THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN NURSING
and
POST-MASTER NURSING PROGRAMS

STUDENT HANDBOOK

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# Master of Science in Nursing Programs Student Handbook

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SECTION I PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The College of Nursing and Health Innovation Vision and Mission

Vision
We provide innovative, exceptional education, research and practice opportunities to those committed to advancing health and the human condition.

Mission
Our mission is to advance health and the human condition by working across disciplinary boundaries to prepare diverse populations of students to engage in critical inquiry and high quality practice.

Accreditation
The baccalaureate, masters and DNP programs at The University of Texas at Arlington are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) - One DuPont Circle, NW, Suite 530, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 887-6791. The University of Texas at Arlington is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

Master of Science in Nursing Program Outcomes
Graduate nursing education builds on a foundation of undergraduate nursing education and provides an opportunity for professional nurses to develop a specialty practice that is congruent with an expanding theoretical and empirical knowledge base. The graduate program in nursing is designed to assist professional nurses to prepare for advanced clinical and functional roles that demand increased accountability, expertise, and leadership. The master's program facilitates the use of the research process through the course of study and prepares the graduate to be a critical thinker and a self-directed professional who collaborates with consumers and other health care providers.

Outcomes
The graduate is provided a background to:
1. Demonstrate competence in an advanced nursing role;
2. Participate in scholarly endeavors to advance nursing knowledge;
3. Provide leadership in professional nursing and interdisciplinary health care

Post-Master’s Certificates
The Department of Graduate Nursing offers Post-Master's Certificate programs for Nurse Practitioners. Students seeking a Post-Master's Certificate must have completed an MSN from an NLNAC or CCNE accredited program. Depending on course work completed for the MSN and current advanced practice status (as applicable), an individualized certificate degree plan will be developed. Please note the following for all NNP Post-Master's Certificate programs: Post-Master's Certificate degree plans are individually created based on a gap analysis of the applicant's MSN transcript and experience. If you have questions about a post-master's certificate program and what
your specific degree program might look like, you will need to apply for admission to the university, including the submission of your transcripts and curriculum vitae for review. Post-master's certificates are available in most all of the above nurse practitioner specialties.

**Program History and Structure**

The UT Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation was established in 1971 as the U.T. System College of Nursing in Fort Worth and was housed in John Peter Smith Hospital. In 1976, the school became an academic unit of UT Arlington, moving to the campus in 1977. The history of the UT Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation is available at: [http://www.uta.edu/conhi/about/history.php](http://www.uta.edu/conhi/about/history.php).

The UT Arlington Master of Science in Nursing Program offers preparation in Nursing Administration, Nursing Education, and Nurse Practitioner. Nurse Practitioner preparation includes the areas (Scope of Practice) of Adult Gerontology Acute Care, Adult Gerontology Primary Care, Family, Neonatal, Acute Care Pediatric, Primary Care Pediatric, and Family Psychiatric-Mental Health.

**Administration**

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SECTION II POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Academic Integrity and Scholastic Dishonesty
All students enrolled in this course are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington’s tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.

I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted.
Per UT System Regents’ Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university’s standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with the University policy, which may result in the student’s suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at https://www.uta.edu/conduct/.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

As a licensed registered nurse, graduate students are expected to demonstrate professional conduct as set forth in the Texas Board of Nursing rule §215.8. in the event that a graduate student holding an RN license is found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, the college may report the nurse to the Texas BON using rule §215.8 as a guide.

**Advisement & Registration**

The Graduate Nursing Programs implement advisement via the Internet and/or in person with Academic Advisors. Academic Advisors are assigned to students following admission. The list of Academic Advisors is available on the College of Nursing and Health Innovation website: http://www.uta.edu/conhi/students/advising/nursing-grad.php. Following admission, as part of the new student orientation process, students are provided a degree plan and information on course registration. Students register in courses online (in MyMav Student Center) each semester according to the degree plan provided in orientation. Students needing changes in their degree plan can discuss their requested changes with their Academic Advisor via e-mail, by telephone, or make an appointment to discuss their degree plan in person. Students desiring to change their program of study from one specialty area to another must contact their Academic Advisor and the Director of the program to which they wish to move for approval. The Academic Advisor will work with the student regarding the specific process for the change of program. Additional information regarding changing programs is provided later in the handbook (Changing Programs/Student Movement Between MSN Traditional MSN, OFF-CAMPUS MSN Programs, and NP Programs).

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:
The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)  [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS)  [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

Non-Discrimination Policy:  The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).

Title IX Policy
The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

Campus Carry
Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/](http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/).

