FAQs

Here is our summary of frequently asked question when navigating the process of supporting a struggling student.

WHAT IS A STRUGGLING STUDENT?

Think of observations of *behaviours* and *attributes*. Behaviours may include: hedging (not getting a straight answer), late assignments, late arrivals, performing skills without supervision, chronic personal crises, lack of preparedness, inability to prioritize care. Attributes may include: lack of self-awareness, lack of insight into practice, inability to use feedback to improve performance & accept responsibility for practice, lack of self-initiative, places external blame for difficulties, anxiety that impedes performance and lack of self-confidence.

WHEN DO I INITIATE A LEARNING CONTRACT?

Identify behaviours and attributes of the struggling student. Include the discernment of serious personal issues that may take priority over proceeding with teaching/learning strategies. Make appropriate referrals to relevant campus resources/crisis resources if a priority action is needed to support the student. Otherwise, you may proceed with contacting the Faculty Navigators to help you decide on initiating a learning contract. **Please contact the Faculty Navigators even if you do not need assistance crafting the contracts as they** are tracking stats on the use of contracts. ☺

WHERE CAN I FIND THE MAIN PROCESS DOCUMENT?

The main process document is called, Nursing Program Protocol for Concerning Students in Clinical. It is located in the BScN handbook and the orientation folder for the PN drive. Other documents are relevant policies and given hyperlinks at the end of the process document.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE IN OUTCOMES BETWEEN A 'WD' AND A 'F' GRADE?

The next steps between the two outcomes are the same (competency development, repeat clinical course). What is impacted is the GPA. An 'F' will bring the GPA down, possibly below 2.0 meaning they may not qualify for admission into 4th year at U of A (BScN students) or may not qualify to graduate (PN students). Fourth year students who drop below 2.0 go through a progress review and may be removed from the program. A 'WD' has no impact on the GPA. [Please be aware that new guidelines will be implemented with the new curriculum.]

CAN I GIVE AN IMMEDIATE FAIL?

There are situations when an immediate fail is the most appropriate course of action. There are two paths to a possible outcome of receiving and F grade based on the pattern or severity of behaviours. **(1)**The learning contract path is considered non-immediate but breach in contract can result in an F grade. Going forward, students who successfully complete a contract should also be aware that breaches beyond a contract but within the same course may still result in an F grade. **(2)** A significant, severe incident or pattern of behaviours that pose a high level risk to patient safety can be grounds for an immediate F grade – no contract institution is necessary.

HOW DO STUDENTS GET INTO THE REMEDIATION COURSES?

BScN students in years 2 and 3 as well as PN students in years 1 & 2 who receive a 'WD' or 'F' grade are required to complete/pass INTP 303 before re-entering clinical courses. Please note that if students are not successful in INTP 303, they may not immediately re-enter the failed clinical course and note that subsequent program/course paths will vary depending on BScN or PN programs. A Fourth year BScN students will be recommended for NURS 420 if they fail or withdraw from a clinical course. Additional U of A stipulations and recommendations from the AD may also apply.

WHO ARE MY KEY CONTACT PEOPLE FOR HELP?

Your initial contact people will most likely be the Faculty Navigator team. They can assist with identification and verification of the struggling student, teaching strategies as well as moving forward with a chosen process. Other key people include your Team Lead, Chairperson and Associate Dean. Please refer to the process document for details.

NAMES & EMAIL CONTACTS

Faculty Navigators:
Shireen Bell- Shireen.Bell@rdc.ab.ca

Jessica Green–
Jessica.Green@rdc.ab.ca

Lab/Competency Development Instructor
Amy.Dyck@rdc.ab.ca

Chairperson BScN Program:
Sarah Malo – Sarah.Malo@rdc.ab.ca

Chairperson PN Program:
Lynne Madsen –
Lynne.Madsen@rdc.ab.ca

Associate Dean:
Bev Temple – Bev.Temple@rdc.ab.ca