

<b>Title of Policy/Procedure:</b> DUN Testing Policy	<b>Approval Responsibility (Title &amp; Name):</b> UG Chair, Jeanean Boyd DNP, MSN, RN
<b>Approved by (Title &amp; Name):</b> UG Chair, Jeanean Boyd	<b>Last Date of Approval:</b> December 2023
<b>Communication Requirement and Date:</b> Posted in BSN Handbook and all syllabi. UEPC reviewed and approved	<b>Date for Next Review:</b> December 2026
<b>Official SharePoint Location Name and Path:</b> UG SharePoint, Policies and Procedures	<b>Comments:</b> Any change initiated in the Testing Subcommittee and must be approved through UEPC

The purpose of this policy is to provide standardized exam development procedures and exam administration conditions to ensure all students in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation Undergraduate Pre-licensure program are provided a fair and consistent opportunity to demonstrate knowledge. For the purpose of this policy, exams can be delivered electronically or via paper/pencil and occur in a proctored environment supervised via live or video technology to ensure integrity of the exam and identity of testers. In addition, exams may be administered using browser-locking technology to prevent the use of external resources. Exams administered in the CONHI Undergraduate Pre-licensure Nursing Program are either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm-referenced exams measure student performance in relation to other testers whereas criterion-referenced exams are designed to measure student performance on a specified set of learning outcomes. Exams may be faculty-created or standardized. Standardized exams are used to provide student and faculty feedback on licensure exam preparedness and program effectiveness as well as determine minimally-acceptable clinical practice competency. The use and development of all exams administered in the CONHI Undergraduate Pre-licensure Nursing Program is guided by the following standards:

1. National League for Nursing *Fair Testing Guidelines for Nursing Education Imperative* (National League for Nursing Board of Governors, 2012)
2. The Use of Standardized Examinations in Nursing Education, Texas Board of Nursing 3. Education Guideline 3.7.4.a (Texas Board of Nursing, 2017)
3. Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education, Joint Committee on Testing Practices (The Joint Committee on Testing Practices, n.d.)

## Exam Development

According to the UTA Handbook of Operating Procedures (Section 6-503), faculty members are free to develop their own methods of evaluating the performance of students in their classes, but are required to make the methods of evaluation and grading standards to be used known in writing in the course syllabus. Exams administered in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation are designed to measure student learning using best practices in exam development. To prepare students for the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-RN), faculty will consider the NCLEX-RN blueprint and content distribution (<https://www.ncsbn.org/testplans.htm>). Since the practice of nursing requires application of knowledge, skills and abilities, the majority of exam items will be written at the cognitive level of application (or higher), which requires more complex thought processing. Possible question types may include: multiple choice, essay, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, multiple response or hotspot. Blueprints will be provided prior to exams. To match the NCLEX-RN format, back-tracking on exams will be prohibited.

**Exam Length** Faculty discretion will be used to determine the number of questions to be included in course exams. The following time per question will be used for exams:

- a. SafeMedicate and course exams: 1.5 minutes per question for students in Preparatory Nursing, Junior 1 and Junior 2 semester. Students in the Senior 1 and Senior 2 semester will be allotted 1.3 minutes per question.
- b. For other standardized exams not created by UTA faculty, the time per question is at the discretion of the vendor. For ATI exams, students will receive 1 to 2 minutes per question.
- c. Exam times do not include time spent providing testing instructions or time to review answers and rationales after the exam is submitted.

**Final Review Week** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week unless specified in the class syllabus. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During

this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

### **Exam Scheduling**

Exams are scheduled by the Lead Faculty in conjunction with CONHI Testing Specialists. A testing schedule for the CONHI is maintained by the Testing Specialists. Any exams given outside the scheduled exam time must be arranged through the Lead Faculty. During re-scheduled exams, students must comply with all of the testing rules of a normally scheduled exam (e.g. testing environment, dress code, tardiness). Students are not permitted to take exams with students enrolled in another section of the course.

**Scheduling Accelerated Online Program Exams at an Alternate Testing Site** If an Accelerated Online student tests at an approved alternate site, it is the student's responsibility to forward the test schedule to the site coordinator and schedule date and time for the exam. The student is required to test at the same time as their group. Alternate test times must be approved by the Lead Teacher. The student is required to keep track of the testing center's availability. The student is responsible for all fees associated with testing at an alternate site. Once a student chooses an alternative testing site, no changes for the semester will be made without the approval of a Program Manager. If the student finds a site that is not on the AO BSN list of approved testing centers, the student will contact them and confirm that they can download our testing software and request approval from the Testing Specialist. Students testing at alternate sites will adhere to the dress code and rules of the testing center.

