

# PRACTICAL NURSING

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The Practical Nursing Program, established in 1966, offers a full-time and part-time program that leads to a certificate in practical nursing. This program is approved by the Alabama Board of Nursing. Upon satisfactory completion of the program, the student will be eligible to apply to the Alabama Board of Nursing, or the Board of Nursing in another state, to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN).

The Practical Nursing program has two sites, one on the main campus in Evergreen and an off-campus site located in Atmore. Both sites offer full-time and part-time programs. Classrooms for the Atmore site are located at 201 Brookwood Road, Atmore, AL 36502. The mailing address is P.O. Box 400, Atmore, AL 36504. The clinical facilities for both programs are located within a 50-mile radius of the site at which the student is enrolled. Primary clinical areas are Andalusia, Evergreen, Greenville, Brewton, Monroeville, Georgiana, Atmore, and Bay Minette, Alabama.

The curriculum is identical at both locations. Full-time and part-time students may enroll in first-term classes fall and spring semesters.

## ***Mission***

The mission of the nursing programs of the Alabama Community College System is to prepare graduates to practice safe, competent, patient-centered care in an increasingly complex and rapidly changing healthcare system. We seek to provide full and equal access to opportunities for educational success to meet the community's needs.

## ***Program Purpose***

The purpose of the Practical Nursing program is to provide accessible, quality educational opportunities that will provide individuals with the knowledge and technical skills necessary to pass the NCLEX-PN and subsequently to obtain entry-level employment in the practical nursing profession. The practical nursing graduate will be capable of providing safe care to individuals and/or groups with common health problems.

The certificate program is intended to produce graduates who are prepared for employment as entry-level licensed practical nurses in hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, doctors' offices, clinics, and as occupational health nurses. Program graduates are to be competent in the academic areas of communication, mathematics, computer literacy, and human relations and in the technical areas of maternity, pediatrics, geriatrics, and adult health. They must also have the foundation to function at the level of a practical nurse in surgery, outpatient departments, intensive care units, community health, and general nursing care units.

Reid State Technical College will accomplish program objectives by providing students with a comprehensive general education and technical training in the core area of practical nursing. The occupational skill preparation should meet the Alabama State Board of Nursing recognized skill standards. The college will ensure program quality through internal certification of graduate competencies and external licensure of graduates and program approval by the Alabama Board of Nursing.

## ***Philosophy***

We believe that nursing is a dynamic profession, blending science with the use of evidence-based practice and clinical reasoning and the art of caring and compassion to provide quality, patient-centered care.

We believe learning is an interactive process in which faculty and students share responsibility to meet program outcomes. We believe in using educational methods that are current and supportive of students in the teaching and learning environment, with the presentation of information from simple to complex.

Nursing is guided by standards of practice and standards of professional performance. Standards reflect the values and priorities of the nursing profession. Therefore, we have integrated competencies from the Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) and National League of Nursing (NLN) into our philosophy as part of our core values.

## **Competencies**

NLN competencies for nursing are central to the conceptual framework. The related QSEN competencies for graduate nurses define the knowledge, skills and attitudes that the graduate nurse should possess to continuously improve the quality and safety of the healthcare systems within which they work. (QSEN)

**Human Flourishing-** Advocate for patients and families in ways that promote their self-determination, integrity, and ongoing growth as human beings. (NLN def)

**Patient-Centered Care** – Recognize the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for patient’s preferences, values, and needs. (QSEN def)

**Nursing Judgment-** Make judgments in practice, substantiated with evidence, that integrate nursing science in the provision of safe, quality care and that promote the health of patient within the family and community context. (NLN def)

