

# Virtual Reality (VR) Policy 2025-2026

## 1. Purpose

The Virtual Reality (VR) Lab provides immersive learning experiences that support the development of clinical judgment, psychomotor skills, and professional behaviors in nursing education. These policies ensure safe, responsible, and equitable use of VR technology by students and staff.

## 2. Supervision & Access

- VR equipment **may only be used when Lab staff are present.**
- VR experiences are intended primarily for **educational use** in alignment with nursing program outcomes.
- Students must sign an **Assumption of Risk Form** at the beginning of each semester before using VR equipment.

## 3. General Safety Expectations

- Whenever possible, users should remain seated during VR activities unless a scenario explicitly requires standing.
- Always stay inside the marked **play area**. VR use restricts awareness of real-world surroundings.
- While wearing a VR headset, you may be blind to the world around you.
- Always stay in the designated "play" area to ensure your safety. Always follow Lab Staff directions.

## 4. Physical Safety & Equipment Awareness

### Cables and Connections

- Be aware of any headset cables. Move slowly to avoid **tripping, tangling, or pulling** cords.
- Do not step on, twist, or sharply bend any cables.

### Controllers

- Use the **wrist straps** at all times.
- Ensure enough overhead and surrounding space to extend your arms safely.
- Avoid striking walls, equipment, or other people.

## 5. Health & Safety Considerations

VR can be intense and may cause physical or psychological reactions. Participation is at the user's own risk. If you experience any discomfort, **remove the headset immediately and notify Lab Staff.**

### Possible Physical Reactions

*VR may cause:*

- Motion sickness, nausea, dizziness, or disorientation
- Eye strain or blurred/double vision
- Loss of balance/falls
- Sweating, increased heart rate, or anxiety
- Rarely, seizures or fainting

## **6. Medical Conditions**

*Students should not participate in VR if they are:*

- Under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or any substance impairing perception or cognition.
- Experiencing dilated pupils, recent head trauma, or known seizure disorders.

## **Medical Clearance Recommended**

Students should consult a medical provider-and provide a clearance letter-if they are:

- Pregnant
- Elderly
- Living with binocular vision abnormalities.
- Managing psychiatric disorders.
- Diagnosed with cardiac or other significant medical conditions.

## **7. Photosensitive Seizure Warning**

Like other products that produce visual effects (including light flashes), VR may trigger epileptic seizures, seizures, fainting, or severe dizziness even in people who have no history of these conditions. If you have a previous history of epilepsy or seizures, loss of awareness or other symptoms linked to an epileptic condition, consult your doctor before using. To reduce the likelihood of a seizure, do not use if you are tired or need sleep.

## **8. Repetitive Stress Injuries**

- Maintain a comfortable posture.
- Do not grip the controllers tightly.
- Stop use immediately if you feel tingling, numbness, throbbing, or muscle discomfort.

## **9. Radio Frequency Interference**

VR headsets emit radio waves that may interfere with implanted devices (i.e. pacemakers). Students with implanted devices must consult with their healthcare provider before participation.

## **10. Responsible Use Guidelines**

- Begin with short sessions (10-20 minutes) to reduce risk of cybersickness.
- Most users acclimate after **several exposures** (typically 10 sessions).
- Complete at least 3 VR sessions before concluding that symptoms are persistent.
- If you begin to feel ill, remove the headset immediately and notify Lab Staff.

## **11. Student Responsibilities**

- Use VR equipment respectfully and responsibly.
- Report any equipment malfunction or safety concern to staff immediately.

Developed by Tammy Schwaab, DNP, RN, CHSE; *Carroll Community College*

- Maintain professional behavior consistent with nursing program standards and treat VR Lab Staff with respect.
- Follow cleaning and infection prevention instructions provided by Lab Staff.
- Schedule VR lab time using the Lab Scheduling system. If you are unable to make your scheduled appointment, please cancel to open the slot back up.
- Communicate concerns and questions regarding VR assignments to Course Faculty or the Simulation Director.
- Communicate concerns and questions regarding scheduling or technical aspects of VR use to VR Lab Staff.
- Engage in all VR simulations and briefings with a spirit of inquiry.

## 12. Equipment Care & Infection Control

- VR headsets will be charged and maintained by VR Lab Staff in a secure area.
- Perform hand hygiene before and after using VR headsets and controllers.
- Use supplied disposable face covers as directed by Lab Staff.
- Avoid make up or lotions applied immediately before VR use to prevent equipment damage.
- Lab staff will clean equipment (headsets and controllers) in between uses using Monk Wipes.
- Alcohol wipes will not be used on lenses as they can be damaged.

## 13. Faculty Responsibilities

- Assure students have received an appropriate orientation prior to assigning VR simulation experiences.
- Integrate VR simulation assignments into the curricular plan consistent with the International Association of Clinical Simulation & Learning (INACSL) healthcare simulation standards of best practice.
- Faculty who include VR in a course must reference VR participation in their syllabus and ensure an **Assumption of Risk** document is completed by all students prior to participation in VR.

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Name (print)

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Signature

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Date