**Exam Accommodations** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning, may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting The Student Access and Resource Center (SARC). Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at <https://www.uta.edu/student-affairs/sarcenter>. Students are responsible for providing the instructor

with official notification in the form of a letter certified by The Student Access and Resource Center within the first week of the semester or immediately after receipt whether they intend to use their accommodations or not. Accommodations will not be considered without this documentation.

**Exam Scheduling with Accommodations** Students with testing accommodations from The Student Access and Resource Center, students in the Accelerated Online program and students enrolled in Preparatory Nursing courses may test in locations other than the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Pickard Hall.

**Scheduling Exams in the Alternative Testing Center (ATC)** Students with accommodations may be eligible to schedule exams in the Alternative Testing Center (ATC). Students must schedule their exams in the ATC no later than 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time and forward their individual ATC Test Request Forms to course faculty. Students who test in the Alternative Testing Center with live proctoring may have changes to the requirements for video-proctored exams and should discuss with their faculty. More information about scheduling exams in the ATC can be found at: <https://www.uta.edu/student-affairs/sarcenter/alternative-testing>. Students who do not schedule exams and submit Test Request Forms to course faculty within 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time will not receive accommodations.

**Scheduling Exams in the College of Nursing Testing Room** Students with accommodations may be eligible to test in the College of Nursing Testing Room. Students with accommodations who wish to schedule an exam in this room must contact the Testing Specialist no later than 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time and forward confirmation to course faculty. Students who do not schedule exams and notify course faculty within 5 business days prior to the scheduled exam date and time will not receive accommodations.

**Accelerated Online Students with SAR Center Accommodations** AO students who qualify for testing accommodations through the SAR Center will be assigned a testing site at no additional cost to the student. Students whose official testing site would normally be designated as UTA may use the ATC. If a student's official testing site is within a clinical facility, UTA will designate an appropriate alternate testing site. Students who make alternative site arrangements not designated by UTA will be responsible for payment of testing fees.

### **Exam Administration Procedures**

Students are expected to arrive on time and prepared to test at the scheduled exam administration time. Students must have passwords and access to required software and will not be allotted additional

testing time if they arrive unprepared to test. Faculty and staff will not assist with password changes and log-in retrievals. Additional time on exams will not be allowed due to password or access issues. Students are responsible for notifying faculty and rescheduling exams in the event of an excused or unexcused absence.

**Excused Absences** Excused absences include legal obligations, military obligations, pre-approved university-sponsored events, emergency situations, religious holy days, death of family member, or illness. To be considered for a re-scheduled exam, the student must notify faculty **PRIOR TO** exam start date and time. The student must provide absence-related documentation within 48 hours following exam date and time. Absence-related documentation for illness requires proof of a visit to a healthcare provider and must be verifiable documentation with a return to work/school date. There are no exceptions to this rule. There will be no point deductions for an excused exam absence. The make-up exam may include an alternative questions and/or test format.

In the event of an emergent situation students must notify faculty as soon as they are able. The students will be required to provide documentation within 48 hours of the faculty notification.

**Unexcused Absences** Examples of unexcused absences include oversleeping, exam date oversight, computer/technical issues, or other reasons not listed in the “Excused Absences” section. To be considered for a re-scheduled exam, the student must notify faculty with their request within 48 hours of the exam due date and time. The exam must be scheduled within 7 days of the original exam due date and time. The make-up exam may include an alternative test format and will have a point penalty of 20 percentage point. A student may only have one unexcused absence per course. Subsequent unexcused absences will result in a ‘0’ on the exam. In addition, students will not be allowed to take exam in another section without penalty due to an unexcused absence.

**Exam Tardy** If a student arrives late to a course or standardized exam, they are only allowed the remaining time to complete the exam. For example, for a 60-minute exam, if a student arrives and has only 13 minutes left, that is all the time they will be given to complete their exam. For online exams, the learning management system will auto-submit an exam at the due date and time of the exam. For example, if an exam is due at 10 p.m. and the student begins the exam at 9:47 p.m., the student will have only 13 minutes to complete their exam. If the student has not completed all questions at that time, the exam will be scored based on what has been completed and, students will not be allowed to complete questions left unanswered.

## Testing Room/Environment

Faculty and exam proctors are responsible for ensuring a secure testing environment with minimal distractions. Students who do not adhere to these procedures may be referred to the Office of Community Standards and/or the Lead Teacher for Performance Improvement Plan implementation. Faculty may assign seats in the testing room.

