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## **School of Nursing**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK GRADUATE PROGRAM – 2025 - 2026**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO SCHOOL OF NURSING**  
**GRADUATE NURSING STUDENT HANDBOOK 2025-2026**

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by all policies, requirements, and regulations in this handbook and the School of Nursing catalog.

University of Toledo General Catalog: <https://catalog.utoledo.edu/>

Students also have a responsibility to access online university policies and procedures when general university information is needed. The policies of the SON are congruent with UToledo policy. In the case of conflicting policies, the stricter policy will apply. All current policies can be found at the University of Toledo Policy website: <http://www.utoledo.edu/policies/>

College of Graduate Studies: <http://www.utoledo.edu/graduate>

The provisions in this handbook are not to be regarded as a contract between the student and the institution.

The School of Nursing (SON) reserves the right to change any provision, regulation, and requirement. Changes will be publicized through appropriate channels.

This handbook supersedes all previous handbooks of the SON.

Revised: July 2025

## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>SECTION 1 - MISSION, VISION, PURPOSE, PHILOSOPHY, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES .....</b> | <b>5</b>  |
| Mission Statement .....  | 6         |
| The School of Nursing Vision .....   | 6         |
| The School of Nursing Purpose .....  | 6         |
| School of Nursing Philosophy .....   | 6         |
| Organizing Framework .....   | 7         |
| DNP Program Outcomes .....   | 7         |
| MSN Program Outcomes .....   | 7         |
| Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Track and the APRN Certificate .....           | 7         |
| <b>SECTION 2 - PROFESSIONAL, LEGAL, AND ETHICAL STANDARDS .....</b>                      | <b>9</b>  |
| Technical Standards .....  | 10        |
| Student Conduct and Academic Dishonesty .....  | 11        |
| Responsibilities Related to Impairment .....   | 11        |
| Professional Standards .....   | 11        |
| American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements ..... | 13        |
| Professional Expectations .....  | 13        |
| <b>SECTION 3 – GENERAL INFORMATION .....</b>   | <b>14</b> |
| Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources .....                                   | 15        |
| Criminal Record Check .....  | 15        |
| Professional Licensure .....   | 15        |
| Health Requirements .....  | 15        |
| Flu Vaccine .....  | 15        |
| Basic Life Support (BLS) Health Care Provider Documentation .....                        | 15        |
| Liability Insurance .....  | 15        |
| Mandatory Health Insurance .....   | 15        |
| Occurrence Reports for Accidental Injury and/or Hazardous Exposure .....                 | 16        |
| Accidental Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids .....                                       | 16        |
| Accidental Exposure to Communicable Disease .....  | 16        |
| Emergency Procedure for Students in Classroom or Clinical .....                          | 16        |
| Emergency Treatment Responsibility for Cost .....  | 17        |
| Reporting Health Problems .....  | 17        |
| Healthcare Release .....   | 17        |
| Responsibility When Illness Occurs .....   | 17        |
| Social Media Statement .....   | 17        |
| Rocket Care Report and Discrimination Resources .....                                    | 17        |
| School of Nursing Policy on Authorship .....   | 17        |
| Student Evaluation Evaluations .....   | 18        |
| Educational Questionnaires .....   | 18        |
| Clinical Sites .....   | 18        |
| Commencement .....   | 18        |
| <b>SECTION 4 - ACADEMIC POLICIES .....</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| Advanced Standing .....  | 20        |
| Transfer Student Requirements .....  | 20        |
| Progression .....  | 21        |
| School of Nursing Minimum Course Grade of 'B' for NURS Courses .....                     | 21        |
| Academic Alert .....   | 21        |
| Repeating Courses in the School of Nursing .....   | 21        |

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Academic Performance Referral .....   | 21        |
| Academic Standards for the College of Graduate Studies.....                         | 21        |
| Change of Track (Major) in the School of Nursing.....                               | 23        |
| Change in Degree Program .....  | 23        |
| Withdrawal from Courses/ Electronic Withdrawal Period for a Grade of W.....         | 23        |
| Leave of Absence .....  | 24        |
| Independent Study for MSN Students.....   | 24        |
| Graduation .....  | 27        |
| Official Transcripts .....  | 27        |
| Academic Due Process and Appeal of a Final Course Grade.....                        | 27        |
| Appeal of Disciplinary Action and Due Process .....                                 | 27        |
| <b>SECTION 5 - STUDENT PARTICIPATION ON COMMITTEES &amp; ORGANIZATIONS .....</b>    | <b>28</b> |
| Student Organizations .....   | 29        |
| Graduate Advising .....   | 29        |
| Minimum Continuous Enrollment.....  | 29        |
| <b>SECTION 6 - ACADEMIC RESOURCES.....</b>  | <b>30</b> |
| Computer Lab Locations.....   | 31        |
| <b>SECTION 7 - FINANCIAL SUPPORT .....</b>  | <b>32</b> |
| Graduate Student Scholarships .....   | 33        |
| Travel Support .....  | 33        |
| <b>SECTION 8 - APRN CLINICAL PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS.....</b>                        | <b>34</b> |
| Requirements for Clinical Placement.....  | 35        |
| Clinical Placement Process for APRN students.....                                   | 35        |
| Flowchart for ALL APRN Clinical Placement Process.....                              | 36        |
| Guidelines for Clinical Preceptors .....  | 38        |
| <b>SECTION 9 – MSN CAPSTONE: FIELD EXPERIENCE, COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, THESIS .....</b> | <b>41</b> |
| MSN Capstone .....  | 42        |
| The Capstone Seminar.....   | 42        |
| The Comprehensive Examination .....   | 42        |
| Thesis Process & Procedures .....   | 44        |
| <b>SECTION 10 - DNP PROGRAM .....</b>   | <b>52</b> |
| Description of Practice Hours.....  | 53        |
| DNP Program Progression .....   | 54        |
| DNP Program Final Defense and Graduation Checklist .....                            | 54        |
| DNP Project Guidelines.....   | 55        |
| Final Project Process & Procedures .....  | 55        |
| Institutional Review Board .....  | 58        |
| Grading of the Doctoral Project.....  | 58        |
| DNP Project Proposal Defense Procedures .....                                       | 59        |
| DNP Project Final Defense Procedures .....  | 60        |
| Project Products .....  | 61        |
| <b>SECTION 11 - ADVANCED PRACTICE LICENSURE &amp; CERTIFICATION .....</b>           | <b>62</b> |
| Licensure.....  | 63        |
| American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)* .....                                  | 63        |
| American Academy of Nurse Practitioner (AANP).....                                  | 63        |
| Degree Posting.....   | 63        |
| Post-Graduation Education Verification .....  | 63        |

**SECTION 1 - MISSION, VISION, PURPOSE, PHILOSOPHY, STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the University of Toledo School of Nursing is to improve the human condition, to educate professional nurses in a manner that engages and serves a diverse learner population as part of a larger metropolitan university, to discover and disseminate nursing knowledge that informs evidence-based practice for quality patient outcomes, and to address the service needs of our stakeholders through innovative programs and entrepreneurial initiatives.

### **The School of Nursing Vision**

The School of Nursing will be the school of choice across the span of nursing education that embodies excellence in the application of the art and science of nursing within an interprofessional context and is distinguished by scholarly inquiry that emphasizes clinical outcomes and translational research.

### **The School of Nursing Purpose**

The School of Nursing purpose is to provide educational programs of excellence in professional nursing at the undergraduate and graduate levels.

- Foster high standards of nursing practice, education, and administration through continuing nursing education,
- Contribute to the health of the citizens of the region served by The University of Toledo through interdisciplinary endeavors; and
- Advance nursing as a discipline through scholarship, research, and practice

### **School of Nursing Philosophy**

As a community of scholars, we are committed to the study and advancement of the art and science of nursing. The philosophy of The University of Toledo School of Nursing expresses our beliefs about the essence of nursing and the education of professional nurses. The foundations of nursing science center on the concepts of the nursing metaparadigm: Person, Environment, Health, and Nursing.

#### **Person**

Persons are unique human beings of unconditional worth, deserving of respect, who are in continuous interaction with the environment and develop throughout the lifespan.

#### **Environment**

Environment is the milieu in which the person exists.

#### **Health**

Health is a dynamic state reflecting the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

#### **Nursing**

Nursing promotes health and well-being and provides support during illness or impairment by assessing, diagnosing, and treating human responses to actual and potential health problems.

#### **Education**

The education of professional nurses is a professional responsibility encompassing the scholarly integration of Education, Research, and Practice. Education is a dynamic interaction between the processes of teaching and learning.

### **Research**

Research is an ongoing commitment to systematic inquiry and discovery.

### **Practice**

Practice is the application of knowledge related to the health of individuals, groups, and communities.

### **Organizing Framework**

The organizing framework is a unifying statement that emerges from the mission and the philosophy of the School of Nursing and guides the development of the curricula. The organizing framework outlines the structure for the content, processes, and outcomes of the undergraduate and graduate programs.

Graduate nursing education is based on foundational knowledge from the natural and social sciences and the humanities. Nursing concepts and theories provide the basis for professional practice. Professional practice encompasses care of individuals, families, groups, and communities in a variety of settings across the lifespan.

The nursing curricula encompass the concepts of caring, communication, cost effective care, critical thinking, cultural diversity, empowerment, ethical decision-making, healthcare policy, inquiry, leadership, and safety. The curricula incorporate psychomotor and interpersonal skills, processes of inquiry and scholarship, and principles of teaching and learning. Faculty and students assume personal accountability and self-direction and comply with legal and ethical professional standards.

Baccalaureate and MSN Graduate Entry graduates are generalists; Masters and Doctoral nursing graduates are specialists. All are prepared as professionals for practice, education, research, and leadership. The University of Toledo education provides the foundation for their quest for lifelong learning.

### **DNP Program Outcomes**

1. Synthesize knowledge derived from a scientific foundation in order to demonstrate expertise in advanced clinical nursing practice to improve delivery of care.
2. Demonstrate continuous quality improvement in patient care situations while providing leadership in clinical decision making through use of information systems and technology for the improvement and transformation of healthcare.
3. Use clinical scholarship and analytical methods to implement safe, quality improvement in administration of patient care.
4. Encourage inter-professional collaboration and teamwork to enhance and improve population health outcomes.
5. Engage in influencing the development and implementation of health policy that provides an interface between practice, research, and policy development.

### **MSN Program Outcomes**

#### **Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) Track and the APRN Certificate**

1. Synthesize theories, concepts, and research in nursing, social, and biological sciences and humanities as the basis for practice.
2. Integrate advanced nursing practice knowledge and skills in managing care of selected populations.
3. Engage in the research process with an emphasis on application to advanced practice.
4. Engage in leadership strategies that contribute to the improvement of health care delivery and influence health care policy.
5. Integrate assessment of own learning in developing a lifelong pattern of scholarly inquiry.

**SECTION 2 - PROFESSIONAL, LEGAL, AND ETHICAL STANDARDS**

### Technical Standards

All students applying to the School of Nursing are held to the same technical standards.

Technical standards are intended to constitute an objective measure of a qualified applicant's ability to meet the program performance requirements.

| Standards   | Examples   |
|---|--|
| Critical thinking ability for effective clinical reasoning and clinical judgment consistent with level of educational preparation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identification of cause/effect relationships in clinical situations</li> <li>• Use of the scientific method in the development of patient care plans</li> <li>• Evaluation of the effectiveness of nursing interventions</li> </ul> |
| Interpersonal skills sufficient for professional interactions with a diverse population of individuals, families, and groups      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of rapport with patients/clients and colleagues</li> <li>• Capacity to engage in successful conflict resolution</li> </ul>  |
| Effective and sufficient communication to facilitate professional interaction   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explanation of treatment procedures, initiation of health teaching</li> <li>• Documentation and interpretation of nursing actions and patient/client responses</li> </ul>   |
| Abilities sufficient for movement in various health care environments   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Movement in patient's room, workspaces, and service areas</li> </ul>  |
| Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient for providing safe, effective nursing care  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calibration and use of equipment</li> <li>• Lift or support at least 50 pounds</li> </ul>   |
| Ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to respond to monitoring device alarm and other emergency signals</li> <li>• Ability to perform physical assessment</li> <li>• Ability to determine patient's condition and responses to treatments</li> </ul>              |

## **Student Conduct and Academic Dishonesty**

Students are responsible for understanding and complying with University and SON policies, procedures, regulations, standards of conduct, and expectations for professional behavior when representing the SON both on and off campus, Policy #[3364-30-04](#). A failure to comply may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the SON. Students subject to certain adverse actions are entitled to due process and appeal rights. The University of Toledo policy on academic dishonesty, Policy #[3364-71-04](#).

