National
UNIVERSITY

School of Health Professions

Department of Nursing (DN)

Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program Handbook

December 2022

This handbook is neither a contract nor an offer of a contract. The material contained herein is intended to supplement the policies and procedures contained in the current NU Catalog or any other institutional documents. This handbook was designed to document requirements specific to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree program. The MSN Handbook is reviewed annually. Failure to read this handbook does not excuse students from the requirements and regulations described herein.

National University welcomes all qualified students and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, veteran status, or disability. This applies to all National University policies, practices, or procedures involving applicants, students, faculty members, employees, and the public. National reserves the right to refuse admission to anyone the University believes does not meet National University

Table of Contents

Table of Contents

Academic Program Director, Department of Nursing

Welcome Message

On behalf of our nursing faculty and staff in the Department of Nursing (DN), I want to welcome you to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program at National University! Your academic journey is about to begin, and we hope this journey allows you to continue to seek and explore life-long learning opportunities. The MSN program at NU is a robust and immersive experience placing you in academic and practice setting endeavors to support you as you achieve your goals. Our unique one- to-one teaching model and active online student community, including The Commons which provides social forums, offers the NU community the academic resources and tools to support student success.

We may all come from a variety of experiences and diverse backgrounds, but we have one main bond in common- we are all nurses. NU's Department of Nursing faculty have a passionate commitment to make a positive difference in your learning and furthering your career through higher nursing education. By taking this next step in your degree advancement, you will develop valuable experiences and skills as a progressive nurse leader to engage in dynamic healthcare environments, policy initiatives, interprofessional collaborations, and evidence-based improvements for quality healthcare outcomes.

Again, welcome to the MSN program, where your career goals can be realized! Sincerely,

Alice Myers

Alice Myers, PhD, MSN, RN
Academic Program Director, Department of Nursing
amyers@NU.edu
M: 609-425-2872

Direct any question about the Handbook to the School of Health Professions (**SOHP@nu.edu**)

1 Introduction

1 – Introduction

This handbook has been prepared to serve as a guide for students enrolled in the Master of Science of Nursing (MSN) degree program at National University. University-wide policies and procedures can be found in the NU Catalog. The policies and information in this handbook are consistent with university policies and are intended to supplement, not replace, university policies and procedures. In addition, the educational and practice experience protocols of the program are designed to align with the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) MSN Essentials (2011).

Please read this handbook carefully, as you are expected to know this information. If you have any questions, please contact the Academic Program Director, Department of Nursing (APD) in the School of Health Professions at shs@ncu.edu. This document will be revised periodically to reflect necessary programmatic changes that may occur due to changes in the profession, the University, and other requirements or relevant contexts. All policies, and any changes to these policies, shall be reviewed and approved by appropriate administrative personnel and will be communicated to students as needed.

This handbook shall be distributed to the following named persons or groups of persons: 1) All faculty members, staff, and leadership associated with the MSN Program; 2) All students both current and entering the MSN degree program; and 3) the Dean of the School of Health Professions.

Department of Nursing: MSN Program Information

The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is in the Department of Nursing within the School of Health Professions. The Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program is a 36 credit-hour leadership practice-focused master's degree with an emphasis on management and organizational leadership in contemporary healthcare organizations. The mission of the MSN program is to prepare nurses to function in nursing leadership roles by engaging in scholarship, synthesizing evidenced-based research and institutional data, and contributing to interprofessional collaboration and practice implementation for optimal outcomes in diverse healthcare settings.

The Department of Nursing (DN) faculty believe that graduate nursing education should provide nurses with a theoretical base and competencies that can be used in meeting diverse nursing goals.

The MSN program is offered as a post-bachelor's program, providing a pathway for bachelor's-prepared nurses to achieve masters-level competencies consistent with the specialization of study.

Within the MSN program courses, in addition to established technical requirements, you are required to complete assignments that include written, oral, and video submissions. It is strongly recommended that you readily have access to a webcam and a microphone to complete the assignments within the program. If you experience technology problems, it is important to inform your instructor prior to the assignment due date.

Overview of the MSN Program

National University, a regionally accredited educational institution, uses distance-based (online) education as the predominant method of instruction and interaction for its degree programs. The MSN program is housed within the School of Health Professions (SOHP) and is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. In a landmark study released in 2010, the Institute of Medicine issued five core recommendations for the future of nursing. The authors concluded that regular proximity to patients and a scientific understanding of care processes across the continuum of care gives nurses a unique ability to act as partners with other healthcare professionals, and to lead in the improvement and redesign of schools, homes, health clinics, long-term care facilities, battlefields, and community and public health centers (The Future of Nursing, National Academy of Health Professions, 2011). The increased complexity of providing acute care and population health services, as well as the rapid integration of health care technology, reinforces the need for additional education and specialized expertise.

MSN In Management And In Organizational Leadership

The MSN in Management and Organizational Leadership was designed for experienced nurses who want to expand their career options. This specialization prepares staff nurses to assume a broader leadership role in nursing management within a healthcare organization and to actively participate in and lead interdisciplinary teams. In addition to the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) MSN Essentials (2011), the specialization outcomes are based upon the American Organization of Nurse Leaders (AONL) Competencies (2012).

Credit Hour Requirements

The MSN in Management in Organizational Leadership requires the completion of 36 credit hours and a minimum of 140 practice experience hours. The program was designed to provide graduate-level education to Registered Nurses (RN) with an earned Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degree. The 140 mentored practice experience hours will focus on nursing leadership roles in a clinical experience site.

MSN Program Course Plan

Program Sequence

All MSN students will take the six core courses, and then complete the five specialization courses. The last course for all MSN students is the capstone course, designed to focus on developing a project proposal in nursing leadership. All courses are completed in sequence. Courses may be overlapped with permission of the APD, Department of Nursing. Requirements to overlap or stack courses include maintaining a B or above in the current course, no extensions in the previous or current course for assignments or course completion.

