# 2025 - 2026 Patient Care Technician Student Handbook Supplement

**Effective September 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026**

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# Welcome to the Patient Care Technician Student Handbook Supplement!

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 Student Handbook Supplement supersede any conflicting statements made by faculty, administrators, the general Berkeley College Student Handbook, and the Undergraduate 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.

The faculty of the School of Health Studies is committed to guiding and assisting you in your academic career. You, in turn, have a responsibility to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures of the College.

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

# Overview

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 Student Handbook Supplement. These program-specific policies and procedures supersede any statements made in the general Berkeley College Student Handbook. Students should refer to the Undergraduate Catalog and the general Berkeley College Student Handbook for all other College policies.

# Patient Care Technician Program Goals and Objectives

The Patient Care Technician (PCT) 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 a healthcare team, they provide direct patient care and comfort measures, take patients' vital signs, collect specimens, and much more.

The objectives of the PCT program are:

- Reading and Written Communication: Students will demonstrate competency in reading and writing.
- Oral Communication: Students will demonstrate effective oral communication skills that incorporate emotional intelligence, empathy, and civility.
- Critical Analysis and Reasoning: Students will apply critical thinking and the knowledge gained in their degree programs for better decision-making informed by:
    - Ethical Reasoning
    - Quantitative Reasoning
    - Scientific Reasoning
- Knowledge and Skills for Living in a Diverse Society: Students will respect multiple perspectives and cultural contexts when making decisions independently or as part of a team.
- Information Literacy: Students will be able to locate, evaluate, and ethically utilize reliable information, empowering them as informed and responsible citizens.
- Integration of Learning: Students will develop the ability to make connections between different academic studies and specialized professional skills leading to more informed, creative, and productive decisions in their lives and career.
- 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.
- To provide students with the knowledge and skills to work collaboratively with members of the healthcare team to provide patient care and manage medical emergencies.
- To ensure students enter the workforce as qualified and technically skilled healthcare professionals in the ever-changing healthcare environment.
- To 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).
- To educate students regarding the ethical, legal, and professional principles of the healthcare profession and the scope of their practice as a patient advocate.
- To instruct students to employ HIPAA, OSHA, Standard Precautions, and other infection control measures in the healthcare setting.

- To prepare students to effectively interact with patients, families, and members of a healthcare team in a therapeutic and professional manner.

# Core Performance Standards

The goal of the Patient Care Technician (PCT) 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 School of Health Studies is committed to providing reasonable accommodation in its academic programs to qualified individuals with disabilities, including but not limited to learning disabilities. A reasonable accommodation is one that does not require a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program or lower academic and/or clinical standards.

Throughout the program, students must be able to perform in a reasonably independent and timely manner that does not affect the quality of care, the safety of patients or other individuals, and in a way that does not adversely affect the School of Health Studies, clinical affiliates, or any member of the healthcare team.

Students must be able to meet all of the performance standards outlined below, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to be admitted and progress in the program. Individuals requiring accommodations while enrolled in the program are encouraged to speak with a representative of the College's Office of Accessibility Services before enrolling in clinical and/or laboratory courses. These core performance standards 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 PCT 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 and/or the Office of Accessibility Services. 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 PCT 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.

It is the student's responsibility to understand the duties, responsibilities, skills, and abilities required to be a patient care assistant. In addition to the technical standards described below, students are encouraged to review the information regarding patient care assistants at the O*NET website.

The following list is not meant to be all-inclusive, but instead it offers examples of required activities. Students are encouraged to review the standards carefully; if there are any questions or concerns, they should be discussed with the Chair of the Allied Health - Medical Department and/or the Office of Accessibility Services.