Student Success Faculty
In order to assist masters nursing students who are at academic risk or who need academic support, there are graduate faculty members available to you. The goal of the success faculty members is to support student achievement in masters-level coursework so students can reach their educational goals. Students may contact a success faculty member directly, or a course instructor may encourage you to contact a success faculty member.

The success faculty in the MSN Program:

Dr. Donelle Barnes is available as a writing coach to assist students in the MSN Core courses; theory, research, and evidence based practice. Since these courses are writing intensive, Dr. Barnes can help students improve the clarity and organization of their written papers. She can be reached via email: [donelle@uta.edu](mailto:donelle@uta.edu).

Dr. Mary Schira is available as a success faculty to assist with diverse resources that may include study skills, testing challenges/approaches, managing multiple responsibilities, and addressing personal issues impacting academic performance. Course content challenges may also be addressed, with referral to additional resources as indicated. Dr. Schira can be reached via email: [schira@uta.edu](mailto:schira@uta.edu).
APA Format
All Graduate Nursing students are required to type their formal papers using APA (American Psychological Association) Format.

Attendance
Regular class attendance and participation is expected of all students. Students are responsible for all missed course information.

Bomb Threat
Students should be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

Change of Program/ Student Movement between Traditional MSN Programs, OFF-CAMPUS MSN Programs, or NP Programs

1. Movement between programs or specialties is not allowed until a student has completed 9 hours in the program or specialty to which he or she was admitted.

2. To qualify to switch from one program to another, a student must have a current and admission GPA equal to or higher than the lowest GPA admitted to the ‘new’ program in that semester.

   For example, a MSN administration student with a current GPA of 3.2 and an admission GPA of 3.1 will not be allowed to switch to the FNP program if the lowest admission GPA in the FNP program that semester was 3.5. However, if a PNP student with an admission and current GPA of 3.5 may be allowed to switch to the Nursing Education program if the lowest admission GPA in the education program that semester was 3.2.

3. Students who are qualified may only make one move during their MSN program. This includes moving between:
   a. An on-campus program and an off-campus program
   b. An off-campus program and an on-campus program
   c. One off-campus program and another off-campus program
   d. One specialty and another specialty whether on campus or online

   For example, this applies to a student in the on-campus MSN in nursing education program to an on-campus NP program. It also applies to a student changing from the off-campus FNP program to the on-campus FNP program.

4. The deadline for submitting a request to change programs or majors is 4:00 pm CST on the graduate course drop date for the traditional semester. This deadline applies to students whether in the on-campus or off-campus program.

5. Changes become effective at the beginning of the next semester.

6. Exceptions to this policy may be made for extenuating circumstances.
**Course Scheduling & Progression**

The Nursing Administration, Nursing Education, and Family Nurse Practitioner (NP) Programs are offered off-campus/online in an accelerated format with Academic Partnerships. Courses are scheduled to be completed in 5 to 14 week time frames. Students in the off-campus FNP Program will be required to come to UTA campus for a full day during NURS 5430 FNP I. The Neonatal NP Program is offered online (with 2 on campus requirements) in the traditional semester length format.

The Adult Gerontology Acute Care NP, Adult Gerontology Primary Care NP, Family NP, Acute Care Pediatric NP, Primary Care Pediatric, and Psychiatric Mental Health NP MSN Programs are offered on campus using a variety of scheduling options for courses that include evenings and weekends. Some courses in the Pediatric NP Programs are offered only on Saturday. Class schedules are posted on the UTA web site. Many courses use blended online/on campus strategies; some core courses are offered online.

Students have the option to complete their MSN with full-time (minimum 6 semester credit hours per semester) or part-time (less than 6 semester credit hours per semester) study. The degree must be completed within a 6 year time frame. Courses are offered during Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters (individual course offerings will vary by semester). The number of precepted clinical hours required depends upon the major area of study.

**Leave of Absence**

In order for a graduate student to continue as an active/enrolled student, the student must be enrolled in a minimum of one semester credit hour each long semester (Fall and Spring). A student may request a Leave of Absence to respond to unusual circumstances that prevent them from meeting the continuous enrollment requirement. A leave of absence may be granted for “good cause” (e.g. pregnancy, health related issues, significant family concerns, etc.) that would interfere with the student’s ability to participate in graduate study. Leaves are granted for a maximum of two long semesters during the student’s graduate study. Only students in good academic standing (minimum GPA 3.0) may be granted a Leave. The Continuous Enrollment and Leave of Absence Policies are available in the University Catalog: [http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/registration/#graduatetext](http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/registration/#graduatetext).