Other MSN Program Requirements

Practice Experience Requirements

In preparation for MSN practice experiences that begin in MSN health informatics course, the student has the responsibility for the fees incurred in obtaining the Practice Experience Site Compliance Requirements including but not limited to: CPR certification, liability insurance, health insurance, HIPAA/OSHA training, current immunizations, TB test (If a positive tuberculosis screen is received, students must submit one negative Chest X-Ray report), physical examination, drug testing, and background screening. All will be uploaded and stored in the CastleBranch repository. The APD, Department of Nursing will work with the student to obtain mentor and site affiliation agreements. All hours completed, evaluations, and agreements will be kept in the Typhon repository. Please refer to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Practice Handbook for detailed information about practice experience requirements.

* A total of 140 mentored practice experience hours in the specialization are required for successful completion of the MSN program.

Licensure Requirements

A current and unencumbered license as a registered nurse (RN) is required in the US state or territory in which the student completes all assignments for the program and practice experience hours in the field. (Note that military, federal, and foreign-educated nurses must meet this state requirement for nursing licensure.) A current and unencumbered (RN) license must be maintained throughout the program. Students must have the registered nursing (RN) license number and state of licensure on file with NU. The student is responsible to update this file when a renewal or change occurs.

General Program Information

Program Faculty

The faculty members of the Department of Nursing in the SOHP are accomplished healthcare professionals from various related disciplines. Consistent with NU's standard, 100% of the faculty hold doctorate degrees. The faculty consists of diverse professionals with a variety of cultural and professional backgrounds. The nursing programs are comprised of full-time and part- time faculty, with the majority of students being taught by the full-time faculty. Faculty are encouraged to participate in teaching, scholarship, service, and practice activities that enable the program to reflect achievement of goals and outcomes.

2 MSN Program Mission, Vision, Values, And Philosophy
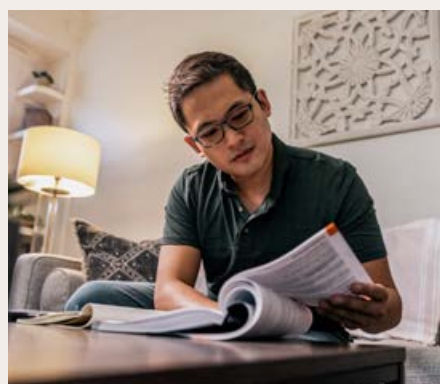
2 – MSN Program Mission, Vision, Values, and Philosophy

The program's mission, vision, values, and philosophy were intentionally crafted to reflect the School of Health Professions and NU's mission, vision, and values.

Mission:

The mission of the MSN program is to prepare nurses to function in nursing leadership roles by engaging in scholarship, synthesizing evidence-based research and institutional data, and contributing to interprofessional collaboration and practice implementation for optimal outcomes in diverse healthcare settings.

Vision:

To be recognized as the premier online graduate school in nursing.

Values:

Excellence: Setting premier standards for our students, faculty, and nursing program to ensure we provide robust educational and interprofessional learner-centered experiences.

Interprofessionalism: Using the fundamental elements of nursing and interprofessional education to support enhanced understanding as faculty and students work on common goals related to successful healthcare outcomes.

Diversity and Inclusion: Embracing cultural diversity, thought, and deed, and believing that all persons' perspectives enhance each aspect of nursing care delivery.

Integrity: Demonstrating professionalism, ethical behavior, evidence-based decision making, and service, while being committed to lifelong learning and professional nursing development.

Communication: Applying effective written, oral, and listening skills, along with the use of innovative technology, to prepare scholarly papers and presentations, and build interpersonal relationships in the nursing and healthcare profession.

MSN Philosophy: Integration Of Nursing, Person, Health, And Environment.

The nursing faculty believe that Nursing is an inspiring profession based upon the arts and sciences. Nursing blends scientific and technical skills with the act of caring to provide comprehensive care to persons. Our curriculum is designed to illustrate the influence of social, cultural, economic, and political concerns on current healthcare. The MSN nursing program celebrates diversity within our global community and is committed to equality for all people. We are committed to excellence in academics and service. We value leadership and strive for continuous improvement. We are deeply committed to holding each member of the university responsible for scholarly and professional work. We envision new and innovative education delivery and support proven concepts of teaching and learning. The MSN program will prepare students to generate exceptional healthcare outcomes.

Definitions for Collective Understanding of Terms

Person is viewed as having physiological, intellectual, emotional, spiritual, philosophical, cultural, and familial elements. Persons are deserving of respect and dignity. Each person is able to function interdependently with others because of shared values and beliefs. Each person has a responsibility to contribute to health maintenance behaviors.

Health is a continuum of physiological, psychological, sociological, familial, and spiritual levels of well-being. Health is viewed as a vital state in constant change. The health is influenced by a person's perception of health, internal and external influences, their ability to access healthcare services, and the care provided.

Environment encompasses the world in which we live. Environmental influences include the accessibility of good quality of air, water, food, and living conditions. Society shapes the person's health and wellbeing and views the environment as the domain in which people must interact and collaborate with the global community to preserve our ecological resources.

Nursing is the act of protecting, promoting, and optimizing health and capabilities, facilitating healing, advocating, and alleviating suffering through the human response in an effort to achieve health. Employing elements of professionalism, the nurse further supports care by functioning as an advocate in issues with legal, ethical, political, or economic indications. Nurses use critical thinking to promote, restore, and maintain health through the management of care.

