

WESTERN TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Health and Public Safety Division

2024 – 2025 Clinical Handbook



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Table of Contents

Alcohol and Other Drug Use.....	3
Student Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy.....	4
Criminal Background Checks.....	5
Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experience	6
Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experience Waiver	7
Clinical Health Clearance	8
CPR Certification	9
Clinical Sites.....	10
Clinical Attendance/Punctuality.....	11
Weather delays/Cancellations.....	12
Clinical Dress Code and Uniforms	13
HEPA Masks	15
Latex Allergies	16
Oral Examinations.....	17
Arterial Punctures.....	18
Patient Care.....	19
Transporting Patients outside Hospital	22
Student Affect/Attendance Policy	23
Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Policies	25
Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Competencies etc.	26

Program Goal

To prepare graduates with demonstrated competence in the cognitive (knowledge), psychomotor (skills), and affective (behavior) learning domains of respiratory care practice as performed by registered respiratory therapists (RRTs).

Program Outcomes

- **Living responsibly**
- **Refining professionalism**
- **Cultivating passion**
- **Apply respiratory therapy concepts to patient care situations**
- **Demonstrate technical proficiency required to fulfill the role of a Respiratory Therapist.**
- **Practice respiratory therapy according to established professional and ethical standards.**

Alcohol and Other Drug Use

Rationale:

The Western Technical College Respiratory Therapist Program recognizes chemical dependency as an illness. At the same time, the abuse of drugs (including legally obtained medication) or alcohol can jeopardize the health, safety and well-being of the student, classmates, patients, and faculty and can adversely impact the learning environment.

Policy:

- The Western Technical College Respiratory Therapist Program does not allow the use, sale, transfer, or possession of an illegal drug while on campus or clinical. The Western Technical College Respiratory Therapist Program also deems totally unacceptable a student attending class or clinical while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol. Further, no student shall be under the influence of a **legally obtained drug** while in class or clinical to the extent that such use of influence may significantly impair the student's performance.
- **A student should notify program faculty if under a legally obtained medication that might adversely affect student performance and/or patient safety.**
- **As a condition of enrollment in the program, the student shall notify program faculty of any drug or alcohol statute conviction within 5 days of the conviction.**

Consequences of non-compliance:

Failure to comply with this policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with the student handbook up to and including dismissal from the program.

Revised: 04/2014

Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Student Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy

As per the Western Technical College Alcohol and Drug policy for Employees and Students, Western Technical College is committed to maintaining a drug-free learning and work environment.

To ensure a safe and effective learning and work environment, and to provide a tool for faculty and staff to use in identifying and responding to situations where student drug and/or alcohol use is suspected, a drug/alcohol testing policy has been created.

Student Drug/Alcohol Testing Policy

Any student at Western Technical College who appears to be impaired or under the influence of alcohol or a controlled substance may be required to submit to drug and/or alcohol testing (paid for by the College) under the following circumstances.

1. If a faculty or staff member has reasonable cause to believe that the student is impaired or under the influence of a controlled substance(s), abused prescription drug(s), alcohol, or other mind-altering substance(s).
2. If a student is involved in an accident or incident where safety precautions were violated by a careless act resulting in injury to a person or damage to equipment.

By signing and submitting the **Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Policies** form*, I agree to abide by this policy. *Form is at the back of policy manual.

Revised: 06/04/2021

Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Criminal Background Checks

Rationale:

Patients, regardless of age, are considered vulnerable. To protect them, the government requires that criminal background checks be performed on any individuals who will have access to patients. The clinical sites that provide patient care experiences to our students rely on Western Technical College to carry out the same screening that they perform on their employees.

Policy:

- The standard Criminal Background Information form should be completed and submitted to the Registrar's office prior to the acceptance into the program.
- Late admission students must submit the form no later than April 1. This allows adequate time for the paperwork to be completed prior to July clinical.
- The student is encouraged to discuss any relevant background information with the program advisor or clinical director in advance so that every effort may be made to meet the requirements.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- The student will not be permitted to attend any clinical assignments until the criminal background check has been completed and any areas of concern have been resolved. Missed days will be handled in accordance with the clinical attendance policy and clinical hours will need to be made up.
 - If the background check shows a conviction that is "related" to the field, the clinical sites will be notified as required by law. The sites may decide to accept or reject the student.
 - See next page for charge(s) pending circumstances.
- If no clinical site will accept the student, the student will be unable to attend clinical and therefore unable to enroll in further program courses. Counseling will be provided to help find a more suitable program choice.