**Safety** – Minimizes risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance. (QSEN def)

**Informatics** – Use information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making. (QSEN def)

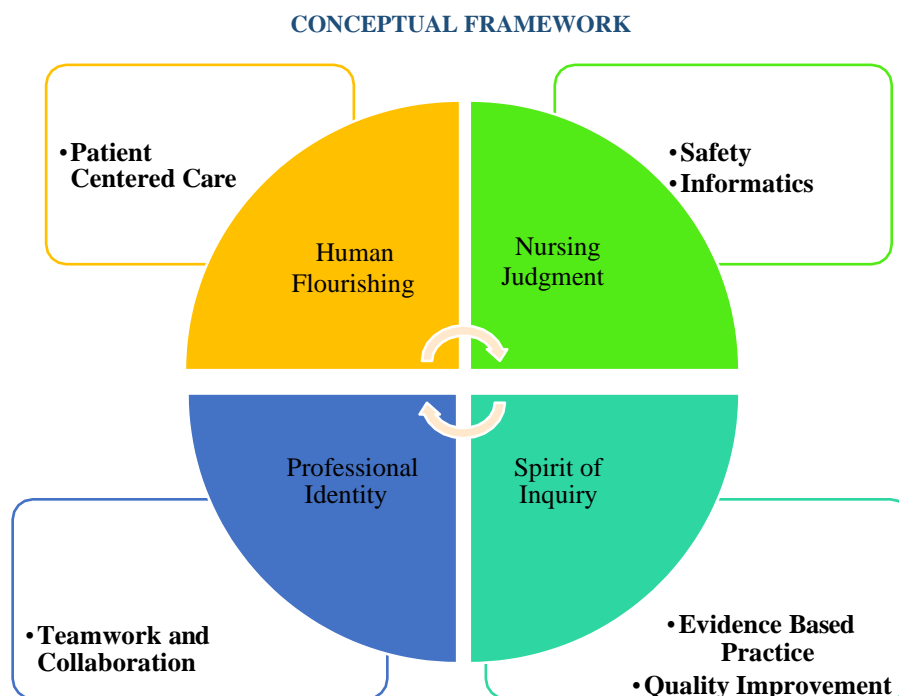
**Professional Identity-** Implement one’s role as a nurse in ways that reflect integrity, responsibility, ethical practices, and an evolving identity as a nurse committed to evidence-based practice, caring, advocacy, and safe, quality care for diverse patients within a family and community context. (NLN def)

**Teamwork and Collaboration** – Function effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality patient care. (QSEN def)

**Spirit of Inquiry-** Examine the evidence that underlies clinical nursing practice to challenge the status quo, question underlying assumptions, and offer new insights to improve the quality of care for patients, families, and communities. (NLN def)

**Evidence-based practice** – Integrate best current evidence with clinical expertise and patient/family preferences and values for delivery of optimal health care. (QSEN def)

**Quality Improvement** – Use data to monitor the outcomes of care processes and use improvement methods to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of healthcare systems. (QSEN def)



The conceptual framework derived from the philosophy forms a basis for the organization and structure of the nursing curriculum. This framework serves as a guide for nursing instruction in the attainment of student learning outcomes. The framework consists of concepts that encompass the qualities of a successful graduate nurse. NLN competencies were chosen because they specifically define the competencies of the graduate Associate Degree Nurse. QSEN competencies reflect current contemporary practice.

Concepts interlace NLN and QSEN competencies to achieve the goal of providing graduate nurses with the tools needed to provide holistic care to in an ever-changing health care delivery system. Each competency includes knowledge, skills and attitudes to serve as a basis for consistent performance expectations across academic and practice settings.

## **Nursing Program Outcomes**

The program outcomes are consistent with The Alabama Community College System Nursing Program Outcomes which include theoretical and clinical competency, graduation rates, NCLEX-PN passage rate of first-time test takers, and job placement rates.

- Performance on Licensure Exam—the licensure exam pass rate will be at or above the national mean for first-time writers.
- Program Completion—At least 75% of the students admitted will graduate within 150% of the time of the stated program length beginning with the first required nursing course as delineated below:
  - - Associate degree nursing--eight semesters
    - LPN-RN mobility option with NUR 200--six semesters
    - LPN-RN mobility option without NUR 200--five semesters
    - Paramedic -RN mobility option--five semesters
    - Practical nursing--five semesters
    - Part-time practical nursing and associate degree nursing options-one and one-half times the semester length of the respective program
- Program Satisfaction—At least 80% of graduates responding to the graduate survey distributed within one year after graduation will indicate satisfaction with the program. At least 80% of employers responding to the employer survey distributed within one year after graduation will indicate satisfaction with the program.
- Job Placement- At least 90% of the graduates seeking employment will be employed one year after graduation in a position for which the program prepared them.

