University of Massachusetts Boston
College of Nursing and Health Sciences

Student Handbook
Master of Science Program in Nursing
Post Master’s Program
2018-2019
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Introduction

Welcome to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences of the University of Massachusetts Boston. The faculty, administrators, and staff of the College hope that you will find your experience as a graduate student to be professionally and personally rewarding. We have published this handbook in order to provide you with important information about the Master of Science Program in Nursing. It is designed to supplement the University’s policies which contain material related to student rights, academic policies, registration, tuition and fees, financial aid, campus facilities, and course offerings.

Graduate Nursing Program Administration

Graduate Program Director
Dr. Susan M. Lee, susan.lee@umb.edu

Clinical Track Coordinators
Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist Coordinator
Dr. Jeanne Marston Jeanne.Marston@umb.edu

Adult/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner Coordinator
Dr. Jennifer Hackel Jennifer.hackel@umb.edu

Family Nurse Practitioner Coordinator
Dr. Patricia Halon Pat.halon@umb.edu

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Graduate Program Assistant
Jocelyn Burke Jocelyn.burke@umb.edu

Post- Master’s Certificate Program Assistant
Mary (Liz) Malone postmasternp@umb.edu
COLLEGE OF NURSING AND HEALTH SCIENCES

Main Phone Number:  (617) 287-7500

Fax Number:                (617) 287-7527

OFFICE LOCATIONS
The College of Nursing and Health Sciences administrative offices are located in the Science Building on Floors 2 and 3.

FACULTY OFFICE HOURS
Graduate students may meet with faculty during regularly scheduled office hours or by appointment. Office hours are posted on the individual’s office door and can best be arranged by contacting the faculty by email or phone.

MEETINGS WITH THE GRADUATE PROGRAM DIRECTOR
The Graduate Program Director has the responsibility for the administration of the program. She is available to discuss any issue of interest to the student by appointment.

MS PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Demonstrate competence in the advanced nursing practice and management of health and illness for individuals, family, and aggregate populations using critical thinking and evidenced-based clinical decision making.

- Promote individual/family relationships that facilitate positive health care outcomes for diverse populations.

- Design, implement, and evaluate educational programs for individuals, professionals and communities.

- Plan comprehensive continuous care through interdisciplinary collaboration across health care settings with an emphasis on diverse and urban populations.

- Monitor and ensure the quality of nursing and health care practices utilizing advocacy and ethical decision-making.

- Design, implement, and evaluate evidenced-based care in relation to ethno-cultural and spiritual beliefs within diverse populations.

- Apply theories from nursing and other disciplines to the advanced nursing practice for individuals and families from diverse populations.
• Identify researchable healthcare problems and continually appraise relevant literature.

• Communicate and consult with health care providers and others to influence policy change.

• Demonstrate competency in professional oral and written communication.

MS PROGRAM COMMITTEE

The MS Program Committee is a committee of the Department of Nursing that oversees all matters pertinent to the MS and Post-Master’s programs, including curriculum and graduate admissions. There is at least one graduate student member who serves with full voting rights.

Overview of the Programs

The College of Nursing and Health Sciences at the University of Massachusetts Boston offers programs of graduate study leading to the MS degree in nursing. The College also offers a Post-Master’s Certificate Program which prepares nurses who already hold a Master’s degree in nursing for careers as family or adult/gerontological nurse practitioners. The Post Master's programs are offered through the College of Advancing and Professional Studies (CAPS) at UMass Boston. For more information see the Master’s Post-Master’s Certificate program section below.

Graduate students at the College work with faculty members distinguished for their achievements as educators, scholars, and practitioners. Faculty are dedicated to developing students’ professional and intellectual interests, and providing a strong background in nursing theory, practice, and research. Master’s degree students may pursue their individual professional objectives by participating in selected clinical practice experiences with expert preceptors in prestigious placements in urban and metropolitan Boston area institutions.

The MS Program

The MS Program in Nursing prepares its students for advanced practice nursing. Each student chooses one of three concentrations:

• Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist,
• Adult/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner
• Family Nurse Practitioner.

The program follows the *The Essentials of Master’s Education for Advanced Practice Nursing*, 1995, and the LACE *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education* that was initiated in 2013 for the new standards for national certification.

The program’s Capstone experience is a comprehensive project that synthesizes the student’s educational experience. The comprehensive Master’s project is submitted at the end of the last
semester of study. The project may be a publishable paper, case study, a service-learning project, grant proposal, evidence-based guideline, or an acceptable format as agreed upon between the student and the MS Committee.

The MS program is designed for the baccalaureate-prepared registered nurse with a strong professional clinical background, and is tailored to meet the needs of the busy professional. The majority of courses meet once per week in the late afternoon or evening or through distance learning. Clinical practicum experiences are usually conducted during the day on schedules arranged between students and preceptors. The program can be completed in four semesters of full-time study or three to four years of part time study.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist concentration was developed in accordance with guidelines established by the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists. Graduates of this concentration are eligible to take credentialing examinations as Adult Health, Adult/gerontological Health and Acute Care and Critical Care Clinical Nurse Specialists offered by the American Association of Critical Care Nurses (ACCNS) or by the American Nurses’ Credentialing Center (ANCC). The Nurse Practitioner concentrations were developed in accordance with guidelines established by the National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF). Graduates of these two concentrations are eligible to take credentialing exams that lead to licensure in advanced practice nursing.

