



**MASTER'S OF SCIENCE IN NURSING PROGRAM
HANDBOOK**

**Georgia College
School of Nursing**

**Nurse Educator
Family Nurse Practitioner
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner
Women's Health Nurse Practitioner**

Summer 2020 Cohort

Welcome to the Master of Science in Nursing Program

Purpose of the Handbook

The purpose of the handbook is to communicate important information and promote effective operation of the Master's in Nursing Science program in the School of Nursing. University policies, School of Nursing policies and procedures, as well as information about advising, resources, and operations are provided for easy reference.

Students are responsible for being familiar with information contained in this handbook and in the School of Nursing catalog. Failure to read these sources will not excuse students from abiding by policies and procedures described in them. The School of Nursing reserves the right to make changes in its policies and procedures, and other information in the handbook as deemed appropriate and necessary. All changes will be communicated promptly to students, faculty, and staff.

The handbook is prepared and revised annually for the use of administrators, faculty, students, and staff. Suggestions regarding clarification or addition of topics are welcome.

The Georgia College's Master's of Science in Nursing degree program is accredited by the
[Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education \(CCNE\)](#)
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Curriculum

Mission Statements

- **Family Nurse Practitioner Program:**

In concert with the Georgia College liberal arts mission, the School of Nursing is committed to the formation of nurse leaders to engage in evidence-based practice, lifelong learning, and civic participation in a health information intensive environment through the development and mastery of clinical reasoning, professional nursing skills, and values. The Family Nurse Practitioner program prepares nursing professionals to fulfill primary care advanced practice roles in rural and underserved areas.

- **Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program:**

In concert with the Georgia College liberal arts mission, the School of Nursing is committed to the formation of nurse leaders to engage in evidence-based practice, lifelong learning, and civic participation in a health information intensive environment through the development and mastery of clinical reasoning, professional nursing skills, and values. The Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program prepares nursing professionals to fulfill mental health advanced practice roles in rural and underserved areas.

- **Women's Health Nurse Practitioner Program:**

In concert with the Georgia College liberal arts mission, the School of Nursing is committed to the formation of nurse leaders to engage in evidence-based practice, lifelong learning, and civic participation in a health information intensive environment through the development and mastery of clinical reasoning, professional nursing skills, and values. The Women's Health Nurse Practitioner program prepares nursing professionals to fulfill women's health advanced practice roles in rural and underserved areas.

- **Nurse Educator Program:**

In concert with the Georgia College liberal arts mission, the School of Nursing is committed to the formation of nurse leaders to engage in evidence-based practice, lifelong learning, and civic participation in a health information intensive environment through the development and mastery of clinical reasoning, professional nursing skills, and values. The Nurse Educator program prepares nursing professionals to address educational needs in academic and healthcare organizational settings.

Vision

The GC School of Nursing aspires to be recognized as a national leader in nursing education. GC nurses will serve at the forefront of the changing healthcare delivery system.

Philosophy

*The following statements reflect the philosophical values of the GC School of Nursing in relation to the concepts of **education, person, environment, nursing and health:***

Education

Nursing education is an active process where the student develops and masters clinical reasoning, professional nursing skills and values that enable graduates to thrive in a health information intensive environment. The minimal level of education for entry to professional nursing practice occurs at the baccalaureate level and mastery occurs through graduate education and life-long learning.

- Clinical reasoning is a cognitive process of thinking where data is reviewed and analyzed to improve health outcomes.

- Professional nursing skills are developed through integration of theoretical knowledge and guided clinical practice.
- Professional nursing values are the consistent demonstration of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice.

Person

Person is a complex, unique, holistic individual with inherent worth and dignity. The meanings

a person attaches to life experiences are influenced by the environment, developmental level, group membership, culture, and ethnicity. The person has the power to identify their own life choices.

Environment

The environment is the accumulation of physical, physiological, social, cultural, spiritual, economic, and political conditions that interact with and influence the human experience. The interaction is constant and the environment can be altered to influence health outcomes. Nursing can create and sustain a culture of safety and quality health care that can transform the environment by creating a safe workplace that produces optimal patient outcomes.

Nursing

Nursing is the protection, promotion, and optimization of health and abilities, prevention of illness and injury, alleviation of suffering through the diagnosis and treatment of human response to actual or potential health problems for health promotion, disease prevention, and advocacy in the care of individuals, families, communities, and populations (American Nurses Association, 2010a, p. 1).

Health

Health is the dynamic integration of the physical, psychological, spiritual, cognitive, and socio- cultural well-being of individuals, families, groups, and communities. The meaning of health varies between individuals and cultures, and is universally accepted as more than being free of disease or infirmity. Health beliefs and practices are impacted by the affordability and accessibility of health care.

Nursing Faculty Organization Approved 10-07-02, Updated: 01/14/03, 4/3/-03; reaffirmed

11/2009, Updated 4/4/11

MSN Program Outcomes with Relationship to Program Concepts

(Approved by Graduate Committee: January 2019)

NCAA Essential I (Liberal Arts/Evidence-Based) and Essential IV (Scholarship)

NONPF Scientific Foundation Competencies

NLN 6 (Quality Improvement), 7 (Scholarship)

1. Integrate liberal arts foundation with scholarly inquiry and client values as a basis for problem solving.

Essential II (Leadership) and III (Quality/Safety)

NONPF Leadership Competencies and Quality Competencies

NLN 5 (Leadership)

2. Demonstrate leadership in the advanced specialty role through legal and ethical decision-making, accountability, and a commitment to quality improvement and safety.

Essential V (Informatics)

NONPF Technology and Information Literacy Competencies

NLN 3 (Assessment and Evaluation)

3. Demonstrate informatics and healthcare technology competencies to enhance outcomes for clients and populations.

Essential VI (Policy/Advocacy)

NONPF Policy Competencies and Ethics Competencies

NLN (Policy)

4. Advocate for ethical policies that promote access, equity, quality, and cost effectiveness.

Essential VII (Collaboration) and VIII (Clinical Prevention/Population Health) NONPF Health Delivery Systems Competencies

5. Collaborate within nursing and inter-professional teams to improve client and population health.

Essential IX (Master's Level Nursing Practice)

NONPF Independent Practice Competencies

NLN I (Facilitate Learning), II (Facilitate Learner Socialization and Development), VI (Curriculum)

6. Demonstrate the competencies associated with the graduate nursing specialty role.

Programs of Study

GC School of Nursing currently offers five MSN Specializations:

- Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP)
- Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP)
- Women's Health Nurse Practitioner (WHNP)
- Nurse Midwifery
- Nurse Educator (NE)

Examples of programs of study for the graduate level major are found in the Graduate Handbook Appendix.

The curriculum for the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Degree at GC consists of graduate core courses, support courses, and specialty courses. If a student wishes to change MSN focus within the MSN program, the first step is to arrange a meeting with their advisor.

Admission, Progression, Dismissal, Readmission and Graduation

See appendix: [Policy # 3001 Admission Progression and Dismissal](#)

Student Orientation & Onboarding Information

See appendix: [Policy # 3002 Student Orientation and Onboarding](#)

Advisement

Students are advised according to the procedure described in the GC Graduate Catalog. Advising at GC is a shared responsibility between students, faculty and staff. Through a network of resources and support, students communicate with advisors to obtain information and guidance aimed at the student's successful completion of degree requirements and preparation for post-master's degree opportunities. An inherent goal of the advising process is for student to gain self-understanding that will inform their decisions regarding academic, career and life goals.

Advising Purpose

The purpose of advising in the graduate nursing program is to assist the graduate nursing students to be successful in their programs of study. Students have either a full-time or part-time program of study, which they must follow once they are accepted into the program. Students in the full-time program may elect if space is available to move to the part-time program after meeting with their advisor and requesting this change. Because of course sequencing, students in the part-time program are not able to move to the full-time program.

Specific Advising Aims

Aim 1: Students will receive effective advising consistent with GC, College of Health Sciences, and School of Nursing guidelines.

Aim 2: Students will actively participate in the advising process.

Aim 3: Successful completion of program of study.

After students are accepted and have regular admission status for graduate study, a program of study will be developed with the Program Directors for each focus area and the Assistant Director of Graduate Programs. The program of study outlines the courses required to earn a Master of Science in Nursing specializing as a FNP, PMHNP, WHNP, Midwifery, or Nurse Educator. Once the program of study is on file, students should register for courses as early as possible. Registration is available in [PAWS](#). See the [Academic Calendar](#) for registration dates for more information.