### **Practical Nurse Student Learning Outcomes/Graduate Competencies**

#### **Human Flourishing**

Support human dignity, integrity, self-determination, and personal growth of patients, oneself, and members of the health care team.

#### **Patient-Centered Care**

Distinguish the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for patient's preferences, values, and needs.

#### **Nursing Judgement**

Appraise judgments used in the provision of safe, quality care and for decisions that promote the health of patients within a family context at the level of practice for a practical nurse.

#### **Informatics**

Integrate information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision making at the level of practice for a practical nurse.

#### **Safety**

Minimize risk of harm to patients and providers through both system effectiveness and individual performance.

#### **Professional identity**

Evaluate how one's personal strengths and values affect one's identity as a nurse and one's contributions as a member of the health care team.

#### **Teamwork and Collaboration**

Collaborate effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making to achieve quality patient care.

#### **Spirit of Inquiry**

Defend the basis for nursing actions, considering research, evidence, tradition, and patient preferences

#### **Quality Improvement**

Interpret data to monitor the outcomes of care processes and use improvement methods to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems.

### **Evidence-Based Practice**

Synthesize current evidence with clinical expertise and patient/family preferences and values for delivery of optimal health care.

### **Occupational Data**

Graduates of the Licensed Practical Nursing program work in the healthcare setting where they use their skills which are grouped under the classification of practical nursing personnel. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Employment and Wages, the national median wage for practical nursing personnel was \$26.86/hr. in 2022.

### **Admission Requirements**

Applicants to this program must complete the application procedure, present official documentation of a high school diploma, in accordance with Alabama Community College Board of Trustees policy, or GED, and meet the following minimum admission standards for the practical nursing program:

1. Unconditional admission to the college.
2. Receipt of completed application for the practical nursing program by set date.
3. A minimum of 2.50 average GPA on the nursing required general education courses.
4. A minimum of 2.50 high school cumulative GPA for students without prior college work (GED acceptable in lieu of high school transcript).
5. Eligibility for English 101, Biology 201, and Math 100 as determined by college policy
6. Good standing with the college.
7. Meeting the essential functions or technical standards required for nursing.
8. The TEAS (The Test of Essential Academic Skills) testing will be done on all nursing applicants. The cost of the test will be the responsibility of the student. The TEAS test must have been taken prior to application.
9. The actual score made by the student will be calculated into the compilation of points. The total number of points possible on the TEAS is 150.
10. The TEAS score is good for two (2) years. A student may repeat the TEAS V (or current version) once during any semester admission time frame. The student must wait at least six (6) weeks between taking each test. A student's score on a previous version of the TEAS test may be considered at the discretion of each college if it is within the two-year time frame.
11. Any student who has a minimum of 18 ACT composite scores National or Residual will not be required to take the TEAS exam.

Admission to the practical nursing program is competitive, and the number of students is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal requirements does not guarantee acceptance.

## **Essential Functions**

Reid State Technical College Practical Nursing Program and the Alabama College System endorse the Americans with Disabilities Act. In accordance with College policy, when requested, reasonable accommodations may be provided for individuals with disabilities.

Physical, cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and social abilities are required in unique combinations to provide safe and effective nursing care. The applicant/student must be able to meet the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations throughout the program of learning. Admission, progression, and graduation are contingent upon one's ability to demonstrate the essential functions delineated for the nursing program with or without reasonable accommodations. The nursing program and/or its affiliated clinical agencies may identify additional essential functions. The nursing program reserves the right to amend the essential functions as deemed necessary.

In order to be admitted and to progress in the nursing program one must possess a functional level of ability to perform the duties of a nurse. Admission or progression may be denied if a student is unable to demonstrate the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations.

The essential functions delineated are those deemed necessary by Reid State Technical College and the Alabama College System nursing programs. No representation regarding industrial standards is implied. Similarly, any reasonable accommodations made will be determined and applied to the respective nursing program and may vary from reasonable accommodations made by healthcare employers.

