



## **DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE PROGRAM**

### **POLICY AND PROGRESSION MANUAL**

2011-2012

*Please Note: Information contained herein is subject to change without notice.*

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## INTRODUCTION AND OBJECTIVES

The College of Nursing supports the mission and vision of the University of Utah and is an integral part of the University's Health Sciences Center. We serve the public by improving health and quality of life through excellence in nursing education, research, and clinical care. The graduate programs leading to the **Doctor of Nursing Practice** (DNP) degree share the vision, mission, and core values of the College of Nursing.

### VISION STATEMENT

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As a College, our vision is to develop leaders in nursing and health care whose actions, discoveries, and voices strengthen and transform the health of individuals and communities worldwide.

### MISSION STATEMENT

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The College of Nursing is a dynamic and evolving organization where we prepare all levels of professional nurses and scholars for diverse health care delivery and leadership roles. We offer interactive education in both nursing and gerontology. The College provides exceptional clinical care through innovative practice models. We are committed to developing knowledge that leads to improved health and quality of life.

### CORE VALUES

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- Excellence
- Innovation
- Integrity

Students are expected to be familiar with the College's mission, vision, core values, and guiding principles, which can also be found on the College of Nursing website:

<http://nursing.utah.edu/about/Mission.html>

## ACCREDITATION

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The College of Nursing's graduate programs are accredited by Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) for a term of 10 years, extending to December 31, 2011. An accreditation review was conducted by CCNE in March, 2001. The College of Nursing also has approval from the Utah State Board of Nursing. The Nurse-Midwifery/Women's Health Nurse Practitioner program is accredited by ACME Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education.

The College of Nursing is a participant of (WICHE) Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education in Nursing and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing.

Within the Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees, the College of Nursing prepares individuals for advanced nursing roles in a variety of specialty tracks.

Graduates from the Doctor of Nursing Practice programs will:

- Integrate nursing science with knowledge from ethics, the biophysical, psychosocial, analytical, and organizational sciences to provide the basis for advanced nursing practice.
- Provide, manage and evaluate care of individuals and populations using evidence-based concepts related to physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, as well as community, environmental, cultural and socioeconomic dimensions of health.
- Demonstrate advanced levels of clinical judgment and decision-making, systems thinking, and accountability in designing, delivering, and evaluating evidence-based care.
- Develop and implement effective plans for initiatives that will improve the quality of care delivery.
- Demonstrate essential informatics knowledge and skills through the use and evaluation of information management resources in patient care, healthcare systems and/or academic settings.
- Demonstrate leadership in the analysis, development, and implementation of just and equitable institutional, local, state, federal, and/or international health policy.
- Employ leadership skills in interprofessional teams and organizations to provide and improve health care and health care delivery systems.
- Demonstrate commitment to professionalism as evidenced by participation and leadership in practice, life-long learning, mentoring, professional organizational activity, community service, and policy.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice programs are based on the American Association of Colleges of Nursing publications entitled **The Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advanced Nursing Practice** (AACN, 2006). This document can be located at:  
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/DNP/pdf/Essentials.pdf>

In addition, graduates of nursing specialty programs will demonstrate that they have met the specific objectives for the nursing specialty. Please ask the individual specialty program for information about the program's specific objectives and/or Core Competences.

## POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

This Policy and Progression manual is specific to the MS and DNP graduate programs in the College of Nursing. The information compiled herein has been prepared to assist you while pursuing your graduate degree in nursing at the University of Utah. In addition to becoming familiar with this manual, we advise you to also consult additional sources of information and resources available to graduate students at the University of Utah to help make your experience successful. Your specific specialty program may have its own manual, and we encourage you to reference it as well.

### **Other Useful Sources Include:**

General Catalog  
Graduate School Handbook  
Academic Calendar  
Student Code  
Specialty Program Handbook

## STATEMENT OF BELIEFS ABOUT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The College of Nursing believes that:

- Faculty and students are individually and mutually responsible for maintaining academic integrity to support a foundation of professional integrity.
- A professional code of conduct is an inherent component of academic integrity.
- Faculty members have a responsibility to model professional teaching and mentoring behaviors.
- Faculty and students are mutually accountable and responsible for maintaining a positive learning environment.
- Faculty and students have a reciprocal commitment and responsibility to identify and report behavior that is not consistent with academic integrity. Examples of reportable behaviors include, but are not limited to plagiarism, unprofessional behavior, cheating, unethical conduct of nursing research, and disruptive behavior.
- These beliefs about academic integrity apply in each and every learning environment, encompassing clinical, didactic, scholarly and research activities.

