

## Vocational Nursing and Associate Degree in Nursing Addendum

September 11, 2023

To: Vocational Nursing and Associate Degree in Nursing Students

**This document will serve as an addendum to the 2023-24 Vocational Nursing Student Handbook, 2023-24 Associate Degree in Nursing Student Handbook, 2023-24 School Catalog and all Summer syllabi in the Smith Chason School of Nursing Licensed Vocational and Registered Nursing programs and all syllabi moving forward.**

The use of Assessment Technology Institute (ATI) Content Mastery Series exams is considered a “**high stakes**” testing method and will no longer be used to fail a student during a nursing course.

The use of Assessment Technology Institute (ATI) Predictor Exam is also considered “**high stakes**” testing and will no longer be used to delay the graduation of any student in the Smith Chason School of Nursing program (LVN or ADN). This decision retroactively applies to the June 2023 Vocational Nursing *graduating* cohort moving forward.

Applies to:

- **June 2023 Vocational Nursing (VN) *graduating cohort*** - VN Level 5 students only who were expected to complete the VN program in June 2023.
- **Active/LOA SU-23 Vocational Nursing (All VN Levels) and Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) students moving forward.**

Does not apply to:

- Current or returning VN and ADN students who failed a course or level prior to the start of the SU-23 quarter due to not passing the ATI content mastery series exams or ATI predictor exam must repeat all failed courses.

This decision is supported by the CA Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians (BVNPT). The topic has also been discussed, in detail, by the CA Board of Registered Nursing with a recent email sent to the Executive Officer for more clarification on the BRN members’ recommendations.

*Students will continue to take these exams. If a student does not reach the benchmark on the Content Mastery Series exam, they will remediate and retake the exams. If a student does not meet the benchmark for the end of course Predictor exam, they will also remediate and retake the exam.*

### Recommendations From Other Entities:

#### ***National Council of State Boards of Nursing Inc. (NCSBN)***

“Encouraging students to take the examination as soon as possible after graduation should be a focus of all nursing programs. Exit examinations that hold students back from taking the NCLEX-RN may also compound students’ problems by preventing them from taking the NCLEX-RN when their chances are best to pass it.” (Spector & Alexander, 2006, p. 292)

<https://www.ncsbn.org/research-item/exit-exams-a-regulatory-perspective>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6871901\\_Exit\\_Exams\\_from\\_a\\_Regulatory\\_Perspective](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/6871901_Exit_Exams_from_a_Regulatory_Perspective)

### ***National League for Nursing (NLN)***

“Requiring a predetermined score for students to graduate and/or to take the NCLEX to ensure that program pass rates remain at state board-prescribed levels can be detrimental to those who have successfully passed all components of the nursing program.” (National League for Nursing [NLN], 2010)

<https://www.nln.org/detail-pages/resource/Reflection-Dialogue-7-High-Stakes-TestingDecember-2010>

“High stakes testing, and progression/graduation policies can also distort the intended purpose of NCLEX pass rate requirements. First-time pass rates are viewed by stakeholders as a measure of program quality. Nursing programs that achieve high first time pass rates by allowing only the highest performing students sit for the licensing exam illustrate the well-known effects of selection bias.” (National League for Nursing [NLN], 2012)

<https://www.nln.org/docs/default-source/uploadedfiles/about/nln-vision-series-positionstatements/nlnvision-4.pdf>

### ***Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)***

“The use of high-stakes testing for students’ progression or completion of a nursing program is typically not the intended purpose of a standardized test, not a best educational practice, and is strongly discouraged” (Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing [ACEN], 2021, p. 43)

<https://www.acenursing.org/About/Report-to-Constituents/RTC2020.pdf>

### ***Assessment Technology Institute (ATI)***

ATI is “not designed for high-stakes purposes such as graduation requirements, and we do not recommend that they are used in this manner.” (Assessment Technologies Institute [ATI], n.d.)

<https://www.atitesting.com/home/ordering-information>

### ***Elsevier/Health Educational Systems Inc. (HESI)***

“Standardized tests do not create the high-stakes environment. It is the program policy developed by faculty on standardized tests that may cause a negative impact. Factors that create negative impact include high grading weight or consequence and/or a benchmark established that limits course or program progression or denying the ability to take licensure exam.” (Mee & Timken, n.d., p. 3)

<https://evolve.elsevier.com/education/expertise/review-testing/hesi-assessments-andpolicy-considerations-finding-a-happy-medium/>

## **Regulations and Guidelines of Other Boards of Nursing:**

### ***North Carolina Board of Nursing***

“The NCBON does not permit the use of any academic external standardized examinations as a determinant or “gatekeeper” for student course progression nor for program completion or graduation from a nursing education program.” (North Carolina Board of Nursing [NCBON] (2017).

<https://www.ncbon.com/vdownloads/position-statements-decision-trees/externalexamination.pdf>



***Texas Board of Nursing***

“The use of standardized examinations in a high stakes manner is not recommended. Performance on a standardized examination should not prevent students from progressing or graduating. If the score on a standardized examination prevents students from graduation, it is a “high stakes” test.” (Texas Board of Nursing, 2017)

[https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/education\\_pdfs/education\\_nursing\\_guidelines/3.7Program\\_of\\_Study/3-7-4-a.pdf](https://www.bon.texas.gov/pdfs/education_pdfs/education_nursing_guidelines/3.7Program_of_Study/3-7-4-a.pdf)