Prior to requesting a Leave of Absence, the student should discuss the request with their Academic Advisor and develop a revised degree plan. A student requesting a Leave of Absence must complete the Leave of Absence Request form (available online at: [http://grad.pci.uta.edu/students/forms/masters/#forms11](http://grad.pci.uta.edu/students/forms/masters/#forms11)). The request for the Leave of Absence is submitted to the Academic Advisor who will forward the request to the student’s Associate Chair for action.

**Current Mailing & Email Address**

Students are required to maintain a current mailing address and telephone number contact with the University. A change of address may be completed online via MyMav. This is essential in order that schedules, official correspondence, scholarship notification, and emergency messages will not be delayed or lost. Per UTA policy, MavMail is the official email for all CONHI and university-wide to communicate pertinent information and students will be held responsible for information distributed in this manner. Personal and/or work emails will not be used.
Dispute & Grievance Procedures
The policies and procedures for Grade Grievances and Grievances Other Than Grades are located in the University Catalog at: http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/grades/#graduatetext. For student complaints, see http://www.uta.edu/deanofstudents/student-complaints/index.php.

It is the student’s responsibility to first make a serious effort to resolve any disputes regarding academic matters include a grievance regarding grades with the faculty member involved. When the dispute is not resolved with the individual faculty member, the student should contact their Program Director.

A disagreement with the judgement made by the faculty member in assigning a course grade is not a valid basis for an appeal (grievance) of a grade. In a grievance (appeal) related to a course grade, the student must provide information to support one of the following reasons for the appeal: 1) discrimination 2) differential treatment or 3) procedural irregularities. The grade must be submitted in writing—on an appeal form available from the Associate Dean of the Graduate Nursing Program. The completed form (including additional information as needed) is returned to the Associate Dean, who will appoint a Grievance Committee to review the course grade appeal. A flowchart describing the steps for filing and proceeding with a course grade grievance may be found in the Appendix-E. The student has one calendar year from the date the grade is assigned to initiate an appeal.

Disruption in Clinical Coursework (Nurse Practitioner Programs)
Degree plans are developed so that once Nurse Practitioner students begin courses with clinical practice requirements the student is expected to enroll in a clinical course each long semester. Nurse Practitioner Program students who have a disruption in required clinical courses and are not enrolled in a clinical course during a long semester (fall or spring) may be required to enroll in a one hour (minimum) Independent Study that focuses on clinical practice prior to enrolling in a clinical course. The decision regarding the Independent Study requirement will be made by the Program Director in consultation with the Academic Advisor.

The number of clinical hours (generally 45-60 per Independent Study semester hour credit), other learning activities, evaluation criteria, and evidence of completion for the Independent Study will be individually negotiated with a faculty member identified by the student. Requirements will be specified in a written Independent Study contract. Potential causes for disruptions include but are not limited to change in degree plan, student withdrawal from a course, unresolved incomplete grade in a prerequisite course, and/or academic probation.

Dress Code
The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation expects students to reflect professionalism and maintain high standards of appearance and grooming in the clinical setting. Professional attire (which may include lab coat) is expected. Jeans/western cut pants, sweatshirts, shirts of underwear type, see-through clothing, sleeveless shirts or any clothing which exposes a bare midriff, back, chest or underwear are prohibited. Tattoos must be covered. Skirt length must be knee length or longer. Appearance must be clean and neat. Students in agencies where scrubs are provided should follow the above standards prior to changing into scrubs. Students inappropriately attired will not be allowed to participate in clinical. In addition, MSN Students MUST be clearly identified as UTA Graduate Students and wear a UTA College of Nursing
Dropping/Withdrawing from Course(s)

On-campus - Graduate students who wish to change a schedule by either dropping or adding a course must first consult with their Graduate Advisor.

Regulations pertaining to adding or dropping courses are described below. Adds and drops may be made through late registration either on the Web at MyMav or in person through the student’s academic department. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships at [http://www.uta.edu/fao/](http://www.uta.edu/fao/). The last day to drop a course is listed in the Academic Calendar available at [http://www.uta.edu/uta/acadcal.php?session=20166](http://www.uta.edu/uta/acadcal.php?session=20166)

1. A student may not add a course after the end of late registration.
2. A student dropping a graduate course after the Census Date but on or before the last day to drop may, receive a grade of W. Students dropping a course must:
   1) Contact your graduate advisor to obtain the drop form and further instructions before the last day to drop.


Dropping or Withdrawing after the Last Day to Drop

Dropping a course after the Last Drop Date requires the academic dean’s permission. Students seeking this permission should complete the "Graduate Withdrawal and Drop Policy Exception Form" available in the advising office of their major department.