**Degree Requirements For Students in the Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist or Nurse Practitioner Concentrations**

A total of 48 credits are required for all concentrations, distributed as follows:

**Core Courses** The core curriculum consists of 27 credits—to be taken by students in all three MS concentrations, and are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 601</td>
<td>Introduction to Advanced Practice Nursing: Knowledge for Practice in the Global Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 614</td>
<td>Advanced Pathophysiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 615</td>
<td>Advanced Health Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 616</td>
<td>Evidence-Based Practice I: Appraising the Strength and Significance of Evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 618</td>
<td>Health Policy, Financing, and Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 638</td>
<td>Advanced Health Promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 715</td>
<td>Informatics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist – Program Plan

**Full Time (2 years, no summers)**

**Fall Semester I**
- NURSNG 601 3 credits
- NURSNG 616 3 credits
- NURSNG 614 3 credits
- NURSNG 615 3 credits

**Spring Semester II**
- NURSNG 634 3 credits
- NURSNG 638 6 credits
- NURSNG 690 3 credits

**Fall Semester III**
- NURSNG 691 3 credits
- NURSNG 664 3 credits
- NURSNG 667 3 credits
- NURSNG 715 3 credits

**Spring Semester IV**
- NURSNG 618 3 credits
- NURSNG 665 3 credits
- NURSNG 668 3 credits
- NURSNG 765 3 credits

**Part Time (4 years, no summers)**

**Fall Semester I**
- NURSNG 601 3 credits
- NURSNG 616 3 credits

**Spring Semester II**
- NURSNG 614 3 credits
- NURSNG 634 3 credits

**Fall Semester III**
- NURSNG 715 3 credits
- NURSNG 615 3 credits
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester IV</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 690</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester V</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 691</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 664</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester VI</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 618</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 640</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester VII</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 667</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 765</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester VI</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 665</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 668</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Adult/Gerontological and Family Nurse Practitioner:**

**Full Time**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester I</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 601</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 614</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 615</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 616</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester II</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 618</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 640</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester III</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 715</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 639</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 670</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester IV</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 637</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 671</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 672</td>
<td>6 credits</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Family take:
NURSNG 637                                           3 credits
NURSNG 681                                           3 credits
NURSNG 682                                           6 credits

Three Year Option

Fall Semester I
NURSNG 601                                          3 credits
NURSNG 616                                          3 credits

Spring Semester II
NURSNG 614                                          3 credits
NURSNG 634                                          3 credits

Fall Semester III
NURSNG 615                                          3 credits
NURSNG 637                                          3 credits
NURSNG 715                                          3 credits

Spring Semester IV
NURSNG 618                                          3 credits
NURSNG 640                                          6 credits

Fall Semester V
NURSNG 639                                          3 credits
NURSNG 670                                          6 credits

Spring Semester VI

Adult/Gero take:
NURSNG 671                                          3 credits
NURSNG 672                                          6 credits

Family take:
NURSNG 681                                          3 credits
NURSNG 682                                          6 credits

Admission Requirements for the MS in Nursing

Prospective MS students must meet the following criteria for admission:

1. Baccalaureate degree in nursing from an NLNAC or CCNE-accredited program.

2. Undergraduate GPA of at least 2.75

3. A current unrestricted Massachusetts license in nursing.
4. Evidence of one or more years of recent professional practice.

5. Completion of a college-level course in introductory statistics.

6. Recent completion of a college-level course in health assessment.

**The Post-Master’s Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program**

The Post-Master’s Certificate program is designed to assist RNs who have an MS degree in nursing from an accredited institution to acquire the knowledge and clinical experience that will prepare them to be certified as adult-gerontology or family nurse practitioners through American Nurses Credentialing Center or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program. Nurses with non-nursing Master’s Degrees are not eligible for the Post-Master’s Certificate Program.

Nurses holding current NP certification in adult primary care or gerontology and with 1 or more years of experience may be eligible for the 12-credit adult gerontological nurse practitioner program. The 12-credit family option is open to pediatric and adult primary care NPs only. RNs and other certified APRNs (CNM, WHNP) who have an MS in nursing may apply for the 21-credit certificate program in adult gerontology or family. Applicants are invited to contact the Post-Master’s Program Director to determine the appropriate program of study that will meet their individual needs. Please note: students may apply to specific programs however the final determination of the number of credits required to complete the program may differ from the program to which the student has applied based on a review of prior academic work. Decisions about required credits/courses are based on academic work only: there is no mechanism for granting a reduction in courses, credits or clinical hours based on work experience.

Prerequisites to the Post-Masters program include evidence of graduate course work (with a grade of B or better) in advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology and advanced pharmacology. These courses must be stand-alone 3 credit courses taken within the past 5 years. Provisional acceptance into the program may be made pending successful completion with a grade of B or better of all prerequisites. Applicants who do not have these prerequisite courses must complete them prior to beginning the population specific courses. Students who have taken these courses greater than 5 years ago have several options available to waive retaking the prerequisites. A determination as to whether an applicant would qualify for these options is determined on a case-by-case basis. Please consult with the Program Director for more information.

