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Introduction

Welcome to the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS) of the University of Massachusetts Boston. The faculty, administrators, and staff of CNHS 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 and Post Masters Certificate Programs in Nursing. The handbook 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.

Our vision is to improve the health of diverse urban populations through the integration of teaching, targeted research, service, practice and health policy in partnership with others.

Our mission is to educate health and fitness professionals from diverse backgrounds to engage in building scholarly community with a special focus on health, and to provide substantial research, professional and community service.

Our goals are to:
- Advance Student Success and Development
- Enrich and Expand Academic Programs and Research
- Improve the Learning, Teaching, and Working Environment
- Establish a Financial Resource Model Consistent with the University’s Vision Statement
- Develop an Infrastructure Supportive of the Preceding

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College of Nursing and Health Sciences MS in Nursing Program Administration

Interim Graduate Program Director
Dr. Terry Buttaro, Terry.Buttaro@umb.edu

Clinical Track Coordinators
- Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist Coordinator
  Dr. Terry Buttaro, terry.buttaro@umb.edu

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

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1 https://www.umb.edu/academics/cnhs/deansoffice/mission_and_vision
Family Nurse Practitioner Coordinator
Dr. Teri Aronowitz, Teri.Aronowitz@umb.edu

Post-Master’s Certificate Program Director
Dr. Susan M. Lee, Susan.Lee@umb.edu

Program Assistant for MS and DNP Students
Jocelyn Burke, Jocelyn.Burke@umb.edu

Program Assistant for Post Master’s Certificate Students
Liz Malone, postmasternp@umb.edu
OFFICE LOCATIONS
The College of Nursing and Health Sciences administrative offices are located in the Science Building on Floors 2 and 3. Offices will be changing location in early 2020 to Quinn Administration Building.

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. Online students can meet with faculty or advisors by setting up a mutually agreeable time by Zoom, Blackboard Collaborate, 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 collaborati
  on 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.

GRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

The Graduate Curriculum Committee is a committee of the Department of Nursing that oversees all matters pertinent to the MS and Post Masters programs, including curriculum and graduate admissions. There is at least one graduate student member who serves with full voting rights during each academic year.

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 CNHS 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 (program currently on hold)
- Adult/Gerontological Nurse Practitioner
- Family Nurse Practitioner

The program follows the *The Essentials of Masters 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 students educational experiences. The comprehensive Master’s capstone may be a publishable paper, case study, a service-learning project, grant proposal, evidence-based guideline, or an acceptable format as established by the Graduate Faculty Curriculum Committee. Special projects may be approved by the Graduate Program Director. The Capstone requirement for AY 2019-2020 is being revised to a case study requirement in the clinical courses of NU 670, NU 681, and NU 672. Please refer to your syllabus for more information.

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 practica 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 the AGNP and FNP concentrations are eligible to take credentialing exams offered by ANCC or AANP.

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

All MS students will take the core courses consisting of 27 credits:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NU 601</td>
<td>Introduction to Advanced Practice Nursing: Knowledge for Practice in the Global Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 614</td>
<td>Advanced Pathophysiology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 615</td>
<td>Advanced Health Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 616</td>
<td>Evidence-Based Practice I: Appraising the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 618</td>
<td>Health Policy, Financing, and Ethics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 634</td>
<td>Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nurses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 638</td>
<td>Advanced Health Promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 715</td>
<td>Informatics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strength and Significance of Evidence

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 640 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

**Spring Semester IV**
NURSNG 634              3 credits
NURSNG 690              3 credits

**Fall Semester V**
NURSNG 691              3 credits
NURSNG 664              3 credits

**Spring Semester VI**
NURSNG 618              3 credits
NURSNG 640              6 credits

**Fall Semester VII**
NURSNG 667              3 credits
NURSNG 765              3 credits

**Spring Semester VI**
NURSNG 665              3 credits
NURSNG 668              3 credits

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

**Full Time**

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

**Spring Semester II**
NURSNG 618              3 credits
NURSNG 634              3 credits
NURSNG 640              6 credits

**Fall Semester III**
NURSNG 715              3 credits
NURSNG 639              3 credits
NURSNG 670              6 credits
### Spring Semester IV

**AGNP students take:**
- NURSNG 637 3 credits
- NURSNG 671 3 credits
- NURSNG 672 6 credits

**FNP Students 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
- NURSING 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

**AGNP Students take:**
- NURSNG 671 3 credits
- NURSNG 672 6 credits

**FNP Students 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 Masters Certificate (PMC) 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 AGNPs or FNP’s through the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners (AANP) Certification Program. Nurses with non-nursing Master’s Degrees are not eligible for the Post Masters Certificate Program. The University requires that all applicants hold a Bachelor’s Degree, a requirement which may affect RN to MS students.

