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Welcome to the Patient Care Technician Certificate Program!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to Berkeley College. We are glad that you have chosen us to assist you in attaining your educational goals. Everyone at the College wishes you an enjoyable and productive academic year.

This Patient Care Technician Student Handbook Supplement is intended to clarify policies and procedures specific to the Patient Care Technician program. The policies in this Handbook Supplement supersede any conflicting statements made by faculty, administrators, the general Berkeley College Student Handbook, and the College Catalog. The Patient Care Technician Student Handbook Supplement is updated regularly. You are urged to provide us with recommendations and suggestions for future revisions by communicating your ideas to Student Development and Campus Life.

Once again, let me extend my sincerest welcome from the entire Berkeley College community. We look forward to assisting you in reaching your goals!

Josiane Hickson, Ed.D., RN-BC, NE-BC
Chair, Practical Nurse and Patient Care Technician Program

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The policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook Supplement are specific to the Patient Care Technician program. By participating in the Patient Care Technician program you are agreeing to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this Handbook Supplement. These program-specific policies and procedures supersede any statements made in the general Berkeley College Student Handbook. Students should refer to the College Catalog and the general Berkeley College Student Handbook for all other College policies.

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The Patient Care Technician program provides students with the knowledge and clinical skills necessary to enter the healthcare field as patient care technicians in hospitals, community health facilities, and the patient's primary residence. Patient care technicians work with doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals to oversee and monitor patients. As vital members of the healthcare team, they provide direct patient care and comfort measures, take patients' vital signs, collect specimens, and much more.

The objectives of the Patient Care Technician program are to:

- Provide students with a solid foundation in general sciences to provide safe and effective care across the life span to patients in a variety of healthcare settings.
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills to work collaboratively with members of the healthcare team to provide patient care and manage medical emergencies.
- Prepare students for employment in an ever-changing healthcare environment.
- Provide students with the knowledge and skills required for pursuing professional certification offered in the field including certified patient care technician (CPCT), certified electrocardiography technician (CET), and/or certified phlebotomy technician (CPT).

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Technical Standards

The goal of the Patient Care Technician program is to prepare students for patient care practice in an entry-level setting. Safe and competent patient care practice requires that graduates demonstrate competencies in knowledge, skills, and attitude guided by adherence to ethical and legal principles.

The Department will consider any applicant who demonstrates the ability to learn to perform all the competencies listed and does not present any safety hazard towards self or recipient of care. These competencies are required skills in order to render safe patient care to patients in various healthcare settings.

Some chronic or recurrent illnesses and problems could interfere with patient care and safety, and may be incompatible with patient care education and practice, since they may lead to a higher chance of absences. Students in the Patient Care Technician program are not required to disclose any chronic or recurrent illness and/or disability; however, those with concerns about meeting these technical standards are strongly encouraged to discuss the issues with the Department Chair. Deficiencies in knowledge, skills, judgments, integrity, or professional attitude may jeopardize patient care and, as a result, may be grounds for course failure and possible dismissal from the Patient Care Technician program.

Students must have the aptitude and abilities in six areas: sensory ability and skills; fine and gross motor skills; strength, mobility, and physical endurance; the ability to communicate, comprehend, read, and write in English; behavioral stability; and cognitive ability and critical thinking skills.

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities
Visual	Optical ability to sufficiently observe a patient and gather data accurately from a distance as well as close up	- Detect changes in skin color or condition - Collect data from patient care equipment, monitoring devices, and measuring equipment used in the care of clients - Read measuring devices that may be hung or placed below bed level - Read fine print in varying levels of light

Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of patient healthcare needs	- Hear normal speaking level sounds - Detect sounds related to bodily functions with the use of a stethoscope or detect audible alarms generated by mechanical equipment used to monitor patient's physiologic status - Detect signs of fire and initiate emergency actions - Hear call bells and/or cries for help
Smell	Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant patient and environmental odors	- Detect odors of bodily fluids, such as foul smelling drainage, spoiled foods, or smoke from burning materials - Detect smoke
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of healthcare needs	- Tactile ability to detect unsafe temperature levels of solutions or heat-producing devices used in patient care - Tactile ability to detect anatomical abnormalities like edema, swelling, or nodules and masses - Feel vibrations such as palpable pulse, feel differences in size and shape needed to identify bodily landmarks or skin surface signs such as rash or skin turgor
Communication	Oral communication skills sufficient to communicate in English with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency with patients, their families, and other members of the healthcare team, including non-verbal communication such as interpretation of facial expressions, affect, and body language	- Communicate clearly with patients and their families, and members of the healthcare team - Give verbal directions to, or follow verbal directions from, other members of the healthcare team and participate in healthcare team discussions of patient care - Recognize and report critical patient information to other caregivers