Students may transfer two graduate level courses into the program if equivalent to the required courses offered at UMass Boston provided they have 1) earned a grade of B or better, 2) courses are the same credit value, 3) courses completed within five years of application, and 4) courses were not applied to a previously earned degree. In addition, students may petition to have courses from their prior MSN program that are equivalent to required UMass Boston courses waived for 0 credit.
All pre-requisite courses are open to non-matriculated students however, matriculated students are enrolled first and then non-matriculated students may be enrolled on a space available basis and with permission of the Program Director. Non-matriculated students cannot enroll in clinical courses (NU 615, NU 670, NU 672, or NU 682).

**Post-Master’s Certificate Program of Study**

The 21-credit option can be completed in two semesters (full time), or four semesters (part-time). The 12-credit option can be completed in one semester full time or two semesters part time.

The family certificate is open to enrollment in the fall, spring, or fall terms. The preferred time to start the FNP 21 credit program is in the fall semester. The recommended sequence of courses is fall NU 639, NU 670 followed by spring NU 681 and NU 682. NU 637 may be taken any term following admission to the program or following completion of the clinicals in the summer term. Alternative plans of study are open to review and approval with the Program Director. Applicants may take up to six credits as a non-degree student prior to acceptance into the program. Those credits may be earned in NU 614, NU 634, NU 631, NU 637.

**Family Certificate Program**

**Family Certificate 21 credits**

This program is open to CNMs, WHNPs, AGACNP, CNS, and those with MSN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 639 Primary Care of the Adult</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 670 Primary Care of the Adult Practicum</td>
<td>6 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 681 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family</td>
<td>3 cr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 682 Primary Care Childbearing Family Practicum (includes 80 hours of OB; CNMs and WHNPs will do all 300 hours in Pediatrics)</td>
<td>6 cr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Family Certificate 12 credits** (Courses are offered on line fall, spring, and summer)

This program is open to Adult or Pediatric Primary Care NPs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Pediatric Primary Care NPs</th>
<th>For Adult Primary Care NPs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</td>
<td>NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 639 Primary Care of the Adult</td>
<td>NU 681 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adult/Gero Certificate Program

Students in the 21-credit program must follow a sequence of courses taking first NU 639 and NU 670 followed by NU 671 and NU 672; NU 637 may be taken any term.

Adult/Gero Certificate 21 credits

This program is open to CNMs, WHNPs, PNPs, and those with a non-NP MSN.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NU 637</td>
<td>Psychosocial Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 639</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 670</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Adult Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 671</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Older Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 672</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Older Adult Practicum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adult/Gero Certificate 12 credits

This program is open to either Adult Primary Care NPs or Gerontology Primary Care NPs. For Gerontology Primary Care NPs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NU 637</td>
<td>Psychosocial Mental Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 639</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 670</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Adult Practicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 671</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Older Adult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 672</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Older Adult Practicum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Clinical Experiences: All students in the 21-credit option must complete 600 hours of documented clinical experience. Students in the 12-credit option must complete 300 hours of clinical experience in the chosen specialty. All clinical practica are subject to the approval of the Program Director. Preceptors must be either Master’s prepared NPs, Certified Nurse Midwives, Physician Assistants, or physicians (MD or DO). Students need to contact the Program Director or course faculty in order to determine if their selected practice site will meet the course objectives. Students must provide evidence of the preceptors’ résumé and license to the program assistant.

The agency providing the clinical practicum must be under contract with UMass Boston College of Nursing and Health Sciences. No student can begin clinical experiences without a signed working agreement on file between UMass Boston College of Nursing and the agency where they will be doing their clinical experience. Affiliation Agreements are managed by the Clinical Placement Office (CIPO), not by the Post-Master’s Office. Clinical practica may not begin
until the Agreement is approved. Students and course faculty are notified by CIPO when the Agreement with their site has been approved.

Clinical Clearance

Prior to beginning the clinical practicum, all students are subject to the clinical clearance requirements as mandated by the agency in which they will be doing their clinical practicum. All students completing clinical practica are required to submit evidence of immunizations, nursing license, CPR, resumé and health insurance as part of the Clinical Clearance process by uploading the documents into InPlace. Students not residing in Massachusetts are waived the requirement for UMass Boston Student Health Insurance. UMass Boston provides malpractice insurance for students while they are in clinical practica at no cost.

Admission Requirements

Applicants should indicate in their statement of interest and intent whether they are applying to the Family or Adult/Gerontology NP program of study, 12- or 21-credit options (although the program to which they are assigned may differ from that to which they apply after review of prior academic records). Only currently certified NPs can be considered for acceptance into the 12-credit option; additional requirements apply. The Chair of the Graduate Admissions Committee will inform applicants of their admission to the program. In addition to the general admission requirements for all graduate studies programs listed in the “Admissions” section of this publication, prospective students applying to the Post-Master’s Certificate Program must also meet the following requirements:

1. Evidence of national certification in advanced practice nursing specialty.
2. Applicants are not required to submit Graduate Record Examination Scores.
3. Courses eligible for transfer and/or recognized as pre requisites must be within the five year limit.
4. Courses applied towards a prior degree cannot be transferred but may be waived or recognized as meeting the pre-requisite requirements; however the credits must be made up with other appropriate courses as noted above. Only two courses from within or outside of UMass Boston are transferable provided they meet the approval of the program director.
5. Syllabi for pre-requisite courses must be submitted to the Program Director for review and approval following admission.
6. All students are provided an electronic program of study which they are asked to sign and follow through to graduation. Changes in the plan of study must be approved by the Program Director.
7. Students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment in the program for fall and spring terms. If students choose to drop out of the program they will be enrolled in CAS600 (check Registrar’s Office for the current fee) which will prevent them from being dropped from the program.
8. Students who are dropped or withdraw from the program will need to reapply for admission.
Academic Resources

**CCER:** The Center for Clinical Education and Research is located in the CNHS on the 3rd floor of the Science Building. It offers varied services to support student learning, including individual tutoring, and skills training. [http://www.ccer.cnhs.umb.edu/index.php](http://www.ccer.cnhs.umb.edu/index.php)

**Graduate Writing Center:** The purpose of the Graduate Writing Center is to provide conferences to students who are willing to make a commitment to work with a professional consultant over several weeks. Students who are in the process of completing graduate or Post-Master’s coursework at UMass Boston, and who wish to develop their paper writing process, graduate-level research skills, and/or understanding of the general expectations associated with graduate study, should consider signing up for conferences. Faculty may also recommend that a student work with the Writing Center to improve their writing skills. Generally, a student meets with his/her consultant for weekly one-hour appointments. These appointments may be in person for those in Massachusetts or virtually for those residing in other states.

Call or visit Academic Support Programs in the Campus Center 1-1300 or call 617-287-6550 for more information.

Financial Aid

**Office of Financial Aid Services**

This office is located on the fourth floor of the Campus Center, Room 04300. Call 617-287-6300 or visit them online at [http://www.umb.edu/students/financial_aid/](http://www.umb.edu/students/financial_aid/). It offers students information on grants, loans, and other sources of financial support.

**Scholarships**
Notices of scholarships available from public and private sources are posted on the College website as well as on the graduate student bulletin board on the third floor of the Science Building.

**Graduate Assistantships**
The University offers a limited number of graduate assistantships in teaching or research to qualified students. Applicants for admission to graduate programs and currently enrolled students should consider applying. These graduate assistantships, which range from ¼ to 1.0 FTE require weekly service in the areas of teaching, research or administrative support. In return, the University pays a stipend and provides a tuition waiver and a waiver of a certain percentage of the fees. Students may obtain more information about assistantships by contacting the Graduate Program Director. General information about assistantships is also available from the Office of Graduate Studies.

Academic Policies, Procedures, and Requirements
All graduate nursing students should familiarize themselves with the University’s Graduate Academic Regulations available at https://www.umb.edu/life_on_campus/policies/academics and https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies. Students matriculated in the Post-Master’s Certificate Program are subject to the same academic polices as the generic Master’s students as stated in the current UMass Boston CNHS Graduate Student Handbook. Please be aware that a breach of academic policies may result in dismissal from the College of Nursing.

1.0 Academic Standing and Progression Policies

Academic standing is the basis for decisions regarding student progression, probation, graduation, and dismissal in the Graduate Nursing Programs. Academic standing is determined by the student's cumulative quality point average, a measure of all the grades the student has earned in the University which are applied to the course requirements of the Master’s, Post-Master’s Certificate, and DNP Programs (includes BS to DNP).

The following policies apply to all matriculated students in the Graduate Program. Policies in effect when the student is matriculated into the program of study will apply throughout the students program of study. Policies in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences handbook may be more stringent than those of general graduate academic policies found https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies. In matters of policy difference, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences and Health Sciences policy supersedes the University policy. All graduate nursing students are required to comply with the policies included in this document.

1.1 All full and part time students must maintain a cumulative average of 3.0 to graduate.

1.2 All full and part-time students who fail to maintain a 3.0 GPA may be subject to academic dismissal.

1.3 Students who do not maintain a cumulative quality point average of 3.00 will be referred to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal with an explanation to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal, the CNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chair and Graduate Program Director.

1.4 Students must earn a grade of B (3.00) in all required courses listed on the student's program of study. Required courses include core courses, clinical concentration courses, theory courses, functional area courses, and clinical practicum’s (electives are not considered required courses). Any grade below a B- (2.75) is considered a failure. Please be aware that students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 to graduate or complete the program.

1.4.1 Effective January 2017 new admissions students must earn a letter grade of B (3.00) or quality point equivalent of 84 -86% in all required courses listed on the student’s program of study. Required courses include core courses, clinical concentration courses, theory courses, functional area courses, and clinical practicums. Any grade below a B is considered a failure.
1.5 Students who do not earn a grade of B or better in all required courses will be referred to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Students will be asked to submit a letter of appeal with an explanation to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. Based upon review of the student's record and letter of appeal the CNHS Student Affairs Committee will recommend conditions of Probation, or Dismissal and forward these to the Department Chairperson and Graduate Program Director.

1.5.1 Students admitted for spring 2017 students who do not earn a B (3.0) will be referred to CNHS Student Affairs Committee (see above).

1.6 The Graduate Program Director will request the Dean of Graduate Studies to place the student on Academic Probation or Dismissal.

