

**THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT  
ARLINGTON**

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN  
NURSING and POST  
MASTERS'S CERTIFICATE**

**STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**THE COLLEGE OF NURSING AND  
HEALTH INNOVATION**

**Academic Year 2021-2022**

Revised: July 7, 2021

In all cases, the Graduate Catalog supersedes.

**DISCLAIMER: The student handbook is updated annually and as needed for programmatic and policy changes. The electronic version of this handbook supersedes all print copies.**

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# **MSN Programs – Overview**

## **College of Nursing and Health Innovation Vision and Mission**

### **Mission**

Our mission is to advance global health and the human condition through transdisciplinary collaboration by engaging in high-quality teaching, research, scholarship, practice and service to prepare a diverse population of health professionals and to reduce health disparities.

### **Vision**

To provide innovative, exceptional education, through research and practice to advance health and the human condition globally

## **Accreditation**

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing, master's degree program in nursing, Doctor of Nursing Practice program, and post-graduate APRN certificate program at The University of Texas at Arlington are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.

The University of Texas at Arlington is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

## **College of Nursing and Health Innovation History**

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

## **Master of Science in Nursing Program Outcomes**

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

MSN Programs include Nurse Practitioner, Nursing Administration, and Nursing Education. Additional information regarding each program is available at: [MSN Program Information](#).

### **Outcomes:**

The MSN Program graduate is provided a background to:

1. Demonstrate competence in an advanced nursing role;
2. Participate in scholarly endeavors to advance nursing knowledge;
3. Provide leadership in professional nursing and interdisciplinary health care

### **Post-Master's Certificates**

The Department of Graduate Nursing offers Post-Master's Certificate programs for Nurse Practitioners. Students seeking a Post-Master's Certificate must have completed an MSN from an NLNAC or CCNE accredited program. Depending on course work completed for the MSN and current advanced practice status (as applicable), an individualized certificate degree plan will be developed based on a gap analysis of the applicant's MSN transcript and experience. Post-Master's Certificates are offered in all Nurse Practitioner Programs and in Nursing Administration. Additional information is available at: Post Masters Certificate Program Information.

#### **Outcomes:**

The Post MSN Certificate Program graduate is provided a background to:

1. Demonstrate competence in an advanced nursing role
2. Provide leadership in professional nursing and interdisciplinary health care

### **Program Administrators**

Elizabeth Merwin, PhD, RN, FAAN. Dean, College of Nursing and Health Innovation.  
Dr. Merwin Faculty Profile

John Gonzalez, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC, ANP-C. Chair, Department of Graduate Nursing.  
Dr. Gonzalez Faculty Profile

E. Monee' Carter-Griffin, DNP, APRN, ACNP-BC. Associate Chair for Advanced Practice Nursing. Dr. Carter-Griffin Faculty Profile

Margarita Treviño, PhD, RN, CHN. Associate Chair for Nursing Education, Nursing Administration, Doctor of Nursing Practice, PhD in Nursing Programs and PhD Advisor.  
Dr. Trevino Faculty Profile

Candice Calhoun-Butts, PhD. Assistant Dean, Office of Enrollment and Student Services

### **MSN Program Directors:**

Dolores Aguilar, MSN, APRN, CNS-BC. Director of MSN Nursing Education Program.  
Mrs. Aguilar Faculty Profile

Monee Carter-Griffin, MSN, APRN, ACNP-BC. Director of Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program

Kathryn Daniel, PhD, APRN, AGNP-BC, ANP-BC. Director of Adult Gerontology Primary Nurse Practitioner Program.

[Dr. Daniel Faculty Profile](#)

Aimee Dunnam, DNP, APRN, PMHNP-BC, NNP-C. Director of Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program.

[Dr. Dunnam Faculty Profile](#)

Lynda Jarrell, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, CHE. Director of Family Nurse Practitioner Program.

[Dr. Jarrell Faculty Profile](#)

Cynthia Plonien, DNP, RN, CENP. Director of MSN Nursing Administration.

[Dr. Plonien Faculty Profile](#)

Heather Holland Skrivanek, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC. Director of Pediatric Nurse Practitioner Programs (Primary and Acute Care) and Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Program.

[Dr. Skrivanek Faculty Profile](#)

# **Master of Science and Post Masters Certificate in Nursing Programs - Policies and Procedures**

This section of the Student Handbook contains general policies and procedures that apply to graduate students in the Master of Science in Nursing and Post MSN Certificate Programs of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. Students are expected to follow the University catalog and the Student Handbook.

The *Rules and Regulations* of the Board of Regents of the University of Texas System, the *Handbook of Operating Procedures* of the University of Texas at Arlington and the University Catalog of the University of Texas at Arlington supersede departmental, program, or college publications.

## **Advisement & Registration**

The Graduate Nursing Programs implement advisement via the Internet and/or in person with Academic Advisors. In the MSN and Post MSN Certificate Programs, students can reach an academic advisor via email at [msnadvising@uta.edu](mailto:msnadvising@uta.edu) or by calling 817-272-2776 and selecting option 3.

Following admission, as part of new student orientation, a degree plan is developed that indicates the course and semester in which the student will complete each course. Students may access their degree plan at any time in their MyMav Student Center. Each semester, the student is expected to register according to their degree plan. Students needing changes in their degree plan must discuss their requested changes with an Academic Advisor prior to enrollment. Failure to follow the degree plan may result in delays in completing the degree in a timely manner. Students desiring to change their program of study from one specialty area to another (MSN Programs) and/or between the campus based and accelerated online program must contact an Academic Advisor (please also see Change of Program information in the handbook). The Academic Advisor will work with the student regarding the specific process for the change of program.

## **Course Scheduling**

Depending on the major area of study, the MSN and Post MSN Certificate Programs are offered in a campus-based traditional semester length format and/or in an off campus/online accelerated format.

