

College Policy Handbook

This handbook is for informational purposes only and is not meant to create a contract with students. The College reserves the right to modify curricula, course content, and policies as it deems necessary.

GUIDING STATEMENTS OF THE COLLEGE

The Mission, Vision, and Values, were developed by the leadership and endorsed by the faculty and staff and are uniquely yet strongly supportive of the Riverside Health System's Mission, Vision, and Values. These guiding statements provide the basis for planning and delivery of educational services.

Mission Statement: "Why We Are Here"

To enhance the well-being and improve the health of the communities of Southeastern Virginia and beyond by providing high-quality, residential and online undergraduate education in nursing and allied health and preparing competent and caring professionals for careers within Riverside Health System and the region.

Vision Statement: "What We Aspire To Be"

To be the educational center of choice within our communities renowned for academic and clinical excellence in a student-centered environment.

Core Values: "What We Believe In, What We Stand For"

Respect Trust, and Teamwork among our students, faculty, and staff that positively enhances our learning environment.

Change and its ability to drive creativity and innovation that leads to excellence.

Health Careers Education that fosters excellence, compassion, competence, safety, lifelong learning, and self-esteem.

Meaningful Community Involvement and Partnership that result in improved healthcare education and community well-being.

Fiscal Responsibility and Resource Management that supports growth based on workforce needs.

Learning Environments designed to support students' educational and career goals.

Diversity:

Consistent with Riverside Health System, Riverside College of Health Careers, is committed to fostering an equitable and inclusive culture where all are valued and supported.

- *Trust earned through safety, quality of education, and service: promote cultural competence with our students, faculty, and staff to foster an environment where all are welcomed, valued and supported to meet their full potential*
- *Deep community involvement: engage with diverse and underserved communities, and provide resources to improve access to health careers education*
- *Teamwork, Diversity, and Respect: demonstrate kindness and respect for every individual's unique background and perspective.*

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

The College promotes equal educational opportunity without regard to race; age (except where age is a bona fide clinical requirement); color; sex; gender identity or sexual orientation; cultural, ethnic or national origin; religion; marital status; military or veteran status; pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions; genetic information; disability; physical or mental condition(s), as long as the condition(s) do not limit the applicant/student's ability to perform the Essential Program Requirements with or without reasonable accommodations as outlined in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title III Public Accommodations, ADA Amendments Act of 2008, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992, Section 504; the U.S. Department of Justice's revised final regulations implementing the ADA; Va. Code (annotated) §51.5-44; protected activity; or any other legally protected status in its educational programs or activities.

IMPACT OF CRIMINAL OFFENSES IN CREDENTIALING AND EMPLOYMENT IN VIRGINIA

Upon graduation, prior criminal offenses must be reported on your application for credentialing examination and may negate eligibility for credentialing and employment in Virginia. Students with prior criminal offenses are encouraged to contact the following professional boards to review eligibility to sit for licensure or certification exams.

Nursing Students: Nursing students with prior criminal offenses are urged to review the [Virginia Board of Nursing Guidance Document 90-55 Joint Statement of the Department of Health and the Department of Health Professions on Impact of Criminal Convictions on Nursing Licensure or Certification and Employment in Virginia](#). Prior criminal offenses must be reported on your Application for Licensure and may negate eligibility for the licensure in Virginia.

Radiologic Technology Students: Students are urged to review the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) *Ethics Pre-Application Review* prior to starting any radiologic technology education program. This evaluation is a process for an early ethics review of criminal offenses that would otherwise need to be re-reported with your Application for Certification when you have completed an ARRT-recognized education program. Ethics offenses could negate eligibility for the ARRT National Certification Exam. All offenses must be reported regardless of how long ago they were committed. Exceptions include Offenses committed while a juvenile and processed in the juvenile court system; traffic violations which did not involve drugs or alcohol; charges that were dismissed if there were no court conditions required for the dismissal.

Physical Therapist Assistant Students: Students with prior criminal offenses are urged to contact the Virginia Board of Physical Therapy to verify eligibility for licensure and employment in Virginia.

College Policies

Summary statements of College policies are provided below. Complete policies are available to students in Canvas. Applicants and the general public may request copies of the full policies by contacting the College.