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Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experiences

Students applying to Health and Public Safety Division programs with an arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or a conviction as noted in the Department of Justice record may be barred from engaging in the required clinical placements. Failure to disclose an arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or a conviction that subsequently appears on the Department of Justice record may also bar the student from clinical placements. It is the clinical sites' prerogative to accept or deny clinical rotations to students with an arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or a conviction.

It is the student's responsibility to inform the program and/or college of any changes in their criminal history during the course of their education.

It is the policy of the Health and Public Safety Division to notify a student with an arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or a conviction that s/he may not be able to complete the required clinical experiences to earn a degree. **The student shall be required to read and sign the *Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experiences* waiver.**

Procedure:

1. If a student has a positive Department of Justice record, the Program Chair or the authorized school representative will contact clinical sites used by the program.
2. The Program Chair or designee will meet with the student to discuss the results of the contact. The student will be advised as to their options.
3. It will be the student's decision as to whether they will begin/continue in the program.
4. The student and Program Chair will sign the *Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experiences* waiver.

If the student chooses to begin/continue their education, the student is not guaranteed a clinical site can be obtained. For each clinical rotation, the program will contact up to two clinical sites that meet the program competencies (some depend on the criticality of the clinical site). If the site(s) deny the student for clinical education, the student cannot continue with the clinical education portion of the program or subsequent courses in which clinical education is a prerequisite. Acceptance for clinical placement during one rotation does not guarantee subsequent clinical placements.

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Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experiences Waiver

I have been notified that because of my arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or conviction record, I may not be able to complete the required clinical experiences needed to complete the **Respiratory Therapy Program**.

I am aware the program may require clinical experiences at multiple facilities and acceptance at one facility does not guarantee acceptance for subsequent required clinical experiences at different facilities. I am aware it is the clinical sites' prerogative to accept or deny clinical rotations to students with an arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or conviction record. Certain clinical sites may not allow the opportunity to complete certain competencies based on criticality.

I acknowledge it is my decision whether I choose to begin or continue the program based on the knowledge I may not be able to participate in clinicals. I am aware I must also meet other division and program policies regarding grades, conduct, etc.

I am aware it is my responsibility to inform the program and/or college of any changes in my arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or conviction record during the course of my education.

I understand even if I am able to complete the required clinical experiences and earn a degree, my arrest (with charge(s) pending) and/or conviction record may affect my eligibility to take state or national certification and/or licensure exams.

Student Signature

Program Chair or College Representative

Date

Date

Student's Printed Name

Clinical Health Clearance

Rationale:

Clinical sites require verification that all students who practice in their facility are in good health and do not pose a danger to patients.

Policy:

- All deficiencies must be corrected no later than April 1.
- TB skin tests will be repeated every twelve months for all program students. The Student Health Center can provide follow up testing for a minimal fee per immunization.
- If a TB test has expired or never received, a 2-step test will be required.
- If a TB skin test has expired, students will not be able to attend clinical and will need to make up the hours missed when the TB skin test has been renewed.
- If a student is inadvertently exposed to a patient with active TB, an incident report should be filled out and submitted to the clinical site and reported to the Program Clinical Director. A repeat TB skin test must be performed 6-12 weeks after the exposure. Further follow-up care will be determined after that skin test. The student is responsible for any expenses related to this exposure.
- Flu shots during flu season (November through March) are required for many clinical sites.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- The student will not be permitted to attend any clinical assignments until the health requirement(s) have been satisfied. Clinical time will need to be made up when health requirements are satisfied.
- Failure to attend clinical assignments may result in dismissal from the program.