The essential functions delineated below are necessary for nursing program admission, progression, and graduation and for the provision of safe and effective nursing care. The essential functions include but are not limited to the ability of the following

1. Sensory Perception

- a. Visual
  - 1) Observe and discern subtle changes in physical conditions and the environment
  - 2) Visualize different color spectrums and color changes
  - 3) Read the fine print in varying levels of light
  - 4) Read for prolonged periods of time
  - 5) Read cursive writing
  - 6) Read at varying distances
  - 7) Read data/information displayed on monitors/equipment
- b. Auditory
  - 1) Interpret monitoring devices
  - 2) Distinguish muffled sounds heard through a stethoscope
  - 3) Hear and discriminate high and low-frequency sounds produced by the body and the environment
  - 4) Effectively hear to communicate with others
- c. Tactile
  - 1) Discern tremors, vibrations, pulses, textures, temperature, shapes, size, location, and other physical characteristics
- d. Olfactory
  - 1) Detect body odors and odors in the environment

2. Communication/Interpersonal Relationships

- a. Verbally and in writing, engage in two-way communication and interact effectively with others, from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds
- b. Work effectively in groups
- c. Work effectively independently
- d. Discern and interpret nonverbal communication
- e. Express one's ideas and feelings clearly
- f. Communicate with others accurately and in a timely manner
- g. Obtain communications from a computer

3. Cognitive/Critical Thinking

- a. Effectively read, write, and comprehend the English language
- b. Consistently and dependably engage in the process of critical thinking in order to formulate and implement safe and ethical nursing
- c. Demonstrate satisfactory performance on written examinations including mathematical computations without a calculator
- d. Satisfactorily achieve the program objectives

4. Motor Function

- a. Handle small delicate equipment/objects without extraneous movement, contamination, or destruction
- b. Move, position, turn, transfer, assist with lifting or lift and carry clients without injury to clients, self or others
- c. Maintain balance from any position
- d. Stand on both legs
- e. Coordinate hand/eye movements
- f. Push/pull heavy objects without injury to the client, self, or others
- g. Stand, bend, walk, and/or sit for 6-12 hours in a clinical setting performing physical activities require energy without jeopardizing the safety of the client, self, or others
- h. Walk without a cane, walker, or crutches
- i. Function with hands-free for nursing care and transporting items
- j. Transport self and client without the use of electrical devices
- k. Flex, abduct and rotate all joints freely
- l. Respond rapidly to emergency situations
- m. Maneuver in small areas
- n. Perform daily care functions for the client
- o. Coordinate fine and gross motor hand movements to provide safe effective nursing care
- p. Calibrate/use equipment
- q. Execute movement required to provide nursing care in all health care settings
- r. Perform CPR and physical assessment
- s. Operate a computer

## 5. Professional Behavior

- a. Convey caring, respect, sensitivity, tact, compassion, empathy, tolerance, and a healthy attitude toward others
- b. Demonstrate a mentally healthy attitude that is age appropriate in relation to the client
- c. Handle multiple tasks concurrently
- d. Perform safe, effective nursing care for clients in a caring context
- e. Understand and follow the policies and procedures of the college and clinical agencies
- f. Understand the consequences of violating the student code of conduct
- g. Understand that posing a direct threat to others is unacceptable and subjects one to discipline
- h. Meet qualifications for licensure by examination as stipulated by the Alabama Board of Nursing
- i. Not to pose a threat to self or others
- j. Function effectively in situations of uncertainty and stress inherent in providing nursing care
- k. Adapt to changing environments and situations
- l. Remain free of chemical dependency
- m. Report promptly to clinical and remain for 6-12 hours in the clinical unit
- n. Provide nursing care in an appropriate time frame
- o. Accepts responsibility, accountability, and ownership of one's actions
- p. Seek supervision/consultation in a timely manner
- q. Examine and modify one's own behavior when it interferes with nursing care or learning

Upon admission, an individual who discloses a disability can request reasonable accommodations. Individuals will be asked to provide documentation of the disability in order to assist with the provision of appropriate reasonable accommodations. The respective college will provide reasonable accommodations but is not required to substantially alter the requirements or nature of the program or provide accommodations that inflict an undue burden on the respective college.

In order to be admitted one must be able to perform all of the essential functions with or without reasonable accommodations. If an individual's health changes during the program of learning, so that the essential functions cannot be met with or without reasonable accommodations, the student will be withdrawn from the nursing program. The nursing faculty reserves the right at any time to require an additional medical examination at the student's expense in order to assist with the evaluation of the student's ability to perform the essential functions.

