

Student Handbook

Welcome to Portage Learning!

We believe that you will find the courses you take with us help to provide a very positive learning experience as you work toward your educational goals. Our staff truly desires to be of service to you and your individual needs as you study to prepare for your new career.

Our Mission

The mission of Portage is an extension of the mission of NursingABC, Inc. “to promote quality academic preparation in high school and college equivalent courses, via convenient, interactive methods, to meet entrance prerequisites and continuing needs of applicants to colleges and post-secondary schools – with the goal of assisting those schools in educating and admitting well-prepared applicants who will positively impact the community.”

Who We Are

Portage is a member of the NursingABC family. NursingABC began in the office of Dr. Ken Hartman, professor of chemistry and biochemistry at Geneva College in Beaver Falls, PA. More than 40 years ago, he was asked by a local nursing school to develop a high school equivalent course in chemistry for under-prepared applicants to their program. The course was taught at least twice a year, and later was offered as a one-on-one tutorial in his office. He realized that students were sometimes traveling as much as 100 miles round trip weekly to take the course. With advances in technology, it was possible to offer the same course online. Since that time, we have also developed curriculum in the fields of math, biology, psychology, English, and social sciences. Now it is possible for a student to meet entrance requirements in a self-paced curriculum that offers the advantage of personal tutoring without having to wait for a semester-based course or to travel to receive the instruction. For more information about NursingABC, visit www.nursingabc.com.

Enrollment Procedures

The first step for students is to contact their school of intent to determine the need for the course. It is the student's responsibility to confirm their intended school's acceptance of transfer courses. Transferability is not something any program/college/university can guarantee; acceptance of transfer credits is at the discretion of the receiving institution.

Contact Portage Learning

Using our website (www.portagelearning.com), students may contact Portage Learning. On the website, you can choose the courses you need and register online. Many questions you may have are answered in our FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) section on the website. If you would like to ask questions or just talk to a staff person, feel free to email (info@portagelearning.com) or call (1-888-724-3590).

Once you have enrolled in our online courses, the pre-exam of the course you have selected will be made available to you (if applicable to the course). After receiving an instructor assignment and completing the



pre-exam, you will be able to begin the first module. This module will include the general course information as well as technical instructions for the proper software setup on your computer. The module is your “textbook.” Communication is crucial to successful learning. We cannot emphasize enough that checking your student dashboard messaging system daily is essential. When you have worked through the module and feel comfortable with the material, you will submit the completed module and be given access to the first exam. You will complete the exam and submit it for grading by your instructor. This procedure is repeated until you have finished all the modules and exams.

College Level Courses Available through Portage may be found at the following site: www.portagelearning.com/courses.

Detailed content information as well as outcomes and objectives of each of these courses is available on the website at www.portagelearning.com/registrar.

Grading and Expectations

The grading scale is as follows: 89.5%-100% = A, 79.5%-89.4% = B, 69.5%-79.4% =C, 59.5% -69.4% =D, 59.4% and lower is a failing grade.

As a student of Portage you should expect that you will be given prompt and impeccable service by our administrative and instructional staff. Every attempt will be made by your instructor to help you to understand the material to ensure success on the exam. Portage’s mission includes the expectation that you will receive quality, academic preparation. In order to achieve that goal, it is expected of a student that the modules will be carefully studied. **It is the student’s responsibility to learn the material by completing the modules and spending the time necessary to utilize the excellent instruction that is available through the curriculum, prepared by qualified faculty.**