Course scheduled in the campus-based format are completed within the traditional semester time frame of 15 weeks (Fall and Spring semesters) or 11 or 14 weeks (Summer semester). Courses are offered using blended on-campus and online teaching strategies. The following MSN and Post MSN-Certificate Programs are offered in the campus-based format: Adult Gerontology (Acute and Primary Care) Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner, Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (Acute and Primary Care), and Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. The Neonatal NP Program is offered online (with 2 on campus requirements) in the traditional semester time frames noted previously.

Courses offered in the off-campus/online accelerated format are scheduled to be completed in 3 to 13 week time frames (depending on the specific course). The following MSN and Post MSN-Certificate Nurse Practitioner Programs are offered in the off-campus accelerated option format: Adult Gerontology (Acute and Primary Care) Nurse Practitioner, Family Nurse Practitioner and Pediatric Nurse Practitioner (Acute and Primary Care). The Nursing Administration and Nursing Education programs are ONLY offered in the online accelerated option format.

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

### **Transfer Course Credit**

A maximum of 25% of a program's required semester hours may be accepted for transfer credit with the approval of the graduate nursing faculty. Only courses completed with grades of A or B are accepted for transfer credit. Courses submitted for transfer credit must have been completed no more than 6 years before completion of the MSN graduate program at UT Arlington. Students should also be aware that course grades in transfer courses are not included in calculating a student's UT Arlington GPA.

Transfer of courses from another university requires the submission of a course syllabus. The syllabus is reviewed by the faculty at UTA who determine whether the course taken at another university has comparable course outcomes, content and assignments. Students requesting transfer credit must complete and submit the Course Transfer Credit Form ([Transfer Credit Form](#)) to their Academic Advisor and an official transcript with the course grade posted must be sent to UTA's Admissions Office to receive transfer credit.

### **Course Adds, Drops/Withdrawals**

Graduate students who wish to change their course schedule by adding or dropping/withdrawing from a course must first consult with an academic advisor.

Students in campus-based programs are encouraged to consult the academic calendar for the final withdrawal date for each academic semester. Students in accelerated option programs are encouraged to consult the final withdrawal date that is applicable to the specific start date and week format of enrollment. Click on the accelerated online academic calendar to locate all related important dates.

Adds and drops may be made through late registration either on the Web at MyMav or in person through the student's academic advising department. Drops/withdrawals can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the enrollment period. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Students with questions regarding financial aid should contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships for more information.

1. A student may not add a course after the end of late registration.
2. A student dropping a graduate course after the Census Date but on or before the last day to drop will receive a grade of W. Students dropping a course must contact a graduate academic advisor to obtain the drop form and further instructions before the last day to drop. **The student must contact an academic advisor by 4pm of the final enrollment date of the enrollment period.**

### **Dropping or Withdrawing after the Last Day to Drop**



Dropping a course after the Last Drop/Withdrawal Date requires the permission of the Chair of the Graduate Nursing Programs. Students seeking this permission must first contact an academic advisor. The academic advisor will work with the student to submit a "Graduate Withdrawal and Drop Policy Exception Form".

### **Repeated Course Withdrawal**

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

### **Disruption in Clinical Coursework (Nurse Practitioner Programs)**

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

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

### **Leave of Absence**

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

Prior to requesting a Leave of Absence, the student should discuss the request with an Academic Advisor and develop a revised degree plan. A student requesting a Leave of Absence must complete the Leave of Absence Request form. The request for the Leave of Absence is submitted to the Academic Advisor who will forward the request to the student's Associate Chair for action.

## **Change of Program/ Student Movement between Campus-based Programs, Off-campus Accelerated Online Programs, and/or Major Areas of Study or Specialty (NP Programs)**

1. Movement between programs and/or major areas or specialty area of study is not allowed until a student has completed 9 hours in the program or major to which he or she was admitted.
2. To qualify to switch from one program/major to another, a student must have a current and admission GPA equal to or higher than the lowest GPA admitted to the 'new' program in that semester. For example, a MSN administration student with a current GPA of 3.2 and an admission GPA of 3.1 will not be allowed to switch to the FNP program if the lowest admission GPA in the FNP program that semester was 3.5. However, if a PNP student with an admission and current GPA of 3.5 may be allowed to switch to the Nursing Education program if the lowest admission GPA in the education program that semester was 3.2.
3. Students who are qualified may only make one move during their MSN program. This includes moving between:
  - a. A campus-based program and an accelerated option (off-campus) program
  - b. An accelerated option program to a campus-based program.
  - c. One off-campus major and another off-campus major
  - d. One specialty area of study and another specialty area of study or specialty whether on campus or onlineFor example, this applies to a student in the on-campus MSN in FNP program to the AGACNP on-campus program. It also applies to a student changing from the off-campus FNP program to the on-campus FNP program.
4. The deadline for submitting a request to change programs or majors is 4:00 pm CST on the graduate course drop date for the traditional semester. This deadline applies to students whether in the on-campus or off-campus program.
5. Changes become effective at the beginning of the next semester.
6. Exceptions to this policy may be made for extenuating circumstances.

## **GAP Analysis**

As part of the application process into the Post- Master's certificate program, each applicant's transcripts are reviewed by the respective Program Director. This review determines which courses will be required to complete the certificate. Applicants are required to complete the GAP Analysis Request Form to identify which courses they want evaluated as equivalent to the required certificate program's courses. Upon completing this form, the applicant is required to return it along with the respective course syllabus to the Degree Plan Evaluator. Syllabi must be from the semester and year the student took the course. Any requests submitted without the correct syllabus and/or inadequate documentation will be denied. Appeals will not be considered without submitting the correct documentation.

When the Program Director has completed their review, the GAP Analysis Request Form will be returned to the Degree Plan Evaluator who will return it to the applicant. The applicant must sign, scan and return the document to the Degree Plan Evaluator. Applicants will not be assigned a degree plan unless they have signed and returned this form. Changing this form after the Program Director has signed it, submitting false records or falsifying any records is unprofessional conduct and academic dishonesty. Anyone guilty of this will be reported to the Office of Community Standards.

