

## FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL of NURSING CODE of CONDUCT

The School of Nursing (SON) at Ferris State University upholds the University Code of Student Conduct and the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics. One of the values of the SON is *Ethical Community*, which states, “The School of Nursing is committed to the development of a professional nurse who will practice within the Nursing Code of Ethics and whose practice is guided by the values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity and social justice”. Our goal is to graduate students who will practice with these inherent values, and to ensure the profession continues to be accountable to and trusted by the communities we serve. Therefore, FSU SON has developed and will uphold a Code of Conduct that serves as an addendum to the University Student Code of Conduct.

Selected sections from the University Code of Student Conduct are provided below as these are also addressed within the SON Code of Conduct. The web addresses are provided within this document as a reminder of FSU examples of personal misconduct, and the procedures and sanctions that may follow at the university level as well:

### Disciplinary Procedures

Ferris State University’s procedures for imposing disciplinary sanctions are designed to provide students with the guarantees of due process and procedural fairness, to ensure equal protection for all students, and to provide for the imposition of similar sanctions for similar acts of misconduct. At the same time, the procedures reflect the need to be concerned about the individual student involved in a particular case. The procedures therefore provide that the imposition of disciplinary sanctions must also be based upon a consideration of all the circumstances in a particular case, including a student’s prior record of misconduct, if any. The disciplinary procedures may be found in the Code of Student Community Standards.

### CODE of STUDENT COMMUNITY STANDARDS

<https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/studentaffairs/judicial/student-code.pdf>

#### Personal Misconduct On or Off University Property

The University may discipline a student for the following acts of reported personal misconduct, which occur on University property or at a University-sponsored function. Additionally, the University may discipline a student for the following acts of reported personal misconduct that are *not* committed on University property or acts that arise from University activities that are being conducted *off* the University campus or if the misconduct a) undermines the security of the University community, b) adversely affects the Ferris State University community and/or the pursuit of its objectives, or c) compromises the integrity of the educational process. Such acts include, but are not limited to, the following:

#### Actions That Endanger

Actions that endanger the student, the University community, or the academic process.

## **Computer and Information System Misuse**

Unauthorized and/or inappropriate use of computers is prohibited. Such use includes, but is not limited to: damaging or altering records or programs, furnishing false information or invading the privacy of another user by using files, programs, or data without permission, engaging in disruptive and annoying behavior, or engaging in any unauthorized use of or access to computer hardware, software, accounts, or passwords. Additionally, any and all actions in violation of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act are prohibited.

## **Harassment**

Behavior that creates a hostile or intimidating environment in which verbal or physical conduct, because of its severity or persistence, is likely to significantly interfere with an individual's work or education, or adversely affect a person's living conditions.

### **Physical Harm/Abuse of any Person, Including the Following:**

- Physical behavior that endangers the health or safety of another person
- The use of physical force or violence to restrict the freedom of action or movement of another person
- Physical behavior that involves an expressed or implied threat to interfere with an individual's personal safety, academic efforts, employment, or participation in University sponsored extracurricular activities and causes the person to have a reasonable apprehension that such harm is about to occur
- Physical behavior that has the purpose or reasonably foreseeable effect of interfering with an individual's personal safety, academic efforts, employment, or participation in University sponsored extracurricular activities and causes the person to have a reasonable apprehension that such harm is about to occur.

### **Verbal Abuse of Another Person, Including the Following:**

- e. An expressed or implied threat to:
  - i. Interfere with an individual's personal safety, academic efforts, employment or participation in University sponsored activities; or
  - ii. Injure that person or damage his or her property and, under the circumstances, causes the person to have reasonable apprehension that such harm is about to occur; or,
- f. Inflammatory speech, spoken or written inflammatory communication as a personal insult to the listener or listeners in personally abusive language inherently likely to provoke a violent reaction by the listener or listeners toward the speaker.

### **Sanctions**

([https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/studentaffairs/judicial/student\\_resources/possiblesanctions.htm](https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/administration/studentaffairs/judicial/student_resources/possiblesanctions.htm))

The Director of Student Conduct or his/her designee is authorized to impose any one or a combination of sanctions for acts of misconduct. The University may impose other sanctions singularly or in combination with any of those listed below. The University recognizes two kinds of sanctions: administrative (inactive) and educational, and they are often combined in an effort to hold students accountable while also providing resources to aid in a student's success. Please access the web address above to review possible sanctions.

### **ANA CODE OF ETHICS & SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY**

In addition, the SON upholds the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses, and considers behavior that disregards this code as negatively impacting not only the program, but the profession of nursing. Therefore, students who violate the University Code of Student Conduct may be subject to not only university appropriate sanctions, but also to the SON's policy that addresses violations of the Code of Ethics for Nurses. Consideration of ANA's Principles for Social Networking have also been applied to this policy. The following excerpts from the ANA's Code of Ethics and ANA's Social Networking Policy are provided below to support the SON's expected Code of Conduct.

