**DREXEL UNIVERSITY**

**College of Nursing & Health Professions**

**SUBSTANCE ABUSE GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT MAJORS THAT INCLUDE A CLINICAL COMPONNENT IN THE CURRICULUM**

**Background**

Drexel University has established guidelines, rules, and regulations that prescribe the standards of conduct expected of students and members of the University community. This standard of conduct includes the prohibition of the use or the possession or dissemination of narcotics or other mind-altering drugs, other than those medically prescribed, properly used, and in the original container, by students or staff on University property or while on University business.

The University has established disciplinary proceedings for when a student is charged or violates the drug and alcohol control guidelines. However, when a student violates the drug and alcohol guidelines and is enrolled in a major that includes a clinical health care component in the curriculum, it is incumbent upon the officers and faculty of the College of Nursing and Health Professions to provide oversight and remedial action for such a serious act by the student.

The University recognizes that drug abuse/dependence is a disease that is chronic, progressive, and if left untreated, fatal. The University can be supportive of a student receiving treatment and once sustained recovery is obtained, the student may seek re-admission.

**Purpose**

The purpose of these Substance Abuse Guidelines is to inform students enrolled in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, who are also enrolled in a major that includes a clinical health care component, about the guidelines and procedures related to any unlawful use, manufacture, distribution, or possession of controlled or illegal substances or alcohol. Aside from seriously affecting the physical and psychological integrity of the user, substance abuse may significantly affect the ability of students to administer safe care to patients entrusted to them in a clinical health care setting.

These guidelines assist the student in maintaining personal and professional integrity, and facilitate the student’s success in their academic and clinical formation leading to entry to or further advance in a health care profession. It promotes a healthy teaching/learning environment for the student and in the clinical setting ensures patient safety. It also fosters the development of a professional who is aware of and considers the prevalence and adverse physical, psychological, and social outcomes of substance abuse.

**Guidelines**

These guidelines apply to all students who have confirmed acceptance in any of Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions programs that include a clinical health care component in its curriculum.

Students are required to have a standardized drug screen prior to entering the clinical environment.

*Any unlawful possession, use, manufacture or distribution of controlled or illegal substances or alcohol by any student in the College enrolled in a program that includes a clinical health care component in its curriculum while on campus or at a clinical site shall be considered substance abuse or possible dependency and will constitute cause for termination from the program.*

Reporting to class or clinical assignments under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol is also prohibited and will result in dismissal from the program. Students must also comply with all local, state or federal laws and regulations controlling the possession, manufacture, use or distribution of controlled or illegal substances and alcohol.

A positive drug screen of an illegal substance (illegal substance or controlled substance without a prescription) or intoxication from alcohol will result in dismissal from the student’s program of study.

All students must also comply with Drexel University guidelines on alcohol and illicit drug use. These guidelines can be found in the Student Handbook online at: [http://drexel.edu/studentlife/community\_standards/studenthandbook/](http://www.drexel.edu/studentlife/studenthandbook/Handbook.html) under “Student Conduct and Community Standards Code of Conduct.”

In addition, there are circumstances in which students may need to take over the counter or prescribed medications that may impair their ability to function safely in the clinical environment and thereby endanger patients and self. As such, all students are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have on their ability to function safely in the clinical practicum and must notify the Department Chair regarding the use of any medication that can impair performance prior to entering the clinical environment. Students cannot participate in clinical training if they are taking mood altering medications that impair their ability to function safely in the clinical environment Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action. In such circumstances, the student is encouraged to request medical leave from their studies.

**Procedures**

**I. Education**

An objective within these substance abuse guidelines is to educate students about the risk of chemical dependency among health care providers, enhance their ability to recognize impaired health care professionals, and reinforce the significance of appropriate intervention. Through selected courses, students will be educated about behavioral and clinical practice characteristics that are common indicators of substance abuse. Students will also acquire an understanding of the Drexel University College of Nursing and Health Professions Substance Abuse Guidelines and procedures guidelines.

