



**RURAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM (RHOP)
PROGRAM STANDARDS for the NURSING OPTION
Participants and Alternates**

PHILOSOPHY

The Rural Health Opportunities Program (RHOP) is a cooperative program between the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC), Chadron State College (CSC), Peru State College (PSC), and Wayne State College (WSC). The purpose of the Program is to recruit and educate traditional and non-traditional students from rural Nebraska that are interested in a career in one of nine health care professions with the expectation that each person will return to rural Nebraska to practice. The program represents a commitment and dedication to the education of Nebraskans and quality health care for the citizens of the state.

COURSE WORK

1. Each student and alternate (hereafter referred to collectively as student (s)) must follow a curriculum designed for the RHOP Nursing Program. Each student, in consultation with their undergraduate institution Pre-Nursing Academic Advisor, will choose an academic major and a program of study will be designed for that major that includes all of the Pre-Nursing required courses.
2. Each student must complete courses in a timely manner. Alternates must be prepared to move into a participant position should one become available and participants and alternates must have completed coursework to make themselves eligible to enter professional school at the end of two years of academic work at one of the applicable Nebraska State Colleges, even if they choose to complete a degree prior to entering UNMC.
3. Each student must obtain approval from their Pre-Nursing Academic Advisor before registering for or dropping any class.

ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Students Must Maintain:

Cumulative Prerequisite GPA \geq 3.3

1. A student must earn a "B" or better in each required course. If a student earns below the required grade in a required course, he/she may be placed on academic probation and must repeat the course as soon as possible. Failure to receive the required grade in a repeated course may result in the dismissal of the student from the RHOP program. Consultation with the undergraduate institution's Pre-Nursing Academic Advisor is required.

2. Each student with a GPA below the requirement will be placed on academic probation. Academic probation and the probation terms will be assigned by the Program Director for the Nursing Program at UNMC and the RHOP Coordinator at their undergraduate institution in consultation with the undergraduate institution's Pre-Nursing Academic Advisor and UNMC Student Services representative. Students on probation will be monitored for progress to meet RHOP standards for no longer than one academic year resulting in either dismissal or a return to good standing in the RHOP program.
3. Each student is required to file a mid-semester grade report with the undergraduate institution's RHOP Coordinator when requested.
4. Each student is required to consult with the undergraduate institution's Pre-Nursing Academic Advisor on a regular basis, at least once per semester.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Each participant and alternate must write a journal chronicling their activities that enhance their understanding of the nursing profession, motivates her/him to become a nurse in rural Nebraska, or enhances their professional development. The student is also expected to record their reactions to and their perceptions of the events to which they have been exposed. The journals must be developed on a computer so that a copy can be printed upon request. A copy of the Journal must be submitted to the Health Professions Office at the end of each semester. The journal is the only record of a student's shadowing and other activities that enhance their professional development. Failure to adequately complete this requirement can be cause for dismissal from the program.
2. Shadowing of nurses and at times other health care providers on a regular basis is expected. Some of the shadowing experiences must be in rural Nebraska so the student develops significant knowledge of what it is like to practice in rural Nebraska. This requirement can be completed during the summer, school vacations, or during school. All shadowing experiences must be noted in the journal. Each participant and alternate must always remember that the function of the Nursing Option of RHOP is to recruit and prepare people for practicing in rural Nebraska. Hopefully, each student will develop a professional association with one or more practicing nurses in rural Nebraska.
3. Each student must visit the University of Nebraska Medical Center on the regularly scheduled RHOP trips, as arranged by UNMC and the RHOP Coordinator. RHOP students are also expected to attend and participate in all RHOP activities including meetings, hospital field trips, speakers, tours, volunteer activities, and all other events sponsored by RHOP.
4. Each RHOP student must participate in on-campus activities that enhance their abilities to interact with people. This would include being an active member of the Health Professions Club, the meetings with health care providers, helping with Health Professions Showcase and RHOP interviews, participating in student government. Off-campus activities such as being a camp counselor, etc. are encouraged.
5. Each RHOP student must return to their high school at least once during their studies to promote RHOP.

PERSONAL BEHAVIOR

Participants and alternates must exhibit professional and personal behaviors that reflect positively on them, the University of Nebraska Medical Center, and Chadron State College. The students must remember that this includes summers and vacations. The students in RHOP are expected to comply with all campus standards of behavior as described in the CSC Student Handbook, as well as RHOP standards **which includes attending classes as scheduled, promptness, exhibiting respect towards fellow students and faculty, displaying initiative and leadership skills.** They are also expected to obey all laws and thus, avoid having any criminal charges brought against them. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disciplinary action including dismissal from RHOP. The students must also remember that drug and alcohol offenses, felony convictions, etc. can prevent them from getting a license to practice their profession.

ENTRANCE OF PARTICIPANTS INTO THE PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM

In order for a participant to enter the Nursing Program at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, he/she must have:

1. Met all academic standards.
2. Submitted a COMPLETE application to the UNMC College of Nursing, including all required supporting documents by the application deadline.
3. Consistently demonstrate professional and personal behaviors and attitudes that would only enhance their ability to practice Nursing as well as their reputation and performance as a nurse in rural Nebraska during their time in RHOP.
4. Understanding that students in the RHOP program are expected to enter the UNMC's Nursing program for their professional school training.

ALTERNATE TRANSITION TO PARTICIPANT STATUS

In the event that any of the candidates selected as participants in this class and in the RHOP Nursing Program decide not to accept a position, withdraw after entering the program, or are dismissed from the program, the RHOP Interview Team may select a replacement from among the alternates in this class and program. Academic accomplishments, progress within the curriculum and participation in professional development activities as described in the Program Standards will be considered in the selection of an alternate to fill each vacancy. A second interview by the RHOP Interview Team may be requested. Each alternate maintains their alternate status as long as they are enrolled at the undergraduate institution, have not started their last year at their undergraduate institution, and met all of the course work, academic, and professional development requirements of the RHOP program. The alternate status ends at the beginning of the senior year for each class because the alternate(s) will be applying for admission into a college of Nursing through the traditional admission process at that time.

RESIGNATION PROCEDURE

Should a participant or alternate choose to resign their position in RHOP, a formal letter of resignation must be filed with the academic advisor and Health Professions office as soon as possible.

