

College of Nursing Beliefs and Practices



Table of Contents

Preface	3
Healthy Respect: Our Commitment to a Culture of Civility	4
CON Mission, Vision and Values	5
CON Themes	5
Value-Based Beliefs and Practices	6
I. Collegiality	6
II. Compassion	7
III. Excellence	7
IV. Inclusivity	10
V. Integrity	11
VI. Leadership	12
References	13

Preface

The purpose of the *College of Nursing (CON) Beliefs and Practices* is to provide value-based professional guidelines for CON faculty and staff. These beliefs and practices help explain how CON faculty and staff actualize their values and how their values are reflected in their teaching, research, practice and service. These beliefs and practices support the *American Nurses' Association (ANA) Code of Ethics*. They also support guidelines found in Augusta University (AU) faculty, employee and student manuals and policies.

Numerous resources were used to develop the *CON Beliefs and Practices*, the most important of which were the review comments of CON faculty and staff. AU foundational documents that were used to develop these beliefs and practices include the *GRU Healthy Respect Project Charter* and the *CON Values*. Other AU and CON communications were referenced, such as the AU Human Resources *Core Standards of Excellence*. Nursing specific references that were used include the *ANA Code of Ethics*.

The *GRU Healthy Respect Project Charter* and the *CON Mission, Vision and Values* are provided below to serve as background for the CON value-based beliefs and practices. CON beliefs and practices are provided for each of the six CON values.

For the purpose of the *CON Beliefs and Practices*, “faculty” refers to all full- and part-time CON faculty, to include CON administrators. “Staff” refers to all full- and part-time CON staff associates.

Healthy Respect Our Commitment to a Culture of Civility

The following is quoted from the GRU Healthy Respect Charter . . .

Achieving an environment of uncompromising respect that clearly articulates the processes required to build a culture of a zero tolerance philosophy for unprofessional, harassing, or disrespectful behaviors is the primary focus of a GRU initiative, the Healthy Respect Project. The project has received approval from all of the GRU colleges, to include the College of Nursing. The Healthy Respect charter follows:

At Georgia Regents University and Georgia Regents Health System, we embrace civility as the commitment to engage with others in the most positive, respectful manner, even when there is genuine disagreement.

Preamble

Civil and respectful treatment is a **fundamental** requirement in our academic, social, and patient care environments. We maintain that the highest level of professional behavior is an uncompromising standard of excellence that should be modeled in all of our interactions.

Our Pledge

We support and promote a culture of respect and dignity toward all members of our community. It is our obligation to confront disrespectful conduct and report the incident to the appropriate authority in a timely manner. We agree to promote awareness and education of civility and to foster “healthy respect” throughout Georgia Regents University and Georgia Regents Health System.

College of Nursing Mission, Vision and Values

CON Mission

To provide leadership through excellent and innovative nursing education, research, practice, and service in diverse environments and to promote health, healing, and well-being of individuals, families, and communities in any healthcare setting.

CON Vision

To be a top-tier college that educates individuals to become nurse leaders in the discovery, delivery and transformation of health care.

CON Values

Collegiality: Reflected in collaboration, partnership, commitment to community and teamwork

Compassion: Reflected in caring, advocacy, empathy, service and social responsibility

Excellence: Reflected in distinction, effectiveness, efficiency, enthusiasm, passion, quality and scholarship

Inclusivity: Reflected in diversity, equality, fairness, impartiality and respect

Integrity: Reflected in accountability, ethical behavior, trust, honesty and reliability

Leadership: Reflected in courage, honor, professionalism, transparency and vision

Over the past several years, the CON has been focusing on cultivating a culture of trust, accountability and effectiveness. The following themes frame all major CON discussions and initiatives.

Value-Based Beliefs and Practices

I. Collegiality . . . reflected in collaboration, partnership, commitment to community and teamwork

CON faculty and staff strive to adapt effectively to the constant change in today's academic environment through collaboration, partnership, commitment to community, and teamwork.

CON faculty and staff . . .

- Create and promote a learning environment where everyone demonstrates mutual respect and collaboration while working together toward a common purpose.
- Effectively resolve conflicts with co-workers through open communication and encourage others to do the same.
- Maintain strong working relationships with peers and team members, in and out of the CON, enhancing inter-professional interactions.
- Actively participate in team efforts and lend support to team members, setting a positive tone for work groups.
- Develop and sustain collaborative community relationships.
- Follow the [ANA/AONE Principles for Collaborative Relationships between Clinical Nurses and Nurse Managers](#).