12-Credit PMC Program

The 12-credit FNP program is open to PNPs, AGNPs, and ANPs who satisfy the pre-requisite course requirements. The 12-credit AGNP program is open to ANPs, and GNPs who satisfy the pre-requisite course requirements as described above.

Masters-prepared nurses, in leadership, education, CNMs, WHNPs, CRNAs, PMHNPs may qualify for the 21-credit certificate AGNP or FNP programs. The same pre-requisite course requirements, as described above, apply. Applicants are invited to contact the Post Masters Program Assistant to determine the program for which they qualify. An unofficial gap analysis will be provided based upon unofficial transcripts. The final determination of the required number of credits/courses is ultimately determined by the Admissions Committee based upon an applicant’s official academic transcripts and clinical portfolio.

Prerequisites to the Post-Masters program include evidence of graduate course work in advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology and advanced pharmacology. To be recognized, the “3 P courses” must have been:

- taken in an APRN track,
• earned a letter grade of a B or better, (pass/fail are not acceptable)
• completed within 5 years of application
• equivalent in content and credits (3 credits) to UMB’s courses
• stand-alone courses (i.e., no combination courses, such as pathopharmacology)
• Applicants who do not have these prerequisite courses must complete them prior to beginning the population specific courses, either at UMB or the school of their choice. Applicants may consult the Program Assistant ahead of time to ensure the courses will be recognized. The Admissions Committee will determine on a case-by-case basis whether the applicant should repeat any courses as a condition of acceptance. The results of this decision are non-negotiable.

Pre-requisite courses are generally not transferred into the program but are recognized by the program as satisfying the program requirements.

All pre-requisite courses are open to non-matriculated students depending on space availability. The Graduate Program Director will review and approve all non-degree applications. Non-matriculated students cannot enroll in population or clinical courses (NU 615, NU 639, NU 670, NU 671, NU 672, NU 681, or NU 682).

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

Students are required to complete the PMC program in five years. The PMC program has three admissions cycles per year and three graduation cycles per year--spring, summer, and fall--providing students the opportunity to take certification boards immediately following completion.

**Family Certificate Program**

**21-credit FNP PMC Program**

CNMs, WHNPs, AGACNP, CNSs, PMHNPs, CRNAs, and those with MS in Leadership and Education may be eligible for this program once pre-requisites have been satisfied.

<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>

**12-credit FNP PMC Program**

ANPs and PNPs may be eligible for admission to this program.
### 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 during any semester.

#### Adult/Gero Certificate 21 credits

CNMs, WHNPs, PNPs, CRNAs, PMH-NPs, and those with MS in Education or Leadership may be eligible for this program, once pre-requisites have been satisfied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
</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>

#### 12-credit AGNP PMC Program

ANPs and PNPs may be eligible for admission to this program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses for GNP</th>
<th>Courses for ANP</th>
</tr>
</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>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Clinical Experiences: All students in the 21-credit program must complete 600 hours of documented clinical experience. Students in the 12-credit option must complete 300 hours of clinical experience in the chosen concentration. All clinical practica are subject to the approval of the PMC Program Director. Preceptors may be NPs, CNSs, PAs, MDs, or DOs. UMBs programs are all in primary care; therefore, clinical practica must be done in the primary care. The Texas BON requires 500 clinical hours for each NP specialty. Therefore, students from Texas are responsible for identifying specifically what their board requires. Any hours over the 300 hours that are provided in our program, will require the student taking a 3-credit Independent Study to complete an additional 200 hours.
Clinical Practica

The following information on clinical practica applies to all students in the MS and PMC programs. There is an established procedure for entering clinical sites which is outlined here.