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| 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<br>• Collect data from patient care equipment, monitoring devices, and measuring equipment used in the care of clients<br>• Read measuring devices that may be hung or placed below bed level<br>• 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<br>• 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<br>• Detect signs of fire and initiate emergency actions<br>• 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<br>• 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- |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| | | producing devices used in patient care<br>• Tactile ability to detect anatomical abnormalities like edema, swelling, or nodules and masses<br>• 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<br>• Give verbal directions to, or follow verbal directions from, other members of the healthcare team and participate in healthcare team discussions of patient care<br>• 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<br>• Position patients, and assist in turning or lifting patients<br>• Reach below the waist or overhead |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| | | while providing patient care or performing nursing procedures<br>• 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<br>• 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<br>• Turn and position patients as a preventive need against development of skin breakdown<br>• Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation |
| Physical Strength | Physical strength sufficient to perform the full range of required patient care activities | • Push and/or pull 250 pounds<br>• 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, | • Walk without a cane, walker, or crutches in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside care |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| | stoop, squat, reach above shoulders and below waist and move quickly; manual and finger dexterity; and hand-eye coordination to perform nursing activities | • 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<br>• Handle strong emotions<br>• Be flexible with changing environments and schedules in both classes and clinical settings<br>• Be able to work in close quarters with clients, classmates, nursing faculty, and members of the healthcare teams<br>• Focus attention on task<br>• Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotions under control in classroom and clinical environments<br>• Establish a therapeutic relationship and communicate in supportive manner |
| Professional Attitudes and Interpersonal Skills | Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate | • Maintain empathetic, flexible, culturally sensitive, therapeutic |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| | 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 | relationships with others<br>• Accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions<br>• Comply with both the ethical and legal standards of the profession<br>• Express compassion, empathy, and a caring concern for others<br>• Demonstrate initiative, motivation, and diligence<br>• Display integrity, honesty, and responsibility<br>• Display respect, sensitivity, and tolerance for diverse populations<br>• 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<br>• Read graphs<br>• Read and understand printed instructional materials for both classroom and/or clinical setting use<br>• Legibly write or type in client physical or electronic records<br>• Effectively converse with patient and members of the healthcare team<br>• Discriminate fine/ subtle differences |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| | | in medical word or medications<br>• 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<br>• Process information thoroughly and quickly to prioritize tasks<br>• Analyze and synthesize data to effectively contribute to the patient plan of care<br>• Sequence or cluster patient findings<br>• Identify cause and effect relationships<br>• Effectively and accurately collect data, prioritize, and anticipate reactions<br>• 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 |

| Core Performance Standard | Definition of Core Performance Standard | Examples of Required Activities (not all inclusive) |
|---|---|---|
| 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 |
| Timeliness | Ability to be responsive within appropriate time period | • Perform all laboratory and clinical skills within a pre-established timeframe that ensures safe patient care |

# Academic Policies

- Add/Drop Policy
- Academic Progression and Grading Criteria
- Appeals
- Attendance and Participation
- Class Hours
- Course Withdrawal
- Credit for Prior Learning
- Graduation Requirements
- Transfer Credit

## 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 second week of the term. Requests will be considered only if appropriate arrangements can be made to make up missed class time from the first week of the term. Clinical courses cannot be added to a student's schedule after the start of the term.

## Attendance and Participation

Attendance, punctuality, and professionalism are key elements of any healthcare professional role. Unexcused absences or habitual tardiness, at lecture, laboratory, clinical/internship/practicum experiences, and other similar experiences, will not be tolerated and could result in dismissal from training and failure of the course.

Students are expected to participate in each of their courses through regular attendance at lecture, laboratory, clinical/internship/practicum training, and other similar experiences. Students are expected to meet the requirements of coursework as assigned, including completing assignments as scheduled. For courses in which some of the meetings are asynchronous, e.g., remote or blended learning, students are expected to participate in a similar manner.

While attendance itself is not used as a criterion for academic evaluations, grading is frequently based on participation in class discussion, laboratory work, performance, field experience, or other activities which may take place during class sessions. In addition, attendance is required for in-class assessments. If these areas for evaluation make class attendance essential, the student may be penalized for failure to perform satisfactorily in the required activities. Grading based on participation in class activities must be explained in the course syllabus.

In all circumstances, it remains the student's responsibility to promptly initiate discussion about absence and arrangements for making up any missed work with each instructor. Students are encouraged to work directly with their instructor for any needed flexibility, and with the Program Chair for supplemental support as needed. Absences from class are handled between students and instructors.

For clinical/internship/practicum training students should follow the program specific policy as delineated in the Student Handbook.

