



University of Pennsylvania  
School of Nursing

Doctor of Nursing Practice Student Handbook 2019-2020

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## **INTRODUCTION**

### **UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

The University of Pennsylvania values diversity and seeks talented students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or status as a Vietnam Era Veteran or disabled veteran in the administration of its educational policies, programs or activities; admissions policies; scholarship and loan awards; athletic, or other University administered programs or employment. Questions or concerns regarding the University's equal opportunity and affirmative action programs and activities or accommodations for people with disabilities should be directed to the Executive Director, Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity Programs, Sansom Place East, 3600 Chestnut Street, Suite 228, Philadelphia, PA 19104-6021 or 215-898-6993 (Voice) or 215-898-7803 (TDD)

### **SUPPLEMENTAL HANDBOOKS**

Students in the Nurse Anesthesia Programs must also abide by the regulations listed in their supplemental program guides.

In addition, all DNP students are responsible for the regulations listed in the University of Pennsylvania Pennbook: <http://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook>

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

#### **Academic Year Terms**

The School of Nursing follows the University Academic Calendar in the Fall and Spring terms: <http://www.upenn.edu/almanac/3yearcal.html>

#### **Summer Term**

The School of Nursing Summer Calendar differs from the traditional University calendar: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/registration/quick-links/>

#### **Disclaimer**

*The policies and procedures described in this manual are continually revised and updated. The School of Nursing and the University of Pennsylvania must reserve the right to make changes affecting policies, fees, curriculum, or any other matters announced in this publication. If you have questions regarding the contents of this handbook, please contact your Program Director or the Office of Student Services at [advisor@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:advisor@nursing.upenn.edu).*

## **SCHOOL OF NURSING MISSION AND POLICIES**

### **SCHOOL OF NURSING MISSION AND VALUES**

#### **Mission**

The mission of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing is to make a significant societal impact through the generation and dissemination of new knowledge, development of models of care that define excellent practice, and preparation of future clinicians, scholars, and global leaders of the profession.

#### **Vision**

To be the preeminent intellectual and transformative force in improving health through nursing.

#### **Philosophy**

The mission of the School of Nursing is aimed at meeting the health needs of society in a global and multicultural world. To this end, scholarship, research, education, and practice are integrated to create a culture of inquiry that values intellectual curiosity and diversity, and where faculty, clinicians, staff, and students thrive and learn from one another.

#### **Scholarship and Research**

We believe that the arts and sciences are the basis for nursing knowledge and scholarship. The former—nursing knowledge—defines empirical, philosophical, historical, ethical, and personal ways of knowing; the latter—scholarship—encompasses research and the integration of research into practice and health policy formation.

Penn Nursing is responsive to today's health care influences, like evolving models of care, consumer advocacy, demographic changes, and advances in science and technology, and our faculty are committed to pushing the boundaries of nursing science.

#### **Education**

A Penn Nursing education leads our students toward meeting their academic and professional goals. Our educational environment fosters independence, ethical behavior, critical thinking, and sensitive interactions concerning cultures and viewpoints.

All our programs—from baccalaureate to post-doctoral—are enriched by the varied perspectives of a culturally diverse population.

The baccalaureate program, including traditional and second degree students, focuses on professional nursing practice across the continuum of healthcare, specifically within vulnerable populations. The curriculum reflects changes in science and technology, and emphasizes evidence-based practice and interdisciplinary collaboration.

The Master's programs focus on advanced practice nursing and administration, with an emphasis on specialty and subspecialty practice to meet our changing societal needs. Graduate nurses are prepared to creatively combine knowledge and skills, with special attention given to clinical decision-making and management, as well as cost-of-care evaluation.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice Degree is dedicated to advancing the discipline of nursing through the translation and dissemination of research.

Pre- and post-doctoral education is set up to advance nursing through research. The goal is to equip students with a foundation that allows them to make substantive contributions to nursing scholarship. Strong faculty mentorship is integral to these programs.

### **Practice**

Nursing is an evidence-based, caring profession that improves the health and quality of life for individuals, families, and communities throughout the world; nursing practice, then, is defined as the construction, application, and evaluation of knowledge and action within our field.

Nursing care must function in both autonomous and collaborative health care settings, and Penn Nursing serves as the model for caring in a global and multicultural context; here, we seek to promote health in every part of the world by preparing nurses to be responsive to the needs of all societies. Our goals are to improve and maintain optimal health, prevent disease, enhance the quality of recovery from illness, and support patients and families as they cope with health problems.

We are proud to see our work improving patient care across the world.

*Mission affirmed by the School of Nursing Faculty Senate on April 6, 2009. Philosophy approved by the School of Nursing Faculty Senate on February 3, 2003.*

### **IMPORTANT SCHOOL OF NURSING POLICIES**

All students at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing are required to adhere to the following school-wide policies. The full policies can be found in the appendices of this handbook, as well as on the School of Nursing website: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/handbooks-forms-policies/msndnp-handbook/penn-nursings-mission-policies/index.php>.

- Creating and Maintaining a Climate of Professional Nursing (Appendix I)
- Statement of Personal Attributes and Capabilities (Appendix II)
- Student Social Media Policy (Appendix III)
- Student Substance Abuse Policy (Appendix IV)
- Policy on Religious and Secular Holidays (Appendix V)



## **DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

### **DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Individual program policies may supersede this policy due to national accreditation regulations. Check with your Program Director to determine any additional requirements.

For information on the different programs offered, see the Nursing web page at:

<http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/academics/>

#### **Overview**

- Each program of graduate degree study is a distinct and sequential course plan leading to the theoretical and clinical expertise within the specialty. A minimum of 10 course units are required. The Nurse Anesthesia DNP program can only be completed on a full-time basis.

#### **Time Limitations**

##### **DNP Program, Post-MSN**

A maximum of five (5) calendar years, beginning with the initial graduate course following matriculation into the DNP program, is allowed for completion of the work for the DNP degree.

### **SPECIAL ACADEMIC OPTIONS**

#### **Electives**

A Graduate Nursing Elective is a NURS 500+ level course.

A student must provide a written petition to the Program Director for a non-NURS course to be fulfilled as the elective. If approved, the student must forward the petition and Program Director approval to the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs for final approval.

### **COURSES AND REGISTRATION**

Students are responsible for their own registration. Students receive registration materials via e-mail one week prior to the start of Advance Registration. New or transfer students may register during the designated registration period that is held before the start of classes.

Information about how to register can be found on the Registration page: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/registration/>.

#### **Registration Hold**

Each Nursing student is placed on registration hold before the start of the upcoming registration term. Each student must request registration “signoff” from the primary academic advisor (Program Director or Program Advisor) in order for the registration hold to be lifted and to register for classes. Students are encouraged to meet with their Program Director or Advisor in person. The registration holds are lifted by the Program Director/Advisor. This is an opportunity for students and the Program Director/Advisors to ensure that the plan of study and planned course registration is correct.

## **Course Selection and Drop Period**

Students use Penn InTouch ([https://portal.apps.upenn.edu/penn\\_portal/intouch/splash.html](https://portal.apps.upenn.edu/penn_portal/intouch/splash.html)) to add, drop, or change a course or section.

- Courses may be added during the first two weeks of each semester.
- Courses may be dropped through the fifth week of each semester.

Full refund of tuition and fees is automatic only during the first two full weeks of the term. For a full refund schedule, please see the Tuition Refund section below for more information.

Students wishing to drop a course after the end of the course selection and drop period will need to request to withdraw from the course.

Please note that should a student fail to attend classes in a course for which s/he is registered, s/he will not be automatically dropped from the course. Students who fail to drop a course they are not taking, but are still registered for, within the five-week course selection period may receive an F in that course. No tuition refunds will be issued.

## **ACADEMIC ADVISING**

For most DNP students, the academic advisor is the Program Director or Associate Director or Clinical Faculty. Advisors are the principal source of assistance to students in planning an academic program, seeking advice and dealing with problems as they arise. The academic advisor(s) may or may not be the Team Leaders for the DNP Project. If the advisor leaves the Standing Faculty of the School of Nursing through retirement or change of position, another advisor must be appointed. However, it is the responsibility of the student to maintain contact with the advisor. Faculty will make every effort to help students but cannot be expected to be responsible for problems not brought to their attention in a timely manner.

## **TUITION REFUND**

Full refund of tuition and fees is automatic only during the first two full weeks of the fall and spring terms. Fifty percent of tuition and fees is refunded for courses dropped during weeks three and four and must be requested through the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Academic Affairs. No refunds are given after week four.

Please note that this policy pertains only to courses taken during the fall and spring semesters. Summer courses operate on a different refund schedule: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/registration/quick-links/>.

## **COURSE LOAD**

Full-time status for graduate students is defined as enrollment in three or more course units in the fall or spring semester or two course units in each summer session. Part-time status is defined as enrollment in less than three course units in the fall or spring semester or one course unit in a summer session.

Students registered for one or two course units in a term are classified as part-time, unless only the one or two course units are necessary to complete the degree requirements and the student has previously been enrolled as a full-time student, in which case the full-time classification applies.

The maximum course load is typically no more than 4.5 course units in the fall or spring semester and no more than two or three course units in a summer session. Students can request an overload to the maximum course load by emailing their Program Director.

## **CHANGE OF GRADE TYPE**

### **Pass/Fail**

DNP students can take a maximum of two elective course units on a pass/fail basis, subject to individual course grading policies. It is the student's responsibility to consult the instructor and/or syllabus regarding this option since the requirements for "pass" may vary. No required courses can be taken on a pass/fail basis.

Students on academic probation may not take any courses pass/fail.

A letter grade may be changed to pass/fail or the reverse within the first five weeks of class. In the first two weeks, this can be done through Penn InTouch. After the end of the course selection period, this must be requested by sending an email to the Office of Student Information at [registration@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:registration@nursing.upenn.edu). Grade type will not be changed after the 5th week of class.

### **Audit**

A student may request that the Office of Student Information change his or her status in a course to auditor, provided that the request is approved by the DNP Director and the instructor giving the course and is submitted to the Office of Student Information at [registration@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:registration@nursing.upenn.edu) no later than the end of the second week of the term. Courses taken for audit will not count toward degree requirements.

## **SUMMER SESSIONS**

There are two six-week sessions offered each summer. The first session begins after spring final exams and runs through June. The second semester begins in late June / early July and runs through mid-August. Some courses are offered in a 12-week format over both summer sessions. Registration for summer and fall courses occurs simultaneously during the Advance Registration period in the spring semester. Unlike fall and spring registration, summer registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

The School of Nursing summer calendar typically differs from the University calendar, and can be found: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/registration/quick-links/>.

## **CLASS ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE**

Policies regarding absence from classes are determined by the instructor(s) responsible for the course. Any special circumstances (including but not limited to religious holidays) must be discussed with the course director prior to the start of the semester.