Revised: 04/2019

Revised by RT- 09/2024

CPR Certification

Rationale:

Clinical sites require verification that all students who practice in their facility are qualified to provide CPR to patients.

Policy:

- Students are required to complete **American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Provider** no later than April 1. To verify completion of this requirement, a copy of student's CPR card must be submitted to Viewpoint Screening for approval.
- Students are required to maintain CPR certification while in the program.
- Students will complete Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) training during the second year of the program and a BLS renewal at that time will be available at that time.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- The student will not be permitted to attend any clinical assignments without current certification in **American Heart Association BLS for Healthcare Provider**. Clinical time will need to be made up when this requirement is updated.
- Failure to attend clinical assignments may result in dismissal from the program.

Revised: 05/2024

Revised by RT- 09/2024

Clinical Sites

Rationale:

The primary goal of the program is to produce competent respiratory care practitioners. This includes didactic, laboratory and clinical training and assessment. After classroom training of concepts and procedure, skills will be tested in simulated and actual patient care settings. Clinical experiences must allow sufficient time and variety of patient encounters to prepare students for successful completion of the program and transition into the workforce.

Policy:

- Students will spend 32-40 hours per week in the clinical setting during the five clinical courses.
- Schedules will include a rotation of day shift (approximately 6am to 3pm), evening shift (approximately 2pm to 11pm), and night shift (approximately 10pm to 7am) in each clinical block.
- All clinical schedules and rotations will be assigned by the Director of Clinical Education, Program Chair, or designee.
- A minimum of five clinical sites will be included in the student experience. Students must rotate through these clinical sites with additional rotations scheduled as applicable or required.
- Students are responsible for transportation to and from all clinical locations.
- Students must complete all health and safety education required by each clinical site prior to attending clinical.
- All clinical sites must have an affiliation agreement on file in the division office.

Clinical Sites:

The primary clinical sites include, but are not limited to:

Gundersen/Emplify Health System
1910 South Avenue
La Crosse, WI 54601

Mayo Clinic Health System-La Crosse
700 West Avenue South
La Crosse, WI 54601

Winona Health
855 Mankato Avenue
Winona, MN 55987

Black River Memorial
711 West Adams Street
Black River Falls, WI 54615

Mayo Clinic Health System- Rochester
1216 2nd St. SW
Rochester, MN 55902

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Failure to attend clinical rotations as assigned may result in dismissal from the program.

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Revised by RT- 09/2024

Clinical Attendance and Punctuality

Rationale:

A good attendance record and punctuality for the clinical portion of the program is important for several reasons. First, clinical rotations provide the experience and practice necessary in developing clinical skills and problem-solving ability. Second, potential employers are most concerned about the attendance records of applicants and view clinical rotations as an opportunity to 'audition' future employees. Finally, good attendance is one of the best ways to repay the clinical sites for volunteering their time and effort to provide experience to students.

Policy:

- Attendance is expected at all clinical rotations except in the case of illness. Except in rare instances (determined by Dean of HPS), missed rotations cannot be made up.
- If a student is ill and cannot attend clinical, they are required to notify both the clinical site **AND** the Director of Clinical Education (DCE).
 - The clinical sites should be notified as early as possible. The site should be notified at least one hour before the clinical shift was scheduled to begin.
 - The DCE should be contacted by email or by office phone (Jarrett 608-785-9421) for absences from any clinical site in RC 1-5. **Include the time that you called the clinical site and the name of the individual you spoke to. Be sure to leave a message if directed to voicemail. (Email is the preferred method)**
- **WEATHER:** If campus has announced a weather closure, it is the student's option to go to their scheduled clinical site. There will be no penalties if the student does not go to clinical. **Notification to clinical site and DCE should still occur if not attending.** There may be required make up days added based on amount of weather cancellations.
- If an individual student has judged travel unsafe but class or clinical has not been cancelled, the student must follow the published policy on attendance. (see further details in the Weather Delays/Cancellations section-page 12)
- Students should arrive at the clinical site sufficiently early, so they are prepared and ready for report at the start time indicated on the schedule. Arriving late, asking to be released early, leaving the site during the shift is inappropriate and counts as an absence. (see further detail below regarding tardiness)

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Excessive absences and other attendance issues may result in a failing grade for the clinical course and removal from the program.
- Clinical tardiness of any amount may result in a failing grade for the clinical course and removal from the program. (see further details in the Students Acceptance of Responsibility section – page 24)

Revised: 05/2024 Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Weather delays or Cancellations

Rationale:

Western Technical College occasionally delays opening or cancels school when snow or ice make travel difficult. To avoid confusion students should listen to local radio/TV or check Western communications/social media for announced school closings or late starting times. Checking Western Technical College communication/social media is the preferred notification method.