- Students should secure clinical sites in primary care close to home as far ahead as possible, preferably 2 to 3 semesters ahead of time.
- Deadlines are established for each semester as to when clinical sites and clearance are required.
- Once a site has agreed to precept a student, the student collects necessary information from that site and enters it into InPlace, our online clinical tracking software.
- An immediate determination is made by CIPO whether the site is acceptable. To reiterate, UMB is a primary care NP program. Therefore, all clinical practica should be arranged for primary care settings. For example, NP students may not work in EDs, hospitals, surgery, and Labor & Delivery. Occasionally, a student may be allowed up to 40 hours in a specialty clinic, such as asthma or diabetes or dermatology, because these practica may improve your knowledge base as a primary care provider. This is dependent upon the student’s background (NP or not NP) and the quality of the primary clinical practicum the student has secured. Please be aware that specialty clinics provide largely observational experiences while our program is designed for you to develop increasingly independent practice.
- The CNHS will immediately check to see whether a working agreement exists for the site. If not, CNHS sends a working agreement to the site, which is why it is critically important for you to identify the legal signatory of the site. For Massachusetts students, working agreements exist for all large hospital systems.
- For students in MA, RI, NH, and ME, the CNHS enters your information into the Centralized Clinical Placement (CCP) system which is a consortium of clinical agencies and colleges in those states who agree to match students with their preceptors, thus avoiding students contacting the sites directly. This does not guarantee a placement so students should continue to identify and submit other sites.
- Once the site is submitted, the student should begin working on clinical clearance which consists of health clearance (immunizations, titers, CPR, health insurance card, etc.) and background checks, again, meeting the deadline for your intended semester.
- There are deadlines when clinical clearance must be achieved. Failure to comply with those deadlines may result in a warning.
- No students can begin clinical until you receive clinical clearance which is when you will be copied on an email that goes to your clinical preceptor stating that you are ready to begin.
- Students who begin clinical placements prior to being cleared will receive a warning.
- Students who are not clinically cleared by the first day of the semester, may be removed from the course.
- Once you receive a copy of the email to your preceptor, you may start clinical.
- All clinical must be completed during the semester in which you are taking the clinical courses (NU 615, NU 670, NU 672, NU 682). Students who wish to start 1 week early may do so with the consent of their professor.
• UMB provides malpractice insurance at no cost to students while they are in the clinical practicum setting.

Professional Comportment

Our graduate faculty are dedicated to sustaining an environment of respect and inclusivity. Our profession is underpinned by the values of respect for the inherent dignity, worth, unique attributes, and human rights of all individuals. The Interpretive Statement of Provision 1 of the ANA’s Code of Ethics for Nurses explains, “Respect for persons extends to all individuals with whom the nurse interacts…the nurse creates an ethical environment and culture of civility and kindness, treating colleagues, coworkers, employees, students, and others with dignity and respect.” The graduate faculty strive to achieve the highest level of professional comportment and expect all students to do the same. We aim to prepare you to be a respected, independent licensed provider with professional behaviors that match your new role as collaborators and providers in the health care of persons, families, and societies.

Holding a graduate degree in nursing puts nurses on a new level of professionalism and accountability even if they continue to work in the role of a clinical nurse. Your peers and administrators expect more from you now. They will look to you to solve problems, bridge differences, and be clinical experts, as well.

Therefore, we demand a high level of professional comportment consistent with graduate-prepared nurses. Unprofessional behaviors that may result in an academic warning include:

• Uncivil language with faculty or peers or in discussion postings
• Non-responsiveness to emails from faculty/staff (i.e., staff have sent 3-4 emails with no response)
• Unprofessional language with preceptors or staff
• Failure to notify a clinical site of illness
• Failure to adhere to policies at a clinical site
• Tardiness at clinical practica

Email Etiquette

Timely responses to emails are a professional expectation both in the university and workplace. We require graduate students to check their umb.edu email at least twice weekly. We ask all students to create a signature on their Outlook accounts which includes name, student ID #, and their program. Go to Outlook and type ‘signature’ at the lightbulb “Tell me what you want to do” and follow the directions.

Example:

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3 ANA. Code of Ethics, p. 20.
Admission Requirements

Applicants should indicate in their statement of interest and intent whether they are applying to the FNP or AGNP program of study. Only some currently certified NPs can be considered for acceptance into the 12-credit option. The Office of the Graduate Admissions will inform applicants of their admission to the program by the US Postal Service. 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, if held
2. Applicants are not required to submit Graduate Record Examination Scores.
3. Courses recognized as pre requisites must be within the five year limit and meet all requirements as outlined above.
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 may be requested by the Program Director for review and approval following admission but prior to the official plan of study.
6. All students are sent a program of study upon admission; changes in the plan of study can be made in collaboration with 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 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

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 writing skills, 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. Information about the Writing Center will be on your Blackboard list of courses. The services are free to students.

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/. 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. Scholarships will be posted to the Blackboard Graduate Nursing Center when they are available.

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 PMC Program are subject to the same academic polices as the Masters students as stated in the current UMass Boston CNHS Graduate Student Handbook. Please be aware that a breach of academic policies may result in written warning and/or dismissal from the CNHS.

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 student’s 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](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 placed on academic probation by the Office of Graduate Studies and 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 admitted prior to January 2017, must earn a grade of B- (2.75) 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.

1.5 Student admitted on or after January 2017 must earn a letter grade of B or better, achieving a minimum of 83 in all required courses and maintaining a GPA of 3.0 to continue. Required courses include core courses, clinical concentration courses, theory courses, functional area courses, and clinical

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.

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. At the mid-term point, students in clinical courses must demonstrate that they are meeting course objectives as demonstrated by a satisfactory mid-term clinical evaluation and a sufficient number of clinical logs (approximately one-half of the expected number of logs for the semester) in order for faculty to assess their performance. Students with insufficient numbers of clinical logs will receive an academic warning.