All faculty seek to promote Patient- and Family-Centered Care (PFCC) as an approach to healthcare delivery that emphasizes partnerships and collaboration between and among healthcare providers, patients and their families. This same philosophy serves as a foundation for daily interactions at Augusta University and the Augusta University Health System (AU Health) to enhance service excellence.

PFCC principles that faculty follow include . . .

- People treat one another with respect and dignity.
- Healthcare providers communicate and share complete and unbiased information with patients and families in ways that are affirming and useful.
- Individuals and families build on their strengths through participation in experiences that enhance control and independence.
- Collaboration among patients, families, and providers occurs in policy and program development and professional education, as well as in the delivery of care.

Effective communication, which reflects CON values, is an essential part of fostering collegiality. Faculty and staff represent themselves, the CON, and AU through their oral, written (paper and electronic) and non-verbal communication.

CON faculty and staff . . .

- Use professionally appropriate communication, to include proper netiquette and email etiquette, when interacting with other faculty and staff, students, and community members through the telephone and electronic media.
- Follow the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) and [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act \(HIPAA\)](#) guidelines for telephone, electronic and other written and verbal communication.
- Follow [ANA's Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse](#).

II. Compassion . . . reflected in caring, advocacy, empathy, service and social responsibility

CON faculty deliver the highest quality, compassionate, and trustworthy nursing care when supervising students in clinical areas and when providing direct patient care. This is an integral part of Patient- and Family-Centered Care (PFCC).

Similarly, CON faculty and staff provide the highest quality, compassionate, and trustworthy education and education services to all students. They extend a compassionate and caring attitude to interactions with all customers, which include students, patients and their families, co-workers, and other employees.

CON faculty and staff . . .

- Interact respectfully and courteously.
- Demonstrate a compassionate and caring attitude toward their customers.
- Engage with customers ethically in positively resolving issues, with consideration and respect for their social and cultural perspectives.

CON faculty . . .

- Incorporate patient and family knowledge, values, beliefs and cultural backgrounds in the planning and delivery of healthcare, demonstrating sensitivity to patients' and families' perspectives and encouraging others to do the same.

III. Excellence . . . reflected in distinction, effectiveness, efficiency, enthusiasm, passion, quality and scholarship

The value of excellence is reflected both specifically in the CON commitment to excellence in the provision of nursing education and also more broadly in the CON commitment to customer service excellence.

Excellence in Nursing Education

Faculty demonstrate ethical behaviors in education and utilize the code of ethics for nurse educators as described by Rosenkoetter and Milstead (2010). Faculty . . .

- Assume responsibility and accountability for personal action and for maintaining competence in the practice of nursing education;
- Have an obligation to function as an advocate for students, as well as for patients, the greater community, and for the discipline;
- Strive to promote academic and professional values, including critical thinking, effective decision making, caring and respect, and excellence in education research and practice, while encouraging and maintaining the highest standards in the nursing program and the profession;
- Facilitate and guide the learning of students in order to ensure quality nursing education and to advance the professional practice of nursing;
- Equitably apply standards and expectations of performance;
- Model high standards and expectations;
- Demonstrate respect for confidential matters relating to students, patients, and families, as well as colleagues in the academic and health care communities;
- Contribute to the evolving body of nursing knowledge, skills, and attitudes;
- Safeguard the patient and the student from incompetent, illegal, or unethical practices of others;
- Acknowledge student contributions to research and scholarly publications, presentations, and professional activities; and advocate for students against exploitation or abuse;
- Utilize technology appropriately in the conduct of research, educational activities, and nursing practice;
- Engage in ongoing self-evaluation and limit professional practice and teaching responsibilities to areas of personal competence;
- Model commitment to lifelong professional learning for professional growth, currency and competence;
- Demonstrate commitment to the profession through participation in professional organizations and by encouraging commitment among students to life-long learning and ongoing personal development;
- Demonstrate accountability to students, the academic community, the profession and society in fulfilling academic responsibilities by engaging in self-evaluation and peer review;
- Demonstrate respect for the beliefs and rights of students and their participation in nursing research and nursing practice, while evaluating them with fairness and integrity;
- Demonstrate respect for students and colleagues as individual contributors to the profession and greater society (Rosenkoetter & Milstead, 2010).

