

Guidelines for Professional Appearance and Attire for Nursing Students

Approved by Faculty: May 2002 Effective August 2002; Revised June 2014; Revised August 2017

The nursing student's professional appearance and attire influences patient care as well as the public's image of nursing. Whether the nursing student is providing care for the acutely ill patient in a hospital setting or teaching the family in the home, she or he is being scrutinized by others who are forming mental images about nurses and nursing. The public's perception of nurses and nursing may influence the effectiveness of nursing practice and should be considered as the nurse provides care. The nursing student is expected to provide an environment that enhances and promotes healing. This is accomplished in a number of ways. The student will maintain a professional appearance and attire that is neat, clean, and appropriate. The student will provide a hygienic, unobtrusive, calm, and comfortable environment that focuses on the needs and a healing of the patient. In keeping with these commitments the school has adopted the following policies:

Policies Regarding Professional Appearance and Presentation

- Perfumes, colognes, and body odor
Should be avoided, the odor of cologne and perfumes can be nauseating and distressing to someone who is ill,
- Tobacco: third-hand smoke and odor
In a like manner the third-hand smoke and odor on clothing, breath, skin, or hair is an impediment to health, can be offensive, and is not acceptable.
- Hair
 - Short, off the collar, or secured in a way that avoids hair falling over the shoulders
 - Dreadlocks or braids, if worn, must be clean, well maintained, and, if below the collar, must be secured
 - Beards and mustaches must be short, trimmed neatly, and clean
 - Most of our partnering healthcare organizations require hair to be a naturally occurring color.
- If the student will potentially be using N95 facemasks, face must be clean and shaven.
- Fingernails
 - No false fingernails of any type, including acrylics, gels, or wraps
 - Nails must be short enough to not be seen over the tips of the fingers
 - No nail polish of any kind or color is permitted
- Jewelry
 - Earrings: only one small earring in each ear lobe is permitted
 - Body Piercing: other than earlobes, may not be visible. Only clear retainers may be used to maintain the piercing while the jewelry is out so as to make the piercing less noticeable.
 - Rings: only plain wedding bands are permitted. No rings with stones are permitted due to the potential for the stone to cause injury to the patient, tear through gloves or harbor pathogens.
 - Bracelets are not permitted
 - Wristwatches may be worn; expansion bands are preferred.
- Tattoos
 - Visible tattoos are not permitted. Clothing, a large band-aid, or make up must cover all tattoos at all times in clinical settings.
- Cell phones
 - Students are expected to bring smart phones to clinical for access to references only. Students are not to access email, text messaging, or call features at the clinical settings.
 - Students may give a faculty member's cell phone number to individuals who may need to contact them in an emergency during clinical hours.

Policies Regarding Attire

The nursing student's professional attire influences the public's image of nursing in general and the school specifically. Whether the nursing student is providing care for the acutely ill patient in a hospital setting or teaching the family in the home, she or he is being scrutinized by others who are forming mental images

about nurses and nursing. The public's perception of nurses and nursing may influence the effectiveness of nursing practice and should be considered as the nurse provides care. Likewise, the student's image of nursing is positively influenced when students take pride in their professional appearance, in their school, and in their identification with peers.

Attire in Hospitals: Clinical Practice That Includes Direct Patient Care

The student scrubs and lab coats may be purchased from Emory University Barnes & Noble Bookstore (Oxford Rd Bldg., 1390 Oxford Rd., Atlanta, GA 30322).

- The uniform consists of navy blue pants, a navy blue tunic top with the Emory University School of Nursing emblem embroidered on the left upper chest area, and an optional blue or white cuffed long-sleeved jacket. The jacket may have the NHWSON emblem embroidered on the left upper chest. Both men and women will wear this uniform. In addition, students may choose between two styles of navy blue uniform pants, and women may choose between a pullover tunic top and a snap front closure tunic top. Additionally, students should ensure that the uniform fits properly and that no skin is exposed at the waist and the chest is appropriately covered when the student bends at the waist.
- A thin, plain, nude, black or white long sleeve shirt may be worn under the scrub top to hide tattoos (not turtle neck).
- In addition to the above, all students must have a white, professional, mid-thigh length lab coat to be worn when in the clinical setting, but not involved in direct patient care. Lab coats will also be available from Uniform Advantage. Do not have lab coats embroidered so you can continue to use after graduation.
- Only all white or black leather or vinyl shoes with flat rubber or other quiet soles (designed specifically for nurses) will be acceptable. Nursing shoes can also be purchased from Uniform Advantage. White socks that cover the ankle must be worn with shoes at all times.
- Photo identification badges are to be worn on the uniform at all times for clinical practice and on the lab coat when students are present in agencies for orientation or assessment prior to clinical practice. The photo identification badges must be purchased from the university during orientation week.
- All items of the uniform must be kept clean and wrinkle free.
- Specific clinical sites may have more stringent uniform requirements that supersede the NHWSON policy and will be discussed and adhered with during the clinical rotation.

Attire in Hospitals: Clinical Learning Activities that Exclude Direct Patient Care

- Slacks are permitted when in the clinical setting, but shorts are never acceptable. Dress should be "business casual."
- Shoes must be completely closed; no open toe shoes or sandals are acceptable.
- Denim jeans, T-shirts with logos, halter or spaghetti straps, short skirts, or capri pants are never acceptable when in the clinical agency.
- The lab coat and the Emory University School of Nursing Photo ID badge must be worn at all times.

Attire in the Mental Health, Community Settings and Some Specialty Areas of the Hospital

Faculty will issue guidelines for attire in these clinical settings, but in general business casual dress or the student uniform with the Emory University School of Nursing Photo ID badge will be required.

Students and faculty are required to adhere to the policies and regulations of the clinical institutions with whom we partner.

The responsibility for establishing guidelines for the professional attire of nursing students rests with the faculty and administration of the school. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the faculty and administration as appropriate. Suggestions for change may be submitted to the BSN program director by any faculty or student. Both students and faculty share the responsibility for adherence to the established guidelines.