## Licensure Requirements

Students who complete the practical nursing program may apply to the Alabama Board of Nursing, or the board of nursing in another state, to take the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses. Program completion does not guarantee a student the right to sit for the examination. Graduates must be licensed in order to practice as a practical nurse.

## Progression Policy

1. In order to progress in the nursing program, the following policy should be followed:
  - a. A student can only have two withdrawals in two separate semesters **or**
  - b. A student can only have one withdrawal and one failure in two separate semesters **or**
  - c. A student can only have 2 failures in two separate semesters.
2. A student may be **reinstated** to the nursing program only one time. The **reinstatement** is not guaranteed. All nursing program admission standards must be met.
3. A student must have a 2.0 cumulative GPA at the current institution for reinstatement.
4. If a student has a documented extenuating circumstance that should be considered related to a withdrawal or failure, then this student may request a hearing before the Admission Committee or other appropriate college committee for a decision on repeating a course or readmission to the program.

## Nursing Non-Progression

1. Nursing non-progression is defined as failure of one or more courses in a semester OR withdrawal (for any reason) from one or more courses in two separate semesters.
2. Students withdrawing from one or more courses in the same semester are not considered under this definition to have experienced a nursing non-progression and should return to repeat the required courses at the first course offering.
3. Students returning to repeat a course due to withdrawal will be allowed to register for said course(s) on a space available basis.

## **Reinstatement Policy**

1. Students who experience non-progression in the nursing program and who desire reinstatement in the program must apply for reinstatement to the program.
2. A student must request reinstatement within one year from the term of non-progression to be eligible for reinstatement.
3. Students dismissed from the program for disciplinary reasons and/or unsafe client care in the clinical area will not be allowed reinstatement to the nursing program.
4. Reinstatement to the program will be allowed one time only.
5. Reinstatement to the nursing program is based on space availability and is not guaranteed.
6. Selection for reinstatement is based on GPA in nursing program required courses.
7. Students must adhere to nursing curriculum and program policies and procedures in effect at the time of reinstatement.
8. Reinstatement can be denied due to, but not limited to, any of the following circumstances:
  - a. Space unavailability
  - b. Refusal by clinical agencies to accept the student for clinical experiences
  - c. Twelve months have elapsed since the student enrollment in a nursing course.

### **Criteria for Reinstatement**

1. Demonstrate a 2.0 GPA in nursing program required courses.
2. Student has had no more than one non-progression since program admission.
3. Demonstrate acceptable skills proficiency.
4. Meet acceptability criteria for placement at clinical agencies for clinical experience.
5. Demonstrate ability to meet essential functions for nursing with or without reasonable accommodations.
6. Demonstrate current CPR at the health care provider level.

### **Process for Reinstatement**

1. Students should first schedule an appointment with a nursing faculty/advisor to discuss eligibility for reinstatement.
2. Students must apply for reinstatement to the nursing program and submit the application by published deadline.
3. Students who have been out of the program for more than one semester, seeking reinstatement, must pass a written validation exam on material with courses completed prior to the non-progression and successfully validate skills required by program.
4. Students must apply for readmission to the College if not currently enrolled. College readmission must be accomplished by published deadlines.
5. Update all drug testing and background screening according to program policy.

## **Readmission**

Students not eligible for program reinstatement may apply for program admission as a new student. If accepted, all nursing program courses (NUR prefix) will have to be taken.

## **Transfer Policy**

The transfer policy applies only to students desiring to transfer between Alabama Community College System institutions. It does not apply to students wishing to transfer from other institutions.

### **Criteria for Transfer**

1. Must meet minimum admission standards for the nursing program
2. Must possess a grade of C or better in all nursing program required courses taken at another institution and possess a minimum of a 2.0 cumulative GPA at time of transfer
3. Dean/Director of previous nursing program must provide a letter of eligibility for progression in previous nursing program.
4. Must comply with all program policy requirements at accepting institutions
5. Complete at least 25% of the nursing program required courses for degree/certificate at the accepting institution
6. Must meet acceptability criteria for placement at clinical agencies for clinical experience
7. Acceptance of transfer students into nursing programs is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal standards does not guarantee acceptance
8. Student selection for transfer is based on GPA in nursing program courses

## **Transient Student Policy**

The transient policy applies only to students desiring to transfer between Alabama Community College System institutions. It does not apply to students wishing to transfer from other institutions.

