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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.

College of Nursing and Health Sciences MS in Nursing Program Administration

Graduate Program Director
Dr. Patricia Halon  Pat.halon@umb.edu

Clinical Track Coordinators
Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist Coordinator
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

Director of the Post-Master’s Certificate Program
Dr. Mary Fischer  mary.fischer@umb.edu
Dr. Michelle Ferguson  michelle.ferguson@umb.edu

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

Post-Master’s Certificate Program Assistant
Mary E Malone  mary.malone@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.

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**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 the following special program above the Master’s level: The Master’s Post-Master’s Certificate Program prepares nurses who already hold a Master’s degree in nursing for careers as family or adult/gerontological nurse practitioners and a Post-Master’s Nurse Educator Certificate program. These 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 or 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:

NURSNG 601 Introduction to Advanced Practice Nursing: Knowledge for Practice in the Global Community

NURSNG 614 Advanced Pathophysiology

NURSNG 615 Advanced Health Assessment

NURSNG 616 Evidence-Based Practice I: Appraising the Strength and Significance of Evidence

NURSNG 618 Health Policy, Financing, and Ethics

NURSNG 634 Pharmacology for Advanced Practice Nurses

NURSNG 638 Advanced Health Promotion

NURSNG 715 Informatics
Adult/Gerontological Acute Care Clinical Nurse Specialist

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

*Fall Semester I*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 601</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 616</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 614</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>NURSNG 615</td>
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*Spring Semester II*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 638</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 690</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Fall Semester III*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 691</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 664</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 667</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 715</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

*Spring Semester IV*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 618</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 665</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 668</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 765</td>
<td>3</td>
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**Part Time (4 years, no summers)**

*Fall Semester I*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 601</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 616</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester II</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 614</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fall Semester III</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 715</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 615</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester IV</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 634</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 690</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall Semester V</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 691</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 664</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester VI</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 618</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 638</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fall Semester VII</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 667</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 765</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spring Semester VI</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSNG 665</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSNG 668</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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 638 6 credits

*Fall Semester III*

- NURSNG 715 3 credits
- NURSNG 639 3 credits
- NURSNG 670 6 credits

*Spring Semester IV*

**Adult/Gero take:**

- NURSNG 637 3 credits
- NURSNG 671 3 credits
- NURSNG 672 6 credits

**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
NURSING 715 3 credits

*Spring Semester IV*

NURSNG 618 3 credits
NURSNG 638 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:**
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.
7. Acceptable scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.

The Post-Master’s Nurse Practitioner Certificate Program

This 12 or 21 credit certificate program is designed to assist RNs who have an MS degree in nursing to acquire the knowledge and clinical experience that will prepare them to sit for adult-gerontology or family nurse practitioner certification examinations through American Nurses Credentialing Center or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Program. Nurses holding current NP certification in adult primary care or gerontology and with 1 or more years of experience may apply for the 12-credit adult gerontological nurse practitioner program. The 12-credit family option is open to pediatric and adult NPs only. RNs and other certified APRNs who have an MS in nursing from an accredited institution may apply for the 21-credit certificate program in adult gerontology or family. Prerequisites to the Post-Masters program option include evidence of graduate course work (with a grade of B or better) in advanced health assessment, advanced pathophysiology and advanced pharmacology. 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 should consult the College of Nursing and Health Sciences course schedule.

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.
Students are invited to contact the Post-Master’s Program Director to determine the appropriate program of study that will meet their individual needs. Students may transfer two required graduate level courses into the program if equivalent to courses offered at UMass Boston provided they have earned a grade of B or better and courses have been successfully completed within five years of the application. Courses considered for transfer credit cannot be applied to a previously earned degree.

**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 practicum experiences are subject to the approval of the certificate Program Director, and the agency providing the clinical must be under contract with the UMass Boston College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Students are advised that preceptors must be either Master’s prepared NPs, or MDs and with some exception Physician Assistants are permitted. Nurse midwives are permitted for the obstetric experience in the family clinical components. Students must provide evidence of the preceptors resume and licensure to the program assistant. Students need to contact the Program Director in order to determine if their selected practice site will meet the course objectives. 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 experience. All students are required to submit copies of immunizations, license, CPR, resume and evidence of health insurance. Students not residing in Massachusetts are waived the requirement for UMass Boston Student Health Insurance. In-state residents in online programs of study, must complete the student health insurance waiver form; contact the Program Assistant for the Wavier Form. UMass Boston provides malpractice insurance to cover students while they are in clinicals.

No student can begin clinical experiences without a signed working agreement on file between UMass Boston College of Nursing and the agency they will be doing their clinical experience in. Courses are offered both in the classroom and online depending upon program needs and enrollments. Students may petition to have equivalent courses completed in their prior Master’s degree waived for 0 credit. Credits needed to complete the certificate will then be taken in other subject areas approved by the Program Director. 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.

All required courses are open to matriculated students first and then to non-matriculated students on a space available basis and with permission of the program director. Non-matriculated students cannot enroll in clinical courses NU 670, 682, or 672.