Repeated Course Withdrawal Policy

A student may withdraw from the same course a maximum of 2 times. “Withdrawal” is defined as dropping a course after census date and is indicated by a “W” on the student’s academic transcript. The third time the student enrolls in the course they will not be permitted to withdraw from the course after census date. Students with extenuating circumstances may petition the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing for permission to withdraw.

Electronic Communication

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. **All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly.** There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at [http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php](http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php). Students who are unable to resolve MyMav email issues should contact the Helpdesk at [helpdesk@uta.edu](mailto:helpdesk@uta.edu).
Gift Policy
In accordance with Regent Rules and Regulations and the UTA Standards of Conduct, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation has a “no gift” policy. A donation to one of the UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation Scholarship Funds, found at the following link: is http://www.uta.edu/conhi/students/scholarships/index.php would be an appropriate way to recognize a faculty member’s contribution to your learning. For information regarding Scholarship Funds, please contact the Dean’s office.

Grade Requirements
Graduate students are considered to be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress in a degree program if they 1) meet all admission conditions within the time required 2) have a B (3.0) or better grade-point average on all coursework undertaken while in Graduate School and 3) have a B (3.0) or better grade-point average in courses needed to satisfy degree requirements by the end of the semester in which they intend to graduate. Students must be in good academic standing by the end of their final semester in order to receive an advanced degree from UT Arlington. (See Section III - Academic Standing and Progression).

GTA / GRA
The College of Nursing and Health Innovation provides paid teaching and research assistantship appointments to graduate students in nursing who are in good standing in the University and registered as a full-time or part-time student. Graduate students who have selected teaching as their functional area are encouraged to participate as teaching assistants to facilitate their future employment in schools of nursing. Non-resident students approved to be a GTA or GRA prior to registration are eligible for resident tuition and fees. (For additional information, see Graduate Catalog).

Independent Study
A student may register for independent study provided it is part of their approved program plan. Prior to registration, the student must contact the supervising faculty to obtain permission. The student must complete and sign an Independent Study Agreement with their supervising faculty and submit it to their Academic Advisor. An independent study is graded on pass-fail basis. Students may not request an incomplete grade for independent study in order to complete a project. Instead, the "R" grade is assigned and the student must register again the following semester to complete the independent study and receive a pass (P) or fail (F) grade.

Inclement Weather
Whenever the University is facing inclement weather, students should watch for notices via MavWire EXTRA, the University's home page, local media outlets, Twitter and Facebook. Additionally, up-to-date recorded information is available on the University's Emergency Information Hotline at 1-866-258-4913.

Banking Clinical Hours
The banking of clinical hours only occurs after the successful completion of course requirement prior to the final practicum course and is at the discretion of the Director of the student's program. Students desiring to bank clinical hours should review the Criteria for Banking Clinical Hours (in Appendix-A), complete the Banking Clinical Hours Contract (available on Blackboard – msn: clinical coordinator), and obtain written approval from their clinical faculty and Program Director to bank clinical hours.
Clinical Compliance/Eligibility
All students must have current immunizations to legally perform clinical hours each semester. If your clinical clearance is not current, you will be unable to do clinical hours that are required for this course and this would result in course failure.

Please visit the “clinical coordinator” organization on Black Board (Bb) for all your clinical clearance questions or contact your clinical coordinators for clinical clearance questions.
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Angel Korenek angel.korenek@uta.edu (students M-Z)

Licenses and Certifications:
- RN Licensure: Renewed every 2 years.
- BCLS (Healthcare Provider): Renewed every 2 years. **ONLY through AHA**
- PALS: Required for ACPNP Renewed every 2 years. **ONLY through AHA**
- NRP: Required for NNP Renewed every 2 years.

AHA = American Heart Association

Immunizations:
- Hepatitis B: Proof of full 3-vaccine series or positive antibody titer. For negative or equivocal titer a single booster and repeat titer.
- Hepatitis A: Documentation of 2 doses or positive titer.
- MMR: Documentation of 2 doses or positive titers.
- TDaP (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis): Booster (one dose as adult) within the last 10 years.
- Varicella (Chicken Pox): Documentation of 2 doses or positive titer. History of infection is not accepted as proof of immunity.
- Influenza: Required annually during flu season usually from September through March or April. Exceptions made for medical and religious reasons, but must adhere to hospital policies.
- TB Test: Annual requirement can be either TST or QFT. If history of positive PPD test, must provide documentation of negative chest x-ray within 5 years with annual surveillance required.

Prior to the first clinical course
Approximately 30 days prior to the beginning of the student’s first clinical course, the student will be required to complete a Criminal Background Check and Urine Drug Screen. There will be additional fees associated with each.