Gross Motor Skills	Gross motor skills sufficient to provide the full range of safe and efficient patient care activities	- Gather data by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic means - Position patients, and assist in turning or lifting patients - Reach below the waist or overhead while providing patient care or performing nursing procedures - Maneuver in small patient areas such as patient rooms, treatment rooms, or nursing work stations
Fine Motor Skills	Fine motor skills sufficient to perform manual psychomotor skills	- Pick up and handle small objects with fingers - Carry out patient care procedures such as wound care
Physical Endurance	Physical stamina sufficient to remain on task continuously for a six-, eight-, or 12-hour clinical shift while standing, sitting, moving, lifting, and bending to in order to perform various patient care activities	- Complete a six-, eight-, or 12-hour clinical shift which could be in varying times of the day or day of the week such as day shift, evening shift, night shift, or weekend shifts - Turn and position patients as a preventive need against development of skin breakdown - Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation
Physical Strength	Physical strength sufficient to perform the full range of required patient care activities	- Push and/or pull 250 pounds - Lift and/or move heavy objects weighing between 25 and 50 pounds

	Mobility	Physical ability sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces; full range of motion to twist, bend, stoop, squat, reach above shoulders and below waist and move quickly; manual and finger dexterity; and hand-eye coordination to perform nursing activities	• Walk without a cane, walker, or crutches in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside care • Move around work and/or treatment areas. Position oneself in the environment in order to render care without obstructing the position of other team members and/or equipment
	Emotional/ Behavioral	Emotional stability and appropriate behavior sufficient to assume responsibility and accountability for actions	• Deal with the unexpected such as frequently changing client status • Handle strong emotions • Be flexible with changing environments and schedules in both classes and clinical settings • Be able to work in close quarters with clients, classmates, nursing faculty, and members of the healthcare teams • Focus attention on task • Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotions

- under control in classroom and clinical environments
- Establish a therapeutic relationship and communicate in supportive manner

Professional Attitudes and Interpersonal Skills	Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate ability to communicate with patients, supervisors, and other members of the healthcare team to achieve a positive and safe work environment. Follow instructions and safety protocols	- Maintain empathetic, flexible, culturally sensitive, therapeutic relationships with others - Accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions - Comply with both the ethical and legal standards of the profession - Express compassion, empathy, and a caring concern for others - Demonstrate initiative, motivation, and diligence - Display integrity, honesty, and responsibility - Display respect, sensitivity, and tolerance for diverse populations - Demonstrate comfort with close physical contact in the care of clients

Cognitive/Quantitative Abilities	Reading comprehension skills and mathematical ability sufficient to understand documents written in English and solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis	- Give clear oral patient reports - Read graphs - Read and understand printed instructional materials for both classroom and/or clinical setting use - Legibly write or type in client physical or electronic records - Effectively converse with patient and members of the healthcare team - Discriminate fine/subtle differences in medical word or medications - Give and understand verbal directions
Conceptual/Spatial Abilities	Conceptual spatial ability sufficient to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships	Comprehend spatial relationship needed to properly assess wounds of varying depths
Clinical Reasoning	Ability to logically reason across time regarding a patient's changing condition	- Carry out the nursing process in the care of patients - Process information thoroughly and quickly to prioritize tasks - Analyze and synthesize data to effectively contribute to the patient plan of care - Sequence or cluster patient findings - Identify cause and effect relationships - Effectively and accurately collect data, prioritize, and anticipate reactions - Demonstrate skill of recall using both long- and short-term memory, inferential reasoning, anticipation of possible outcomes, application of knowledge, and evaluation of predicted outcomes according to the level in the program
Flexibility	Adapt to College's course schedule policy	Available to work the hours of an assigned schedule,

			which may include any shift during any day of the week; or attend on-campus classes during the day, evening, and/or weekend

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- **Add/Drop Policy**
  (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-14916.htm)
- **Attendance and Participation**
  (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8172.htm)
- **Class Hours**
  (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8174.htm)
- **Credit for Prior Learning**
  (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8168.htm)
- **Passing Grade**
  (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8167.htm)
- **Transfer Credit**
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Add/Drop Policy

Students interested in adding a course or courses to their schedule must meet with the Academic Advisement Department to obtain approval prior to the start of the first week of the term. Requests will be considered only if appropriate arrangements can be made to make up missed class time. Clinical courses cannot be added to a student's schedule after the start of the term.