# Class Absence

Absences from class are handled between students and instructors (in the case of the clinical training between students and the clinical instructor or clinical preceptor). The instructor may request documentation to substantiate the reason for the absence and consider said documentation at their discretion, while maintaining a student's right to privacy. Students are expected to provide requested documentation in a timely manner.

# Advance Notification for Non-Emergency Planned Absence(s)

A student may need to schedule a planned absence from class. The student should discuss the planned absence(s) with the appropriate program representative and receive approval two weeks prior to the day(s) of absence. Table 1, Notification Policy for Non-emergency Planned Absences, offers instructions on the appropriate program representative School of Health Studies students must inform regarding the planned non-emergency absences.

Upon advanced notification excused absences may be granted for situations specifically addressed below.

- For absence due to religious observance
- Participation or attendance at events sanctioned by College and/or the School of Health Studies
- Academic pursuits
- Non-emergency medical reasons (e.g., elective surgeries or treatments)
- Planned absence due to Career Services activities
- For planned absence due to active military duty

Outside conflicts need to be avoided; for example, students must not schedule work hours or other obligations during synchronous class sessions, which could be in person or online, during clinical/internship/practicum training, or during the final assessment period. Students should not schedule leisure activities/vacations during the scheduled academic session course dates and the final assessment period. It is expected that every student will be present, on time, and prepared to participate when scheduled class sessions begin.

Table 1. Notification Policy for Non-emergency Planned Intermittent Short Absences

| | **Course Type & Who to Notify** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **Lecture** | **Laboratory** | **Clinical Training (including rotation, internship, practicum)** |
| Patient Care Technician | Instructor | Instructor | Clinical Faculty, and<br>Submit *Excused Absence Request Form* and<br>Receive approval prior to planned absence |

Failure to provide advance notification will result in the absence(s) being considered unexcused. Advance notice is not expected in cases of sudden illness or other unforeseen conflicts. Refer to the section below for non-planned absences.

# Excused Absence Criteria for Non-Planned Absences

In case of an emergency, sudden illness or other unforeseen conflicts, students may request for an absence to be marked as excused absence, by filling the *Excused Absence Request Form*. Excused absences are granted for situations specifically addressed below. All absence requests must be accompanied by contemporaneous supporting documentation. The following criteria are recognized for granting excused absences:

1. The student has a death in the immediate family. An announcement of the family member's funeral arrangements may be presented as supporting documentation.
2. The student is admitted to a healthcare facility to receive necessary medical care. In the case of an injury or illness, a physician's note (and/or evidence documenting such an absence) is required. The Program Chair or the Clinical Coordinator reserve the right to ask for additional supporting documentation in support of the physician's note. Seeing a doctor does not satisfy the requirement for a medical excuse. Late presentation of a note or retroactive application may affect the determination of whether the absence is excused.
3. Situations beyond the control of the student and related to exceptional circumstances.
4. Special Circumstances
    a. Should requests for academic flexibility be made by the Student Development and Campus Life (SDCL) and the Title IX Coordinator - from the perspective of a Reporter victim or a Respondent, on behalf of a student, instructors will work with the student and the SDCL as necessary/appropriate to determine the type of flexibility/accommodation the student may benefit from.

Table 2. Notification Policy for Emergency Intermittent Short Absences

| | **Course Type & Who to Notify** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Program** | **Lecture** | **Laboratory** | **Clinical Training (including rotation, internship, practicum)** |
| Patient Care Technician | Instructor | Instructor | Clinical Faculty, and<br>Submit *Excused Absence Request Form* |

# Attendance and Participation During Clinical Training

## Excused Absence

Due to the very specific nature of the student learning goals and outcomes, the number of absences during laboratory and clinical training is limited even when the absences may fall under the excused absence criteria. The table below shows the number of permissible excused absences for each clinical/internship/practicum course.

| Course | Program | Total Clinical Hours | Excused Absences | Make-up Needed |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| PCT2320 | PCT | 90 | 1 | Yes |

# Tardiness (Applies to Both Laboratory and Clinical Training)

Repeated tardiness is considered improper professional behavior and may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the clinical sites, failure of this course, and/or dismissal from the program Clinical or laboratory tardiness is defined as arriving after the designated start time of the clinical or laboratory experience. A student who anticipates being late to clinical or laboratory, must directly contact the College representative* as instructed (e.g., the clinical or laboratory instructor, the clinical site monitor, and/or the clinical coordinator), or a representative of the clinical site (students to follow instructions provided by the clinical coordinator). Student must inform (report to) the College representative* (e.g., faculty, or the site monitor) or the Clinical facility representative as soon as they arrive at the clinical site.