3 Nursing Program Goals
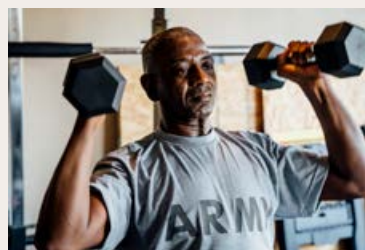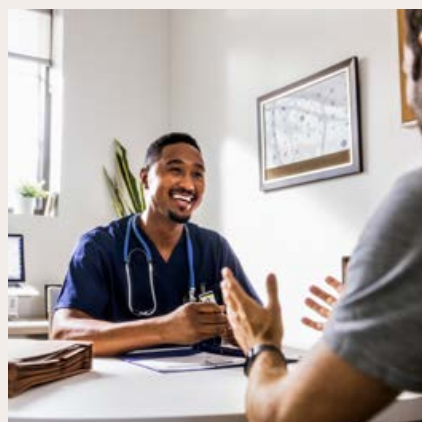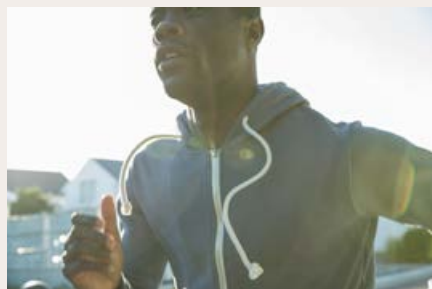
3 – Nursing Program Goals

- Function in nursing leadership roles and contribute to scholarship to further the nursing profession.
- Synthesize evidence-based research and institutional data to contribute to innovative practice implementation across diverse healthcare settings.
- Promote interprofessional communication and collaboration among healthcare teams to advocate for cultural inclusion and equity for optimal patient outcomes.

Program Learning Outcomes

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) represent students cumulatively learning across all courses by the end of the MSN program, as well as the knowledge and skills they can use in their careers. The PLOs are the focus of student assessment throughout the program.

Upon completion of the MSN program, you, as an adult learner and graduate, will be able to:

- Appraise nursing leadership roles utilizing data assessment, quality processes, and improvement sciences.
- Recommend professional nursing practices using research- and evidence-based practice models.
- Prioritize accountability and responsibility in professional judgment, ethics, and actions.
- Optimize collaboration strategies to develop, participate, and lead interprofessional teams and partnerships.
- Evaluate policies and economics related to healthcare delivery.
- Integrate health promotion and prevention strategies to improve care of diverse populations.

MSN Program AACN Essentials

I.   Background for Practice from Sciences and Humanities

II.   Organizational and Systems Leadership

III.   Quality Improvement and Safety

IV.   Translating and Integrating Scholarship into Practice

V.   Informatics and Healthcare Technologies

VI.   Health Policy and Advocacy

VII.   Interprofessional Collaboration for Improving Patient and Population Health Outcomes

VIII. Clinical Prevention and Population Health for Improving Health

IX.   Master's-level Nursing Practice

MSN: Management In Organizational Leadership

AONL Competencies

1. Communication and Relationship Building

2. Knowledge of the Healthcare Environment

3. Leadership

4. Professionalism

5. Business Skills

Interprofessional Education (IPE)

One of the foundational values of the School of Health Professions (SOHP) and the MSN program is interprofessional education (IPE). IPE is defined as "when students from two or more professions learn about, from and with each other to enable effective collaboration and improve health outcomes" (WHO, 2010). As the complexity of issues impacting patients' health increases, SOHP is dedicated to preparing students who are highly competent and skilled at collaborating with others in the field to address patient and industry needs. IPE and collaborative practice have been integrated into each of the academic programs in SOHP, SOHP intentionally seeks opportunities to provide IPE activities for and with our students. An IPE Discussion Forum within our student engagement network, The Commons, has been established, allowing students and faculty from the various SOHP disciplines (health administration and nursing) to engage and interact with each other. All faculty have experience in their respective industries, and this forum allows for engagement on various levels. Additionally, SOHP has established a monthly student-lead IPE Speaker Series (via Zoom webinar). Industry leaders serve as guest speakers to bring relevant topics to our faculty and students. The case studies and question and answer segments have proven to be very engaging for students across their respective disciplines. In the true spirit of IPE, other health-focused disciplines and programs/schools have been invited to participate in the Speaker Series, including schools/programs within NU, as well as programs/schools/colleges outside of NU with which we have collegial relationships. MSN students are encouraged to participate in the IPE Speaker Series on a monthly basis, by either attending the live webinars or by watching the recorded webinars on the school specific webpage in the Center for Teaching and Learning at a later time.

IPE is embedded in assignments in the MSN courses. The IPE competencies will be explored and applied.
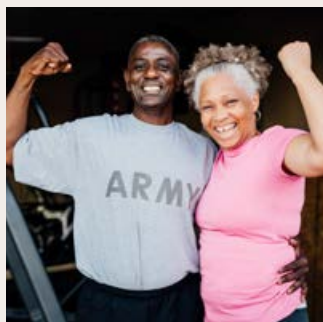
Competencies

1. Values/Ethics for Interprofessional Practice
2. Roles/Responsibilities)
3. Interprofessional Communication
4. Teams and Teamwork)

MSN Competency Model:
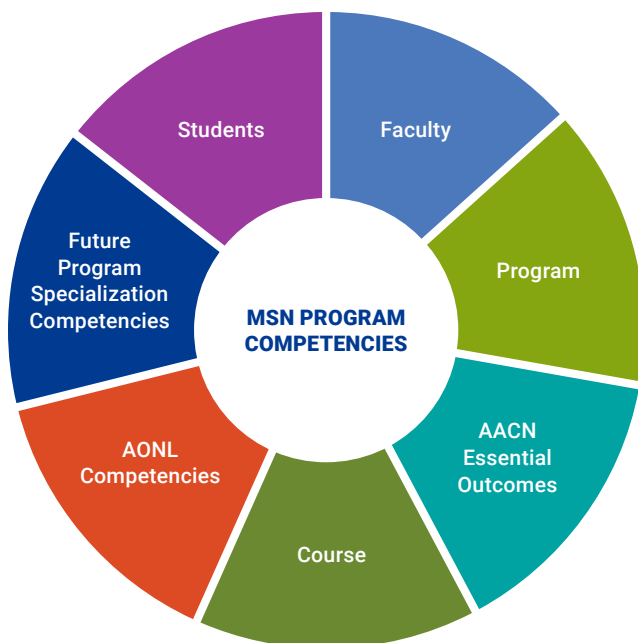
4 Program Evaluation and Assessment