## STATEMENT ON PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Professional behavior is an integral part of each student's nursing education. Nursing is a profession that has earned the public's trust. The importance of student integrity, trustworthiness and honesty are important due to the implications to patient safety. A faculty member may refuse to have a student continue in their course, and the college may dismiss a student from the program, if the student's character does not uphold the professionalism of nursing. This is a serious matter for both the College and the student.

Students in the College of Nursing are expected to maintain professional behavior in both the clinical and classroom settings. This professional behavior includes, but is not limited to:

- Attending orientations, classes and clinical
- Taking exams as scheduled
- Arriving and leaving class and clinical as scheduled and on time

- Accepting responsibility for your own actions
- Respecting others space and quiet time (i.e. no cell phones, pagers or children in class or clinic)
- Giving prior notification in writing or in a meeting to the faculty when you are unable to meet commitments and detailing how and when you will make up requirements
- Dealing with others (peers, faculty, staff, patients and clients) in a respectful, sensitive and nonjudgmental manner.

The College of Nursing identifies unprofessional behavior as a cause for an academic dismissal. An academic action may be overturned on appeal only if the academic action was arbitrary or capricious. (See the section on the Student Code on Page 7 of this manual.)

The faculty acknowledges that **emergencies** do exist and will work with students in these situations.

Note: Emergencies do NOT include:

- Scheduling work or vacation during class, clinical, or final exams. (Missing class in order to work is not an excused absence.)
- Non-emergency doctor or dental appointments
- Being fatigued due to your own actions
- Planning “special” events that interfere with class or clinical time

## PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS

The following are professional standards and expectations for classroom and clinical behaviors for students, faculty and staff:

- Respecting other’s space and quiet time (i.e., no pagers or cell phones in class or clinical)
- Start and end class on time
- Professional appearance and image, including adhering to the approved clinical dress code
- Accountability for preparation for class and clinical
- Constructive verbal and non-verbal behavior
- Care for others in an empathetic manner
- Honest, open, assertive communication
- Confidentiality of all patient information
- Teamwork and helping behavior for colleagues
- Honesty and integrity
- Personal and professional ethics
- Respecting all individuals’ differences (i.e., culture, ethnicity, religion, work experience, gender, age, sexual orientation, etc.)

The **American Nurses Association Code for Nurses** defines professionalism, as follows:

The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems.

The nurse safeguards the client’s right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature.

The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person.

The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions.

The nurse maintains competence in nursing.

The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities, and delegating nursing activities to others.

The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the ongoing development of the profession’s body of knowledge.

The nurse participates in the profession’s efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing.

The nurse participates in the profession’s efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care.

The nurse participates in the profession’s effort to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing.

The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public.

Unprofessional behavior is also defined in Section 58-1-501 (Part 5) of the Utah Nurse Practice Act.

## CONSEQUENCES OF UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

When problem behaviors are identified, the involved faculty or staff member will:

1. Counsel the student on the unacceptable behavior and indicate what type of behavioral change is expected and within what time frame. The student's unacceptable behavior and the specific counseling will be documented by the faculty or staff member in the student's file. In addition, the faculty or staff member will notify the appropriate academic directors and committees. For graduate students, the Executive Director for Graduate Programs and the relevant Specialty Program Directors and the Masters and DNP Program Committee will be informed. In all cases the Director of Graduate Student Services and Academic Programs will be informed. The student will be given a copy of the documentation submitted to his/her file.

If the behavior is a major infraction, the student will be counseled, referred to the Director of Graduate Student Services and Academic Programs and the appropriate program directors and committees (see above); documentation will be placed in the student's file. The appropriate committee will ultimately evaluate the student's situation. Dismissal is a possibility.

If the student violates the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Student Code), he/she will be counseled and documentation will be placed in the student's file. The appropriate academic directors and committees (see above) and the Director of Graduate Student Services and Academic Programs will be notified. (See the section on the Student Code in this manual.)

2. If the behavior from the minor infraction does not change within the given time frame, the faculty member will document the incidents and the attempted interventions. The documentation will be reviewed with the appropriate academic directors and committees as noted above and the Director of Graduate Student Services and Academic Programs. The documentation will be placed in the student's permanent file in the College of Nursing.
3. If the behavior occurs a third time, the faculty has the right to fail the student with further documentation being completed and placed in the student's file. The appropriate committee will ultimately evaluate the student's situation. Dismissal is also a possibility.

Students are held responsible for content presented in class or clinical settings. Students whose behavior is unprofessional will receive sanctions, which may include: class or clinical grade being lowered, failing a course, or probation, suspension or dismissal from the class or program.