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Attendance and Participation

Students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program are expected to demonstrate a commitment and dedication to the healthcare profession through professional conduct that is consistent with the requirements needed to be successful in the healthcare industry. Healthcare is a profession that demands attention to detail and a commitment to caring for others who are in need of assistance and who are vulnerable without it. For this reason, students are expected to exemplify this level of professionalism in their school attendance and participation.

Clinical and Laboratory Class Attendance Requirements:

Students are expected to attend all scheduled clinical and laboratory classes. Any clinical or laboratory absence must be made up through a supervised open laboratory class assignment and will also result in a two-point overall grade reduction for that patient care technician course.

Students who enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program prior to January 2016 should follow the Attendance policy outlined in the **2015 Patient Care Technician Student Handbook Supplement** (/student_handbook/2015_student_handbook_pct_index.htm) .

Students are reminded of the mandatory C (70 percent) grade requirement for all patient care technician (PCT) courses.

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Class Hours

Generally, patient care technician classes are in session from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM. Clinical rotations are scheduled from 7:00 AM until 12 midnight, Monday through Sunday.

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Credit for Prior Learning

Students in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program who possess active, current healthcare certifications issued by the State of New Jersey may be eligible to receive credit for prior learning for some PCT courses. Students requesting credit for prior learning must provide evidence of their active, current New Jersey certification(s) to the Department Chair for review.

Challenge examinations consist of both written and practical components; both components must be successfully completed before credit can be awarded.

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Passing Grade

Effective July 6, 2015, the minimum passing grade required for a Patient Care Technician (PCT) course is a C (70 percent). Any grade below a C (70 percent) is a failing grade. In order to pass a PCT course that consists of both didactic and clinical/laboratory portions, students must receive at least a C (70 percent) for the didactic portion of the course and a P for the clinical/laboratory portion. A failure in either the didactic or clinical/laboratory portion of a PCT course will result in a failing grade for the entire course. Therefore, only a PCT course in which students receive at least a C (70 percent) will satisfy the course requirements for the Patient Care Technician program.

Repeating a Patient Care Technician Course

Students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program who receive a grade of D or below in any Patient Care Technician (PCT) course must repeat that course in order to progress in the program. The minimum passing grade required for a repeated course is a C. Note that failed courses will lead to repeat charges assessed on a per-credit basis.

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Transfer Credit

In addition to the transfer credit guidelines outlined in the Berkeley College Student Handbook, students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program who wish to have credits considered for transfer must note the following:

- A grade of C or higher is required for all transfer credits.

- Courses that contain clinical or laboratory credits are not eligible for transfer credit due to the affective and psychomotor learning domains covered in clinical and laboratory experiences.

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- **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8162.htm)
- **Confidentiality** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-9688.htm)
- **Criminal Background Check** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8161.htm)
- **Dress Code** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8165.htm)
- **Health Requirements** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8164.htm)
- **Informed Consent** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-14920.htm)
- **Malpractice Insurance** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-8163.htm)
- **Professionalism** (/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-pct-9690.htm)

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Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

Students in the Patient Care Technician program must successfully pass the health provider Basic Life Support (BLS) course, which is offered during the first term of the Patient Care Technician program for day students and during the second term of the program for evening students.

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Confidentiality

Berkeley College students are required by law to maintain the confidentiality of all patient information encountered at any clinical internship and/or practicum site. While the requirements of patient confidentiality are emphasized throughout the student's coursework, all students are encouraged to visit the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website (**http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/** (http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/)
) to review the entire HIPAA policy before beginning the clinical component of the program. In addition to complying with all federal regulations, Berkeley College students must comply with any specific confidentiality requirements, policies, and/or procedures established by the assigned internship and/or clinical site.

A patient's right to confidentiality regarding his or her medical information, which includes confidentiality of personal and social information, is a fundamental healthcare tenet. Accordingly, students must remain mindful of the following basic requirements:

- Patients must not be described in any identifiable way for purposes other than the provision of direct patient care. When discussing experiences involving patients with third parties for legitimate educational purposes, using patient initials, exact descriptions, or locations of patients - either on paper or online - is strictly prohibited. Students are to use generalities only, so that no patient can be clearly recognized.
- While participating in clinical rotation(s) students shall not videotape, photograph or make audio recordings of themselves, their fellow students, their instructors, or their patients for any reason.
- The public discussion of any patient who is identified by name or whose identity can be derived from other circumstances (or the condition of such patient) without consent violates patient confidentiality and ethical principles. This includes any discussion held in public areas such as elevators, hallways, and cafeterias. It also includes any discussion held in any media forum (such as print media) or any virtual forum (such as websites or social networking sites). Classrooms, pre- and post-conferences, and/or laboratory settings may be used for such discussions, but only for legitimate educational purposes.
- Students should only obtain information about those patients who are assigned to their care for that clinical day. At no time should students use their position in the clinical setting to seek information about a patient other than the patient(s) to whom they have been assigned.
- Copying, scanning, and/or removing any portion of a patient's medical record or printed patient information from the healthcare facility is strictly prohibited.