#### **ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses, Provision 1.5, States:**

“Relationships with colleagues and others: The principle of respect for others extends to all individuals with whom the nurse interacts. The nurse maintains compassionate and caring relationships with colleagues and others with a commitment to the fair treatment of individuals, to integrity-preserving compromise, and to resolving conflict. Nurses function in many roles, including direct care provider, administrator, educator, researcher, and consultant. In each of these roles, the nurse treats colleagues, employees, assistants, and students with respect and compassion. This standard of conduct precludes any and all prejudicial actions, any form of harassment or threatening behavior, or disregard for the effect of one's actions on others. The nurse values the distinctive contribution of individuals or groups, and collaborates to meet the shared goal of providing quality health services” (American Nurses Association, 2015).

#### **ANA's Principles for Social Networking (2011)**

d. Principle 5. “As the patient's advocate, nurses have an ethical obligation to take appropriate action regarding instances of questionable healthcare delivery at an individual or systems level that reflect incompetent, unethical, illegal, or impaired practice. Nurses who view social media content posted by a colleague that violates ethical or legal standards should first bring the questionable content to the attention of the colleague so that the individual can take appropriate action. If the posting could threaten a patient's health, welfare, or right to privacy regarding health information, the nurse has the obligation to report the matter to a supervisor or designated person within the institution or entity for follow-up. If the questionable practice is not addressed in the employment setting and seriously jeopardizes the patient's safety

and well-being, the nurse may need to report the problem to external authorities. Accurate reporting and factual documentation—not merely opinion—should always support such responsible actions.

Principle 6. Nurses are encouraged to participate in the development of policies and procedures in their institutions and organizations for handling reports of online conduct that may raise legal concerns or be professionally unethical. Such official channels can protect the rights of those participating and can offer remedial action for the patient, while offering fairness, support, and nonpunitive correction and training for a nurse’s inadvertent mistakes.” (ANA, 2011) *ANA’s Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse*, Foundation for the Principles for Social Networking, p. 7

### **Nursing’s Social Policy Statement (ANA, 2010) ANA’s Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse | Foundation for the Principles for Social Networking, p. 13**

This foundational document describes the essence of the nursing profession that is both valued within society and is uniquely accountable to that society. The authority for nursing, as for other professions of trust, is based on social responsibility, which in turn derives from nursing’s social contract wherein a mutually beneficial relationship exists between society and the nursing profession: “[S]ociety validates the existence of the profession through licensure, public affirmation, and legal and legislative parameters. Nursing’s response is to provide care to all who are in need, regardless of their cultural, social, or economic standing.” (p. 5) *Nursing’s Social Policy Statement: The Essence of the Profession* describes the nursing profession as “particularly focused on establishing effective working relationships and collaborative efforts essential to accomplish its health-oriented mission.” (p. 7)

### **SON ADDENDUMS TO FSU CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT**

Thus, the following are addendums to the Ferris State University Code of Student Conduct for Ferris State University SON conduct policy:

Students may be in violation of the Nursing Code of Ethics Provision 1.5 by any of the noted misconducts noted in the University Code of Student Conduct, and may be dismissed from the program as a result. It is important that students familiarize themselves with the University Code of Student Conduct as the following are only examples of misconduct specific to the nursing program and do not constitute a comprehensive list of all violations that might fall under this provision.

**1.** Overt or implied verbal or written threats stated to and/or about a peer/faculty/staff member, which would place a reasonable person in fear of harm. This may be in the form of social media (i.e. Facebook, Instagram, email, or other communication). Such threats and/or verbal/written abuse are in direct violation of the Nursing Code of Ethics. Such threats/abuse/behavior will be evaluated by the SON faculty/staff, reported to the University Police and/or the University Office of Student Conduct with sanctions conferred as deemed appropriate. In addition, the SON reserves the right to confer sanctions, up to and including **dismissal** from the program if the student is in violation of the Nursing Code of Ethics.

2. Students and faculty may not take any patient records, notes, or any identifying data out of a clinical agency on paper [must be shredded] or electronically. If reporting or discussing in person or in writing a clinical situation with an instructor or with peers, omit identifying information. Students will conform to the guidelines of the Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA). **Failure to comply with HIPAA guidelines may result in program dismissal.**

3. Additionally, it is the policy of the FSU SON that students will conduct themselves professionally and will not take any form of photograph or digital image in the clinical setting for any reason. Additionally, students are to refrain from discussing patient/clinical situations in public venues, including Facebook, Instagram, or similar online arenas (even if client names are not used). Failure to abide by this policy may result in **dismissal** from the nursing program.

### **Procedural Due Process**

Students in all cases will be afforded adequate procedural due process. The student will in all cases, be afforded the opportunity to offer his/her version of events to the Director of the SON and/or faculty or staff involved with the situation. Once a decision is made, an appeal of the decision can be made to the Dean of the College of Health Professions, and that decision will be based on the guidelines set forth in this policy and will be final.