If the student believes that the action taken against him/her was arbitrary or capricious, the student may appeal following the policies and procedures set forth in the Student Code. (See the section on the Student Code in this manual.)

# USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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## GENERAL STATEMENT

Many students use various forms of social media, including but not limited to wikis, blogs, listserves, fora, websites, and social networking sites. Facebook, myspace, and twitter are specific and frequently-used examples of these media. When using social media, students are expected to act with courtesy and respect toward others.

Regardless of where or when they make use of these media, students are responsible for the content they post or promote. Students may be subject to action by the university for posting or promoting content that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with university activities or that might lead university authorities to reasonably foresee substantial disruption or material interference with university activities. This action may be taken based on behavioral misconduct, academic performance, academic misconduct, or professional misconduct, and may range from a reprimand or failing grade to dismissal from a program or the university.

## GUIDELINES FOR USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

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Use of social media is prevalent among students. Students should be aware that unwise or inappropriate use of social media can negatively impact educational and career opportunities. To avoid these negative impacts, students should consider the following:

Post content that reflects positively on you and the University. Be aware not only of the content that you post, but of any content that you host (e.g., comments posted by others on your site). Content you host can have the same effect as content you post.

Though you may only intend a small group to see what you post, a much larger group may actually see your post. Be aware that your statements may be offensive to others, including classmates or faculty members who may read what you post.

Employers and others may use social media to evaluate applicants. Choosing to post distasteful, immature, or offensive content may eliminate job or other opportunities.

Once you have posted something via social media, it is out of your control. Others may see it, repost it, save it, forward it to others, etc. Retracting content after you have posted it is practically impossible.

If you post content concerning the University, make it clear that you do not represent the University and that the content you are posting does not represent the views of the University.

Make sure the content you post is in harmony with the ethical or other codes of your program and field. In certain circumstances, your program may have made these codes binding on you, and violations may result in action against you.

If you are in a program that involves confidential information, do not disclose this information. The University may take action against you for disclosures of confidential information. Realize that you may be subject to action by the University for posting or promoting content that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with University activities or that might lead University authorities to reasonably foresee substantial disruption or material interference with University activities. This action may be taken based on behavioral misconduct, academic performance, academic misconduct, or professional misconduct, and may range from a reprimand or failing grade to dismissal from a program of the University.

## INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

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Under normal circumstances students will not keep private health information on their personal computers or USB thumb drives. However, if it becomes necessary to do so, students must abide by the University of Utah's Information Technology Resource Security Policy and only keep Private Health Information on encrypted laptops or USB thumb drives (Policy 4-004 <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/it4-004.html>).

Violation of the policy may result in disciplinary action in accordance with University policies referenced in Section II of this policy.

If you have any questions or concerns, you should contact the Office of Information Technology 801.585.3314 or [IT\\_policy@utah.edu](mailto:IT_policy@utah.edu).

## UNIVERSITY COMMUNICATION (UMAIL)

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The University email system will be the official communication link for the University, College of Nursing and Specialty Program. Faculty, staff, and students have an email account (UNID@utah.edu) on the University's centralized mail server. Web access to e-mail is available. Email sent to our central server can also be redirected to any other existing email accounts on or off campus. To get connected with step-by-step instructions go online to: [www.it.utah.edu](http://www.it.utah.edu) follow appropriate links.

**The University email system is the Program & College's official form of communicating with you**

**CHECK IT DAILY!**

## STUDENT COMPUTER ACCOUNT & SERVICES

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The College of Nursing (NURS) and the Health Science Education Building (HSEB) houses an Academic Computing Facility with windows computers, printers, and numerous academic software tools, including word processing, statistics, web and graphics packages. Other facilities on campus offer similar services for student and faculty use, short computer courses, web browsing, on-line databases and consulting services.

# UNIVERSITY OF UTAH RESOURCES

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## STUDENT CODE

The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Student Code) has seven parts: General Provisions and Definitions, Student Bill of Rights, Student Behavior, Student Academic Performance, Student Academic Conduct, Student Professional and Ethical Conduct, and Student Records.

The purposes of the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities (Student Code) are to set forth the specific authority and responsibility of the University to maintain social discipline, establish guidelines that facilitate a just and civil campus community, and outline the educational process for determining student and student organization responsibility for alleged violations of University regulations. University policies have been designed to protect individuals and the campus community and create an environment conducive to achieving the academic mission of the institution

The Student Code can be accessed at this link:

<http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/guides/students/studentRights.html>

## GRADUATE SCHOOL

In addition to this manual, there are resources, guidelines and information available from the University of Utah Graduate School. Please see the Graduate School pages at

<http://www.gradschool.utah.edu> for general information about:

- Graduate Handbook
- Important Dates
- Online Forms
- Graduate Fellowship & Scholarships
- Tuition Expenses
- Graduate Tuition Benefit Guidelines
- Graduate Student Health Benefit Plan
- Registrars Office

**It is your responsibility to verify that all forms and information are filed in the College of Nursing Student Services & Academic Affairs Office in a timely manner. If you have questions, please ask your graduate academic advisor.**

The College of Nursing Student Services & Academic Programs Office verifies that you have completed all academic requirements for graduation. In matters pertaining to the satisfaction of degree requirements, you and the faculty deal directly with College of Nursing graduate advisor of your specialty program area.

## UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER

The purpose of the University Writing Center is to assist students, staff, and faculty in understanding and improving their writing. We assist clients to develop a writing process, learn to assess their own written texts and strategize different ways to approach writing projects. We believe this purpose is maximized in an environment enriched with support, encouragement, and purposeful creativity. Please see the University Writing Center at: <http://www.writingcenter.utah.edu/>

## CENTER FOR STUDENT WELLNESS

Personal concerns such as stress, anxiety, relationship difficulties, depression, cross-cultural differences, etc., can interfere with a student's ability to succeed and thrive at the University of Utah. For helpful resources contact the Center for Student Wellness: [www.wellness.utah.edu](http://www.wellness.utah.edu) or 801.581-7776.

## CENTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES (CDS)

The Center for Disability Services (CDS) is the designated office of the University of Utah to evaluate disability documentation, determine eligibility, and implement reasonable accommodations for students enrolled at the University of Utah and its associated academic programs. Students are protected from discrimination under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act 1990 (ADA). In order to qualify for services under these mandates, the Center for Disability Services requires comprehensive and specific documentation to substantiate the presence of a disability and demonstrate functional limitations. The documentation establishes eligibility for services and is used for determining reasonable accommodations.

### ACCOMODATION POLICY

The University of Utah complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing qualified individuals with disabilities access to University programs, services and activities. Reasonable prior notice is needed to evaluate requests for accommodation and to implement them when appropriate. Student requests for accommodation must be referred to, and will be evaluated by, the Center for Disability Services (CDS). All student accommodation requests, including those made by student applicants seeking accommodation in any academic program application process, will be evaluated in accordance with the criteria established and defined by the ADA. Accommodations provided to students in accordance with the ADA will apply to all University programs, services and activities.

## GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

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The College of Nursing graduate programs of study include all the didactic and clinical requirements necessary for the awarding of the graduate degree and eligibility for certification and licensing (where applicable). Baccalaureate prepared nurses who are candidates for graduate degrees in the College of Nursing must accumulate the minimum number of credits specified in the program of study for their specialty concentration. Please refer to your specific specialty program for more information about specialty specific requirements.

Graduate students who have a nursing degree must be licensed to practice as a registered nurse or advanced practice registered nurse in one of the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN) jurisdictions. Any exceptions to the licensure requirement must be approved by the MS and DNP Program and Curriculum Committee.

## PROGRESSION IN THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

### 1. SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE

The general progression of graduate students is monitored by a supervisory committee.

The supervisory committee consists of the specialty program director; the Executive Director of the Master's and DNP Programs; and the synthesis instructor, thesis chair or capstone project chair, whichever is relevant. In the event that two of these members are the same, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs will be the third member. Until a synthesis/thesis/capstone chair is assigned, supervision of the student's progress in the program is the responsibility of the specialty program director and the student's faculty advisor.

Supervisory committees are responsible for ensuring that the student meets the expectations of scholarship and clinical preparation and is approved to graduate with appropriate degree. This committee is responsible for all administrative approvals and signatures for the University. If a graduate student's preliminary work is deficient, supplementary undergraduate courses for which no graduate credit is granted may be required to proceed in the program. The supervisory committee may require additional coursework during the graduate program, if deemed necessary to the student's program of study. For example, if a student in the post Master's DNP program has not accumulated sufficient hours in advanced practice through a Master's degree program to satisfy the University of Utah requirements, additional clinical hours may be required through enrollment in appropriate coursework.

## 2. COURSE WORK

Course work includes core courses in the College of Nursing, specialty courses for the particular program specialty, and electives offered in the College of Nursing or other departments. Electives must be graduate level courses or equivalent, and must be approved by the student's program director, advisor, or synthesis/thesis/capstone chair.

Elective courses may include independent study. Students who wish to register for an independent study must identify a faculty member to supervise and provide the earned grade for the independent study. The student and faculty must develop a list of objectives and outcomes for the project. There is a request form for independent study; this can be obtained from your graduate academic advisor.