## **Responsibilities Related to Impairment**

The student will not use alcohol or drugs in a manner that could compromise the academic environment or patient care. It is the responsibility of every student to protect the public from an impaired colleague and to assist a colleague whose capability is impaired because of ill health. The student is obligated to report persons of the health care team whose behavior exhibits impairment or lack of professional conduct or competence, or who engage in fraud or deception. Such reports must conform to established institutional policies.

## **Professional Standards**

Standards for safe nursing care set forth in Chapter 4723. of the Revised Code and the rules adopted under that chapter, including, but not limited to the following:

- (1) A student shall, in a complete, accurate, and timely manner, report and document nursing assessments or observations, the care provided by the student for the patient, and the patient's response to that care.
- (2) A student shall, in an accurate and timely manner, report to the appropriate practitioner errors in or deviations from the current valid order.
- (3) A student shall not falsify any patient record or any other document prepared or utilized in the course of, or in conjunction with, nursing practice. This includes, but is not limited to, case management documents or reports, time records or reports, and other documents related to billing for nursing services.
- (4) A student shall implement measures to promote a safe environment for each patient.
- (5) A student shall delineate, establish, and maintain professional boundaries with each patient.
- (6) At all times when a student is providing direct nursing care to a patient the student shall:
  - (a) Provide privacy during examination or treatment and in the care of personal or bodily needs; and
  - (b) Treat each patient with courtesy, respect, and with full recognition of dignity and individuality.
- (7) A student shall practice within the appropriate scope of practice as set forth in division (B) of section 4723.01 and division (B)(20) of section 4723.28 of the Revised Code for a registered nurse, and division (F) of section 4723.01 and division (B)(21) of section 4723.28 of the Revised Code for a practical nurse;
- (8) A student shall use universal and standard precautions established by Chapter 4723-20 of the Administrative Code;
- (9) A student shall not:
  - (a) Engage in behavior that causes or may cause physical, verbal, mental, or emotional abuse to a patient;
  - (b) Engage in behavior toward a patient that may reasonably be interpreted as physical, verbal, mental, or emotional abuse.

- (10) A student shall not misappropriate a patient's property or:
- (a) Engage in behavior to seek or obtain personal gain at the patient's expense;
  - (b) Engage in behavior that may reasonably be interpreted as behavior to seek or obtain personal gain at the patient's expense;
  - (c) Engage in behavior that constitutes inappropriate involvement in the patient's personal relationships; or
  - (d) Engage in behavior that may reasonably be interpreted as inappropriate involvement in the patient's personal relationships.

For the purpose of this paragraph, the patient is always presumed incapable of giving free, full, or informed consent to the behaviors by the student set forth in this paragraph.

- (11) A student shall not:
- (a) Engage in sexual conduct with a patient;
  - (b) Engage in conduct in the course of practice that may reasonably be interpreted as sexual;
  - (c) Engage in any verbal behavior that is seductive or sexually demeaning to a patient;
  - (d) Engage in verbal behavior that may reasonably be interpreted as seductive, or sexually demeaning to a patient.

For the purpose of this paragraph, the patient is always presumed incapable of giving free, full, or informed consent to sexual activity with the student.

- (12) A student shall not, regardless of whether the contact or verbal behavior is consensual, engage with a patient other than the spouse of the student in any of the following:
- (a) Sexual contact, as defined in section 2907.01 of the Revised Code;
  - (b) Verbal behavior that is sexually demeaning to the patient or may be reasonably interpreted by the patient as sexually demeaning.

(13) A student shall not self-administer or otherwise take into the body any dangerous drug, as defined in section 4729.01 of the Revised Code, in any way not in accordance with a legal, valid prescription issued for the student, or self-administer or otherwise take into the body any drug that is a schedule I controlled substance.

(14) A student shall not habitually or excessively use controlled substances, other habit-forming drugs, or alcohol or other chemical substances to an extent that impairs ability to practice.

(15) A student shall not have impairment of the ability to practice according to acceptable and prevailing standards of safe nursing care because of the use of drugs, alcohol, or other chemical substances.

(16) A student shall not have impairment of the ability to practice according to acceptable and prevailing standards of safe nursing care because of a physical or mental disability.

(17) A student shall not assault or cause harm to a patient or deprive a patient of the means to summon assistance.

(18) A student shall not misappropriate or attempt to misappropriate money or anything of value by intentional misrepresentation or material deception in the course of practice.

(19) A student shall not have been adjudicated by a probate court of being mentally ill or mentally incompetent, unless restored to competency by the court.

(20) A student shall not aid and abet a person in that person's practice of nursing without a license, practice as a dialysis technician without a certificate issued by the board, or administration of medications as a medication aide without a certificate issued by the board.

(21) A student shall not prescribe any drug or device to perform or induce an abortion, or otherwise perform or induce an abortion.

(22) A student shall not assist suicide as defined in section 3795.01 of the Revised Code.

(23) A student shall not submit or cause to be submitted any false, misleading or deceptive statements, information, or document to the nursing program, its administrators, faculty, teaching assistants, preceptors, or to the board.

(24) A student shall maintain the confidentiality of patient information. The student shall communicate patient information with other members of the health care team for health care purposes only, shall access patient information only for purposes of patient care or for otherwise fulfilling the student's assigned clinical responsibilities, and shall not disseminate patient information for purposes other than patient care or for otherwise fulfilling the student's assigned clinical responsibilities through social media, texting, emailing or any other form of communication.

(25) To the maximum extent feasible, identifiable patient health care information shall not be disclosed by a student unless the patient has consented to the disclosure of identifiable patient health care information. A student shall report individually identifiable patient information without written consent in limited circumstances only and in accordance with an authorized law, rule, or other recognized legal authority.

(26) For purposes of paragraphs (C)(5), (C)(6), (C)(9), (C)(10), (C)(11) and (C)(12) of this rule, a student shall not use social media, texting, emailing, or other forms of communication with, or about a patient, for non-health care purposes or for purposes other than fulfilling the students assigned clinical responsibilities.

#### **American Nurses Association Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements**

The latest version of the American Nurses Association Code of Ethics was released January 1, 2015. The Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements can be accessed online at <https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/>.

#### **Professional Expectations**

In addition to [the University Toledo Student's Code of Conduct](#), the nursing profession requires individuals to be responsible, accountable, self-directed, and demonstrate professional behavior. Students demonstrate professionalism by attending classes, lab, and clinical experiences, by exhibiting courteous and respectful behaviors. Students are expected to be prepared and punctual for classes, lab, and clinical experiences.

**SECTION 3 – GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources**

The University of Toledo Office of Accessibility and Disability Resources ensures equal access and full participation for students with documented disabilities in all programs and activities at the University of Toledo. The principles of Universal Design guide our mission to proactively identify and remove barriers to participation wherever possible. <https://www.utoledo.edu/offices/accessibility-disability/>.

### **Criminal Record Check**

Criminal record checks will be conducted on all students accepted for admission to SON programs and for any student visiting affiliated clinical facilities. Ohio students are required to have a BCII and FBI background check prior to matriculation into the program. If a student lives outside the state of Ohio, they need FBI only. The student is responsible for processing fees. Reports must be sent directly to the graduate program office. Duplicate reports from places of employment or other sources are not acceptable as report results must be current with matriculation.

<https://www.utoledo.edu/depts/police/Fingerprinting.html>

### **Professional Licensure**

#### **Health Requirements**

Students must meet health and safety requirements based on agency, local, state, and federal government mandates. Students are responsible for the cost of meeting these obligations.

The student must submit required health information to CastleBranch/MyCB as mandated by the program. There is a one-time fee that will be required to set up your account. Failure to meet this requirement will prevent students from attending clinicals.

#### **Flu Vaccine**

#### **Basic Life Support (BLS) Health Care Provider Documentation**

Documentation of current American Heart Association BLS for Health Care Providers (not Red Cross or other educational providers) is required of all students prior to matriculation. If the certification card expires during the program, students must complete the American Heart Association BLS for Health Care Providers and provide a copy of the front and back of the card to CastleBranch/MyCB. BLS must be up to date in order to complete clinical experiences.

#### **Liability Insurance**

School of Nursing students engaged in an academically approved assignment are covered under the University of Toledo general liability insurance.

#### **Mandatory Health Insurance**

The University of Toledo believes it is important that all students maintain health care coverage to help ensure academic success and well-being. Students in the School of Nursing are required to maintain health insurance, and the charge for student health insurance care coverage will be placed on your student account. Please see University Policy [#3364-40-27](#).

#### **What This Policy Means to You**

When you register for classes, health insurance will be added to your account if you meet the registration requirements as indicated in the policy. If you have health insurance that is equivalent to, or exceeds, the

health insurance offered by the University, you may complete the online waiver process requesting to waive UToledo's insurance by logging in to the [UToledo portal](#).

If you do not complete the online waiver process within the specified deadline, typically by the last day of add/drop for the semester, the health insurance fee will remain on your account. After the deadline, you must contact the Main Campus Medical Center Insurance Office for waiver appeal information. Students are not covered by Workers' Compensation. Payment for medical, hospital, and emergency treatment, in case of illness or injury, is the responsibility of the student. The School of Nursing is not responsible for any medical costs incurred during enrollment.

### **Occurrence Reports for Accidental Injury and/or Hazardous Exposure**

Students who experience an accidental injury or hazardous exposure during clinical experiences are expected to complete an Occurrence Report per the agency's policies with their clinical faculty. The clinical faculty will then complete necessary documentation and submit it to the program director.

#### **Accidental Exposure to Blood and Body Fluids**

Nursing students sustaining an accidental percutaneous (puncture wound) and/or mucous membrane exposure to blood or body fluids or blood borne pathogen at a clinical site shall comply with the Blood borne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan.

If the exposure occurs in a clinical setting, the policy for the agency should be followed. A student who experiences accidental exposure to blood or body fluids during clinical must notify the clinical preceptor or clinical faculty immediately. An occurrence report is completed according to agency and university policies.

PLEASE NOTE: The student is responsible for the cost of treatment.

If exposure occurs while the student is affiliated with an agency that has no policy to cover such an incident, the student should be treated by the Health Science Campus Student Health and Wellness Center or UTMC Emergency Department.

#### **Accidental Exposure to Communicable Disease**

A student who experiences accidental exposure to a communicable disease during clinical must notify the clinical associate or clinical faculty immediately. They must also follow the clinical site policy for immediate assessment, since rapid assessment for risk is essential. The student is responsible for any cost incurred.

#### **Emergency Procedure for Students in Classroom or Clinical**

If a student becomes ill in the classroom, an immediate assessment should be performed to determine if simple measures will suffice or there is a need for more complex care. The faculty member or a classmate should call 419.383.2600 (or 2600 from a campus phone) if ambulance transport is warranted; the UToledo Police Department will summon "911." A faculty member, staff member, or peer should remain with the student until the health concern is resolved or emergency transport begins. The individual can seek treatment at HSC Family Practice 419.383.5555, their healthcare provider, or the UTMC Emergency Department for interventions. If a student becomes ill or is injured in the clinical setting, they should seek available emergency treatment at the clinical site. If treatment is not available, the clinical faculty member should arrange for student transport to the closest emergency facility or The University of Toledo Medical Center.

### **Emergency Treatment Responsibility for Cost**

The student is responsible for all costs associated with evaluation and treatment following classroom, clinical, or lab illness or injury. The SON, UToledo, and clinical agency do not assume liability for any accident or illness during the student assignment. The clinical agency will make available emergency treatment as required.

Students may utilize the University of Toledo Medical Center and Health Science Campus Student Health and Wellness Center.