- The first tardy occurrence will result in a verbal warning and a note will be placed on the student's record.
- A second tardy occurrence will result in a written warning, student will be sent home, and an absence will be recorded for the component of the course (laboratory or clinical experience).
- A third tardy occurrence will result in the student dismissal from the clinical site** and course failure***.

*Note: Students must inform the instructor or College Representative. Communicating being late to another student is not permitted.

**If a student is dismissed from the practicum site for cause, Berkeley College is not obligated to place the student at another practicum site. Therefore, the student will be subject to dismissal from the practicum training and course failure. In such cases, the student's graduation will be delayed.

***A course failure may result in program dismissal based on the maximum number of course failures allowed for the program.

# Unexcused Absence

As stated in prior sections of the policy, students are required to inform representatives of the School of Health Studies (faculty, or the Clinical Coordinator, and/or the Program Chair) that they will not be at the clinical site. For specific programs students must notify the clinical facility as well. Instances when the student does not attend a clinical training day and fails to inform the College representative and/or the Clinical site representative (a.k.a. No Call, No Show) will result in dismissal from clinical training and course failure.

Extenuating circumstances that impede the student to provide the required notification will be evaluated by the Program Chair. It is the student's responsibility to provide documentation that clearly demonstrates that the student could not provide the mandatory notification on-time.

## Class Hours

Generally, classes are in session from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM, Monday through Friday. Saturday classes may be scheduled from 7:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Clinical rotations may be scheduled from 7:00 AM until 12 midnight, Monday through Saturday.

## Credit for Prior Learning

Students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program may be eligible to receive credit for prior learning if they possess active, and in good standing, healthcare licenses or certifications. Details regarding the College's Credit for Prior Learning policy can be found in the 2025-2026 Undergraduate Catalog.

## Graduation Requirements

To qualify for graduation, students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program must fulfill the following requirements:

- Pass Medical Terminology, as well as each PCT and MED course with a minimum grade of C (70%)
- Pass Anatomy and Physiology I and Anatomy and Physiology II with a minimum grade of C+ (75%)
- Successfully complete the prescribed number of clinical hours
- Successfully complete the prescribed course of study with a minimum average of 2.00 (C)
- Meet the credit-hour requirements for the major
- Discharge all financial obligations to the College
- Participate in the Certified Patient Care Technician credentialing examination

Additional information regarding graduation can be found in the 2025-2026 Undergraduate Catalog.

## Academic Progression and Grading Criteria

### Passing Grade(s)

The minimum passing grade required for Medical Terminology and all Patient Care Technician (PCT) and Medical (MED) courses is a C (70 percent). Any grade below a C (70 percent) is a failing grade. In order to pass a PCT and/or MED 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 (Passing) for the clinical/laboratory portion. A failure in either the didactic or clinical/laboratory portion of a PCT or MED course will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

The minimum passing grade required for Anatomy and Physiology I and Anatomy and Physiology II is a C+ (75 percent). Any grade below a C+ (75 percent) is a failing grade. Therefore, students must receive at least a C+ (75 percent) in these courses in order to satisfy course requirements for the Patient Care Technician program.

### Repeating Courses

Students enrolled in the PCT program who receive a failing grade as outlined above in Medical Terminology, Anatomy and Physiology I and II, and/or any PCT or MED course must repeat that course in order to progress in the program.

Students are reminded that they may only attempt to pass a single course two times, including one repeat. A student wishing to take a course for a third time, regardless of whether the repeated grade is passing or failing, must obtain written permission from the Dean of the School/Division in which the course is offered.
Note that failed courses may lead to repeat charges and may also delay graduation.

## Transfer Credit

In addition to the transfer credit guidelines outlined in the Berkeley College 2025-2026 Undergraduate Catalog, students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program who wish to have credits considered for transfer must note the following:

- A grade of C+ or higher is required for Science (SCI) transfer credits, and the credits must have been earned within the last five years.
- 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.