4 – Program Evaluation and Assessment

The MSN program utilizes an ongoing assessment cycle as part of its strategic plan for quality continuous improvement. The assessment cycles include the following activities: 1) Gathering data, 2) Analyzing and interpreting data, 3) Developing action plans based on the data, and 4) Measuring successes of action plans and initiating subsequent cycles. Educational and program outcome data, as well as program performance data, is reviewed annually. This review is performed in order to revise outcomes per industry standards, to reflect MSN core competencies, educational guidelines, and evidence-based trends. Specifically, action plans are created to improve educational outcomes, curriculum, and overall program quality based on outcome data and faculty feedback. Action plans are reviewed and evaluated annually. The aggregated data and subsequent analysis are provided to various Communities of Interest (COI) at NU, including but not limited to faculty, students, alumni, Student Advisory Council (SAC), Program Advisory Council (PAC), health industry employers, University administration, accrediting bodies, and others as appropriate. Feedback is requested from each community of interest which is then used to implement change and improvement in the program, its policies, and procedures.

Program Assessment

The purpose of program assessment, which includes many aspects (curriculum, teaching, learning, and assessment methods, and instructor effectiveness), is for continuous quality improvement of the program, ensuring we are meeting the needs of our students, accrediting organizations, and the healthcare industry. The assessment cycle is an evidence-based, iterative cycle of planning, implementing, assessing, and improving learning outcomes and program performance.

The Academic Program Director, Department of Nursing (APD) is responsible for overseeing the assessment of the MSN program and overseeing the mentored practice experiences. Institutional support for data gathering, analysis, and documentation of assessment activities is provided via the SOHP Assessment Director. The APD, Department of Nursing meets regularly with MSN faculty to review the assessment data and to implement program improvements/modifications.

MSN Program Assessment Model:
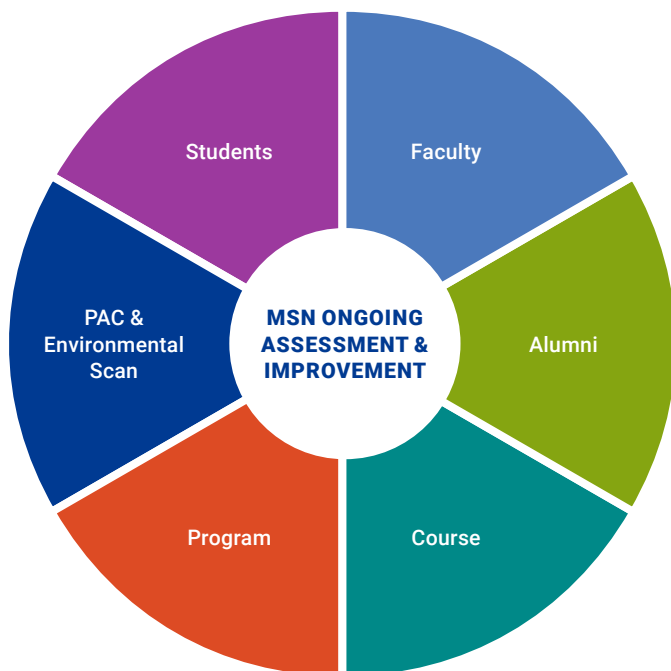
5 Program Expectations

05 – Program Expectations

Student

Students in the MSN program, as current or future healthcare leaders and professionals, are held to established standards and expectations. These expectations directly align with the program's values.

1. Students are expected to adhere to all NU policies, procedures, and codes of conduct.

2. Students are expected to be professional, respectful, and abide by the National University Code of Ethics.

3. Students have the responsibility to respectfully communicate with the MSN faculty and administration.

   a. Communication with course faculty may be conducted by email, phone calls, and online conferencing such as Zoom.

   b. Students are expected to engage in individual conversations with course faculty, per the NU one-to-one teaching model. Conversations are expected to begin in, but should not be limited to, the first week of the course.

   c. Students are expected to contact course faculty and/or the APD, Department of Nursing program director if they experience difficulties in a course and/ or in their personal or professional lives.

   d. Communication with course faculty must be timely, either prior to or directly after any unforeseen circumstance. Students should not wait until after the course is over to discuss a late or missing assignment with course faculty.

   e. Communication must be professional and respectful.

   f. Communication must follow proper netiquette. Netiquette is the term used to describe expected etiquette behaviors in an online environment. This includes but is not limited to:

   • Use of complete sentences, proper spelling, and grammar.

   • Avoid the use of slang, obscene words, swearing, cussing, cursing, or threatening language.

   • Be respectful of differences and value others' opinions (even if you disagree).

   g. Students should use their NU email for course/school correspondence.

   • Students are expected to check their NU email regularly, preferably daily.

   • Students are expected to respond to emails in a timely fashion – within 24–48 hours.

4. Students are expected to adhere to graduate-level writing, which is scholarly and rigorous. Graduate-level writing goes beyond the expected minimum of the assignment instructions, broadens the topic from course room to professional life, is based in evidence, and synthesizes different points of view. Graduate-level assignments are to be written clearly and succinctly; have a limited use of quotations; and utilize proper syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling consistently.

5. Students are expected to use APA formatting for all assignments, unless otherwise noted. NU has many resources available to students to help with APA and writing skills.

6. Students are responsible for all course material and are expected to complete all coursework by the assigned due dates. All assignments are due on Sundays by 11:59 p.m. Arizona time, per NU policy.

   a. Students have the responsibility to review available feedback provided by the course faculty on student assignments and are expected to apply this feedback to future assignments. If faculty feedback is unclear, the student is expected to contact course faculty for clarification.