### **Reporting Health Problems**

It is the responsibility of each student to inform the clinical faculty and Program Director of any and all health problems that may impact safe clinical performance. The information should be reported the first day of the semester or at the time of occurrence.

### **Healthcare Release**

Students who experience acute illness or injury must provide the School of Nursing with healthcare provider documentation of release before returning to class and clinical. Provider documentation must include the date of absence and the expected return date. Students will be evaluated individually for the ability to provide safe patient care and comply with clinical facility regulations.

The School of Nursing is not responsible for any medical costs the student may incur while enrolled as a student.

### **Responsibility When Illness Occurs**

Students are expected to seek professional health care when illness occurs and to follow directions regarding class and clinical attendance. ***Students are responsible for contacting course lead and faculty for make-up of clinical assignments.***

### **Social Media Statement**

When speaking or writing, students shall be responsible and accurate and shall indicate that they speak as individuals. As scholars, students must remember that the public may judge their professions and the institution by their public statements, including those made on social media. Please review the National Student Nurses Association, 'A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media,' at [https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCSBN\\_SocialMedia.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/public-files/NCSBN_SocialMedia.pdf)

### **Rocket Care Report and Discrimination Resources**

The Rocket Care Report is used to connect UToledo students with assistance to ensure their well-being, and a safe learning environment. Rocket Care Reports can be submitted by any UToledo Community Member (faculty, staff, or student), or a parent/family member.

A link to the referral form can be found at the end of each page in the myUT portal under Initiatives/Report a Concern.

<https://www.utoledo.edu/report/>

### **School of Nursing Policy on Authorship**

Please refer to The University Policy [#3364-71-29](#).

### **Student Evaluation Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide feedback on classroom and clinical experiences, as well as faculty, clinical site, and clinical instructor/preceptor/mentor. Online course evaluations are provided at the end of each semester through Blackboard. Quantitative data is compiled into aggregate reports for program assessment and evaluation. Qualitative remarks are reviewed by course faculty as a means to implement course improvement.

### **Educational Questionnaires**

Periodically, the university seeks feedback about students' educational experiences (e.g., curriculum, student services, quality of Instruction, etc.). As a part of professional responsibility, students are encouraged to participate in these surveys. Effort is made to minimize unnecessary intrusion on student time and to protect student identity.

### **Clinical Sites**

Students have experiences in a variety of health care agencies depending upon the objectives of the course. While assigned to Clinical Agencies, students will not be considered employees of the agency and will not be covered by any Social Security, workers' compensation, or malpractice insurance policy of the Agency. Students will abide by existing clinical rules and regulations of the assigned Clinical Agency.

### **Commencement**

Students apply for graduation online in the myUT portal. Commencement ceremonies are held by UToledo in fall and spring. Traditional caps and gowns are rented or purchased from the university bookstore; orders are placed in advance.

**SECTION 4 - ACADEMIC POLICIES**

## Advanced Standing

### Transfer Student Requirements

It is the policy of the SON Graduate Programs to evaluate courses for which a student requests transfer credit. Such evaluation will occur subsequent to admission. All students who seek to transfer will be held to the published admission requirements. In addition, students seeking transfer credit are subject to the following requirements:

1. Students must submit an official transcript documenting completion of the target course with a 'B' or higher.
2. Courses considered for transfer credit must have been completed within the past three academic years.
3. Students must submit a copy of the syllabus for the course as taken, including course description, objectives, course completion requirements, and a content outline in an organized format. Only copies should be submitted, as material will not be returned to the student.
4. Faculty members who have taught the course at the UToledo SON will review the syllabus and other materials and make a recommendation for accepting or rejecting the course to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
5. The six-year time frame for completion of MSN degree requirements or the seven-year time frame for completion of DNP degree requirements begins with the semester of completion of the earliest course for which transfer credit is approved.
6. The School of Nursing will communicate its recommendation to the College of Graduate Studies by completing the Request for Transfer Credit form. Please note the following requirements for transfer:
  - a) All graduate credits requested for transfer must carry a grade of A, A-, B+, or B. Credit for an S grade may be transferred only if the grading institution verifies, in writing, that the S translates into a grade of B or better. Research hours earned at another university are not transferable toward research hours for a project, thesis, or dissertation.
  - b) Credits earned at another university as part of a completed degree are not transferable.
  - c) Credits taken at a foreign institution are not transferable.
  - d) If a plan of study has been approved, and the course is being used to substitute for a course already listed on the approved plan of study, please submit a Course Substitution Form and a revised plan of study.
7. Transfer of graduate credit is limited to a maximum of one-third of the total number of didactic credits required for the degree.
8. Transfer of graduate credit for certificate programs is limited to a maximum of one-fourth of the total number of credits required for the award of the certificate.

See Transfer Credit to Graduate Degree Policy [#3364-77-06](#) for additional information.

### Military Transfer Credit

Rule 4723-5-12 under the Ohio Administrative Code: For individuals with experience in the armed forces of the United States, or in the national guard or in a reserve component, the program shall have a process in place to:

- (a) Review the individual's military education and skills training;
- (b) Determine whether any of the military education or skills training is substantially equivalent to the curriculum established in Chapter 4723-5 of the Administrative Code;
- (c) Award credit to the individual for any substantially equivalent military education or skills training;

### **Progression**

Students are expected to progress according to their plans of study as arranged with the graduate advisor. Plans of study are established to assure that students will graduate within the required time frame per program and to ensure compliance with prerequisites that faculty have established for courses in the curriculum. Students needing to make changes in plans of study are required to contact the graduate advisor and may also be asked to contact the program director if applicable. Revision of the plan of study may delay graduation and may negatively affect the availability of courses and financial aid.

### **School of Nursing Minimum Course Grade of 'B' for NURS Courses**

The faculty in the SON have established a grade of 'B' as the minimum acceptable grade for all courses with the prefix of NURS. A grade of 'C' is acceptable in INDI 6000. A minimum grade of "B" is acceptable in INDI 8000. A student who earns a grade less than "B" for NURS courses or less than "C" in INDI 6000 or "B" in INDI 8000 cannot progress into courses for which such a course is a prerequisite.

### **Academic Alert**

Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Failure to do so will result in the student being placed on academic probation and notified by the College of Graduate Studies.

### **Repeating Courses in the School of Nursing**

A student who earns a grade of less than 'B' in a NURS course or less than 'C' in INDI 6000 or a "B" in INDI 8000 can repeat such a course once. Students are allowed to repeat up to two courses in which a grade of less than "B" was earned. This policy means that a C, F, W, WP, and WF are not a grade of B; however, retake standards shall not exceed two courses--up to a maximum of 12 credit hours. Both the original and repeated grade will appear on the transcript and will be calculated into the cumulative GPA.

Students who earn a grade of less than "B" in a NURS course are prohibited from taking any courses for which the course is a prerequisite until such a time as the course is repeated with a grade of "B" or better. The intent of such referrals is to outline a plan for success. The student receives a copy of the referral, and a copy is placed in the student's file in the SON Graduate Office.

### **Academic Performance Referral**

The Academic Performance Referral Form is used by the School of Nursing to monitor the progression of students in the graduate programs. Faculty initiates a referral for students who experience academic challenges at midterm. The referral serves as an official notice to students. Students are expected to meet with faculty and follow the recommended actions to ensure successful course progression. A copy or the referral will be placed in the student file.

### **Academic Standards for the College of Graduate Studies**

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (four-point grading system) in graduate course work is required for graduation. Graduate students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 during any semester will be placed on academic probation. Depending on the program, a full-time student on academic probation will have one or at most two semesters (excluding summers) to meet the cumulative GPA standard. A student failing to meet the standard will be subject to dismissal. A part-time student on academic probation will be required to meet the GPA standard after 12 additional credit hours of graduate coursework. A grade of C is the minimum passing grade for graduate courses. Grades of below "C" will continue to be counted in

calculating the cumulative grade point average. Individual programs may offer a specific number of credit hours with earned grades of "C" or below to be repeated one time. Colleges are permitted to establish individual program course retake standards. However, such standards shall not exceed two courses up to a maximum of 12 credit hours. Both the original and repeated grades will appear on the transcript and be calculated into the cumulative GPA. Colleges/departments/degree programs may enact additional coursework grade requirements beyond the minimum standard established by the Graduate Faculty.

Graduate students shall be responsible to consult with the appropriate graduate degree program director for the applicable standards. Grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, D-, F, S, U, WP or WF may be awarded depending on College/program/departmental policies. A limited number of graduate courses earn grades of S (Satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory) upon completion. A grade of S will be allowed for credit toward graduation but is not computed into the grade point average. A grade of U earns no credit and the course must be repeated to earn graduate credit but is not computed in the grade point average.

The grade of PR may be awarded to indicate work in progress and courses with this grade will not be included in the GPA calculation. The grade of 'I' (Incomplete) is assigned only under extraordinary circumstances when unexpected events prevent a student from completing the requirements of the course within the term of enrollment. The student must complete the required work before the end of the following semester (excluding summers) in which the 'I' grade was received; otherwise, the grade will be converted to the grade of F by the Office of the Registrar. The student may initiate a request for an additional semester to complete the work for the grade (excluding summers). The extension is granted upon the approval of the faculty member and the associate dean of the college offering the course. Once the 'I' grade has been converted to F, the student must re-register and take the course again. The grade of 'I' will not be included in the GPA calculation. It is recommended that faculty set specific benchmarks for completion of the course or material each term and regularly assign S, U, or I grades as appropriate instead of awarding a PR. Students may not graduate with a grade of U, I, or PR on their plan of study. Students may not graduate with a grade of I or PR on their transcript. A grade of WP (Withdrawal Passing) or WF (Withdrawal Failing), according to the status of the student at the time of withdrawal, will be assigned to students who withdraw after the university established withdrawal period at the discretion of the instructor. The grade of WP will not be included in the GPA calculation. A grade of WF indicates that a student's work is unsatisfactory (grade of less than C), and will be included in the GPA calculation as a grade of F. Students may repeat courses with grade WF or U subject to the maximum credit hour repeat limitation.

### **Change of Track (Major) in the School of Nursing**

A student requesting a change in track (major) within the same degree must be in good standing with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. A student may not request a change of track (change majors) if they have earned a grade of "C" in an NURS course. Student requesting a change of track must meet with graduate nursing advisor and program director and complete a change in major request.

### **Change in Degree Program**

A student requesting a change in degree program (e.g. DNP to MSN) must be in good standing with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students requesting a change of degree must meet with the graduate nursing advisor and program director, complete a College of Graduate Studies change of degree form, and apply to their desired program.

Admission will be based on the recommendation of the Program Director.

### **Withdrawal from Courses/ Electronic Withdrawal Period for a Grade of W**

Students who decide not to attend, or stop attending, any or all classes for which they have registered must drop a course via the UToledo Portal. Specific drop and withdrawal dates are listed on the University's academic calendar. A withdrawal from a course results in a grade of "W" on the student's transcript. Students are advised to consult with their academic advisor prior to initiating a drop or withdrawal to discuss implications to their plan of study and/or financial aid. Failure to drop a course for which a student has stopped attending may result in a grade of "F." Drop and withdrawal dates are prorated for summer and special session courses that do not meet during the standard start/stop dates within the academic term. Students may only repeat required courses one time after a grade of "W" has been earned.

## Leave of Absence

Students may request a leave of absence for personal, medical, call to active military duty, or other compelling reasons from a degree program after completion of the first term. The student requesting a Leave of Absence must complete the request for leave of absence form and submit it to the SON graduate advisor. Students should consider the potential implications of a leave on such matters as immigration status, health insurance, and loan repayment.

Request for leave will be discussed with the student's program director and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs SON. A student may be granted a three consecutive term (one calendar year) and still remain in good standing with the program. A leave of absence extending beyond three consecutive terms will necessitate a new application to the College of Graduate Studies. Such student will be required to compete for available positions and will not automatically be granted admission. In all circumstances, students are responsible for resolving registration and financial issues in accordance with established [Policy # 3364-77-04](#).

## Independent Study for MSN Students

### NURS 6890

*There may be times that a student may need to complete Independent Study activities to satisfy program requirements. The following details the process and forms used for each graduate degree program.*

Independent Study, an academic course completed outside of the required classroom, clinical, or college laboratory experience provides the learner with an opportunity to pursue an area of interest in depth.