Students are required to attend all clinical components of their course work. Absences from the clinical portion of a nursing course will not be excused except for a documented illness (of the student), family death or critical illness. Students with excessive excused absences from clinical may be asked to share the cost of the make-up clinical hours with the School of Nursing. Excessive absences for any reason may necessitate repetition of the entire course.

Unexcused absences from clinical may result in a failing grade for the course based on the discretion of the course director. If the course director allows a student to make up an unexcused absence from clinical, the student must pay the current rate per day missed.

## **COURSE WITHDRAWAL**

After the 5th week of classes, courses may not be dropped. Students may petition to withdraw from the course up until the 10th week of the semester by submitting a course withdrawal form to the course instructor and the Assistant Dean of Academic and Student Affairs. If the withdrawal is approved, the registration for the course remains on the record and the notation of “W” is placed as a permanent entry in the grade section of the student’s transcript. The “W” does not affect the student’s grade point average. A student may only attempt a required Nursing course twice; therefore, only one withdraw per course will be permitted.

After the tenth week of the semester, withdrawals are not normally permitted. Students who have a serious and compelling extenuating circumstance may petition the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee to grant a late withdrawal for a course. Students petitioning for an exception must obtain written support from the instructor for the committee to consider the petition.

*The Course Withdrawal Form can be found online: <http://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/handbooks-forms-policies/>*

## **LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

DNP students must request a leave of absence if not enrolled in coursework for two or more consecutive semesters.

A leave of absence for a period of up to one academic year may be granted when circumstances necessitate the interruption of academic work. In unusual circumstances, and at the written request of the student, such leaves may be extended for no longer than one additional year. This period may include either consecutive or nonconsecutive terms.

The complete leave of absence policy can be found online: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/live/forms/26-leave-of-absence-request>

## **TRANSFER CREDIT**

A maximum of two course units (or their equivalents) may be approved for transfer credit for the DNP programs.

Eligible courses must meet the following criteria:

- Taken at the graduate level
- Taken at an accredited, four-year institution
- Final grade of B or higher (no pass/fail or audit)
- Taken prior to admission to the University of Pennsylvania MSN or DNP program

All transfer credit decisions are at the discretion of the course faculty. See “Transfer Credit Procedures” for the timeline and instructions on submitting course work for review: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/registration/transfer-credit/>.

## **Gap Analysis Procedure**

The initial step for identifying transfer credit for post-master’s and second master’s degree students will be a gap analysis. A “Request for Gap Analysis” form must be submitted to the Office of Student Services (OSS) along with course descriptions, syllabi and official transcripts of the course(s). This form is available through the Office of Student Information. The gap analysis request form will include the current gap analysis fee as set by the OSS fee schedule and must be paid prior to the gap analysis.

The purpose of the gap analysis is to ensure that, upon graduation, the student will have achieved the appropriate competencies for the degree or certificate sought. The Program Director will be responsible for completing the gap analysis. Every effort will be made to ensure that upon graduation from the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing the student will meet criteria for certification and licensure in the appropriate specialty area as known at the time of admission to University of Pennsylvania.

Once the gap analysis is completed, the Program Director will review it with the applicant. During the review, the applicant and Program Director will agree on the courses which meet the criteria for possible transfer of credit. Transfer credits will appear in the action column of the transcript. Transfer credits will not be calculated into the student's GPA.

Following transfer credit evaluation, a Plan of Study will be developed and finalized by the Program Director.

Several principles will guide the award of transfer credit and the following criteria must be met:

- Only courses taken in an accredited School of Nursing are acceptable for transfer.
- Courses must have a grade of B or better. A grade of pass is not acceptable.

## **GRADE REPORTS AND TRANSCRIPTS**

At the end of each semester, students may access Penn InTouch for a listing of final grades. Through Penn InTouch, students can request to receive their grade report by mail from the Office of the Registrar.

Transcripts are maintained by the Office of the Registrar, not by the School of Nursing. Students can request transcripts through the Office of the Registrar, or order them online through Penn InTouch.

Office of the Registrar website: <http://www.upenn.edu/registrar/>.

## **COURSE MATERIALS**

### **Canvas Learning Management Platform**

Canvas is the Learning Management System used at the University of Pennsylvania. Students use Canvas to access their course content, upload assignments, and interact online with their instructors and classmates. Once you register for a course, you will be added to the Canvas site. Please note that sites are published individually by instructors each semester, so you may not see all registered courses in your course listing right away.

Students can log in to Canvas at <http://www.library.upenn.edu/courseware/canvas/canvaslogin.html>.

## **COURSE/FACULTY EVALUATIONS**

At the end of each course, students evaluate the course and its instructor. The results of these evaluations are maintained by the Office of Student Information.

The Penn Course Review is a student-run publication that lists the numerical ratings and general comments for some graduate courses: <https://secure.www.upenn.edu/vpul/coursereview/>

## **NURSING EMAIL ACCOUNT**

All students at the School of Nursing must open and maintain a Nursing email account and list it as the primary email in the Penn Directory by the last day to add a course each semester, including summer sessions. Students who do not comply by the deadline will be put on registration hold and will be unable to make registration changes in Penn-in-Touch.

Please visit the link below to set up your Nursing email:

<https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/its/resources/student/>

Please visit the link below to make your Nursing email the primary email in the Penn Directory:

<http://www.upenn.edu/directories/>

## **ACADEMIC REGULATIONS**

### **STUDENT IN GOOD STANDING**

A student in good standing is defined as a student who:

- Maintains the proper GPA
- Maintains the proper course load (without incompletes)
- Is not on academic probation
- Does not have two consecutive semesters of non-enrollment
- Is on an approved leave of absence
- Is not on financial hold nor carrying past due balances
- Has completed the immunizations, background check, and drug screening processes with no identified problems

A student must maintain a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 to remain in good academic standing and to graduate from the School of Nursing and the University.

### **WARNING**

A student who has a cumulative GPA or single semester term GPA between 2.5 and 3.0 will be given a warning notice.

### **PROBATION**

A student will be placed on probation if s/he:

- has a cumulative GPA of less than 2.5 at the end of any semester
- has a term GPA below 2.5 at the end of any semester
- has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 for two consecutive semesters
- has a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 in Nursing core, theory, and clinical courses (required courses)
- has failed a required Nursing core, theory, or clinical course (required course)

A student on probation may not take classes pass/fail.

### **DISMISSAL**

A student will be withdrawn from the School of Nursing for failing a required Nursing course twice.

A student who has been on academic probation for at least one semester and who has a cumulative GPA below 3.0 for two consecutive semesters may be withdrawn from the School of Nursing.

### **GRADING POLICIES**

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is tabulated at the end of each semester. A minimum of a C- is needed to pass a non-clinical graduate level course (a grade lower than this will be reported as an F on the student's transcript). A minimum grade of B- is needed to pass a clinical course (a grade lower than this will be reported as an F on the student's transcript).

All course grading policies are at the discretion of individual course instructors.

## **GPA Scale**

Excellent	Good	Fair	Failure
A+ = 4.0	B+ = 3.3	C+ = 2.3	
A = 4.0	B = 3.0	C = 2.0	F = 0.0
A- = 3.7	B- = 2.7	C- = 1.7	

## **GPA Calculation**

To calculate the GPA, the following formula should be used:

$$\text{GPA} = \frac{\text{SUM (C.U. x GRADE)}}{\text{TOTAL C.U.s}}$$

The GPA is calculated by multiplying the course unit for each course (usually 1 c.u.) by the numerical equivalent for the grade received in the course, adding the total number and dividing by the total number of credits taken. Averages are tabulated for each semester and on a cumulative basis.

## **Pass/Fail**

When a course is taken as Pass/Fail, the grade of P (pass) is not calculated into the grade point average. However, if an F (fail) is received in a Pass/Fail course, it is calculated into the GPA.

## **Other GPA Notations (NR / GR / W)**

The notations of NR and GR indicate that the grade has not been received by the Registrar. All NRs (instructor did not submit grades for the course) and GRs (instructor did not enter a grade for the student in question) must be cleared from the student's transcript before graduation. The notation W indicates an approved withdrawal from a course.

## **COURSE FAILURE**

If a required course is failed, it must be repeated at the next available offering and a satisfactory grade must be achieved. The repeated course may not be taken with the Pass/Fail Option. Any courses for which the failed course is a prerequisite may not be taken until a satisfactory grade in the prerequisite course has been achieved. However, the "F" remains on the transcript even though the student has repeated the course and obtained a passing grade or above. The "F" is still calculated into the cumulative GPA.

Students will receive an "F" in a clinical course if they fail to meet objectives or if they are removed from the clinical setting for unsafe practice at any point during the course. A student who is failing a clinical course for unsafe practice may not withdraw from the course. In the event of a failure for unsafe clinical practice, the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee and Program Director will define the conditions under which the student may repeat the course.

A student may only attempt a required Nursing course twice. A student will be withdrawn from the School of Nursing for failing a required Nursing course twice or withdrawing from the course on the first attempt and failing the course on the second attempt or vice versa.

## **Incomplete Policy**

A student who fails to complete a course within the prescribed period and does not withdraw from the course or change his or her status to auditor will receive, at the instructor's discretion, either a grade of I (incomplete) or F (failure).



A grade of incomplete is assigned by the instructor only under the following conditions:

- The student has academic good standing in the course with a passing grade average.
- The student has no more than two outstanding course requirements unmet in the course.
- The student and instructor have completed a Learning Plan to Achieve Complete Course Work (see Appendix VI)
- The student and instructor have an agreed date of submission for all outstanding course requirements. This date is no later than the end of the academic term that follows the term in which the grade of incomplete is assigned.

These conditions must be conveyed to the Office of Student Information via email and approved by the Assistant Dean or her/his designee before the grade of incomplete is assigned. Except in unusual and extreme situations, the “I” must be removed within the following academic term. Only with the approval of the Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, the instructor may permit an extension of time up to one year for the completion of the course. Incomplete extensions must be accompanied by a written faculty approval on file with the Office of Student Information. Any grade of incomplete which remains after one calendar year from date of assignment becomes a permanent incomplete grade designated by the mark I\* on the student’s record and is not credited toward any degree

### **ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND PROGRESSIONS COMMITTEE**

All matters of academic discipline are acted upon through the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee of the School of Nursing.

The Academic Standards and Progressions Committee is the highest ruling body in the School of Nursing. (Note: The Doctoral Progressions Committee holds the same level within the Ph.D. Program). The Academic Standards and Progressions Committee reserves the right to make decisions in the best interest of the student and the School of Nursing.

#### **Meetings**

The Academic Standards and Progressions Committee meets three times a year at the close of the fall, spring, and summer semesters, and as needed, to rule on specific academic problems.

#### **Purview**

The cases of students with academic concerns are presented to the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee for action. Committee deliberations may result in issuing a warning, placing the student on probation, or withdrawing the student from the School of Nursing. Students will receive a letter informing them of the Committee’s decision and outlining the required course of action. A copy will be sent to the student’s faculty advisor.