Policy:

- **Students from outlying areas are encouraged to use their own judgement regarding advisability of travel.**
- If campus has announced a weather closure or late start, it is the students' option to go to their scheduled clinical site. There will be no penalties if a student does not go to clinical. **Notification to the clinical site and Direct of Clinical Education (DCE) should still occur if not attending.** Necessary make up days may be added based on the amount of weather cancellations and each student's particular overall attendance.
- If an individual student has judged travel unsafe but clinical has not been cancelled, the student must follow the published policy on clinical attendance (see earlier section Clinical Attendance/Tardiness). This means the student must notify the clinical site and the DCE in advance of the scheduled start time.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- In most cases, absences for weather are considered excused absences and will not affect the final grade. However, the DCE retains the right to adjust grades when the student's situation warrants or requires the student to make up clinical hours.
- If an individual deems travel unsafe and misses clinical without following the protocol for notifying the clinical site and DCE, a penalty of a 3% reduction in final grade will be applied for each incidence.

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Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Clinical Dress Code and Uniforms

Rationale:

Your appearance plays a role in how patients and staff perceive you. Being professional through punctuality and proper uniform ensure patient safety and show respect. Arrive in uniform with proper credentials. Make sure you have all your equipment! Be prepared by the time your therapist is ready to begin report. Generally, clean scrubs and proper equipment conveys competence and professionalism. **Hospital policies must be followed in addition to the following.**

Policy:

- The official program uniform, explained below, will be worn for all hospital-based clinical rotations. Any exceptions to the policy will be printed in the clinical guidelines for the course.
- The uniform **should not** be worn in public places.

UNIFORM - Purchased from a local uniform shop or online

- Red scrub top and black scrub pants required.
- Red warm-up jacket optional. If used, you still are required to have your red scrub top underneath.
- School insignia patch required on **LEFT** sleeve of scrub top and warm-up jacket, if used.

NAME/ PICTURE BADGE:

- One is provided from Western. Replacement badges may be ordered by calling the Health & Public Safety division office (608-785-9226).
- Gundersen/ Emplify Health- One is provided, if the badge is lost or stolen, a student will be required to pay the \$15 fee for replacement.
- Mayo- One is provided, the first replacement is free, but a 2nd replacement will come with a \$25 fee that will be paid for by the student.

SHOES:

- Clean, low-heeled shoes rubber or leather sole/heels.
- Low-top walking or athletic shoes are acceptable.

UNDERGARMENTS:

- Appropriate undergarments must be worn and should not be visible.
- Extra layers under scrubs, such as a tee shirt or long sleeves, must be clean and either matching red, black or white in color. Long underwear is not acceptable.

JEWELRY:

- Watch (preferably water-resistant) with second-hand required.
- Smart watches can be permitted based on clinical sites but **must be disconnected from phone prior to the start of patient care.**
- Small, simple post or button type earrings are acceptable.
- If a student has body piercings, only jewelry for ear piercing as described above, may be visible while on clinical. See Program Academic Handbook for more Health and Public Safety Division policies.
- A simple wedding band or similar ring is acceptable.

- Safety, infection control and patient care should be considered when determining whether jewelry/accessories may be worn. Consider crevices where bacteria may hide, rough surfaces that may tear gloves or scratch patients, etc.