Independent study courses may not be used to substitute for required courses. The independent study course is supervised by a faculty member and approved by the program department chair.

Process: The Contract Form must be completed by the student and approved by the faculty member and the program Department Chair prior to the semester in which the Independent Study is to be conducted.

1. The student will present the plan or idea for Independent Study to a faculty member who agrees to supervise the study.
2. The student and faculty complete The University of Toledo School of Nursing contract form including:
  - A. Course purpose.
  - B. Course objectives developed by the student with faculty guidance and approval.
  - C. Course conduct and implementation.
    - 1) how the objectives will be accomplished (annotated bibliography, clinical experience, directed reading, etc.)
    - 2) if a clinical experience, when and where the learning will occur.
    - 3) means and frequency of communication between student and faculty.
  - D. Evaluation methods specifically stated with assigned percentages for each. Examples: Successful completion of written project, oral or written examinations, conference presentation, nursing systems papers, clinical performance.
  - E. Grading (may be a letter grade or S/U) determined by the faculty member.
  - F. A Master Contract must be completed between The University of Toledo School of Nursing and the precepting facility. A preceptor agreement form must be onfile.
  - G. Course credits as determined by the student and the faculty member according to the Following criteria: One semester credit hour equals four hours of course study and/or clinical experience per week for fifteen weeks.
3. The faculty member is to notify the graduate advisor of the need to add the course to the

semester course schedule.

4. The completed Independent Study Contract Form is placed in the student's permanent file.



**The University of Toledo School of Nursing Graduate Nursing Programs Independent Study  
NURS6890 Contract Form**

Direction: The faculty directing an independent study course completes this form, and the student enrolled in the course, then submits form to the Program Director, Graduate Nursing Programs School of Nursing. If additional space is needed, attach a separate sheet.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Rocket #: R \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work#: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester/Year during which study will be conducted: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Credits: \_\_\_\_\_ (S.H.) Faculty: \_\_\_\_\_

Purpose of the Course: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Course Objectives: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Grading Plan: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name of Preceptor (if appropriate):

Agency:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature

Faculty Signature

Approval: \_\_\_\_\_

Department Chair, Graduate Nursing Programs

## **Graduation**

All MSN degree requirements for graduate programs must be completed within six years. All requirements for a graduate certificate must be completed within four years. All DNP degree requirements for doctoral programs must be completed within seven years. A student must complete the required courses and semester credit hours required for the degree and major. A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (using a four-point grading system) in graduate course work is required for graduation. Students may not graduate with a grade of U, IN, or PR on their plan of study. Students are required to be registered for a minimum of one graduate credit hour in the semester he/she applies to graduate.

A student who has compelling circumstances that may warrant an extension of one year must complete the Request for Time Extension and Course Recertification Form and submit it to the graduate advisor who will present the request to the chair or program director, graduate advisor, and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The completed form with all approval signatures and supporting documentation is returned to the College of Graduate Studies Office for review and final approval. There is a per course fee assessed for each course approved for recertification. Fees are applied to the student account after the Request for Time Extension Course Recertification form has been approved. Notification will be sent via university email to both the student and advisor.

Students must complete the online graduation application and survey. The College of Graduate Studies will verify completion of degree requirements for all graduation applicants. Verification of program completion for national certification applications will be completed after the degree is posted by the College of Graduate Studies. If needed, additional verification paperwork should be sent to [CONGradMat@utoledo.edu](mailto:CONGradMat@utoledo.edu). **Students should allow a minimum of 45 days for this process.**

The School of Nursing participates in the University of Toledo's commencement exercises in the fall and spring terms. Summer graduates are invited to participate in either the fall or spring commencement ceremony. The names of the summer graduates will be included in the fall commencement program.

## **Official Transcripts**

Requests for official transcripts should be submitted directly to the Registrar's Office at The University of Toledo. University of Toledo students can request their transcripts through Rocket Solutions Central or MyUToledo portal. Transcripts will not be released if there is an outstanding account balance.

### **Academic Due Process and Appeal of a Final Course Grade**

Please see CON Policy #[3364-82-05](#) on academic due process and appeal of a final course grade.

### **Appeal of Disciplinary Action and Due Process**

Please see CON Policy #[3364-82-06](#) about the appeal of disciplinary action and due process.

**SECTION 5 - STUDENT PARTICIPATION ON COMMITTEES & ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Student Organizations**

Students are encouraged to participate in any of the student organizations. Students are not expected to miss class or clinical to participate. Please contact the chair of the organization you would like to join. Below is a list of the organizations.

#### **Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) Nursing Honor Society**

- The purposes of the organization are to recognize superior achievement and leadership in professional nursing, foster high professional standards, encourage creative work, and strengthen commitment to the ideals and purposes of the profession.
- Graduates of the SON are encouraged to join the Alumni Association. Graduates can help their alumni association by providing stronger relationships with our community and clinical partners and by being ambassadors for our programs.

### **Graduate Advising**

Appointments with the graduate advisor may be made by calling the support staff in the Office of Student Services at 419.383.5810.

#### **Guidelines for Developing Formal Plan of Study**

Prior to matriculation, students must meet with the graduate advisor for the purpose of developing a plan of study (POS). It is the student's responsibility to meet all requirements for the degree and major.

Students are expected to discuss desired changes in their plan of study with the graduate advisor and respective program director. Changes to the plan of study may affect availability of courses, delivery method of courses, financial aid, and length of degree program.

Please note that students matriculate into a specific major in the MSN and DNP programs and are permitted to take courses within the major. Should a student wish to take courses outside the approved major, permission from course faculty, program directors, and graduate advisor is necessary. Permission is not guaranteed. NURS courses are not available to non-degree seeking guest students.

#### **Minimum Continuous Enrollment**

Graduate Students who have completed their course work and are working on their project, thesis, and/or capstone are using university facilities and services (i.e., the library, health services, computer services, laboratories, consult with faculty, apply for graduation, etc.) must register for a minimum of one graduate credit hour each semester. Students who do not enroll for any course work for more than two academic semesters (excluding summer) will have their matriculation closed and will be required to apply for readmission. Students who apply for graduation during the summer term must also be registered for a minimum of one graduate credit hour.

#### **Enrollment Status**

The enrollment status of graduate students is determined by the number of hours enrolled in credit bearing courses during a semester or during an entire summer term. The university recognizes full-time status as enrolled for a minimum of 9 or more semester hours in credit bearing courses. A part-time graduate student is enrolled for fewer than 9 semester hours in credit bearing courses. Hours taken for audit, ALI, and undergraduate courses cannot be used to meet the graduate hour requirements.

**SECTION 6 - ACADEMIC RESOURCES**

### **Computer Lab Locations**

Computers are available on Collier 2nd floor, rooms 2060 and 2010, and 3rd floor, room 3414, and Mulford Library rooms 408 and 506 on the 6th floor for student use on a first-come, first-serve basis.

**SECTION 7 - FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

### **Graduate Student Scholarships**

Funds may be available for Graduate Student Scholarships. To be eligible students must be admitted as regular status and in good academic standing. Scholarships based on financial need must have a FAFSA on file. Private scholarships are based on donor criteria. Students apply via an online application that can be found at <http://www.utoledo.edu/financialaid/scholarships/>. Students wishing to use their scholarship for summer enrollment must complete a summer aid application. If a student is filing a FAFSA, it must be completed and accepted before the summer aid application can be processed. In addition, if a student is selected for verification, the verification must be complete before the summer aid application can be processed. Scholarships cannot exceed the estimated cost of attendance.

### **Travel Support**

All graduate students enrolled at the University of Toledo are automatically members of the Graduate Student Association and may be eligible to apply for travel funding. See information on [Graduate Student Association website](#).

**SECTION 8 - APRN CLINICAL PLACEMENT REQUIREMENTS**

### **Requirements for Clinical Placement**

All students in the BSN to DNP, MSN Advanced Practice and Post-Graduate Certificate programs must hold an active, unrestricted, unencumbered license as a Registered Nurse in the state of Ohio or Michigan. It is recommended that students obtain both an Ohio and Michigan RN license to expedite clinical placement. Students must maintain this licensure throughout the course of study.

Students may not start clinical experiences until all required compliance documentation has been submitted and verified. All documents must be kept updated in order to continue in clinical experiences throughout the academic year – **this is the students' responsibility. If any compliance item expires, the student will no longer be able to continue in the clinical site IN ANY CAPACITY until compliance is verified.** The SON does not provide copies of medical information (HIPPA protected).

### **Clinical Placement Process for APRN students**

The clinical placement process begins the semester prior to the first clinical course, depending on each student's plan of study. Identification of clinical preceptors and clinical sites is a shared responsibility between the student and the program, with assistance available from faculty and designated clinical placement coordinators.

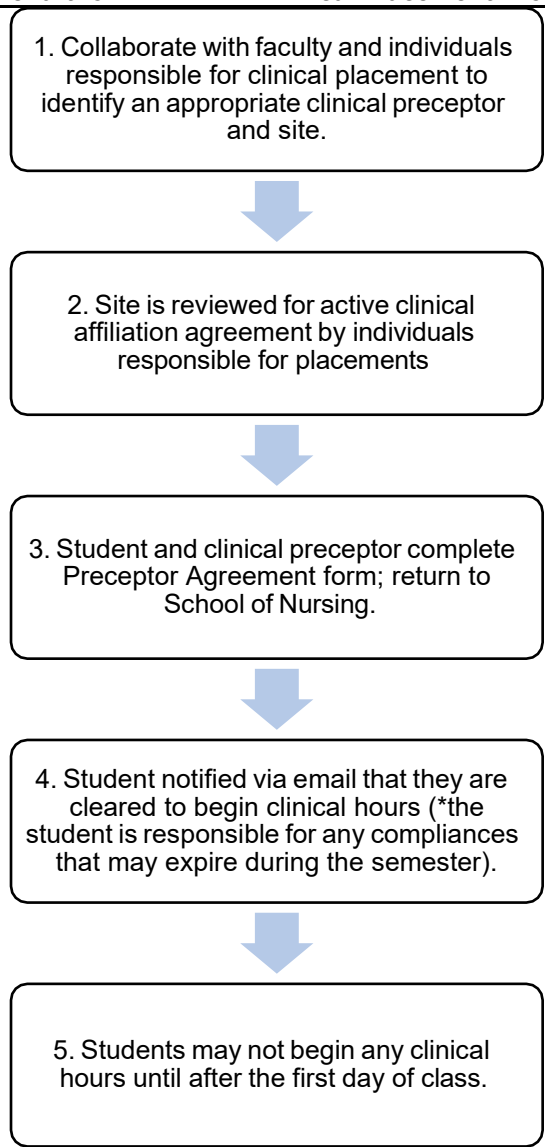
Consistent with the National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF, 2022), students must complete clinical learning experiences that are guided, comprehensive, and provide sufficient breadth and depth to achieve program outcomes. Clinical preceptors may include licensed APRNs and/or physicians (not physician assistants). Whenever possible, each semester should include a portion of clinical hours with an APRN preceptor, ensuring alignment with role-specific competencies.

To maintain professional boundaries and academic integrity, it is not appropriate for a student to use a direct supervisor, spouse/first-degree relative, personal healthcare provider, or employer as a preceptor. If a student completes clinical hours at their place of employment, those hours must represent faculty-guided learning experiences that are distinct from their employment responsibilities. This practice is supported by NTF (2022), AACN Essentials (2021), and CCNE accreditation standards, all of which emphasize role clarity, independence, and avoidance of conflicts of interest in clinical education.

Course faculty, in consultation with the track coordinator and program director, approve all new preceptors and clinical sites. If an active Clinical Affiliation Agreement is not in place, a Clinical Site Contract will be initiated by the clinical placement coordinator. The School of Nursing collaborates with the University of Toledo legal department to establish a binding contract between the clinical site and the University. Because this process may take up to 90 days or longer, students will not be permitted to begin clinical hours until the formal contract has been executed. Students will be notified by the program office once the contract has been finalized.