#### **Petitions**

Other academic problems may be brought to the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee for action. A student must petition the Committee in writing, describing the situation, and may be asked to present his or her case at the Committee meeting. The petition should be submitted to the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES**

Since the University is an academic community, its fundamental purpose is the pursuit of knowledge. Essential to the success of this educational mission is a commitment to the principles of academic integrity. Every member of the University community is responsible for upholding the highest standards of honesty at all times. Students, as members of the community, are also responsible for adhering to the principles and spirit of the following Code of Academic Integrity.

The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found online here:

<https://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/code-of-academic-integrity>

## **Office of Student Conduct**

The Office of Student Conduct (OSC) is responsible for acting on behalf of the University in matters of student discipline. OSC deals with alleged instances of academic dishonesty and other student misconduct, to determine how best to resolve these allegations consistent with the goals and mission of the University as an educational and intellectual community. (Note: As of January 2015, all alleged violations of the University's Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence and Stalking Policy are handled by the Sexual Violence Investigative Officer).

For detailed information regarding the Disciplinary Process, resources for students and faculty, and frequently asked questions, please consult the OSC website: <https://www.osc.upenn.edu/>.

If you have any questions about the Code of Academic Integrity or the processes required by the Code, or if you would like a complete copy of the Code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Office of Student Conduct directly by calling 215-898-5651 or visiting the office located in 207 Duhring Wing, 236 S. 34th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

## **EXAMINATION POLICIES**

Examinations in the School of Nursing courses are governed by the rules on examinations from the Office of the Provost: <http://www.upenn.edu/registrar/>. In the left column, click "Final Exam Information" under the appropriate semester. Click "Provost Rules".

Students with such special circumstances as time conflicts between multiple exams, illness, or grave personal difficulties such as a death in the family should petition the faculty immediately to work with and find a resolution.

## **READMISSION TO THE DNP PROGRAM**

Doctor of Nursing Practice Students are readmitted through the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee. The Academic Standards and Progressions Committee is the highest ruling body in the School of Nursing with regard to readmission decisions for Doctor of Nursing Practice students; as such, it has the final say.

### **Procedure**

1. The student should indicate interest in readmission by emailing the Office of Student Services at [advisor@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:advisor@nursing.upenn.edu) at least six months before the desired return date. The following materials are required for the readmission petition to be considered:
  - A letter requesting readmission addressed to the Academic Standards and Progression Committee
  - Two letters of recommendation, preferably from managers or those who have supervised the student (to be sent directly from the recommender to [advisor@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:advisor@nursing.upenn.edu))
  - A resume
  - Any transcripts from institutions attended since separating from Penn.
2. The Associate Director for Graduate Academic Affairs will forward the materials to the DNP Program Director(s). The DNP Program Director(s) will communicate with the applicant if any additional admissions requirements, such as an interview, are needed.
3. The Program Director(s) will review the applicant and communicate their recommendation to the Associate Director for Graduate Academic Affairs prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Academic Standards and Progression Committee. If the DNP Program Director(s) recommend readmission, an updated plan of study should be provided.

4. The readmission materials and DNP Program Director(s)' recommendation will be reviewed by the Academic Standards and Progression Committee and the student will be notified of the decision.

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

This policy exists for the resolution of disagreements between students and instructors for academic matters. A student must first have submitted a written appeal regarding the academic matter in question to the appropriate instructor or instructors. Email appeals are permitted. After a decision is made by the instructor(s), the issue, if unresolved, may be appealed to the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs will consult with the instructor(s) and attempt to resolve any process disputes, but the faculty retains the final decision about the grade for the assignment or the course. If the matter continues to be unresolved to the satisfaction of the student and the instructor(s), the issue will be referred to the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee (ASPC). The ASPC will review the situation to determine if grading processes have been applied fairly and will provide recommendations to the instructor(s) about process improvements.

### **Types of Grievances**

Commonly, grievances fall into 2 categories:

1. Grade Disagreement Re-evaluation of a grade given on an individual assignment or for a course.
2. Appeal of the decision to dismiss the student from the school, usually for unsafe practice; significant failure to perform academically; failure to correspond with the Office of Student Services according to stipulations in Leave of Absence letters.

### **GRADE DISAGREEMENT**

The role of the ASPC in matters of grade disagreement is to investigate the processes used by faculty in determining the grade and advise the faculty member in handling any perceived problems with applying grading processes outlined in the syllabus or any other apparent violations of fairness. The Faculty member ultimately determines the grade that is awarded.

The ASPC is the only body in the School of Nursing that can dismiss a student for severely poor academic performance, failure to return from a leave of absence/ failure to correspond with the School, unsafe clinical practice or other serious problems.

Determining that clinical practice is unsafe: clinical practice that is considered unsafe must be evaluated as such by more than one faculty member involved in the course, usually the faculty member serving as the student's clinical instructor and the Course Director or Program Director. The faculty will then consult the Associate Dean for Academic Programs who may choose to meet with the student and will consult with the faculty about potential processes to improve student performance. If it is determined that the student's clinical practice is so unsafe that she/he must be removed from clinical, the faculty will determine if the student has failed the course. The ASPC will be consulted and will review documentation leading to the determination of unsafe practice and course failure. In collaboration with the faculty, the ASPC will determine if the student will be permitted to re-take the course or if the student is to be dismissed from the School.

### **OPTIONS FOLLOWING DISMISSAL FROM THE SCHOOL OF NURSING**

#### **Review by the Academic Standards and Progression Committee**

In the event that the ASPC dismisses a student from the School of Nursing, the student may request a meeting with the Committee. The ASPC has the option to reconsider the decision or to uphold it. The ASPC must defer to faculty and teaching staff on all academic decisions related to dismissal.

### **Appeal to the Academic Standards and Progression Committee**

The only ASPC decision a student may petition is that of dismissal from the School of Nursing. The appeals process is as follows:

1. The student must submit a written petition to appeal the dismissal within 30 days of notification of the decision. The petition must include the grounds for appeal, which are limited to a) procedural error, b) bias on the part of the ASPC or any of its members, or c) dismissal that was arbitrary or capricious and without any reasonable basis. The petition should be sent to the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Academic Affairs.
2. Written petitions for appeal of dismissal are evaluated by an ad hoc Appeals Committee appointed by the Dean of the School of Nursing. The Appeals Committee shall be comprised of three members of the Standing Faculty, one of whom will be designated Chair.
3. The student may request, in the written petition, the opportunity to address the membership of the Appeals Committee.
4. The Appeals Committee will review relevant background materials, including relevant academic history and any supporting materials submitted by the student. The Appeals Committee may seek additional information or consultation from School or University officials as its members deem appropriate.
5. The Appeals Committee must defer to faculty and teaching staff on all academic decisions related to the dismissal.
6. The Appeals Committee deliberates and votes in private. In voting, the Appeals Committee may consider the following among the possible options: a) uphold the dismissal, or b) return the dismissal decision to the ASPC for further consideration.
7. The Appeals Committee reports the results of the vote and any supporting rationale to the Dean. The Appeals Committee is advisory to the Dean. The Dean holds the final decision.
8. In the case that the Dean decides to ask the ASPC to further consider a decision to dismiss in light of such an Appeal's Committee review, ASPC's decision to uphold dismissal after such further consideration cannot be appealed.

### **ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OMBUDSMAN**

The Office of the Ombudsman at the University of Pennsylvania serves as a mechanism for students, faculty, staff, and administrators who have a specific problem or dispute that they may not have been able to resolve through other channels. The overarching mission of the Office of the Ombudsman is to resolve issues of equity and justice at the University of Pennsylvania before the tensions of polarization escalate.

The office is concerned with safeguarding individual rights and promoting better channels of communication throughout the University. It is independent of all administrative offices. The Ombudsman is not an advocate for any one individual or group. He or she is an advocate for fairness, adherence to University regulations, due process, and personal responsibility. The Office supplements, but does not replace, any existing grievance mechanisms or modes of redress. It can and does recommend changes in the existing rules and practices when necessary.

Students may contact the Office of the Ombudsman for consultation at any time during the grievance process. The Ombudsman may advise students about process issues and may choose to discuss the issue with relevant faculty or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. The Ombudsman does not function as a true appeal process in that they do not attempt to overturn a faculty decision about student performance.

For more information about the Office of the Ombudsman, please visit <http://www.upenn.edu/ombudsman/> or contact the office at 215-898-8261 or [ombuds@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:ombuds@pobox.upenn.edu).

**ROLE OF THE DEAN OF THE SCHOOL OF NURSING**

Students may contact the Dean of the School of Nursing at any time in the grievance process. The Dean may communicate with relevant faculty or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs about process issues. She will not over-rule a faculty member's decision about grading or safety of clinical practice.

## **FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

### **TUITION AND FEES**

Tuition is charged based on the number of Course Units (CU) taken in a given semester. You will also be charged a General Fee and Technology Fee each semester, and in some semesters may be charged additional fees (such as simulation laboratory fees) that are associated with certain courses.

Current tuition information can be found on the “Tuition and Fees” section of the website:  
<https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/admissions/tuition-and-fees/masters-post-masters-costs/>.

Please see the “Courses and Registration” section of this handbook for Tuition Refund policies.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

Personalized financial assistance is available through the School of Nursing Financial Aid Office.

Website: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/admissions/financial-aid/for-current-students/>  
Contact Information: [financialaid@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:financialaid@nursing.upenn.edu) or 215-898-8191.

### **FUNDED RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES**

Opportunities to participate on funded research programs may be available to full-time graduate students. This experience can be a valuable addition to a student’s studies. For further information the student may consult the Office of Nursing Research at 215-898-3151 or [research@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:research@nursing.upenn.edu).

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

This notice provides a summary of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), often referred to as the “Buckley Amendment,” and University policy regarding the confidentiality of student records. For more detail, the University policy, which incorporates legal requirements, is available online:

<http://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/confidentiality-of-student-records>.

### **RESTRICTIONS ON DISCLOSING STUDENT INFORMATION**

In general, University faculty and staff may not disclose personally identifiable information from a student or applicant’s records except with the student’s written consent. Some of the most common exceptions to this rule are:

- To school officials with a “legitimate educational interest” – in other words, where the information is required or would be helpful in the performance of his or her duties, or in the pursuit of an enterprise sanctioned by the University;
- To another school in which a student or applicant seeks to enroll;
- To parents if the parent properly documents that the student is a dependent for tax purposes;
- As required by other law.

University faculty and staff may disclose directory information, such as name, address, telephone number, and other designated demographic data, without the student’s consent, unless the student has chosen to object to such disclosure by “opting-out.” Students can exercise their right to opt-out by contacting the University Registrar’s office:

<http://www.upenn.edu/registrar/contact.html>.

As a general rule, University faculty and staff must inform any recipient of student records that they may not re-disclose that information unless they obtain the student’s written consent.

In certain cases, such as injury and in emergency situations, the University may contact parents regarding a student. Disclosure decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis by designated University officials in consultation with the Office of the General Counsel.