MSN Late Assignment and Grading Policy

   b. Grading policies are consistent for all MSN students and are compliant with NU's institutional policies. The graduate grading scale includes:

   A   =   100-94

   A- =   93-90

   B+ =   89-87

   B   =   86-83

   B- =   82-80

   C+ =   79-77

   C   =   76-73

   F   =   72-0

Progression within the program is monitored by the Department of Nursing. A student may be dismissed for failing to progress.

• Each assignment's due date must be met. If an assignment is submitted after the original assignment deadline it will be considered late.

• All work submitted within 7 days (up to and including day 6) after the original assignment deadline without prior communication and authorization from faculty, will be graded and reviewed however, faculty may take percentage deduction every day the assignment is late. This deduction occurs before other deductions for issues with content, critical thinking, grammar/APA, and resource use. Feedback on the assignment will be provided by the faculty member and the grade earned will be posted.

• Faculty have the discretion to accept assignments 7 or more days beyond the original due date. Communication between the student and their assigned Faculty member is essential in these types of situations in order for the assigned Faculty member to consider extenuating circumstances. For late assignments submitted prior to the aforementioned 7-day deadline, Faculty may establish their own guidelines for acceptance and grading penalties for late work.

• In addition, course work will not be accepted after the course end date and/or approved course extension end date.

Emergency Event or Extenuating Circumstance

If a student anticipates missing an assignment deadline due to an emergency event or extenuating circumstance, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the course faculty PRIOR to the due date (if possible) to make arrangements for an extension to the due date. An extension may or may not be granted and is at the discretion of the faculty member. Overdue assignments may or may not be accepted with or without penalty. If the student is unable to contact the course faculty prior to the event/circumstance, the student should contact the faculty at the earliest opportunity.

7. All student coursework is expected to be original and written specifically for the course in which it is assigned. Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is an academic integrity violation. This includes self-plagiarism. Turnitin is used for course assignments. Turnitin reports will be used as part of the overall assignment feedback.

a. Academic recycling, which is defined as the submission of all or a portion of course work submitted for an assignment in a concurrent course, previous course, or at another institution, is not permitted.

b. If a student is repeating a previously attempted course, NU allows prior work from the same course to be submitted when a student is re-taking a course that was previously attempted. However, the student must notify their faculty that they previously attempted the course and are re-using prior work. This exception notwithstanding, refining prior work before submission to best reflect the student's current scholarly abilities and achieve the best chance for a passing grade on the re-take is always prudent.

c. It is faculty discretion to allow resubmission of previous course work. If a student would like to reuse their previous work and believes that a concurrent or previous course assignment meets the criteria for a current course assignment, the following criteria must be satisfied:

1. PRIOR to submission, faculty permission must be obtained. Granting students permission is at the discretion of their faculty member.

2. Student must provide the current course faculty with a copy of the previous/concurrent coursework that they wish to repurpose PRIOR to submitting the assignment that contains the recycled material. This email must include the name of the course, course dates, and where the material was originally used.

3. Written approval must be obtained from the course faculty via email.

4. The original assignment must be substantially revised and/or enhanced to reflect the student's current scholarly abilities.

5. Students have the opportunity to complete the End of Course Survey/Post Course Survey in each course. Responses to the survey are anonymous and reviewed by nursing leadership to improve the student experience, address course concerns, and enhance faculty/ student engagement.

6. Students are encouraged to participate in Interprofessional Education (IPE) Activities offered by SOHP. MSN students are encouraged to track their participation and turn in documentation upon completion of the program (see Appendix B). MSN students are encouraged to participate in at least 6 IPE activities during the tenure of their program.

7. Students are encouraged to engage in The Commons, particularly the School of Health Professions HA, IPE, and Nursing Commons communities. There are a variety of interest groups in The Commons that students can connect with for engagement. The Nursing Commons community will provide an area to collaborate with the nursing student community. All program announcements will be posted in the Nursing Commons community, so students are encouraged to visit once a week.

8. For complete MSN capstone and practice experience requirements, please refer to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Practice Handbook.

Faculty

Faculty of the MSN program, as educators and current or previous healthcare leaders and professionals, are held to certain expectations and have certain responsibilities to the MSN student. These expectations and responsibilities directly align with the program's values.

1. Faculty are expected to adhere to all NU expectations, code of conduct, policies, and procedures.

2. Faculty are expected to be professional, respectful, and abide by the National University Code of Ethics.

3. Faculty are expected to fully execute NU's Teaching Through Engagement pedagogy by being present, serving as mentors to their students, sharing their knowledge and experiences, and helping students grow as individuals and professionals. Please refer to the Teaching Through Engagement training and handbook for faculty for further explanations.

4. Faculty have the responsibility to respectfully communicate with the MSN students.

    a. Communication with students may be conducted by email, phone calls, and online conferencing such as Zoom.

    b. Faculty are expected to engage in individual conversations with students, per the NU one-to-one teaching model and the Teaching Through Engagement pedagogy. Conversations are expected in, but should not be limited to, the first week of the course.

    c. Faculty are expected to contact students if they are going to be out of the office and unavailable. Faculty will also communicate to the student who to contact in their absence.

    d. Communication must be professional and respectful.

5. Faculty are expected to provide timely, thorough, and relevant feedback on student assignments. Feedback and grades must be provided within 4 days of assignment due date.

6. Faculty are expected to adhere to grading at the graduate level, which is scholarly and rigorous, per the grading guidelines stated by NU and the MSN program. Graduate-level writing should go beyond the expected minimum of the assignment instructions, broaden the topic from course room to professional life, be based in evidence, and synthesize different points of view. Graduate-level assignments are to be written clearly and succinctly; have a limited use of quotations; and utilize proper syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling consistently.