Criminal Background Check (fee required)
You must submit and pass a Criminal Background Check **30 days prior to your first clinical course**. The Criminal Background Check is accomplished with Certified Background as noted above.
http://uta.certifiedbackground.com/. If this is done before the 30 day period, another background check will be required with an additional fee.

**Drug Screen Policy** (fee required)
Students are required to complete a urine drug screen approximately **30 days prior to the beginning, or their first clinical course.** Using the companies recommended through Certified Background. A negative drug screen is required for clinical clearance; a positive drug screen will be managed by the Associate Dean. If this is done before the 30 day period, another drug screen will be required with an additional fee.

**Electronic Clinical Log**
Students in the MSN NP Programs will be required to maintain a Clinical Electronic Log of each patient encounter as part of their clinical learning experience in their coursework. This log will also be used in evaluating and grading student clinical performance.

**Preceptors – Clinical Courses**
Clinical practice experiences are required in all Graduate Nursing Programs. The number of clinical practice/experience hours completed varies by major program of work (e.g. Nurse Practitioner versus Nursing Education). Clinical hours are completed with volunteer preceptors who share their expertise with graduate nursing students. Appendix-B includes more detailed information regarding preceptor criteria and responsibilities, student responsibilities, and faculty responsibilities (Appendix-C) for the Graduate Nursing Programs. Additional criteria and/or responsibilities may vary in individual courses and will be detailed in the course syllabus.

Evaluations of the clinical experience are submitted by the preceptor, student, and faculty at the completion of the required hours. Evaluation forms (specific to each MSN major and/or course) are available in Blackboard – msn: clinical coordinator and in the electronic log system.

**Professional Liability Insurance**
The Liability Insurance Policy is provided through UTA and is covered by a student fee each year that is assessed in the Fall registration. [https://www-devel.uta.edu/conhi/students/msn-resources/index.php](https://www-devel.uta.edu/conhi/students/msn-resources/index.php)

**Status of RN Licensure**
All graduate nursing students must have an unencumbered license as designated by the Board of Nursing (BON) requirements specific to your state of licensure during enrollment in the Graduate Nursing Programs. Students MAY NOT participate in graduate clinical nursing courses with an encumbered license. It is imperative that any student whose license becomes encumbered (includes ANY stipulations) by the BON must immediately notify the Associate Dean of the Department of Graduate Nursing. Students are required to report the encumbered license whether they are enrolled in a clinical or non-clinical course. Check your states complete policy about encumbered licenses. For Texas it is available online at: [www.bon.state.tx.us](http://www.bon.state.tx.us). Failure to inform the Associate Dean of an encumbered license is grounds for dismissal.
**Student Confidentiality Agreement**
Students are required to sign and submit a Student Confidentiality Form as part of the Clinical Requirements completed following admission. Students should take a copy of this Confidentiality Form with them to their clinical sites if requested by the facility/sites. Do not sign other agency confidentiality forms. The student should contact the course faculty or Clinical Coordinator if the agency requires an additional confidentiality form.

**Student Code of Ethics**
The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation supports the Student Code of Ethics Policy (Appendix-D). Students are responsible for knowing and complying with the Code.

**Student Information Bulletin Boards**
General and special notices for students are posted on the bulletin boards located on the 2nd floor of Pickard Hall and sent via UTA e-mail.

**Student Support Services**
UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php.

**Student Success Faculty**
In order to assist masters nursing students who are at academic risk or who need academic support, there are graduate faculty members available to you. The goal of the success faculty members is to support student achievement in masters-level coursework so students can reach their educational goals. Students may contact a success faculty member directly, or a course instructor may encourage you to contact a success faculty member. The success faculty in the MSN Program:

Dr. Donelle Barnes is available as a writing coach to assist students in the MSN Core courses; theory, research, and evidence based practice. Since these courses are writing intensive, Dr. Barnes can help students improve the clarity and organization of their written papers. She can be reached via email: donelle@uta.edu.

Dr. Mary Schira is available as a success faculty to assist with diverse resources that may include study skills, testing challenges/approaches, managing multiple responsibilities, and addressing personal issues impacting academic performance. Course content challenges may also be addressed, with referral to additional resources as indicated. Dr. Schira can be reached via email: schira@uta.edu.

**Title IX**
The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of
sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. For information regarding Title IX, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or jmhood@uta.edu.