Applicants applying to a Post-Masters Certificate Nurse Practitioner program should be aware that the GAP Analysis process is essential to their successful certification and licensure. While applicants may believe courses are equivalent, the Program Directors have the responsibility and final say on the course equivalency. Giving credit for courses which are not equivalent will prevent applicants from being able to obtain national certification and state licensure; therefore, credit is not granted for any course which is not determined to be equivalent to the nurse practitioner courses taught in the program.

## **State Authorizations**

The University of Texas, College of Nursing and Health Innovation offers a number of programs in the online format. To do so, the College of Nursing and Health Innovation must follow federal and state laws for the operation of programs in states outside of Texas. The CONHI's ability to offer programs outside of the State of Texas is variable and highly dependent upon the program, federal laws, and state laws including each states' board of nursing regulations. It is important that every student understand and acknowledge that the completion of a graduate nursing program may only occur in a state in which the College of Nursing and Health Innovation can operate.

Students are required to review the list of approved states per program at the following link: [CONHI State Authorization Disclosure](#)

Graduate nursing students must understand the following:

1. States in which UTA CONHI graduate programs are approved to operate may change without prior notice. This may adversely affect progression in the program as described below.
2. Approved states may change their laws and regulations at any point without prior notice to UTA CONHI. This may adversely affect progression in the program as described below.
3. Living in or moving to a state in which UTA CONHI graduate nursing programs are not approved to operate may result in one or more of the following:
  - a. a delay in graduation
  - b. not graduating
  - c. withdraw from a course
  - d. withdraw from the program
  - e. may require students to come to Texas to complete clinical and/or any portion of the graduate program
  - f. a denied clinical placement
  - g. a delay in clinical placement

Due to the constraints of international law the nurse practitioner programs do not operate outside of the United States. Requests received from a student to attend or continue in a non-nurse practitioner program from an international location are reviewed on an individual basis.

Prior to moving students are required to email [NursingSOA@uta.edu](mailto:NursingSOA@uta.edu) to discuss the implications on progression to graduation and clinical placements. Students who are admitted to the program and live in a state which is not approved for the MSN/PMC programs to operate must contact their advisor immediately by sending an email to [msnadvising@uta.edu](mailto:msnadvising@uta.edu).

All students are required to review the CONHI State Authorization Disclosure to determine if the program in which they are enrolled leads to licensure and if the curriculum leads to licensure in their respective state.

## **Academic Standing and Progression**

### **Academic Standing**

Policies and procedures for academic standing and progression in the MSN and Post MSN Certificate Programs are consistent with UTA Graduate policies. Click on the Academic Standing link for more information on the university policies.

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

### **Academic Probation**

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

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

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

## **Masters of Science in Nursing and Post Masters Certificate Programs Remediation Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to provide an opportunity for remediation to MSN and PMC students to facilitate academic success and degree completion.

Master of Science in Nursing and Post Masters Certificate students who require remediation prior to or during clinical practice have the option to or may be required to retake a course as remediation.

Courses taken as remediation are subject to the following stipulations:

1. Remediation course grades cannot be used to improve the University GPA or program GPA.  
Students are required to achieve a 3.0 GPA independent of the remediation course grade(s) for program completion. Remediation course grades are subject to university policies and procedures.
2. A remediation course may only be taken for an earned letter grade of C. The remediation policy does not apply to courses in which a student earned a letter grade of D or F.
3. A remediation course may only be taken for courses required as part of the student's MSN or PMC degree plan.
4. Each course in which the student has earned a letter grade of C may be repeated for remediation only once.
5. Students may withdraw from a remediation course only once. Subsequent enrollment in the remediation course must be completed.
6. Required remediation courses must be completed with a grade of B or better to satisfy a remediation requirement.
7. Optional remediation courses are subject to approval of the advisor and/or the program director.
8. Completion of remediation courses will be included in the academic summary information when reviewing petitions for continuation in the MSN and PMC programs.
9. Course remediation may be required for continuation in the program.
10. Remediation courses are not eligible for financial aid.
11. Students not in good academic standing will be required to find clinical sites which do not require good academic standing as a pre-requisite for clinical practice.
12. Letters of good academic standing will not be issued to students or other parties on the student's behalf based on a remediation course grade.
13. Students who have demonstrated unsafe clinical behaviors may be subject to a clinical practice performance remediation plan in addition to course remediation.

### **Clinical Practice Performance Remediation**

Students who have demonstrated unsafe clinical behaviors, as evaluated by the faculty, may be required to complete a formal, individualized remediation plan. The plan will be developed by the program director in consultation with the clinical course lead faculty and clinical faculty.

Remediation plan shall be:

- in writing,
- signed by the program director and the student,
- kept in the student's permanent record.

The remediation plan may include but is not limited to remediating courses in which the student earned a grade of C, enrolling in an independent study to complete objective clinical skills evaluation and check offs, and completing simulation activities. Students unable to successfully pass all aspects of the remediation plan will be dismissed from the program.

Students who have failed a clinical course and are unable to achieve a GPA of 3.0 prior to graduation are not eligible to be placed on a clinical remediation plan.

### **Petitions to Continue in the Graduate Nursing Program**

Students who wish to submit a petition to continue in the Graduate Nursing Program must meet with an Academic Advisor. During that meeting, students should be prepared to discuss how/why plans to regain good academic standing during the probation semester were not successful and develop a specific plan for improvement. The student is responsible for submitting a written letter of petition electronically to the academic advisor for action by the graduate faculty. Students are also strongly encouraged to meet with the student success faculty (see information in following section) to develop plans to support academic success.

The student's petition to continue in the Graduate Nursing Program will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing. If the subcommittee agrees to approve the student's petition to continue, the academic advisor will work with the student to review/revise the student's degree plan and assist with clearing the student for enrollment. If the subcommittee does not agree to approve the petition, the petition will be referred to the full Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing for discussion and action. Students should be aware that the full Committee does not meet during Summer session and will be unable to enroll until the Committee meets in regular session. Students should also be aware they may need to submit a "readmission form" if they experience an enrollment gap that includes a Fall or Spring semester. To apply for readmission click on the readmission form link.