Appointments (virtual or in person) with academic advisors are encouraged to discuss coursework, programs of study, and opportunities for clinical placement and to release advisor holds for registering for classes.

Advisor Responsibilities

Graduate students can expect their advisors to:

1. Understand and effectively communicate the University policies and procedures.
2. Provide information about and strategies for utilizing available campus resources and services.
3. Monitor and accurately document the advisee's progress toward meeting curricular goals.
4. Maintain confidentiality.
5. Be accessible via posted office hours, scheduled virtual appointments, email, and/or telephone.

Advisee Responsibilities

The advisees are ultimately responsible for their educational success and are expected to:

1. Participate in mandatory graduate orientation.
2. Read the University catalog and Graduate Handbook.
3. Schedule regular appointments or make regular contact with their academic advisor.
4. Make use of campus services and resources to enhance your personal and academic success.
5. Be prepared for each advisement meeting with questions and discussion points.
6. Accept responsibility for own decisions.

[Revised 5/2010, Revised 6/21/11, 4/11/2014]

Grievances, Appeals, and Petitions

The School of Nursing (SON) follows the policies and procedures outlined in the University Graduate Catalog regarding academic and non-academic grievances and appeals. These can be found in the Graduate Catalog under [Grievance and Appeals](#).

Student Concern Form & Flow Chart can be found at the following website in Unify:

<https://intranet.gcsu.edu/cohs-students/student-concern-form>

Transfer and Transient Credit

Transfer credit applied toward MSN degree requirements from another ACEN or CCNE accredited school may be possible. Contact the Assistant Director of Graduate Programs to inquire. In addition, consult the [GC Graduate Catalog](#) for policies related to transfer credit. Students may transfer a maximum of 9 credit hours. Students may take classes at another University as transient students. Students should contact their academic advisor for more information.

Synthesis Requirement

The MSN student is expected to achieve program outcomes as evidenced by depth and breadth of knowledge, a synthesis of data, complexity of skills and interventions, and role autonomy by the end of the program. In addition, the Advance Practice RN student is expected to demonstrate that they are educationally prepared **to assume responsibility and accountability** the assessment, diagnosis, and management of the patient, which includes health promotion and/or maintenance as well as the use and prescription of pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic interventions.

The purpose of the synthesis requirement is to measure this achievement. The MSN student will demonstrate successful completion of the program outcomes by:

1. Maintaining a Master's Portfolio during the program that successfully demonstrates the student's mastery of the program outcomes. This electronic portfolio must be started at the beginning of the program and shared with the student's academic faculty.

2. In addition, APRN students are required to successfully complete the Simulated Certification Exam on the first attempt with a score within the acceptable range (see course materials.) Those students not passing the simulated certification exam on the first attempt will be given the option of completing an Oral Examination or working with faculty in a remediation course that includes another simulated certification exam.

Master's Portfolio

Students will receive information on the program outcomes and the requirements for the Synthesis during orientation at the beginning of the program. Each semester, course faculty will outline in the syllabus the course components to be included in the portfolio.

Emphasis is placed on demonstration of the relevance of coursework for practice. Students and faculty are encouraged to arrange multiple experiences in synthesis and application to practice throughout the program. The process of synthesis should be a scholarly experience that threads throughout the program and is finalized in the last semester. The Master's Portfolio should demonstrate the student's mastery of the program outcomes. Students are required to submit their portfolio for review at the end of their program. Documentation of a satisfactory portfolio will be confirmed in the practicum course.

Graduation Information

Preparation for graduation happens much sooner than students expect. The University provides policies about graduation in the [GC Graduate Catalog](#). If you still have questions about graduation, contact your academic advisor or the Registrar.

Information for Accessing Certification Applications

American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC)

8515 Georgia Avenue; Suite 400

Silver Spring, MD 20910

800.274.4ANA

[ANCC Certifications](#)

Certification examinations: FNP, PMHNP

American Academy of Nurses Practitioners (AANP) Certification Program, Inc.

P.O. Box 12926

Austin, TX 78711

512.637.0500

512.637.0540 (facsimile)

<https://www.aanpcert.org/>

Certification examination: FNP

Certified Nurses Educator (CNE) Examination

National League for Nursing

The Watergate

2600 Virginia

Avenue, NW

Washington, DC

20037

800-669-1656

<http://www.nln.org/certification>

[/index.htm](http://www.nln.org/certification/index.htm)

National Certification Corporation

676 N. Michigan Ave Suite 3600

Chicago, IL 60611

info@nccnet.org

[WHNP Examination](#)

Academic Code of Conduct

The University has formulated a number of policies and procedures with which the student will need to be familiar. Graduate students are expected to comply with all aspects of the Georgia [College Student Academic Dishonesty Policies found in the Georgia College Catalog](#).

Student Academic Dishonesty

I. Policy Statement (Quoted from GC Graduate Catalog)

Georgia College acknowledges the need to preserve an orderly process with regard to teaching, research, and public service, as well as the need to preserve and monitor students' academic rights and responsibilities. Since the primary goal of education is to increase one's own

knowledge, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated at Georgia College. Possible consequences of academic dishonesty, depending on the seriousness of the offense, may range from a revision of assignment, an oral reprimand, a written reprimand, an F or a zero for grade work, removal from the course with a grade of F, to suspension or exclusion from the University.

Academic dishonesty includes the following examples, as well as similar conduct aimed at making false representation with respect to academic performance:

1. Cheating on an examination;
2. Collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course;
3. Plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers (whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained) as one's own. When direct quotations are used in themes, essays, term papers, tests, book reviews, and other similar work, they must be indicated; and when the ideas of another are incorporated in any paper, they must be acknowledged, according to a style of documentation appropriate to the discipline;
4. Stealing examination or course materials;
5. Falsifying records, laboratory results, or other data;
6. Submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course;
7. Knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination, or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.
8. Students accused of academic dishonesty may appeal through the student academic dishonesty procedures in effect at Georgia College.

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Students violating this code should expect to receive an "F" for the course(s) in which the academic dishonesty occurs and to be dropped from the graduate nursing program.

Compliance with Georgia Law Governing Nursing

Graduate nursing students are to comply with the law governing the practice of nursing in Georgia. This law is outlined in the [Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act](#).

Unprofessional Conduct

Nurses are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Professional behavior is expected in all areas of their lives: academic, work, and personal. The professional standards that are expected of nurses translate to the use of social media as well. Students who through unprofessional conduct are unable to maintain an unencumbered license in their state of practice will be withdrawn from the graduate program.

The Georgia Board of Nursing defines unprofessional conduct for nurses in the following way:

Nursing behaviors (acts, knowledge, and practices) failing to meet the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing nursing practice, which could jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of the public, shall constitute unprofessional conduct. These behaviors shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) Using inappropriate or unsafe judgment, technical skill or interpersonal behaviors in providing nursing care;
- b) Performing any nursing technique or procedure for which the nurse is unprepared by education or experience;
- c) Disregarding a patient/client's dignity, right to privacy or right to confidentiality;
- d) Failing to provide nursing care because of diagnosis, age, sex, race, creed or color;
- e) Abusing a patient/client verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually;
- f) Falsifying, omitting or destroying documentation of nursing actions on the official patient/client record;
- g) Abandoning or knowingly neglecting patients/clients requiring nursing care;
- h) Delegating nursing care, functions, tasks or responsibility to others when the nurse knows or should know that such delegation is to the detriment of patient safety;
- i) Providing one's license/temporary permit to another individual for any reason;
- j) failing to practice nursing in accordance with prevailing nursing standards due to physical or psychological impairment;
- k) Diverting prescription drugs for own or another person's use;
- l) Misappropriating money or property from a patient/client or employee;
- m) Failing to notify the appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct which may jeopardize patient/client safety.