Excellence in Customer Service

Service excellence in academia exceeds the expectations of CON customers, namely, CON students, patients and their families, fellow faculty and staff, visitors, community partners, and colleagues from other colleges.

CON faculty and staff believe that higher learning in academia is a concerted endeavor built on the foundation of respect, trust, and a shared commitment to the values of excellence in education, research, service and scholarship.

As part of their commitment to excellence in customer service, faculty and staff . . .

- Are timely and responsive in dealing with problems, questions, concerns and managing affairs.
- Are knowledgeable problem solvers.
- Take responsibility for continuous improvement in AU and the CON.
- Are positive and effective when communicating with others, regardless of the means of communication (e.g., email, telephone, face-to-face, webinar, IP).
- Ask for feedback and are receptive to constructive criticism.
- Are accessible.
- Reward and complement others.

Our customers are our business. We pledge the following . . .

To our Students: We treat all students with dignity and respect. We seek to provide you with a quality education that focuses on evidence-based practice and uses effective teaching/learning methods to translate theory into practice. We provide this education in a professional, compassionate and courteous manner. We are accessible and will respond to your needs in a timely manner. We are devoted to your success.

To our Clinical & Community Partners: We recognize the time, talent and resources provided by our clinical and community partners as a vital component of our mission in educating our future nurses and attending to the healthcare needs of patients and their families. We offer our clinical and community partners excellence in nursing education, and we recognize and appreciate their contributions to the education of our students.

To our Employees: We seek to provide a work environment that is characterized by open and honest communication, respect, fairness, pride and camaraderie, professional ethics and integrity, and ample opportunities for professional growth and development.

To our Co-Workers: We seek to create and promote a learning and working environment where we can interact with each other in mutual respect and collaboration, and we mentor each other. We commit to effectively resolving conflicts through open communication and encouraging others to do the same.

IV. Inclusivity . . . reflected in diversity, equality, fairness, impartiality and respect

While diversity involves ensuring that the CON has faculty and staff with the right mix of life experiences and perspectives to accomplish the CON mission, inclusivity refers to how this diverse group of faculty and staff come together to form a blended and aligned workforce. Inclusivity involves ensuring that all CON faculty and staff have an opportunity to become involved in the important work of the CON and that everyone feels valued, respected and engaged.

CON faculty and staff believe that diversity and inclusivity add richness to their ideas, actions, and approaches and that this richness optimizes their ability to successfully meet the numerous challenges and the constant change in today's academic environment. The CON diversity and inclusion strategic priorities and goals help the CON develop culturally astute faculty, staff and students.

Respect and civility are foundational to creating and sustaining an optimal environment for learning, scholarship, patient care and working together. CON faculty and staff engage with each other in the most positive and respectful manner, even when there is genuine disagreement.

As part of their commitment to the principles of inclusivity, CON faculty and staff . . .

- Actively participate in creating an environment where diversity and inclusion can contribute to the success of AU and the CON.
- Proactively create and optimize the unique contributions inherent in the culture of each individual.
- Welcome, celebrate, and appreciate the unique differences and opportunities that each individual brings to AU and the CON.
- Embrace the diversity of the student, faculty, and staff populations.
- Work effectively with colleagues and customers from many different backgrounds.
- Seek out perspectives from those of different backgrounds.
- Make decisions fairly, equitably, and consistent in like situations.
- Model language and behavior that is inclusive and respectful of all people and expect others to do the same.
- Anticipate the impact of cultural biases on relationships and processes.
- Identify and correct acts of exclusion that undermine teamwork, damage morale, and reduce satisfaction and productivity.
- Seek to remove obstacles to equity and inclusion wherever possible.
- Maintain ongoing efforts to ensure a diverse and inclusive community within AU and the CON.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and initiate personal development related to diversity and inclusivity.

V. Integrity . . . reflected in accountability, ethical behavior, trust, honesty and reliability

CON faculty and staff model the highest ethical and professional attitudes and behaviors with students, patients and their families, and each other. These attitudes and behaviors are central to integrity as reflected in accountability, ethical behavior, trust, honesty and reliability.