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

Students whose petitions to continue are approved by the Graduate Studies Committee in Nursing may enroll as stipulated in the requirements of the approved petition. If a student's petition is not approved by the Graduate Studies Committee, dismissal from the University will stand. The student is not eligible for readmission to the Graduate Nursing Program.

A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Graduate Studies Committee must submit the appeal in writing to their academic advisor who will then forward it to the Graduate Nursing Department Chair for review. The decision of the Chair is final.

## **Graduation**

### **Degree Requirements**

Graduate students must complete degree requirements in accordance with the Graduate Catalog in force at the time they entered the graduate program in which the degree will be awarded or, at the student's option, the catalog of any subsequent year in which the student was in residence. If students choose to complete degree requirements in accordance with the catalog of a year subsequent to that in which they entered the graduate program, their graduate advisor must submit an online request form to Graduate Studies. The graduate advisor may contact the Office of Graduate Studies graduation desk for access to the required form. For additional information click on Master's and Doctoral Degrees Academic Deadlines and Eligibility for Graduation

### **Degree Completion**

Coursework initiated in fulfillment of an MSN or a Post MSN Certificate program must be completed within six (6) years. All courses six (6) or more years old will expire from the initial course enrollment and will need to be repeated to fulfill the requirements towards the degree or certificate program. Re-enrollment in completed courses are subject to financial penalties.

Students who exceed the published time limits for completing the graduate degree or certificate, but wish to graduate, must **repeat** all courses six (6) or more years old **and** petition the Graduate Studies Committee for an exception to the time limit policy. A student who wishes to appeal the decision of the Graduate Studies Committee must submit the appeal in writing to their academic advisor who will then forward it to the Chair of the Department of Graduate Nursing. The decision of the Chair is final.

### **Application for Graduation**

Students who have completed all degree requirements or who will complete degree requirements must submit an application for graduation by the deadline for graduation for the next available graduation date. They must also pay the appropriate graduation fees. Enrolled students who do not complete all requirements by the beginning of the next long semester must enroll to complete remaining requirements. Please refer to the Graduate Catalog for complete graduation information.

### **Certification and Licensure as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse**

UT Arlington prepares BSN prepared registered nurses to become Nurse Practitioners through an MSN degree program or a formal post-master's certificate program. Graduates from the MSN/PMC Nurse Practitioner program are prepared to complete national certification and obtain state licensure. Students may review the Nursing State Authorization website to determine if the MSN/PMC Nurse Practitioner program meets licensure requirements in their state. MSN/PMC students who graduate from a nurse practitioner specialty track are eligible to take the national certification that aligns with their educational preparation.

<b>Nurse Practitioner Specialty Track</b>	<b>Certifying Body</b>	<b>Certification Exam</b>
Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Track	American Association of Critical Care Nurses  American Nurses Credentialing Center	Adult Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner
Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner Track	American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  American Nurses Credentialing Center	Adult Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner
Family Nurse Practitioner Track	American Academy of Nurse Practitioners  American Nurses Credentialing Center	Family Nurse Practitioner
Neonatal Nurse Practitioner Track	National Certification Corporation	Neonatal Nurse Practitioner
Pediatric Nurse Practitioner-Acute Care Track	Pediatric Nurses Certification Board	Pediatric Nursing Practitioner- Acute Care
Pediatric Nurse Practitioner-Primary Care Track	Pediatric Nurses Certification Board	Pediatric Nurse Practitioner-Primary Care
Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Track	American Nurses Credentialing Center	Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner

All individuals prepared as Nurse Practitioners must be certified in their area of specialization. All individuals completing preparation as a Nurse Practitioner must also be licensed by their respective Board of Nursing (BON) as an Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) prior to practicing as a Nurse Practitioner. Students are responsible for completion and submission of the National Certification and BON applications and for obtaining their APRN status.



### **MSN NP Verification of Education for Certification and Licensure**

1. The Department of Graduate Nursing is committed to the appropriate and timely completion of verification of education (VOE) forms for nurse practitioner students' licensure or certification. These forms require the school to attest to the completion of each student's education. The school will only attest to the completion of education after the semester has ended and after the degree conferral date. Each semester VOEs will be sent to the respective licensing board and/or certification board on the first business day after the degree conferral date.
2. Students should communicate with their respective program director regarding any questions about the licensure and certification process.
3. The Department of Graduate Nursing will automatically send the verification of education forms to Texas Board of Nursing and the certifying bodies as described above.
4. Students applying for licensure in Texas will need to complete the release of information form on the APRN application and email it to [BONpaperwork@uta.edu](mailto:BONpaperwork@uta.edu) . This form is located on page 2 of Part II of the Texas BON APRN application.
5. Out of state students applying for licensure in a state other than Texas are required to review their state licensure application, determine which forms need to be completed by the school and email those forms to [BONpaperwork@uta.edu](mailto:BONpaperwork@uta.edu)

## Academic Integrity

The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation supports the University of Texas at Arlington Honor Code and academic regulations regarding academic integrity. Students are responsible for knowing and complying with the Honor Code:

I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or that I contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.

Click on the University Honor Code link to view the code.

Students in the Graduate Nursing Programs are expected to follow the rules of academic integrity and submit only academic work and assignments that are entirely their own work. Academic dishonesty (violations of academic integrity) may include cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Information regarding dishonesty may be found in the University Catalog. For additional information regarding student conduct and discipline click on the UT Arlington Policy link.