ACADEMIC ADVISING

The College provides ongoing academic advising to students from entry into a program of study until graduation or withdrawal. The academic advisor monitors student academic progress and serves as a resource for students experiencing academic difficulties. *(Policies 172 Academic Advising in Residential and Hybrid Programs and 174 Academic Advising in DE Programs)*

ACADEMIC DEFICIENCY NOTIFICATION

The faculty monitor student performance and provide ongoing communication when performance and/or behavior fails to meet expectations. Academic Deficiency Notifications provide a structure for documenting and communicating performance and behavioral issues. The onus of responsibility for performance improvement is on the student. Failure to complete the requirements listed on the Academic Deficiency Notification may result in course failure and/or dismissal from the program. *(Policy 122 Academic Deficiency Notification)*

ACADEMIC PROGRESSION

A student's continued enrollment at the College and eligibility for federal financial assistance depends on the student maintaining satisfactory academic progress. The College has identified mechanisms designed to provide early identification of students who are experiencing academic difficulty, and to provide timely intervention through academic advising and academic support. The College may at any time dismiss a student when it is evident through poor attendance or other behavior(s) that the student's academic performance or other behavior(s) is unsatisfactory or has become disruptive to the academic environment. The College Catalog contains detailed information on the determination of satisfactory academic progress. *(Policy 120 Academic Progression)* See also *Grades and Maintaining Eligibility for Financial Aid*.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR DISABLED STUDENTS

The College provides equivalent access to programs and services for qualified individuals with disabilities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services (757-240-2203) for information on eligibility requirements for services, procedures for requesting and obtaining approved accommodations, student responsibilities when receiving accommodations, and to provide guidelines for the use of service animals on campus. Comfort animals are prohibited on campus. *(Policy 219 Accommodations for Disabled Students)*

ADMISSIONS

The Office of Admissions is the point of entry for prospective candidates desiring admission to the College. Admission eligibility, procedures, and program-specific admission criteria and prerequisites are contained in the College Catalog. All admitted students are required to provide documentation of required immunizations, CPR certification, and attestation that they are able to meet the College Essential Program Requirements (technical standards). Admitted students are also required to undergo a urine drug screening and a criminal background check prior to matriculation. For more information, please refer to the College Catalog. *(Policy 240 Admissions Process)*

ATTENDANCE

The College fosters a high-level of performance and readiness to meet program and future employer expectations. Consistent attendance in scheduled class, lab, and clinical experiences is critical to the learning experience to achieve course and curriculum outcomes. Irregular attendance or tardiness detracts from learning; prevents participating in intellectual exchanges between students and faculty; demonstrates a lack of professional responsibility to faculty, peers, and patients; and may cause a potential danger to patient safety and welfare. Patterns of irregular attendance and/or tardy behavior may result in disciplinary actions up to and including course failure and/or dismissal from the program. Students may be subject to mandatory attendance requirements based on their tuition funding source. *(Policy 207 Attendance)*

CAMPUS SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The College provides a safe and secure environment conducive to learning through the use of automated security systems (i.e., alarms systems and door locks), fences, signage, and patrols provided by Riverside Health System Protection. The safety and security of all students and employees is always the first priority in any emergency situation. In the event of a campus emergency, specific emergency procedures will provide for notification, communication, coordination, and evacuation as needed. Students complete online training modules each semester that review emergency procedures on campus. Additional information can be found in the *Annual Campus Safety and Security Report* which is available on the College website and in the College Catalog. *(Policies 301 Campus Emergency Response, 303 Campus Security and Building Access, and 304 Emergency Notification Procedures)*

CAREER PLANNING SERVICES

The College provides student career advising, career planning, resources related to career planning, and opportunities to attend job placement events in coordination with Riverside Health System. The College does not guarantee employment. *(Policy 127 Career Planning Services)*

CLINICAL SKILLS LABS

The College promotes safe clinical skills laboratory experiences. Students and faculty are accountable for adhering to posted safety standards at all times during skills laboratory experiences, including proper handwashing, equipment decontamination, handling of regulated medical waste, and linen and sharps disposal. *(Policies 323 Clinical Skills Laboratory and 333 Simulation Laboratory Use.)* See also Emergency Campus Shutdown.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The College has a responsibility to the student body and to the community-at-large to secure student compliance in regard to personal integrity and professional behavior. Students are expected to aspire to a set of principles and values that demonstrate a commitment to fairness, honesty, empathy, respect, and achievement. Disciplinary actions may be taken when a student who, through their behavior on campus or during program-approved educational activities off campus, demonstrates that they pose a substantial danger to others in the College community, or otherwise have an adverse effect upon the mission or purpose of the College or upon individual members of the community. *(Policies 202 Student Code of Conduct and 123 Disciplinary Actions Policy)* See also *Rights and Responsibilities*.

