

**University of Texas at El Paso  
College of Health Sciences**

**Policy: Background Checks for College of Health Sciences Students**

Audience Students	The information in this policy is intended for all College of Health Sciences students admitted to majors that include or may include, at a future date, a clinical rotation at a health care facility.
Rationale	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Effective Fall semester 2005, background checks are required of students participating in clinical rotations at all health care facilities. Students who do not pass the background check requirements may be unable to complete degree requirements. Failure to obtain clearance may result in the case of students' dismissal from the major. The Student Support Center will assist the student in seeking a non-clinical major.</li> <li>2. In 2004, a Joint Commission of Healthcare Organization (JCAHO) standard became effective requiring background checks for security purposes on all employees, staff, volunteers who supervise care, render treatment, and provide services. Individual institutions have been given the responsibility for mandating this clearance for students and faculty. Therefore, in keeping with both JCAHO and agency security regulations, all students will be required to undergo a background check for security clearances in order to matriculate into UTEP College of Health Sciences majors that include or may include, at a future date, a clinical rotation at a health care facility.</li> <li>3. These requirements are the same as those required of health care facility personnel.</li> <li>4. Additional rationale for extending these requirements include: (a) meeting the contractual obligations contained in affiliation agreements between UTEP and the various health care facilities: (b) due diligence and competency assessment of all individuals who may have contact with patients and/or research participants: (c) ensuring uniform compliance with JCAHO standards and agency regulations pertaining to human resource management: (d). meeting the public demands of greater diligence in light of the national reports on deaths resulting from medical malpractice and medical errors.</li> </ol>
Timing of the Screening	Security screening is a requirement for matriculation into a clinical major at the College of Health Sciences. These majors at the present time include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Nursing</li> <li>b. Clinical lab sciences</li> <li>c. Occupational therapy</li> <li>d. Physical therapy</li> <li>e. Speech and Language Pathology</li> </ul> <p>Students must complete the required background check screening following admission but prior to enrollment. A “HOLD” will be placed on student enrollment until clearance documentation is received. For students currently enrolled a “HOLD” will be placed on any clinical courses until a background check clearance is obtained.</p> <p>Students who do not give permission for UTEP to review the results of the background check will be barred from enrollment and will be removed from the accepted student list.</p>
Identification of Vendors	UTEP will designate a company (ies) approved to do the background checks. Results from any company other than those designated will not be accepted.
Allocation of the Cost	Students will pay the cost of the background checks.
Period of Validity	The background checks will be honored for a five year period as long as the student has not had a break in enrollment. A break in enrollment is defined as non-attendance of one full semester (Fall or Spring) or more. However, a student whose attendance (for those currently matriculated) has been suspended due to the Texas Board of Nursing Examiners (BNE) Declaratory Order process will not be considered as having a break in enrollment. A student on Leave of Absence is considered to be in continuous enrollment. A student who has a break in enrollment will be required to complete a new background check.
Significant Findings in Security Screening	<p>Students have the right to request that the vendor who performed the check re-verify that the background check is correct. Accepted applicants who do not pass the required background check will have the case referred to a review panel appointed by the Dean of the College of Health Sciences. That panel will have the responsibility of reviewing the case and recommending: 1) that the acceptance be rescinded; 2) that the concern does not rise to the level of rescinding admission; or 3) that the applicant be interviewed to determine appropriate action. Any admitted applicant whose admission is referred to a review panel has the right to appear before the panel to contest or explain the negative contents of their background check.</p> <p>If the background check uncovers a question which can be</p>

	<p>cleared by the applicant, matriculation can be deferred up to one year while the matter is resolved. However, the student <u>may be granted permission to re-enroll only if space in clinical lab(s) section(s) is available.</u></p> <p>Falsification of information will result in immediate removal from the accepted student list or from the program of study.</p> <p>Failure to pass the background check may result in dismissal from the respective program until a BNE Declaratory Order has been obtained (in case of Nursing students) or reinstatement is authorized by the Dean of the College of Health Sciences.</p>
Appeal of Panel Decision	Any admitted student whose admission is rescinded or otherwise deferred has the right to appeal the decision to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences.
Denial of Appeal (School of Nursing Students Only)	<p>For School of Nursing, accepted students who have a significant finding on their background check will be referred to the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners (BNE) in order to obtain a Declaratory Order. The accepted student may be allowed to enroll when official documentation is received from BNE, confirming eligibility to sit for the NCLEX-RN. Re-enrollment however, is also contingent upon the availability of space in clinical lab sections. Matriculation can be deferred up to one year while the matter is resolved.</p> <p>If BNE denies eligibility to sit for the NCLEX-RN, the accepted student will be removed from the School of Nursing accepted student list. A new application will be considered if the BNE ruling is reversed in the future.</p>
Recordkeeping	Reports will be filed in the Office of Student Support Services/College of Health Sciences for the duration of the student's enrollment or until the applicant is removed from the list of accepted student list.