



GUIDELINE

SUBJECT/TITLE: Attire for Students in the Practice Setting (Undergraduate Programs) for the 2 nd Year of the Undergraduate Nursing Program at Medicine Hat College		PAGE: 1 of 3
RELATED POLICY: Attire for Faculty in the Practice Setting (Undergraduate Programs)	DATE ESTABLISHED: 2001	
AUTHORIZATION: Practice Policy and Procedure Committee (PPPC) Undergraduate Programs Committee (UPC) Nursing Council	DATE LAST REVIEWED (MHC): October 10, 2023 October 4, 2022 October 1, 2021 September 14, 2020 January 9, 2018	
	DATE LAST REVISED (UC/MHC): October 10, 2023 (editorial revisions)	

Purpose: To ensure nursing students, as University of Calgary/Medicine Hat College representatives dress appropriately in all practice (on and off campus) settings. The Attire Policy has been developed to promote a professional image, providing a safe environment for the student and the patient, and to promote appropriate personal hygiene and prevent the spread of infection. Dress and personal care must be neat, clean, and appropriate for the practice environment.

Policy: Nursing Practice Course Coordinators need to ensure that Instructors are aware that the Attire for Students in the Practice Setting Policy must be enforced at all times.

If a student is not in compliance, a verbal warning will be given by the Instructor. If the issue is not remedied, the following protocol must be followed:

- The student will be required to leave the practice environment immediately to comply with the Attire Policy. The student will only be permitted to return to the practice area once the infringement to the policy has been rectified.
- Consistently failing to comply with the Attire Policy means that such a student will be unsuccessful in the practice course. Practice evaluations will include Learner Outcomes concerning professional identity (i.e. demeanor, conduct, dress code).
- The Nursing Instructor (NI) will document a student’s refusal to adhere to the policy and will copy the NPCC and Nursing Department Chair at MHC.

- The NI will direct the student to make an appointment with the Nursing Department Chair.

Points of

Emphasis: 1. **Uniforms:** Uniforms are required for practice in simulation, hospitals, congregate living facilities (i.e. long term care/supportive living) and a variety of other care centres. The Faculty of Nursing requires a standard uniform and specific instructions regarding the uniform will be provided at orientation. Where uniforms are not required, specific instructions will be given.

- Students are advised to change out of their uniform and work shoes following each off-site practice. Uniforms and work shoes are considered vectors for transmission of pathogens.
- White or dark grey long sleeve shirts (solid, non-patterned) may be worn under the student uniform except in pediatric areas where appropriately patterned long sleeve shirts may be worn. (Specific unit policies may apply.) Sleeves must be able to be pushed up, above the elbow, when providing direct hands-on patient care.

When uniforms are not required (e.g. most community and mental health settings), students must be conservatively and appropriately dressed. Refer to respective course documents or agency policy guidelines for specific details related to these expectations. The dress code in community agencies is determined by the type of agency in which the practice experience is occurring. Very casual clothes (e.g. sweat pants, yoga wear, tank tops, tracksuits, jeans, jean jackets, shorts, hats, sweat and t-shirts with logos) are not considered appropriate dress for students in a professional school (some exceptions may apply).

2. **Shoes:** Proper footwear must be worn during practice. All shoes will be leather or vinyl, have a closed heel and toe to offer adequate support and protection against injury or exposure to spills. Footwear must have a low heel and adequate shock absorbing, non-marking, slip resistant sole. Footwear is to be well maintained, clean, dry and in good condition.

3. Jewelry:

- A watch marking seconds is required. Fob watches worn on clothing are preferred in clinical areas to facilitate improved hand hygiene, but wrist watches with cleanable/waterproof face and straps are permitted. Watches with gemstones/raised decoration or fabric wristbands are not permitted.
- Rings on hands should be limited to plain bands (may be required to be removed for some practice settings).
- Medical alert identification is acceptable.
- Piercings should be limited to plain studs or sleepers [may be required to be removed for some practice settings (e.g. Infectious Disease)].

4. Personal Hygiene:

- Natural nails must be clean, healthy, and short. No artificial fingernails and no nail polish may be worn in the practice setting.
- Hair must be worn in a controlled fashion (i.e. pulled back, or in a ponytail) so as not to interfere with patient care.
- Groomed beards and moustaches must be neat; and, if required to wear a N95 mask must meet N95 standards.
- No chewing gum is permitted.

5. **Fragrances:** Students should refrain from using fragrances as they can be harmful to clients. Unscented or low scented personal hygiene products are recommended (e.g. deodorant, shampoo and soap).

6. **Identification Cards/Name Badges:** Students will receive a:

- Medicine Hat College, Faculty of Nursing, Name Badge (displaying first name and last initial) – is part of the uniform; therefore, must be worn at all times unless agency policy or clinical judgment precludes this.

If in an AHS setting: AHS Photo ID and Access Control Card – must be clearly visible at all times. This will be issued prior to commencement of the first AHS practice placement and will be retained for the duration of program.

7. It is expected that the dress and deportment of nursing students will be in accordance with the expectations of this policy and of the practice setting. Due to the admittedly subjective nature of what constitutes appropriateness, students are advised to consult with their Instructor if they are unsure of the suitability of their attire or their personal presentation.

References:

Alberta Health Services, “Hand Hygiene” Policy Level 1 (Document #: PS-02), 2021.

<https://extranet.ahsnet.ca/teams/policydocuments/1/clp-hand-hygiene-ps-02-policy.pdf>

Buresh, B., & Gordon, S. (2006). Presenting yourself as nurse. In B. Buresh & S. Gordon (Eds.), *From silence to voice: What nurses know and must communicate to the public* (pp. 42-63). London: Cornell University Press.

Moolenaar, R.L., Crutcher, J.M., San Joaquin, V.H., Sewell, L., Hutwagner, L.C., Carson, L.A., Robinson, D.A., Smithee, L.M.K., & Jarvis, W.R. (2000). A prolonged outbreak of *pseudomonas aeruginosa* in a neonatal intensive care unit did staff fingernails play a role in disease transmission? *Infectional Control & Hospital Epidemiology*, 21(02).

University of Calgary, Undergraduate Medical Education Handbook, “Attire”.

https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/4/Policies/A/attire-medical-students-guideline_june-2015.pdf