Lab Component

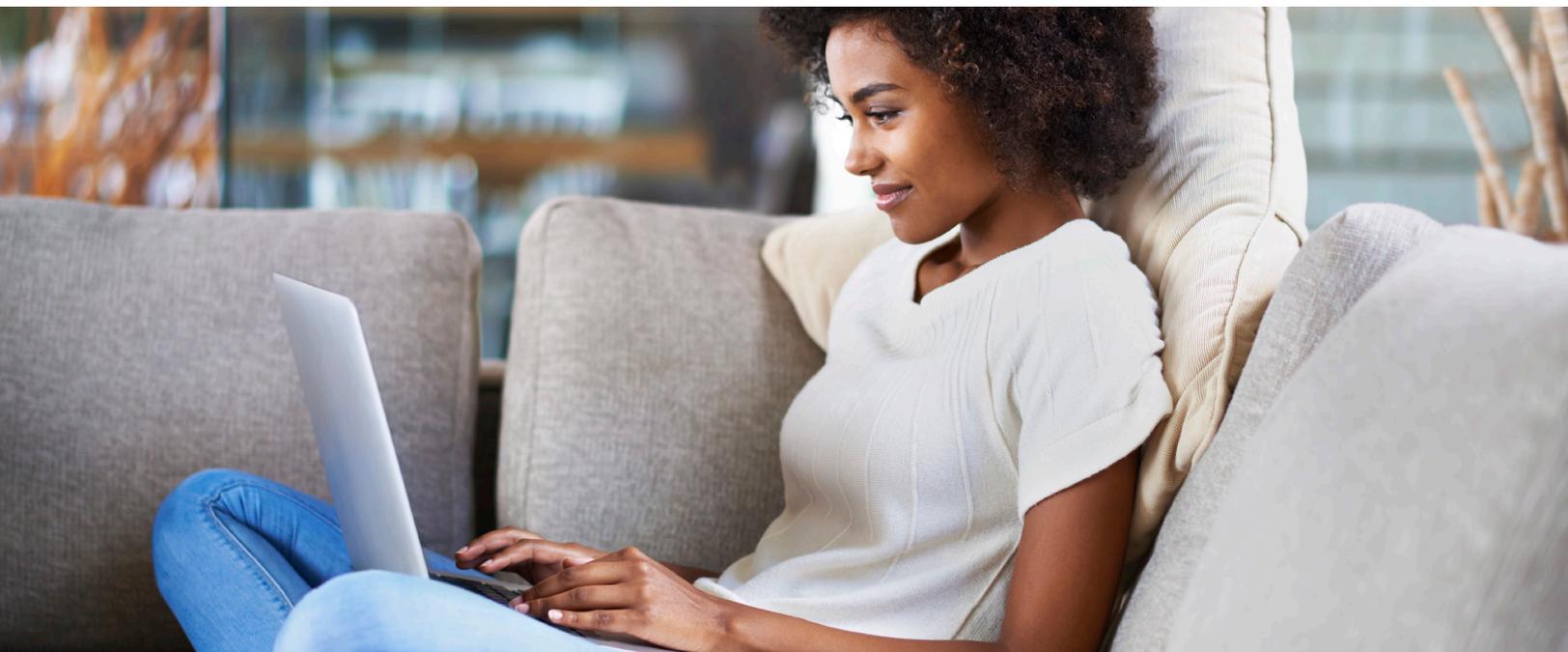
If you are taking a lab course, a video lab is part of the course requirement. You will be required to watch the lab videos in their entirety and complete corresponding exams.

Module Practice/Review Questions

These are not an option or a choice; they are required. This means that you must complete **all** of the review questions within the modules. These count as class participation and are the best way to prepare for the exams. Instructors have the option to either not grade your exams until these are completed, or to deduct points from the related exam if blank modules are repeatedly submitted.

Course Completion Time

All courses are self-directed within the constraints established by our academic review board. Accordingly, course minimums are 3 weeks and a maximum of 1 year from the completion of the first module. Additional requirements include the limit of one module exam per day per course. Please refer to your instructor for course grading time frames as this varies between 48-72 hours [M-F] dependent upon the nature of the exams; i.e., papers, essays, etc.



Cost

The current cost of each course is listed at www.portagelearning.com/courses. Tuition payments do not guarantee an outcome. Tuition guarantees an opportunity to succeed, and in distance education, the greatest factor in that success is the effort put forth by the student.

Administrative Forms

For accurate record keeping by Portage and for the constant improvement of our course offerings, we ask you to complete three forms, in addition to your registration. When you enroll, a demographic survey of general information will be presented and a standard referral form. When you have completed each course, we will request that you complete a course evaluation form.

Portage Student Policies

The student policies include statements concerning the following issues:

Academic Integrity

Important note: If a student uses memorized material from any source, cuts and pastes any material from any source, including a student's own word processing files, on an exam, unless specifically instructed to do so, the student will receive a "0" for the exam question for the first offense, a "0" on the entire exam for the second offense, and possible expulsion from the course following review by the instructor in consultation with an administrative-instructional committee for the third offense. If a student has been warned of an academic integrity policy violation, or had points deducted in one course, that student starts a subsequent course at the next level of consequences for an additional violation.