### **Criteria for Transient Status**

1. Must meet minimum admission standards for the nursing program
2. Must possess a grade of C or better in all nursing program required courses taken at another institution and possess a minimum of 2.0 cumulative GPA
3. Dean/Director of previous nursing program must provide a letter of eligibility for progression in previous nursing program
4. A student enrolled at another institution must secure permission from that institution by submitting an application for admission to the College and a Transient Student Form completed by an official (Nursing Program Dean/Director) of the primary institution
5. Transient students must complete a Transcript Request Form at the end of the term before a transcript will be issued by the primary institution
6. Must comply with all program policy requirements at accepting institution
7. Must meet acceptability criteria for placement at clinical agencies for clinical experience
8. Acceptance of transient student into a nursing program is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal standards does not guarantee acceptance
9. Student selection for transient status is based on GPA in nursing program required courses

### **Dismissal Policy**

Students dismissed from the previous program for disciplinary reasons and/or unsafe/unsatisfactory client care in the clinical area will not be allowed reinstatement to the nursing program.

### **Grading Policy/Scale**

No rounding of test scores (daily, weekly, or final exam) will be done (example: 78.6 is 78.6). Only the final course grade average will be rounded: 0.5 or higher will be raised to the next whole number (Example: 79.5 or higher will be rounded to 80). A student must have a "75" or better average (C) in all nursing courses and a "70" or better in general education courses (math, English, and biology) to pass and be allowed to progress in the nursing program.

A grade of "D or F" is not acceptable for any course in the standardized practical nursing curriculum (including math, English, and biology). A student must pass both components of a theory/clinical class to pass the course. A passing grade in one component will not bring up a failing grade in the other.

#### **Grading Scale for Nursing Courses:**

|                  |                |
|------------------|----------------|
| A = 90 - 100     |                |
| B = 80 - 89      |                |
| C = 75 - 79      | AU = Audit     |
| D = 60 - 74      | I = Incomplete |
| F = 59 and below | W = Withdrawn  |

#### **Grading Scale for General Education Courses in the Nursing Curriculum:**

|              |                  |
|--------------|------------------|
| A = 90 - 100 | D = 60 - 69      |
| B = 80 - 89  | F = 59 and below |
| C = 70 - 79  |                  |



## PRACTICAL NURSING

**MINIMUM CREDITS REQUIRED:** 46 Semester Credit Hours

**Length of Program:** 3 semesters of full-time attendance

| GENERAL EDUCATION CORE: 21 Semester Credit Hours       |     |                                    | Theory | Lab | Clinical | Contact | Credit |
|--|-----|------------------------------------|--------|-----|----------|---------|--------|
| ORT  | 100 | Orientation                        | 1      | 0   |          | 1       | 1      |
| BIO  | 201 | Human Anatomy & Physiology I       | 3      | 1   |          | 5       | 4      |
| BIO  | 202 | Human Anatomy & Physiology II      | 3      | 1   |          | 5       | 4      |
| ENG  | 101 | English Composition I              | 3      | 0   |          | 3       | 3      |
| MTH  | 100 | Intermediate College Algebra       | 3      | 0   |          | 3       | 3      |
| PSY  | 210 | Human Growth and Development       | 3      | 0   |          | 3       | 3      |
| SPH<br>or<br>SPH                                       | 106 | Fundamentals of Oral Communication | 3      | 0   |          | 3       | 3      |
|  | 107 | Fundamentals of Speaking           |        |     |          |         |        |
| TECHNICAL CONCENTRATION CORE: 25 Semester Credit Hours |     |                                    |        |     |          |         |        |
| NUR  | 112 | Fundamental Concepts of Nursing    | 4      | 2   | 1        | 13      | 7      |
| NUR  | 113 | Nursing Concepts I                 | 4      | 1   | 3        | 16      | 8      |
| NUR  | 114 | Nursing Concepts II                | 5      | 0   | 3        | 14      | 8      |
| NUR  | 115 | Evidence Based Clinical Reasoning  | 1      | 0   | 1        | 4       | 2      |