After approval of the preceptor and site, the student is responsible for contacting the preceptor to discuss a mutually agreeable schedule and initiating the [APRN Preceptor Agreement Form fillable form.pdf](#). This form must be completed and signed by both the student and the preceptor prior to beginning any clinical experience. The signed agreement must be submitted electronically to [APRNplacements@utoledo.edu](mailto:APRNplacements@utoledo.edu) to allow entry of the preceptor and site into Typhon, the clinical tracking system. Students are encouraged to retain a copy of the completed form for their records.

### **Flowchart for ALL APRN Clinical Placement Process**



## Planning and Documenting Clinical Experiences

### 1. **Enrollment Requirement**

Students may engage in clinical experiences only during semesters in which they are officially enrolled in a clinical course. All required clinical hours must be completed within the dates of the registered course. Failure to complete hours within this timeframe will result in a course grade of "Incomplete (I)."

### 2. **Clinical Scheduling**

To maximize learning opportunities, students are encouraged to schedule full clinical days whenever possible. Clinical days are arranged according to the preceptor's schedule and availability.

### 3. **Communication with Faculty**

Students are required to keep clinical faculty informed of their clinical schedules. Any changes should be communicated to faculty in advance whenever possible. Clinical hours logs and Typhon entries must be updated regularly and signed weekly by the clinical preceptor. Students are strongly encouraged to keep a personal copy of their clinical hours log.

### 4. **Absence and Professional Conduct**

Students must notify their clinical preceptor if they are unable to attend a scheduled clinical experience. Failure to report to the clinical site as scheduled is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in disciplinary action.

### 5. **Clinical Documentation**

All patient encounters must be documented in Typhon, accurately reflecting the time spent in the clinical setting. Weekly data entry is strongly recommended to ensure accuracy and to allow timely review by clinical faculty. Students are responsible for the Typhon access fee.

### 6. **Faculty Clinical Site Visits**

Clinical faculty will conduct site visits, either in person or virtually. During these visits, students may be asked to:

- Demonstrate history-taking and physical examination skills.
- Discuss clinical reasoning and determination of differential diagnoses.
- Identify appropriate laboratory or diagnostic tests.
- Describe management plans, health risks, patient education, and follow-up recommendations.
- Demonstrate therapeutic communication with patients and/or families.
- Accurately document, code, and bill the encounter, and provide an appropriate report to the clinical preceptor.

## **Guidelines for Clinical Preceptors**

The programs may utilize interprofessional team members to provide direct clinical teaching appropriate to the range of experiences needed to meet course and program objectives. This interprofessional mix is intended to enhance students' collaborative practice competencies. However, in accordance with the National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF, 2022), students must complete the majority of their clinical experiences with preceptors who hold certification and expertise in the same population-focused area of practice as the student's program of study.

### **Appropriateness of Credentials**

- FNP Students: Family Nurse Practitioner students must complete the majority of their precepted hours with licensed and certified FNPs or physicians practicing in family or primary care across the lifespan. While some interprofessional experiences may include other providers (e.g., PAs, clinical pharmacists, other APRNs), these should not comprise the majority of training.
- PMHNP Students: Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner students must precept with licensed and certified PMHNPs or psychiatrists. Training in mental health settings requires supervision by clinicians credentialed in psychiatric care. PMHNP students cannot precept with FNPs, and FNP students cannot count PMHNP experiences toward their required population-focused hours, as these placements do not align with population-specific competencies outlined by the NTF (2022), AACN Essentials (2021), or CCNE standards.

### **Definition of Clinical Preceptor**

The clinical preceptor must be appropriately licensed, credentialed, and practicing in their role, with at least one year of clinical experience. The preceptor's area of practice must be clearly relevant to meeting the objectives of the NP program or track.

### **Preceptor and Site Approval**

All preceptors and sites must be approved by course faculty in consultation with the program director. An active Clinical Affiliation Agreement must be in place before any clinical experiences may begin. Students may not start clinical rotations until the Preceptor Agreement Form has been completed, signed, and formally approved by the program office.

### **Role of the Faculty Member**

1. Assist students in identifying appropriate preceptors and clinical sites.
2. Guide students in establishing course-specific learning goals.
3. Provide the Preceptor Packet for orientation.
4. Approve planned activities with the preceptor to ensure alignment with course objectives.
5. Monitor and evaluate student progress, with ongoing communication between faculty and preceptor.
6. Validate minimum clinical competencies through site visits, evaluations, and documentation review.
7. Complete all required program documentation before course grades are due.

### **Role of the Clinical Preceptor**

1. Review the Preceptor Packet and Preceptor Agreement Form.
2. Discuss student learning needs in relation to course objectives.
3. Provide access to appropriate patient care opportunities.
4. Supervise and guide clinical learning consistent with student objectives.
5. Provide interprofessional collaboration opportunities as available.
6. Offer regular feedback to both the student and faculty.
7. Validate and sign weekly clinical hours logs and/or Typhon records.
8. Submit a written evaluation of the student's clinical performance at the conclusion of the rotation.

### **Role of the Student**

1. Identify personal learning goals aligned with course objectives.
2. Provide the preceptor with the Preceptor Packet, including course information, contact information, and evaluation forms.
3. Maintain professionalism and uphold ethical standards in all clinical interactions.
4. Communicate regularly with both the preceptor and faculty.
5. Complete Typhon documentation within seven (7) days of the encounter, ensuring accuracy.
6. Seek and apply feedback to advance clinical competency.
7. Complete all required evaluations and provide constructive feedback to the preceptor.

### **Clinical and Typhon**

- All clinical hours must be completed within the semester in which the student is registered for the course.
- All clinical experiences and patient encounters must be documented in the Typhon clinical tracking system.
- Students will:
  - Receive an orientation to Typhon.
  - Register and pay a one-time fee for access.
  - Receive login credentials via email following orientation.
- Students are responsible for tracking their required clinical hours each semester.
- All encounters should be logged into Typhon within 7 days of the initial encounter.

### **Clinical Hours**

- The clinical hours listed for each course represent the minimum required hours.
- Direct patient care hours are defined as hours in which students provide clinical care to individuals and families in one of the six NP population-focused areas.
  - These hours do not include: skills lab practice, physical assessment practice, or community projects unless they involve direct patient care.
- Clinical experiences must be varied and distributed to prepare students for the populations they serve, and may include:
  - Telehealth experiences- with limited hours depending on track
  - International direct care experiences
- Simulation is recommended to supplement clinical learning, particularly for high-risk/low-frequency events.
  - Simulation hours may only be counted in addition to the minimum direct patient care clinical hours (NTF, 2022).
- Final determination of clinical competency rests with faculty. Students may be required to complete more than the minimum hours if needed to demonstrate competency.

### **Grades and Credits for Clinical Courses**

Students entering the clinical setting must adhere to the following requirements:

1. To receive credit, students must successfully complete both the theory and practicum requirements during the semester of enrollment.
2. A grade of “C” or lower in a clinical course requires the student to repeat the course.
3. Faculty must receive written documentation verifying completion of all practicum requirements before a final grade can be assigned.
4. Required practicum hours must be completed within the registered semester. Failure to do so may result in course failure or an incomplete.

**SECTION 9 – MSN CAPSTONE: FIELD EXPERIENCE, COMPREHENSIVE EXAM, THESIS**

## **MSN Capstone**

Students must complete a Thesis, Capstone Seminar, or Comprehensive Exam as the capstone experience for the MSN degree. Selection of the capstone experience will be made in consultation with the faculty and the Graduate Advisor. Capstone Seminar may be available and are subject to faculty-specified prerequisites in addition to those listed in the Bulletin and Handbook of the Graduate Student. Students must receive written permission from the faculty conducting the capstone seminar prior to registration.

### **The Capstone Seminar**

#### *Capstone Seminar Placement in Plan of Study:*

The prerequisite for the Capstone Seminar is NURS 6910 with a minimum grade of B and enrollment by permission of course faculty. NURS5220 can be taken as variable credit. One credit hour may be taken concurrently with NURS6910 with the approval of Capstone Faculty. Course faculty reserves the right to require specific prerequisites per the course content. Program capstone experience that integrates nursing theory, research, and practice to fulfill the requirement of the Master of Science in Nursing Program. The Capstone Seminar is limited to two consecutive semesters of the Master Student's final three semesters, with the approval of the Capstone Faculty. The capstone project is designed to be a culmination of the student's graduate work.

#### *Enrollment Process for a Capstone Seminar:*

Students who are interested in a Capstone Seminar must contact the faculty member to request permission to enroll. Enrollment is limited.

#### *Responsibility for Expenses:*

There may be expenses involved with a Capstone Seminar above and beyond the tuition and fees for the course. For example, students have accompanied faculty members on medical missions to underserved areas. For these types of experiences, students must adhere to the Global Health Program Policy. The School of Nursing is not responsible for any expenses involved with such an experience. Funding may be available through external sources. Students contemplating such an experience must contact faculty members to determine availability of such funding. There may be additional health requirements in certain circumstances. A U.S. Passport may also be required.

#### *Grading of the Capstone Seminar:*

The Capstone Seminar is graded as satisfactory/unsatisfactory. Students are responsible for such evaluation strategies as are published in the syllabus.

## **The Comprehensive Examination**

### **Goal and Purpose**

The Comprehensive Examination is a culminating capstone option for MSN students. Its purpose is to demonstrate:

- Mastery of advanced nursing knowledge.
- The ability to analyze, synthesize, and apply knowledge acquired throughout the program of study.

- Integration of nursing theory, research, and practice to address issues that confront master's-prepared nurses.

The exam is not a re-test of individual courses; instead, it evaluates the student's ability to integrate and apply content across the curriculum. Essay responses must reflect mastery, critical analysis, and independent thinking.

### **Content and Structure**

- Exam questions may cover content from any course in the MSN program.
- At least one question addresses the student's major clinical and functional role (e.g., theory, research, pathophysiology, policy).
- Additional questions may address theory, research, leadership, or healthcare policy.
- Students may be asked to answer two or more questions. Depending on the exam, choice of questions may or may not be provided.

### **Timeline**

- Students must take the Comprehensive Examination in their final semester.
- All prior coursework must be completed. If a student has an Incomplete, it must be resolved with faculty documentation of a passing grade before registration for NURS 5980.
- The exam date is announced within the first two weeks of the semester. Students must sit for the exam on the scheduled date and time.

### **Testing Procedure**

- Students must be enrolled in NURS 5980 during the semester of the exam.
- The exam is administered in a designated testing center on the Health Science Campus.
- Students at a distance may request an approved off-site testing center, with prior approval from the course coordinator. Any associated fees are the student's responsibility.
- The exam is completed in Blackboard with Respondus Lockdown Browser and Webcam.
- Students have four (4) hours to complete the exam.
- Notes, books, electronic devices, and phones are not permitted. Proctors provide pencils and paper for rough work, which are collected at the end of the exam.

### **Grading**

- Exams are evaluated by a minimum of three graduate faculty members blinded to student identity.
- A grading rubric guides scoring.
- The exam is graded Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U).
- To achieve a "Satisfactory":
  - Content must incorporate theory, sciences, research, and practice.

- Responses must demonstrate analysis, synthesis, and application of knowledge with relevant references.
- Writing must be clear, grammatically correct, and well organized.
- Students who receive an Unsatisfactory must retake NURS 5980 the next semester. A second “Unsatisfactory” results in dismissal from the program.

### **Preparation Strategies**

- Begin studying several months in advance, ideally the semester prior.
- Review all program coursework, notes, papers, and exams.
- Summarize and synthesize knowledge across courses.
- Practice writing essay-style responses on a computer.
- Develop practice exam questions and draft answers.
- Use study groups or independent study according to personal learning style.
- Focus on integration and application of knowledge rather than memorization.
- Maintain self-care (adequate sleep, healthy eating, stress management) during preparation.

## **Thesis Process & Procedures**

### **Thesis Committee**

The thesis committee is responsible for guiding the student through the development of a proposal and thesis, evaluating and assuring scientific merit, and counseling regarding the student’s progress. The Chair and all committee members are responsible for providing feedback to the student and other committee members in a timely manner (2 weeks from time paper was submitted).

### **Chair of Committee**

The committee chair serves as major contact for completion of the thesis. The thesis committee chair must hold full graduate faculty membership in the University of Toledo College of Graduate Studies.