PERSONAL:

- No perfume, cologne, scented lotions, etc. should be used since many of our patients have hypersensitive airways and scented products may provoke bronchospasm.
- Hair should be clean and well groomed. Hair longer than shoulder length must be secured away from the face.
- Men's faces should be clean-shaven or have neatly groomed beards and/or mustaches. Facial hair may be an employment issue since it interferes with HEPA mask fit.
- In the Health and Public Safety Division, a student may display no body art or piercing that may be considered offensive. Most employment settings have policies that are generally broad; however, they do reserve the right to deny employment and student clinical/practicum/fieldwork placement if body art or piercings is found to be offensive to those in that setting. If a Western Technical College student has significant visible body are and/or piercings, we are unable to guarantee that the student will be able to be placed for the multiple clinical/practicum/fieldwork experiences that most programs require. You may be asked to cover the body art with clothing or dressings or remove the piercings to complete your rotation. See Program Academic Handbook for more Health and Public Safety Division policies.
- Fingernails must be kept short (less than ¼ inch) and clean. **Artificial nails are unacceptable as they harbor microorganisms and have been responsible for infection outbreaks in hospitals. Neutral polish is acceptable if it is not more than 4 days old and has no chips or breaks.**

OTHER:

- No smoking or smokeless tobacco is permitted at clinical sites or while wearing uniforms.
- No gum chewing is allowed in patient care areas.
- The uniform should be kept clean and neat looking.

ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES:

- Stethoscope required. Purchasing information will be given in class.
- Bandage scissors (5") encouraged.
- Eye protection goggles are required in some situations. Available in the Campus store or may be provided by the clinical sites.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- If a student violates the uniform policy, they will be sent home from clinical and charged with a clinical absence. The first violation will warrant a verbal warning, the second a written warning. A third violation will result in dismissal from the program.

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Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

HEPA/N95 Respirators

Rationale:

OSHA requires all Respiratory Care Practitioners to wear protective N95 respirators (HEPA masks) when treating patients with active tuberculosis, while administering Pentamidine by aerosol, and in other clinical situations identified by the facility.

Prior to using a respirator, the individual must undergo an assessment, which includes a screening interview and mask fit test.

Violations of any part of the OSHA policy can result in large fines to the individual, their supervisor, and the institution.

Policy:

- Respirator fit testing and assessment will be provided by Western Technical College prior to students beginning clinical. Students may opt to have testing provided by another agency at their own cost.
- Students who are cleared to wear a respirator accept responsibility for using the mask correctly including checking the mask fit before each use, being clean shaven and caring for the mask as directed.
- Students who are not cleared to use a respirator will not be permitted to:
 - Care for patients with active tuberculosis
 - Administer Pentamidine treatments.
 - Accompany other staff into areas where HEPA masks are required.
- ❖ Powered Air Purifying Regulators (PAPR) may be worn in place of an N95 if the student has completed the training for that specific clinical site.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Because of the serious health risk to the student and liability risk to both the clinical site and Western Technical College, strict adherence to this policy is critical.
- Violations will result in dismissal from the program.

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Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Latex Allergies

Rationale:

Latex allergies have become a significant problem in healthcare. Allergies may result in a skin rash or be severe enough to produce severe bronchospasm and anaphylaxis. More importantly, reactions may progress to the more severe levels over a short period of time. It is very difficult for a Respiratory Therapist with an allergy to latex to continue working in the field.

Policy:

- Students are required to inform program faculty of an allergy immediately upon entering the program. All reasonable accommodation will be made in the college classrooms and labs. Program faculty will meet with division administration and clinical site supervisors to determine what accommodations can be made.
- The student may be counseled into another program or may be ineligible for clinical if the severity of the allergy is felt to be harmful to the student. This decision should be made as early in the program as possible to prevent both harm and unnecessary expense to the student.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Students who withhold information that may create a safety hazard may be immediately removed from the program.

HPS DIVISION LATEX EXPOSURE POLICY

Western Technical College cannot provide a latex-free environment within the classrooms, labs, or clinical settings. Since student may be exposed to various amounts of latex products, students who have a latex sensitivity or latex allergy will be required to provide the instructor with a doctor's written statement stating they are safe to continue in the program with varying exposure to latex products. As a result, latex sensitivity or latex allergy may prevent a student from continuing in a Health and Public Safety division program.