NursingABC and Portage Learning courses assign questions that require students to write thorough responses in their own words and not simply respond by parroting the words of others, either memorized or copied. If a student cannot write in his/her own words, the student should take additional academic or language preparation before attempting to enroll in a NursingABC or Portage Learning course. This policy is explained more fully below.

Academic Integrity is a serious matter. In the educational context, any dishonesty violates freedom and trust, which are essential for effective learning. Dishonesty limits a student's ability to reach his or her potential. Portage places a high value on honest independent work. In a distance learning situation, we count on the student's desire to succeed in the program he or she is entering. It is in a student's own best interests to avoid cheating on an exam, as this would compromise the student's preparation for future work, as well as reflect poorly on the student's character. Students are required to take exams without consulting class materials or any external study aids. Additionally, students are to type their answers directly into the spaces provided in the course website during modules, labs, and exams. Students are not permitted to copy and paste work into the website from any source, unless **specifically instructed** to do so by the course materials or instructor.

Note that you will be required to show all of your work on exams. When the nature of the course does not require numerical or symbolic determination but may instead require recitation of learned descriptions, be careful to write out the answers in your own words. It is not acceptable to merely memorize the material required on the exam unless the student is specifically instructed to memorize and write the material word for word. Otherwise, if a student completes the written portions of an exam with memorized material, rather than writing in a student's own words, the student's response will be considered in violation of the academic integrity policy.

When a course facilitator detects the use of any form of lesson or other outside materials on an exam, the student will be confronted. Violations of this policy will result in academic consequences as noted above. Please consult the course material and communicate with your instructor for course specific applications and enforcements of this policy. You are responsible to be sure you understand academic integrity policies before beginning any exam.



Please note the additional instructions about plagiarism below that apply specifically to the proper use of outside sources when writing a paper:

Avoid the following forms of plagiarism:

- 1 Copying but failing to properly cite short quotes copied from a source.**
- 2 Rewording major sections from a source but not citing the source.**
- 3 Copying, but failing to cite several paragraphs throughout the paper.**
- 4 Copying and pasting extensive portions of the paper from a source.**

Copying, but failing to cite short quotes copied from a source may be one of the most common forms of plagiarism. Avoid this violation of academic integrity by making and keeping notes of information taken from any source including the information needed to create a citation.

Not copying directly, but rewording (paraphrasing) the information from a source but failing to cite the source is a violation of the academic integrity agreement. Make sure you avoid this form of plagiarism by including a citation **after** any words, data, and information that are not your own, original thoughts or words.

Copying extensive portions of the paper from one or more sources without using citations is regarded as plagiarism. Sometimes students will copy and paste from an electronic source as a shortcut to doing the research and writing necessary to construct a good paper. This is the most egregious form of plagiarism and is easily recognized by instructors who often utilize electronic scanning programs that detect this type of cyber-plagiarism.

Copying means duplicating from a paper or electronic source by any means including, but not necessarily limited to mechanical means, electronic copying and pasting or entering data, or information from memory, without properly citing the source.

To avoid plagiarism, be sure to include a citation within the paper where the quote occurs (in-text or parenthetical citation), as well as a reference list at the end of the paper that contains information describing the sources used in the text (works cited list). Consult your course materials and instructor for instructions.

Instructors have the authority to deal with plagiarism in a paper according to their best judgement. Normally, copying one short quotation without properly citing it will result in deduction of points and instructions to rewrite the offending section. Larger infractions will usually result in a major loss of points and the requirement to rewrite the entire paper. Copying all or nearly all of a paper will usually result in an automatic loss of all points for the paper.

Multiple infractions of the academic honesty policy in a given course will result in a loss of points that could result in a failing grade in the course and removal from the program.

If students have questions about this policy, they should contact their instructor. Failure to understand this policy regarding violations of academic integrity when writing papers will not excuse any student from its consequences. In the enforcement of the policy, no notification is needed between occurrences. If three occurrences are found in your course prior to your instructor grading your work, each occurrence will be treated as an individual case and the enforcement will apply as shown above.

