

nursing world.”

Page noted that her first and second year consisted of many hands on labs where students learned nursing interventions such as catheterization, wound care, and medication administration.

“The mix of in person labs and in person theory classes helped to solidify my knowledge and skill in these procedures and more,” said Page. “To my understanding now, these labs are being taught online due to Covid restrictions.”

Page has missed out on 420 hours entirely due to the pandemic but on January 11 a new semester has begun and she will have the opportunity to complete 300 hours, which is based on the nurse’s schedule that she will be working with.

“Some students have been already and some not yet depending on when their nurse works next, some students are completely on hold until outbreaks at their facilities end,” she explained. “Over the course of fourth year, I was supposed to have 720 clinical hours, 300 preconsolidation and 420 consolidation, OnTechU has divided our year into cohorts who complete one online semester with 180 hours of simulation and one semester with 300 clinical hours.”

According to Page, students have been randomly assigned a placement at various facilities and can attend in-person based on whether outbreaks are present. Students in long-term care homes cannot attend the facility with an active outbreak and must wait until the outbreak clears, she added.

Thankful and optimistic, Page will be heading to the Ross to complete her current placement requirements.

“I am really excited to be in a hospital again and obviously at first I was a little nervous about the virus but their PPE use is impeccable,” she said. “It’s up to the hospital if they kick students out or let them stay during an outbreak as far as I understand.”

Students cannot graduate until all 300 in person hours and 180 simulation hours have been completed. The contingency plan for the school is to complete any outstanding hours in the spring and summer semester, Page noted.

“Navigating this pandemic as a student whose program requires specific placement hours has been very difficult. I understand that this pandemic is difficult for everyone and I know the nursing program faculties are trying hard to deliver the necessary content,” she said. “Unfortunately, losing clinical hours makes developing and demonstrating proficiency in both hands-on nursing skills and the competencies set out by our governing body, the College of Nurses of Ontario, very difficult.”

According to Trent University, since the summer of 2020, placements have been carefully arranged to meet public health guidelines, often run remotely with some in-person placements in specific areas of study such as Nursing and Biology.

“For instance, final-year Nursing students were able to continue with their preceptor placements, working for 300 hours one-on-one with a nurse in the field,” they said in a written statement. “In cases where placements had to be put on hold, the University made special efforts to develop alternate learning opportunities to ensure Trent students did not lose credit.”