15	70	2.5 hours

It is suggested that students be allowed 60 minutes to complete a Focused Review Exam and their first attempt is the score on which the course grade will be assigned.

2. Use of reports

- Track students test scores, remediation, course grades, and NCLEX first time pass.
- Data for Program Review

Timelines for Kaplan test administration

NURS 262	NURS 362	NURS 372	NURS 462	NURS 472
Fundamentals A Pathophysiology A	Pharmacology- Parenteral Therapy A Psychosocial A	Medical/Surgical Part 1 A (customized) Obstetrics A	Comprehensive Medical/Surgical Pediatric Test A	Community Health A Management & Professional Issues A Research A Exit Predictor #1

Appendix

NURSING COURSE TEST BLUEPRINT

	Client needs			
	SAFE EFFECTIVE CARE ENVIRONMENT Management of care Safety and infection control (26-38%)	HEALTH PROMOTION & MAINTENANCE (6-12%)	PSYCHOSOCIAL INTEGRITY (6-12%)	PHYSIOLOGICAL INTEGRITY Basic care and comfort Pharmacological and parenteral therapies Reduction of risk potential Physiologic adaption (38-62%)
Integrated processes				
NP: Assessment				
NP: Diagnosis				
NP: Planning				
NP: Implementation				
NP: Evaluation				
Caring (list criterion): Nurse/client interaction; mutual respect & trust				
Communication: Verbal/Nonverbal				
Documentation: Written/Electronic				
Teaching/Learning: KSA's to promote change in behavior				
Culture & Spirituality				
TOTAL %				

Note: based on the 2019 NCLEX-RN detailed test plan

DIRECTIONS: Indicate the dispersion of test questions for this test/exam within each of the designated categories. Use the following key to determine the cognitive level:

K – Knowledge Question: Simple recall of factual information

C – Comprehension Question: Determines understanding of a concept; also tests for recollection of facts, principles, theories, or procedures.

A – Application and Higher Question: Requires the student to explain, differentiate, evaluate, analyze; Student must apply knowledge from at least two (2) areas or concepts of a specific clinical situation. Multi-logical thinking / Critical thinking