### **STUDENTS’ RIGHT TO INSPECT AND SEEK CORRECTION OF RECORDS**

Students are entitled to inspect and review their records. They are not entitled to inspect personal notes of faculty or administrative staff that are solely held by the maker of the notes, confidential letters and statements subject to waiver, or parts of their record that contain information about another student. Students may be allowed to copy their records, upon payment of a nominal charge. Students also have the right to seek correction of their records.

Officials responsible for student records, such as the Registrar and school or department business offices, are required to maintain a record of requests for access and disclosures of student records, except in cases where the request was from or the disclosure was to: the student, school officials with legitimate educational interests, a party with consent from the student or a party seeking directory information.

For more detail, the University policy, which incorporates legal requirements, is available online:

<http://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/confidentiality-of-student-records>.



## **GRADUATION**

### **REQUIREMENTS**

All degree requirements must be completed within a five-year period after admission to DNP program. Candidates who are unable to meet this requirement must petition for an extension to the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee. Any additional requirements in effect at the time of re-evaluation must be completed.

All failing (“F”) and Incomplete grades must be cleared or completed by graduation day or the student’s name will be removed from the graduation list. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required. All University balances must be paid in full.

### **PROCEDURES**

Applications for diplomas will be emailed to students during the academic year. Students must complete the online applications according to the instructions.

### **CEREMONIES**

Each year, the School of Nursing celebrates the accomplishments of the graduating class with a special School of Nursing ceremony following the University Commencement at Franklin Field.

<https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/news-events/annual-events/commencement/index.php>

### **HOODING**

Graduates are responsible for either renting or purchasing their own academic regalia and information will be distributed regarding this each year. Students wear their full regalia to the University Commencement but are officially hooded by their School of Nursing Project Leader.

Diplomas are granted by the University of Pennsylvania. Students will receive their diplomas in the mail.

Corrections to diplomas should be brought to the attention of the Office of the Secretary. A fee will be charged for all changes on diplomas.

Students with outstanding University balances, incompletes, “NR” or uncleared “F” grades at the time of graduation will not be able to obtain their diplomas nor will they be able to obtain any official transcripts or other University information until the balances are paid in full.

Office of the Secretary: <https://secure.www.upenn.edu/secretary/>

### **GRADUATION AWARDS**

Students are encouraged to nominate themselves or others for the School of Nursing Student Awards. More information about the nomination process will be disseminated to students during the academic year.

A list of graduation awards can be found on the website: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/live/files/568-school-of-nursing-student-awardspdf>.

## **RESOURCES**

### **UNIVERSITY AND SCHOOL OF NURSING GENERAL RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

The University of Pennsylvania is committed to providing the support resources that students need to achieve their goals.

- Academic: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/advising/masters/>
- Health and Wellness: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/conference-funding/>
- Cultural Resource Centers: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/cultural-resources-centers/>
- Student Life: <https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/student-services/resources/student-life/>

For a comprehensive list of University resources consult Penn A-Z (<http://www.upenn.edu/penna-z/>).

## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: Creating and maintaining a climate of professional nursing**

As members of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing community, we are committed to creating a classroom environment that is built upon a foundation of mutual respect and fosters a climate in which student learning is enhanced to the fullest extent. As faculty and students, we value:

- A course that is well-organized and in which the expectations and objectives are clearly communicated.
- An educational experience that is stimulating, engaging, and intellectually challenging.
- A classroom environment that celebrates and values diversity.
- A safe space in which to voice our thoughts and opinions.
- We also recognize that the quality of the educational experience is influenced by each member of the classroom community. As students, we play a significant role in shaping the educational climate. It is therefore our responsibility to:
  - Be fully present while in class, which includes actively listening while others speak and participating in classroom discussion.
  - Challenge our assumptions and seek to learn from the diverse experiences, backgrounds, and opinions that each person brings to the educational environment.
  - Provide feedback in a professional and honest manner regarding factors that enhance or inhibit learning in the classroom environment.
  - Treat course faculty and fellow students with respect.
  - Be a positive ambassador and role model for Penn Nursing.
- By upholding these basic principles, we hope to promote a classroom climate that is conducive to the intellectual, professional, and personal development of every student.

## **Appendix B: Statement of Personal Attributes and Capabilities**

The curricula leading to degrees in nursing require students to engage in diverse and complex experiences directed to the practice, refinement and full acquisition of essential nursing competencies and functions. Unique combinations of cognitive, behavioral, sensory, communication, psychomotor, and communication abilities are required to perform these functions in a satisfactory manner and to consistently demonstrate these competencies. In addition to being essential to the successful completion of the requirements for the respective nursing degree, these competencies and functions are necessary to ensure the health and safety of patients, fellow students, faculty and other health care providers. This statement describes the minimum competencies and functions necessary for entrance to, continuation in, and graduation from the nursing degree programs of the School of Nursing at the University of Pennsylvania. Candidates for nursing degrees must be able to meet these minimum standards with or without reasonable accommodation.

Candidates for degrees offered by the School of Nursing must exhibit all the following competencies and characteristics:

### Behavioral Characteristics

- Fully use his/her intellectual ability, exercise good judgment and promptly and accurately complete all responsibilities attendant to implementing an appropriate plan of care for patients across the life span.
- Develop a compassionate, effective, professional and therapeutic relationship with patients.
- Work constructively in stressful and changing environments with the ability to modify behavior in response to evolving events.
- Demonstrate ethical behavior, including adherence to the Nurse Practice Act, the ANA Scope and Standards of Practice and the University Code of Academic Integrity.
- Demonstrate emotional and interpersonal skills sufficient to:
  - adapt to changing environments.
  - function efficiently and effectively in conditions of uncertainty inherent in the clinical problems exhibited by patients.
  - remain calm in an emergency situation.
  - function effectively and efficiently in times of physical and mental stress for short and/or for extended periods.
  - be aware of one's emotional responses and biases.

### Communication Characteristics

- Interrelate with colleagues, faculty, staff, patients and other professionals with honesty, sensitivity, integrity, respect and without bias.
- Communicate effectively with patients and families of diverse religious, cultural and/or social backgrounds.
- Express own ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.
- Communicate effectively in oral and written forms in person and/or when using telephonic devices.
- Perceive and interpret non-verbal communication and verbal cues.
- Recognize and appropriately respond to emotions.
- Demonstrate the following communication abilities: speech, hearing, reading, writing, and electronic modality literacy.
- Demonstrate skills/ability sufficient to:
  - Elicit and record relevant information about health history, current health status or responses to treatment from patients, family members, or others.
  - Convey information to patient, members of the healthcare team and others as necessary to teach, direct, and counsel individuals and groups.
  - Give verbal directions to or follow verbal directions from other members of the health care team and participate in health care team discussions/coordination of patient care.
  - Process and communicate information of the patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the healthcare team.

### **Psychomotor Abilities**

- Possess sufficient proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibration), physical strength and mobility to carry out nursing procedures, to conduct laboratory and diagnostic tests, and carry out physical examinations.
- Possess the motor skills required for their specialty's scope of practice, as defined by the relevant accrediting organization(s).
- Possess sufficient motor function to be able to demonstrate manual dexterity in order to coordinate fine and gross muscular movements sufficient to provide safe general care and treatment to patients in all areas of healthcare.
- Demonstrate an appropriate and timely response in emergency situations, including any circumstance requiring immediate and rapid resolution.
- Demonstrate physical abilities sufficient for carrying equipment, pushing, pulling, stooping, kneeling, bending, climbing stairs and moving within the confines of care delivery settings such as the patient room and the operating room and between settings such as clinic, classroom building and hospital.
- Demonstrate ability to lift, push and pull with assistance (mechanical or coworker) the weight of the average patient specific to the area of clinical work; and possess sufficient flexibility, balance, dexterity, hand-eye coordination, and stamina to deliver care and operate all related instruments and equipment.

### **Cognitive Characteristics**

- Demonstrate an aptitude for rapid problem solving, the capability to access and interpret medical files independently, evaluate physical examinations, and formulate a logical care plan in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate good judgment in patient assessment, and the abilities to utilize prior knowledge and incorporate new information in the decision-making process.
- Possess the ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and the relationships of structures as they pertain to practice decisions.
- Possess the necessary short and long-term memory function to retain and recall pertinent information (patient and other) in a timely fashion.
- Possess the ability to read and understand written documents in English and solve problems involving measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis.
- Demonstrate the ability to gather, analyze and synthesize data, develop an appropriate plan of action, establish priorities, conceptualize plan of care, monitor treatment plans and modalities and provide in-depth rationale for plan of care both in quiet environments and in areas where distractions, noise, and other stressors are present.
- Demonstrate the ability to integrate and assimilate large volumes of information from multiple sources and multiple educational experiences in a timely fashion, and be able to apply that information to problem solving and decision making.

### **Sensory Characteristics**

- Ability to distinguish colors including the accurate interpretation of diagnostic tests, changes in skin color, nail beds, mucus membranes, bodily fluids and wound characteristics in all types of lighting conditions.
- Ability to recognize three dimensional and spatial relationships.
- Ability to discriminate physical examination findings using inspection, auscultation, percussion and palpation.
- Ability to discriminate between sizes, shapes, temperature, and texture by means of touch.
- Ability to discriminate changes in position, pressure, movement and vibrations in order to perform nursing procedures, conduct laboratory and diagnostic tests, and to perform the physical examination.
- Ability to distinguish odors that may be related to a patient's condition, noxious spills, or fumes from a fire explosion or malfunction of equipment.
- Ability to detect sounds related to bodily functions, monitoring devices, telephones and emergency signals.
- Ability to prepare and dispense the correct quantity of medication or therapeutic agents in a syringe or therapeutic device
- Possess sufficient visual acuity to be able to observe a patient's response at a distance and/or close at hand and to read lips when necessary.

Consistent with its mission and philosophy, the School of Nursing is committed to providing educational opportunities to students with disabilities. In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the School provides reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. However, the decision regarding appropriate accommodations will be based on the specifics of each case.

Students who seek reasonable accommodations for disabilities must contact the Office of Student Disabilities Services located at Stouffer Commons, Suite 300, 3702 Spruce Street, Philadelphia PA 19104-6027. The office hours are Monday through Friday, from 9:00am to 5:00pm. Phone: (215) 573-9235; TDD: (215) 746-6320; FAX: (215) 746-6326; Email: [sdsmail@zimbra.upenn.edu](mailto:sdsmail@zimbra.upenn.edu).

This office is responsible for assessing documentation and determining reasonable accommodations.

Questions concerning these standards can be directed to [advisor@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:advisor@nursing.upenn.edu).

*Approved December 2011*

## Appendix C: Student Social Media Policy

In online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as a representative of the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing, you are creating perceptions about the School of Nursing (SON) and your expertise. Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your abilities and the SON's reputation.