1. Validates that Graduate School requirements are met.
2. Selects appropriate committee members in collaboration with student:
  - At least one committee member must be knowledgeable about the selected conceptual framework.
  - One committee member must be knowledgeable about the method of analysis.
  - At least one committee member must have expertise in the content area.
3. Carries major responsibility for ensuring overall validity and scientific merit of the thesis.
4. Arbitrates differences of opinion among committee members outside presence of student.
5. Conducts meetings of the thesis committee.
6. Determines that student has received appropriate statistical consultation, as appropriate, and understands statistics used for data analysis.
7. Counsels student regarding preparation for thesis defense.
8. Counsels student regarding decision if the student has not made satisfactory progress toward completion of the thesis.
9. Carries major responsibility for determining that final draft of the thesis meets the requirements of content and proper grammar and formatting.
10. Oversees completion of required School of Nursing and Graduate School forms. (See Thesis Form Protocol).

### Committee Members

1. Assures quality, clarity and accuracy of thesis.
2. Assures scientific merit of proposal and thesis.
3. Works with committee and student to promote student achievement.
4. Serves as content and/or methodology expert on committee.
5. Approves thesis proposal prior to IRB submission.
6. Resolves disagreements among thesis committee members prior to discussions/meeting with student.
7. Signs appropriate forms as designated by the School of Nursing and University of Toledo College of Graduate Studies.
8. Participates in defense examination. (NOTE: All members of the committee must be present before the presentation may begin).

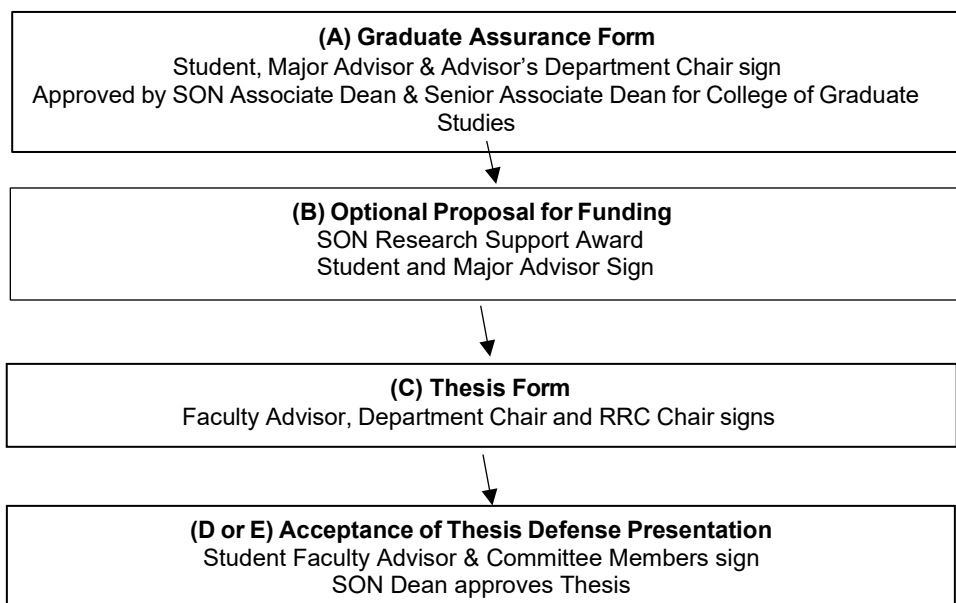
### Student Responsibilities

1. Student is ultimately responsible for his/her own thesis.
2. Assumes responsibility for following thesis guidelines, meeting deadlines, making appointments, editing the manuscript, and the timely progress of the study.
3. Registers for appropriate number of thesis credits each semester.
4. Develops objectives for research each semester. Faculty will use the objectives to determine grade (S/U). An unsatisfactory grade will be earned if no progress is made.
5. Selects the thesis chair and committee with assistance of chair/major advisor.
6. Seeks approval of major advisor/chair prior to distribution of drafts to other committee members.
7. Seeks statistical consultation as appropriate before final approval of proposal if thesis uses a quantitative methodology.
8. Seeks writing/editing consultation as needed.
9. Completes work in a timely manner.
10. Provides committee members with typed copies of manuscript at least two weeks before feedback is expected.
11. Provides the Graduate School representative with a copy of the thesis at least four weeks prior to the defense. Acceptance of Thesis form, date, time and place must accompany the final draft.
12. Completes School of Nursing and University of Toledo College of Graduate Studies forms and obtains signatures as required.
13. Reviews the ETD website for Health Science Campus and instructions for reloading documents to Ohio LINK and ProQuest.
14. Uploads thesis to OhioLink by posted deadline before uploading to ProQuest.
15. Uploads placeholder (NOT the actual thesis) to ProQuest UMI and any associated fees by the posted deadline.

### College of Graduate Studies Representative

A representative of the College of Graduate Studies is appointed by the Senior Associate Dean of the College of Graduate Studies to attend each thesis defense. The representative has the responsibility of judging whether the student has been adequately and fairly examined and whether the responsibilities of the committee, the College of Graduate Studies, and the University of Toledo have been met. The representative is required to determine whether the examination conforms to the procedures, policies, and standards set forth by the College of Graduate Studies.

Thesis Forms Protocol



↓

**(F) Report of Thesis Examination**  
Examination Committee Members & Graduate School representative sign

↓

**(G or H) Final Approval of Thesis**  
Student, Faculty Advisor & Committee sign  
Examination Committee, SON Associate Dean, SON Dean & College of Graduate  
Studies Dean Sign

↓

The University of Toledo IRB Final Report (DH RP Website)  
**Faculty Advisor signs**

## Thesis Research Overview and Process

Prerequisites NURS 6910: Nursing Research and Practice Application to fulfill the research requirement of the Master's Program. The required three credit hours may be repeated and divided across semesters. Only three credit hours are applicable for the degree but multiple credits may be needed. The thesis may be defined as part of faculty program of research, scholarly inquiry, or clinical practice.

### Guidelines for Process

All Graduate forms mentioned are available from the myUToledo portal or by entering the following website into your browser:

<http://www.utoledo.edu/graduate/currentstudents/academicprogramforms/index.html>

1. Select a graduate research advisor and two additional School of Nursing faculty members for your Academic Advisory Committee. Your major advisor can assist you in accessing expert faculty consultants for your committee. Major advisors must hold full membership on the Graduate Faculty in the University of Toledo College of Graduate Studies.
  - A. If you are doing a quantitative study, you will need access to expert consultation on quantitative methodology for data collection and statistical analysis. There may be a student cost associated for this consultation
  - B. If you are doing a qualitative study, you will need access to expert consultation on qualitative methodology for data collection and analysis. There may be a student cost associated for this consultation
2. Discuss the publication agreement with your major advisor and have potential committee members sign the form.
3. Complete the [UToledo GRAD](#) Form and obtain the appropriate signatures. Submit the form to the graduate nursing advisor in the School of Nursing. The program chair and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Research in the School of Nursing will sign and submit the form to the Dean of the College of Graduate studies for approval and filing in Graduate Studies.
4. Once the GRAD form has been submitted and NURS 6910 is completed, the student is eligible to register for NURS 6990, Thesis Research. Three credit hours of thesis are required. Consult with the graduate research advisor to determine the number of credit hours for registration.
5. Use the thesis guidelines for Chapters 1, 2, and 3 included in this handbook to guide the proposal. Also, use the current edition of the [Format and \(Style Guidelines of the Graduate School of the University of Toledo\)](#) and current edition of the [APA Publication Manual 7<sup>th</sup> Edition](#).
6. The major advisor must approve the proposal prior to submitting the document to committee members for review and comment.
7. Always allow the major advisor and committee members two weeks for review and feedback on submitted documents.
8. Plan on revisions all along the way. Students are expected to make numerous significant revisions in the proposal. Plan time for revisions on the finished document as well.
9. When approved by the major advisor, schedule a meeting with the Academic Advising Committee to discuss the proposal. Obtain and complete the SON Approval of Proposal Signature Form. Once all committee members approve the proposal, student may proceed to secure the Research Review Committee (RRC) and the University IRB approval.
10. Students should review the following information from the University of Toledo Research and Grants Administration as they prepare for IRB approval:
  - "University Institutional Review Board Procedures and Deadlines"
  - "University Requirements for Research Involving Human Subjects or Related Materials"
11. For research that includes data collection from human subjects, submit the required documents to the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) through the major advisor. The major advisor is identified as principal investigator on IRB forms. If student will be collecting data from subjects in an agency other than the University of Toledo, student will need to complete IRB approval procedures in that institution before they obtain University of Toledo – IRB approval. Plan adequate time, because delays can be considerable!
12. Once student has secured all required IRB approvals, they may proceed with data collection.

- This step always takes longer than expected, so student should anticipate delays as they develop a timeline and schedule.
13. Complete the research procedures of data collection and analysis, then write a draft of Chapters 4 and 5 using the School of Nursing Guidelines.
  14. Submit a draft of the entire thesis to the major advisor, allowing two weeks for review and feedback. Revise as necessary. After approval from the major advisor, submit a draft to committee members for review and comments.
  15. Schedule a meeting with the committee, allowing two weeks for reading.
  16. Review information about the defense process, [Thesis and Dissertation](#).
  17. Take the typed form, Acceptance of Thesis for Defense, to the committee meeting. If thesis is approved, the committee members will sign the form and set the date and time for the defense.
  18. Take the signed form to the program support staff. Notify the support staff of the date and time to schedule the defense. Be sure to notify the support staff of equipment needed to present your defense. Support staff will arrange the room for the defense and complete necessary forms.
  19. After the thesis is approved, submit a final draft of the document to the UToledo College of Graduate Studies Health Science Campus office along with the signed form, Acceptance of Thesis for Defense. Student must also provide information on the date, time, and place for the defense.
  20. Four weeks must be allowed between the submission of the tentative draft of the thesis in the Graduate School Office and the defense. The Assistant to the Senior Associate Dean of the Graduate School requires four weeks to review the document in the University of Toledo Graduate School Office for adherence to the University of Toledo [Format Style and Guidelines](#). The Assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School will provide two signature forms that are completed at the defense: Final Approval of Thesis and The University of Toledo Report of the Thesis Examination for the Degree of Master of Science in Nursing. Please refer to the Thesis & Dissertation deadlines posted on the College of Graduate Studies website. Students are advised to confirm deadlines for submission to avoid delays in thesis progression.
  21. Schedule a defense at a time when all committee members can meet. Plan a two-hour block of time. Presentation should be 35-40 minutes with 15-20 minutes for questions. The second hour is scheduled for time to meet with the committee, as needed.
  22. Provide the major advisor with two copies of the final draft and one copy to each committee member prior to the defense. The major advisor will send one copy to the College of Graduate Studies Graduate Faculty representative appointed to be observer for the defense.
  23. Following successful defense of thesis, submit the following items and signed forms to the Assistant to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.
    - A. Report of the Thesis Examination for the Degree of Master of Science in Nursing.
    - B. Final Approval of Thesis.
  24. The thesis must be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies in electronic format.
  25. Review the [ETD website](#) for Health Science Campus and instructions for uploading documents to OhioLink and ProQuest.
  26. Upload thesis to [OhioLink](#) by posted deadlines before uploading to ProQuest.
  27. Upload placeholder (Not actual thesis) to ProQuest UMI and any associated fees by the posted deadline.

## TIME FRAME FOR COMPLETION OF THESIS

Develop timetable, working backwards from the projected defense date. It takes about 1 and 1/2 years to go from start to finish! Student may need more time for IRB approvals, data collection, data analysis, and final writing than is shown in the example. If student projects a need for more time at the end, they should start earlier than in the example. Complete the proposal and secure IRB approvals, by the end of spring semester, so student can begin data collection in the summer.

