TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

School of Nursing
Operating Policy and Procedure

SON OP: 30.433, Text Messaging
Refer to SON OP 60.060

PURPOSE: The purpose of the Non-traditional undergraduate text message communication policy is to outline parameters for the use of texting between students and faculty within the non-traditional programs.

REVIEW: The OP will be reviewed biennially by October 1 of each odd numbered year (ONY) by the Accelerated BSN Program Council and RNBSN Program Council.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

According to SON OP 60.060, “Text messages to or from SON students, faculty and/or staff are not authorized and do not serve as an official form of communication and may not be relied upon by either faculty, staff or students as an official communication. Faculty are required to inform students of this policy.”

The Accelerated BSN and RNBSN Programs recognize that text message communication is a convenient and efficient method of communication between faculty/staff and students. Text messaging may be used for non-official communication or to communicate time-sensitive information which then must be followed up through a source of official communication as outlined in SON OP 60.060. Guidelines for the use of text messaging communication are outlined to maintain compliance with SON OP 60.060:

1. Text messaging communication must be respectful and honest at all times. Do not use offensive language (i.e., sarcastic, slang, rude, abrasive verbiage). If it would not be said face-to-face, do not send it in a text message.

2. Parameters for the use of texting with faculty/staff to include:
   a. Students must use an official form of communication to communicate with didactic faculty, preferably through messages in the appropriate course within the online learning platform, to provide written communication regarding any course related questions. If students have a time-sensitive need, they can text or call the didactic faculty. Then, students must follow up with a message within the online learning platform within 24 hours. If the online learning platform is unavailable, students should use the TTUHSC email system.
   b. Students must use an official form of communication to communicate with retention counselors and clinical site coordinators, preferably through messages in the online learning platform. If students have a time-sensitive need, they can text or call the retention counselor or clinical site coordinator. Then, students must follow up with a message within the online learning platform within 24 hours. If the online learning platform is unavailable, students should use the TTUHSC email system.
   c. Faculty must use an official form of communication to communicate with students, preferably through messages in the online learning platform. If faculty have a time-sensitive need, they
can text or call the students. Then, faculty must follow up with a message within the online learning platform within 24 hours. If the online learning platform is unavailable, students should use the TTUHSC email system.

d. If students do not follow up text message communication with written communication through the online learning platform messages or TTUHSC email system within 24 hours, faculty may deduct points within the course. Additionally, student may be referred to program director for disciplinary action due to unprofessional behaviors.

e. During business hours (Monday – Friday, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm), it is anticipated that faculty/staff will reply to students’ text message communication in a timely manner, generally within 2-4 hours. Students should understand that this is a general guideline, and at times faculty/staff may not be able to reply within this time frame due to meetings, travel, vacation, illness, etc. If the student does not receive a reply in a time-sensitive situation, then the student should follow up local staff/faculty or program director for direction.