DRESS CODE

Students are expected to convey a professional image consistent with the mission of the College. In addition, students are expected to comply with applicable safety, sanitation, and infection control policies, and to exercise good judgment in their apparel and grooming practices. Programs have specific uniform and dress requirements. *(Policy 206 Dress Code)*

EMERGENCY CAMPUS SHUTDOWN

The College has contingency plans for unforeseen disruptive events to ensure that the needs of students, faculty and staff are met. The College reserves the right to transition classes to an online format if circumstances warrant restricting or closing classrooms on campus. Unless otherwise required by applicable law, there will be no refund or reduction in tuition or fees if the method of instruction is altered as a result of events or conditions that are not within the control of the College, including (but not limited to), pandemics, applicable laws, regulations or government orders, labor strikes, and acts of God such as weather conditions or natural disasters. *(Policy 306 Emergency Campus Shutdown and Continuity of Operations)*

EMPLOYMENT

The College recognizes a student's right to attain employment in related or unrelated fields. During the hours of employment, students will not represent themselves as students, wear the student uniform, display the student emblem, or wear their student ID badge. Students employed in a healthcare setting must work only in their appropriate scope of practice and may not practice or perform skills learned in a program of study. *(Policy 212 Student Employment)*

FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law designated to protect the privacy of a student's education records and academic work. To protect the rights of students, the College releases restricted information to other persons or agencies only as provided by FERPA. Directory information is considered to be public information unless the student requests in writing that it be kept confidential. Directory information includes name, address, telephone number, email address, date and place of birth, program of study, dates of attendance, diplomas/certificates and awards received, the most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student, photograph, and participation in officially recognized activities. All files, records, and completed academic work are considered educational records and are protected under FERPA. It is the student's right to expect that any materials submitted in their courses, except when submitted as group work, will not be viewable by guests or other individuals permitted access to the course without the student's explicit, written, signed consent. Verbal consent or email is insufficient. Students who wish to review their educational records must submit a written request to the Registrar's office identifying the record(s) they wish to inspect. *(Policy 242 FERPA)*

GRADES

Students are required to pass all theory, laboratory, and clinical components of a course to achieve a passing course grade. Student progress is monitored throughout the program and faculty provide ongoing communication with students regarding their academic progress. Failure to achieve a minimum grade of 80% by the end of the course will result in course failure and may also result in dismissal from the program. Additional information on grading and promotion is available in the College Catalog. *(Policy 121 Grading Policy) See also Academic Progression.*

GRADUATION AND THE EXIT PROCESS

All students exiting the College are required to complete the Exit Process. Exiting students/graduates are responsible for ensuring that outstanding student account balances have been settled, course materials returned, and financial aid exit counseling completed. Students must also return their student ID badge to the Registrar. *(Policy 220 Student Graduation and Exit Process)*

GRIEVANCE AND APPEALS

The College promotes an educational environment that values open communication, fair treatment, mutual respect, and trust among students, faculty, and staff. The College provides a mechanism through which students can address and receive fair consideration regarding issues of an academic and non-academic nature. Students receive ongoing communication regarding their performance and are encouraged to address concerns informally with faculty and/or staff. When a problem cannot be resolved informally, students may file a grievance with the Program Director for resolution. In the event the student disagrees with the Program Director's decision, the student has the right to appeal the decision. The Student Evaluation Committee hears student appeals of program decisions. If the student disagrees with the decision of the Committee, they may file an Appeal Review Request with the Executive Director of the College. The Executive Director's decision is final. Complaints that cannot be resolved by direct negotiation with the College may be filed with the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, program-specific accreditors, and/or governing agencies. Students will not be subject to adverse actions by a College official as a result of initiating a grievance or appeal. *(Policy 210 Student Grievance and Appeal Policy) See also Program Complaints.*

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

The College is committed to maintaining a working, learning, and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all staff, faculty, and students in the College community are respected. Members of the College community are expected to treat other community members with civility and respect, recognizing that disagreement and informed debate are valued in an academic environment. Harassment and bullying constitute uncivil behavior which threatens the fundamental principles of the College and will not be tolerated. Harassment and bullying behavior on any Riverside property, at any College function or event or activity, or through the use of any electronic or digital technology, whether or not such use occurs on Riverside property is strictly prohibited. *(Policy 218 Harassment and Bullying) See also Social Media.*