1.7 Upon the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee and Graduate Program Director the student may petition to repeat up to two failed courses a total of one time for each course during their entire program of study.

1.7.1 The student must receive a grade of B better for students admitted after January 2017 in the repeated course in order to meet the degree or Post-Master’s certificate requirements.

1.7.2 If a satisfactory grade (B-) is not achieved when the student repeats the previously failed course or a (B) for students admitted after January 2017, the student will be recommended by the Graduate Program Director to the Dean of Graduate Studies for dismissal.

2.0 Course Policies

2.1 It is an expectation that students will demonstrate the ability to meet the course objectives as stated in the course syllabus.

2.2 Failure to meet course objectives as outlined in the syllabus, or as stated by course faculty, and determined by the course evaluation strategies specified in the course syllabus, will result in course failure.

2.2.1 In Graduate nursing courses that have two components, theory and practicum, both components must be successfully completed in order to pass the course. If the theory or practicum portion is failed, both components must be repeated.

2.2.2 If at any time during a course, a faculty member deems that a graduate student's academic and/or clinical performance is unsatisfactory, or if demonstrated work indicates that a student is in jeopardy of failing, a written warning or an At Risk of Failure Form will be given to the student. Students must meet with the course faculty to develop a plan for meeting the course objectives.

3.0 Practicum Purpose, Hours, and At Risk of Failure Policies
3.1 Practicum Purpose and Clinical Practice Hours. The clinical practicum provides graduate students with the opportunity to integrate theory and research with practice. It also provides the laboratory experiences that allow the student to acquire advanced competencies in the role specialty. Clinical practice hours are required for each clinical course. For advance practice nursing students, a specific number of clinical practice hours are necessary pre-requisites for students to register for the specialty certification exams upon graduation from the program of study.

3.2 Required clinical practice hours are listed in the course syllabus. Preceptors and agencies have a contractual agreement with the University to precept students for a predetermined number of clinical hours for the determined period of time. Students are expected to comply with the times and days that that have been arranged with their clinical preceptors. Deviations from prearranged contractual hours are permitted only by agreement with the agency and preceptor and must be in writing.

3.3 Clinical Clearance Policies and Procedures

Students must submit certain documentation in InPlace prior to beginning every clinical rotation. It is the student’s responsibility to make sure that completed clinical clearance materials are submitted correctly, completely, and on time. According to the Graduate Nursing Program guidelines, you must complete the clinical clearance requirements annually before starting your spring clinical placement. Students will be required to adhere to submission dates: failure to do so will delay the start of the clinical rotation.

**Additional immunizations and additional clearances may be required by a clinical agency such as – for example, TB Symptom Check, or flu shot. Students will be required to provide this information in InPlace.**

3.4 At Risk of Failure Form Policy and Procedures

At any time during the practicum experience that the student is determined to be at risk of failing, the student will be advised in writing by the faculty course member. The student will be asked to meet with the course faculty to discuss their deficiencies and develop a plan for meeting the course objectives using the At Risk of Failure Form.

3.4.1 An At Risk of Failure Form details the reasons why the student is at risk of failing and attaches a form that describes recommendations for meeting the course and clinical performance objectives. The form is written by course faculty and a copy is forwarded to the Graduate Program Director.

3.4.2 The graduate student receives a copy of both the course performance recommendations and the At Risk of Failure Form, and a copy will be placed in the student's file.

3.4.3 Following receipt of an At Risk of Failure Form, the student and faculty member set up a schedule to meet and discuss the student's progress in meeting the course objectives.
3.4.4 A Student-Faculty Conference is set up prior to the final clinical evaluation. Whenever possible this conference will occur such that there will be sufficient time between the receipt of the At Risk of Failure Form and the final clinical evaluation to allow the nursing student time to work towards mastery of their deficiencies.

3.4.5 A meeting occurs between the student and course faculty at the conclusion of the course. Students who have demonstrated achievement in mastery of the course objectives will have a note written on their At Risk of Failure Form indicating the above. However, if a student does not make sufficient progress in demonstrating competent clinical performance, as specified by the course objectives and the instructor they will fail the course.

3.5 Safety in Clinical Practice – Policies and Procedures

If at any time during the clinical practice experience a preceptor, course faculty member or other licensed agency personnel determines that a graduate student's performance is below the minimum standards consistent with safe clinical nursing practice expected of a licensed registered nurse in the Commonwealth, the graduate student will be not be permitted to continue their clinical practicum.

Graduate students found unsafe in clinical practice under this clause of the Graduate Student Handbook will be referred to the Graduate Program Director and course faculty to be notified of the specifics of the alleged unsafe practice and of sanctions to be imposed.

3.6 Professional Policies, Dismissals, and Appeals

3.6.1 Graduate nursing students must comply with the conditions of academic probation as recommended by the Student Affairs Committee to the Graduate Program Director. These recommendations will be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

3.6.2 Dismissal Policies: Academic dismissal is an action that is taken by the Graduate Dean upon recommendation of Department Chair and Department Graduate Program Director. Refer to Academic Policies Office of the Registrar and University policies and student rights Office of the Dean of Students.

3.6.3 Graduate students will be notified in writing by the Dean of Graduate Studies of their impending dismissal and the reasons for the dismissal.