Note that transfer credit will be evaluated on a course-by-course basis based on the recommendation of the Department Chair/Director and/or School Dean.

## Course Withdrawal

Students who wish to drop a course must do so in writing and must have the approval of the Academic Advisement Department. Courses dropped during the first two weeks of classes do not appear on the student's transcript. Withdrawal from a 15-week course between weeks three and 12 will result in a grade of WP or WF, which indicates whether the student was passing or failing the course at the time it was dropped.

Students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program are permitted to withdraw from one PCT course during the length of their program. Students who withdraw from a second PCT course without receiving prior approval from the Department Chair will be dismissed from the program.

A grade of W will be assigned to students who enrolled in but did not participate in a course. Students who do not officially drop a course will receive a letter grade that reflects their achievement.

## Program Dismissal Appeal

Students who are dismissed from the Medical Assistant program for violating policies outlined in this Student Handbook Supplement will receive official notification from the College's Allied Health - Medical Department Chair. Any student dismissed from the program for reasons other than academic integrity violations may ask for a review of the circumstances leading to the dismissal and request the possibility of being readmitted into the program. This appeal should be sent to the Allied Health - Medical Department Chair within six (6) months of the date of dismissal using the following mechanism:

- Student outlines a written appeal to the Chair of the program of study detailing reasons why the dismissal should be reversed. Such appeal should include relevant documentation, a detailed summary of the circumstances that have changed that will lead to success, and any other appropriate supporting facts.
- The Chair will review the appeal and conduct an appropriate investigation with a Committee comprised of representatives of the School of Health Studies.
- After reviewing all relevant documentation, the Committee will deliberate, vote, and present their final decision to the Department Chair who will then share it with the School Dean. All decisions made by the Committee will be final and cannot be appealed. The Department Chair will notify the student and Academic Advisement of the Committee's decision in a letter sent via email.

# Clinical Requirements and Responsibilities

- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification
- Clinical Clearance Requirements
- Latex Sensitivity

## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

Students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program must successfully pass the health provider Basic Life Support (BLS) course prior to enrolling in clinical courses. This course teaches high-quality cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for adults, children, and infants. Once obtained, the certification must remain current while enrolled in the PCT program.

Students will be scheduled for the CPR course as part of their program of courses. Any student who fails to attend or who does not pass this course will not be permitted to enroll in courses containing a clinical component.

## Clinical Clearance Requirements

In preparation for their clinical experience, students are strongly encouraged to review the Clinical Clearance Requirements forms, which are available from the Allied Health - Medical Department. Clinical affiliates are becoming more stringent regarding health clearance documentation, and the absence of required documentation could delay or prohibit clinical placement.

Students are responsible for providing clinical clearance forms to the Allied Health - Medical Department Chair/Clinical Coordinator by the determined due date for the applicable term. Students who fail to submit health forms in their totality by the due date will be withdrawn from the clinical course and a grade designation of WF will be assigned. Students are encouraged to retain a copy of all clinical clearance documentation provided to the Department Chair/Clinical Coordinator.

Students are not permitted to call the clinical site at any time for any reason. If a student has a question or concern, they should first try to resolve it with their clinical instructor. If the clinical instructor is unable to help, the student should contact the Department Chair/Clinical Coordinator. Any deviation from this procedure will result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal from the clinical site and/or clinical course. The Allied Health - Medical Department reserves the right to make administrative changes to clinical placements as necessary.

- Criminal Background Check
- Health Requirements
- Malpractice Insurance

## Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all students in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program prior to participating in clinical rotations and may be conducted annually or at the discretion of clinical affiliates. Not passing a background check may prohibit the student from progressing in the program and from becoming certified to work in the field.

In instances where a student’s criminal background check contains information related to past criminal activity, Berkeley College cannot guarantee that the College will find suitable clinical placement(s) because the decision to allow students to complete clinical rotations is at the sole discretion of the clinical affiliate. If the student is denied clinical placement by the clinical affiliate due to criminal history information, that student will not be permitted to continue in the program. If the offense is expungable, the student is encouraged to seek legal counsel. If the student's record is cleared, and the record shows as "clear," the student is eligible for progression, provided all other clinical eligibility requirements are met.