Authority O.C.G.A. Secs. 43-26-2, 43-26-3, 43-26-5(a)(b)(c), 43-26-10. **Administrative History.** Original Rule entitled "Definition of Professional Conduct" was adopted as Rule 410-11-.01 on February 6, 1987; effective February 26, 1987 and renumbered as Rule 410-11-.02 by filing of August 5, 1987; effective August 25, 1987. **Repealed:** Authority repealed, new authority adopted. F. May 8, 1990; eff. May 28, 1990. Source: Georgia Board of Nursing. Retrieved June 22, 2011 from <https://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/410>

Attendance Policies

Class

Graduate students are expected to attend all scheduled classes (both face-to-face and synchronous online) and to arrive promptly. Students who demonstrate excessive absences or tardiness will be counseled individually. Students are expected to complete the sound check prior to each synchronous online class and having a working microphone and headset. In the event of an absence, students should:

- Notify the nursing faculty member prior to class if they expect to be absent due to personal or family illness death of a relative/close friend, or for participation in approved co-curricular activities.
- Make arrangements with the nursing faculty member for missed assignments or examination according to the guidelines in individual course syllabi. Students may be given an alternate form of the examination. It is important that all students understand that many MSN courses include

participation in synchronous classes as a component of the grade calculation. Students cannot participate if absent or late; consequently, the grade will be adversely affected by absence or tardiness.

See Appendix:

Academic Evaluation: See [Policy # 3000, Graduate Online Testing Policy](#)

Clinical Experiences: See [Policy # 3003, MSN Course and Clinical Guidelines](#)

Professional Experience: see [Policy # 3003, MSN Course and Clinical Guidelines](#)

Grading and Grading Scale: See [Policy # 3003, MSN Course and Clinical Guidelines](#)

Clinical Evaluation: see [Policy # 3003, MSN Course and Clinical Guidelines](#)

The University Graduate Catalog provides a description of [methods for determining academic standing](#).

Course Specific Clinical Evaluation

Each clinical nursing course identifies specific expectations for satisfactory clinical performance. These expectations are indicated in course materials, and may include guidelines, checklists, or other forms that describe the course specific requirements for satisfactory clinical performance. Each course also describes the method by which clinical evaluation will be conducted, which may include, but is not limited to, observation of performance by faculty and/or others supervising the student; written assignments; journals; or self-evaluation and components for Master's Portfolio.

Criteria for Written Assignments

Written assignments are required in most graduate courses. Because these assignments reflect the student's knowledge of content, as well as professional communication skills, written assignments should be prepared with care. The general guidelines should be followed in addition to any course specific criteria.

1. Typewritten in Microsoft Word and saved as a .doc or .docx document. (It is the student's responsibility to seek assistance with using the Microsoft Office software.)
2. Written in accordance with APA style (Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, latest edition guidelines, unless otherwise specified by faculty. Purchase of the APA manual is required for all graduate students.
3. Composed using correct sentence and paragraph structure.
4. Written using correct grammar and spelling.
5. Documented appropriately with references.
6. Presented in a professional manner.
7. Prepared according to criteria specified in the course requirements and The GC Graduate Writing Manual Guidelines.

Primary and Secondary Sources in Scholarly Work

Students should be familiar with the differences between and the use of primary and secondary sources in scholarly work. A brief overview may be viewed at:

https://journals.lww.com/ajnonline/Fulltext/2009/04000/Primary_and_Secondary_Sou

[rces_Guidelines_for.47.aspx](#)

In essence there are three rules that should guide the writer when selecting resources:

1. **The quality of the article.** Generally, the most up-to-date (written within 3-5 years) articles should be used for references. However, seminal (important & influential) works should take precedence in certain situations.
2. **Primary sources.** The author who did the research was the person who wrote the article.
3. **Secondary sources.** The author refers to an article written by another person.

(“Primary and secondary sources: Guidelines for authors”, 2009)

GALILEO Digital Library

Students should also demonstrate skill finding peer reviewed resources in the GALILEO (<http://galileo.usg.edu>) database. An online tutorial on this topic, Finding Peer-Reviewed Articles in Galileo, is available at <http://www.galileo.usg.edu/scholar/gcsu/subjects/>

The password access to GALILEO changes every semester. Students can retrieve the password from [PAWS](#). From the Main Menu in PAW, click on the GALILEO link.

Bibliographic Software

Students are expected to use the most current personal bibliographic manager supplied by GC to retrieve citation information from digital libraries and to cite references in scholarly papers. GC provides free access to this bibliographic software. The software is compatible with Windows and Mac operating systems. Software can be downloaded from all GC campus sites at <http://software.gcsu.edu>. Contact SERVE if you need help in downloading the software from off campus locations (serve@gcsu.edu).

Turnitin

Faculty reserve the right to require submission of students' paper to [Turnitin](#), or the most current anti-plagiarism software program adopted by the university. Faculty will provide this information in their syllabi.

D2L Learning Management System

The graduate courses are taught on-line. All courses use D2L learning management system as a support tool and faculty expect that graduate students are computer-literate.

Technology Requirements

If you have questions regarding minimum technology requirements for laptop and desktop computers, as recommended by GC, please contact the Serve Help Desk at 478.445.7378 or via email at serve@gcsu.edu.

Antivirus Products

Graduate students are expected to use antivirus software. GC currently uses Kapersky but any reputable antivirus software is acceptable.

Technology Resources

Technology resources such as **iPods, iPads, laptop computers, digital cameras**, and other **resources** are available through GC Library and Information Technology Center (LITC). Poster printing services are also available through the LITC services. Printing costs two cents per square inch printed payable through the pay-for-print system with a Bobcat card. It is available to students and faculty. Print time varies with size but may take 30-45 minutes. For additional information about equipment that can be checked out from the LITC, go to <https://www.gcsu.edu/library>.

Computer software can be purchased with significant discounts at [Software Resource & Services](#) because of a University System of Georgia contract. Approved software can be purchased online and postal mailed to the student's home. Additionally, students can download Microsoft Office 365 for free through UNIFY and also get 7GB of storage for use while they are a student at GC.

For questions, please contact the Serve Help Desk at 478.445.7378 or via email at serve@gcsu.edu.

Clinical Information

Clinical Hours

- Clinical hours are counted as time under the **direct guidance** of a preceptor or designee for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements of the clinical learning contract.
- Reading, self-reflecting, journaling, and/or completing course or clinical assignments **do not** count as clinical time.
- Travel and meals **do not** count as clinical time.
- The intent of clinical hours is to spend the hours **interacting** with the preceptor and others in learning your advanced practice roles. Interacting is the key word. The purpose of and focus for clinical experiences are to learn the advanced practice or educator role by interacting with and observing others in that role.
- Attending conference or webinars for CNE do not apply to clinical time.

Clinical Requirements

Documentation Required Prior to Clinical Experiences as MSN Student

The following documents are required prior to any clinical learning experience in any setting as a graduate student in nursing.

1. Current professional liability insurance will be arranged for MSN students through the School of Nursing.
2. Current American Heart Association Healthcare Provider Course (CPR) to include one- man and two-man rescue; infant, child, and adult resuscitation; and the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs).
3. Verification of TB test (skin test) annually or chest x-ray, as needed.
4. Current unencumbered license to practice as registered nurse in Georgia or state in which practice setting is located.

5. Successful completion of Self-Study Module on Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).
6. Signed Technical Standards form
7. Physical Exam Form completed by a healthcare provider.
8. Other requirements specified by clinical agencies.

PLEASE NOTE: In the absence of any of the above clinical documentation, graduate students are not eligible to attend clinical experiences.

Any clinical hours completed in the absence of updated documents will not count toward the clinical hours requirement.

Health Insurance for MSN Students

The Georgia Board of Regents requires all nursing students to obtain student health insurance. The fee for this service is added to tuition each fall & spring. Neither the University nor clinical agencies are liable for costs incurred if an injury or illness occurs as a result of clinical practice in the student role.

Graduate students who already have health insurance may complete a waiver from USG Student Health Insurance Program (SHIP) by completing a form found at <https://www.uhcsr.com/gcsu> further information about this will be distributed by the GCSU Business Office each fall and spring semester. Questions regarding the student health insurance policy and the waiver procedure should be directed to the Business Office (478-445-5254; email businessoffice@gcsu.edu.)

Background Checks for MSN Students

MSN students must hold an unencumbered license in the state where they will complete their clinical experience. Criminal background checks and urine drug screens are required for all MSN students by the School of Nursing. A private service is used for this and the results will be available to clinical agencies that the student is assigned. Information about utilizing the service will be provided to the students during Orientation.

Ordering Student Photo ID

Students enrolled in clinical graduate courses are expected to have a GC photo ID to identify them as such in clinical settings. Photo ID with the University logo may be ordered through the Georgia College Bobcat Card Services. Students may do this during orientation.