7. Suspected academic integrity violations will be reported appropriately.

6 MSN Program Resources

06 – MSN Program Resources

All students in the MSN program are expected to be familiar with the MSN Handbook and the policies outlined in the current NU Catalog, as well as agree to abide by all key policies and procedures. In addition, students are expected to agree to and abide by the professional and ethical behavior outlined in the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics. Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.

Professional Advisory Committee

The School of Health Science Professional Advisory Committee (PAC) consists of leaders and administrators with a vast variety of healthcare experience. Similar PACs exist in each school throughout National University. The primary purpose of the PAC is to provide industry expertise to the MSN program, acting as sounding boards to ensure students are learning relevant disciplinary knowledge and skills that align with the needs of external stakeholders. PAC members are asked to participate in various evaluation activities. These activities provide the MSN program with valuable information to help support the continuous improvement of the program.

Student Governance

Student involvement in NU's shared governance structure is a very important part of the NU model, both within the program and across the University. Students have a valuable perspective on the educational services they receive. Therefore, the university and School of Health Professions benefits from student perceptions and input, especially on academic and administrative matters, and the vehicle to receive student input is through the school-based Student Advisory Councils (SAC).

Students in the MSN program are encouraged to participate in NU's shared governance structure through the School of Health Professions Student Advisory Council (SAC).

SOHP Student Advisory Council

The School of Health Professions Student Advisory Council (SAC) serves as a liaison between students, faculty, and administration. SAC members work together to evaluate and provide recommendations to MSN policy and program, as well as work toward increasing student awareness and participation with MSN opportunities. More specifically, this council is expected to identify issues important to the future of the University and the MSN program, as well as provide feedback and recommendations regarding improvement or enhancements to the program from the student perspective.

• Student Support Services National University offers an array of student support services. Contact information for student support services can be ound in the current NU Catalog. The university regularly surveys and evaluates student satisfaction with the support services provided to ensure the quality of these services are meeting the program and student needs.

Please refer to the NU Catalog for specific information pertaining to the following services:

• Enrollment Services

• Academic and Finance Advising

• Disability/ADA Services

• Center for Teaching and Learning

• Academic Success Center

• NU Library

• Alumni Services

• Office of the Registrar

7 General Program Policies and Procedures
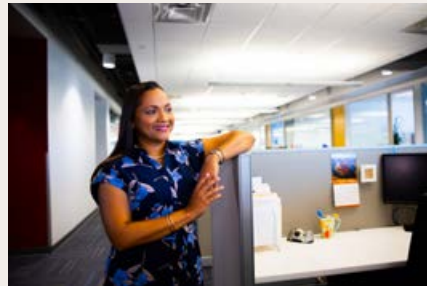
07 − General Program Policies and Procedures

Notice: Please consult the current version of the NU Catalog for information regarding curriculum, academic requirements, fees, deadlines, academic policies (including requirements regarding English proficiency and degrees awarded by non-US Institutions), and application and admission requirements.

The following program policies are reviewed and revised as necessary. Policies have been developed to be fair and equitable. All program policies are designed to be supportive of the program and university mission and values. If students have questions regarding any policies or any other information found in this handbook, they are encouraged to contact the APD, Department of Nursing (shs@ncu.edu) to seek clarification.

Anti-Discrimination Policy

The MSN Program abides by the University's Non-Discrimination Policy, as found in the current NU Catalog. In addition, faculty are invested in the personal and professional growth of students and developing an understanding and appreciation for diversity is an important element of this growth. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, relationship status, gender identity, health status, national origin, race, color, religion, spiritual values, gender, sexual orientation, SES, learning disabilities, physical limitations, age, veteran status, belief systems, and academic and professional background. Respect for diversity is embedded in the nature of the MSN program at National University, and the program is committed to acknowledging and discussing issues of diversity. Due to the online nature of the program, students and faculty members come from a wide variety of contexts. As such, the importance of diversity can be seen in the diversity of our students and faculty, as well as being evident throughout our curriculum and educational outcomes.

Admission Policy

• Earned Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from an institution accredited by either a regional accrediting agency or an agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

• GPA 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale. Applicants who meet all general admission requirements to the Master of Science in Nursing degree program, but who have a cumulative GPA for the BSN degree between 2.75 to 2.99, may be granted provisional admission.

• Current, active unrestricted license to practice as a Registered Nurse in the student's state of residence. All students must maintain their license throughout the program of study. License number and expiration date are required.

• Graduates of a foreign school with the BSN equivalency determination by the Council on Graduates of Foreign Nursing Schools (CGFNS).

• Employment verification or verified access to an applicable healthcare environment for practice experience requirements.

• Also required are official transcripts, current resume, or curriculum vitae.

The following is an outline of what can be expected once the student is accepted into the MSN program:

Responsible Party	Typhon
Academic and Finance Advisor	Provides student support throughout their program. This may include, but is not limited to, scheduling adjustments, support with financial aid or other funding options, program questions, assistance with University resources, or questions related to University policies and procedures.
Student	Stays in contact with their Academic and Finance Advisor (AFA) in order to adjust the timing of courses, ask questions, or request information or assistance regarding matters related to these aspects of the program. The most common way of maintaining contact is email.
Student	Utilizes One as the primary means for completing coursework and degree requirements, serving as the gateway to courses, educational resources and materials, communication with faculty, other students, and University resources, such as the National Library, the Academic Success Center (ASC), and the IT Help Desk. Using One, the student can review their degree plan, manage educational finances, access unofficial transcripts, and submit requests to Student Records.
Student	Begins courses and submits weekly assignments in a timely manner. Stays in contact with faculty member regarding course attendance and assignment questions.
Faculty Member	When assignments are completed and submitted for grading, the faculty member reviews, evaluates, offers detailed feedback, and submits the feedback and grades for completed work. University requirements are such that faculty must respond to questions in messages or email within 24-48 hours and they must grade and submit detailed feedback for all work submitted within 4 days of the assignment due date.
Student	Takes advantage of the asynchronous model to work at their convenience, within the allowed time frames for course participation and faculty member responsiveness. Students are encouraged to also set time to talk via Zoom (or by phone) if additional mentoring or support is needed.