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

The College strives to provide a healthy environment for students, employees, and patients. Students are expected to assume responsibility for maintaining their own health by practicing good health habits. Students must comply with the College's health requirements, including immunizations and drug screening to be allowed on campus or in clinical settings. The College strongly encourages students to enroll in a medical care plan to provide financial coverage for costs related to illness and injury. The College assumes no responsibilities for medical costs incurred by a student. A list of health requirements and immunization, as well as the Essential Program Requirements (technical standards) is available in the College Catalog. *(Policy 213 Student Health Policy) See also Admissions, Infectious Diseases and Student Exposure, Smoking, and Substance Abuse.*

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND STUDENT EXPOSURE

The College supports student participation in the care of patients with infectious diseases. It is recognized, however, that at times a student's lack of knowledge, skills, expertise, or the student's health status, may preclude caring for such patients. Because all patients are considered potentially infectious, standard precautions will be practiced with all patients. Students receive annual training on infection control procedures, including standard precautions, bloodborne pathogens, and regulated medical waste, to reduce the transmission of bloodborne pathogens and other communicable diseases between students, faculty, staff, patients, and healthcare providers. Students will follow facility policies for an actual or suspected exposure to bloodborne pathogens. The College follows CDC Guidelines for students with reportable diseases. Student infection with HIV or other bloodborne pathogen does not automatically preclude participation in clinical experiences. *(Policies 214 Guidelines for Care of Patients with Infectious Diseases and 215 Communicable Disease Exposure and Infection)*

INFORMATION SYSTEMS ACCESS

Riverside Health System (RHS) at its discretion, will provide students access to and use of Riverside technology resources (e.g., computers, telephone lines, software, Internet access, academic technology, etc.) on campus and in RHS clinical areas. Use of these resources is for educational purposes only; accessing these resources for personal use or without authorization is strictly prohibited. It is the obligation of each student to safeguard the data and information from unauthorized access. *(Policy 204 Student Information System Access)*

LIBRARY

The College, in conjunction with Riverside Health System, maintains the Ruby Pope Drumm Health Sciences Library to provide the most recent publications and resources available to facilitate learning and research. The library houses resources in medical, nursing, allied health, and healthcare management. Online access to nursing and allied health literature is also provided via a suite of database programs. *(Policy 350 Ruby Pope Drumm Health Sciences Library)*

MAINTAINING ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL AID

The College provides financial assistance to eligible enrolled students. Financial assistance is governed by the regulatory policies and procedures of the U.S. Department of Education. To maintain eligibility for financial assistance, students must show continuous academic progress as well as meet the minimum enrollment standards. The College Catalog provides financial aid and scholarship information. *(Policy 261 Maintaining Eligibility for Financial Assistance) See also Academic Progression.*

MALPRACTICE AND INCIDENT REPORTING

The College recommends that students obtain their own supplemental malpractice insurance. Riverside Regional Medical Center provides malpractice insurance for students during the normal scope of student clinical practice. Students involved in an incident that may result in a malpractice claim will inform their faculty and follow the facility's risk management procedures. *(Policy 217 Student Malpractice Insurance and Incident Reporting)*

ONLINE TRAINING MODULES

The College provides ongoing mandatory education for all students through online training modules (Student Learning Modules) in compliance with the requirements of DNV-GL, OSHA, the Virginia Department of Health, Riverside Health System, and College accrediting and regulatory agencies. These training modules are completed at the beginning of each semester by all students. They also provide student education on College policies and procedures. *(Policy 209 Student Learning Modules)*

PARKING ON CAMPUS

The College provides restricted parking areas on campus for students, employees, and visitors. Vehicles parked on campus are the sole responsibility of the owner. Students parking on campus must register their vehicle with Student Services and display the current school year student parking decal. *(Policy 320 Parking on Campus)*

PATIENT CONFIDENTIALITY

The College safeguards patient/client confidentiality as required by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), including but not limited to information contained in medical records, verbal reports, and conversations. Throughout the educational process, students must communicate situations, discussions, assessments, observations, etc., in a manner that protects patient/client identity. Confidentiality is extended to information related to other students and Riverside employees using judgment based on the principle of need-to-know. *(Policy 205 Confidentiality: Student Responsibilities)*