Students may use elective credits to obtain certification in a sub-specialty area relevant to their practice; such requests must be approved by the student's supervisory committee.

## 3. ADVISEMENT

Students have a faculty academic advisor, who is generally the specialty program director or faculty designee. The advisor will meet with the student at regular intervals to review progress; tailor the program of study, if necessary; and assist in selection of electives. For DNP students, the faculty advisor will assist in the development of ideas and identification of appropriate mentors for DNP capstone projects.

Students also have a designated graduate academic advisor in the College of Nursing Student Services and Academic Programs Office. The graduate advising office will help you to navigate the University of Utah policies and procedures, connect you to College of Nursing and University of Utah resources, and keep you informed of important information related to progression and graduation.

You will be enrolled in a Virtual Advising Classroom by academic degree (BS-DNP or MS-DNP). This classroom is found through your CIS homepage.

Virtual Advising is an information resource hub for timely announcements, forms, and deadlines.

**GET FAMILIAR AND STAY INFORMED.**

The contact information for Student Services Office can be found at:  
[http://nursing.utah.edu/students/student\\_services.html](http://nursing.utah.edu/students/student_services.html)

## ABSENCES

Please **do not** plan vacations during the semester. If you must miss class or practicum, please notify the respective instructors and supervisors. If there are extenuating circumstances that require a prolonged absence (a week or more) please make arrangements with faculty instructors, supervisors, the program director and clinical agency supervisors. Advanced notification for planned absences are necessary to prepare clients and to arrange any backup coverage. It is at the discretion of the course faculty whether or not make-up work will be permitted.

## 4. GRADE REQUIREMENTS

Graduate students are expected to maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA (this corresponds to an average of B or higher; an average of B- or below is not acceptable). A grade of B- or higher must be earned in core courses in order to have the course applied toward graduation. If a student receives a grade of C+ or lower in a core course, the course must be repeated. No grade of C+ or below will be accepted for graduate credit.

Individual Programs with more stringent requirements are the following:

- Nurse Midwifery & Women's Health NP program must receive a B or better in all program courses

## 5. ASSESSMENT

Regular, formative assessment is the responsibility of the graduate student, program director and faculty. Students are expected to keep **all of their written assignments** for review during and at the end of the program, and to comply with all program requirements, such as keeping records of student experiences or the use of reflective journals or discussion boards.

We strongly recommend that you keep copies of your syllabi and other official program documents after graduation. Many times these are needed as part of the certification verification process.

Graduate specialty program directors will ensure that each student in the program has a formative evaluation **at least once per academic year**. The program director, or faculty designee, will meet with the student for this evaluation. The student is responsible for bringing a copy of the most current grade transcript or DARS report to the meeting for review. Program directors, or designees, will review the transcript and summaries of the student's clinical performance (if appropriate), and complete the *Formative Evaluation Form*.

The Formative Evaluation Form can be found in your BS-DNP virtual advising classroom.

A copy of the completed form will be placed in the student's file in the College of Nursing Student Services and Academic Programs Office, and the student may request a copy from their graduate academic advisor.

## 6. ACADEMIC RECORDS

Students may have access to their own academic records maintained in the College of Nursing Student Services and Academic Programs Office. Students may request access to their own file by making an appointment with their program director or their graduate academic advisor.

## 7. SPECIALTY EXAMINATIONS

Specialty areas may require a progression examination as a component of the specialty area program requirement. Such an examination is independent of the final synthesis, thesis, or capstone projects and is given according to guidelines determined by specialty area faculty. This examination may be part of a required course or separate from any course.

## 8. CAPSTONE

**DNP STUDENTS:** Graduate students are expected to complete a final project that demonstrates a synthesis of clinical and didactic learning and demonstrates achievement of the objectives of graduate education. Candidates for the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree must complete a capstone clinical immersion project.

### **Doctor of Nursing Practice: Capstone Clinical Immersion Project**

The capstone immersion experience provides an opportunity for further synthesis and expansion of learning in the DNP program. The capstone experience is designed to help students build and assimilate knowledge for advanced specialty practice at a high level of complexity.

The capstone project must represent the results of scholarly inquiry and be a contribution to nursing in the areas including but not limited to leadership, policy, or evidence-based practice. The capstone project uses evidence to improve practice or patient outcomes. The capstone project should provide evidence of an advanced understanding of relevant literature and policy/practice issues, and must be presented in an acceptable style and must adhere to ethical academic standards. Examples of suitable capstone projects are systematic reviews with clinical practice guidelines, needs or program assessments, program evaluations, or assessment of outcomes of complex clinical practice.