Uniform Policy

See Appendix: [Policy # 3004, MSN dress code](#)

Criteria for Selection of Preceptors

The preceptor is a person who:

- Agrees to assume the responsibilities of the preceptor or facilitator role.
- Holds a minimum of a Master's degree and has one year of experience as a leader/manager.
- Has knowledge of agency policies and procedures.
- Will complete the "Preceptor Qualification Record."
- Has direct, primary knowledge needed to facilitate learning objectives in the practicum setting.

Expectations of Clinical Preceptors for Nurse Practitioner Graduate Students

1. Discusses with student the goals set for this preceptorship and the anticipated schedule in the practice setting to accomplish course goals.
2. Agrees to have a nurse practitioner faculty member visit the practice site to evaluate student performance while rendering care and to discuss candidly with that faculty member the quality of student performance.
3. Orients student to the practice site to include emergency procedures, OSHA, fire and safety, and location of evacuation procedures.
4. Develops an environment conducive to student learning. Welcomes student questions and requests for assistance and guides student actions as necessary in situations of uncertainty for the student.
5. Provides feedback on student performance throughout the experience, guiding student in improving assessment strategies, diagnosis, plans of care, and understanding the pathophysiology being encountered in patients under care.
6. Documents the level of performance in writing at the end of the rotation, using the instrument provided by the student, and sharing feedback with student.
7. Notifies the faculty if problems arise prior to the evaluation site visit or thereafter.
8. Helps select patients and or learning experiences that will provide a varied experience within the organization's patient population.
9. Allows student to perform a complete history and physical exam based on the assigned patient's presenting problem.
10. Allows student to generate a working diagnosis, differential diagnoses, or problem list.
11. Allows the student to develop a preliminary plan of care, including medications.
12. Listens to a review of findings and the preliminary care plan for assigned patient and critiques plan for final implementation, helping student to understand why modifications in her/his plan have been suggested, to enable learning to occur.
13. Helps student to understand the cost implications of the management plan for reimbursement under consideration.
14. Allows student to document the care provided using agency procedure and assures that documentation includes those elements of the clinical encounter necessary to continuity of care, third-party reimbursement, and a legally prudent record and affixes signature to record.
15. Appreciates that the student is a learner and should be allowed to function in the setting as a health care provider but may take more time and need more consultation than an experienced provider.
16. Reviews the evaluation criteria to appreciate what competencies are to be evaluated in order to observe for evidence of these throughout the rotation.
17. Completes the electronic evaluation form at the end of the semester.

Expectations of Clinical Preceptors for Nurse Educator Graduate Students

1. Discusses with student the goals set for this preceptorship and the anticipated schedule in the practice setting to accomplish course goals.
2. Agrees to have a nurse educator faculty member visit the practice site to evaluate student performance while practicing educational activities and to discuss candidly with that faculty member the quality of student performance.
3. Orients student to the educational site to include emergency procedures, OSHA, fire and safety, and location of evacuation procedures. .
4. Develops an environment conducive to student learning. Welcomes student questions and requests for assistance and guides student actions as necessary in situations of uncertainty for the student.
5. Provides feedback on student performance throughout the experience, guiding student in improving ability to develop learning outcomes, prepare educational materials, assess student learning, and improve the teaching-learning process.
6. Documents the level of performance in writing at the end of the rotation, using the instrument provided by the student, and sharing feedback with student.
7. Notifies the faculty if problems arise prior to the evaluation site visit or thereafter.
8. Helps select patients and or learning experiences that will provide a varied experience within the organization's client population.
9. Allows the student to take an active role in teaching and learning activities, with direct interaction with nursing students in classroom and/or clinical settings.
10. Listens to the student's evaluation of the teaching learning process for each educational activity and recommends changes for future activities to improve student learning.
11. Helps student to understand accreditation standards, curricular requirements, and clinical placement, and fiscal issues that affect nursing education.
12. Allows student to complete required educational reports and documentation of learner feedback and grades.
13. Appreciates that the student is a learner and should be allowed to function in the setting as an educator, but may take more time and need more consultation than an experienced educator.
14. Reviews the evaluation criteria to appreciate what competencies are to be evaluated in order to observe for evidence of these throughout the rotation.
15. Completes the electronic evaluation form at the end of the semester.

Policies on Infectious Diseases and Injuries

The GC School of Nursing requires all students accepted into professional nursing programs to maintain proof of immunization status and titers in the clinical documents file. See Certification of Physical Exam form, required documentation for new students (Students born before 1959 are not required to provide proof of MMR or Varicella):

Vaccine	Acceptable Alternative Record
Hepatitis B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hepatitis B Declination form • Laboratory evidence of Hepatitis B immunity (titers) this is required not alternate
MMR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of physician-diagnosed measles or mumps • Laboratory evidence of measles, mumps or rubella immunity
Varicella	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laboratory evidence of varicella immunity • Laboratory confirmation of disease • Physician diagnosed history of varicella or herpes zoster
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of booster within previous 10 years for tetanus/diphtheria preparations • DTaP within 10 years; then follow with TD every 10 years.
Influenza	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of yearly vaccination
Zoster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation of vaccination if applicable

Updates are available at:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). Recommendations and guidelines: Adult immunization schedule (anyone over 18 years old).

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>

In addition to current immunization status, all nursing students are required to have documentation of either an annual negative PPD or chest x-ray, as needed.

Standard Precautions

All students engaged in clinical education activities shall adhere to Standard Precautions as outlined at:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010, September 29). 2007 guideline for isolation precautions: Preventing transmission of infectious agents in healthcare.

Retrieved June 27, 2011, from

<http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/2007IP/2007isolationPrecautions.html>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2011, April 19). Prevention of MRSA infections in healthcare settings. Retrieved June 27, 2011, from

<http://www.cdc.gov/mrsa/prevent/healthcare.html>

United States Department of Labor: Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Blood Born Pathogens Standard. Retrieved April 25, 2014, from <https://www.osha.gov/html/faq-bbp.html>

Background

Standard Precautions combine the major features of Universal Precautions (UP) and Body Substance Isolation (BSI) and are based on the principle that all blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions except sweat, nonintact skin, and mucous membranes may contain transmissible infectious agents. Standard Precautions include a group of infection prevention practices that apply to all patients, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status, in any setting in which healthcare is delivered. These include: hand hygiene; use of gloves, gown, mask, eye protection, or face shield, depending on the anticipated exposure; and safe injection practices. Also, equipment or items in the patient environment likely to have been contaminated with infectious body fluids must be handled in a manner to prevent transmission of infectious agents (e.g., wear gloves for direct contact, contain heavily soiled equipment, properly clean and disinfect or sterilize reusable equipment before use on another patient).

The application of Standard Precautions during patient care is determined by the nature of the HCW-patient interaction and the extent of anticipated blood, body fluid, or pathogen exposure. For some interactions (e.g., performing venipuncture), only gloves may be needed; during other interactions (e.g., intubation), use of gloves, gown, and face shield or mask and goggles is necessary. Education and training on the principles and rationale for recommended practices are critical elements of Standard Precautions because they facilitate appropriate decision-making and promote adherence when HCWs are faced with new circumstances. An example of the importance of the use of Standard Precautions is intubation, especially under emergency circumstances when infectious agents may not be suspected, but later are identified (e.g., SARS- CoV, *Neisseria meningitides*). Standard Precautions are also intended to protect patients by ensuring that healthcare personnel do not carry infectious agents to patients on their hands or via equipment used during patient care. **Depending on the clinical site you are in and the type of patients and procedures encountered, the clinical site may direct you to use Standard or Universal Precautions. You need to clarify with the OSHA officer during your orientation to the clinical site which they are using to comply with OSHA Blood borne Pathogens Guidelines.**

Universal Precautions

Universal precautions is an approach to infection control to treat all human blood and certain human body fluids as if they were known to be infectious for HIV, HBV and other bloodborne pathogens, (Bloodborne Pathogens Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030(b) definitions). Bloodborne Pathogen Standard 29 CFR 1910.1030(d)(1) requires:

- Employees to observe Universal Precautions to prevent contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials (OPIM).
- Under circumstances in which differentiation between body fluid types is difficult or impossible, all body fluids shall be considered potentially infectious materials.
- Treat all blood and other potentially infectious materials with appropriate precautions such as:
 - Use gloves, masks, and gowns if blood or OPIM exposure is anticipated.