**Transfer Course Credit**
A maximum of 25% of a program’s required semester hours (9-12 semester hours) may be accepted for transfer credit with the approval of the graduate nursing faculty. Only courses completed with grades of A or B are accepted for transfer credit. Transfer of required courses from other universities involves the submission of a course syllabus. The syllabus is reviewed by the faculty at UTA who determine whether the course taken at another university has comparable course outcomes and assignments. Some courses reviewed by the faculty are not accepted for transfer. Students requesting transfer credit must complete and submit the Course Transfer Credit Form to their Academic Advisor and an official transcript with the course grade posted must be sent to UTA's Admissions Office to receive credit.

**Verification of Medical Insurance Coverage**
All newly admitted UTA Graduate Nursing Students are required to provide Verification of Medical Insurance Coverage that includes Emergency Department coverage and follow-up treatment for needle sticks and blood borne diseases. This mandatory requirement has been approved by the UT System Board of Regents.

**Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens**
In the event of injury, needle stick, and/or exposure of the nursing student to blood or body fluids, the nursing student should immediately notify the nursing clinical faculty. The faculty will follow the Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens Procedure. (Follow procedures at the site.) [http://www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)

**SECTION III**
**ACADEMIC STANDING AND PROGRESSION**

**Academic Standing**
Policies and procedures for academic standing and progression in the Graduate Nursing Programs are consistent with UTA Graduate policies. UTA Policies are available in the University Catalog. Current and previous academic year catalogs are available at: [http://catalog.uta.edu/](http://catalog.uta.edu/). Policies specific to Academic Standing are found at: [http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/academicstanding/](http://catalog.uta.edu/academicregulations/academicstanding/).

As noted in the Graduate policies related to Academic Standing:

“Graduate students are considered to be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress in a degree or certificate program if they 1) meet all admission conditions within the time required, 2) have a B (3.0) or better grade point average on all coursework undertaken while enrolled as a graduate student at UT Arlington and, 3) have a B (3.0) or better grade point average in courses needed to satisfy degree requirements by the end of the semester in which they intend to graduate.”
Departments may specify additional requirements that students must meet in order to be in good standing or to be considered to be making satisfactory progress. Students should understand and follow those requirements because failure to meet them may lead to dismissal (see Dismissal, below). Students must be in good academic standing by the end of their final semester in order to receive an advanced degree or certificate from UT Arlington. Refer to the section Courses That Do Not Provide Graduate Credit for an explanation of courses that do not provide graduate credit and will not be used to determine academic standing or to satisfy degree requirements.”

**Academic Probation**
Per the Graduate Policy, “A graduate student whose cumulative grade point average falls below a 3.00 in all graduate courses, be they graduate or undergraduate level taken while enrolled as a UT Arlington graduate student, will be placed on academic probation. The student must attain a grade point average of at least 3.00 in the next semester he or she is enrolled or be subject to dismissal. Undergraduate courses or graduate courses graded P, R, I or W or courses that do not provide graduate credit cannot be used to remove the condition of academic probation.” Courses that are not part of the student’s degree plan do not contribute to GPA.

Graduate Nursing students placed on academic probation are required to meet with their Academic Advisor to discuss plans for improvement and potential revision of their degree plan. Students may meet with the Academic Advisor electronically, via telephone, or in person. Students on academic probation will not be able to register for a following semester until cleared by their Academic Advisor (an advising hold will be placed in MyMav).

Students who do not gain good academic standing in the semester following completion of the probation semester will be academically dismissed. A student who has been dismissed for failure to maintain a GPA 3.0 may petition the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing to continue in the program.

**Petitions to Continue in the Graduate Nursing Program**
Students who wish to submit a petition to continue in the Graduate Nursing Program must meet with their Academic Advisor. During that meeting, students should be prepared to discuss how/why plans to regain good academic standing during the probation semester were not successful and develop a specific plan for improvement. The student is responsible for submitting the petition electronically – the petition form is available at: [http://grad.pci.uta.edu/students/forms/masters/](http://grad.pci.uta.edu/students/forms/masters/). Students are also strongly encouraged to meet with the student success faculty (see information in previous section related to student success) to develop plans to support academic success.

The student’s petition to continue in the Graduate Nursing Program will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing. If the subcommittee agrees to approve the student’s petition to continue, the Academic Advisor will work with the student to review/revise the student’s degree plan and assist with clearing the student for enrollment. If the subcommittee does not agree to approve the petition, the petition will be referred to the full Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing for discussion and action. Students should be aware that the full Committee does not meet during Summer session and will be unable to enroll until the Committee meets in regular session.

In some cases, a student may need/wish to submit a second petition to continue. If the conditions of
the first petition were met, the subcommittee of the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing will review the petition. As above, if the subcommittee agrees to approve the student’s petition to continue, the Academic Advisor will work with the student to review/revise the student’s degree plan and assist with clearing the student for enrollment. If the conditions of the first petition were not met, the petition will be referred to the full Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing for discussion and action.

