

**Welcome****Overview****Patient Care Technician  
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## Welcome to the Patient Care Technician Certificate Program!

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

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

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

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'E Fitzgerald'.

Elizabeth Fitzgerald, MSN, RN, CCRN  
Department Chair, Patient Care Technician Program

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



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## Patient Care Technician Program Goals and Objectives

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

The objectives of the Patient Care Technician program are:

- To provide students with the knowledge and clinical skills necessary to enter the healthcare field as patient care technicians in various clinical settings.
- To provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to interact effectively and appropriately as members of the healthcare team who provide care to patients in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, home healthcare, hospice, and assisted living environments.
- To provide students with a solid foundation for pursuing professional certifications offered in the patient care technician field.

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## Technical Standards

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

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

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

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

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities
Visual	Optical ability to sufficiently observe a patient and gather data accurately from a distance as well as close up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detect changes in skin color or condition</li> <li>• Collect data from patient care equipment, monitoring devices, and measuring equipment used in the care of clients</li> <li>• Read measuring devices that may be hung or placed below bed level</li> <li>• Read fine print in varying levels of light</li> </ul>
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of patient healthcare needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear normal speaking level sounds</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Detect signs of fire and initiate emergency actions</li> <li>• Hear call bells and/or cries</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear call bells and/or cries for help</li> </ul>
Smell	Olfactory ability sufficient to detect significant patient and environmental odors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detect odors of bodily fluids, such as foul smelling drainage, spoiled foods, or smoke from burning materials</li> <li>• Detect smoke</li> </ul>
Tactile	Tactile ability sufficient for physical monitoring and assessment of healthcare needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tactile ability to detect unsafe temperature levels of solutions or heat-producing devices used in patient care</li> <li>• Tactile ability to detect anatomical abnormalities like edema, swelling, or nodules and masses</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate clearly with patients and their families, and members of the healthcare team</li> <li>• Give verbal directions to, or follow verbal directions from, other members of the healthcare team and participate in healthcare team discussions of patient care</li> <li>• Recognize and report critical patient information to other caregivers</li> </ul>
Gross Motor Skills	Gross motor skills sufficient to provide the full range of safe and efficient patient care activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gather data by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic means</li> <li>• Position patients, and assist in turning or lifting patients</li> <li>• Reach below the waist or overhead while providing patient care or performing nursing procedures</li> <li>• Maneuver in small patient areas such as patient rooms, treatment rooms, or nursing work stations</li> </ul>
Fine Motor Skills	Fine motor skills sufficient to	

	perform manual psychomotor skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pick up and handle small objects with fingers</li> <li>• Carry out patient care procedures such as wound care</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Turn and position patients as a preventive need against development of skin breakdown</li> <li>• Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation</li> </ul>
Physical Strength	Physical strength sufficient to perform the full range of required patient care activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Push and/or pull 250 pounds</li> <li>• Lift and/or move heavy objects weighing between 25 and 50 pounds</li> </ul>
Mobility	Physical ability sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces; full range of motion to twist, bend, stoop, squat, reach above shoulders and below waist and move quickly; manual and finger dexterity; and hand-eye coordination to perform nursing activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk without a cane, walker, or crutches in order to ambulate patient and provide bedside care</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
Emotional/Behavioral	Emotional stability and appropriate behavior sufficient to assume responsibility and accountability for actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deal with the unexpected such as frequently changing client status</li> <li>• Handle strong emotions</li> <li>• Be flexible with changing environments and schedules in both classes and clinical settings</li> <li>• Be able to work in close quarters with clients, classmates, nursing faculty, and members of the healthcare teams</li> <li>• Focus attention on task</li> <li>• Monitor own emotions and be able to keep emotions under control in classroom and clinical environments</li> <li>• Establish a therapeutic relationship and communicate in supportive</li> </ul>