This document serves as the official policy for student use of social media at the SON. These guidelines apply to all students creating or contributing to any kind of social media affiliated with the SON. Please check back periodically to make sure you're up to date. We trust that you will adhere to these policies. If, for any reason an incident occurs that violates the policy, we expect you to bring it to our attention immediately so we can work together toward a resolution.

### Your Online Reputation

The information you post and share online is NOT confidential. Assume anything you post — or, are tagged by — is visible to the world-at-large, and may affect your professional reputation for years to come. Today, many employers and academic institutions routinely search potential candidate's online reputations. For more on developing and protecting your online reputation, we strongly encourage you to review:

- University of Pennsylvania Career Services – Creating an Online Persona  
[http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/undergrad/online\\_persona.html](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/careerservices/undergrad/online_persona.html)
- Social Media Guidelines – What do nurses need to know?  
<https://www.ncsbn.org/2930.htm>  
<https://www.nursing.upenn.edu/live/files/217-student-social-media-policy>
- White Paper: A Nurse's Guide to the Use of Social Media  
[https://www.ncsbn.org/Social\\_Media.pdf](https://www.ncsbn.org/Social_Media.pdf)

### Branding Guidelines

The SON "Brand" has a carefully defined look comprised of logos, colors, fonts, and styles.

To ensure your group meets the SON's branding standards, please contact the Marketing and Communications team at [media@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:media@nursing.upenn.edu).

### Facebook Guidelines

Use the GROUP Account Type

We ask that SON-affiliated student groups choose the "Group" account type when using Facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups>.

Groups are like a message board; they are easy to manage and have several privacy options.

Please set any SON-affiliated Facebook Group privacy option to CLOSED: <http://www.facebook.com/help?page=982>

We ask that all SON-affiliated Facebook Groups add a member of the SON Marketing and Communications team as an Admin of their group. Please contact [media@nursing.upenn.edu](mailto:media@nursing.upenn.edu).

### Ethics Guidelines

- Live the SON philosophy

Be sure that all content associated with you is consistent with your abilities and the SON's philosophy - that social media is about building relationships. Never impersonate someone else, or purposely obscure your identity as a representative of the SON. Build your own reputation. Care about what you are talking about.

- Write what you know

Stick to your area of expertise and provide unique, individual perspectives on what's going on at the SON and in the world. Don't tell secrets. Respect proprietary information, confidentiality, brand, trademark, copyright, and fair use.

- Remember everything online is discoverable

There is no such thing as a private social media site. Search engines turn up posts years after they were published. Comments can be forwarded, copied, and printed. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post.

- Understand and use privacy settings

We do not expect all of your social media use to be SON-related, but we do expect you to keep the items you share with your close personal friends separate from what you share with your SON “friends.”

- Adhere to HIPAA

<http://www.pennmedicine.org/health-system/about/organization/policies/notice-of-privacy-practices.html>

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/summary/index.html>

- Keep It Legal

Have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your source. Keep your links up to date and make sure they work.

- Be Respectful and Professional

SON students should always keep in mind our principles of respect for others and the civil and thoughtful discussion of ideas. The freedom and speed of online conversations can often prompt people to behave in ways they may otherwise would not. Your reputation and SON are best served when you express yourself professionally. Don't spam. Ever.

- Institutional and Personal Privacy

Do not post about religious holidays, confidential or proprietary information about the SON, its students, alumni, employees, or patients. Use good ethical judgment and follow university policies, as well as federal requirements.

- Likes and For-Profit Ventures

SON does not endorse for-profit ventures; i.e., please do not choose to “Like” a for-profit entity!

- Give credit where credit is due

Always cite when quoting someone else. Make sure images are shareable through Creative Commons, and attribute them, too. Never use copyrighted material without permission.

- Mistakes happen

If you make a mistake, admit it quickly. Most of the time, you can then move on. If not, let us help you fix your mistakes; explain the situation and we can help you to find a solution to any problem.

*Original Source: © 2009 SocialFish & Croydon Consulting, www.socialfish.org*

## **Social Media - Best Practices, Tools, and Tips**

### Facebook

- Facebook Groups <http://www.facebook.com/groups>
- Facebook Help <http://www.facebook.com/help/>
- Facebook Basics > How to Post and Share Content <http://www.facebook.com/help/?page=812>
- Facebook Privacy and Data Use Policy <http://www.facebook.com/about/privacy/>
- Facebook and Privacy > Resources [http://www.facebook.com/fbprivacy?sk=app\\_6009294086](http://www.facebook.com/fbprivacy?sk=app_6009294086)
- Facebook Security > Take Action [http://www.facebook.com/security?sk=app\\_10442206389](http://www.facebook.com/security?sk=app_10442206389)
- Facebook Statement of Rights and Responsibilities <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>
- Mashable: How to Manage a Facebook Group <http://mashable.com/2009/10/07/facebook-groups/>



- Mashable – The Facebook Guide: <http://mashable.com/guidebook/facebook/>

#### Linked In

- What is LinkedIn? <http://learn.linkedin.com/what-is-linkedin/>
- About Groups <http://learn.linkedin.com/groups/>
- Groups and Featured Discussions <http://learn.linkedin.com/groups/#featured-discussions>
- What is LinkedIn Today? <http://blog.linkedin.com/2011/03/10/linkedin-today/>
- New Users <http://learn.linkedin.com/new-users/>
- Training Webinars <http://learn.linkedin.com/training/>

#### Twitter

- Mashable – The Twitter Guide Book: <http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/>
- What is Twitter? <http://business.twitter.com/basics/what-is-twitter>
- Glossary <http://business.twitter.com/basics/glossary>
- Basics <http://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics>
- Best Practices <http://business.twitter.com/basics/best-practices>
- Support <http://support.twitter.com/>
- Use Twitter Efficiently <http://econsultancy.com/us/blog/3780-a-20-step-starters-guide-to-using-twitter-efficiently>

## **Appendix D: Student Substance Abuse Policy**

### **Purpose**

The School of Nursing recognizes the importance of educating its students about the problems of substance abuse because this significant health risk, and in many cases, criminal matter, is unfortunately prevalent among healthcare providers. Aside from impacting upon the personal and psychological integrity of the abusers, substance abuse may significantly impact the ability of healthcare providers to administer safe, competent patient care. Recognizing that substance abuse is both a disease and a professional hazard, the School of Nursing has incorporated substance abuse topical content areas into its curriculum. The School of Nursing has likewise established this substance abuse policy.

This policy impacts upon and augments the student's ability to maintain personal and professional integrity, and facilitates the student's success both clinically and didactically. It promotes a healthy learning environment for the student. In the clinical setting, this policy enhances patient safety. It also fosters the development of professional nurses who are well educated about the prevalence and adverse outcomes of substance abuse.

### **Policy**

This policy applies to all students who have matriculated in the School of Nursing. Any unlawful possession, use, manufacture, distribution, diversion, or improper use of any substances by any student in the School of Nursing may constitute removal from clinical and/or cause for termination from the program. In addition, no student may consume or be under the influence of, or be in the possession of alcohol at any time the student is in the classroom and/or performing clinical duties. Improper use of alcohol may also constitute removal from clinical and/or cause for termination from the program. Students must also comply with all local, state, or federal laws and regulations controlling the possession, manufacture, use, or distribution of controlled or illegal substances and alcohol. Students must also adhere to all University of Pennsylvania Alcohol and Drug Policy. The policy can be found at: <http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/alcohol/policy2.php>.

In addition, there are circumstances in which students may need to take over the counter or prescribed medications that have the potential to impair their performance or personal behavior. As such, all students are responsible for being aware of the effect these medications may have on performance and must notify the Program Director or Course Director within 72 hours prior to clinical attendance or drug testing about the use of any medication that could impair performance or has the potential to influence a drug screen.

Failure or refusal to comply with the substance abuse policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any testing or to alter the results of testing will be considered a refusal to comply with this policy. In addition, failure or refusal to comply with any aspect of the substance abuse policy may be reported to the University's Office of Student Conduct for possible disciplinary action in accordance with the university's Student Conduct Policy.

### **Procedures**

#### **I. Drug Testing**

Many clinical training sites, or institutions in which human research is being conducted, require that students undergo drug testing, similar to what is required of their employees, prior to placement at the sites. Therefore, all students involved in clinical practice settings, whether for clinical education purposes or for the recruitment of research subjects and/or the collection of research data, will need to undergo drug testing prior to working at clinical sites.

In addition, during enrollment in the School of Nursing, a student may be required to undergo drug or alcohol testing for cause when the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee, in consultation with the relevant Program or Course Director and relevant University experts, determines there is reasonable suspicion that the student is impaired due to illegal drug or alcohol use, or the use or misuse of prescribed

or over-the-counter medications based upon, but not limited to the following examples: unusual or aberrant behavior or patterns of abnormal or erratic behavior; physical symptoms of impairment; arrest or conviction for a drug or alcohol related offense; evidence of drug tampering, drug diversion, or misappropriation; direct observation of drug use or discrepant drug counts; alterations in student clinical and/or didactic performance that may not be attributed to other causes; following a work-related injury or illness, with evidence that it may have been related to use of a controlled substance; observation of poor judgment or careless acts which caused or had the potential to cause patient injury, jeopardize the safety of self or others, or resulted in damage to equipment

## II: Reporting

A faculty or staff member who suspects possible substance abuse by a student must report the suspicious behavior to the Program Director or Course Director who will then immediately contact the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. In the absence of the Course or Program Director, the faculty member observing the behavior should contact the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. Any faculty member with evidence that an enrolled student has engaged in clinical care of patients and families or participated in class room work while impaired may also report their observations to the University's Office of Student Conduct.

A student who suspects possible substance abuse or a violation of this policy by another student has the responsibility to report this information. A report can be made to the student's faculty advisor and/or Program Director, the Assistant Dean for Academic and Student Affairs, or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs. The identity of the individual making the report will be kept confidential to the greatest extent possible consistent with the need to investigate the report and subject to legal requirements.

Any student arrested or convicted of violating any federal, state, or local law pertaining to the manufacture, possession, sale, use, or distribution of a drug or alcohol or misuse of prescribed medications must report this event to the Assistant Dean for Academic & Students Affairs and Associate Dean for Academic Programs within three days of the event and prior to any clinical contact with patients and families.

## III: Testing Procedure

Drug and alcohol testing required by the School of Nursing will be conducted utilizing the following measures:

- The student must be tested at a facility approved by the School.
- The student must fully comply with the testing facility's methods and procedures for collecting samples
- The test shall screen for the use of the controlled substances (examples listed below) or any other controlled substances that are suspected of being abused or used by the student.
- Urine, serum, hair, and saliva analysis or a combination of these may be tested.
- The student will disclose any prescribed or over-the-counter medications, as well as any dietary habits that could modify testing results.
- If the accuracy of a positive test is disputed by the student, the student may request a retesting of samples by the facility; however, the cost of the additional testing would be borne by the student. Testing done outside the appropriate window of time will not be considered valid.
- Substance abuse is verified if either: (i) the positive test result is not disputed, or (ii) if the student-requested retest is positive.
- If the test is inconclusive, the screening will be treated as positive until definitive analysis by alternate testing is accomplished. During this time, the student will be not permitted to have any contact with patients and families but may be allowed to attend classes, pending the approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.
- The testing facility will make a final report of the test results (positive, negative, or inconclusive) to the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.
- A student who is required to and submits to drug and alcohol screening will be expected to authorize the release of the results to the School and other relevant University offices (CAPS/SHS).