SECTION IV

GRADUATION AND FINAL SEMESTER REQUIREMENTS

Final Semester Requirements
Students must be enrolled in a graduate course(s) for the semester in which they expect to graduate. In addition, the following items must be filed in the Office of Records and Registration of the University and the required fees paid by the deadlines given in the University Schedule published online.

1. All graduating students must file an Application for Graduation (degree conferral) and pay the Diploma Fee. The application is not transferable to a subsequent semester; therefore, if a student does not graduate at the time indicated in the initial application, that application will be cancelled and a new one must be filed for the semester of graduation. The Diploma Fee is also nontransferable and non-refundable.

2. Master's program non-thesis students must:
   a. Complete the Practicum Course in their major area of study
   b. Submit Application for graduation

Recognition by BON as an Advanced Practice Nurse
UT Arlington prepares Nurse Practitioners through an MSN degree program or a formal post-master’s certificate program. All individuals prepared as Nurse Practitioners must be certified in their area of specialization. All individuals completing preparation as a Nurse Practitioner must also be recognized by the Board of Nursing (BON) as an Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) prior to practicing as a Nurse Practitioner. Students are responsible for completion and submission of the National Certification and BON applications and for obtaining their APN status.
Clinical hours can ONLY be banked between the final graded clinical course and the end of program practicum (NURS5331/5631) and must be active and in good standing.

The maximum number of hours that can be banked is 180 hours. The Director of a Program may specify more or less hours.

The following criteria must be met before a student is authorized to bank hours:

- All clinical hours must have been completed in prerequisite clinical course(s)
- All clinical hours and patients must have been entered in Typhon
- The clinical evaluation for the prerequisite course(s) must have been completed and passed with a satisfactory grade.
- All major course requirements of the prerequisite course(s) must have been completed with satisfactory (passing) performance.
- The student must be an active student status and in good standing – have an overall average of B (3.0) to progress to the final practicum.
- A student may NOT bank if there is a possibility that the grade in the immediate prerequisite course will impact the overall GPA in a negative manner – i.e., the course grade would lower the overall GPA below 3.0 (B).
- The student MUST complete the official Banking Form found on the graduate web site.
- The student must have approval of their clinical faculty.
- The form must specify the specific days, times, and preceptor.
- After the form is completed the student may not change days, times, and/or preceptor without notice to the faculty and completing a revised clinical banking form.
- The form must indicate what faculty will be available for supervision during the specified clinical times.
- The student must coordinate the clinical with the clinical coordinator.
- The student is responsible for insuring that all of the appropriate preceptor materials are on file prior to doing clinical hours.
- The faculty must sign the form.
- A copy of the form should be given to the advisor, faculty and to the respective clinical coordinator PRIOR to any clinical hours.
CRITERIA FOR PRECEPTORS
On site clinical supervision of students may be shared with other competent clinicians serving as clinical preceptors, as appropriate. Competent clinicians may be considered as preceptors if they meet the criteria noted below:

Nurse Practitioner Programs:
Licensed and nationally certified (Nurse Practitioners, Advanced Practice Nurses) in their specialty area with experience and expertise in the area of specialization. Such clinicians may include, but are not limited to: Physicians, nurse practitioners, advanced practice nurses, and physician assistants.

Have preparation appropriate to their area(s) of responsibility with clinical experience of at least one year.

Maintain currency in clinical practice and continue to improve their expertise.

Nursing Administration and Nursing Education Programs:
• Licensed to practice professional nursing in the state.
• Certification in practice area preferred (but not required).
• Have preparation appropriate to their area(s) of responsibility with experience of at least one year.

PRECEPTOR RESPONSIBILITIES – ALL PROGRAMS
1. Bridges the gap between theory and actual practice.
2. Orient student to clinical setting, organizational policies and key personnel.
3. Assists student in planning clinical assignments based on course objectives and student articulated learning needs.
4. Provides supervision of student on a one-to-one clinical basis until such time as student and preceptor deem direct supervision is no longer necessary.
5. Provides daily feedback to student.
6. Reviews all student documentation in clinical records and co-signs same.
7. Submits a Student Evaluation Form to UTA of the clinical experience as requested.
8. Serves as a role model to the graduate nursing student.
9. Maintains an open line of communication with student’s clinical advisor.
APPENDIX-C
STUDENT AND FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES – CLINICAL COURSES
Graduate Nursing Program

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES- ALL PROGRAMS

1. Interviews the prospective preceptor as to goals/objectives for fulfilling clinical requirements.
2. Provides the preceptor with written objectives for the clinical experience, both general and specific.
3. Works with Clinical Coordinator to provide proof of nursing license and immunization status as necessary.
4. Submits the signed preceptor agreement to UTA prior to beginning the clinical experience.
5. Reviews preceptor and student responsibilities.
6. Reviews existing agency protocols, policies and procedures and UTA’s protocols with preceptor.
7. Nurse Practitioner Program Students: Documents all clinical encounters in the respective health records using a SOAP format. All entries must be co-signed by the preceptor.
8. Arrives at designated site on time and dressed professionally with UTA student nametag.
9. Fulfills goals and objectives as agreed or modified as necessary.

**Note** All currently enrolled UTA graduate students are covered under the Medical Professions Liability Insurance. [https://www-devel.uta.edu/conhi/students/msn-resources/index.php](https://www-devel.uta.edu/conhi/students/msn-resources/index.php)

FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES – ALL PROGRAMS

1. Available to discuss the program requirements and objectives with the preceptor.
2. Assess the adequacy of space and appropriateness of assignments for the student’s learning objectives and experiences.
3. Communicates with preceptor regarding the student’s progress.
4. Schedules on-site visits when deemed necessary by the faculty, student and/or preceptor.
APPENDIX-D
COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION NURSING
STUDENTS: CODE of ETHICS

The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation upholds the highest ethical standards. Ethical decision making is of the utmost importance in the profession of nursing and to that end, all students (licensed or not) are expected to maintain the high standards of ethical conduct necessary to ensure accountability for their learning and optimal care of their clients.

As a client-centered practice, the profession of nursing is obligated to develop nursing students into individuals capable of providing culturally competent care based within mutually respectful interactions. Nursing is one of the most respected and trusted professions in society. Students are expected to provide client privacy, confidentiality, and safety, while accepting individual accountability. These ethically centered behaviors preserve the respect and trust of the public. Students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with high ethical standards consistent with the American Nurses’ Association Code of Ethics.


According to the National Student Nurses Association, “students of nursing have a responsibility to society in learning the academic theory and clinical skills needed to provide nursing care. The clinical setting presents unique challenges and responsibilities while caring for human beings in a variety of health care environments. The code of Academic and Clinical conduct is based on an understanding that to practice nursing as a student is an agreement to uphold the trust with which society has placed in us. The statements of the code provided guidance for the nursing student in the personal development of an ethical foundation and need not to be limited strictly to the academic or clinical environment but can assist in the holistic development of a person.”
(http://www.nsna.org/Portals/0/Skins/NSNA/pdf/pubs_code_of_ac.pdf)

Honesty and integrity are expected of all students and are foundational to trust in the learning environment. Dishonesty undermines nursing education and professional development, leading to demoralization of the spirit of learning among students and faculty. Developing the ability to make moral and ethical judgments is a lifelong process. Ethical violation of conduct may result in disciplinary action either by the Texas State Board of Nursing, and/or The University of Texas at Arlington.
(http://www3.uta.edu/policy/HOP/HOP2_2.htm; http://www.bne.state.tx.us/)

Students at The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation are developing their ability to practice the art and science of professional nursing, respecting all individuals and incorporating the following overarching principles of ethics:

1. Beneficence – the doing of good
2. Non-maleficence - the duty to do no harm
3. Justice – fair, equitable, and appropriate care
4. Autonomy – freedom to make own choices
5. Veracity- truth telling
6. Fidelity – faithfulness and keeping one’s promises

Working within their chosen profession, nursing students should strive to do no harm and promote good while encompassing principles of justice, veracity and fidelity, recognizing individuals’ freedom to make their own decisions.
APPENDIX-E
UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation  Undergraduate and Graduate Nursing Programs  Course Grade Grievance Algorithm

Student contacts faculty member to discuss course grade

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Student not “satisfied” with faculty response, indicates wants to submit grade grievance  Student meets with Program Director

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Student meets with Associate Dean  Associate Dean provides student with grievance form

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Student submits form to Associate Dean

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Associate Dean appoints a Grievance Committee Chair and Committee members  Committee Chair convenes the Committee

↓

Committee members review written grievance

↓

Committee interviews faculty, student, and other individuals as needed  Committee Chair writes summary with Committee Decision  Committee Chair submits decision in writing to Associate Dean

↓

Associate Dean responds to student

↓

Associate Dean informs Assistant Dean of Enrollment and Student Services if Grade Change needed.

↓

Associate Dean informs Dean of Grievance outcome