Revised: 04/2019

Reviewed by RT- 09/2024

Oral Examination

Rationale:

The primary goal of the program is to produce competent respiratory care practitioners. The students will learn concepts and procedures in the classroom, practice them in the lab and perform them on patients. Content knowledge will be tested at the end of each classroom unit. Skills will be tested in simulated and actual patient care settings. As the final piece in demonstrating competence, the student will be given an oral exam on each major area of patient care.

Policy:

- Clinical rotation two through five will have an oral exam.
- Time for oral exams may occur outside of the scheduled clinical time.
- Completion of the oral exam will be a large component of your overall grade in that corresponding clinical.
- An oral exam score of less than 11.5 points on any oral exam, the student must retake the oral exam. The highest retake score they can achieve is 11.5 out of 15 points in the grade book.
- If a student scores less than 9 points on the initial oral exam for each clinical rotation, the highest overall grade they can achieve is a C. Preparation for oral exams is an expectation in order to avoid additional time away from clinical for retakes. Study guides will be made available in each respiratory clinical blackboard shell.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Failure to retake the oral examination and achieve at least 11.5 points out of 15 will result in an incomplete and can result in program dismissal. This may include multiple retakes.

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Arterial Punctures

Rationale:

Since arterial puncture is an invasive procedure with significant risks to the patient, caution above and beyond the norm is warranted to assure patient safety and adequate supervised practice for the student.

Policy:

- The student **must pass** the simulated skill check before attempting an arterial puncture on a patient.
- For the first actual patient draws at each clinical site, the student **MUST** be accompanied by an instructor **OR** an experienced RCP (preceptor required for actual competency completion). This person will observe the draw, paying particular attention to patient safety risks. ABG attempts **MAY NOT** be completed on anyone other than a patient with an ABG order.
- If the competency has been passed, the student may then perform arterial punctures **with any** credentialed respiratory care staff member observing.
- If the technique is not safe, the student should practice in a simulated setting before a reattempt on a patient. An instructor **OR** preceptor must observe each of these simulation attempts until the technique is adequate.
- Even after completing the actual ABG competency, the student must continue to have a staff member observing. **The student may NOT draw an ABG unsupervised at any time during the program.**

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Failure to comply with this procedure may result in the loss of that privilege to perform arterial punctures at one or all clinical sites and a revocation of the skill check.
- A deduction would be taken from the final course grade in each term for an uncompleted skill. (full letter grade deduction)
- Dismissal from the program may result if patient safety was compromised.

See additional Arterial Puncture details on page 21.

Revised: 02/2023

Revised by RT- 09/2024

Patient Care

Rationale:

Patient safety and quality patient care are of great concern to students, faculty, and the clinical facility staff. Respiratory therapy students are operating under the licenses of clinical facility staff and Western Technical College faculty. To protect patients and staff, the following sequence will be followed.

Demonstration and Practice

After classroom instruction, all competencies will be demonstrated by the instructor or designee either in person or via video. Lab time will be made available for students to practice and there may, or may not be, structured activities to reinforce learning.

Simulated Lab Testing

Peer Competency Check

After achieving comfort during practice sessions, each student will complete a peer check off. The peer check must be completed successfully prior to moving on to the next step.

Final Instructor Competency Check

After successful completion of the peer check, students will videorecord their competency with the assistance of their peer as a patient (as applicable). Following the recording, the student will review their attempt and determine if a satisfactory completion has occurred (explanation included in clinical manual documents). If not, the attempt and video recording will need to be repeated.

Clinical Competency Testing

Actual Clinical Competency Check

After supervised practice, you will arrange with a preceptor or instructor to be checked off in the clinical setting. After successful demonstration of the skill in clinical, you may perform this competency **with a licensed RCP immediately available to you** (in the room, in the hall, and available to assist promptly if needed)

Next Practicum Course

Skills completed in any clinical block may not be performed independently until the following clinical block. For example, skills completed in RC1 can be performed independently in RC2, skills completed in RC2 can be done independently in RC3, etc. However, each student must be still assigned to a licensed RCP and is required to communicate with them frequently. Any unexpected events or changes in patient condition should be reported to the RCP immediately.