3.6.4 Appeal Policies: Graduate students have the opportunity to appeal the decisions of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee:

3.6.4.1 Submit a letter of appeal to the CNHS Student Affairs Committee. The appeal letter should include the policy exception request, or a plan to prevent any further need for policy exceptions.
3.6.4.2 Graduate students may request to appear before the CNHS Student Affairs Committee to clarify and/or to answer questions regarding their appeal. In addition, the student may bring someone with them to the meeting to lend support. The support person can only submit written materials or a letter of support, and may not disrupt committee proceedings or serve as legal counsel.

3.6.4.3 Graduate students will be notified in writing of the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee.

3.6.4.4 If dissatisfied with the decision of the CNHS Student Affairs Committee students may grieve the decision (see below).

4.0 Readmission of Students Who Voluntarily Withdraw

In general, graduate students who withdraw from the program of study in good standing may resume their studies by completing a readmission form obtained from the Registrar's Office.

Students who have been out of the clinical setting for two consecutive semesters or more must meet with their track advisor to develop an individual plan to assess their readiness for clinical. This plan will address the need for the student to demonstrate clinical competence in areas such as physical assessment, management of common health problems, and documentation.

4.1 Applicants will be notified in writing of their request for readmission status.

4.2 Graduate students are referred to the Office of the Registrar website, https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies/readmission_policy concerning all policies related to graduate student readmission.

5.0 Readmission of Students who are Dismissed

All requests for readmission by dismissed students must be submitted to the student affairs committee. The letter requesting readmission should contain:

5.1 New, different, and pertinent information not previously presented to the Student Affairs Committee that will assist the Committee in re-evaluating the dismissal. Students should make an appointment with the Graduate Program Director to discuss the appropriateness of an appeal.

6.0 General Use Petition Form

Masters students must complete a General Use Petition hereafter known as the (GUP) form for all formal requests that pertain to their program of study. Such requests include, but not limited to a one time only reduction to 3 credits/semester, withdrawal from the program, change from part-time to full time study (or vice versa), a change in program concentration, permission to transfer credits, a leave of absence, and so on. The GUP form is available in the graduate student mail room at the CNHS or from your faculty advisor.
Guidelines for use of the GUP form are as follows: The student should discuss the proposed request with their faculty advisor and then formalize their request by completing the GUP. Check the appropriate category of request on the GUP and write a brief narrative explaining the request in the space available. The request is reviewed by the faculty advisor who makes a recommendation to approve or deny and signs the form. The student then submits the signed GUP form to the Graduate Program Director. The Graduate Program Director approves or denies the request after due consideration. If the faculty advisor recommends denial of the request, the student has the right to dispute the recommendation with the Graduate Program Director. The final determination on GUP requests is based primarily on the Master’s in Nursing Program Academic and Progression Policies. A copy of the finalized GUP form is placed in the student’s mailbox, forwarded to the faculty and academic advisors, and entered into the student’s file.

6.1 Matriculated students wishing to change concentrations within the MS program must first contact their faculty advisor to complete a petition form which will then be submitted to the Graduate Program Director for review. Permission to change concentrations will be granted on a space available basis for students who are in good academic standing with a minimum GPA of 3.0. Generally, all requests should be submitted by October 1st during the semester matriculated students are in Advanced Health Assessment. The College reserves the right to deny requests for a change in the program of study.

6.2 If the request to change concentrations is approved, the student is expected to meet with their new advisor as soon as possible following acceptance into the new program of study to file a revised program plan that must be approved by the Graduate Program Director. Graduate students cannot register for courses until a new program plan has been filed.

7.0 Credit Load Requirements

7.1 In order to be eligible for the benefits of full-time study, graduate students must carry 6 credits per semester.

7.2 Part-Time graduate students must carry a minimum of 3 credits.

7.3 Maximum Credit Load

A graduate student may register for up to 12 credits during the fall and spring semesters and nine credits during the summer. Post-Master’s students may take 12 credits over the summer. Any student who wishes to register for more than the maximum credit load must secure written permission from the Graduate Program Director.

8.0 Five Year Limitation on Period to Earn a Degree

University policy indicates that all graduate students must earn their degree within five years of the date of matriculation into the program of study in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.
8.1 Exceptions to credit minimum must be made in consultation with the student's advisor. Changes will affect the student's program of study and expected date of graduation.

8.1.1 The student must petition their Graduate Program Director for an exception to the minimum credit policy.

8.1.2 Exceptions will be made in special circumstances and may be granted for one semester only.

8.1.3 If an exception is granted by the Graduate Program Director, the student will be notified in writing and requested to meet with their advisor to file a new program of study and expected date of graduation.

8.1.4 Graduate students who fail to complete their program of study within five years will be placed on registration hold by the university registrar and may be subject to dismissal by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

9.0 Request for Extending Five Year Limitation

Graduate students may seek an extension of the five-year time limitation to complete their program of study because of extenuating circumstances one time during their program of study.

9.1 Graduate students must be in good academic standing and not on probation to be considered for an extension.

9.2 Graduate students must file a petition for extension on the deadline to graduate in writing to the Graduate Program Director who will forward the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. The petition request should include all relevant information including a clear statement of the reasons for the request, the extenuating circumstances, and a revised plan of study with new date of graduation.

9.3 A signature of the graduate student's academic advisor of record must accompany the petition for extension containing the revised program plan at the time of the request.

