

Criminal Background Check and Drug Screen

The College of Nursing will require criminal background checks to be performed annually on BSN, RN-BSN, MNsc and DNP students and will utilize the services of CastleBranch <https://mycb.castlebranch.com> to procure the national background check report.

Purpose

The College of Nursing requires all students in every program to have annual criminal background checks and drug screenings. The rationale for performing criminal background checks on accepted nursing school students is based on a number of issues, including, but not limited to:

1. The need to enhance safety and well-being of patients/research subjects and, in so doing, to bolster the public's continuing trust in the nursing profession;
2. The need to ascertain the ability of students to eventually become licensed nurses or maintain current license;
3. Consideration of liability issues which may affect the College of Nursing and our affiliated clinical facilities;
4. Compliance with mandates from many clinical agencies utilized by the College of Nursing.

Policy Statement

All students must consent to, submit to, and fully complete a criminal background check annually through <https://mycb.castlebranch.com> as a condition of matriculation into the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences College of Nursing and, if applicable, Graduate School. Failure to do so will constitute failure to meet the matriculation requirements established by the College of Nursing and will result in administrative withdrawal from the program.

Matriculation and continued enrollment in the College of Nursing is contingent upon a completed criminal background check and drug screening with *acceptable* results. Administrative action will be taken, in the event of any of the following: Failure to consent to a criminal background check; refusal to provide necessary information to conduct a background check; falsifying information; failure to provide any additional information wherein an investigation is warranted; and failure to comply with the investigatory procedures when a cause for further action is warranted due to the:

1. Discovery of previously undisclosed information;
2. Discovery of more egregious information than was previously undisclosed information; and/or
3. Discovery of conflicting information between or among the College of Nursing application and/or the criminal background check report and/or any and all documents considered part of a student's application, will result in disciplinary action up to, and including, administrative withdrawal from the program or dismissal from the College of Nursing.

Procedure for Review of Criminal Background Check Findings

1. The Preliminary Review Committee will consist of the following:
 - a. Associate Dean for Academic Programs
 - b. Director of Student Services
 - c. An associate dean or designee (if needed)
2. Upon receipt of a criminal background check report from Certified Background.com, the Preliminary Review Committee will review the report.
3. If the Preliminary Review Committee determines that the criminal background check report is clear with no adverse findings, the student will be notified by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.
4. If the Preliminary Review Committee determines that the criminal background check report identifies adverse findings, the report will be reviewed by the Preliminary Review Committee to determine if the report should be referred to the Criminal Background Check Review Committee, defined below.

Criminal Background Check Review Committee

Purpose

1. Review criminal background check report results referred to by the Preliminary Review Committee.
2. Review the criminal background check report findings, conduct an investigation, and recommend to the dean whether or not the offer of acceptance, conditional admission, and/or progression should be rescinded.
3. Conduct individualized reviews on a case-by-case basis.

Composition

1. The committee consists of the following voting members:
 - a. A member of the College of Nursing Admissions & Progressions Committee (votes only to break a tie)
 - b. Associate Dean for Academic Programs
 - c. Associate Dean for Practice
 - d. Director of BSN Program
 - e. Director of MNsc Program
 - f. Director of DNP Program

2. The committee also includes the following non-voting members:
 - a. Director of Student Services
 - b. Legal Counsel
3. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will serve as the chair of the committee.
4. A quorum shall consist of at least 4 of 7 voting members.
5. If a member is unable to attend, the dean or dean's designee can appoint an alternate member from the faculty.

Process

1. The Director of Student Services will notify the student in writing of the scheduled investigation. This notification will contain the date, time, and location of the committee meeting. The student will be notified that the committee will convene even in the absence of the student.
2. If the student attends the meeting, he or she may have one (1) person present during the meeting, who may be an attorney, to advise him or her. This person may not speak on behalf of the student, committee members, or otherwise actively participate in the investigation.
3. The student may appear in person, make an oral statement, and answer questions from committee members. Should the student choose to remain silent, no adverse inference will be raised against him or her.
4. The student may submit additional information or clarification in writing to the committee within five (5) working days.
5. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will facilitate the discussion regarding the criminal background check.
6. When the student has so requested, the Chair will provide for the student to be heard by the committee and for the student to hear the evidence presented.
7. Once the student's testimony has been presented, the Chair will dismiss the student from the meeting, and continue discussion, deliberation, and voting regarding the final recommendation of the committee to the dean.
8. The committee will consider cause for action to dismiss the student. Such factors involved in a final decision may include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Failure on the part of the student to fully disclose information;
 - b. The accuracy of the information provided by the student;
 - c. The relationship between the offense committed and the student's participation in the basic science or clinical education components of the nursing education program;
 - d. The nature and seriousness of the offense;
 - e. The circumstances under which the offense occurred;
 - f. The age of the person when the offense was committed;
 - g. Whether the offense was an isolated event or part of a pattern of similar offenses;
 - h. The length of time since the offense was committed;
 - i. Past employment history;
 - j. Past history of academic or non-academic misconduct at prior institutions;
 - k. Evidence of successful rehabilitation; and
9. Forthrightness of the information provided by the student in opportunities provided for self-report on application-related forms. Upon completion of the discussion, the Chair will call for a vote to recommend to the dean to dismiss the student or rescind the offer of conditional admission.
10. A three-fourths (3/4) vote of present committee members is required to make a recommendation to the dean to dismiss the student or rescind the offer of conditional admission.
11. A vote of less than three-fourths (<3/4) of present committee members will result in a recommendation to the dean for "no cause for action."
12. The Chair will adjourn the committee meeting.

A Committee Vote Approved by the Dean Resulting in No Cause for Action

1. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will notify the dean of a committee vote that recommends "no cause for action."
2. Upon the dean's affirmation of the committee's recommendation for "no cause for action," the dean will notify the student.

3. The dean will advise the student of the committee's proceedings.
4. Students will be counseled that the College of Nursing has no control or jurisdiction over decisions for licensure made by the Arkansas State Board of Nursing. Activities/issues that appear on the student's criminal background check may jeopardize the student from either taking the NCLEX licensure exam or becoming licensed in any given state. Students may be advised to consult with the Arkansas State Board of Nursing to determine future eligibility for licensure.

A Committee Vote Approved by the Dean to Dismiss a Student or Rescind an Offer of Acceptance

1. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will notify the dean of a committee vote to recommend that the College of Nursing dismiss a student or rescind an offer of conditional admission.
2. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will advise appropriate administrators of any dismissal decision or rescinding of an admissions offer.
3. Upon the dean's affirmation of the committee's recommendation to dismiss, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs will advise the student that he/she has been dismissed.
4. Decisions by the dean are final and are not subject to appeal.

Criminal Background Check Review Committee Documentation

1. The student's file will be retained.
2. The criminal background check and committee investigation records will be stored in a locked, limited access file cabinet in the Dean's Office.
 - a. The file will be shredded at the appropriate time or whenever the student has successfully completed the degree from the College of Nursing