**Check-In Procedures** Students are expected to arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of the exam. To be admitted into the testing room, students must provide a MavID or a government-issued photo ID. Students may be required to provide a calculator, scantron, and/or earplugs. Faculty and staff will not assist with changing passwords or troubleshooting access issues for log in. Proof of identification will also be required upon exam submission.

**During the Exam** Once the exam has started and log-in sheets have been passed out, students are expected to remain in the testing room and complete the test. In the event of an emergency or scheduled break, the student will turn in materials to the proctor prior to leaving the testing room. Faculty and staff will not answer questions related to exam content during exams. Once students have finished the exam, all materials distributed before the exam must be returned. Students who leave the testing room with exam-related documents or materials will be referred to the Office of Community Standards for academic dishonesty.

**Unauthorized Devices and Materials** Students are prohibited from having unauthorized devices and materials in the immediate testing area. Unauthorized devices include, but are not limited to: cell phones, ear buds, smart watches, smart glasses, tablets, alarms, cameras. Unauthorized materials include but are not limited to cheat sheets and notes written on clothing, skin, and personal items. Faculty and staff will conduct visual inspection of clothing and personal items brought to the immediate testing area prior to testing. Any student found with an unauthorized device or material in the immediate testing area will potentially be referred to the Office of Community Standards for an Honor Code Violation.

**Cheating Behaviors** Cheating behaviors will not be tolerated in the testing environment. Behaviors may include looking at other papers or screens, copying answers from other students, allowing students to copy or look at answers, using or possessing unauthorized devices or material in the testing environment. Any suspicious behaviors will be documented by the proctor and reported to the Lead

Faculty for follow up. If the student is found responsible by the Office of Community Standards the exam grade will be a "0". For upper division courses, students who are found responsible for an academic integrity violation will not be eligible to receive a Clinical Excellence Award or Letter of Recommendation for the specified course and will complete a written assignment that includes references to American Nurse Association (ANA) and National League for Nurse (NLN) Standards and core values regarding professional integrity.

**Video Proctored Exams:** If a student is noted to have suspicious behaviors on an exam video the faculty may review videos from previous exams within the course. Previous exam reviews may be included on the OCS referral.

**Distractions and Disruptive Behavior** Faculty and staff will make every effort possible to provide a testing environment that is free from distractions and disruptions. Any student behavior that may cause a distraction is considered inappropriate for the testing environment. Distractions and disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to: audible sound from a cell phone or electronic device that is secured in a bag in a designated area for personal items in the testing environment; reading or talking aloud; excessive bodily movements; frequent and excessive coughing; creating noises, such as tapping sounds; or causing a disturbance. In certain testing locations, electronic devices may be allowed to be stored in a designated area of the testing environment and must be turned off so as not to cause a distraction. If a distraction or disruption is due to an audible sound from a cell phone or electronic device, the student will be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (or if Preparatory Nursing, "Counseling Record /Incident Report"). There will be an automatic point deduction penalty of 20 percentage points from the exam grade. All distractions and disruption will be documented on the "Proctor Exam Report" and provided to the Lead Teacher or designated course faculty.

### **Video- Proctored Exam Procedure**

Students are required to follow this procedure when taking a video-proctored online exam. Students who do not follow this procedure will be notified by the assigned coach and/or course instructor. The following behaviors will warrant a percentage-point deduction on exams and a potential referral to the Office of Community Standards:

- Failing to remove prohibited items or to cover large, difficult to move prohibited items (found in Step 1)

- Submitting an incomplete environmental scan recording, failing to use a detachable webcam, or failing to use the side angle camera view (found in Step 2)
- Failing to identify themselves (no ID shown, unacceptable ID, or picture of ID is unclear and cannot be read (found in Step 2)
- Engaging in prohibited activities (found in Step 3)

Students will receive a 5-percentage point (5%) penalty on an exam for the **first offense** of any above listed behaviors. **Repeated offenses** will warrant a 10-percentage point (10%) penalty on an exam. The penalty will be based on the total points possible of the exam.

Online students are responsible for their computer equipment and the speed of the internet services they are using. This applies to either personal equipment or public (for example, a computer at UTA or a public wi-fi service). Using a slow internet connection can result in lost time on exams and a reduced quality of the exam's video recording. This lost time can negatively impact a student's grade. Course instructors are not able to return "lost time" to students with a slow or inconsistent internet connection.