Social networking has become one of the main sources of communicating in today's world. However, its use can have major legal and ethical implications for healthcare workers with regard to patient privacy and confidentiality. Students must comply at all times with the requirements of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and must be especially mindful of patients when using social media. For instance:

- References to patients, patient data, or clinical experiences involving patients or their family members are not to be included in any part of the social networking environment. Social media breaches include, but are not limited to, tweeting

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confidential or proprietary information about clinical facilities and/or rotations and taking 'selfies' while participating in clinical rotations and posting them on social media sites.

- Students are strictly prohibited from posting any information pertaining to or descriptive of a clinical site, instructor/preceptor, patient, employee, fellow student, or procedure. This includes revealing the location of a clinical site either by posting or by providing content with GPS locator evidence (such as digital photographs).

Students who disclose restricted patient information may face serious consequences. For example, federal law provides for fines up to $250,000 and imprisonment up to 10 years for misusing protected patient information for commercial advantage or malicious harm. Students found in violation of the Berkeley College Confidentiality Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate suspension or dismissal from the College. For additional requirements concerning the use of social media in connection with Berkeley College matters, go to **BerkeleyCollege.edu/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf** (http://berkeleycollege.edu/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf) .

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Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all students in the Patient Care Technician program. A positive background check may prohibit the student from progressing in the program and from becoming certified to work in the field. Criminal background checks may be conducted annually or at the discretion of clinical affiliates.

If a conviction or arrest occurs while a student is enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Department Chair. This notification must be in writing and must occur promptly after the event occurs. The required notification must include a description of the circumstances surrounding the conviction. Subsequent to this notification, the student should make an appointment with the Department Chair to discuss options. Failure to notify the Department Chair of a conviction or arrest may result in the student being removed from the Patient Care Technician program.

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, a student must undergo a criminal background check. A positive background check may prohibit the student from returning to the Patient Care Technician program and from becoming certified to work in the field. Any fees involved with the repeat background check will be the responsibility of the student.

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Dress Code

Student uniforms should be worn while in the clinical setting or the skills laboratory, and for faculty-approved activities in the community. Each student is expected to keep the uniform clean, pressed, and in good condition. When uniforms are worn, they must be worn in their totality. Students who are dressed inappropriately or who lack proper professional appearance will be dismissed from that day's clinical assignment and given an unsatisfactory grade for the day.

The following are the guidelines of the professional appearance code:

- Hair must be clean. Long hair must be pulled back and cannot fall forward in front of shoulders while providing patient care. Hair accessories must maintain a professional appearance, safety, and hygiene. Hair of an unnatural color of fad designs is not permitted. Avoid highly colored sprays and maintain only natural-looking hair color. Male students must be neatly shaven and well groomed. Facial hair should be kept trimmed and neat.
- No hats or head coverings are permitted; however, exceptions for religious requirements will be made.
- Fingernails must be kept short, clean, and filed. Artificial nails, nail polish, and added stick-on jewels are not permitted as they harbor microorganisms.
- Dangle earrings or other visible body jewelry (nose rings, lip rings, tongue piercing, bracelets, necklaces which can become entangled in equipment) are not permitted.
- Cosmetics should be worn in moderation. Students are not permitted to wear fragrant products (cologne, perfume, aftershave, lotion, etc.) in clinical settings due to potential patient allergic response. Strong odors, including the odor of a smoker, can be apparent and offensive to patients who are ill.
- Wedding rings may be worn. Avoid large stone rings. Rings can cause injury to patients and can also harbor microorganisms. Earrings (one pair) must be small, whether posts or hoop earrings. No other body piercing jewelry is permitted. If a large medal or chain is worn it should be tucked inside the uniform. Students are required to wear a watch with a sweep second hand.
- Consumption of food, candy, and gum is prohibited while working in any laboratory or clinical setting.
- Unless other facility-specific guidelines are provided, students are required to wear a clean and pressed patient care technician uniform with the Berkeley College insignia. Appropriate undergarments are to be worn and be undetectable through the uniform.
- Shoes must be professional in nature; clean, white polished shoes or sneakers are acceptable provided they contain no mesh and/or open areas. No sandals, clogs, open-toed, or sling back shoes are permitted.
- Students are required to wear their Berkeley College IDs at all times while on campus and at the clinical sites. If a student is employed at the same facility, the employment name badge may not be worn during clinical assignments.