Minimum Technology Requirements

Students in an online program must have the technological resources necessary for them to be successful. The Technical Requirements (as found in the NU Catalog) explain the minimum technical requirements for NU students.

Available Technology Support

Students can locate free software and discounts in the Student Technology Resource Center by visiting the University Services Module and the NCUOne Support and training materials for various technology applications and NU systems can be found in the Center for Teaching and Learning, and Academic Success Center.

University Orientation

University enrollment and academic advisement teams orient students to the learning environment. MSN students should ensure that they have familiarized themselves with One, The Commons, and various student support services. Students are encouraged to complete Great Start student orientation. Great Start is a road map that introduces new students to the various academic and support services available, while also covering several essential topics that will help students be successful during their time at NU. Contact your Academic and Finance Advisors if you have questions regarding university orientation.

MSN students will receive an email invitation to attend an MSN Program Orientation while enrolled in the dynamic healthcare environments course, to ensure an understanding of nursing specific processes. During the MSN Program Orientation, students will meet full-time faculty members and have the opportunity to ask program questions. Students will be invited to attend a Practice Experience Orientation while enrolled in the health policy course; prior to registering for their first specialized practice experience course.

Code of Conduct Policy

National University has established a Code of Conduct for all students and faculty in the University community, including applicants and alumni. Students in the MSN program are expected to abide by this code at all times. This code can be found in the NU Catalog.

Academic Integrity

All work submitted in each course must be the student's own original work. This includes all assignments, exams, term papers, and other projects required by the faculty. The submission of another person's work represented as that of the student's (without properly citing the source of the work) will be considered plagiarism and will result in an Academic Integrity Policy Violation Notice being filed by the faculty member. The result may be an unsatisfactory grade for the work submitted or for the entire course and may result in academic dismissal.

Assignments are submitted through Turnitin to help students prevent plagiarism, engage students in the writing process, and provide personalized feedback.

The most current American Psychological Association (APA) Manual is the standard for all student work. Students may find out more about this writing style through the Center for Teaching and Learning, the Academic Success Center, and APA Academic Writer, or students may ask their faculty member for help.

Grade Policy

See Grading Policies of the NU Catalog for information about the NU Grading Policies.

Natural Disasters and University-Wide Technology Outages

Students should be reassured that faculty will work with them regarding assignment submissions in the event of natural disasters (i.e., hurricanes, wildfires, tornadoes, etc.), or in the event of a university-wide technology outage. Each event and how it directly affects the student will be handled on an individual basis. This may or may not include extensions on assignment due dates, utilizing the Incomplete Grading Policy, and/or granting an official course extension. Students should contact their course faculty if they believe they will be impacted by a natural disaster. For specific course information, please visit the catalog.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the standard by which National University measures students' progress toward completion of a degree or certificate program. The three components of SAP are Grade Point Average (GPA), Course Completion Rate (pace), and SAP Maximum Timeframe. If a student is not meeting the minimum requirements for SAP at their evaluation point, they receive an email notification to their primary email address on file. However, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to know these requirements, and failure to receive notification does not nullify the SAP status.

Additional information regarding the Satisfactory Academic Progress policy can be found in the NU Catalog.

Course Repetitions

Students who do not meet required minimum grades and/or who fail to maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better may request a second attempt to repeat a course to improve their academic standing and for the opportunity to enhance knowledge. However, it is recommended that the student make an appointment with the APD, Department of Nursing Program Director of Nursing to review their plan to facilitate academic and course success in the second attempt. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, per NU policy, a third attempt may be requested. The APD, Department of Nursing Program Director retains the right to determine if a third attempt is in a student's best interest; the third attempt is not guaranteed. Please see Grading Policies and Procedures in the NU Catalog for additional information on repeated courses.

Only the most recent grade for a repeated course is counted in the Program GPA. All attempted courses are counted toward the Course Completion Rate and the SAP Maximum Timeframe for program completion.

Academic Leave of Absence

NU programs are designed to allow students to pursue their educational efforts full-time while managing other responsibilities. NU will consider granting an Academic Leave of Absence (LOA) for a student who is experiencing hardships that make effective progress in their academic course of study unusually difficult. A leave of absence is defined as a temporary break from academic registration with a clear intent to return to the program of study.

Additional information regarding the Academic Leave of Absence policy can be found in the NU Catalog.

Academic Probation

Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) is the standard by which NU measures students' progress toward completion of their program. Occasionally, students may experience difficulty in their graduate program affecting one or more components of their satisfactory academic progress (GPA, Course Completion Rate, SAP Max Timeframe). A student in Good Standing will be placed in a Warning status by the University at their next evaluation point if one or more SAP minimums are not met. A student in Warning will be placed on Academic Probation by the University at their next evaluation point if one or more SAP minimums are not met.

A student placed on Academic Probation remains on Academic Probation for one evaluation period. For graduate students, one evaluation period is measured as nine attempted credit hours. A student on Academic Probation may appeal to be placed on Financial Aid Probation to continue using Federal Financial Aid funding for one evaluation period. A student on Academic or Financial Aid Probation must meet the minimum standards for all three SAP components and return to Good Standing by their next evaluation point. Failure to do so may result in academic dismissal from the University. Although a student may appeal grades and/or to use Federal Financial Aid funds – a student cannot appeal their SAP status. For a complete list of SAP statuses and the appeals process, please review the NU Catalog.

Resources Available to Students When Experiencing Difficulties

When a student is placed on Academic Probation, several steps may be taken as a part of their success plan. This may include, but is not limited to: (a) adding breaks between courses (up to 3 weeks), (b) referring students to the National University academic assistance resources, (c) considering a possible leave of absence, (d) suggesting a referral of a student for therapy services or medical intervention in their local community, and (e) providing additional faculty mentoring and encouragement. While all recommendations are designed with the goal of helping students to succeed, students must meet the minimum SAP standards to be removed from Academic Probation.