Faculty and staff . . .

- Take ownership for completing job responsibilities while striving for excellence.
- Accept responsibility for errors and any needed corrections.
- Demonstrate and exemplify respect and fairness when working with . . .
 - students,
 - patients and their families,
 - each other, and
 - community partners.
- Handle concerns or issues between or among CON employees directly, and without unnecessary external involvement.
- Are respectful of students' privacy in consultation with other AU nursing faculty by sharing only the information necessary for student safety and effective training.

CON faculty conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the [ANA Code of Ethics for Nursing](#). Faculty treat colleagues, staff and students with respect and compassion and without prejudice. Specifically, they conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Ethics Code Provision 1.5, *Relationships with colleagues and others*:

Respect for persons extends to all individuals with whom the nurse interacts. Nurses maintain professional, respectful, and caring relationships with colleagues and are committed to fair treatment, transparency, integrity-preserving compromise, and the best resolution of conflicts. Nurses function in many roles and settings, including direct care provider, care coordinator, administrator, educator, policy maker, researcher, and consultant.

The nurse creates an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating colleagues, coworkers, employees, students, and others with dignity and respect. This standard of conduct includes an affirmative duty to act to prevent harm. Disregard for the effects of one's actions on others, bullying, harassment, intimidation, manipulation, threats, or violence are always morally unacceptable behaviors. Nurses value the distinctive contribution of individuals or groups as they seek to achieve safe, quality patient outcomes in all settings. Additionally, they collaborate to meet the shared goals of providing compassionate, transparent, and effective health services.

Additionally, CON faculty . . .

- Make clinical decisions based on the primacy of the patient's interest.
- Respect patients' needs when in the clinical environment for educational purposes and do not use patients solely as a means to an educational end.
- Fully inform and engage patients in decision-making processes when students are involved in their care to avoid any misunderstanding of roles or functions.

VI. Leadership . . . reflected in courage, honor, professionalism, transparency and vision

CON faculty and staff believe that everyone is an academic and community leader who affirms commitment to professionalism daily with one another, their students, the university community, community partners, and the public. Faculty and staff strive to ensure that they are positioned in roles best suited to the value they bring to the organization.

CON faculty and staff . . .

- Develop and communicate a clear vision of how they can positively contribute to the AU and CON mission and goals.
- Respond positively to new challenges and demonstrate a positive attitude toward students, patients, co-workers and other customers.
- Build and uphold a healthy work environment by displaying behavior that is fair, balanced and respectful.
- Maintain professional appearance and behavior while engaging in university related activities.
- Accept and acknowledge personal responsibility for actions in work environments.
- Use a respectful, approachable tone and manner of addressing students, patients, co-workers and other customers that elicit and enhance communications.
- Respect the right of others to freely express their own professional viewpoints.
- Raise concerns about unprofessional behavior in a private and respectful manner, understanding that opinions and perceptions may differ.
- Conduct all work with integrity, adhering to the highest professional standards.
- Take personal responsibility to support collaboration, compassion, diversity, inclusion, excellence, and innovation within the CON.
- Demonstrate accountability to AU and the CON, managing resources wisely and appropriately communicating waste and actions inconsistent with the CON mission, vision, and values.

References

ANA Code of Ethics for Nursing.

<http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/COE-Learn-More.html>

ANA/AONE Principles for Collaborative Relationships between Clinical Nurses and Nurse Managers.

http://www.aone.org/resources/PDFs/ANA_AONE_Principles_of_Collaborative_Relationships.pdf

ANA's Principles for Social Networking and the Nurse: Guidance for Registered Nurses.

<http://www.nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/ThePracticeofProfessionalNursing/NursingStandards/ANAPrinciples.aspx> (ANA membership required to view the document.)

Augusta University Annual Training Resources.

Augusta University Employee Manual.

http://www.augusta.edu/hr/employee_manuals.php

Augusta University Human Resources. *Core Standards of Excellence*

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College of Nursing Mission, Vision and Values.

<http://www.augusta.edu/nursing/mission.php>

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Georgia Regents University and Health System. *Healthy Respect Charter*

Rosenkoetter, M. M. & Milstead, J. A. (2010). A code of ethics for nurse educators: Revised. *Nursing Ethics*. 17(1): 137-139.