*All research involving human subjects must be approved by the Institutional Review Board of the Health Science Center before they are implemented. See <http://www.research.utah.edu/irb/> for more information.*

The capstone project is overseen by a capstone chair who is also the capstone seminar leader. To inform particular aspects of the project, two or more content experts will be selected by the student and approved by the capstone chair. This group has responsibility for assisting the student in developing and completing a scholarly capstone project. The responsibility of approval for successful completion of the Capstone project lies with the capstone chair. The capstone chair/seminar leader will consult with the content experts who provide additional content and/or methods expertise for specific aspects of the project as part of this approval decision.

The chair must be doctoral-prepared faculty in the College of Nursing and will generally have expertise in one facet of the student's capstone project. The capstone chair provides guidance over your capstone courses. Capstone chairs are charged with facilitating the experience for a group of students in completion of the capstone immersion project. Capstone chairs will collaborate with the content experts in the process of guiding the student in development, implementation and completion of the capstone project.

An acceptable capstone project will take two semesters (6 credit hours) from concept development, design, implementation and final presentation, and is generally completed in the final two semesters of the DNP program (NURS 7975 and NURS 7976, 3 credits each semester). The capstone seminars provide students with the opportunity to discuss the progress of their project in small groups with faculty supervision. Following the completion of the capstone immersion project, there will be a public oral defense of the capstone project before seminar participants, chairs and content experts, and other members of the community as appropriate.

The final product is additionally approved by the supervisory committee before graduation. The complete project report or manuscript, on the basis of which the degree is awarded, must be provided in a specified format that will be retained in the College of Nursing.

## 9. GRADUATION

Students who successfully complete their program of study and culminating synthesis/thesis/capstone projects are eligible for graduation. Students should discuss graduation deadlines and the necessary forms with the graduate academic advisor in the College of Nursing Student Services and Academic Programs Office.

To officially graduate from the University of Utah in May of the academic year, all work must be completed according to the deadlines in the calendar on the University of Utah Graduate School Website (<http://www.gradschool.utah.edu/>).

However, because the University of Utah holds only one graduation exercise per year, students may participate in the convocation exercise if the capstone project has been successfully defended and all required course work has been completed. There may be specific exceptions in which a course will be completed by the end of summer following the convocation exercise. Exceptions must be approved by the appropriate program director, the Executive Director for Master's and DNP Programs, or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Services.

**All graduation forms can be found in your virtual advising classroom.**

# FAILURE TO PROGRESS, PROBATION, DISMISSAL, AND ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

## 1. PROBATION

The College requirement is a B- minimum for all core courses and specialty courses that are required to complete the approved program of study in your specialty area. Individual specialty programs may have different grading criteria and/or require higher level of grade for specialty courses for students registered in their program. Please refer to specialty program for information.

To remain in good standing in the graduate program, students must maintain a cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 3.0 or better in all courses applied to the degree. Students will automatically be placed on probation if their CGPA falls below 3.0. If the student does not raise the CGPA to 3.0 or above during the next two semesters, or after completing the next 12 graduate credits (whichever comes first), the student will be recommended for dismissal from the program, according to the due process procedures outlined in the Student Code. Per College of Nursing standards, students will be terminated from the program if they receive a non-passing grade (below a B-) in two required courses or receive a non-passing grade in the same course requirement twice. Specialty Program grade standards also apply, see your specialty area requirements.

A student may be placed on probation if he or she fails to progress towards the degree. In the event of probation, an individualized plan of progression will be developed, indicating terms for probation. Failure to adhere to the probation plan will result in dismissal from the program. More information can be found in the Student Code: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/guides/students/studentRights.html>

Students who are placed on probation may be asked by their program director or faculty designee to sign a contract which is designed to identify and remedy the academic and/or professional issues that have contributed to the student's probation.

## 2. TERMINATION/DISMISSAL

The program director and the MS and DNP Program and Curriculum Committee may recommend termination/dismissal of students if they fail to progress towards the degree. Reasons for termination or dismissal from the program include, but are not limited to, the following: a) failure to meet grade requirements after probationary status, b) academic or professional misconduct. More information can be found in the Student Code: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/guides/students/studentRights.html>

## 3. ACADEMIC OR PROFESSIONAL MISCONDUCT

All students need to be familiar with the "Statement of Beliefs about Academic Integrity" and the "Code of Professional Conduct" that can be found in this manual and on the College website. All students should also be familiar with and comply with the Student Code <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/guides/students/studentRights.html>

Any violation of academic or professional conduct may be entered into a secure database kept by the College, as a means of identifying repeated infractions. This database is in addition to any University policies regarding academic or professional misconduct. Serious violations of the Student Code and University policies on Academic and Professional Misconduct may result in termination or dismissal.