All interim actions including requiring the student to undergo drug or alcohol testing, to refrain from clinical contact with patients and families, or to refrain from attending classes will be determined by the Associate Dean for

Academic Programs and the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee in consultation with the relevant Program or Course Director and relevant University experts. In drug or alcohol testing for cause cases, the cost of any required drug or alcohol testing will be borne by the School of Nursing at a facility chosen by the School of Nursing. A student who refuses to submit to testing will be regarded as having voluntarily relinquished his/her clinical responsibilities. Any attempt to delay, hinder, or tamper with any testing or to alter the results of testing will be considered a refusal to submit to testing and may result in an inference of impairment and/or a violation of this policy.

### *Confidentiality*

The requirement that a student be tested, as well as the test results, will remain confidential and disclosed only to those individuals within University of Pennsylvania or an affiliated clinical site with a need to know or as required by law. Upon written request, students will be provided a copy of test results. As required by law, MSN students who have been suspected of substance abuse will be reported to the appropriate State Boards of Nursing where the student is currently licensed.

### III. Review by Academic Standards and Progressions Committee

Once evidence has been gathered documenting the use or suspected use of controlled substances and/ or impairment, the student's case will be discussed at a meeting of the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee. The Committee will consider all evidence to determine next steps including removal from clinical, leave of absence, and/or dismissal from the program. A student who is suspected of violating this policy may submit written information to the Committee for their review.

### IV. Voluntary Self-Disclosure

Students who voluntarily self-disclose a substance or alcohol abuse problem to a faculty member, academic advisor, Office of Student Services staff member or the Associate Dean for Academic Programs, prior to a positive drug/alcohol test result, and who are willing to enter in and complete an appropriate program of treatment may be granted a medical leave of absence while she/ he undergoes treatment. In consultation with her/his health care provider and providers from the University (Counseling and Psychological Services and/or the Student Health Service), a treatment program will be identified, and the student will be assisted in entering it. The student must sign appropriate University forms providing designated University providers (Counseling and Psychological Services and Student Health Services) to communicate with the student's private providers about her/ his recovery status and with the School of Nursing.

### V. Treatment and Counseling Resources

Students who are concerned that they may have a substance or alcohol abuse problem are encouraged to seek appropriate assessment, treatment, and counseling from qualified health care professionals.

The following websites are a list of some treatment and counseling services that are available to students:

- American Association of Nurse Anesthetists Peer Assistance [www.aana.com/peerassist.aspx](http://www.aana.com/peerassist.aspx)
- Alcoholics Anonymous [www.alcoholic-anonymous.org/](http://www.alcoholic-anonymous.org/)
- American Society of Addictive Medicine [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org)
- Narcotic Anonymous <http://wsoinc.com/>
- National Directory of Drug and Alcohol Abuse Treatment Programs <http://dasis3.samhsa.gov/>
- Penn Counseling and Psychological Services [www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/caps/)
- Penn Student Health Service [www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs/](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/shs/)

- Pennsylvania Bureau of Professional & Occupational Affairs Professional Health Monitoring Programs [http://www.dos.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/professional\\_health\\_monitoring\\_programs\\_%28phmp%29/12470](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/professional_health_monitoring_programs_%28phmp%29/12470)

## VI. Reentry into the Academic and Clinical Environment

Return from medical leave of absence will be considered by the Assistant Dean for Academic & Student Affairs, the Associate Dean for Academic Programs and approval of the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee following successful treatment and sustained progress in addition to other conditions that may be stipulated in the leave of absence letter. All relevant University and School required documents must be completed, including a plan for successful return to course and clinical work that is approved by the student's health care provider, relevant University experts, (Counseling and Psychological Services and Student Health Services) and the School of Nursing. Factors that have been identified as helpful for reentry into practice include 12-step program participation, random drug screening, and sponsorship in a support group. The student must also provide medical clearance from the appropriate individual coordinating therapeutic intervention and evidence of current, active nursing licensure (if a graduate student). Re-entry to the School of Nursing will be determined in consultation with the Counseling and Psychological Services and Student Health Services offices.

Depending upon the length of absence from the program, the student may be required to restart the clinical and didactic components of their plan of study. Alternatively, the student may only be required to repeat specific semesters of clinical and didactic study, based on the decision of the Academic Standards and Progressions Committee in consultation with relevant Program Director or Course Director.

Before reentry into the School of Nursing, conditions will be established between University of Pennsylvania's School of Nursing and the recovering student. The conditions will be appropriately individualized toward the situation and needs of the student. A student recovering from substance abuse will be monitored closely, particularly in clinical practice. Frequent monitoring to ensure the student remains substance free will be required.

Reentry can be difficult for students, especially those who have just started their educational program and have limited time invested in the program. Reentry after relapse into substance abuse is not advised for any student. Reentry into a nursing program's curriculum after a period of absence, no matter what the reason, can be a stressful time of readjustment. A student who has been in rehabilitation for substance abuse requires the same period of adjustment as a person who has been away from clinical and didactic arena for any other reason. A student in recovery who is reentering the program will be encouraged not to resume their course of study too hastily, but instead allow themselves time to develop appropriate support systems to facilitate the reentry.

A student in recovery who is permitted to reenter the School of Nursing must comply with the conditions of return delineated as part of the program reentry.

### **Examples of Prohibited Controlled Substances**

The list of controlled substances that the University of Pennsylvania, School of Nursing's testing facility will normally screen for includes common street drugs and those drugs that a nursing student would normally have access to and could potentially abuse. Drugs monitored include but are not limited to:

- Alcohol
- Alfentanil
- \*Amphetamines
- \*Barbiturates
- \*Benzodiazepines
- Butorphanol (Stadol)
- Cannabinoids
- Cocaine Metabolites
- Fentanyl
- Ketamine
- \*Marijuana Metabolites
- \*tested for with a typical “9-panel” screening
- MDMA (Ecstasy)
- \*Methadone
- Nalbuphine (Nubain)
- \*Opiates
- \*PCP
- Propofol
- Propoxyphene
- Remifentanil
- Sevoflurane
- Sufentanil
- Tramadol

## Appendix E: Policy on religious and Secular Holidays

1. The University recognizes/observes the following secular holidays: Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, July 4, Thanksgiving and the day after, Labor Day, and New Year's Day.
2. The University also recognizes that there are several religious holidays that affect large numbers of University community members, including Christmas, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, the first two days of Passover, and Good Friday. In consideration of their significance for many students, no examinations may be given and no assigned work may be required on these days. Students who observe these holidays will be given an opportunity to make up missed work in both laboratories and lecture courses. If an examination is given on the first-class day after one of these holidays, it must not cover material introduced in class on that holiday.

Faculty should realize that Jewish holidays begin at sundown on the evening before the published date of the holiday. Late afternoon exams should be avoided on these days. Also, no examinations may be held on Saturday or Sunday in the undergraduate schools unless they are also available on other days. Nor should seminars or other regular classes be scheduled on Saturdays or Sundays unless they are also available at other times.

3. The University recognizes that there are other holidays, both religious and secular, which are of importance to some individuals and groups on campus. Such occasions include, but are not limited to, Sukkot, the last two days of Passover, Shavuot, Shemini Atzerat and Simchat Torah, as well as Chinese New Year, the Muslim New Year, Diwali, and the Islamic holidays Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha. Students who wish to observe such holidays must inform their instructors within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday even when the exact date of the holiday will not be known until later so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. Students who make such arrangements will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. For this reason, it is desirable that faculty inform students of all examination dates at the start of each semester. Exceptions to the requirement of a make-up examination must be approved in advance by the undergraduate dean of the school in which the course is offered.

Source: *Almanac*, March 30, 2001; *Almanac*, September 7, 2010:

<http://provost.upenn.edu/policies/pennbook/2013/02/13/policy-on-secular-and-religious-holidays>

**Appendix F: Learning Plan to Complete Course Work**

**Student Name:**

**Date:**

**Instructor Name:**

**Academic Term:**

Briefly state the mutually agreed upon problems in completing course work.	
State what the student needs to accomplish to complete coursework.	
State how the student will accomplish the outstanding coursework including use of campus learning resources.	
State how the student will demonstrate completed course work.	
State the metric for satisfactory completion including specific grading criteria.	
Date(s) for submission of written assignments and examinations.	
Date(s) for clinical hours.	
Date for review of completed course work and grade assignment.	
Student Signature (verifies agreement with this plan) Date:	
Instructor Signature (verifies agreement with this plan) Date:	
Outcome of review and grade.	
Signature of student.  Date:	
Signature of Faculty  Date:	



## **Appendix G: Doctor of Nursing Practice Project Guidelines**

Requirements for the Development, Implementation and Evaluation of Doctor of Nursing Practice Projects at The University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing

### **Overview**

The University of Pennsylvania offers the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) as a terminal degree option for nurses. This handbook serves as a guideline for the requirements and expectations for successful completion of the Doctor of Nursing Practice. All students must meet the program and curriculum requirements for all required courses. The below document describes an overview of the Project Management DNP courses, this should be used in conjunction with the individual course syllabi.

### **Process for Development:**

The University of Pennsylvania faculty developed these requirements in alignment with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing DNP Essentials (2006), White Paper, Doctor of Nursing Practice: Current Issues and Clarifying Recommendations (2015), standards from professional organizations, such as the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF), and current evidence-based practice.

The faculty anticipate review of this document and process annually.

### **Getting Started: Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Project**

The clinical DNP Project is an opportunity to apply skills obtained in the theoretical coursework. The Project is intended to make an impact, directly or indirectly, on patient and/or healthcare outcomes. The DNP student identifies a clinical problem, evaluates the context of the problem, conducts a thorough review of literature, and translates evidence to formulate a potential solution or intervention. The intervention is then implemented and evaluated to determine what impact it had on the given clinical problem. The findings are then shared with stakeholders, other scholars, and the public.

According to the AACN (August 2015) White Paper, Current Issues and Clarification Recommendations, at minimum, all DNP Projects should:

Focus on a change, which impacts a healthcare outcome(s) either through direct or indirect care.

Have a system (micro, meso-, or macro level) or population/aggregate focus.

Demonstrate implementation in the appropriate arena or area of practice.

Include a plan for sustainability (e.g. financial, systems or political realities, not only theoretical abstraction).

Include an evaluation of processes and/or outcomes (formative or summative).

DNP Projects should be designed so that processes and/or outcomes will be evaluated to guide practice and policy. Clinical significance is as important, and the Project should provide a foundation for future practice.