In addition to the general rules of academic integrity, students are expected to comply with the following:

- Students may not collaborate with anyone else on assignments, quizzes, examinations, or any other academic work except as directed by the assignment/instructor's directions.
- Students may not resubmit any assignment or part of a previous assignment – written, audio, or video recorded - for which they previously received a grade. This applies to courses from which a student withdrew and/or in which a failing course grade was achieved.
- Students may not submit the same assignment (written or recorded) or portion of an assignment to more than one course unless specifically allowed or directed by the instructor's directions. This applies to both graded and non-graded assignments.
- Students may not resubmit any work which has previously been submitted for course credit at any educational institution unless prior written approval is received. Written approval for resubmitted work must be received from both the current course instructor and the instructor of the course in which the work was previously submitted.
- Students may not copy or share any course materials or documents, past or present assignments, nor quiz/examination questions on any social platform or publicly available website.
- Students may not seek, acquire, receive, or provide unauthorized information or assistance regarding an exam, quiz, or assignment (such as purchasing, using, or distributing any unauthorized course materials in order to gain academic advantage).

- Students are expected to accurately and completely document and record clinical practice hours completed and patient/client care activities. Falsifying any documents related to clinical hours or patient/client care activities (including documenting as fact, information not obtained through one's own direct assessment and examination of a patient or falsely recording clinical practice hours) constitutes dishonesty.
- Students are expected to accurately collect and submit data collected for completion of course and program requirements. Falsification of data or data collection methods constitutes academic dishonesty

Students suspected of committing academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Community Standards. Students found responsible for academic dishonesty are subject to a grade penalty for the assignment in question, which may include a point deduction up to and including a zero and/or course failure. As noted in the University catalog, sanctions may include probation, suspension and expulsion from the university. Procedures and additional information related to academic dishonesty and violations of the University Honor Code may be found on the Office of Community Standards' website.

## **Student Complaint and Grievance Procedures**

The policies and procedures for Student Complaints, including grade and non-grade grievances are located on the University of Texas Arlington website and may be accessed by clicking on the links below:

- [Student Complaints](#)
- [Grade Grievances](#)

A confidential log of student complaints is maintained in the College of Nursing and Health Innovation Dean's office.

### **Student Complaints**

Student complaints related to issues or concerns in the graduate nursing program should be submitted in writing and may include grade and non-grade complaints. If a student has a complaint regarding the conduct of a course, a concern about a faculty member's feedback, or a grade on an individual assignment in a course, it is the student's responsibility to first make a serious effort to resolve their concern with the faculty member involved. When the complaint is not resolved following discussion with the individual faculty member, the student should contact their Academic Program Director. Other complaints (for example, issues regarding clinical placements and/or policies and procedures of the graduate nursing program) should first be addressed by contacting the student's Academic Program Director. If a complaint remains

unresolved, the student should contact the Associate Chair for their academic program for further assistance.

Students are encouraged to maintain a record of their efforts to resolve the complaint which may include emails, names of individuals contacted, and any meetings that occurred to resolve the complaint. At each step of the complaint process, if the student's complaint is not resolved, the student will be informed of the next step in pursuing their complaint. If the complaint or concern is still not resolved AND the student has evidence that they were treated differently than their peers and/or the institution processes or policies were not followed, the student may submit a formal appeal to the Dean of Students. To view the formal complaint and appeal process click on the following link: [Student Complaints](#).

## **Course Grade Grievance Procedures**

A student may submit a grievance related to a course grade. Complaints/issues related to individual assignment grades are addressed as noted above (Student Complaints). A disagreement with the judgement made by the faculty member in assigning a course grade is not a valid basis for an appeal (grievance) of a course grade. As with a student complaint, the student must first make a serious effort to resolve the disagreement regarding a course grade with the faculty of record for the course. If the issues cannot be resolved, the student may request a meeting (in person or by telephone) with their Academic Program Director. At this meeting, the student must provide information to support an academic grade grievance - either differential treatment or procedural irregularity.

A flowsheet that details the steps the student should follow in pursuing a Grade Grievance may be found in the student's program handbook (MSN, DNP, or PhD Student Handbook). If the Associate Chair of the student's Academic Graduate Nursing Program is unable to resolve the student's issue, the Associate Chair will review the written grievance process with the student.

The grievance must be submitted in writing on an appeal form available from the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. The completed form (including additional information as needed) is returned to the Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Innovation. The Dean will provide the grievance form to the Chair/Associate Dean, who will appoint a Grievance Committee to review the course grade appeal. As noted in the [University catalog](#) Grievance procedures Related to Grades, the student has one calendar year from the date the grade is assigned to initiate a grade grievance/appeal. Additional information regarding student complaints related to an Academic Grievance – Grade and non-Grade is available on the following link: [Academic Grievance Grade and Non-Grade](#).

## **Student Academic Grievance Outline Flowchart**

Each numbered step in the outline indicates a point of escalation, specifically to ask for a review of decisions made at lower levels. These escalations are solely initiated by the student.

1. Student Meets with Instructor (Faculty Member)

2. Student Meets with Lead Teacher / Instructor of Record
3. Student Meets Program Director / Associate Chair, Providing Evidence of Differential Treatment or Procedural Irregularity

**Note:** Students unsatisfied with the decision at the Program Director/ Associate Chair level will be directed to the next level, the Written Grievance process.

4. Written Grievance:
  - a. CONHI Dean provides student with the Written Grievance Form
  - b. Form is completed by the student and returned to the Dean
  - c. Dean forwards the Written Grievance Form to the Department Chair
  - d. Chair appoints and convenes a Faculty Grievance Committee
  - e. Faculty Grievance Committee reviews the written grievance, which may include interviewing the instructor, the student, and other individuals
  - f. Faculty Grievance Committee Chair writes summary and the Committee Decision
  - g. Committee Decision submitted in writing to the Departmental Chair
  - h. Departmental Chair informs the Student and the CONHI Dean of the decision
  - i. CONHI Dean records the outcome in the CONHI Complaint Log
  - j. **IF NEEDED:** Chair informs Assistant Dean of Enrollment Services of any required Grade Change

## **Clinical Placement Policies and Procedures**

Students are responsible for reading and following the clinical policies and procedures in InPlace. InPlace is the clinical management system and guides students through clinical placement and clearance processes. The following policies are posted in InPlace:

- UTA MSN Clinical Practicum Acknowledgement
- Graduate Student Clinical Placement Policy and Procedure
- Graduate Student Clinical Performance Policy
- Graduate Student Clinical Site and Preceptor Policy
- Students Experiencing Difficulties with Clinical Placements
- [Graduate Nursing Clinical Clearance Requirements Policy](#)

## **Nurse Practitioner Program Clinical Experiences**

Clinical hours required in the nurse practitioner tracks are experiential learning encounters designed to provide patient care practice that prepares students in the diagnosis, evaluation and management of their population focus. National nursing organizations, national certifying bodies and program accreditation agencies require nurse practitioner programs to provide a minimum of 500 clinical hours. Some programs, such as the Neonatal Nurse Practitioner program, are required to have a minimum of 600 clinical hours. The minimum number of hours must be direct patient care experiences. Nonpatient care clinical activities (including simulation) may not be used to satisfy the established minimum clinical hour requirements and may only be used for clinical hours which exceed the minimal requirements. Simulation hours may not be used to replace all population specific clinical hours required by any NP track even if the student has met the minimum 500 direct patient care hours. Students must have direct patient care hours in all categories of population specific requirements, required by their NP track, in addition to meeting the minimal direct patient care hour requirement.

While the requirements establish the minimal amount of hours an NP program must provide, they do not preclude universities from requiring more hours as part of their curriculum. UTA's NP program has incorporated more than the minimal number of clinical hours to facilitate student learning, ensure that students are able to transition to the work force as seamlessly as possible, and ensure that students receive the foundational knowledge required to practice safely. The completion of a degree implies that students have met all the requirements of the curriculum, and thus can practice safely upon graduation. Students are unable to graduate without completing all program required clinical hours. This include hours above the minimum threshold as defined by the appropriate national certifying body for the degree. Completion of a graduate level education is required to sit for national certification and state licensure; therefore, failure to complete all program required clinical hours will result in a failure to graduate, become certified and become licensed.

The inclusion of simulation hours in any NP track is reviewed and approved on a semester by semester basis and may vary between tracks. Simulation hours, when permitted by the department to be used to replace clinical hours, may only be allowed when aligned with the NP track clinical requirements and may not exceed a total of 120 hours across all clinical courses per

track. MSN and PMC Neonatal Nurse practitioner students are not permitted to use simulation hours to replace clinical hours in their program. PMC students in the FNP, AGACNP, AGPCNP, Psychiatric Mental Health NP, Pediatric Primary Care NP, and Pediatric Acute Care NP tracks, whose degree plan only requires them to take 2 clinical courses for a total 540 hours are not eligible to use simulation to replace clinical hours.

The graduate nursing faculty have designed the curriculum to align with certification, licensure and accreditation requirements and are committed to high academic standards. As such, waiving any amount of clinical hours required in any NP track is not appropriate nor does it align with professional, ethical and legal standards that require the department to validate students' competency and ability to practice safely upon graduation.

## **Status of RN Licensure**

All graduate nursing students must have an unencumbered license as designated by ***their licensing Board of Nursing (BON)*** to participate in graduate clinical nursing courses. It is imperative that any student whose license ***is under investigation by a Board of Nursing or becomes encumbered by a BON at any time while a student is enrolled in a Graduate Nursing Program*** must immediately notify the Chair of their Department. ***Students who fail to report the above may be subject to dismissal.***

## **Substance Abuse Policy**

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) College of Nursing & Health Innovation (CONHI) is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment for students, faculty, staff, clients, and visitors. In order to provide a safe learning environment, students must be able to perform with reasonable skill in a safe, secure, productive, and effective manner, and remain able to do so through the entire time they are students at UTA.

Students must adhere to the Academic Nursing Program Substance Abuse Policy (full policy in the Appendix) at all times. Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program.

## **Professional Liability Insurance**

The Liability Insurance Policy is provided through UTA and is covered by a student fee each year that is assessed in the Fall registration. Click on the Liability Insurance Policy link to obtain additional information.

## **Verification of Medical Insurance Coverage**

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

## **Exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens**

In the event of injury, needle stick, and/or exposure of the nursing student to blood or body fluids, the nursing student should immediately notify the nursing clinical faculty. The faculty is responsible for notifying the appropriate person at the agency where the incident occurred and completing the agency's documentation if appropriate. The faculty will also notify CONHI's Clinical Compliance Coordinator. Life threatening emergency treatment will be implemented at the clinical facility. If emergency treatment is not available on site, 911 should be activated. If the clinical facility does not provide care indicated for the injury/incident or it is a non-emergent situation, the student may select a health care provider of their choice.

The faculty will be responsible for completing the Injury/Illness Report form for Students and Visitors located in Canvas and the Faculty Student Incident Check List. The Injury/Illness Report form should be forwarded to The University of Texas at Arlington Environmental Health and Safety Department.

## **Clinical Performance Requirements and Evidence of Clinical Competence**

Nursing is a practice profession in which patient and family safety must be protected. MSN and PMC students enrolled in a nurse practitioner track are responsible for demonstrating clinical competence. The faculty will investigate all allegations and concerns of all unsafe clinical behavior. If faculty deem a student's clinical performance as unsafe, students may not drop or withdraw from the clinical course regardless of the drop or withdrawal date. The student will be immediately removed from the clinical setting, will be prohibited from completing any additional clinical hours for the course in question, and receive a grade of F.

Any of the following behaviors constitute a clinical failure:

1. Fails to follow standards of professional practice as detailed by the Texas Nursing Practice Act<sup>1</sup> (available at <http://www.bon.state.tx.us/>) or the student's respective Board of Nursing or state licensing agency.
2. Inability to accept and/or act on constructive feedback.
3. Need continuous, specific, and detailed supervision for the expected course performance.
4. Inability to implement advanced clinical behaviors required by the course.
5. Failure to complete required clinical assignments.
6. Falsification of clinical hours.
7. Violation student confidentiality agreement.
8. Falsification of clinical logs, clinical assignments, patient documentation.
9. Knowledge deficits which increases the risk of or causes injury to a patient.
10. Dismissal from the clinical setting by the preceptor, or their designee, for unsafe clinical behavior, knowledge deficits, or incivility with the patient, family, preceptor or other employees of the clinical agency.