- Use engineering and work practice controls to limit exposure. OPIM is defined in 29 CFR 1910.1030(b) as:
 - The following human body fluids: semen, vaginal secretions, cerebrospinal fluid, synovial fluid, pleural fluid, pericardial fluid, peritoneal fluid, amniotic fluid, saliva in dental procedures, any body fluid that is visibly contaminated with blood, and all body fluids in situations where it is difficult or impossible to differentiate between body fluids;
 - Any unfixated tissue or organ (other than intact skin) from a human (living or dead); and
 - HIV-containing cell or tissue cultures, organ cultures, and HIV- or HBV-containing culture medium or other solutions; and blood, organs, or other tissues from experimental animals infected with HIV or HBV.

The Bloodborne Pathogens Standard allows for hospitals to use acceptable alternatives [OSHA Directive CPL 02-02-069, (2001, November 27)] to universal precautions:

- Alternative concepts in infection control are called Body Substance Isolation (BSI) and Standard Precautions. These methods define **all** body fluids and substances as infectious. These methods incorporate not only the fluids and materials covered by the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard but expands coverage to include all body fluids and substances.
- These concepts are acceptable alternatives to universal precautions, provided that facilities utilizing them adhere to all other provisions of the standard.
- For compliance with OSHA Standards, the uses of either Universal Precautions or Standard Precautions are acceptable.

The CDC recommends **Standard Precautions** for the care of all patients, regardless of their diagnosis or presumed infection status.

- **Standard Precautions** apply to 1) blood; 2) all body fluids, secretions, and excretions, *except sweat*, regardless of whether or not they contain visible blood; 3) non-intact skin; and 4) mucous membranes. Standard precautions are designed to reduce the risk of transmission of microorganisms from both recognized and unrecognized sources of infection in hospitals.
- Standard precautions include the use of: hand washing, appropriate personal protective equipment such as gloves, gowns, masks, whenever touching or exposure to patients' body fluids is anticipated.

Transmission-Based Precautions (i.e., Airborne Precautions, Droplet Precautions, and Contact Precautions), are recommended to provide additional precautions beyond Standard Precautions to interrupt transmission of pathogens in hospitals.

Transmission-based precautions can be used for patients with known or suspected to be infected or colonized with epidemiologically important pathogens that can be transmitted by airborne or droplet transmission or by contact with dry skin or contaminated surfaces. These precautions should be used in addition to standard

precautions.

- **Airborne Precautions** used for infections spread in small particles in the air such as chicken pox.
- **Droplet Precautions** used for infections spread in large droplets by coughing, talking, or sneezing such as influenza.
- **Contact Precautions** used for infections spread by skin to skin contact or contact with other surfaces such as herpes simplex virus.

Airborne Precautions, Droplet Precautions, and Contact Precautions. May be combined for diseases that have multiple routes of transmission. When used either singularly or in combination, they are to be used in addition to Standard Precautions

[2007 Guideline for Isolation Precautions: Preventing Transmission of Infectious Agents in Healthcare Settings](#) [3 MB PDF, 225 pages]. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), (2007).

United States Department of Labor: Occupational Safety and Health Administration. Blood Borne Pathogens Standard. Retrieved April 25, 2014, from <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/hospital/hazards/univprec/univ.html>

Accidents and Injury to Students

Injury/Occurrence Policy

In the case of a student injury during a clinical, the safety and well-being of the student is the first priority. The student must **IMMEDIATELY** notify the faculty member or clinical preceptor responsible for the clinical learning experience. If the student is injured or experiences a high- risk exposure while under the supervision of a clinical preceptor, the faculty member should be notified as soon as safely possible.

The policies of the occupational or employee health department of the institution will be followed. The student should receive the same kind of assessment and care that an employee of the agency would under the circumstances. If the student has sustained a serious injury or has been exposed to blood, body fluids, or hazardous materials, then time is of the utmost importance and the student should receive prompt treatment through the qualified health care provider or the emergency department of his/her choice. Students exposed to blood or body fluids should receive treatment within two (2) hours.

Personal Liability and Medical Insurance

All students are required to carry personal health and medical insurance. A College of Health Sciences incident/injury report is to be completed by the student and faculty member as soon as possible after the incident. The faculty member will notify the Director of the School of Nursing (478.445.5122/1076) as soon as possible. The clinical agency may request that an incident report be completed there as well.

Georgia College, the GC College of Health Sciences and the School of Nursing assume no responsibility for the risks of exposure if the student chooses not to inform the appropriate faculty member or clinical preceptor and/or follow the Injury/Occurrence Policy.

Blood Borne Pathogen Exposure

Students who experience a needle stick, sharps injury, blood splash, or other potentially infectious contact with body fluids during the course of a clinical educational experience are required to report exposures promptly to the faculty member and/or preceptor.

Reporting of blood exposure will not adversely affect a clinical course grade.

Post-exposure prophylaxis shall be offered to students through the agency designated for post-exposure and care according to U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines. Students are required to have health insurance coverage for such follow-ups as neither the clinical agency nor the university or their personnel are liable for the student's health care. The latest guidelines documents may be found at:

Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HIV and Recommendations for Post exposure Prophylaxis (2005) at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5409a1.htm>

Updated U.S. Public Health Service Guidelines for the Management of Occupational Exposures to HBV, HCV, and HIV and Recommendations for Post exposure Prophylaxis (2001) at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5011a1.htm>

Students shall notify the Director of Nursing within 24 hours. 478.445.5122.

Students shall submit a completed GC injury/accident report to the Director's office with two (2) days after incident. This report is required even if an incident report was completed by the clinical agency.

Students are encouraged to make an appointment for free counseling in Student Health Services as desired to help in dealing with concern of exposure.

Students are encouraged to use the following resources for information regarding post-exposure care and prophylaxis:

- Exposure to Blood: What Healthcare Personnel Need to Know (2003) published by the CDC and available at:
http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dhqp/pdf/bbp/Exp_to_Blood.pdf
- PEpline – National Clinicians' Post-exposure Prophylaxis Hotline at **1-888-HIV-4911**

Other Injury

1. Notify faculty member or preceptor immediately.*
2. Initiate injury-reporting system in agency.
3. Report to emergency department or other unit designated by agency for assessment and care.
4. Complete GC Incident/Injury Report and forward to the Office of the Director of Nursing with two (2) days after incident. This report is required even if an incident report was completed by the clinical agency.
5. Notify the faculty member as soon as possible without delaying treatment.

**Students are required to have health insurance coverage for such care as neither the clinical agency nor the university or its personnel are liable for the student's health care.

ANA Code of Ethics for Nursing

All professional nurses are expected to incorporate ethics into their practice. Therefore both students and faculty at GC are expected to adhere to the following ANA Code of Ethics:

Provision 1: The nurse practices with compassion and respect for the inherent dignity, worth, and unique attributes of every person.

Provision 2: The nurse's primary commitment is to the patient, whether an individual, family, group, community, or population.

Provision 3: The nurse promotes, advocates for, and protects the rights, health, and safety of the patient.

Provision 4: The nurse has authority, accountability, and responsibility for nursing practice; makes decisions; and takes action consistent with the obligation to promote health and to provide optimal care.

Provision 5: The nurse owes the same duties to self as to others, including the responsibility to promote health and safety, preserve wholeness of character and integrity, maintain competence, and continue personal and professional growth.

Provision 6: The nurse, through individual and collective effort, establishes, maintains, and improves the ethical environment of the work setting and conditions of employment that are conducive to safe, quality health care.

Provision 7: The nurse, in all roles and settings, advances the profession through research and scholarly inquiry, professional standards development, and the generation of both nursing and health policy.

Provision 8: The nurse collaborates with other health professionals and the public to protect human rights, promote health diplomacy, and reduce health disparities.

Provision 9: The profession of nursing, collectively through its professional organizations, must articulate nursing values, maintain the integrity of the profession, and integrate principle of social justice into nursing and health policy.

To access the ANA Code of Ethics with Interpretive Statements:

<http://nursingworld.org/MainMenuCategories/EthicsStandards/CodeofEthicsforNurses/Code-of-Ethics-For-Nurses.html>

American Nurses Association, Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements, Washington, D.C.: American Nurses Publishing, 2015

American Nurses Association Standards

The following American Nurses Association standards of professional practice guide the educational experience of students and the practice of both students and faculty in the School of Nursing at GC.