### **ALWAYS ALLOW TWO WEEKS FOR FACULTY READING AND FEEDBACK**

#### Sample Plan for Completing a Thesis for Spring Graduation

1st Semester:

Select Major Advisor and Academic Advisory Committee

Complete and submit:

- Graduate Research Advisory Committee Approval & Assurances Form
- Identify Project/Thesis topic with Major Advisor Begin to collect relevant literature

2nd Semester:

- Develop initial proposal (Chapters 1-3 through NURS 6910) Submit to Major Advisor for feedback
- Identify Theoretical Framework Submit Author Agreement

3rd Semester:

- Complete proposal
- Submit proposal to Major Advisor for approval
- Following approval of Chapters 1-3, schedule meeting with Committee Meet with Committee to review proposal
- Make revisions suggested by Committee Submit Proposal Approval Form With approval of Major Advisor, obtain letters of support if needed
- Submit documents to SON Research Review Committee (RRC) for approval (Allow 3-5 days)
- Submit documents to outside agency if needed (Allow 4-6 weeks)

4th Semester:

- Month 1:
  - Data analysis (thesis) or evaluation (project outcomes). Allow adequate time for data entry. Analyze data.
  - Write Chapters 4 and 5. Revise Chapters 1, 2, and 3.
- Month 2:
  - Final draft of thesis or project to Major Advisor.
  - Meet with Major Advisor. Thesis or project initially approved. Send copies to Committee for approval.
- Month 3:
  - Committee meets with you for final approval. Make revisions recommended by Committee.
  - Obtain signatures on the appropriate acceptance forms; University of Toledo Acceptance of the Thesis for Defense. Refer to College of Graduate Studies Master Thesis and Dissertation deadlines.
- Month 4:
  - Prepare for defense.
  - Give copies of thesis or project to Advisory Committee members. Complete additional editing after appointment.
  - Defend successfully.
  - Make changes to final copy as directed by Academic Advisory Committee.
  - Submit signed Report of Thesis Examination for the Degree of Master of Science in Nursing to College of Graduate Studies Health Science Campus office. Get signatures on Final Approval Form.

- Month 5:
  - Distribute copies.
  - Submit completed form, Final Approval of Thesis, with copies for the Graduate School Office.
  - Complete IRB Final Report form and attach copy of abstract and submit to Major Advisor.

**SECTION 10 - DNP PROGRAM**

### **Description of Practice Hours**

Practice hours in the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) curriculum provide integrative experiences that prepare students to apply evidence, lead change, and improve health outcomes.

- Aligned with AACN Essentials (2021), CCNE Standards (2018), and NTF Criteria (2022):
  - Hours include both direct and indirect care (e.g., leadership, quality improvement, informatics, policy, interprofessional collaboration).
  - Experiences are population-focused, competency-based, and faculty-guided.
  - Documentation of hours is required to demonstrate attainment of program outcomes.

### **Professional Standards**

- Students must wear professional dress and a University of Toledo School of Nursing nametag, prominently displayed, during all practicum activities.

### **DNP Program Progression**

|   |
|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Admission to the Program</b></p> <p>Upon admission, applicants meet with the Graduate Advisor to develop a <b>plan of study</b>. Any changes to the plan must be discussed and pre-approved by the Graduate Advisor.</p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Program Orientation</b></p> <p>All newly admitted students are required to complete a <b>mandatory program orientation</b>.</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Program Progression</b></p> <p>Students are expected to complete courses in sequential order as outlined in their plan of study. Any deviation from the original plan requires discussion with the DNP Program Director and Graduate Advisor.</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DNP Project</b></p> <p>Please refer to the guidelines for project development and proposal defense.</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DNP Project Committee</b></p> <p>A DNP Project Committee will be formed under the leadership of the DNP Project Chairperson. The Chair and DNP Program Director will work in tandem to identify DNP Project Committee members aligned with the project.</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>DNP Project</b></p> <p>NURS8010 DNP Project 1 (Proposal), NURS8020 DNP Project 2 (Implementation), and NURS8030 (Evaluation and Dissemination) are required to complete the DNP Project. The designated DNP Project Chairperson will facilitate students in selection of experiences appropriate for the project. Each course has a required 180 hours of clinical hours.</p>                                   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Final DNP Project Defense &amp; Graduation</b></p> <p>Students must refer to the university guidelines for applying for graduation. Students must be registered for NURS 8030 (DNP Project 3) the semester in which they graduate. Students in the Nurse Executive (NE) track take NURS 8030 (DNP Project 3) a year before they graduate. The NE track finish their last year with the 3 Executive courses.</p> |

### **DNP Program Final Defense and Graduation Checklist**

- Complete Application for Graduation for the College of Graduate Studies. Apply online through the [myUToledo portal](#). Use the "Apply to Graduate" link located in the My Records section of the Toolkit menu.
- Review the DNP Project Final Defense Procedures
- After the defense, revise document as directed by DNP Project Committee and submit to Project Chair for final approval. Revise if needed.
- Submit final version of DNP project to the [Sigma Repository](#):
  - Create an account
  - Post under the category: Open Dissemination Materials – Group and Individuals
  - Post under the group titled: University of Toledo School of Nursing, DNP Doctoral Papers
- Once DNP Project Chair has approved the revised version, submit electronic copy of final version in .pdf format to DNP Program Director, Chair, and to all Committee members and obtain signatures on the [Approval of Project form](#). Once signed, the original Approval of

Project form should be given to the Graduate Advisor and a copy should be given to the Program Director.

- Submit [Final Defense and Graduation Checklist form](#) to the DNP Program Director.

## DNP Project Guidelines

### Final Project Process & Procedures

#### Overview

The DNP Project represents the culminating scholarly work of the program and demonstrates the student's ability to apply evidence, translate knowledge into practice, and positively impact outcomes for individuals, families, populations, and systems. Unlike a dissertation, the DNP Project focuses on practice change initiatives, such as: Quality improvement or program evaluation,

- Implementation of evidence-based practice,
- Development and evaluation of practice models,
- Health policy or systems-level change initiatives.

Projects are grounded in AACN Essentials (2021) competencies and are expected to produce a tangible, disseminated product.

#### Project Courses

- NURS 8010: DNP Project I (Proposal)
- NURS 8020: DNP Project II (Implementation)
- NURS 8030: DNP Project III (Evaluation & Dissemination)

Each course requires **180 practice hours**.

#### DNP Project Committee

The committee of three members is derived through collaboration with the Program Director, the Department Chair, eligible faculty, and the student. The committee is responsible for guiding the student through the development of a proposal and final two manuscripts, evaluating and assuring scientific merit, and counseling regarding the student's progress. The Chair and all committee members are responsible for providing feedback to the student and other committee members in a timely manner (allow a minimum of 2 weeks from the time a paper was submitted).

**Chair:** A faculty member with full Graduate Faculty status.

**Committee Members:** Two additional graduate faculty (Special/Associate/Full status).

- One member should have expertise in the conceptual framework.
- One should have expertise in methodology/analysis.
- One should provide content expertise in the project's focus area.
- Community or interprofessional members may serve with Special Faculty Status approval.

**Chair Responsibilities include:**

- Ensuring Graduate School requirements are met.
- Coordinating committee selection with Program Director and student.

- Guiding proposal and final defense preparation.
- Ensuring timely feedback (2 weeks).
- Overseeing scientific merit, IRB preparation, and manuscript quality.

**Committee Member Responsibilities include:**

- Assuring quality, clarity, and accuracy of the project.
- Providing methodological/content expertise.
- Approving project proposal prior to IRB submission.
- Participating in proposal and final defenses.

**Student Responsibilities**

- Responsible for timely progression, manuscript preparation, and adherence to guidelines.
- Must identify a Project Chair by NURS 7910 (Advanced Research) and no later than the beginning of NURS 7011. This is a collaboration between the program director, department chair, student, and faculty member.
- Provides committee members with electronic copies of manuscripts at least 2 weeks before feedback is expected.
- Works with the Chair on IRB preparation and revisions.
- Submits manuscripts and final products to:
  - Sigma Repository ([Submission link](#))
  - DNP Program Director, Project Chair, and committee members.

Introduction

Doctoral education, whether practice or research, is distinguished by the completion of a specific project that demonstrates synthesis of the student’s work and lays the groundwork for future scholarship. For practice doctorates, requiring a dissertation or other original research is contrary to the intent of the DNP. The DNP primarily involves mastery of an advanced specialty within nursing practice. Therefore, other methods must be used to distinguish the achievement of that mastery. Unlike a dissertation, the product of the DNP project may take on various final forms depending on the student’s area of advanced nursing practice. One example of a final product of a DNP project is a practice change initiative. This may be represented by a pilot study, a program evaluation, a quality improvement project, an evaluation of a new practice model, or a consulting project. Additional examples of final DNP projects could include substantive involvement in a larger public health or policy endeavor. The use of evidence to improve practice or patient outcomes is the theme that links all DNP scholarly projects. The final DNP project produces a tangible and deliverable academic product that is derived from the practice immersion experience and is reviewed and evaluated by the DNP Project Committee (AACN, 2021).

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist in the preparation of a manuscript consistent with high standards of a scholarly doctoral project. Although DNP projects may take a wide variety of forms, all projects must clearly exemplify critical thinking at the doctoral level. The DNP project will utilize appropriate scholarly methods to apply knowledge to impact health outcomes of patients and populations.

Choosing a Topic

Many resources are available to assist students in determining a topic for their project including the student's own practice experience, other student projects, faculty interest lists, the University libraries, and numerous university websites that have completed DNP project abstracts listed. Suitable topics of investigation should be discussed with the DNP Chair and committee members. It is extremely helpful to begin a list of potential topics, clinical problems, issues or concerns from the first day of your program. Prior to determining a topic, consider the following:

- interest in a clinical issue/problem/concern;
- organizational data to support the existence of a clinical issue/problem/concern and need for a practice change;
- best evidence available
- feasibility of completing the project (your skills; the time required; resources needed; implementation site, population and instrument/resource availability);
- local, regional or national nursing priorities;
- faculty availability and interest in the topic area; and
- professional goals.

### Considerations for Project Topics

In selecting a DNP project, consider the following factors:

1. The project relates to your advanced practice specialty (advanced practice can either be in direct patient care, administrative leadership, educational leadership, or public health).
2. The project is evidence based (i.e., there is a body of evidence to support implementation of a practice change and data to support a clinical issue/problem in a designated population)
3. The project focuses on identified need(s) of a group (system/organization), population or community rather than an individual person.
4. The theoretical model and evidence based practice framework to be used in project design.
5. The implementation timeline including evaluation of the project outcomes.
6. The dissemination of project findings and recommendations at professional and public forums.

The Sigma Repository and The Doctors of Nursing Practice online community web site provides a list of completed DNP scholarly projects. The link to access the web site is:

[Sigma Repository | Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing Research](#)

### Selecting a DNP Project Chair

The process of selecting a doctoral prepared chairperson begins with entry into the DNP program. Interacting and networking with graduate faculty are important components of graduate education and provide the basis for selecting a project chair and committee members. The student should contact the Program Director to identify a potential chair to discuss a selected topic and the faculty's interest and availability. It is highly recommended that the student identify a chair during the NURS 7910 course and no later than the beginning of NURS 7011. The chair must agree to serve in this role prior to registration for NURS 8010 DNP Project 1. The role of the project chair is to:

- provide guidance from the proposal stage through completion of the project's final defense;
- provide overall supervision of the project;
- raise questions and serve as an informed critic; and
- provide specific recommendations for improvement
- be available to meet the student's specified timeline for project completion (i.e., availability includes summer breaks).

The DNP Project Chair must be a nursing faculty member who has Full Graduate Faculty status as identified by the UToledo College of Graduate Studies. Once a chair is determined, the student and faculty chair and Director discuss options for DNP Project Committee members who are preferably within

and possibly those outside the UToledo School of Nursing. The committee members must be acceptable to both the student, the chair, and the Program Director. The student must contact the potential committee members and assess their interest in the topic and willingness to serve on the DNP Project Committee and report back to the Program Director and Project Chair.

### Selecting a DNP Project Committee

The full DNP Project Committee will consist of a Chair and two other graduate faculty members selected in collaboration with the Chair. The DNP Project Committee members must have Special/Associate/or Full Graduate Faculty Status. If a DNP Project Committee member is from the community or an agency where the project is being conducted (a key stakeholder in the DNP project, or in a profession other than nursing and considered an expert in their field), they must apply for Special Faculty Status to serve on the committee. Students must negotiate with these individuals regarding their availability and willingness to serve on the DNP Project Committee. Information about eligible faculty is available through the UToledo Office of Graduate Studies.