EXCEPTIONS

Arterial puncture, arterial line sampling, extubation, and open suctioning **ALWAYS** require the **direct supervision** of a licensed RCP

Policy:

- **Lab Testing:** Students will be allowed one (1) second attempt at an instructor check off without penalty during each course. Additional failed competency attempts will result in a 3% reduction for each second attempt. A student will be allowed one (1) competency to be checked off a maximum of three times during a course. If more than one competency requires three attempts, the student may receive a failing grade for the course which may result in dismissal from the program.
- All required competencies for each clinical and classroom course must be completed and passed to complete that specific course. Failure to take or pass a competency (lab or clinical) will result in an "F" for the course. If there are further courses that require a competency as a prerequisite, the student will not be able to take that course until the competency is successfully completed and will result in not being able to complete the Respiratory Therapist program.
- **Clinical Competency: After completing the clinical competency testing, a student should continue to gain experience during the same clinical rotation with the following guidelines:** The student is expected to report to the staff RCP frequently (approximately every 15 minutes) about patient status and completion of tasks. No changes in therapy or other independent action should be taken by the student without prior consultation with the RCP, except in an absolute emergency requiring a code blue or medical response team/rapid response team etc. Any unexpected occurrence must be reported to the staff RCP and/or Western Technical College faculty immediately.
- **Next Practicum Course – Semi Independent Practice: The student is permitted to perform patient care semi-independently beginning the next clinical block, within the following guidelines:** The student will report to the staff RCP at minimum, at the end of each treatment round. on patient status and tasks completed. Any unexpected occurrence must be reported to the staff RCP and/or Western Technical College faculty immediately. This includes patient refusal of therapy. No changes in therapy or other independent action should be taken by the student without prior consultation with the RCP, except in an absolute emergency. The staff RCP must co-sign the student's documentation.
- **Documentation:** The staff RCP must review and co-sign the student's documentation, Western Technical College faculty may co-sign in place of the staff.
- Any deviation from this policy, regardless of reason, must be reported immediately to the Western Technical College faculty on site and to the clinical coordinator within 24 hours. At no time should the student perform clinical skills without the supervision required for the demonstrated level of competence.

Exceptions to the Sequence:

- **Arterial puncture, arterial line sampling, extubation, and open system suctioning always require supervision by an RCP.**
- **Arterial puncture and open-system suctioning may absolutely NOT be performed on an actual patient until the student has passed the lab simulated clinical check on campus.**

- **Arterial puncture requires a three-step skill evaluation**

- **Level 1 – Simulated Skill Check:** The student must pass the lab competency evaluation before performing an arterial puncture on an actual patient. There are absolutely no exceptions to this rule. The standard of practice for this competency will be particularly high since the procedure is invasive and carries significant risk to the patient if performed improperly.
- **Level 2 – Actual Skill Check 1:** Upon a student's competency attempt, be aware only an instructor or clinical preceptor may officially check you off. However, practice can take place with an experienced RCP (non-preceptor).
 - After competency completion the student may then perform arterial punctures with any credentialed respiratory care staff member observing.
 - If the technique is not safe, the student should practice in a simulated setting and then reattempt on a patient. An instructor or preceptor must observe each attempt until the technique is adequate and the Level 2 check completed.
- **Continued Practice with actual patients (under close supervision):** After passing the Level 2 check, the student may perform the skill with supervision by any licensed RCP. Even after completing the actual checks and oral exam, the student must continue to have a staff member observing. The student may NOT draw an ABG unsupervised at any time.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- Violations of this policy may put patients at risk. Therefore, the policy will be strictly enforced. Actions that jeopardize patient safety may result in loss of clinical privileges and dismissal from the program.

Revised: 05/2014

Revised by RT: 09/2024

Transporting Patients Outside Hospital

Rationale:

The experience of riding in an ambulance or helicopter during patient transport can be exciting and interesting. However, it is Western's belief that the risks to the student in those situations outweigh any potential educational value.