Standards of Practice

1. **Assessment.** The registered nurse collects comprehensive data pertinent to the patient's health and/or the situation.
2. **Diagnosis.** The registered nurse analyzes the assessment data to determine the diagnoses or issues.
3. **Outcomes Identification.** The registered nurse identifies suspected outcomes for a plan individualized to the patient or the situation.
4. **Planning.** The registered nurse develops a plan that prescribes strategies and alternatives to attain expected outcomes.
5. **Implementation.** The registered nurse implements the identified plan.
 - A. **Coordination of Care.** The registered nurse coordinates care delivery.
 - B. **Health Teaching and Health Promotion.** The registered nurse employs strategies to promote health and a safe environment.
 - C. **Consultation.** The graduate-level prepared specialty nurse or advanced practice registered nurse provides consultation to influence the identified plan, enhance the abilities of others, and effect change.
 - D. **Prescriptive Authority and Treatment.** The advanced practice nurse uses prescriptive authority, procedures, referrals, treatments, and therapies in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.
6. **Evaluation.** The registered nurse evaluates progress toward attainment of outcomes.

Standards of Professional Performance

1. **Ethics.** The registered nurse practices ethically.
2. **Education.** The registered nurse attains knowledge and competency that reflects current nursing practice.
3. **Evidence-Based Practice and Research.** The registered nurse evaluates one's own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations.
4. **Quality of Practice.** The registered nurse contributes to quality of nursing practice.
5. **Communication.** The registered nurse communicates in all areas of practice.
6. **Leadership.** The registered nurse demonstrates leadership in professional practice setting and the profession
7. **Collaboration.** The registered nurse collaborates with healthcare consumer, family, and others in the conduct of nursing practice.
8. **Professional Practice Evaluation.** The registered nurse evaluates her or his own nursing practice in relation to professional practice standards and guidelines, relevant statutes, rules, and regulations.

9. **Resource Utilization.** The registered nurse utilizes appropriate resources to plan and provide nursing services that are safe, effective, and financially responsible.

10. **Environmental Health.** The registered nurse practices in an environmentally safe and healthy manner.

Source: (American Nurses Association, 2010b, p. 9-11)

Other Information

Nursing International Exchange Opportunities for Graduate Students

The College of Health Sciences has international exchange agreements with a number of universities. Graduate students in good standing within the University may apply for an international exchange experience during their academic program. Academic requirements and scheduling are negotiated between graduate course faculty at GC and the respective faculty abroad. For further information on the international exchange possibilities, please visit the [GC International Exchange](#) website and consult Dr. Sallie Coke/ sallie.coke@gcsu.edu.

Graduate Nursing Pin

Pin Description

The nursing pin is a replication of the Georgia College seal and bears the University colors of blue, green, & and gold. The center of the pin is gold. The University and specific nursing degree are identified with gold lettering.

In the center of the (Georgia College) seal is the Seal of the State of Georgia, indicating that Georgia College is a public institution.

In the four quadrants around the state seal are four orthodox academic symbols:

- a retort indicating science;
- a book symbolizing the arts;
- a philosopher's lamp for philosophy;
- and a laurel wreath, the symbol for honor and achievement.

Near the bottom, crossing the line separating the two lower quadrants, is the year in which the University was chartered, 1889.

The seal was designed by a faculty committee composed of Dr. J. C. Bonner (chairman), Dr. Ed Dawson, and Miss Janice Hardy.

("Thirty", Vol. XIV, No.28, 7/29/68 Georgia College - Milledgeville, GA)

A small gold Aladdin's lamp has been designated as a chain guard for the nursing pin.

Pin Purchase Policy

1. Only those persons confirmed as having graduated from the Georgia College nursing program may purchase a pin.
2. Graduates of the Georgia College graduate program may purchase the pin with the lettering "Masters of Science – Nursing."
3. Student must contact the university bookstore for specific information about pins and for ordering.

Scholarships, Awards and Honors

General information concerning scholarships, awards, prizes, and grants may be obtained from the scholarship committee. Contact the [GC Financial Aid Office](#) at 478.445.5149.

Georgia Nurses Foundation, Inc.

The Georgia Nurses Foundations offers scholarships on an annual basis. Visit their website for more information.

Georgia Association for Nursing Education (GANE)

GANE offers the Spillman-Bischoff scholarship for graduate nursing students. Visit their [website](#) for more information.

Theta Tau Nursing Scholarship

Students must be enrolled in graduate nursing and a member of the Theta Tau chapter of [Sigma Theta Tau, International](#). The recipient must have earned 20 hours of graduate credit prior to the year in which the scholarship is awarded. Contact the Theta Tau Chapter of Sigma Theta Tau International (STTI) for more information.

Outstanding Graduate Student

The purpose of the award is to recognize an outstanding graduate student in the areas of clinical performance, community service or service learning, and scholarly activities. Students are encouraged to develop a portfolio which documents their development as a master's prepared nurse, emphasizing the following areas: involvement with national or local nursing organizations in their area of expertise, university involvement, community service in the area of nursing, and the development of an evidence based practice in their area of expertise.

The award is given each spring to students who are graduating. Students whose graduate grade point average falls between a 3.50 and 4.00 will be notified that they are eligible to apply for this award.

Eligible students will submit:

1. A cover letter addressing the criteria
2. A current curriculum vitae
3. At least one supporting letter from a preceptor
4. At least one supporting letter from a faculty member
5. Other relevant documents

Participation in University Community

University-Level Committees

Graduate students are invited to serve on a number of committees at the University level in order to provide the unique perspective of the graduate nursing student to the group's work. If you have interest in serving on a university-level committee, please contact the Director of the School of Nursing at 478-445-1076.

Nursing Program Committees

Several standing and ad hoc committees exist to enable much of the work of the College of Health Sciences and the Nursing Program. If you are interested in serving on the Nursing Faculty Organization (NFO), please contact the Director of Nursing at 478.445.1076

**Student representatives will be excluded during admission/progression deliberations.*

*** Ad Hoc committees may be established by any standing committee or the Director and continue to function until their assignment is complete.*

GC Graduate Writing Manual Guidelines

Students enrolled in graduate programs at the Georgia College & State University School of Nursing are responsible for ensuring that assignments and major papers meet the format requirements of the program of study. The Georgia College School of Nursing has adopted the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition (referred to as the APA Manual) as the official guide for preparation of written work within all programs. This guide has been developed to assist students in preparation of written work in compliance with the guidelines. This document will also guide the student in adapting the guidelines to meet specific School of Nursing requirements.

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Appendix

Georgia College & State University College of Health Sciences School of Nursing Policies & Procedures

Policy/Procedure Title: MSN Admission, Progression & Dismissal	
Policy # 3001	Related policies: Online Testing #3000 ; MSN Student Orientation and Onboarding Process #1101
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> BSN <input type="checkbox"/> RNBSN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MSN <input type="checkbox"/> Postmaster MSN <input type="checkbox"/> DNP <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty
NFO Initial Approval Date: 4/29/19	Policy Committee Review Dates (every 3 years): NFO Approved Revision Dates:

Policy Statement:

The School of Nursing (SON) will adhere to a standard process for admission, progression and dismissal from the MSN Program of Georgia College & State University (hereafter “GC”). GC is committed to the fundamental principle of equal opportunity and equal treatment for every prospective and current student and strives to create a campus environment which understands, fosters, and embraces the value of diversity. No person shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or genetic information, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination, under any program or activity conducted by Georgia College. <http://catalog.gcsu.edu/2019-2020/Graduate-Catalog/Academic-Policies/Non-Discrimination>

Procedure:

- I. Advisement
Applicants who are accepted to GC as MSN majors or postmaster’s certificate programs will be assigned a SON faculty advisor.
- II. Application
 - A. Applicants should consult with graduate admissions to ensure all necessary requirements to apply to the MSN Program or postmaster’s certificate programs are met. It is the applicants’ responsibility to ensure that all requirements published on the official website and catalog are met.
 - B. Application dates are published on the official website at <https://www.gcsu.edu/health/nursing/nursing-msn>. The online application is available only during the designated application period. Late applications will not be accepted.

- C. Only applicants who submit a completed application by the published deadline will be considered for admission.
- D. Not all qualified applicants will be admitted due to space limitations in the cohort(s).
- E. In order to apply, students must complete the following by the deadline for applications:
 1. Submit a completed online application.
 2. Hold a baccalaureate degree in nursing from an Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) or Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) accredited program. Applicants who will receive their BSN degree and be eligible to sit for the licensure exam prior to the beginning of the MSN program can be accepted provisionally.
 3. Provide evidence of current licensure as a registered nurse and eligibility for licensure in Georgia by providing a copy of an unencumbered Georgia RN license.
 4. Because all students must complete any clinical learning in the state, a Georgia RN license or a Compact License is required. At least one year of clinical practice is required for consideration as a fulltime student, additional clinical experience is preferred. Students with no clinical experience may apply for the part time program.
 5. Have a grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.75 on a 4.0 scale for the last 60 undergraduate hours required in the nursing major.
 6. Submit three letters of reference from professionals who can speak to the applicant's experience and potential for success in master's studies.
 7. Submit official transcripts from all previous colleges/universities attended.
 8. Submit a current resume or curriculum vitae.
 9. Submit a statement of professional goals.
 10. Participate in an interview.
 11. Submit an onsite writing exercise at the time of the interview.