## 4. APPEALS

The Academic Misconduct and Appeals Committee of the University of Utah College of Nursing provides students and faculty with a vehicle for the making of decisions relative to student contested academic actions; academic sanctions for misconduct; and dismissals from participating in class. The Committee functions in accordance with the directives outlined in the Student Code at: <http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html>

# CREDIT, GRADING and REGISTRATION POLICIES

## CREDIT HOURS

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### 1. CREDITS PER SEMESTER

Candidates for a graduate degree will not be permitted to register for more than sixteen (16) credit hours in any one semester. A minimum of nine (9) credit hours per semester is needed for full-time standing, except during the summer semester. Refer to the University of Utah General Catalog for more details.

Students must register for a minimum of three (3) credit hours at the graduate level (6000 or higher) in term that they complete their synthesis/thesis/capstone projects.

### 2. TRANSFER OF CREDIT

Per University policy, no more than six (6) semester hours may be transferred from other institutions for graduate credit. Transfer credit must be approved by the program director. Credit may be approved toward fulfillment of graduate degree requirements provided the transferred courses are passed with a B or higher grade and are graduate level courses taken within the past five (5) years. Courses taken for credit/no credit are not transferable.

Required courses may be waived with the approval of the appropriate program director and the MS and DNP Program and Curriculum Committee. Waiver for a course will only be considered if the student can provide evidence that the course objectives have been met. The request and supporting evidence are submitted to the current faculty of record in the required course, who must support the request. Students may be required to replace the waived course credits with an approved elective.

Courses taken to fulfill the requirements for another graduate degree cannot be counted or transferred to fulfill requirements.

In addition, the supervisory committee may advise the student to pursue studies for a period of time at another institution, related to availability of special facilities or learning experiences. This study may be considered work in residence, provided that arrangement has been approved in advance by the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and Student Services and the Dean of the Graduate School.

### **3. CREDIT LIMITATIONS**

University of Utah regulations specify that a student may not apply more than nine (9) credit hours of non-matriculated credit toward any graduate degree, unless specifically approved in advance by the Dean of the Graduate School. Specific courses may be considered based upon relevancy to their graduate program. Courses taken via distance education are considered in residence courses, provided they are a part of the student's approved program of study. Courses taken by correspondence or home study are not eligible for graduate credit. Online courses from accredited universities may be eligible for graduate credit.

## **GRADING**

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### **1. CREDIT/NO CREDIT**

some courses are graded as credit/no credit, and some other courses have options for credit/no credit grading. In considering the option of credit/no credit, graduate students are reminded that it is often important to receive letter grades to build their GPA. This is especially important if the student applies for fellowships or traineeships on a competitive basis or transfers to another institution. See the University of Utah General Catalog for more information on credit/no credit courses.

### **2. INCOMPLETE GRADES**

A grade of Incomplete (I) may be given for work not completed because of circumstances beyond the student's control, providing the student is passing the course and has completed at least 80% of the work required for the course. Arrangements must be made between the student and the faculty concerning completion of the work. If incomplete work has not been finished and a grade has not been reported within the calendar year after the incomplete (I) grade was given, the incomplete (I) grade is changed to a failing (E) grade by the Registrar's Office. Students on a Leave of Absence still must adhere to this timeline.

Capstone seminar credit hours may receive grades of T (work-in-progress) until the final project is completed.

## **REGISTRATION**

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### **1. MINIMUM CONTINUOUS REGISTRATION**

All graduate students must maintain continuous registration (3 credit minimum at the graduate level) from the time of formal admission through the completion of requirements for the degree they are seeking unless granted an official leave of absence. If students do not comply with this continuous registration policy and do not obtain an official leave of absence, their supervisory committee is terminated and their records are inactivated. For more information refer to the University of Utah General Catalog under Minimum Continuing Registration. The regulations do not apply to summer term.

## 2. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY

If a student finds it necessary to withdraw from the University during any semester, an application to withdraw from school should be filed with the Registrar's Office. Failure to do so may jeopardize eligibility for readmission to the University.

## 3. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A student wishing to discontinue study for one or more semesters must file a Request for Leave of Absence form available from the College of Nursing Student Services and Academic Programs Office. Leaves of Absence (LOA) are only granted for extenuating and unusual circumstances and must be approved by the appropriate program director or faculty designee or the supervisory committee chair (if different); the Executive Director for Master's and DNP Programs; and the Dean of the Graduate School. Leaves are granted for a maximum of one academic year at a time. In making a decision to grant a LOA to a student, the College of Nursing will take into consideration if faculty resources will be available for students upon return to the College.