### Clarification of DNP versus PhD Scholarship

There are essentially two types of doctoral nursing scholarship. Nurses may choose a terminal degree in nursing as a PhD or a DNP. Though both types of scholarship may generate new information, DNP scholars do not test hypothesis, theoretical models, or generate information that is considered generalizable (AACN, 2015, p 2). Rather DNP scholars focus on synthesis, translation, implementation, and evaluation of evidence to solve clinical problems. To quote the AACN, "...DNP programs focus on translation of new science, it's application and evaluation," (p.2). The distinction between research-focused and practice-focus scholarship be clarified to state:...Research-focused graduates are prepared to generate knowledge through rigorous research and statistical methodologies that may be broadly applicable or generalizable; Practice- focused graduates are prepared to demonstrate innovation of practice change, translation of evidence, and the implementation of quality improvement processes in specific practice settings, systems, or with specific populations to improve health or health outcomes (AACN, 2015, p.2)."

**Table 1.0** Delineation of DNP and PhD Scholarship

Concept	DNP (Evaluation Principles)	PhD (Research Principles)
Nature of Knowledge	Problem Solving, Translation	Discovery
Nature of Results	Appraisal, Application & Evaluation of Current Knowledge	New Knowledge
Level of Control	Moderate-Low, Variable	High, Precision
Statistical Power	Optional	Essential
Standards	Repeatability & Impact Accuracy, Utility, Feasibility, Worth	Validity Accuracy, Generalizability
Questions	Quality, Value, Significance	Association, Effects
Planning	Evaluation: - Identify a Problem- Engage Stakeholders- Needs Assessment- Implement & Evaluate Solution- Justify Conclusions- Disseminate to interested audience and to stakeholders	Research: - Scientific Method- State Hypothesis- Collect Data - Analyze Data- Draw Conclusions - Disseminate to interested audience
Description of Program	Objectives: To prepare nurse leaders at the highest level of nursing practice to improve patient outcomes and translate research into practice Competencies: AACN <i>DNP Essentials of Doctoral Education for Advancing Nursing Practice</i> (2006)*** Additional competencies dependent on nursing role	Objectives: To prepare nurses at the highest level of nursing science with an ability to conduct research to advance nursing science Competencies: AACN <i>The Research-Focused Doctoral Program in Nursing: Pathways to Excellence</i> (2010)
Students	Commitment to a practice-oriented career. Strong interest in improving outcomes of patient care and population health.	Commitment to a research-oriented career Strong interest in developing new nursing knowledge and formal scientific inquiry.
Program Evaluation	Outcome: Healthcare improvements and contributions via practice, policy change, and practice scholarship. Receives accreditation by nursing accreditor.	Outcome: Contributes to healthcare improvements via formal science.

**Table 1.0.** Adapted from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2011), *Introduction to Program Evaluation for Public Health Programs*; White, et al., (2016), *Translation of Evidence into Nursing and Healthcare*; and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (2014), *Key Differences Between DNP and PhD/DNS Programs*.

## **American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) DNP Essentials**

The DNP Project course content is aligned with the AACN DNP Essentials, which address the following:

**Essential I:** Scientific Underpinnings for Practice

**Essential II:** Organizational and Systems Leadership for Quality Improvement and Systems Thinking

**Essential III:** Clinical Scholarship and Analytical Methods for Evidence-Based Practice

**Essential IV:** Information Systems/Technology and Patient Care Technology for the Improvement and Transformation of Health Care

**Essential V:** Health Care Policy for Advocacy in Health Care

**Essential VI:** Inter-professional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes

**Essential VII:** Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving the Nation's Health

**Essential VIII:** Advanced Nursing Practice

\*(<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/publications/position/DNPEssentials.pdf>)

\*Students should read this document in full upon admission to the program and refer to the documents as they move through their curriculum.

## **DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE PROJECT COURSE OVERVIEW**

### **I. Project Courses I-IV**

All students enrolled in the Doctor of Nursing Practice Program will complete a DNP Project as a requirement for graduation.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) Project involves the design, implementation, and evaluation of a structured project to improve clinical practice and/or influence health policy. The DNP Project serves as the terminal requirement for fulfillment of the DNP Degree. The DNP Project prepares students to lead and conduct a scholarly project that synthesizes, integrates, and applies learning from DNP coursework and clinical practicum experiences. The project is designed to advance nursing or inter-professional practice, and is supported by evidence-based practice guidelines, literature for best practices and quality improvement, expert consensus reports or positions statements promulgated by professional organizations/societies, and health policy reports. The DNP Project focuses on topical areas or issues of importance to the profession of nursing, population-based health, or the delivery of healthcare. The project must demonstrate potential benefit for a group, population, or community, and is not limited to any individual nurse, healthcare professional, or patient. Projects are developed in partnership with a clinical entity, community-based organization, or professional group to address a problem, challenge, or issue that is within the scope of DNP Project guidelines. The DNP Project utilizes systematic and methodological approaches to guide improvements or changes in nursing or inter-professional clinical practice or leadership, patient outcomes, and/or the practice environment.

(<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/publications/position/DNPEssentials.pdf>)

The foundation for the DNP project is guided by a theory, framework, model, scientific perspectives, published evidence-based guidelines, best practice, methodological approaches, and/or determination of need (e.g., needs assessment). Projects that meet this standard are considered evidence-based. Quality improvement or best practice projects can also be a focus of the DNP Project. Students who conduct a “needs assessment” as a rationale for determining the nature of the DNP Project should recognize that this is not considered “evidence,” but may be valuable as preliminary work to justify the DNP Project focus and/or methods.

## II. Guidelines for the DNP Project

The DNP Project demonstrates the synthesis and application of the evidence as it applies to the student’s DNP work. The project reflects leadership and scholarship.

**A. Nature of the Project:** The project can address, but is not limited to, a clinical, financial, leadership-systems, or policy-related problem, challenge, or issue.

The focus of the DNP project may include:

1. **Change Project:** Demonstration of “small tests of change” for an existing or new intervention or strategy in a practice or community setting
2. **Evidence-based Practice Project:** Translation of evidence or evidence-based practice guidelines into a practice setting to achieve a desired outcome(s)
3. **Quality Improvement Project:** Implementation of a performance improvement (PI) or quality improvement (QI) project that utilizes a QI methodology(s) to achieve a desired outcome(s)
4. **Model Evaluation Project:** Evaluation of a new or existing practice model or component(s) of a care delivery system or model.
5. **Innovation Evaluation Project:** Evaluation of a “new” or innovative practice, which may include a new technology.
6. **Data tracking and Trending Project:** Analysis (tracking and trending) of existing patient-, unit/area- or organizational-level data to inform clinical and/or leadership practices.
7. **Practice Analysis:** Analysis of practice(s) to identify and quantify the focus of nursing practice with population-based care, professional nursing or inter-professional specialties, leadership, and/or health policy, as well as measure adherence with guidelines, policies, and/or practices.
8. **Program Evaluation:** Evaluation of a new or existing program to demonstrate a change in practice and/or healthcare professional and patient outcome(s).

<http://www.aacnnursing.org/Portals/42/Publications/DNPEssentials.pdf>

**B. Scope of Project:** The scope of the project can be limited to a practice setting unit, department, service line, or organization. The sample size or unit of analysis for the project should be determined based on:

- Nature of the project
- Access to data, patients, healthcare professionals, and practice settings
- Timeframe that is feasible to complete the project
- Representativeness of a sample for generating meaningful implications for practice and/or health policy

### **III. Student Expectations and Competencies for DNP Project Courses**

1. Determine a topical area of interest
2. Develop a “Population-Patient Problem/Intervention/Comparison/Outcome/Time” (PICOT) Question
3. Synthesize and evaluate the strength of evidence and related literature focused on the DNP project topical area
4. Apply systematic methods to the project design and procedures
5. Develop a DNP Project Proposal according to the DNP Project Proposal requirements that outline the scope of DNP Project work
6. Obtain the appropriate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval status for the project from the University of Pennsylvania IRB and all sites where DNP Projects will be conducted, (if required).
7. Collaborate with a team of faculty and health professionals in practice to achieve the specific project objectives and work
8. Measure relevant outcomes or data using reliable and valid methods and instruments/tools.
9. Analyze and interpret findings and outcomes using appropriate analytical approaches to the types of outcomes and data generated by the project
10. Prepare a final a DNP Project Scholarly Paper that details the work and reports the analysis of DNP Project findings
11. Final presentation of DNP Project to team with full endorsement according to course syllabus
12. Prepare a manuscript for publication related to the DNP Project work
13. Prepare a poster for dissemination of DNP Project findings and Power Point Presentation
14. Submit an abstract for dissemination of the DNP Project findings to a regional or national professional society conference/meeting
15. Submission to Sigma Theta Tau or Doctor of Nursing Practice Project Repository

### **IV. Evidence-based Practice Competencies**

The DNP Project courses are focused on developing competencies in the translation of research and evidence-based practice (EBP). At the completion of all four DNP Project courses, students will have achieved beginning competencies in the following areas

1. Systematically conducts a search for external evidence\* to answer clinical questions. (external evidence\*: evidence generated from research)
2. Critically appraises existing evidence (i.e., clinical guidelines, summaries, synopses, syntheses of relevant external evidence) and primary studies, including evaluation and synthesis.
3. Integrates a body of external evidence from nursing and related fields with internal evidence\* in making decisions about patient care. (internal evidence\* = evidence generated internally within a clinical setting, such as patient assessment data, outcomes management, and quality improvement data)
4. Leads transdisciplinary teams in applying synthesized evidence to initiate clinical decisions and practice changes to improve the health of individuals, groups, and populations.
5. Generates internal evidence for EBP implementation practices.
6. Measures processes and outcomes of evidence-based clinical decisions.
7. Formulates evidence-based policies and procedures.
8. Mentors others in the EBP process through peer review.
9. Implements strategies to sustain an EBP culture.
10. Communicates best evidence to individuals, groups, colleagues, and policy makers.

## V. **DNP Project Team: The DNP Student, The School of Nursing Project Leader and the Institutional Project Leader**

Carefully review the responsibilities of the DNP Project Team. Remember that **DNP Project Team Members must agree in writing (Form 1, DNP Project Sign Off)** to be engaged in the process. This includes advising, review of the project proposal, providing support during implementation, providing the required evaluations, and attendance at all academic DNP presentations. The Course Director for the Project Courses ensures that the objectives for the course are met. The School of Nursing Project Team Leader ensures the objectives for the DNP project are met. The Course Director and Project Team Leaders will meet every semester (or more frequently if there are student concerns) to evaluate the student progress. Student Progress may be evaluated by the DNP Director, Associate Director and Associate Dean for Academic Programs.