Online students should have a back-up computer and internet plan in case equipment stops working. Students should start an exam as early as possible to ensure there is time to activate the back-up plan, if necessary, prior to the exam deadline. Last minute problems with computer equipment, internet service, and/or the lockdown browser will not be an acceptable reason to take an exam late without a penalty.

**Refer to the syllabus for technology requirements for online video-proctored exams.**

Students should start and complete exams during the scheduled exam time as outlined on each course schedule. The scheduled exam time includes time for steps 1-3. If a student is unable to enter an exam and has attempted to troubleshoot their equipment without success, they should contact the Lead Faculty or whoever has been designated as the contact person for exam related problems. If a faculty or university sided technical issue occurs the faculty will communicate to all students within ten minutes of when the faculty identifies the issue.

### **Step 1: Preparing for the exam**

- To prepare for taking exams in an online, video-proctored environment, students should refer to the lockdown browser information resources.



- To download the Respondus Lockdown Browser, students should use this link (or there is a link found within the **UTA** Canvas Course Help Area found in the blue left- side banner):
  - <https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=163943837>
- To learn how Respondus Monitor works, students should use the following links:
  - <https://web.respondus.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/RLDB-QuickStartGuide-Instructure-Student.pdf>
- For information about Respondus monitor, students are encouraged to watch this video about the Respondus Lockdown Browser:
  - <https://web.respondus.com/lockdownbrowser-student-video/>
- Students should check for any updates to software before **each exam**, including any updates for the lockdown browser, computer operating system, and antivirus/antimalware programs.
- To maximize the connection to Respondus:
  - Be as close to the router as possible, or connect using an ethernet cable
  - Limit use of bandwidth (turn off cell phone, tablets, streaming devices)
  - Avoid repeated saving of questions
- It is recommended for students to check their system by completing the **Practice Test** in Junior 1 orientation in Canvas or within their current course.
- No breaks that include leaving the view of the camera (including going to the bathroom) are allowed after logging into Respondus Students should plan accordingly.
- If a mobile phone is required for duo authentication for logging into Canvas, it must be turned off and put away **BEFORE** the student begins the pre-exam process.
- **Please note:** a testing surface is defined as the surface where your computer will be placed during the exam (i.e. lap, desk, foot stool, bedside table, if utilizing a bed as testing surface must be made without additional covers and pillows) and the testing area is defined as the room in which you will sit for your exam.
- Remove **all** items not needed to take the exam or not approved in advance by your faculty from the testing surface and aretas within reach.
- Remove all prohibited items as defined below from testing area.
- Items that are prohibited from the testing surface and area include, but are not limited to:
  - Papers or books (including “scratch paper”), unless authorized by faculty
  - Electronic devices with a display screen (tablets, computers, phones, or smart watches)
  - Ink pens or pencils

- Food or drinks
- Ear buds or earphones (**foam ear plugs are permitted**)
- Hat or caps or sunglasses
- Students who are unable to clear all items from the testing area or surface may choose to move to a different location or cover difficult to move items (i.e. computer screen, printers, bookcases) with a sheet or towel.
- If a student is unsure if an item is prohibited from the testing surface/area they should contact faculty or coach to clarify before the exam date.
- Students are expected to dress and act as if they are testing in an in-person proctored environment.
- Students should choose an environment that includes:
  - Adequate lighting to ensure a view of your testing environment
    - Avoid backlighting, which occurs when light is directly behind the students (for example, when their back is facing a window). If needed, a lamp could be placed on the desk to help preventing backlighting.
  - Reliable internet connection
  - Ability to position a detachable camera in the proper side angle view
  - Testing Environment Examples:
    - On Campus computer labs
      - For example: Pickard Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor
      - For additional locations: <https://oit.uta.edu/oit/cs/its/labs>
    - Public Libraries
    - Automobiles
    - Hotel/Conference Rooms

## **Step 2: Completing the pre-exam steps**

- Students should follow the instructions of the start-up sequence in the Lockdown Browser.
- There will be a webcam and microphone check to ensure the equipment is functioning appropriately for the exam.
- Students should take a clear picture of themselves.
- Students must take a clear picture of their photo ID (driver's license, UTA MavID or other form of government- issued photo ID) when requested. The name on the photo ID must match the name that is found in Canvas.