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, an academic warning will be given to the student. Students must contact the course faculty within 48 hours of receiving an academic warning 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 prerequisites 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 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. Students must contact CNHSClearance@umb.edu to change any dates of clinical practica. Failure to do so may result in an academic warning. Students may arrange actual clinical days with the preceptor but arranging an earlier start or a later finish always requires the permission of the course faculty, at the very least.

3.3 Clinical Clearance Policies and Procedures

Students must submit certain documentation 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. Students will be required to adhere to submission dates: failure to do so will result in an academic warning. Furthermore, the student will be prevented from entering clinical and may be required to drop the course.

Additional immunizations and additional clearances may be required by a clinical agency. Additional onboarding processes, such as EMR training, fingerprinting, regulatory training, ID badge, depend upon the requirements of each site.

Flu shots are required for all CNHS students. It is no longer possible to opt out unless the student provides a note from his/her PCP stating why the vaccine is contraindicated (allergy, past hx of Guillain-Barre, etc). Even with that note, clinical agencies have the right to refuse the student in their setting or require the student to wear a mask. Remember, we are guests in these organizations and we will comply with all of their requirements. We want to maintain excellent relationships. Students who do not comply will receive an academic warning, be removed from the site, and may be dismissed from the program.

3.4 Academic Warnings

At any time in the semester that the student is determined to be at risk of failing, the student will be advised in writing by the Graduate Program Director (GPD). The student is required to meet with the course faculty within 48 hours of the academic warning to discuss their deficiencies and develop a plan for meeting the course objectives.

3.5 Clinical Comportment/Safety in the Classroom or Clinical Setting

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 or whose professional comportment is deemed below what is expected of a licensed registered nurse, the graduate student will be not be permitted to continue their clinical practicum. Students who are performing unsatisfactorily in clinical placements will work with their faculty to identify specific problems and remediation. Students may be required to complete additional hours of clinical with the same or a different preceptor at the discretion of the students’ course faculty.

Graduate students found unsafe in clinical practice or not performing to standards 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/or professional comportment and of sanctions to be imposed.

Students who are dismissed from clinical placements will work with faculty to determine a plan for remediation, whether the problems were behavioral, knowledge-based, a poor fit between preceptor and student, or a misunderstanding. Students who are dismissed from clinical placements will not return to the site nor have any other contact with the site. If a
problem or misunderstanding ever arises at a clinical site, the student shall inform the faculty immediately.

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](https://www.umb.edu/registrar/academic_policies/readmission_policy) concerning all policies related to graduate student readmission.

4.3 Graduate students who have been out of the program for an extended time may be required to retake pre-requisite or other courses to ensure current knowledge. This decision will be made by the Graduate Program Director who is responsible for readmitting all students who have been out for extended periods of time (typically years).

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. However, students interested in changing their program of study should speak with their Program Director and the Graduate Program Director. Students requesting a change to the FNP program may be required to find their own clinical placements.

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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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. For clinical courses, 75 of the clinical hours must be completed at the time the Incomplete is requested.

11.3.1 The student must request 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 According to university policies, 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. However, clinical practica must be completed within the time frame set by the faculty.

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.

11.3.6 The Incomplete Form is signed by the faculty and forwarded to the GPD for signature. Thereafter, it must be received by the Registrar by the last week of class. The Registrar is the only person who can enter Incomplete into Wiser as of 12/18.

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 Graduation Application 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 (MS students only) and graduation application 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 on the website of the certifying body. 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/GPD 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. The Master’s Curriculum Committee will set the requirements for the capstone project. The GPD may exempt a student from the required capstone project in cases where the student published a paper, or can show evidence of substantial work on a faculty project, QI project, or other scholarly work, that is verifiable. Other possibilities may be the completion of an elective course, such as NU 716 EBP II, that results in a synthesis or state of the science paper that meets an established course rubric. Exemptions should be requested and granted in advance of the capstone semesters.

15.1 For AY 2019-2020, a new capstone format will be piloted. The capstone will be a case study in courses: NU 670, NU 672, and NU 682. Each student submits two case studies in the Master’s program only.

15.2 The case studies will be due according to the class syllabi.

15.3 A grading rubric will be provided ahead of time and subsequently used by course faculty to grade the case study.

15.4 Students will submit to the course faculty the case study once for which the final grade will be given.

15.5 Students will be required to correct the faculty’s edits to the case study and submit the corrected copy to the faculty without any changes in grade. In other words, the original submission earns the grade but the final, corrected version is required because the capstone is a polished, scholarly work in the student’s graduate program.

15.6 No poster presentation is required for AY 2019-2020. The corrected case studies in two of the three courses listed above are the sole requirements for this year.

Student Organizations

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