A stethoscope, pen, and penlight are also required.

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Health Requirements

Students in the Patient Care Technician program must submit a complete physical assessment by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant prior to enrolling in clinical courses. In addition to meeting any general immunization requirements applicable to admission, students also must meet the following requirements prior to participating in a clinical practicum: Provide appropriate proof of immunity (blood titers or immunization records) to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, and hepatitis B vaccine series; a two-step TB skin test within the last year or a negative chest x-ray within three months; and a tetanus shot administered within the past 10 years. An influenza vaccine is required for most clinical facilities. A negative twelve-panel, pre-employment urine toxicology screening also is required. This includes screening for:

- Amphetamines
- Barbituates
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine
- Opiates
- Oxycodone
- Phencyclidine
- Methadone
- Propoxyphene
- Meperidine
- Tramadol
- Benzodiazepine

If emergency medical treatment is required while on campus or while participating in the clinical experience, the cost of treatment will be the responsibility of the student receiving the medical attention/treatment.

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, a student must repeat the drug screening outlined above prior to participating in any clinical rotations. If during the course of study a student is suspected of drug use, he/she may be asked to provide an updated urine toxicology screening.

A negative drug screen is required to progress in the Patient Care Technician program. Students with a positive drug screen will be removed from the Patient Care Technician program immediately and will not be eligible for reentry.

By submitting the results of a urine toxicology screening to the College, the student thereby authorizes the College to share those results with any individual clinical facilities that request such information.

Berkeley College's Patient Care Technician program is physically and mentally challenging. During the clinical portion of the program, students will be exposed to healthcare situations where there is an increased risk of exposure to strenuous activity, communicable diseases, radiation, and toxic substances.

Due to the increased risk of exposure to a variety of situations and substances that could potentially affect a developing fetus, any student who believes she may be pregnant, has recently given birth, or has recently terminated a pregnancy is strongly encouraged to

speak with her healthcare provider immediately to determine whether she is physically capable of remaining in the program and meeting all relevant technical standards outlined in this Handbook. Neither Berkeley College nor its affiliating clinical agencies shall be held responsible for any harm that might occur to a fetus or pregnant student.

Any student who is unable to continue in clinical courses based on the recommendation of her/his healthcare provider will be afforded the opportunity, once medically cleared, to return to the program pending course availability.

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Informed Consent

Students will be learning and practicing direct patient care throughout the Patient Care Technician program. Students will also be involved in procedures such as venipuncture. Since these procedures are invasive, there is the potential risk of exposure to hepatitis, HIV, and other diseases. Students will be introduced to the Universal Precautions recommended by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Students are expected to follow these recommendations in their contact with all clients/patients in a clinical setting. It is very important that students follow all established rules and procedures for their protection and the protection of others.

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Malpractice Insurance

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Professionalism

Students are expected to present themselves in a professional manner at all times by demonstrating integrity, respect, and compassion. While participating in the clinical portion of the program, students should realize that their behavior may positively and/or negatively affect the reputation of Berkeley College. Students are expected to be thoughtful and professional when interacting with faculty, patients and their families, nurses, attending physicians, preceptors, affiliated institutional staff, other students, other members of the healthcare team, and the general public.

Professional demeanor is also required while students are in virtual sites, such as online social networking sites. Students are required to comply with the Berkeley College Social Media Policy, which governs the use of College and personal social media sites with respect to matters related to the College.

Under no circumstances are students permitted to engage in personal phone conversations or text messaging while participating in the clinical portion of their program. Students are preparing for membership in a profession that serves the public – a public that expects a high standard of professionalism.

If, while enrolled in a clinical course, a student's level of professionalism and/or performance presents a potential harm to the welfare of clients, the faculty will determine, based on written and/or oral documentation, whether or not the student will be permitted to continue in the course. If a student's performance presents an immediate potential harm to either the student or his/her clients, the program faculty and/or preceptors have the responsibility to remove the student immediately from the clinical setting. For more general conduct requirements applicable to all Berkeley College students, go to **BerkeleyCollege.edu/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-8146.htm**
(/student_handbook/student-handbook-2016-8146.htm)
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