### Procedures for Developing and Conducting the DNP Project

A detailed description of the procedure for developing and conducting the DNP Project follows:

#### Preparation

- To enroll in NURS 8010 (DNP Project 1) these courses must be completed : NURS 7400 with a minimum grade of B and NURS 7910 with a minimum grade of B and INDI 8000 with a minimum grade of B and NURS 7011 with a minimum grade of B.
- Students must also have successfully presented their DNP project proposal defense at the end of DNP Project 1.
- Submit a [Graduate Research Advisory \(GRAD\) Committee Approval and Assurance Form](#) to the College of Graduate Studies before work begins.
- Meet with the DNP Project Chair and develop a mutual timeline for completion of the project.
- Develop the proposal for the project with input and approval from chair, committee members, and agency members if appropriate.
- Arrange statistical consultation if needed.
- Submit draft(s) of proposal to Project Chair and your committee. Multiple drafts are to be expected.
- Write the DNP project proposal and defend the proposal.
- Complete the [DNP Project Proposal Defense form](#).

Note: The student is responsible for maintenance and retention of copies of all forms required by the DNP Program during the duration of the program and after completion of the program.

### Institutional Review Board

Doctoral projects will need to be submitted to the appropriate UToledo Institutional Review Board (IRB) (and may require submission to an outside agency's IRB). The student must check with the DNP Project Chair regarding the appropriate action.

### Grading of the Doctoral Project

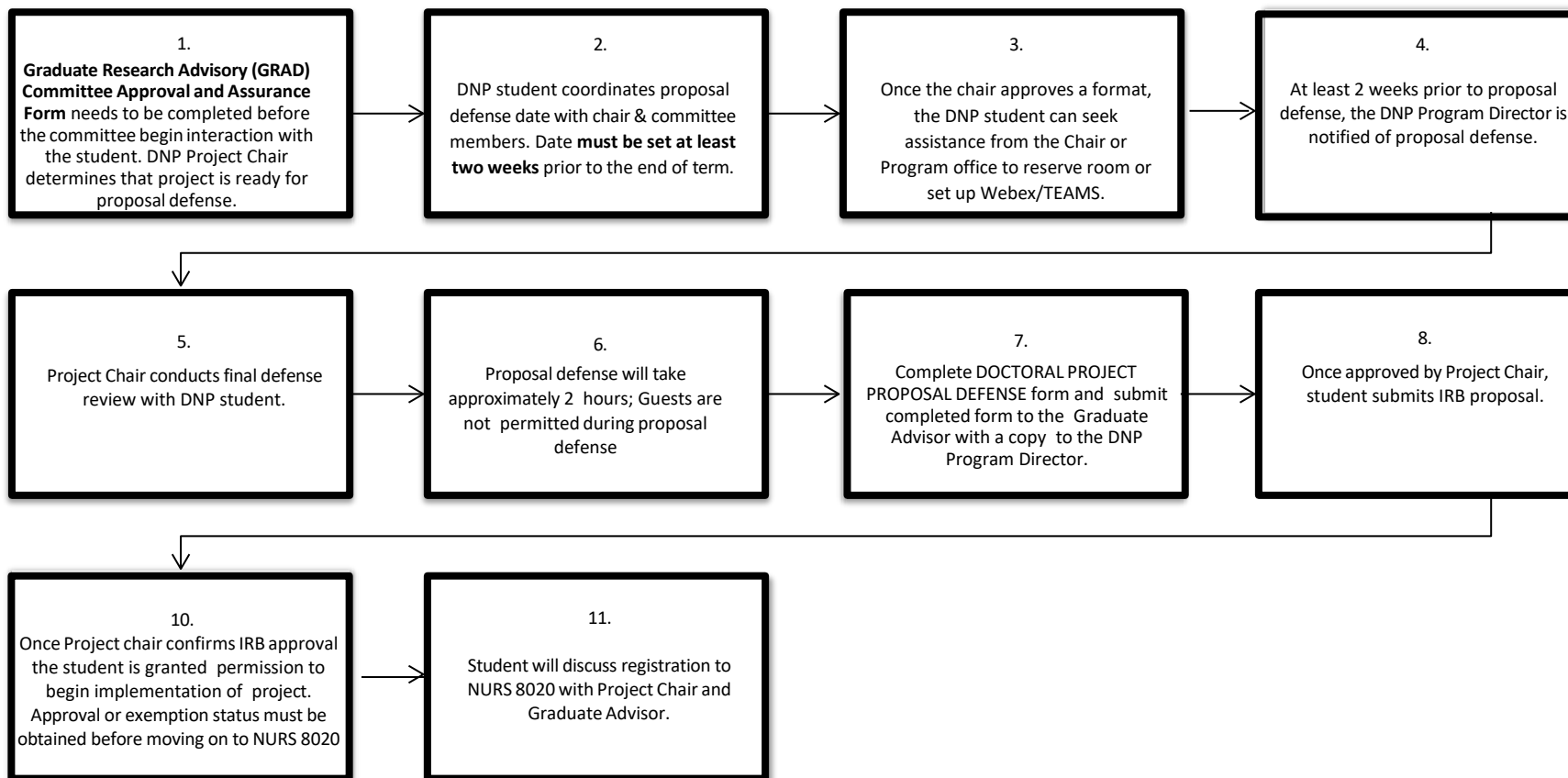
Satisfactory work toward the project is denoted with the grade of (S). Unsatisfactory work earns a (U). Successful completion of all 3 DNP Projects courses and project defense are required for graduation.

### DNP Project Proposal Defense Procedures

During the Doctoral Project Proposal Defense phase, students will need to complete the [Graduate Research Advisory \(GRAD\) Committee Approval and Assurance Form](#) and the [Doctoral Project Proposal Defense Form](#).

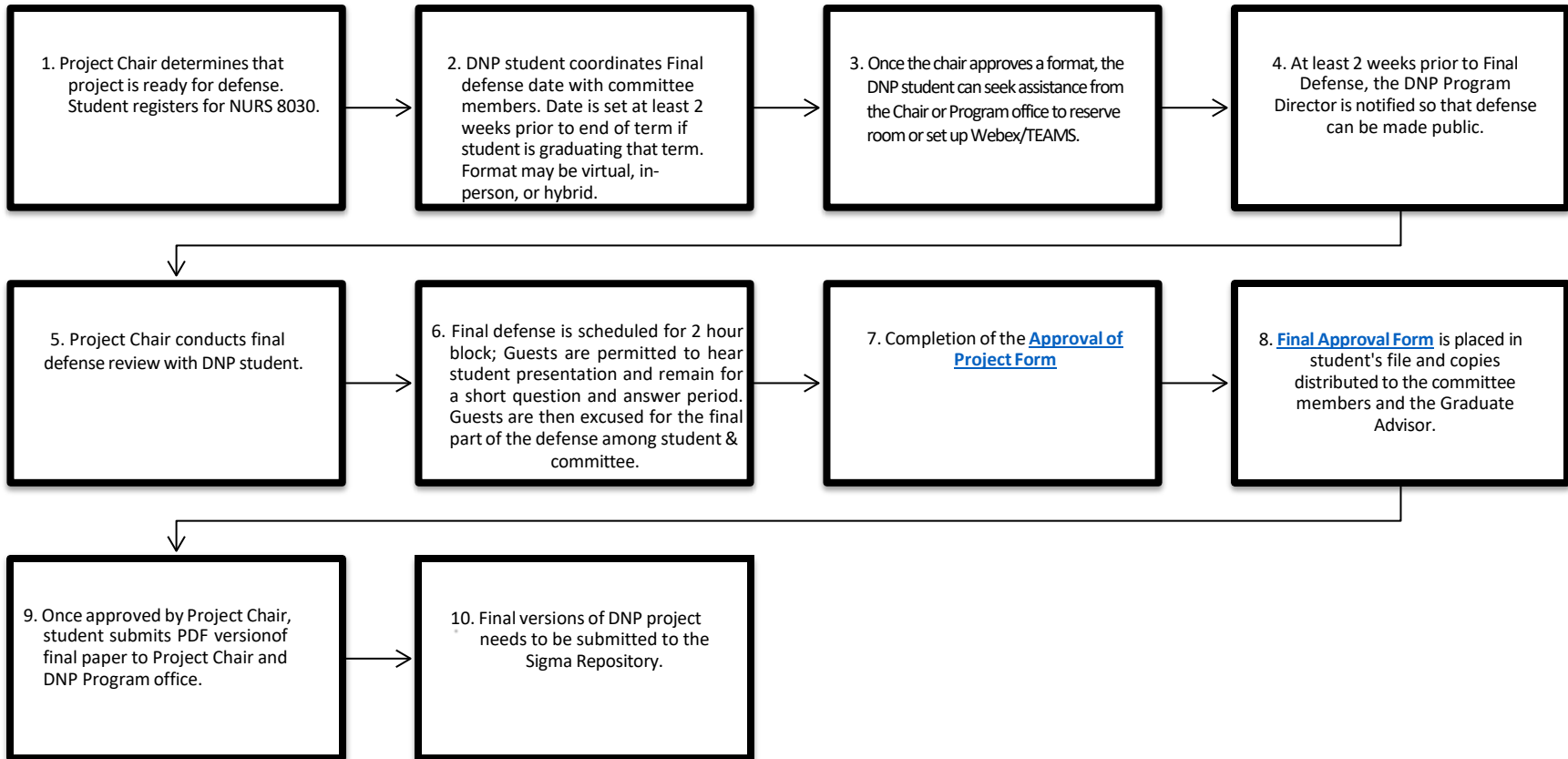
Proposal Defense occurs in NURS 8010.

Please use the following pathway as a guideline for successful completion of the DNP project proposal defense.



### DNP Project Final Defense Procedures

Please use the following pathway as a guideline for successful completion of the doctoral project final defense. Students will need to complete the Approval of Project Form during this phase.



## **Project Products**

Students in NURS 8030 are required to complete two manuscripts (replacing the outdated single-document format):

1. Non-Data Manuscript
  - Example: policy analysis, integrative review, program description.
  - Includes references and appendices as appropriate.
2. Data-Based Manuscript
  - Example: quality improvement initiative, evaluation study, implementation outcomes.
  - Includes references and appendices as appropriate.

### **Proposed Outline:**

- Dedication
- Acknowledgements
- List of Tables
- Introduction
- Title of Non-Data Manuscript
  - References
  - Appendices
- Title of Data-Based Manuscript
  - References
  - Appendices
- Conclusion
- References

**SECTION 11 - ADVANCED PRACTICE LICENSURE & CERTIFICATION**

## **Licensure**

### **Ohio APRN Licensure**

- For details on obtaining an APRN license in Ohio, students should consult the Ohio Board of Nursing (OBN) website and review the Advanced Practice Registered Nurse applications and forms section [Oklahoma Alternative Programs+2PNCB+2Oklahoma Alternative Programs+5Ohio Board of Nursing+5ANA+5](#).
- Ohio requires both an active RN license and a state-specific APRN Certificate of Authority — licensure cannot be issued or renewed without completing the proper application process [Nursing Licensure](#).

### **Michigan APRN Licensure**

- Students seeking Michigan APRN licensure must apply through the Michigan Board of Nursing under the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA).
- Applications are processed through the MiPLUS online portal.

### **American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)\***

FNP and PMHNP graduates are eligible to sit for the ANCC certification corresponding to their population foci upon graduation. The process for application is found on the ANCC website at <https://www.nursingworld.org/ancc/>.

### **American Academy of Nurse Practitioner (AANP)**

FNP program graduates are eligible to sit for AANP certification. The process for application is found on the AANP website at <http://www.aanpcert.org>. Students are responsible to visit the website and complete all other application requirements.

### **Degree Posting**

Graduate degrees are posted by the College of Graduate Studies within 45 days of commencement, though this may take longer in some cases.

Some certification agencies require an official final transcript before students may sit for national certification exams.

### **Post-Graduation Education Verification**

Requests for verification of program completion should be sent in writing with any official forms to the respective program director.