Policy:

- No student will be permitted to travel with a patient in an ambulance or helicopter.

Consequences of non-compliance:

- If a student violates this policy, and an injury occurs during the transport, it is the student's full responsibility. Western Technical College assumes no liability as the student is acting beyond the scope of the clinical assignment.

Revised: 07/2000

Revised: 09/2024

Student Affect and Attendance Policy

Additional Program Information concerning student affect for clinical courses:

See page 11 Clinical Attendance and Punctuality

See full academic policy manual for additional program details.

Area of Concern:	Explanation:	Deduction:
<p>Attendance</p> <p>Absence? Late? Need to leave early?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have an excused absence, <u>the student must notify the clinical site AND instructor of an absence prior to the start of clinical.</u> • Other absences without notification will be considered unexcused. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All hours, excused or unexcused, will have to be made up in their entirety. The instructor will determine a date and time for those hours. • The first excused absence will not have any reduction in the overall grade. A second excused absence will trigger the initiation of a Success Plan. • The first unexcused absence will result in a 3% reduction of the final grade. (ex. 97% → 94%) Program Outcome 3, Criteria 1 & 2. Effective Witten and Oral Communication. • Deductions will continue the same way with sequential absences (excused or unexcused). • Clinical hours missed will still need to be completed at a later/approved time. <p style="text-align: center;">Exceptions may be made by the instructors based on the student's circumstances.</p>
<p>Professionalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate language, respect, and teamwork is to be upheld throughout the course. • Soft-skills will be assessed throughout the course for the benefit of the students' future success in the healthcare setting • Feedback given to anyone by anyone should be delivered with constructiveness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalism effect will be used in a student's grade percentage. This change can be made in either direction of the grade percentages.

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Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Policies

It is the student's responsibility to understand and abide by all relevant Western Technical College, Respiratory Therapist Program, and clinical site policies.

The following clinical policies have been given to me.

- Alcohol and Other Drug Use & Student Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy
- Arterial Punctures
- Clinical Attendance/Punctuality
- Clinical Dress Code and Uniforms
- Clinical Health Clearance
- CPR Certification
- Criminal Background Checks
- Disclosure of Possible Bar from Clinical Experiences
- HEPA masks
- Latex Allergies
- Oral Examinations
- Patient Care
- Transporting Patients Outside of Hospital
- Weather Delays/Cancellations
- Student Affect/Attendance Policy
- Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Policies

Divisional Policies found within each Respiratory Clinical Syllabus and Program Academic Handbook are also applied.

I have read and understand the above policies and agree to adhere to them.

Student's Name (printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Acceptance of Responsibility for Clinical Competencies, Clinical Hours, and Clinical Tardiness

As a Respiratory Therapy program student, I am aware that the required clinical competencies are mandatory for completion of the program, as well as graduation and Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) requirements.

Initial: _____ If required clinical competencies have not been completed on or before the last clinical day, I understand I will be required to complete those competencies with additional clinical hours the week after graduation.

As a Respiratory Therapist program student, I am aware that the required number of **clinical hours** (as scheduled in RC1 through RC5) are mandatory for completion of the program, as well as graduation and Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC) requirements.

Initial: _____ Staying the assigned amount of time at the clinical site during your assigned clinical day is required. Exceptions include PM shifts that precede a morning course requirement the following day. In such cases, students may leave clinical at 2100 to complete travel and rest to be present the next morning. Other exceptions may arise but will only be approved by the program instructors. In an event of a family emergency, clinical staff may also dismiss you early.

Initial: _____ As a Respiratory Therapist program student, I am aware that arriving on time and prepared for clinical is required. If a clinical site reports tardiness of any amount, the clinical site has the right to request that the student no longer participate in clinical at their location. This would lead to a failing grade for the clinical course and dismissal from the program.

Initial: _____ Being on time is characterized as placing your items in the locker room, uniform/ accessories prepared, report sheet printed, and patient histories reviewed. This may involve coming 15 minutes prior to the start of report time.

I have read, understand, and agree to adhere to the above responsibilities.

Student's Name (printed): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____