- *Please note: Students are able to verify that a picture was taken in the system. If the student is unable to view the picture of their ID, they should exit out of the system and try again.*
- *Students are allowed multiple attempts to take a picture of their ID. If more than one attempt is needed, the student should hold up their ID in front of the webcam, click try again to take the picture, then click continue.*
- The maximum time allowed for the student to complete the environmental scan is 65 seconds. Students must use a detachable camera to slowly scan their environment and show all of the components defined below.
- An environmental scan is defined as:
  - Entire testing surface, edge-to-edge
  - Entire keyboard and any item that is allowed on testing surface (**including foam ear plugs**) as dictated by your professor as well as underneath each item (lift and show underneath).
- Students can narrate or explain what is seen during the environmental scan as needed.
- It is the student's responsibility to make sure the entire environment can be seen by coaches and faculty.
  - *Please note: students are able to verify that a video was taken. If the student is unable to view the recorded environment check, they should exit out of the system and try again.*
- Once the environment scan has been completed, students are prohibited from leaving the view of the testing area or moving any items back into the testing area.
- Students should start the exam as soon as the environmental scan is completed and reviewed.
- Students should position the webcam to the side of the testing surface so that the webcam captures a profile view of you, your computer (including the computer screen), and testing surface. The webcam should provide a clear view of you, the testing surface and computer from the level of the testing surface and up (including the top of your head, eyes, torso, keyboard, monitor, mouse, and any permitted testing aid (i.e. whiteboard)).

### **Step 3: Taking the exam**

- Online video-proctored exams are simulating the testing environment as if the student were taking an exam in a testing center.
- Behaviors that are prohibited during the exam include, but are not limited to:

- Leaving view of the camera
- Eating or drinking
- Speaking out loud
- Vaping or smoking
- Interacting with other individuals
- Wearing earbuds or earphones
- Turning off, unplugging or covering the webcam
- Students must use a webcam for the entire exam.
- If the webcam stops recording (ex. the indicator light goes off), it is recommended for the student to exit the exam and troubleshoot their equipment immediately. The timer for the exam will continue to run.
- If the connection to an exam is lost, the student should attempt to re-enter the exam immediately and complete steps 1-3 each time. The exam timer will continue to run during this time. The student should contact the lockdown browser support and Canvas support for trouble-shooting assistance if they are unable to re-enter the exam.
  - <https://support.respondus.com/support/index.php?/Knowledgebase/List>
  - For Canvas support, click on the “Help” icon in the Left Ribbon in Canvas.
- **Dry Erase/White board and marker use:**
  - Students will be able to use a dry erase/white board that is no larger than 16” by 16”.
  - Students will need to show a blank board at the beginning of the test and clearly show erasing the board PRIOR TO CLICKING THE FINISH EXAM BUTTON. Once the student exits the test, erasing of the whiteboard cannot be shown and this may be considered academic dishonesty.
- **Calculator use:**
  - Student will be able to use a 4-function basic calculator for calculation purposes.
  - Students will need to show the calculator during the environmental scan.
  - **Scientific calculators are not permitted.**

**If a student does not follow the Video-Proctored Exam Procedure and it is determined that the student engaged in academic dishonesty, the student may be required to test in a live proctored environment at their own expense.**

## Post-Exam Procedures

Once all students enrolled in the course have completed testing, faculty will conduct reviews of exam statistics and make subsequent adjustments to ensure exams are valid measures of student learning. Students wishing to review their exam must follow faculty-designated processes. Students may have an opportunity to provide feedback on exam at the exam site. However, discussing exam items and taking written materials from the testing site will result in referral for academic dishonesty.

**Exam Integrity** After any and all exams, there must be no electronic or face-to-face discussion with students from other sections of the course or with students who have not taken the exam. Discussion of exam questions outside the classroom is considered collusion to cheat and will be referred to the Office of Community Standards. Students who are aware of other students discussing exam questions are expected to report to faculty or Office of Community Standards. Students and faculty are expected to adhere to the rules regarding academic integrity set forth in Policy 9 of the Handbook of Operating Procedures (<https://www.uta.edu/policy/hop/9>).

**Scoring** In order to successfully complete an undergraduate nursing course, students must obtain a 70% weighted average on proctored exams. Exam grades are rounded to two decimal places (i.e., 85.679=85.68) but there will be no rounding for final course grades.

## **References**

- National League for Nursing Board of Governors. (2012). *The fair testing imperative for nursing education: A living document from the National League for Nursing*. New York. Retrieved from [http://www.nln.org/docs/default-source/about/nln-vision-series-\(position-statements\)/nInvision\\_4.pdf](http://www.nln.org/docs/default-source/about/nln-vision-series-(position-statements)/nInvision_4.pdf)
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