<sup>1</sup>Students should also be aware that violation of the Nursing Practice Act is a "reportable offense" to the Texas Board of Nursing or their State's Board of Nursing or state licensing agency.



The following program requirements are also associated with patient safety and will result in clinical failure without regard to the drop or withdrawal time frames. Clinical failures related to the below items will be reviewed by the Department Chair and/or the Associate Chair.

1. Non-compliance with clinical clearance requirements.
2. Non-compliance with Drug and Alcohol policy
3. Unlawful behavior prohibiting sufficient background check required for clinical participation

## **Student Resources and Information**

### **Student Success Faculty**

Faculty members who work specifically with graduate students are available to assist graduate nursing students who are at academic risk or who need academic support. The goal of the success faculty members is to support student achievement in masters and doctoral level coursework so students can reach their educational goals. Students may contact a success faculty member directly, or a course instructor may encourage the student to contact a success faculty member. Contact information for the graduate student success faculty can be found in each course syllabus. University level student support may be found by clicking on the Student Services link.

### **Disability Accommodations**

UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of a letter certified by the Student Access and Resource Center (SARC). Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting:

[Student Access and Resource Center](#), (SARC), or calling 817-272-3364  
Counseling and Psychological Services, (CAPS), or calling 817-272-3671

Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found by clicking on the Office for Students with Disabilities link or by calling their office at (817) 272-3364.

### **APA Format**

Correct and accurate citation of information used to prepare papers and presentations is an expectation of graduate students in nursing. Students are required to follow American Psychological Association (APA) format for scholarly papers and assignments.

## **Current Mailing and E Mail Address**

Students are required to maintain a current mailing address and telephone number contact with the University. A change of address may be completed online via MyMav. This is essential in order that schedules, official correspondence, scholarship notification, and emergency messages will not be delayed or lost.

UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account. For information on activating and using the student email click on the MavMail link.

Per UTA Policy, MavMail is the official email for CONHI and the University to communicate pertinent information. Students will be held responsible for information distributed in this manner. All official communication will be done using UT Arlington's MavMail. Personal and/or work emails will not be used. Students are required to check MayMail every day.

## **Technical Support**

MyMav, the online system for registration and payment, gives students access to their course grades and a record of all courses completed. Students' net IDs and passwords provide them with secure access to the MyMav and other electronic support programs including the UTA MavMail system, the library, and Canvas courses. If students have trouble with electronic access, they should contact the university Help Desk.

## **Library Support**

The College of Nursing and Health Innovation has a subject librarian who works closely with students and faculty. Information about how to contact the subject librarian is available in each course syllabus.

## **Dress Code**

The University of Texas at Arlington College of Nursing and Health Innovation expects students to reflect professionalism and maintain high standards of appearance and grooming in the clinical setting. Professional attire (which may include lab coat) is expected. Students where scrubs are provided should follow the above standards prior to changing into scrubs.

In addition, MSN and Post-MSN Certificate students must be clearly identified as UTA Graduate students and wear a UTA College of Nursing and Health Innovation ID in the clinical environment.

## **Commitments outside of the classroom**

Graduate nursing education requires students to have dedicated time to devote to studying, completing assignments, preparing for, and completing clinicals and other course work. Students are encouraged to consider their work schedules and commitments considering the demands of

the MSN/PMC program and adjust accordingly. Commitments which compete with graduate study may result in suboptimal academic performance and place the student in academic jeopardy.

### **Study Time Recommendations**

In general, for every-one graduate nursing semester credit hour of enrollment a student should allocate 5 hours of study time outside of class. For example, a 3 semester credit hours course, may reasonably require 15 hours of work, outside of class, plus anytime needed to complete clinicals.

### **Employment Recommendations**

It is recommended that a student's employment not exceed 16-20 hours per week in either regular or summer semesters. Students are encouraged to evaluate their energy level, familial and personal obligations, and school commitments before starting their degree program.

### **Board of Nursing Reportable Student Incidents**

Registered Nurses enrolled in a graduate nursing program at UTA are serving in a professional capacity. Graduate students are required to act in accordance with their respective State Board of Nursing's Nurse Practice Act and Rules and Regulations. Violations of standards of nursing practice, as defined by the student's respective State Board of Nursing will be reported to the appropriate Board of Nursing.

In the event a reportable event is suspected to have occurred, the faculty witness to the event will discuss the event with the Department Chair. The Department Chair will examine the respective Board of Nursing Nurse Practice Act and Rules and Regulations and make a determination on the reportability of the event. Upon determining that the event is reportable, the Department Chair will inform the Dean and student, complete the necessary paperwork and submit it to the student's respective Board of Nursing.

Reportable events include but are not limited to:

1. Academic Dishonesty
2. Falsification or omission of any admission documentation
3. Falsification of licensure
4. Falsification of information submitted for clinical clearance
5. Falsification of information submitted requesting assistance with clinical placement
6. Unsafe clinical behaviors include but are not limited to:
  - a. Fails to follow standards of professional practice as detailed by the Texas Board of Nursing Practice Act, and Rules and Regulations or the student's State's Board of Nursing.
  - b. Inability to accept and/or act on constructive feedback
  - c. Need for continuous, specific, and detailed supervision for the expected course performance
  - d. Inability to implement advanced clinical behaviors required by the course.
  - e. Failure to complete required clinical assignments
  - f. Falsification of clinical hours.
  - g. Violation of student confidentiality agreement.

- h. Falsification of clinical logs, clinical assignments, patient documentation
  - i. Knowledge deficits which increases the risk of or causes injury to a patient.
7. Falsification of GAP Analysis.
8. Incivility which disrupts patient care.
9. Other activities which violate the respective Board of Nursing Practice Act or Rules and Regulations.