The DNP Project Team is responsible for:

- Guiding the student in the development of the DNP project proposal
- Reviewing and critiquing the DNP Project Proposal
- Determining the readiness of the project for implementation
- Ensuring that the student has the necessary resources and support to conduct the project
- Mentoring the student throughout the implementation and evaluation phases of the project
- Evaluating the student's performance on the proposal, implementation of the project, and the final summary of the project
- Communicating with the Course Director for Project Management Courses and The DNP Program and Associate Program Directors
- Reviewing and critiquing the final project summary and final products for dissemination (e.g., presentations and publications)
- Providing feedback to the student on written drafts of a cumulative scholarly paper in a timely manner

### A. **DNP School of Nursing Project Leader:**

The DNP Project Leader must hold a doctoral degree (PhD, DNSc, DNP or EdD) and be affiliated with The University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing. The DNP Project Leader should be identified by the student and approved by the DNP Program Director and/or Specialty Program Director. The DNP student and the Project Leader may identify additional faculty and or content/methods experts to serve on the project team.

#### **Responsibilities of the DNP School of Nursing Project Leader:**

- Mentor the student throughout the entire process of development for the DNP Project, is ultimately responsible for the student's progression through the Project Courses.
- Assist in identifying content/methods experts to serve as team members
- Ensure that all University of Pennsylvania IRB and institution-specific (site for DNP Project) standards, requirements, and approvals for projects involving human subjects or data are met. Will Serve as faculty of record for IRB applications and all necessary training requirements for the DNP student (e.g., Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) Program Training appropriate to the level of the project and institution-specific training)
- Establish timelines for completion of the DNP Project with the student.
- Oversee the implementation of the DNP Project and be available to address issues, challenges, and barriers that may arise
- Meet regularly with the student and DNP Institutional Team Leader to appraise the progress and quality of the project implementation
- Meet regularly with the DNP Project Course Director and DNP Director and Associate Director. These meetings occur at the beginning of every Project Course and again before the end of the semester. Meetings of course can occur anytime when one or more member feels it to be necessary.

Ensure productive scholarly work of the student. These milestones can be found in the criteria for each DNP Project Courses.

- Review and provide constructive feedback for final DNP Project Report and all other formats for dissemination (e.g., abstract submissions, oral presentations, and/or posters, journal submission)
- Assure that the DNP student has met all requirements for the DNP Project
- Maintains CITI certification

**B. DNP Institutional Project Leader and Team Member(s):**

The DNP student may invite 1) another School of Nursing faculty member, 2) a faculty member from other schools at the University of Pennsylvania, and/or 3) a leader and/or clinician (external members) from the site where the student is conducting the DNP Project. It required the Project Team Member work or be affiliated with the site where the Project is being conducted. The external members from the DNP Project practice or organization site(s) must hold a minimum of a Master's Degree to be eligible to be a member of the DNP team. The DNP Project Leader and DNP student can determine the composition of the team to bring the needed expertise in the content area, methods, and/or analytical plan for project data.

**Responsibilities of DNP Institutional Project Leader and Team Member(s):**

- Facilitate connections and networks to assist the student in navigating entry into the practice or organization site
- Provide expertise in developing and facilitating the project.
- Determine the feasibility of the project and preliminary work that must be performed prior to the project
- Assist the student to obtain the necessary permissions, letters, and sign-offs that may be required for the DNP student to begin the project
- Assist the DNP student to successfully complete any regulatory or training requirements of the institution
- Ensure access to project populations, electronic systems, data, and other resources necessary to complete the project
- Provide oversight for the implementation of the DNP Project
- Provide feedback to student in a timely manner
- Communicate concerns to student and The School of Nursing DNP Project Leader in a timely manner.
- Agrees to read and review all drafts of the project within a timely (usually 2 week) turnaround

**C. DNP Student Team Member:**

As noted above, the DNP Project establishes a foundation for scholarly productivity to advance nursing practice in clinical care, leadership, and/or health policy.

**Responsibilities of the DNP Student:**

- Demonstrate a high level of professionalism
- Develop a scholarly project based on an identified area of need within a specialized area of practice under the guidance of a DNP Project Leaders and/or team
- Maintain ongoing and effective communication with DNP Project Team Leaders and Team Members
- Establish goals and timelines for the project, and adhere to established timelines for progression and completion of DNP Project requirements
- Regularly review progress toward goals with the School of Nursing and Institutional DNP Project Leaders and team members

- Comply with University of Pennsylvania Guidelines for Responsible Conduct of Research ([http://www.upenn.edu/research/compliance\\_training/responsible\\_conduct\\_of\\_research/](http://www.upenn.edu/research/compliance_training/responsible_conduct_of_research/)) including current completion and/or verification of completion of CITI training appropriate to the DNP Project
- Comply with all regulations, mandates, and policies at the School of Nursing as well as the practice sites, including training requirements; and maintaining confidentiality, security, and protection of protected health information (PHI), clinical information, or data.
- Obtain sign-offs for all forms, and submit these to the Administrator in the Office of Student Information, for DNP Program as required.
- Seek ongoing advice and guidance from faculty and individuals at practice sites when implementing the project.
- Achieve DNP Project milestones as they adhere to the University of Pennsylvania's Code of Academic Integrity ([http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai\\_codeofacademicintegrity.html](http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html)).
- Assistance with writing and/or learning efforts are available on-campus at the:

**Weingarten Learning Resources Center**  
**Stouffer Commons, Suite 300**  
**3702 Spruce Street**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19104- 6027**  
**215-57-EXCEL (215-573-9235)**  
**lrccmail@pobox.upenn.edu**  
**<http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/>**

The Weingarten Learning Resources Center provides professional instruction in skills, such as academic reading, writing, and study strategies free of charge to the Penn student community. From learning strategies to the writing process and time management for any higher education project, the staff can provide advice and instruction that complements graduate level study. Workshops are offered throughout the year and can be developed to address the needs of specific groups. Individual instruction is available by appointment or through walk-in hours.

## **VI. Team Projects**

Students who work together on a project must all make equal and substantial contributions to the project. The majority of Post-MSN Doctor of Nursing Practice students will work independently on the DNP Projects. Post- BSN students will be assigned to work in teams. All team members are responsible for designing the project; preparing a proposal; implementing the project; and interpreting, evaluating, and/or analyzing, and reporting the project findings.

Every team member must submit individual work.

If there are any concerns regarding any team members' contribution, the Course Director and/or School of Nursing Project Leader will request to review the students' individual work and notes. Any concerns regarding the contributions will be addressed with the Project Team Leader, Course Director and DNP Program Directors and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs.

The DNP Project Leader will ensure the synergy of the work and that all students on a team have sufficient guidance and oversight to conduct the DNP Project work. The institutional DNP project leader will participate in all aspects of the students' work.



## **VII. Sequencing of DNP Project Work:**

The DNP Project topical area should be determined in the first DNP Project course, NURS 851, and continued to be refined and developed in the remaining courses: NURS 852, NURS 853, and NURS 854. No student may progress to the next course unless they have successfully completed the preceding required DNP Project Management Course. There is a concise checklist (**Form 2**) to help guide you with the minimal course expectations, strategies to be successful and FAQs.

The AACN (2015) asserts that to achieve mastery of the DNP Essentials, a nurse must complete a minimum of 1,000 beyond the BSN or baccalaureate degree. These hours must be part of an academic program. Work experience is not accepted as a substitute.

## **VIII. Graduation Criteria**

The School of Nursing DNP Project Leader determines if the student has successfully met graduation criteria.

Form 1



University of Pennsylvania  
School of Nursing  
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program

DNP Team and Project Implementation Form

This form is to be completed by the student(s), institutional/organizational project member(s), and school of nursing project lead and submitted for approval to the DNP Program Director.

Student Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Topic/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

UPENN School of Nursing DNP Project Lead: \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional/Organizational DNP Project Member(s): \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby accept the following proposed project pending IRB approval (completed by student(s))

Research Site(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Study/Project Purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Study Activities: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Enrollment: \_\_\_\_\_

Site(s) Support: \_\_\_\_\_

Data Management: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**University of Pennsylvania  
School of Nursing  
Doctor of Nursing Practice Program**

**DNP Team and Project Implementation Form**

I hereby consent to serve on \_\_\_\_\_ DNP project committee

E-mail address of doctoral student (s): \_\_\_\_\_

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*We understand that this site's participation will only take place during the project's active IRB approval period. All study activities must cease if IRB approval expires or is suspended. We understand that any activities involving Personal Private Information of Protected Health Information may require compliance with HIPAA Laws and The University of Pennsylvania's Policy. Our organization agrees to the terms and conditions stated above. If we have any concerns related to this project, we will contact the project team. For concerns regarding IRB policy or human subject welfare, we may also contact the UPENN IRB.*

As a doctoral student member of this team, I agree to conduct the project to the best of my abilities with professionalism.

Student(s) signature (s): \_\_\_\_\_

As an institutional/organization member of this project team, I agree to read and review all drafts of the project within a timely turnaround (approx. 2 weeks)

Institutional/Organizational Project Member(s) signature(s): \_\_\_\_\_



Email address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

As the School of Nursing DNP Project Lead, I agree to meet with the student(s) and consult throughout the project.

SON DNP Project Lead Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Email address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

(Director, Doctor of Nursing Practice Program)

\_\_\_\_\_

date

Form 2

**DNP Project Checklist**



The purpose of this checklist is to ensure that students, faculty, and other stakeholders are aware of the requirements for each phase of the DNP Project process. Details of each item can be found within the body of the full paper and within each specific course's syllabus. These items are **minimum** expectations.

COURSE	REQUIRED DELIVERABLES	DATE COMPLETED
NURS 851	Read: DNP Essentials, AACN White Paper (2015), and Penn SON Requirements Develop Phenomenon of Interest Develop Professional Network Develop Doctoral Skills & Knowledge Complete CITI Training Evidence Table Begins Cumulative Paper (appendix B)	
NURS 852	Assemble DNP Project Team, Secure Signatures (Appendix A) (*completes Team Contract, if in a group, Appendix C and Appendix D) Determine Type of DNP Project Write a DNP Project Proposal Translate the Proposal to meet IRB requirements Formal Project Presentation to DNP Team and Leadership With permission, submit the Proposal to IRB Develop Plan for DNP Experience Hours (GANTT Charting) Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Master's student: Clinical Hours from MSN Program + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs. Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Baccalaureate student: Clinical Hours from Advanced Practice Training + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs.	
NURS 853	Secure IRB Approval Begin Project Implementation Analyze Synthesize Data & Findings Work towards Completing the Cumulative Paper (appendix B) Experience Hours (GANTT Charting) Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Master's student: Clinical Hours from MSN Program + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs. Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Baccalaureate student: Clinical Hours from Advanced Practice Training + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs.	
NURS 854	Complete application for graduation Final DNP Project Paper (submit 2 weeks prior to Final Presentation)	

	<p>Final DNP Project Poster Final DNP Project Presentation Work towards Completing the Cumulative Paper (appendix B) Experience Hours (GANTT Charting) Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Master's student: Clinical Hours from MSN Program + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs. Entry to DNP Degree as a Post-Baccalaureate student: Clinical Hours from Advanced Practice Training + 500 DNP Experience Hours = 1,000 + hrs.</p>	
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