For example: If you take two exams before your instructor has time to review your work and there are issues with plagiarism on both exams, you will receive a zero on any questions involved in the first exam and a zero for the second exam. If you have any question about the work you submitted, we recommend that you wait until your instructor has had time to grade your exam prior to taking another one.

Code of Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a way that supports learning and teaching and promotes an atmosphere of civility and respect in their interactions with others. Verbal and written aggression, abuse, or misconduct is prohibited and may be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program without refund.



Unacceptable student conduct is organized into two tiers. Review the following details:

Tier I

Tier I misconduct involves disputing the authority of faculty and/or staff, arguing persistently, writing to an instructor using aggressive or abusive language, and making a negative remark about an instructor or staff in any communication with them.

Tier I misconduct will result in a warning to the student by the instructor if the incidence is mild and a first offense. Student Services and the Academic Dean will be copied on the warning as well as given a copy of the offending material.

A repeat of a Tier I offense automatically moves it to a Tier II offense.

Tier II

Tier II misconduct is a repeat of a Tier I offense, or any of the following:

Sexually harassing message(s), threatening, bullying, or attempting to intimidate an instructor and/or staff member (including but not limited to use of gender, racial, ethnic, religious or sexual slurs), or posting derogatory, defamatory statements about faculty, staff, or the Portage program on social media.

A Tier II offense will result in a letter from the Academic Dean which will result in a disciplinary measure that involves anything, depending on the severity of the case, from a warning to failing an exam or course, to expulsion from the Portage program without refund regardless of how long the student was enrolled in the program, at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

A student may appeal any disciplinary action by emailing a detailed account of the incident to Student Services (studentservices@portagelearning.com) and the reason for the appeal. A council made up of the Executive Director, the Director of Operations, the Academic Dean and Director of Student Services will review the appeal and inform the student of the result of the appeal in writing within 10 business day of the appeal. The decision of the council is final.

By enrolling in a Portage course, a student agrees to abide by this policy and agrees that no further appeal is possible following a decision by the council described above.

Instructor Assignments

Instructors are assigned by the administration. Students may not request a change in instructor during the course. Students will be assigned the same instructor for repeated courses unless requested otherwise by the instructor.

Course Guidelines

As with any class, the instructors have the academic freedom to establish policy for their respective course. Instructors send a welcome e-mail detailing the policy of their class, which students are required to read prior to beginning their course. Additionally, students are to read through the syllabus and demonstrate understanding in all its contents.

Account Security

The security of your coursework is your responsibility. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to secure personal login information and not leave coursework unsecured for others to access. Accordingly, whatever is submitted under your account will be graded as your work.

Grievances

If for any reason a student has a complaint about the course work or the instructor, that student is advised to first consult the instructor, who will be willing to listen and consider the concern. However, if you don't feel you have received a satisfactory reply, you are encouraged to formally appeal to the administration of Portage Learning for further consideration of your complaint. All formal appeals must be submitted in writing to info@portagelearning.com

Refund Policy

Students enrolled in Portage Learning course(s) may withdraw with written notice to studentservices@portagelearning.com. Include the number and title of course(s) and a brief statement indicating the reason for withdrawal. Tuition charges are refunded in accordance with the drop/add policy outlined below. The tuition refund will be reduced by \$50 per course for processing/administrative fees. After the drop/add period no further refunds are granted, although a student may still withdraw from an incomplete course.



A refund for a course will not be given if **either** of the following has occurred:

Thirty (30) calendar days or more have elapsed since the date of registration for the course or anything beyond module one (1) exam has been submitted.

Students should be aware that the date of registration is not the date a course was started; i.e., even if a course was not started and 30 days have elapsed since date of registration, no refund is granted.

Student Privacy

It is to be noted that under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, (FERPA), it is a violation of federal law to publish or announce student grades to anyone other than the student and his school of enrollment by his request. Not only do instructors not share this information with anyone outside of Portage except upon student request, but records within Portage are stored in such a way that they remain confidential. All paper documents that contain personal information are kept in secure files and shredded at the time of disposal.

Non-Discriminatory Policy

Portage follows the NursingABC non-discriminatory policy. NursingABC admits students of any race, color, sex, religion, and national or ethnic origin to all of the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students in the program. NursingABC does not discriminate against students on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, handicap, and national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or any other programs or services.

🌐 www.portagelearning.com

☎ 1-888-724-3590

✉ info@portagelearning.com