**II. Drug/Alcohol Testing**

A student in the College may be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing when the Program Chair, or designee, determines through direct observation or reports received from faculty or clinical supervisors and there is reasonable suspicion that the student is impaired due to illegal drug or alcohol use, the use or misuse of prescribed over-the-counter medications based upon, but not limited to:

1. Unusual or aberrant behavior
2. Physical symptoms indicative of being under the influence
3. Patterns of abnormal or erratic behavior
4. Inconsistent quality of work performance
5. Conviction for drug-related offenses
6. Being identified as the subject of a drug-related criminal investigation
7. Credible information from independent sources
8. Evidence of drug tampering or misappropriation
9. Consistently discrepant daily drug counts
10. Accidents or illnesses caused by substance abuse
11. Impairment or intoxication in the clinical and/or didactic setting
12. Patterns of absenteeism and/or lateness
13. Alterations in student clinical and/or didactic performance that may not be attributed to other causes
14. Following a work-related injury or illness
15. Observation of poor judgment or careless acts which caused or had the potential to cause patient injury, jeopardize the safety of self or others or resulted in damage to equipment

A faculty member suspecting possible substance abuse by a student must report the suspicious behavior immediately to the Program Chair or designee. (See Appendix 1).

Once the Program Chair is notified that a student has been suspected of violating the substance abuse guidelines, the student will be instructed to report to the designated testing laboratory in accordance with the Program Chair’s instructions, which will take into consideration a safe mode of transportation given the suspected level of impairment of the student. The cost of any drug or alcohol testing requested by the Program Chair will be borne by the program. The Program Chair has the authority to temporarily suspend the student from the clinical practicum pending the final results of any tests.

Clinical education/practicum sites may also require that students undergo drug/alcohol testing prior to placement or during clinical rotations at the site. Therefore, students may also be tested in accordance with the clinical training site’s guidelines.

A student convicted of violating any federal, state or local law or regulation pertaining to the manufacture, possession, sale, use or distribution of a drug or alcohol or misuse of prescribed or over the counter medications must report this conviction to the Program Chair within five days of the conviction.

Failure or refusal to comply with any aspect of the substance abuse guidelines is grounds for disciplinary sanction up to and including dismissal from the program. Examples of noncompliance include, but are not limited to, refusal to submit to immediate drug and alcohol testing or repeat testing, tampering or alteration of specimens, attempts to submit the samples of another person as the student’s own, and failure to appropriately complete associated program or testing laboratory documents.

**Testing Procedure**

Drug and alcohol testing required by the College will be conducted utilizing the following measures:

1. The student must be tested at a laboratory designated and approved by the College of Nursing and Health Professions. The student may be asked to provide a witnessed sample.
2. The student will sign the chain of custody forms and any other documents provided by the testing laboratory.
3. The test shall screen for the use of the controlled substances listed below:
4. Amphetamine (methamphetamine)
5. Barbiturates
6. Benzodiazepine
7. Cocaine
8. Marijuana
9. Methadone
10. Methaqualone
11. Opiates (Codeine, Morphine)
12. Phencyclidine
13. Propoxyphene

In addition, a student could be tested for any other controlled substances that are suspected of being abused or used by the student. Affiliation agreements may require additional substance screenings.

1. Urine, serum, hair and saliva analysis or a combination of these testing methods may be utilized.
2. The student will disclose any prescribed or over-the-counter medications as well as any dietary habits that could modify testing results as requested on the consent form(s) and/or laboratory documents.
3. The student must fully comply with the testing laboratory’s methods and procedures for collecting samples
4. If the student disputes the accuracy of a positive test, the student may request a retesting of samples by the laboratory, however the cost of the additional testing would be borne by the student. This re-test must take place within one week. The student will not have advanced notice of the re-test. The student may be asked to provide a witnessed sample.
5. Substance abuse is verified if either: (i) the positive test result is not disputed or (ii) if the student-requested retest is positive.
6. The testing laboratory will make a final report of the test results (positive, negative or inconclusive) to the Program Chair or designee and any designated affiliate site as required.

**Confidentiality**

The requirement that a student be tested as well as the test results will remain confidential and disclosed only to those individuals within Drexel University as well as any licensing, registering, or certification boards that have a need to know. An affiliated clinical site with a need to know or as required by law or regulation will also be notified.

Upon written request, students will be provided a copy of test results.

**III. Documentation**

Appropriate documentation will commence at the time of the initial suspicion that a student may have a substance abuse problem and will include the rationale for such suspicion.

All documentation regarding drug testing results and a student’s medical condition will remain in a secure location in the custody of the Program Chair or Compliance Officer. Such records will be maintained separately from the student’s permanent Program file.