		communicate in supportive manner
Professional Attitudes and Interpersonal Skills	Present professional appearance and demeanor; demonstrate ability to communicate with patients, supervisors, and other members of the healthcare team to achieve a positive and safe work environment. Follow instructions and safety protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain empathetic, flexible, culturally sensitive, therapeutic relationships with others</li> <li>• Accept accountability and responsibility for one's actions</li> <li>• Comply with both the ethical and legal standards of the profession</li> <li>• Express compassion, empathy, and a caring concern for others</li> <li>• Demonstrate initiative, motivation, and diligence</li> <li>• Display integrity, honesty, and responsibility</li> <li>• Display respect, sensitivity, and tolerance for diverse populations</li> <li>• Demonstrate comfort with close physical contact in the care of clients</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give clear oral patient reports</li> <li>• Read graphs</li> <li>• Read and understand printed instructional materials for both classroom and/or clinical setting use</li> <li>• Legibly write or type in client physical or electronic records</li> <li>• Effectively converse with patient and members of the healthcare team</li> <li>• Discriminate fine/subtle differences in medical word or medications</li> <li>• Give and understand verbal directions</li> </ul>
Conceptual/Spatial Abilities	Conceptual spatial ability sufficient to comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprehend spatial relationship needed to properly assess wounds of varying depths</li> </ul>
Clinical Reasoning	Ability to logically reason across time regarding a patient's changing condition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out the nursing process in the care of patients</li> <li>• Process information thoroughly and quickly to prioritize tasks</li> <li>• Analyze and synthesize data to effectively</li> </ul>

		<p>data to effectively contribute to the patient plan of care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sequence or cluster patient findings</li> <li>• Identify cause and effect relationships</li> <li>• Effectively and accurately collect data, prioritize, and anticipate reactions</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
Flexibility	Adapt to College's course schedule policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

**NOTE:**

Pregnancy may pose special problems for female students. While the Department encourages students to continue in the program or course during pregnancy, it is vitally important for the faculty to be informed of the pregnancy as soon as possible. As soon as the student knows that she is pregnant, she must notify the primary faculty member. The student is required to obtain and submit a signed medical statement from the student's obstetrician verifying that the student may safely participate in the program or course, including meeting relevant technical standards.

Any change(s) during or after the pregnancy must be reported and further documentation may be required. A student who is less than six weeks post partum must have written medical documentation from her obstetrician that states the student can meet the technical standards of the Patient Care Technician program in order to return to clinical rotation.

A student who suffers from an injury, or has a surgical procedure during the program or course, is required to provide written medical documentation from his or her own healthcare provider that states the student is able to meet the technical standards of the Patient Care Technician program in order to return to clinical rotation.

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## Academic Policies

- **Attendance** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8172.htm)
- **Class Hours** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8174.htm)
- **Credit for Prior Learning**  
(/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8168.htm)
- **Passing Grade** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8167.htm)



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## Attendance

Punctuality and attendance are required for all classes, laboratory sessions, and clinicals. The number of minutes and/or hours tardy is cumulative and is added to the number of hours absent in order to obtain a combined total for the quarter. Excessive tardiness or absence will result in course failure as outlined below:

Course Title	Number of Unexcused Absences = Failure
PCT101 Fundamentals of Patient Care	10 hours
PCT111 Patient Care Procedures	12 hours
PCT122 Introduction to Clinical	4 hours
PCT132 Advanced Patient Care Techniques	10 hours
PCT233 Patient Care Practicum	0 hours
PCT256 Home Healthcare Techniques and Clinical	10 hours
PCT270 Patient Care Capstone	8 hours

Students must notify the instructor of an absence no later than two hours prior to any class, laboratory, or scheduled clinical. Students who will be absent from a scheduled clinical must notify the instructor by phone.

### Unexcused Absences

Any unexcused absence carries a one (1) point per hour deduction from the course's final grade. However, a "no call-no show" carries a five (5) point per hour deduction from the final course grade.

Unexcused clinical absences are not eligible for make-up.

Unexcused non-clinical absences may be eligible for make-up based on the guidelines determined by the instructor and outlined in the course syllabus.

### Excused Absences

In the case of accident, illness, or other critical events, absences may be excused if the student provides proper documentation to the instructor when the student returns. The instructor will evaluate such occurrences on a case-by-case basis.

One day of excused clinical absence may be made up in the virtual hospital. Clinical make up will be scheduled at the end of the rotation. Clinical make up hours are scheduled on weekdays, evenings, and/or weekends, and are subject to the availability of the clinical unit and the faculty.

Excused non-clinical absences may be eligible for make-up based on the guidelines determined by the instructor and outlined in the course syllabus.

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## Class Hours

Generally, Patient Care Technician classes are in session from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm. Clinical rotations are scheduled from 7:00 am until 12 midnight, Monday through Sunday.

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## Credit for Prior Learning

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

Patient Care Technician students may also test out of Fundamentals of Patient Care (PCT101) and/or Patient Care Procedures (PCT111) by taking a formal challenge examination for credit. A challenge examination can only be attempted once for each course and may not be taken for any courses in which the student received a failing grade in a previous quarter. Students may not attempt to test out of courses in which they are currently enrolled.

Patient Care Technician students seeking to take a challenge examination must obtain prior approval from Department Chair of the Practical Nurse and Patient Care Technician program. Challenge examinations consist of both written and practical components; both components must be successfully completed before credit can be awarded.