The family certificate is open to enrollment in the fall, spring, or fall term for adult or pediatric NPs needing to complete requirements for the family nurse practitioner certificate. Others may enroll for NU 681 and NU682 in the spring with permission of the Program Directors. 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. All adult NPs seeking preparation as an FNP must complete 80 hours of obstetrical experience in primary care.

The 12 credit FNP program is open to those with a Pediatric NP certification including courses NU 639, NU 637 and NU 670; or Adult NP certification courses include NU 681, NU 637 and NU 682. All pediatric certified nurse practitioners must complete at least 80 hours of obstetrical primary care.

**Family Certificate 21 credits**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<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 681</td>
<td>Primary Care of the Childbearing Family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NU 682</td>
<td>Primary Care Childbearing Family Practicum</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Adult/Gero 21 credit certificate program begins in the fall, the sequence of courses includes NU639 and NU670/680 followed in the spring or summer by NU671 and NU672, NU 637 may be taken any term. Students with Gero only preparation are eligible for the 12 credit adult gerontology certificate including courses NU637, NU639 and NU670/680; those with an Adult only NP preparation are eligible for the 12 credit Gero/Adult certificate courses including NU637, NU671 and NU672. All adult-gerontology didactic and clinical courses are offered in the summer.

**Adult/Gero Certificate 21 credits** (all courses below are offered fall, spring, and summer with the exception of 671 offered only in the spring and summer terms.)

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<tr>
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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 Adult/Older Adult Practicum</td>
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**Adult/Gero Certificate 12 credits**

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

Family Certificate 12 credits (Courses are offered online, fall, spring, and summer)

NU 637 Psychosocial Mental Health
NU 681 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family
NU 682 Primary Care of the Childbearing Family Practicum

Admission Requirements

Applicants should indicate in their statement of interests and intent whether they are applying to the Family or Adult/Gerontology NP program of study 12 or 21 credit options. Only currently certified NPs can be considered for acceptance into the 12-credit option. A personal interview may be required; 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 nurse certificate program must also meet the following requirements:

1. Evidence of national certifications 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 seven year limit with the exception of advanced pharmacology, which 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. 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 and as a place holder that will prevent them from being dropped from the program.
8. Students who are dropped from the program will need to reapply for admission.
9. Students may apply to take the certification exam during their last term of clinical
Post-Master’s Nurse Educator Graduate Certificate Program

The Nurse Educator Master’s Post-Master’s Graduate Certificate Program is designed for students, including practicing nurses, who aspire to nurse educator roles. This 12 credit certificate program will provide students with essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes for contemporary nursing education. Transforming nursing education for creating culturally inclusive learning environments is particularly emphasized. Flexibility and choice is built into the program to meet the needs of active professional nurses. Eligible students will have an unrestricted R.N. license, a minimum of a Master’s degree in nursing, and transcripts that show a B or better in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology, and advanced health assessment. Students may take these courses while enrolled in the program but will receive conditional acceptance until they are completed. One course equal to those required for this certificate may be eligible for credit transfer from an accredited graduate program if not applied towards a prior degree. Completion of the Nurse Educator Post-Master’s Graduate Certificate program courses will fulfill eligibility requirements for Nurse Educator Certification (CNE). In addition, courses taken are eligible to fulfill elective credits in the DNP program and or PhD program of study.

Four, 3 credit courses are required to complete this Post-Master’s Graduate Certificate Program. A number of these nursing courses are also offered in our PhD and Graduate Nursing Program. See the specific program requirements.

+++Pre reqs in advanced pathophysiology, advanced pharmacology and advanced health assessment (may be waived by the PhD program director for students enrolled as PhD students)

Post-Master’s Nurse Educator Certificate – 12 credits
NU 607 Evidence-Based Teaching Practices

Plus three of the following:

NU 612 Transitions from Nurse Clinician to Clinical Educator
NU 667 Nurse Educators in Clinical Practice Settings Practicum
NU 668 Nurse Educators in Academic Settings Practicum

1-2 CEHD courses: Instructional Design, Critical/Creative thinking, or other UMass College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) course/courses
http://www.umb.edu/academics/departments/cehd/programs/course/s/curriculum_instruction/ and see Graduate Studies catalog and department website for specific course descriptions
Academic Resources

Facilities and programs available to all students in the University are described in the University’s Graduate Handbook. Other facilities for students in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences are listed below.

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 enhance your 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 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. Generally, a student meets with his/her consultant for weekly one-hour appointments.

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/ 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 requires service per week 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.

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. 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 Chairperson and Graduate Program Director.

1.4 Students 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.

1.5 Students who do not earn a grade of B- (2.75) 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.
1.6 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- or better 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, 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 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 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 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 may 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 to the agency.**

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 to 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](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 you believe will assist the Committee in re-evaluating your dismissal. You should make an appointment with the Graduate Program Director to discuss the appropriateness of your 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
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. 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 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>4.00</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>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.00</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.

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.

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 Each graduate student must complete 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 Each Nursing student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in all required UMass Boston courses excluding electives.

12.2.3 Each student must successfully 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.

15.0 The Capstone Experience

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 is 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/

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.