**IV. Sanctions**

The Program Chair will report an enrolled student with a positive test result, if applicable, to the University’s Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards (“SCCS”) for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Judicial Policy and Student Code of Conduct. Students with a positive test result will also be referred to the Nursing and/or Student Conduct Committee. The Program Chair has the authority to temporarily suspend the student from the clinical practicum pending the conclusion of any student judicial process.

If as a result of a positive test, a student is required to submit to subsequent testing as a condition to remaining in or returning to the Program, the student will bear the expense of all subsequent testing required by the Program. The student is required to provide a witnessed sample.

Failure or refusal to comply with any aspect of the substance abuse guidelines will be reported to the Student Conduct Committee and/or the SCCS for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Judicial Policy and Student Code of Conduct. In addition, any perceived attempts to tamper with the testing procedure or results will be reported to such committees as well.

Students will be informed of counseling and other treatment resources that are available to the student.

**V. Treatment and Counseling Resources**

Students who are concerned that they may have a substance or alcohol abuse problem are encouraged to seek appropriate assessment, treatment and counseling from qualified health care professionals.

The following website lists some local treatment and counseling services that are available to students:

* <http://drexel.edu/studentaffairs/community_standards/studentHandbook/Drug_Free_Schools_and_Communities_Act/substance_abuse_assistance/>
* American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Peer Assistance <http://www.aana.com/resources2/peer-assistance/Pages/default.aspx>
* Alcoholics Anonymous <http://www.aa.org>
* American Society of Addictive Medicine <http://www.asam.org>
* Narcotics Anonymous <https://www.na.org>
* Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration – Behavioral Health Treatment Services Locator <https://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/>

At all times, it is incumbent upon the student to make the decision not to attend a clinical assignment, if he/she feels impaired and will present a risk to patients.

**VI. Reentry into the Academic and Clinical Environment**

A student who has been dismissed, suspended, withdrawn or taken an approved leave of absence from the Program due to substance abuse may be eligible to reenter the Program in certain circumstances if he/she can demonstrate satisfactory evidence of successful completion of treatment and documentation of 24-months of sustained recovery. Factors that have been identified as helpful for re-entry into practice include 12-step program participation, random drug screens, and sponsorship on a peer assisted support group. The student must also provide medical clearance from the appropriate individual coordinating the therapeutic intervention and evidence of current, active nursing licensure if enrolled in the MSN or DNP Program.

A student in active recovery from substance abuse will be monitored closely particularly in clinical practice. A Program and student contract with guidelines and expectations will be developed and signed by both parties, Frequent evaluations will be mandated and stipulated in the contract delineating the contingencies of programmatic return.

A student in recovery who is permitted to reenter the program will comply with the conditions of readmission delineated in a signed contract of program reentry.

A student in recovery should be aware that their state licensing or certifying bodies may not allow students to take qualifying, licensing, or certification examinations. Students should refer to requirements with the applicable licensing board.

**Appendix 1**

**Faculty Report of Suspicion of Drug/Alcohol Use**

Please use the space below to provide a detailed description of the student’s behavior. All information is to be kept confidential. Please return the form via encrypted email to the Program Chair as soon as possible. Notify the Program Chair by phone immediately to request a drug/alcohol test.

* 1. Name of Student:
  2. Date of Incident:
  3. Time of Incident:
  4. Location of Incident:
  5. Detailed description: Include any behavioral, visual, olfactory or auditory observations.
* Speech (normal, incoherent, confused, slurred, rambling, shouting, using profanity, slow)
* Coordination (normal, swaying, staggering, lack of coordination, grasping for support)
* Performance (unsafe practices, unsatisfactory work)
* Alertness (change in alertness, sleepy, confused)
* Demeanor (change in personality, fighting, excited, aggressive, violent, argumentative, indifferent, threatening, antagonistic)
* Eyes (bloodshot, dilated)
* Clothing (dirty, disheveled)
* Odor of alcohol on breath
* Drug tampering or misappropriation, consistent discrepancy in daily drug counts
* List reports of complaints of student behavior from personnel or other students
* List unexplained absences or tardiness
* Long coffee or lunch breaks
* Frequent trips to restroom/locker room
* Early arrival or late departure
* Presence in the clinical area on non-assigned clinical days
* Other observed actions or behaviors

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* 1. Did the student admit to use of drugs/alcohol? No \_\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
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* 1. Were drugs/alcohol discovered on student? No \_\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_  
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* 1. List witnesses to student’s behavior: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Faculty Member’s Name (print) Faculty Member’s Signature Date