In addition to reporting unsafe clinical behaviors to the student's respective licensing agency, the student will receive a course grade of "F". If the unsafe clinical behaviors are related to academic dishonesty, the incident will also be reported to the Office of Community Standards.

Some states do not have a Board of Nursing. In this instance students are equally responsible to the standards of practice, rules and regulations and laws established by the appropriate state licensing agency. The above language applies in these instances as well.

## **Civility and Professional Behavior**

UTA CONHI believes in a culture of caring. At the CONHI, civility is expected from faculty, staff and students. Incivility will not be tolerated. Incivility is defined as any one-time or repeated action or unprofessional behavior (whether physical, psychological, verbal and/or non-verbal) including but not limited to behavior that is: disrespectful, obnoxious, impolite, hostile, disregarding, rude, discourteous, offensive, vulgar, aggressive, taunting, violent, intimidating, belligerent, and/or bullying. Students are required to maintain civil and respectful communication with faculty, staff, and students at all times and to act in accordance with the ANA Code of Ethics. Uncivil communications with faculty and staff may result in one or more of the following:

1. Notification informing the student that a communications was inappropriate, and their concerns will be addressed when they pose their communication in a civil, professional manner.
2. When necessary, reporting behavior to the appropriate parties. Threats of harm to an individual, the college or university will be reported to the Office of Community Standards, the UTA Police Department and the student's respective State Board of Nursing.

Students should keep in mind that they are communicating with faculty and staff members that they will need to rely on for references and recommendations in the very near future. Completion of references and recommendations for a student are at the sole discretion of the faculty or staff member. Students are beginning a new phase of their professional career and professionalism is one of the areas that will be evaluated in any recommendation

# Appendix

## UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH INNOVATION ACADEMIC NURSING, KINESIOLOGY AND PUBLIC HEALTH PROGRAM SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) College of Nursing & Health Innovation (CONHI) is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive learning environment for students, faculty, staff, clients, and visitors. In order to provide a safe learning environment, students must be able to perform with reasonable skill in a safe, secure, productive, and effective manner, and remain able to do so through the entire time they are students at UTA.

All students are expected to be in good academic standing throughout their Academic Undergraduate Nursing, Graduate Nursing, Kinesiology or Public Health Program (Program). Good academic standing for CONHI students includes maintaining professional behavior, personal accountability, academic integrity and for Undergraduate or Graduate Nursing Students, upholding the [Code of Ethics for Nursing Students](#). Failure to meet these expectations may result in course failure or dismissal from the Program. Good academic standing extends beyond the classroom and is an expectation CONHI holds of students during their clinical courses, while present in healthcare facilities, and while present within their communities.

Students will be required to sign an attestation with each clinical course for which they enroll verifying they will adhere to this Policy. Regardless of whether a student has signed the attestation, students must adhere to this Academic Nursing Program Substance Abuse Policy (Policy) at all times. Violations of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program.

### **Registered Nurses**

If a student is a registered nurse and has a positive drug screen, the student will be referred to the state BON where the student is licensed. The student must comply with all BON requirements prior to returning to any clinical course(s). Failure to complete any BON requirement will result in dismissal from the CONHI.

### **Impaired Behavior Students**

Impaired students are not fit for participating in a Program and may pose significant health and safety risks to themselves and others. In the clinical setting, students must be fit for duty and are expected to perform in a safe manner without signs of impairment. Students exhibiting one or more signs of impaired behavior directly before or at any time during a clinical rotation shift will be immediately assessed. [See Impaired Observation Checklist (IOC)\*].

When a faculty member or preceptor personally observes or receives reliable information that supports a reasonable suspicion that a student may be impaired, the faculty member or preceptor will assess the student using the IOC. If the IOC results confirm impairment, the student will be removed immediately from the clinical setting and will be required to submit to the appropriate

screening test at an [approved screening center](#), including [UTA Health Services](#). The specific test will be based on the suspected substance and may include blood, urine, or saliva sample(s). Typically a blood alcohol level test is administered when alcohol is the suspected cause of impairment and a 10 panel urine screen is administered when impairment is suspected due to other substances. Students are solely responsible for the cost and scheduling of impaired behavior drug screenings, evaluations, and treatments.

Students must arrive at the testing site for their impaired behavior screening within two hours of referral. Students suspected of impairment are not allowed to drive themselves to the testing site and must make appropriate transportation arrangements such as calling a friend or family member to transport them or using a transportation system, such as a taxi, etc. Depending on the level of impairment, the student may be referred to the facility's emergency department (where the student is participating in a clinical course) for evaluation and care.

Once at the screening center, students will have up to three hours to provide an adequate specimen (the approved screening center will determine the adequacy of the specimen). Students must remain at the testing site the entire three hours or until an adequate specimen is provided, whichever occurs first.

Approved screening centers will adhere to the following:

- maintain the chain of custody;
- confirmation GCMS (gas chromatography and mass spectrometry);
- initial screen must include split sampling method;
- blood alcohol level drawn if alcohol involvement suspected; and
- if student fails to provide adequate sample within required three hour time period, stop the test and report to the referring faculty member or preceptor, or other CON designated representative, the student failed to provide adequate sample.

Students screened for impaired behavior cannot return to their clinical course(s) until their results are received and approved by appropriate CONHI personnel. Students who refuse to submit to, fail to appear for, or fail to provide an adequate sample for their impaired behavior drug screen will not be allowed to return to any clinical course(s) and will earn a failing grade in their clinical course(s).

If an impaired behavior student's screening is positive due to alcohol or substance abuse, the student must be evaluated by a qualified healthcare professional (psychiatric mental healthcare provider or substance abuse provider), follow the qualified healthcare professional's recommendation for treatment if applicable, receive a recommendation from the qualified healthcare professional to return to the Program, and provide documentation the student is able to safely return to the Program. Upon an impaired behavior student's return to clinical courses, random urine drug screens will be conducted each semester throughout the student's Program and at the sole discretion of CONHI.