9.4 The Dean of Graduate Studies will notify graduate student of the decision in writing.

10.0 Registration and Leave of Absence Policies and Procedures

10.1 Each degree-seeking graduate student must maintain continuous registration each semester until the degree sought by the student has been formally awarded.

10.2 If the student does not register in any semester for a course, he/she must maintain continuous registration (registering for CAS600) and by paying a program continuation fee determined by the registrar.

10.3 Payment of program fees does not extend the time limit for completion of the degree.
10.4 All Leave of Absences (LOAs) requests must be approved by the Graduate Program Director in consultation with the student's advisor.

10.4.1 Students must meet with their faculty advisor and complete the General Use Petition Form. The student and advisor must complete a Change in Program Plan.

10.4.2 The faculty advisor must forward the General Use Petition Form and the revised program to the GPD.

10.4.3 The student will receive a letter from Dean of Graduate Studies concerning the requested LOA.

10.4.4 A copy of Graduate Dean's permission letter will be placed in the student's file.

10.4.5 An LOA approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies extends the time limit to graduate by the length of the leave and will be reflected in the student's revised program plan.

10.4.6 During any approved LOA the **student must pay the program fee for each semester of non-continuous registration** in order to maintain matriculation status in the Graduate Program, College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

11.0 Graduate Grading Policy

11.1 Letter Point Equivalent. For graduate students, the University uses a system of letter grades that are equivalent to numerical "quality points" according to the following table:
### Grading Policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Quality Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0-72%</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INC**

A grade of Incomplete (INC) is not automatically awarded when a student fails to complete a course. Incompletes are given at the discretion of the instructor. They are awarded when satisfactory work has been accomplished in the majority of the course work, but the student is unable to complete course requirements as a result of circumstances beyond his or her control. The student must negotiate with and receive the approval of the course instructor in order to receive a grade of incomplete.

**IF**

Received for failure to comply with contracted completion terms.

**W**

Received if withdrawal occurs before the withdrawal deadline.

**AU**

Audit (only permitted on space-available basis).

**NA**

Not Attending (student appeared on roster, but never attended class. Student is still responsible for tuition and fee charges unless withdrawal form is submitted before deadline. NA has no effect on cumulative GPA.)

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**11.2 Policy on Grades.** The instructor of a class has full responsibility for grading and is the best judge of student performance; there may, however, be instances in which a graduate student believes that a grade has been assigned unfairly. In such cases, the student should discuss the grade with the instructor. If they are unable to resolve the issue, the student should make a written request to the Graduate Program Director asking for a meeting with the faculty member to discuss a fuller explanation of the grade and/or reconsideration of the grade. Although the Graduate Program Director serves as mediator in this meeting, the faculty member remains the final authority for any grading decision.

**11.3 Incomplete.** A grade of incomplete (INC) is not automatically awarded when a student fails to complete a course. Incomplete grades are awarded only when satisfactory work has been accomplished in the majority of the course (75% completed) and the student is unable to complete course requirements due to extenuating life circumstances beyond his or her control.
11.3.1 The student must negotiate with and receive the approval of the course instructor in order to receive the grade of incomplete.

11.3.2 A copy of the written agreement between the faculty member and the student which specifies the work to be completed and the deadline for completion must be on file with the Graduate Program Director with a copy to the graduate student’s advisor.

11.3.3 A student can only obtain credit for an INC by completing the coursework before the end of one calendar year from the time of enrollment in the course in which they have earned an incomplete. At the end of that period, if the course faculty member does not submit a change of grade form, a grade of F (Failure) will be recorded on the student's transcript. An incomplete grade that converts to an F is irrevocable.

11.3.4 Graduate students with an Incomplete in a pre-requisite course cannot progress to active enrollment in a course requiring that pre-requisite while an INC grade remains on their transcript.

11.3.5 Graduate students who have an INC in a clinical course may not progress to the next clinical course.

11.4 Not Attending Grade (NA)

11.4.1 The NA grade signifies that although a student registers for a course and appears on the class roster, the student never attended the class.

11.4.2 The NA grade is not a substitute for dropping or withdrawing from a course, since a student is still responsible for all tuition and fee charges for courses designated NA on his/her transcript.

11.5 Withdrawal Grade (W)

11.5.1 The W grade is given to a graduate student who withdraws from a course after the add/drop period.

11.5.2 Graduate students are advised to comply with the time limitations for withdrawal from a course as listed in the academic calendar. Students who wish to retain the option to re-enroll in the course are to meet with the course faculty and their faculty advisor at the time of withdrawal.

11.5.3 Refer to the Academic Policies Office of the Registrar at https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies/course_withdrawal_option for complete information on how to withdraw from a course and policies that apply to the withdrawal grade. Students may re-enroll in a course from which they have withdrawn one time only. Students that withdraw from a course a second time cannot re-enroll in the same course a third time. Students may not enroll in any course more than twice, whether they withdrew or failed the course.
11.5.4 A maximum of two withdrawals are allowed while in the program additional withdrawals may result in dismissal from the program.

11.6 Audit/Pass/Fail

11.6.1 Audit. Graduate students may audit a course on a space available basis and with permission of the instructor. An audit course cannot be used to meet degree requirements.