III. Admission

- A. Admission decisions are made by the GC School of Nursing (hereafter "SON") Graduate Nursing Committee (hereafter "GNC") based on criteria approved by the nursing faculty.
- B. Students will be notified of acceptance decisions within 4-6 weeks of the application deadline.
- C. Accepted students must meet the requirements specified in their acceptance letter in order to secure their placement in the MSN Program.
- D. Once accepted, students must:
 1. Complete all onboarding documents and submit to the SON by the deadline identified in the acceptance letter.
 2. Satisfy program orientation and onboarding requirements addressed in *SON Policy #3002 Graduate Student Orientation and Onboarding Process*.
 *Student participation in clinical experiences is contingent upon acceptance by the clinical facilities. Students who are not accepted by the clinical facilities may not be able to meet course and program requirements.

These students will be advised to withdraw from the program to avoid course failure.*

IV. Progression

A. Grade requirements for progression in the MSN program:

1. A grade of 80 (“B”) or higher in all **clinical nursing courses** in the program, and a “satisfactory” clinical rating in each clinical course is required to progress. Grades of “C”, “D” and “F” are **clinical nursing course failures**.
 - a. If a student earns a final “unsatisfactory” clinical rating in any clinical course, a grade of “F” will be assigned as the course grade.
2. A grade of 75 (“C”) or higher in all **non-clinical nursing courses** in the program is required to progress. Grades of “D” and “F” are **non-clinical nursing course failures**.

B. Re-Entry after Withdrawal or One Failure

1. Students who fail or withdraw from a course must petition for readmission into the MSN Program/concentration. There is no guarantee of readmission to the program/concentration.
2. Students may repeat only one course within the MSN Program. A student may reenter the program/concentration (if approved) only one time.
3. Procedure for re-entry to the MSN Program following a withdrawal or failure:
 - a. A nursing student who fails or withdraws from a nursing course and desires to continue to pursue a MSN degree at GC should initiate contact with his/her academic advisor to complete a SON petition for readmission. The petition should include the following: (a) insight into what circumstances contributed to unsuccessful completion of the course; (b) what steps have been (or will be) taken to promote success; and (c) an alternate program of study co-developed with the advisor. The petition should be submitted between the first day of finals week or by the day on which final grades are due for the semester (per academic calendar) in which the failing grade was earned.
 - b. The GNC Committee will make a decision regarding approval of the SON petition no later than the first full day of class of the next semester. The final approval of the petition, and the student’s eligibility to re-enter the program is at the discretion of the Director of the GC SON. When petition for re-entry is supported by the GNC and the Director, re-entry remains contingent on space availability in courses identified in the student’s revised program of study.
 - c. A Remediation Plan is required of all students reentering the nursing program. The GNC Committee will include remediation requirements in student petition responses.
 - d. A student who withdraws (whether voluntary or failure) from the MSN Program re-enters under the most current catalog and SON policies.
 - e. Nursing credit earned prior to readmission may or may not count toward progression, at the discretion of the faculty.

- f. GC nursing students are admitted into and progress as a cohort (group). A cohort is admitted to either a six-semester program of study (full-time) or a nine-semester program of study (part-time) each summer semester. Transferring between cohorts will only be considered on an individual basis through the SON petition process. Post-master's certificate students are admitted and will begin their individual program of study following a gap analysis by the specific program coordinator for which they are applying.

C. Exit Exam Policy

Following GC Policy, students receiving a MSN degree or post-master's certificate must pass the Exit Exam. The GC Exit Exam Policy may be found under Academic Policies (Exit Requirements) in the Graduate Catalog.

V. Disciplinary Action and Dismissal from the MSN Program

A. Unprofessional Conduct

Nurses and graduate student nurses are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner. Failing to meet the minimal standards of professional behavior in the clinical setting will result in an "F" in the course and/or possibly dismissal from the BSN Program. The Georgia Board of Nursing defines unprofessional conduct for nurses in the Nurse Practice Act as described on their website: <http://sos.ga.gov/PLB/acrobat/Forms/38%20Reference%20-%20Nurse%20Practice%20Act.pdf>.

A. Academic Code of Conduct

Graduate nursing students are expected to comply with all aspects of the GC Student Honor Code (hereafter "Honor Code") found in the GC Graduate Catalog <http://catalog.gcsu.edu/2018-2019/Graduate-Catalog/Academic-Policies/Copy-of-The-Honor-Code>. Students who fail to comply with the Honor Code will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include an "F" for the course(s) in which the Honor Code violation occurred and dismissal from the MSN Program. Any incidence of violation of the Honor Code involving Academic Dishonesty will be reported to the Judicial Council.

B. Compliance with Georgia Law Governing Nursing

Graduate nursing students are to comply with the Georgia Registered Professional Nurse Practice Act. Specific aspects of this law will be discussed in the first nursing course taken by all students and then threaded throughout the curriculum.

C. Certification and Licensure after Graduation

1. Previous Arrest or Legal Conviction

The Georgia Board of Nursing determines if an applicant with a previous legal conviction may become or remain licensed as an RN or APRN by the state. Any history of arrest may affect the applicant's ability to obtain licensure and/or certification. General guidance on previous legal convictions and effects on potential nursing license can be accessed on the State of Georgia website at: <http://sos.ga.gov/index.php/licensing/plb/45>.

2. US Citizenship

The application for licensure as a RN in Georgia requires disclosure of United States citizenship. Non-US-citizens must complete a form to determine qualified alien status. This form is part of the Georgia RN and APRN licensure application.

Georgia College & State University
College of Health Sciences
School of Nursing Policies & Procedures

Policy/Procedure Title: Graduate Student Orientation and Onboarding	
Policy #3002	Referenced policy: 1102 Course and Clinical Guidelines; SON Student Handbook Proctor Guidelines
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> BSN <input type="checkbox"/> RNBSN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MSN <input type="checkbox"/> DNP <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty
NFO Initial Approval Date: 4/29/19	Policy Committee Review Dates (every 3 years): NFO Approved Revision Dates:

Policy Statement:

The purpose of this policy is to guide the onboarding process for new graduate students.

Policy:

All students accepted into the School of Nursing graduate programs are required to complete the orientation and onboarding process for the program as described in this policy.

Procedures:

I. Newly accepted students will receive an email with onboarding instructions after confirming acceptance of offer of admission.

- A. Onboarding instructions include information regarding the following:
 1. Dates for Immersion week (attendance is mandatory)
 2. Overview/tentative schedule of events for Immersion Week
 3. Information regarding hotel accommodations for Immersion Week.
 4. Parking Information for Immersion Week (including parking pass and campus maps)
 5. Information re: required purchases during Immersion Week (clinical ID badge, malpractice insurance and clinical tracking program subscription.)
 6. Information re: mandatory Health Insurance requirement
 7. Information re: required equipment for all students enrolled in NRS 5480/Advanced Assessment

8. Technology information with student tech manual, necessary computer specifications for online classes and how to contact SERVE.
9. Information on how to register, set up email,
10. Links to academic calendar and campus directory, how to find out who advisor is, how to order books

B. Information regarding required forms and documents:

Students are required to bring a copy of each of the 5 documents below to Immersion Week in electronic format. These files are uploaded by the student into the clinical tracking system when they are on campus during Immersion week:

1. Current PPD exam (from the last 12 months-- Test result, showing test administered and read within 72 hours. If positive PPD, we must have confirmation of chest x-ray)
2. Current CPR card (Copy of Card--must be issued by American Heart Association)
3. Current Nursing License, which shows expiration date
4. Current Flu Vaccine documentation
5. Copy of Program of study

Students are given the following 5 documents that they are required to complete and bring to Immersion Week in electronic format. These files are uploaded by the student into the clinical tracking system when they are on campus during Immersion week:

1. Authorization for Release of Records
2. Graduate Technical Standards
3. Student Applied Learning Experience
4. HIPPA Self-Study Module & Quiz
5. Certification of Physical Exam
6. Handbook Receipt

C. Students are given instructions & required to complete the following before Immersion Week:

1. Background Check
2. Drug Screen

D. During Immersion week, students will be enrolled in Nightingale Cafe where all documents including student handbooks are housed. Student handbooks are also located on the SON webpage:

<https://www.gcsu.edu/health/nursing/nursing-msn>. Information from the student handbooks is reviewed with students during Immersion week.