If a charge, arrest, and/or conviction occurs while a student is enrolled in the PCT program, it is the student’s responsibility to inform the Department Chair. This notification must be in writing and must occur within two business days after the event occurs. The required notification must include a description of the circumstances surrounding the charge, arrest, and/or conviction. Subsequent to this notification, the student should make an appointment with the Department Chair to discuss their options. Failure to notify the Department Chair of a charge, arrest, and/or conviction may result in the student being removed from the PCT program.

**Health Requirements**

Students in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) 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 provide appropriate proof of immunity as follows:

- Blood titers for measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella
- Immunization records or blood titers for hepatitis B
- A two-step PPD skin test administered within the last year or a negative chest X-ray within three months
- A tetanus shot administered within the past 10 years

Clinical affiliates require all clinical students to have a yearly influenza vaccine. A COVID-19 vaccine and available boosters are strongly recommended. Please note that some sites may also require weekly PCR testing in addition to the COVID-19 vaccination series. Failure to comply with these immunization requirements may prohibit students from attending clinical courses. Clinical affiliates also may require students to provide proof of individual health insurance or be an eligible dependent or beneficiary of another person's accident and health insurance policy. Students not able to meet this requirement may find it difficult to complete the required clinical rotation(s) and/or progress in the program.

A negative 12-panel, pre-clinical urine toxicology screening also is required. This includes screening for:

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

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 readmission, reinstatement, or 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, they may be asked to

provide an updated urine toxicology screening. The cost associated with these repeat drug screenings will be borne by the student.

A negative drug screen is required to progress in the PCT program. Students with a positive drug screen result will be required to meet with the Department Chair and/or School Dean to discuss continuation in the program. A student's drug screen is not considered positive until a determination is made that the results are not due to legally prescribed and appropriately taken prescription medications and the student has been offered the opportunity to have their original sample retested at the student's expense. If the positive drug results are not due to legally prescribed prescription medications, the student will be removed from the program and will not be eligible for reentry. If during the course of study students are suspected of drug use, they may be asked to provide an updated urine toxicology screening. The cost associated with this repeat drug screening will be at the student's expense.

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.

# Health Advisory

Berkeley College's PCT program is physically and mentally challenging. During the laboratory and clinical portions 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.

Students may be exposed to a variety of other situations and substances which could potentially affect students with medical conditions that include, but are not limited to, asthma, allergies, and pregnancy. If a student becomes pregnant during the practicum, these exposures can harm the student's unborn baby. If you are concerned, you should consult with your healthcare provider prior to participating in the clinical practicum to ensure you are 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 their healthcare provider will be afforded the opportunity, once medically cleared, to return to the program pending course availability.

## Malpractice Insurance

Students in the Patient Care Technician program are required to purchase their own individual malpractice insurance and must provide the Clinical Scheduling Coordinator with evidence of coverage prior to enrolling in clinical courses.

## Latex Sensitivity

Hospitals and other clinical settings have numerous items that have a natural latex rubber component. Unforeseen exposure and sensitivity may result from repeated exposure to the protein associated with natural latex rubber (commonly found in powdered gloves). True allergies are rare, but latex sensitivities can be seen in approximately eight to twelve percent of healthcare workers.

Students with known latex sensitivity and/or allergies must provide the College's ADA Coordinator with documentation of the specific sensitivity/allergy along with suggested safety guidelines from the healthcare provider in order to request a reasonable accommodation. Information regarding the student's latex sensitivity/allergy will be shared with clinical affiliates as applicable.

Students with documented latex sensitivity/allergies are responsible for carrying their own medication to counteract the allergy. Any costs related to the allergy screening and/or treatment will be borne by the student.

If a student has a suspected reaction, he or she must report it to the clinical site as well as to the College's Clinical Coordinator and ADA Coordinator.

Berkeley College cannot guarantee a latex-free environment, including in its classrooms, laboratories, and/or during clinical rotations.

# Student Rights and Responsibilities

- Complaints and Grievances
- Confidentiality
- Dress Code
- Informed Consent
- Professionalism

## 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 (https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/index.html) to review the entire Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (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 their 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, and/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, but is not limited to, any discussion held in public areas such as elevators, hallways, and cafeterias. It also includes, ut is not limited to, 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 a 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 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 and/or posting confidential or proprietary information about clinical facilities and/or rotations and/or 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, and/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. Click for additional requirements concerning the use of social media in connection with Berkeley College matters.