PORTABLE ELECTRONIC DEVICES

The College reviews the use of emerging technologies and makes recommendations regarding such use in the teaching/learning environment. All audible electronic device features must be turned off or placed in vibrate mode during classroom or lab activities except as authorized by faculty. Students are prohibited from using portable electronic devices in clinical areas except as authorized in accordance with clinical facility policies. Use of portable electronic device cameras or other recording functions in clinical areas is strictly prohibited. *(Policy 208 Portable Electronic Devices: Student Use)*

PROGRAM COMPLAINTS

The College strives to provide a reasonable, prompt, orderly, and fairly administered resolution of complaints by any active, prospective, or former student or visitor. The College encourages complainants to make reasonable efforts to have their concerns addressed informally by discussing the matter in question with those most directly involved. The complainant may also file a formal complaint through the College compliance hotline at compliance@riverside.edu or by contacting their Program Director. Retaliation against anyone involved in a complaint process is strictly prohibited. *(Policy 223 Program Complaints)* See also *Grievance and Appeals*.

REFUND AND CANCELLATION

The refund process is initiated when an applicant cancels their enrollment, when a student withdraws, or when a student is dismissed. Tuition and fees are due in full by the end of the published Add/Drop date. Refunds of College tuition and fees will be determined by the amount of time completed in the semester. Refund requirements for students who withdraw officially or unofficially follow federal guidelines. The College Catalog contains detailed information on cancellation and refund procedures. *(Policy 264 Refund and Cancellation)*

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Student rights and responsibilities, listed in the College Catalog, support students in their pursuit of a quality education, and upon graduation to practice as an entry-level practitioner in their field of study. These rights and responsibilities support concepts of fairness, mutual trust and respect between students, peers, faculty, and staff at the College. *(Policy 201 Student Rights and Responsibilities)* See also *Code of Conduct*.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The College promotes an educational environment in which sexual and gender-based harassment are prohibited. Persons reporting sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, are provided support and avenues of redress. In accordance with Title IX, the College ensures the prompt, effective, fair, and impartial investigation and resolution of complaints and ensures appropriate action will be taken to end the conduct, prevent its recurrence, and address its effects. The Title IX Compliance Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that the campus environment is free from unlawful gender-based discrimination and that individual complaints are handled promptly and appropriately. The Title IX Compliance Coordinator may be reached at TitleIXCoordinator@rivhs.com or 757-240-2202. *(Policy 218 Sexual Harassment)* See also *Harassment and Bullying*.

SOCIAL MEDIA

The College requires students to demonstrate responsible use of social media and other electronic communications, respecting the privacy and confidentiality of the patients, classmates, and employees of the College. The College provides guidelines for students to minimize the risks of using social media and other electronic communication platforms. These guidelines are discussed in online training modules that students complete each semester. *(Policy 221 Social Media Policy) See also Harassment and Bullying.*

SMOKING AND NICOTINE-DELIVERY SYSTEMS

The College maintains a tobacco-free campus environment. Abundant evidence exists that the use of tobacco and nicotine products is a serious health hazard to all who may be exposed to them and that condoning the consumption of tobacco/nicotine products is inconsistent with the mission of promoting a healthy lifestyle. In this regard, the rights of individuals who choose to use tobacco/nicotine products must be made subordinate to the rights of non-tobacco/nicotine using individuals not to be involuntarily exposed. Use of tobacco products and nicotine delivery devices, including but not limited to e-cigarettes, Juul and vaping devices, chewing tobacco, and snuff, are strictly prohibited on campus. *(Policy 321 Tobacco-Free Campus)*

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The campus is a drug-free learning environment that is safe for students and employees. Drugs and alcohol are restricted from being brought onto or being present on Riverside property. Students are prohibited from reporting to class, lab, or clinical while having detectable levels or identifiable trace quantities of certain drugs and other substances, or from possession of drug-related paraphernalia on campus or in clinical settings. Disciplinary action, including dismissal, will be used to address violations of this policy. *(Policy 216 Substance Abuse)*

TUITION AND FEES

The College requires all student accounts to be paid in full by the Add/Drop date each semester (exceptions may apply). Tuition and Fee schedules are reviewed annually and are available in the College Catalog and on the College website. Financial Aid and Scholarship information is also available in the College Catalog. *(Policy 260 Tuition and Fees) See also Refund and Cancellation.*