The committee reserves the right to deny a LOA request. An LOA does NOT extend the time period for finishing an incomplete. The LOA is void if a student registers for classes in a semester for which a leave was granted.

Graduate school forms can be found in your virtual advising classroom.

# COLLEGE OF NURSING INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

## STUDENT INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

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### COLLEGE OF NURSING COMMITTEES

When students are needed for College of Nursing committees they will be selected in accordance with the "*Student Selection Process for CoN Committee Service*" as approved by College Council.

In general, students may vote on policy and/or curricular issues; however, depending on the specific committee, certain restrictions may be imposed concerning the types of issues on which students may vote. Under no circumstances may students participate or vote on confidential issues regarding other students or potential students (e.g., admissions, re-admissions, scholarly integrity, etc.), except as stipulated when serving on the Academic Misconduct and Appeals Committee. Student representation from each program level (BS, MS and PhD) has one (1) vote.

Terms of service on committees shall begin and end in August of each year, at or near the time of Fall Retreat, unless determined otherwise in the College of Nursing Charter and College Council Committee Structure [http://nursing.utah.edu/faculty\\_handbook/pdf/current\\_charter.pdf](http://nursing.utah.edu/faculty_handbook/pdf/current_charter.pdf)

### COLLEGE OF NURSING OUTREACH

The College of Nursing holds numerous outreach events and activities throughout the year designed to introduce K-12 students, undergraduate students, and members of the community to the field of nursing. Students' willingness to volunteer and share their passion for nursing, knowledge and skills is integral to these efforts.

Throughout the year, students' participation in College of Nursing's outreach activities will be solicited by the graduate academic advisors. If you are interested in volunteering before you are solicited, please contact your graduate academic advisor and your name will be added to our volunteer list.

Contact information for members of Student Services can be found at:  
[http://nursing.utah.edu/students/student\\_services.html](http://nursing.utah.edu/students/student_services.html)

## SPECIAL INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS

### ACCIDENT REPORT PROCEDURE

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Students who incur an injury (i.e., needle stick, fall, etc.) during a clinical practicum in an affiliated agency should report the incident to their supervising faculty and the agency and follow the accident procedure for the agency in which they are located. In addition, a College of Nursing form must be completed and submitted; this form can be obtained from the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services. Students who are injured during educational experiences in the College, University, or clinical agencies are not covered by University insurance-workman's compensation. All costs incurred relative to the incident (initial and follow-up) are the sole responsibility of the individual student.

### DRUG TESTING POLICY

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Clinical agencies may conduct random drug testing. The University of Utah Health Sciences Drug Testing Policy is in the appendices.

### CRIMINAL HISTORY REVIEW

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Some clinical facilities may require criminal background checks for personnel who provide patient care services. The College of Nursing must comply with these requirements. Students may be required to request and pay for a criminal background check if affiliated with one of these agencies as a student.

### FACULTY RIGHT TO REQUEST MEDICAL CLEARANCE

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College of Nursing faculty, especially those who teach students in clinical or laboratory settings, have the right to request written medical clearance from the student's health care provider if there is reason to believe that a known or suspected problem or illness (physical or emotional) may compromise patients, staff, faculty, peers or the student's own health, welfare and safety. The student will not be allowed in the clinical area and/or classroom until such written documentation is obtained. A copy of the letter from the health care provider will be kept on file in the Office of Academic Programs and Student Services. All expenses related to the medical clearance are the sole responsibility of the student.

## **MALPRACTICE INSURANCE**

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The University's malpractice and liability coverage for graduate students applies to the student role; students who are employed must carry individual insurance coverage for their employee role, as the College assumes no responsibility for student activities when they are employed by an agency.

The University's Health Care Professional Liability (Malpractice) insurance provides coverage for registered University students engaged in providing services to members of the public in the course of an approved medical, nursing, or other professional health care clinical training programs. All University coverage is dependent on having a current clinical training agreement in place between the University and the site.

Coverage is limited for clinical experiences outside the state of Utah and must be arranged on a case-by-case basis. Students may be required to carry additional insurance up to \$1M (occurrence) /\$3M (annual aggregate) if they are placed in sites outside of the state of Utah.

Clinical experiences out of the United States must be assessed on a case by case basis by the College and the University's Professional Liability office.

## **OUT-OF-STATE CLINICAL EXPERIENCES**

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Requests for consideration of clinical placement outside the state should be made through the appropriate graduate program director. Please review the liability and malpractice issues that pertain to out of state clinical experiences.

## **OTHER COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY REQUIREMENTS**

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The College of Nursing reserves the right to require students to meet additional College or University requirements that are mandated.