## 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.
- Artificial eyelashes are prohibited.
- 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; hoop earrings are prohibited. 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.
- 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, flip flops, 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.

## Informed Consent

While enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program, students will be learning and practicing direct patient care and will be expected to participate in all clinical skill activities, including invasive procedures. Partial disrobing may be required while practicing and performing certain skills. However, appropriate draping and privacy considerations will be maintained at all times.

As an inherent risk of invasive procedures, students may be exposed to hepatitis, HIV, and other bloodborne or airborne pathogens that may cause injury, disease, or death. Students also may be exposed to latex and may develop an allergic reaction, which may cause injury.

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.

By participating in the Patient Care Technician program, students freely agree to assume and accept any and all known and unknown risks of injury, harm, loss, death, and disease. If students have religious, cultural, or medical reasons that prevent them from participating in invasive procedures, they are encouraged to speak with the Department Chair and course instructor.

## Professionalism

Students are preparing for membership in a profession that serves the public – a public that expects a high standard of professionalism. While participating in the classroom/laboratory/clinical portion of the program, students are expected to present themselves in a professional manner at all times by demonstrating integrity, respect, and compassion and are expected to be thoughtful and professional when interacting with faculty, staff, patients and their families, healthcare providers, preceptors, affiliated institutional staff, and other students.

It is expected that during the lecture and laboratory portion (as applicable) of their courses, students will:

- Arrive at class on time. Students who anticipate being late must notify their instructor at least 30 minutes prior to the start of class.
- Not disrupt the lecture or laboratory instruction by engaging in private conversations.
- Refrain from eating or drinking while in the laboratory.
- Refrain from inappropriate behavior, such as verbal abuse, anger outbursts, etc.
- Not engage in personal phone conversations or text messaging while participating in the didactic, laboratory, and/or clinical portions of their program. To the extent possible, electronic devices should be turned off or placed in silent mode.

It is expected that during the clinical portion of their courses, students will:

- Uphold school policies and regulations related to academic and clinical performance.
- Refrain from performing any technique or procedure for which they have not been adequately trained.
- Refrain from any deliberate action or omission of care in the academic or clinical setting that creates an unnecessary risk of injury to the client, self, or others.
- Provide care for the client in a timely, compassionate, and professional manner.
- Communicate client care in a truthful, timely, and accurate manner.
- Protect patient privacy, which is governed by HIPAA. Information about patients and/or their circumstances should not appear on social media sites.

If, while enrolled in a clinical course, a student's level of professionalism and/or performance presents 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 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. A student who recognizes that she/he has made a clinical error is obligated to report the situation to their instructor immediately and to take necessary measures to ensure subsequent patient safety.

In addition, students enrolled in the Patient Care Technician program may be suspended, or expelled, from clinical studies for reasons associated with academic misconduct. These reasons include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to follow Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) Guidelines by maintaining the confidentiality of patient information and records.
- An act of dishonesty involving clinical work.
- Falsification of credentials.
- Inappropriate use of electronic devices such as, but not limited to photographing, recording, or transmission of patient information or photographs.

Professional demeanor is also required while students are on virtual sites, such as online social networking sites. All students are expected to abide by the College's Social Media policy.

As members of the healthcare profession, it is imperative that students recognize their responsibility to society and their patients and exhibit behavior representing high standards, polite etiquette, compassion, and respect for human dignity in both the classroom and clinical settings.

Professionalism will be a graded component of all core patient care technician courses via the completion of the Professional Development Achievement Tool (PDAT). This form is included as part of the course syllabus. Students must achieve 90% or higher on each PDAT form. Those scoring less than 90% on their first PDAT will receive remediation and a verbal warning; scoring less than 90% on two PDATs will result in a written warning; and scoring less than 90% on the third PDAT will result in automatic dismissal from the Program.

Click for more general conduct requirements applicable to all Berkeley College students.

## Complaints and Grievances

For policies and procedures regarding student complaints and grievances, including grade appeals and other academic grievances, please see the Student Complaint Procedures.