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## Passing Grade

In order to pass a Patient Care Technician course that consists of both didactic and clinical/laboratory portions, students must receive a passing grade for the didactic portion of the course and a P for the clinical/laboratory portion. A failure in either the didactic or clinical/laboratory portion of a Patient Care Technician course will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

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## Student Rights and Responsibilities

- **Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification**  
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- **Confidentiality** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_9688.htm)
- **Criminal Background Check**  
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- **Dress Code** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8165.htm)
- **Health Requirements**  
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- **Malpractice Insurance**  
(/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_8163.htm)
- **Professionalism** (/student\_handbook/student\_handbook\_2014\_pct\_9690.htm)

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## Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification

Patient Care Technician students must successfully pass the health provider Basic Life Support (BLS) course, which is offered as part of PCT122, Introduction to Clinical.



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# Confidentiality

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

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

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

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

- References to patients, patient data, or clinical experiences involving patients or their family members are not to be included in any part of the social networking environment. Social media breaches include, but are not limited to, tweeting confidential or proprietary information about clinical facilities and/or rotations and taking 'selfies' while participating in clinical rotations and posting them on social media sites.

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

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

**[BerkeleyCollege.edu/files\\_bc/Social\\_Media\\_Policy.pdf](http://berkeleycollege.edu/files_bc/Social_Media_Policy.pdf)**  
(/files\_bc/Social\_Media\_Policy.pdf).

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## Criminal Background Check

A criminal history background check is required for all Patient Care Technician students. If the results are positive, the student will not be permitted to progress in the program.

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

Upon returning from a Leave of Absence, students must undergo a criminal background check. If the results are positive, the student will not be permitted to return to the Patient Care Technician program. Any fees involved with the repeat background check will be the responsibility of the student.

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## Dress Code

As part of its mission to prepare students for careers in the healthcare industry, Berkeley College requires Patient Care Technician students to adhere to the following professional dress code while on campus or at a clinical site.

- Uniform: Clean, pressed, solid-colored, light blue scrub set with the Berkeley insignia. Appropriate plain white or flesh colored undergarments only.
- Hair: Clean, groomed, and off the collar. No large barrettes or hair pins. Long ponytails should be held up in a bun.
- Shoes: Clean, white polished shoes of a professional nature. White colored sneakers are acceptable provided they contain no mesh and/or open areas. No clogs, open-toed shoes, or sandals. Shoelaces must be clean.
- Fingernails: Clean, no polish, and just visible over the pads of the fingers when viewed from the palmer surface. Artificial nails of any kind (i.e., wraps or gels) are not permitted.
- Jewelry: No decorative jewelry, including bracelets. A watch with a sweep second hand, wedding ring, and small post earrings may be worn.
- Perfume: No perfume or heavy scents.
- Make-up: Subdued and in good taste.
- Smoking: No smoking.
- Gum: No gum chewing.
- Equipment Needed: Watch with sweep second hand, stethoscope, pen, and penlight.
- Student ID Badges: IDs must be worn at all times while in school and at clinical sites.

**Please note:**

Your student uniform should not be worn when you are in a health agency in any other capacity than as a Berkeley College Patient Care Technician student. Student uniforms should be worn while on campus or at a clinical site. During the lecture portion of a course held in the classroom, students may wear decorative jewelry including earrings, sweaters, or sweatshirts over their uniforms, and long hair does not need to be in a ponytail and/or held up in a bun.

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## Health Requirements

Patient Care Technician students must submit a complete physical assessment by a licensed physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant prior to enrolling in clinical courses. Appropriate proof of immunity (blood titers or immunization records) to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella and Hepatitis B vaccine series; a two-step TB skin test within the last year or a negative chest x-ray within three months; and a tetanus shot administered within the past 10 years are required. An influenza vaccine may be required for some facilities. A negative twelve-panel, pre-employment urine toxicology screening also is required. This includes screening for:

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



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

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

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

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

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## Malpractice Insurance

Patient Care Technician students are required to purchase their own individual malpractice insurance and must provide the lab coordinator with evidence of coverage prior to enrolling in clinical courses.



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## Professionalism

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

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

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

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

[BerkeleyCollege.edu/student\\_handbook/student\\_handbook\\_2014\\_8146.htm](http://BerkeleyCollege.edu/student_handbook/student_handbook_2014_8146.htm)  
([http://BerkeleyCollege.edu/student\\_handbook/student\\_handbook\\_2014\\_8146.htm](http://BerkeleyCollege.edu/student_handbook/student_handbook_2014_8146.htm)).