If, during a student's program, the faculty determines that a student does not have the personal and professional health and maturity needed to be an effective healthcare administrator, the student will be advised of this and counseled to seek another area of study.

Dismissal from the Program

Students who violate the University's Code of Conduct and/or Academic Integrity policy while enrolled in the program may be subject to dismissal. Students who have been dismissed due to a violation of the Code of Conduct or Academic Integrity policy, or due to any other legal or ethical matter, do not qualify for readmission to National University. Students in violation of the University's Attendance policy may be withdrawn. Students who do not meet their financial obligations may be restricted from attending future courses. The Code of Conduct, Attendance policy, and a summary of the Academic Integrity policy are published in the NU Catalog. For additional information regarding dismissal and withdrawal policies, students can reference the NU Catalog.

Time Limits for Degree Completion

NU allows 5 years to complete all Master's programs of 36 credits or less. The estimated time to completion for this program is 26 months (this time may vary due to student enrollment and successful completion of each course).

Time to completion varies depending upon the pace in which a student completes courses and the number of transfer credits accepted. As most NU students are working adults, balancing educational, professional, and personal commitments, our academic and finance advisors will work with you to develop a program schedule that works best for your needs.

Students following the preferred schedule designed by the Dean for this program, and applying no transfer credits, can expect to finish in as little as 26 months.

Graduation Policy

Upon completion of all program requirements, students may complete an online diploma application that can be accessed via University Services Module in NCUOne. To ensure that all requirements of the program and degree, as well as those of the University, are met prior to conferring the degree, a Graduation Audit will be performed in response to a student's diploma application.

An additional audit is performed by the APD Department of Nursing Program Director to ensure that program specific requirements have been met. For all graduate-level students, degree requirements include:

• 3.0 (letter grade of "B") or higher GPA

• Official documents on file for basis of admission from an appropriately accredited academic institution

• Official transcripts on file for all transfer credit hours accepted by the University

• All financial obligations to the University paid in full

Program Completion, Alumni, and Employer Evaluation Surveys

Graduating students are asked to participate in an online SHSSOHP Program Completion Survey upon degree conferral, and the Alumni Survey and Survey of Employers of graduates one year after graduation. The primary purpose of the Program Completion Survey is to give students an opportunity to share with the MSN faculty their overall evaluation of the MSN program, including ways that it can be improved. The primary purpose of the alumni survey is to gather information about alumni views of how well the program prepared them for success in various competency areas and current employment. The purpose of the employer evaluation survey is to gather information about their views of how well our graduates are doing, what competencies may be lacking, and, in general, how satisfied they are with the graduate's performance. Students are asked to please be sure to provide contact information (email, phone, etc.) when they graduate so they or their employers can be provided links to these various surveys.

Student Complaint and Grievance Process

Students may find detailed information regarding complaint and grievance process in the NU Catalog. Part of the process of becoming a professional is learning to deal appropriately with disagreements and grievances. Most concerns can be effectively addressed and resolved between the student and their faculty. Engaging in a respectful interchange of ideas and concerns with peers and supervisors is an important part of a student's professional development and learning to address concerns in a professional manner is an important graduate-level student skill. Students are encouraged to first communicate concerns with their faculty, or nursing administrators to ensure every opportunity for resolution has been discussed.

If students experience a concern, either academic or administrative (e.g., university policy or procedures, its decisions or judgements), the student should follow the steps outlined in the NU Catalog. For academic concerns regarding grade appeals, students should contact their Academic & Financial Advisor or refer to the NU Catalog for the current appeal process.

*See NU Catalog for additional information regarding university policies and procedures.

AP Appendix A
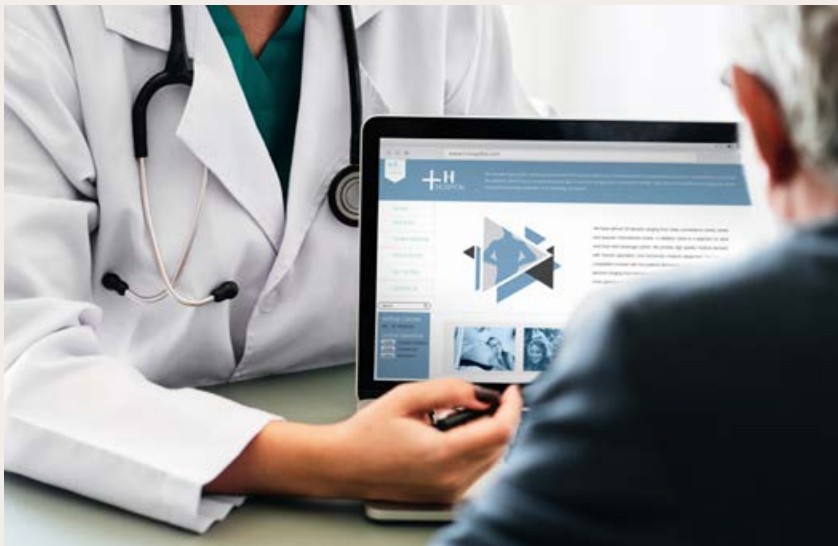
Appendix A: Interprofessional Education (IPE)

SOHP Student IPE Activity Tracking Form

The School of Health Professions is founded on the value of interprofessional education. Therefore, we encourage students to document IPE activities. You will upload this document into your ePortfolio for safe keeping.

*Please Note: Master of Science of Nursing (MSN) students are strongly encouraged to track all interprofessional education (IPE) activities throughout their MSN program. Our goal is that you will have participated in at least 6 activities upon graduation. You will upload this document to your ePortfolio prior to completion of the program.

Name:		Program Start Date:	
Program:		Program End Date:	

	Date	IPE Activity Title	Brief Summary
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			