11.6.2 Pass/Fail. There is no pass/fail option for graduate students.

12.0 Graduation Requirements and Procedures

The College recognizes graduate students eligible for graduation in December (Post Master’s Certificate only) and June.

12.1 Graduate students must consult the individual program descriptions in the Graduate Student Bulletin for complete information regarding graduation requirements.

12.2 In general, graduate students are eligible for graduation if they complete the following:

12.2.1 The required number of credits as designated in their program of study and all clinical practicum requirements as designated in their program of study.

12.2.2 Have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in all required UMass Boston courses excluding electives.

12.2.3 Complete a Capstone Experience prior to graduation from the Master’s Degree Program in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

13.0 Certification to Graduate.

Graduate students preparing to graduate must complete the Intent to Graduate Form during their final semester.

13.1 Graduate students should obtain and return the form as directed by the Graduate Program Director.

13.2 Following review of the student's academic record, the Graduate Program Director will certify eligibility for graduation.

13.3 An announced graduation fee must be submitted together with the graduation certification form to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences Academic Advisors Office.
13.4 Failure to complete the capstone experience and certification process in a timely manner will interfere with the awarding of the degree.

14.0 Certification Exams and Licensure Practice in the Expanded Role

Graduate students who are planning to take certification exams following graduation are expected to obtain the information for certification exams from their faculty coordinator. Registration for certifying exam occurs during the early part of the final semester of study.

14.1 Graduate students are responsible to obtain all transcripts from the registrar's office and any needed faculty signatures in completing the certifying exam registration.

14.2 Graduate students must obtain official transcripts with a stamp indicating that their degree has been awarded. This final transcript must be sent to the certifying body in order to obtain release of scores on any certification exam.

14.3 For Nurse Practitioner Students: When Nurse Practitioner graduate students have obtained a passing score on the certifying exam, they must apply to the Board of Registration in Nursing and pay the required fees and complete the registration to practice as a nurse in the expanded role in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. **REGULATORY AUTHORITY** 244 CMR 4.00: M.G.L. c. 112, §§ 80B, 80C, 80E and 80G; c. 94C. A new license will be issued by the Board of Registration in Nursing. See Code of Mass Regulations 244 for further information on Practice in the Expanded Role in Nursing including obtaining prescriptive authority in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, on line at the Massachusetts Government publications web site. Post-Master’s students outside of Massachusetts should refer to the Board of Nursing in the state where they plan to work.

15.0 The Capstone Experience (MSN students)

Successful completion of the Capstone Experience is a requirement for graduation from the Master’s Degree Program. The Capstone Experience provides an opportunity to demonstrate both integration and synthesis of knowledge in the discipline.

Successful completion of the Capstone is a requirement for graduation from the Master’s Program at the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Acceptable formats include scholarly papers of publishable quality, posters and presentations at professional conferences, the development of clinical protocols and guidelines, case studies, evidence based practice implementation projects, and quality improvement projects that address outcomes in the clinical setting. Student and faculty will agree on an appropriate format.

15.1 Students will be asked to submit a draft of the project in the fall semester at a date determined by the MS/DNP committee. Draft outlines will be reviewed by the Committee.
and approved as acceptable for the capstone experience. Outlines are to be revised as necessary until they meet the committee’s approval.

15.2 As appropriate for the type of Capstone and its requirements, each advisor may identify intermediate dates for submission of drafts. Students also may negotiate submission of drafts and progression of their work individually with their advisor.

15.3 An abstract of the project must be submitted with the final copy, which will be kept on file in the Graduate Studies Office. The format of the abstracts will be standardized.

15.4 Dissemination of results are part of the Capstone experience. As appropriate for the type of Capstone and its requirements, each advisor may require that the student present findings at the College Research and Scholarship Day, held during the spring semester.
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for successful completion of [course name] students are asked to complete a Capstone project. Many students chose to conduct a SERVICE LEARNING QA project for their Capstone. The student has negotiated with you to carry out a service learning project at your agency that would contribute to your Agency’s Continuous Quality Improvement Initiative.

Please indicate below if you are willing to have this information presented as an abstract. The agency will not be identified, but you can be included as a co-author if you desire. The details of the project are contained in the initial letter you received.
Student Organizations

**Sigma Theta Tau International National Honor Society of Nursing - Theta Alpha Chapter**

[https://www.nursingsociety.org/](https://www.nursingsociety.org/)

Candidates shall have demonstrated superior scholastic achievement, academic integrity, and professional leadership potential and/or marked achievement in the field of nursing. Candidates shall be elected from students enrolled in masters and doctoral program that are accredited by a recognized accrediting body.

Students who have completed a minimum of one-fourth of the required graduate curriculum and have demonstrated ability in nursing shall be eligible. Nurses matriculated for Master’s program shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent. Nurses matriculated for doctoral or post-doctoral program shall be eligible for membership if they have achieved a grade point average of at least 3.75 on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent.

Guidelines and opportunities for membership in the Honor Society will be published on the College website. Students who are accepted are inducted in the Annual Induction Ceremony.

Graduate who belong to other chapters of Sigma Theta Tau are welcomed to transfer their membership to Theta Alpha or apply for dual membership for a modest fee paid to Sigma Theta Tau International paid with their annual renewal fee.