E. Students will be provided orientation to clinical learning experiences during immersion week:

1. All students are required to obtain a photo ID Badge that will be worn at all clinical learning experiences
2. Specific information about required number of clinical hours, appropriate clinical sites and preceptors for individual programs (i.e. FNP, PMHNP, WHNP, NE, etc) will be discussed with students during sessions with program coordinators.
3. Information about the procedures used to obtain clinical placement are reviewed by the clinical placement coordinators.
4. In addition to the SON onboarding requirements, students are also required to meet any additional agency requirements that are associated with the agency in which they are completing their clinical hours.

F. Students will be provided orientation to the following during immersion week:

1. Advising process for graduate students.
2. Overview of program of study.

3. Transfer credit from another university.
4. Online learning systems and support (i.e.D2L, WebEx, online testing proctoring, SERVE, Library, etc.
5. Academic Honor Code
6. Petition process
7. Electronic Portfolio Requirements
8. Exit Exam
9. Application for graduation
10. Financial Aid

Georgia College & State University
College of Health Sciences
School of Nursing Policies & Procedures

Policy/Procedure Title: MSN Course and Clinical Guidelines	
Policy #3003	Referenced policy: 3000
Applies to	<input type="checkbox"/> BSN <input type="checkbox"/> RNBSN <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MSN <input type="checkbox"/> DNP <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty
NFO Initial Approval Date: 4/29/19	Policy Committee Review Dates (every 3 years): NFO Approved Revision Dates:

Policy Statement:

The purpose of this policy is to provide general guidelines for students and faculty related to course and clinical experiences. This policy complements other SON policies that address related areas.

Policy:

This School of Nursing policy will provide guidelines for the following:

1. course syllabi and learning management system documents,
2. evaluation of student attainment of course outcomes,
3. course and clinical attendance,
4. technology use.

Procedures:

I. Course Syllabi and Learning Management System Documents

a. Syllabi

In accordance with Board of Regents' policy, students will be provided a syllabus for each course in which they are enrolled. This syllabus will include specifics of course requirements including:

- Title of course, credits, etc.
- Faculty
- Course and Program Outcomes
- Grading criteria for classroom and clinical
- Required and recommended texts

- GCSU Graduate Syllabus Required Statements, available at this link:
<http://www.gcsu.edu/registrar/required-syllabus-statements>

b. Learning Management System

- Students are required to access course materials online through GaView. Course calendars, clinical schedules when applicable, and course information will be available at this site.

II. Evaluation of Student Attainment of Course Objectives

Evaluation of student attainment of course outcomes will be accomplished using a variety of methods specified in course syllabi.

A. Classroom Evaluation

- Criteria for grade calculation are included in the syllabus for each course. The grading scale adopted by the School of Nursing assigns letter grades for numerical scores as follows:

A = 90 - 100

B = 80 - 89

C = 75 - 79

D = 66 - 74

F = 65 and below

- For additional information, refer also to Online Testing Policy #3000.

- Rounding of Grades:

Rounding for this course will occur only with the final average grade for the course. There will be no rounding of exam grades or other written assignments during the semester. If the final course average to the nearest tenth is 0.5 or more, the final course grade will be rounded up to the next whole number (i.e. 88.5 would be rounded to 89)

B. Clinical Evaluation

- Clinical performance is evaluated using a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory system. The student must earn a satisfactory grade for clinical experiences in order to pass the course. Students who do not earn a satisfactory rating for the clinical experience will receive an "F" for the course.

- Note: Receiving 2 clinical unsatisfactory ratings will result in failure of the course.

Students must meet Technical Standards each semester. Students who experience a health event such as surgery or injury must have clearance from a healthcare provider (MD, DO, NP or PA) before returning to the clinical setting. Clearance must indicate the student can practice in the clinical setting without restrictions.

- All planned clinical hours must be logged into the clinical tracking system calendar **prior to attendance** at the clinical learning experience to receive clinical credit for the hours. Faculty are required to verify student attendance at clinical using this calendar. Students who are not in the clinical setting as indicated by the clinical calendar will receive a clinical unsatisfactory for that day.

- All clinical hours for the course must be logged into the clinical tracking system by the date indicated by course faculty. Clinical hours cannot be scheduled during any University closure (i.e.: holidays, spring break, etc.)

- Faculty Clinical Evaluations are completed after faculty visits to the student in the clinical setting.
- Course Specific Clinical Evaluation
 - Each clinical nursing course identifies specific core competencies for satisfactory clinical performance. These expectations are indicated in course materials, and may include guidelines, checklists, or other forms which describe the course specific requirements for satisfactory clinical performance. Each course also describes the method by which clinical evaluation will be conducted, which may include, but is not limited to observation of performance by faculty and/or others supervising the student, written assignments, journals, or self evaluation.

III. Course and Clinical Attendance

- Attendance at all scheduled classes, and clinical is necessary to meet course outcomes. It is the student's responsibility to check the class/clinical rotation schedules and arrive promptly to the assigned class, or clinical agency site in appropriate attire. Students have responsibility for their class/clinical learning experience. They should prepare for each class/clinical and communicate their learning needs to their instructors.
- Courses may vary with the tardiness or absence policy. In the event of tardiness or absence, students should communicate to their instructors as directed by the course syllabus. Refer to #3000 Online Testing Policy for missed exams.
- As part of class/clinical experience students will be required to attend selected lectures, conferences and workshops which enhance their professional development. Students will be notified of these events in advance so that schedules can be planned accordingly.
- Students may be required to travel in excess of 50 miles to obtain necessary clinical experiences.
- Electronic Devices - All electronic devices should be on mute, silent, or off during class. Usage in class activities will be determined by the instructor. Electronic usage during clinical must comply with the agency's policy.
- In the case of extreme weather, students should monitor the GCSU webpage, Bobcats and GaView email in the event of class or clinical cancellations.

IV. Technology Use

- Nursing courses use numerous software and online programs to support student learning. These programs include, but are not limited to: GaView, EValue, and Office 365. Refer to this site for Information Technology specifications:
<http://www.gcsu.edu/technology/studentinfo> Serve Help Desk can be contacted at 478 445-7378 or by email at serve@gcsu.edu

V. Recording of Classroom/Clinical Activities

- Standardized patient experiences are recorded and viewed by both faculty and students to meet course objectives and learning needs. These recordings are housed in a password protected system to ensure student privacy. Some student recordings may be shared during debriefing with the students' permission in order to encourage an open exchange of ideas among students and faculty. For the purpose of confidentiality (in accord with federal HIPAA regulations), taping of patient clinical encounters in the clinical setting is not permitted.

Georgia College & State University
 College of Health Sciences
 School of Nursing Policies & Procedures

Policy/Procedure Title: MSN Dress Code	
Policy #3004	Referenced policy:
Applies to	__BSN __RNBSN _x_MSN __DNP __Faculty
NFO Initial Approval Date: 4/29/19	Policy Committee Review Dates (every 3 years): NFO Approved Revision Dates:

Policy Statement:

The School of Nursing (SON) graduate students will adhere to SON dress code during clinical experiences.

Procedures:

- Students engaged in clinical activities are expected to dress in an appropriate and professional manner. While traditional nursing uniforms are expected in some clinical settings used for learning by graduate students, the majority of settings require professional dress or business casual and lab coats.
- Students are required to wear the official Georgia College Bobcat Nursing Photo ID.
- The dress and behavior of the student reflects on the student, the School of Nursing, and the University. Specific uniform guidelines will be discussed in courses with clinical components. Gauged earrings, multiple piercings, exposed tattoos, and nail polish are not allowed in the clinical setting.
- Educator Focus students will follow all guidelines for the facilities in which they are assigned for clinical experiences.
- OSHA requires closed toed shoes to be worn in the workplace.

Student Handbook Receipt

I have read the Georgia College Graduate Student Handbook and agree to adhere to the policies stated herein.

Student Name (Please Print):

Student Signature:

Student Signature Date:
