School of Nursing
Graduate Student Handbook

College of Health & Human Services

California State University, Sacramento

Fall 2021

Table of Contents

Preface

This handbook is designed to provide information and guidance for current and prospective graduate students in the School of Nursing at California State University, Sacramento. The handbook is an overview of the purpose and goals, program course offerings, application and admission procedures and graduation requirements for the Masters of Science in Nursing at Sacramento State University. The handbook is revised as needed to remain reflective of current University and SoN policies. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies and procedures of the most current nursing graduate handbook. Continuing students will be notified of any major handbook revisions through Canvas Learning Management System email within the School of Nursing Graduate course site. Minor changes in the handbook will be highlighted each semester in yellow in the revised version of the handbook.

The Sacramento State Masters of Science in Nursing Program complies with the policies and procedures of the University and the Office of Graduate Studies (OGS). It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with current University and OGS policies. Students are advised to refer to the University Catalog and the OGS Website for comprehensive information regarding University and Graduate Studies policies.

For further information regarding the policies and procedures of the Masters of Science in Nursing program at Sacramento State, please contact the via the email address posted on the Sacramento State nursing webpage

Introduction

Mission Statement
The School of Nursing prepares nurses to lead diverse individuals, families, and communities in achieving optimal health through nursing science, collaborative practice, advocacy, and service.

Vision
The School of Nursing (SoN) transforms health care through innovative nursing education, community partnerships, and policy engagement.

Core Values
We believe that the SON serves its students and the society at large by creating an environment in which faculty and students pursue the knowledge of nursing practice guided by the following core values:
- Caring
- Professionalism
- Integrity
- Advocacy
- Collaboration
- Inclusion
- Equity

- Leadership

Graduate Student Learning Outcomes

Graduate Student learning Outcomes are based on the American Association of College's Essentials of Master's Nursing, the American Nursing Association Standards of Care and Professional Performance, the Sacramento State School of Nursing Mission and Philosophy, the Graduate Studies Learning Outcomes and the University Mission.

Upon successful completion of the MSN program, the student:

I.   Synthesizes evidence from nursing and other academic disciplines to continually improve the delivery of nursing care across diverse settings.
II.   Analyzes organizational and systems leadership skills to promote quality and safe health care.
III.   Designs a quality improvement and safety project within a health care system.
IV.   Integrates translation research concepts and evidence into diverse practice settings to improve health care outcomes.
V.   Integrates meaningful data from nursing, computer, communication and information sciences to coordinate and improve care.
VI.   Analyzes health care policy and advocate through the development process to improve health and health care.
VII.   Utilizes relationship centered leadership to build and sustain collaborative, inter-professional teams to coordinate care.
VIII. Integrates clinical prevention and population health concepts in the design and delivery of health care.
IX.   Demonstrates advanced depth and breadth of nursing and related sciences, and integrates this knowledge into practice.
X.   Applies theoretical models or frameworks to formulate nursing interventions and to improve health outcomes at the individual, organizational, or systems level.

Graduate Study in Nursing

Curriculum Overview

The Masters of Science in Nursing (MSN) at Sacramento State prepares nurses for professional roles in education, leadership and advanced clinical practice. The graduate curriculum is founded in the mission and vision of Sacramento State University and the Sacramento State School of Nursing (SoN). The curriculum is designed for practicing nurses interested in increasing their professional skills to enhance patient care and to assume leadership roles in nursing. Committed to increasing access to graduate education, the SoN graduate program utilizes non-traditional course scheduling and a variety of distance education curricular modalities for the working student. The graduate nursing courses are delivered primarily in a hybrid format (blending of online and face to face formats). Face to face and clinical practicum experiences are integrated into the curriculum with regard for the schedule of working students. Practicums occur in a variety of community and clinical settings and provide opportunities for interdisciplinary nursing practice, nursing leadership activities, and teaching experience. Upon

graduation from the Sacramento State Nursing Master's Program, the student is prepared to pursue doctoral study.

The didactic foundation of the MSN curriculum is a series of required courses. These courses emphasize the systematic study of professional nursing practice and provide the theoretical learning necessary for graduates to assume a leadership role in their chosen setting. The courses are divided into three groups that include leadership, advanced clinical role and nursing education.

The leadership courses include the following:

- NURS 209: Advanced Role Development in Nursing. This course meets the Graduate Writing Requirement
- NURS 210: Research as a Foundation for Advanced Nursing
- NURS 215: Community health Services and Policy. Pre-requisites are NURS 209 and 210 or instructor permission
- NURS 213: Seminar in Organizational and Systems Leadership. Pre-requisites are NURS 209, 210, 215, 230, 231 and 232 or instructor permission. Requires completion of 21 units of graduate course work which must include NURS 209 and 210.
- NURS 293: Practicum in Specialized Nursing Processes. Pre-requisites are NURS 209, 210, 214, 230, 231 and 232 or instructor permission. Co-requisite is NURS 213.

The advanced role courses provide the foundation for a variety of professional roles in nursing organizational leadership and clinical education. The required courses establish a foundation for students planning to pursue a *post master's* certification in an advanced practice role such as nurse educator, clinical nurse specialist or clinical nurse leader. The advanced clinical role courses provide the student with a strong foundation in pathophysiology, pharmacology and physical assessment.

The advanced role courses include the following:

- NURS 230: Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology
- NURS 231: Pharmacology for Advanced Practice
- NURS 232: Advanced Physical Assessment Across the Lifespan. Prerequisites are NURS 209 and 210

The education courses prepare graduates to teach nursing and related topics in an academic or clinical setting. The education courses provide the student with a strong foundation in curriculum development and instructional strategies. The practicum course partners the graduate student with a faculty mentor or clinical educator for experience in teaching and curriculum development. Students are prepared to pursue a clinical educator role, academic faculty position and doctoral study.

The education courses include the following:

- NURS 214: Educational Program Development in Nursing. Prerequisites are NURS 209 and 210 or instructor permission
- NURS 294: Practicum in Educational Program Development in Nursing. Co-requisite is NURS 214

Curricular Schedule of Course Offerings

The nursing graduate studies curriculum is designed as a six semester, part time program of study. An alternative plan of study is possible, but must be approved by the student's faculty advisor. The tables below present templates for a six semester, four semester, and eight semester plan of graduate nursing study.

6 Semester Plan of Study

Semester 1 Fall	Semester 2 Spring
• **NURS 209**: Advanced Role Development in Nursing (3 units) • **NURS 210**: Research as the Foundation for Advanced Nursing (3 units)	• **NURS 230**: Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology (3 units) • **NURS 231**: Pharmacology for Advanced Practice (3 units)
Semester 3 Fall	Semester 4 Spring
• **NURS 215**: Community Health Services and Policy (3 units) • **NURS 232**: Advanced Physical Assessment Across the Lifespan (3 units)	• **NURS 294**: Practicum in Educational Program Development in Nursing (3 units) • **NURS 214**: Educational Program Development in Nursing (3 units)
Semester 5 Fall	Semester 6 Spring
• **NURS 213**: Seminar in Organizational and Systems Leadership (3 units) • **NURS 293**: Practicum in Specialized Nursing Process: Organizational and Systems leadership (3 units)	• **NURS 500**: Culminating Experience (3 units)

4 Semester Plan of Study

Semester 1 Fall	Semester 2 Spring
• **NURS 209**: Advanced Role Development in Nursing • **NURS 210**: Research as the Foundation for Advanced Nursing **NURS 232**: Advanced Physical Assessment Across the Lifespan	• **NURS 230**: Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology • **NURS 231**: Pharmacology for Advanced Practice • **NURS 214:** Educational Program Development in Nursing

Semester 3 Fall	Semester 4 Spring
• **NURS 215**: Community Health Services and Policy • **NURS 213**: Seminar in Organizational and Systems Leadership • **NURS 293**: Practicum in Specialized Nursing Process: Organizational and Systems Leadership	• **NURS 500**: Culminating Experience • **NURS 294**: Practicum in Educational Program Development in Nursing

8 Semester Plan of Study

Semester 1 Fall	Semester 2 Spring
• **NURS 209**: Advanced Role Development in Nursing • **NURS 210**: Research as the Foundation for Advanced Nursing	• **NURS 214:** Educational Program Development in Nursing
Semester 3 Fall	Semester 4 Spring
• **NURS 215**: Community Health Services and Policy	• **NURS 230**: Advanced Concepts in Pathophysiology • **NURS 231**: Pharmacology for Advanced Practice
Semester 5 Fall	Semester 6 Spring
• **NURS 232**: Advanced Physical Assessment Across the Lifespan	• **NURS 294:** Practicum in Educational Program Development in Nursing
Semester 7 Fall	Semester 8 Spring
• **NURS 213**: Seminar in Organizational and Systems Leadership • **NURS 293**: Practicum in Specialized Nursing Process: Organizational and Systems Leadership	• **NURS 500**: Culminating Experience

Graduate Practicums and Preceptor Policy

Preceptors are utilized in the MSN program as an extension of the faculty to provide graduate students with appropriate practicum field experiences.

Preceptor Selection: Identification and selection of the graduate preceptor in practicum courses is the joint responsibility of the individual graduate student and the faculty of record and / or the graduate

coordinator. The faculty of record for a practicum course is responsible for the approval of identified preceptors for use in the graduate practicum. The SoN placement coordinator is a resource for establishing or confirming a clinical contract between the SoN and the practicum organization.

Criteria for preceptor selection includes:

- Completion of graduate level work in the clinical area of focus for the practicum
- Evidence of education and/or past experience in precepting or mentoring in the clinical setting

Preceptor orientation is the responsibility of the faculty assigned to the student for a practicum course. The faculty will provide the preceptor with course objectives and resources for student evaluation. The preceptor orientation may be conducted in a face to face, electronic or telephonic meeting.

Master's with School Nursing Focus

The MSN with a focus on school nursing is available from Sacramento State in conjunction with the School Nurse Credential Program. These two programs are administered through the College of Continuing Education at Sacramento State University. Information on the School Nurse Credential and the master's option can be found at: https://www.cce.csus.edu/school-nurse-credential-program-masters-nursing.

Students wishing to pursue a master's degree in conjunction with the School Nurse Credential must meet the criteria for admission into the MSN program at Sacramento State. To complete the MSN program for school nurses, the student must take the core nursing master's courses in addition to the School Nurse Credential courses. Students completing the master's with a school nursing focus at Sacramento State are prepared for employment as a school nurse and for doctoral education.

Core Courses for the MSN with a focus on school nursing include:

- NURS 209- Advanced Role Development in Nursing
- NURS 210- Research as the Foundation for Advanced Nursing
- NURS 214- Educational Program Development in Nursing
- NURS 215- Community Health Services and Policy
- NURS 213- Seminar in Organizational and Systems Leadership

Requirements for the School Nurse Credential

The Masters of Science degree in Nursing with a School Nurse Credential requires the following courses and is designed to be completed in 2 years.

Students wishing to pursue only the School Nurse Credential are required to take the following courses:

- NURS 213C: Seminar in Specialized Nursing Processes: School Nursing I
- NURS 213D: Seminar in Specialized Nursing Processes: School Nursing II
- NURS 214: Educational Program Development in Nursing
- NURS 216: Vision and Scoliosis Screening
- NURS 232A: Advanced Physical Assessment: Infant, Child, Adolescent
- NURS 293D: Practicum in Specialized Nursing Processes: School Nursing

Students must also show proof of an audiology course from an approved college – level institution

Students wishing to pursue the School Nurse Credential and the MSN degree are required to take the courses above plus the following courses:

- NURS 214: Educational Program Development in Nursing
- NURS 215: : Community health Services and Policy

Requirements for Special Teaching Authorization in Health (STAH, 6 units)

The STAH option is available to school nurses who wish to position themselves to become the sole, independent teacher for health classes within public school districts. The STAH is not required for the school nurse credential but is considered a supplemental credential. Candidates for the STAH must hold a school nurse credential or apply for both credentials at the same time. The STAH authorizes nurses to provide health education instruction beyond that of periodic guest presentations (e.g., sexual health education) and allows school administrators to utilize nurses in the capacity of health educators through the provision of direct and regular health instruction. Requirements for the STAH at Sacramento State are: completion of six units of educational pedagogy including a supervised student (practice) teaching experience and passing of the CBEST (California Basic Educational Skills Test).

- NURS 214C: Educational Program Development in Nursing II (Prerequisite: NURS 214: Educational Program Development in Nursing or equivalent)
- NURS 294: Practicum in Educational Program Development in Nursing (NURS 214C, may be taken concurrently)

Culminating Project

Students in the MSN program are required to complete a culminating experience designed to synthesize the didactic and practicum academic work completed within the program. NURS 500 is the capstone course in the MSN program. Students may enroll in NURS 500 after completion of all course requirements for the MSN degree or during the semester within which those requirements will be fulfilled. A student may only take one course concurrently with NURS 500. Prerequisites for enrollment in NURS 500 include: NURS 209, 210, 215, 213, along with courses for advanced clinical role and nursing education or school nursing. The student must have advanced to candidacy the semester prior to enrollment in NURS 500.

The nursing graduate student may choose one of the three culminating experiences:

- Comprehensive Examination
- Project
- Thesis

The Comprehensive Examination is the default option for completion. Students who do not actively pursue a thesis or project will default to the Comprehensive Examination. Students wishing to complete a thesis or project must be approved to pursue this option by the Graduate Committee. Additionally, a member of the School of Nursing faculty must agree to work with the student on the proposed thesis or

project. The Graduate Coordinator and faculty are available to meet with students interested in pursuing a graduate project or thesis.

A complete description of the procedure for the Comprehensive Examination can be found in the Comprehensive Examination Handbook, found on the Canvas Learning Management Systems and on the Graduate Source Page. It is the responsibility of the student to review the Comprehensive Examination Handbook and be familiar with all policies and procedures regarding the Comprehensive Examination.

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination is administered in the final semester of graduate study and is designed to test the student's understanding of the range of subject matters covered in the student's graduate program. The comprehensive examination is a comprehensive proposal for a project that will address a health care discrepancy. Students enrolled in NURS 500 will have approximately 10 weeks to complete and submit to the NURS 500 Course Site. Faculty are not permitted to provide help to students in NURS 500 with regard to the development of their comprehensive examination. Students must advance to candidacy in the prior semester before enrolling in NURS 500.

Comprehensive examinations will be read by three faculty examiners and will certify the success or failure of the student submission using blinding procedures. A simple majority (two out of three) examiners determines whether the student has passed or failed. The results of the examination will be submitted promptly to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Please note that students who fail to submit an exam will receive a "no credit" on the exam and will be required to retake the NURS 500 course. A student may resubmit the comprehensive examination once after a failure, provided that at least four calendar months have lapsed since the previous examination. Students who fail the comprehensive examination due to plagiarism will receive a "no credit" on the exam and must file a petition to repeat NURS 500. If the petition is approved, the student may retake the NURS 500 course, but the comprehensive examination must be on a different topic.

The exam may be retaken only once. After a second comprehensive exam failure, the student will be declassified from the nursing program. A third submission is not allowed unless extreme extenuating circumstances can be demonstrated by the student to the Dean for Graduate Studies. The culminating experience option cannot be changed once the initial examination has been administered.

Thesis or Project

A thesis is the written product of the systematic study of a significant problem. It clearly 1) identifies the problem; 2) states the major assumptions; 3) explains the significance of the undertaking; 4) sets forth the sources for and the methods of gathering information; 5) analyzes the data; and 6) offers a conclusion or recommendation. The finished product must evidence originality, critical and independent thinking, appropriate organization and format, clarity of purpose, and accurate and thorough documentation. An oral defense of the thesis will be required. All submissions are to be formatted in APA using the second printing of the 6th edition.

A project is a significant undertaking appropriate to the fine and applied arts or to professional fields. It evidences originality and independent thinking, appropriate form and organization, and rationale. It is described and summarized in a written abstract that includes the project's significance, objectives, methodology, and a conclusion or recommendation.

Students interested in completing a thesis or project must identify an area of specific nursing interest and discuss it with the graduate program coordinator prior to approaching a faculty member to collaborate with on the thesis or project. Students wishing to pursue this option are strongly encouraged to seek collaborating faculty as early as possible in the program. Prior to advancing to candidacy, the student must submit a completed Thesis/Project Proposal form to the graduate coordinator. This form will identify the topic of the proposed thesis/project and a potential faculty advisor. The request will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee and the decision will be communicated to the student via email through the Canvas Learning Management system site by the Graduate Coordinator. The Thesis/ Project Proposal Form is available via the Graduate Student Source Page in the Canvas Learning Management System site under the NURS 500 link on the home page. Further information on the Thesis/Project option can be found on the [Office of Graduate Studies Website](#).

Denied Requests: If the thesis/project is denied, the student will not have the option of completing a thesis or project and will be placed in the Comprehensive Examination cohort when registering for NURS 500.

Approved Requests: If the request is approved, it is the student's responsibility to meet with the identified faculty advisor to establish a plan for completion for the thesis/project. If the student fails to meet with the thesis/project advisor or fails to make reasonable progress on the thesis/project as determined by the designated faculty advisor, the option of completing a thesis/project will be revoked by the Graduate Committee and the student will be placed into the Comprehensive Examination culminating experience.

Graduate students completing a thesis as their culminating experience are required to submit their research proposal for approval through the SoN research committee and the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) before proceeding with the research. Forms for graduate research approval can be found at the [Institutional Review Board](#).

Grading Policies

Academic Standards in the MSN Program

A minimum of a B (83%) is required for successful completion of all graduate nursing course units. The student will be required to repeat any courses completed with a final grade of less than a B (83%) to receive course credit in the graduate nursing program at CSUS. Individual graduate courses are graded by the faculty of record using the guidelines outlined in the course syllabus.

The following policy applies to grading in individual courses:

- All assignments will be submitted according to assignment prompts and directions. Accurate APA formatting will be used in all assignments unless otherwise directed.
- A minimum score of 83% is required to successfully complete course work designated as a key assessment. Assignments submitted that do not achieve an 83% will be considered failing.
- Key assessments will be clearly identified in each syllabus

- Students who receive less than 83% on a key assessment may be allowed to rewrite the assignment one time at the discretion of the faculty, with the understanding that the highest achievable score on the assignment will be a 90%
- If the rewrite of the assignment still fails to meet the 83% benchmark on the key assessment, the student will receive a zero for the assignment
- Assignments must be submitted on time. Students who anticipate submitting a late assignment must notify faculty and obtain approval at least 24 hours PRIOR to the due date. Late submissions can earn a maximum of 90%, if submitted by the revised due date designated by the faculty
- In the case of unforeseen circumstances (serious illness, death in the family, accident), supported by written documentation, late assignments may be accepted without penalty at the discretion of faculty
- Assignments will not be accepted past the revised due date

Definition of Grade Symbols

All MSN course letter grades are assigned as indicated in the table below (based on percentage, rounded to tenth of a percent). Note that while grades below a B (< 83%) may be assigned, any grade below a B is not a passing grade in accordance with the Sacramento State Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) and requires course repeat. Course repeats must be approved by the School of Nursing Graduate Program Committee and OGS (see Course Repeat Policy below).

Some laboratory courses in nursing are graded Credit (C)/No Credit (NC), while others utilize letter grades. Please see individual course syllabi for grading policies.

Letter Grade	Course Percentage
A	93-100%
A-	90-92.9%
B+	87-89.9%
B	83-86.9%
	≥ 83% is required to pass graduate level courses
B-	80-82.9%
C+	77-79.9%
C	73-76.9%
C-	70-72.9%
D+	67-69.9%
D	63-66.9%
D-	60-62.9%
F	59.9% and below

More complete information on university grading policies can be found at
http://csus.edu/umanual/acad/umg05150.htm

Academic Dishonesty

The School of Nursing expects nursing students to adhere to the highest ethical standards in both clinical and academic settings. Any student suspected of gaining an unfair advantage in a course (e.g. cheating

on an exam, plagiarism, handing in work that is not one's own) will be reported, per University policy, to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

School of Nursing disciplinary action can include, but is not limited to, remediation related to the importance of compliance with the policy and documentation in the student's file, failure on the assignment or in the course, suspension from the program, or expulsion from the program.

If a plagiarized assignment is also a key assessment and faculty do not allow a rewrite, then the student fails both the assignment and the course. If faculty do allow a rewrite on a key assessment, the highest score possible will be 90% (See above section on Academic Standards).

It is the student's responsibility to review the University policy and procedures on academic dishonesty. Please visit the web link below to learn how academic dishonesty is defined and the procedure related to violation of this policy. https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-100.htm

Course Repeat Policy

Graduate students in the School of Nursing who are requesting to repeat a required course in the program must complete the following steps:

1. Obtain the petition for course repeat from the Office of Graduate Studies: https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/ Students must follow the directions on the petition including submitting a written statement and securing an appointment with the Graduate Coordinator for the MSN program.
2. The petition must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the following semester or immediately upon return from a break in enrollment: If failure occurs in fall semester, students must submit petition by March 1st; if failure occurs in spring or summer semester, students must submit petition by October 1st.
3. Completed petitions to repeat will be reviewed by the Graduate Committee and then forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies for subsequent review.
4. Incomplete petitions will not be forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies.
5. According to university policy, students who fail a course as a result of academic dishonesty are not eligible for grade forgiveness in the context of course repeat https://catalog.csus.edu/academic-policies/#text

Grading of Culminating Experience

The culminating experience (NURS 500) is graded as Credit or No Credit. Credit for students enrolled in the comprehensive examination option for NURS 500 is received after the student achieves a passing grade on the comprehensive examination. More detailed information on the grading of the comprehensive examination can be found in comprehensive examination handbook posted in Canvas on the graduate source page and the NURS 500 course page. Credit for students submitting a thesis or project is achieved after the thesis/project manuscript is accepted by the Office of Graduate Studies. The final credit for NURS 500 is posted by the Office of Graduate Studies after completion of the culminating experience requirements.

Incomplete Grade Policy

An incomplete grade "I" can be assigned only when a clearly identifiable portion of the course requirements cannot be completed and evaluated within the academic term due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons. To be eligible for an "I", the student must have completed a majority of course requirements at a satisfactory level in accordance with the course syllabus. The student must submit an Incomplete Grade Petition available through the student's faculty advisor or the faculty of record of the course. The Incomplete Grade Petition must be approved by the faculty of record and a plan for completion of the course objectives must be documented. The specified time period for the incomplete grade shall not exceed one academic year. This one-year limit extends from the last day of instruction of the semester of session in which the "I" was assigned until the last day of instruction in the same semester or session one year later. Individual instructors may specify a time period less than this one year limit. The specified time period limitation applies whether or not the student maintains continuous enrollment at CSUS. A final grade will be assigned when the work agreed upon has been completed with the specified time period, and evaluated. A student's "I" grade will convert to an "F" or a "NC" and be recorded on the student's transcript if the required course work is not completed within the specified time period.

Jeopardy

Students who are not progressing in the course according to established syllabi and are not meeting the Graduate Student Learning Outcomes may receive a letter of jeopardy. Generally students are notified at the mid semester; however, any point during the course a student may receive a letter of jeopardy if deemed necessary.

Grade Appeal Procedure

A student wishing to contest an assigned course grade is required to follow the University Grade Appeal procedure. Information on the University grade appeal procedure can be found at: https://www.csus.edu/academic-affairs/internal/grade-appeals.html

General Information

Specialized Courses

NURS 295 – Field Study (1-6 units)

Field study experiences are provided for the continued development of nursing clinical and professional role skills. 45 hours of clinical practicum are completed for each unit of field study. Field study is not designed to be used in lieu of regularly scheduled practicum courses. Enrollment in NURS 295 requires the consent of a faculty member willing to serve as a faculty advisor for the experience. This course is graded as credit/no credit.

NURS 299 – Special Problems

NURS 299 is intended for individual research, study, and directed reading in an area not directly covered in the SoN core courses, role preparations or electives. Students pursue a particular course of study on a

one to one basis with a faculty member. Academic objectives for the course must be specified in advance. This course is graded.

Transfer Units

A maximum of 6 units of graduate level course work may be transferred from another university program for credit in the MSN program. Transfer units from other universities are accepted at the discretion and approval of the nursing graduate committee and the faculty of record for the substituted course.

A maximum of 6 graduate level units may be transferred from academic study completed through Open University administered through the Sacramento State College of Continuing Education. Transfer units from Open University are accepted at the discretion and upon approval of the nursing graduate committee and the faculty of record for the transferring course.

Catalog Rights

A student is admitted to the graduate nursing program at Sacramento State under the catalog requirements for the academic year of admission. The student retains these "catalog rights" as long as the student remains continuously enrolled in the MSN program at Sacramento State. If a student interrupts continuous enrollment, the student may be subject to the catalog requirements of the academic year when the student is readmitted. Readmission into the MSN program after a disruption of enrollment is not guaranteed.

Course Currency

All requirements for the MSN degree must be completed within the seven (7) years immediately prior to the date of graduation. If course work extends beyond seven years, the student may request an evaluation of course currency. Contact the Graduate Coordinator for more information. Please see the link to further explain the 7 year deadline for graduate studies at Sacramento State.

Academic Advising

The Graduate Coordinator is usually the faculty advisor who provides academic guidance to students. For students in the school nurse focus, the School Nurse Program Coordinator acts as the faculty advisor. It is essential for students to meet with the faculty advisor (Graduate Coordinator, School Nurse Program Coordinator, or designee) within the first semester of matriculation to file an initial plan of study based on their individual academic goals and needs. It is the responsibility of students to schedule the initial meeting with the Graduate Coordinator and to meet with the Coordinator when making any changes to their plan of study.

Writing Proficiency and Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement

All assignments in the graduate courses are expected to be at the level of graduate writing. The Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR) for the MSN program is fulfilled through the successful completion of the nursing Graduate Writing Intensive (GWI) course. This requirement is met in NURS 209, the core didactic course in the MSN program. All students must complete NURS 209 with a minimum grade of B (83%) to continue in the program. Grading of written assignments in the GWI course will be heavily weighted on the structure, format and style of written work.

Further information regarding the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement can be found on the OGS Website

University Reading and Writing Center

The primary goal of the University Reading and Writing Center (URWC) is to provide encouraging focused and non-judgmental one to one tutorials in reading and writing for any undergraduate or graduate student enrolled in courses at CSUS. In a collaborative and supportive environment, our peer tutors offer help with reading and writing at all points in the process, from initial planning and organizing through developing and revising a paper or understanding difficult texts. The URWC is supported by Academic Affairs and partners with Associated Students, Inc. Students are welcome to come to the URWC with reading and writing assignments for any course in any academic discipline. The University Reading and Writing Center is in room 128 in Calaveras Hall. To schedule an appointment call (916) 278 6356 or visit their webpage: https://www.csus.edu/undergraduate-studies/writing-program/reading-writing-center.html

Sacramento State Library

As a CSUS student, you have access to the various resources offered by the library, such as book checkout, study areas, computer labs, online tutorials, research and databases. To learn more about available resources visit the Library Home page.

Technology requirements

A primary mode for instruction and communication within the graduate program at Sacramento State is through the Canvas Learning Management System. Online learning activities and assignments are delivered through the course websites.

Canvas runs on Windows, Mac, Linux, iOS, and Android or any other device with a modern web browser. Compatible browsers include: Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer and Safari. Other browser requirements include Adobe Flash and Javascript enabled.

Skill Requirements

An internet connection is necessary to participate in discussions and assignments, access readings, transfer course work, and receive feedback from your instructional associate and/or professor. For web-based courses, students should have a basic working knowledge of computers and internet use as well as access to a computer with a broadband (DSL, cable, satellite) internet connection. Other requirements for each course are listed in the university's catalog.

At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office or OpenOffice. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required.

Assistance with Technology

If you experience technical difficulties with your computer or network connection to the university please contact the Information Resource and Technology (IRT) Service Desk by e-mail servicedesk@csus.edu, phone (916) 278-7337, or visit them in person at ARC 2005. A full listing of their services can be found at https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/get-support-consultation/

If you need assistance navigating or operating Canvas please contact the Student Technology Center in AIRC 3007, Phone: 916.278.2364, Email: stc@csus.edu. A full listing of their services can be found at the Help Desk

Please note that you are responsible for knowing how to fully operate a computer. If you have difficulties using Canvas, please go through the Student Canvas orientation found in your Courses listing.

Student Computing Labs

Students can use any of the IRT managed student computer labs on campus including the one in Folsom Hall. Visit the University Lab website for information about locations, hours and resources available.

Graduate Committee

The graduate committee is composed of the Graduate Coordinator, the SoN Chair, the SoN Associate Chair, the School Nurse Program Coordinator, graduate faculty, a community representative and two student representatives, including one from the school nurse credential program. Functions of the committee include: to evaluate the graduate nursing curriculum, coordinator curriculum-related activities, develop programs for recruitment and retention of students, complete surveys related to curricular issues and student life, and make recommendations to the School of Nursing Assembly regarding academic and student matters. A calendar of the scheduled meetings of the graduate committee can be obtained from an administrative staff person in the School of Nursing or the Graduate Coordinator.

Admission, Registration and Graduation Procedures

The MSN program at CSUS admits students annually in the fall semester. To be eligible for admission, all Office of Graduate Studies deadlines and School of Nursing requirements must be met by the designated deadlines. The most recent admission requirements, deadlines and application instructions can be found on the Office of Graduate Studies website or the School of Nursing Website.

International applicants must consult the Office of Graduate Studies and the Office of International Admissions for specific application procedures.

Processing of Completed application

- Completed applications are processed by the OGS and then reviewed by the School of Nursing. The Graduate Coordinator issues a recommendation to either deny or accept the application in one of two categories:
  - Classified standing
  - Conditionally classified standing
- Conditionally classified standing will indicate areas to be cleared before classified standing is given. Conditions must be met during the first semester after admission.
- Incomplete or late applications are not acted upon. All required admission documents must be submitted by the posted application deadline for an application to be considered complete.
- Admission recommendations from the School of Nursing are forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final disposition and student notification.

Admission as Conditionally Classified Standing

Students who do not fully meet admission criteria may be admitted as conditionally classified students. Students must apply for classified standing after the conditions on the "Graduate Admission

Recommendation Form" have been met. Failure to meet the identified conditions within the specified time frame will result in disqualification from the nursing graduate program. An "Application for Classification in a Master's Degree Program" may be obtained from the OGS at the following link: https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/

Admission into programs leading to licensure, credentialing, or certification eligibility does not guarantee that students will obtain a license, credential, or certification. Licensure, credentialing, or certification requirements are set by agencies that are not controlled by or affiliated with the CSU and requirements can change at any time. For example, licensure, credentialing, or certification requirements can include evidence of the right to work in the United States (e.g., social security number or tax payer identification number) or successfully passing a criminal background check. Students are responsible for determining whether they can meet licensure, credentialing, or certification requirements. The CSU will not refund tuition, fees, or any associated costs, to students who determine subsequent to admission that they cannot meet licensure, credentialing or certification requirements. Information concerning licensure, credentialing or certification requirements are available from Sara Niekamp, School of Nursing, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, Ca. 95819-6096; 916 278 6714.

Request for Reinstatement

Graduate students requesting reinstatement after academic disqualification or withdrawal must submit the required forms and documentation to the nursing graduate committee for consideration of reinstatement. The petition will be reviewed by the graduate committee and the Graduate Coordinator will communicate the graduate committee decision in writing to the student via email. The forms for reinstatement after disqualification can be found at https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/

Add/Drop/Withdrawal Policies

It is the responsibility of the student to be familiar with the University Add, Drop and Withdrawal Policies. These are available at: https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/student-services-center/forms.html

Advancement to Candidacy

Upon completion of 12 (12) units of core curricular master's level course work within the MSN program, a student is eligible to apply for advancement to candidacy. Candidacy is a term designating the status of a student whose program or degree has been formally approved by the Graduate Dean. To successfully advance to candidacy, the student must:

- Complete the Graduate Writing Intensive (NURS 209) course with a minimum of a B (83%)
- Successfully complete 12 units of core curricular nursing coursework in the MSN program
- Maintain a 3.0 GPA
- File an application with the Office of Graduate Studies in accordance with the timeline posted on the OGS website.

Advancement to candidacy must be completed at least one semester prior to the student registering for NURS 500. Once a nursing graduate student has successfully advanced to candidacy, the student may choose to use the professional credentials of MSNc. Information regarding advancement to candidacy may be found within www.mycsus.edu and then look at OnBase Forms. MSN students will receive guidance on form completion from program staff in advance of the due date.

Application for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation by the Office of Graduate Studies scheduled deadline in the semester of graduation. Students may participate in May or December graduation exercises prior to completion of the NURS 500. However, the diploma will be issued after the completion of the culminating experience. The application for graduation may be found within www.mycsus.edu and then look at OnBase Forms. MSN students will receive guidance on form completion from program staff in advance of the due date.

Health Clearance Requirements

To ensure the safety of patients, students, and faculty, and to meet contractual obligations with outside agencies, graduate students are required to have evidence of completion of the Graduate Nursing Student Clearance Requirements listed in this section.

COVID-19 Vaccination

As of fall 2021, all CSU students must self-certify their COVID-19 vaccination status; exemptions are available for medical or strongly held religious beliefs, which both require documentation. If students are exempt from completing their COVID-19 vaccination, they must submit to regular testing for on campus classes or clinical.

Students are encouraged to get the COVID-19 vaccination rather than submit an exemption, as a growing number of clinical placement sites require the vaccination. COVID-19 vaccinations approved for use in the U.S. are proven to be safe and effective in preventing severe illness, hospitalization, and death due to COVID-19. Unvaccinated students may not be able to complete the program as, for the required clinical courses, students must adhere to outside agency policies which may not accept exemptions.

Students can learn more about this policy, schedule their COVID-19 vaccination, and complete the self-certification process at the Sacramento State website.

Students must also provide proof of their vaccination, or their approved exemption and PCR testing results (when in clinical courses) to the Chair of the School of Nursing. Proof of COVID vaccination or exemption is submitted via Castlebranch, along with other immunization records (see below information on required immunizations). Information about PCR tracking will come from the Chair of the School of Nursing.

Drug and Alcohol Screen

All students are required to have a negative drug and alcohol screen prior to entry to the graduate nursing program. The screen detects alcohol, amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, opiates and phencyclidine. Results are provided to the Chair of the School of Nursing and remain confidential. Students who test positive will be contacted and counseled by the SoN Chairperson.

Criminal Background Check

All clinical agencies and the Board of Registered Nursing, in compliance with the Joint Commission, require investigation of any prior convictions and disciplinary actions. Failure to disclose a conviction may interfere with clinical placements. Individuals with reported convictions should refer to the "Frequently Asked questions Regarding Prior Convictions and Disciplinary Actions" in the "Licensing & Examination" section of the Board of Registered Nursing website.

All background checks must be performed by the agency designated by the School of Nursing. Background checks performed by other agencies will not be accepted. Results of the criminal background check remain confidential. Students with prior convictions or disciplinary actions which will interfere with clinical placement will be contacted and counseled by the Chair of the School of Nursing. If a student is denied a clinical placement by a partner agency as a result of a background check and cannot, satisfy the clinical and community placement requirements, they will not satisfy requirements for graduation. Some clinical placements may require additional clearances. Students who transition from the RN-BSN or BSN programs to the MSN program will need to repeat background checks.

Current RN licensure

Licensure must be achieved prior to beginning any practicum hours in the graduate program. Students are expected to maintain an unencumbered RN licensure throughout the duration fo the graduate program.

CPR Certification

All MSN students are required to maintain current CPR certification. Students are to submit a photocopy of the CPR certificate (front and back) to the School of Nursing according to the timelines established for health clearances. CPR must be level C (AHA). American Red Cross CPR is no longer acceptable.

Professional Liability Insurance

Nursing graduate students must maintain professional liability insurance as mandated by the CSU Chancellor's office.

Personal health Insurance

All MSN students must carry personal health insurance from an insurance provider of their choosing.

Automobile Insurance

Travel to assigned clinical agencies is required of MSN students. All MSN students are expected to carry personal automobile insurance in compliance with California State law.

Immunizations/ Infectious Disease Screening

Students entering the MSN program are required to submit proof of immunization status. This can be done by a private physician, clinic or other healthcare facility accepting the students' insurance, or at the Student Health Center (for continuing students). Acceptable documentation of immunizations is required by the School of Nursing. The following documentation is acceptable:

- An official letterhead or stationary signed by a health care provider
- Official document from health care system

Immunization Guidelines include:

- Tuberculosis: Absence of tuberculosis may be documented in one of the following ways: 1) a two-step PPD process demonstrating a negative TB skin test is required within the past three months of admission; PPD skin tests are required annually. Students must meet CDC guidelines
    - A positive PPD result requires a clinical evaluation by a health care provider to include a chest x ray, Quantiferon blood test, and a TB symptom form
    - Students with inactive TB must submit documentation from health care provider verifying this determination
    - Students with active TB must submit documentation that the student has begun appropriate plan of treatment and is no longer infectious. No clinical assignments will be rendered until students submits documentation indicating the student is safe to care for patients.
    - Students should not receive any immunization until they have had a PPD screening. Immunizations and PPD may be given together, but immunizations cannot be given before the PPD. Recently administered live virus vaccines can cause false negative PPD results.
- MMR: Students are required to demonstrate immunity to rubella, rubeola and mumps. This demonstration may take three forms: 1) serologic testing that establishes immunity through a positive antibody titer, 2) proof of previous adequate vaccination (2 doses, 4 weeks apart). Students may be deemed exempt from the MMR immunization if:
    - Student has a religious constraint
    - Student is allergic to the immunization
    - Student was born prior to January 1, 1957
- Tdap: Due to the increasing prevalence of community – based pertussis and the potential implications for medically vulnerable populations, MSN students are required to demonstrate current (within 10 years) Tdap immunization. Expired vaccinations must be updated upon notification. Students will be exempt from Tdap if:
    - Student indicates a religious constraint to the immunization
    - Student is allergic to the immunization
- Hepatitis B: Hepatitis B immunity may be demonstrated by proof of completion of the immunization series (3 doses over 6 months) or through a positive antibody titer.
- Varicella Zoster: MSN students are required to provide evidence of immunity to varicella zoster through either 1) documentation of the two dose immunizations series; 2) proof of serologic immunity. Students will be exempt from the varicella immunization if:
    - The student has religious constraints to the immunization
    - The student is allergic to the immunization
- Influenza: the influenza vaccine verification must be received by November1st of each year. Students may provide proof of immunization or provide a written declination statement.
- Students receiving nasal inoculations are advised that masks are required two weeks after administration. These are live viruses and put patients at risk for contracting the infection.
- Students who have declined the immunization will be required to wear masks in the clinical facility during flu season.

Immunizations and infectious disease screening may be completed by the health care provider of the student's choice. Student Health services at CSUS is available to provide immunizations and infectious

disease clearance. Additional fees may be required in accordance with the current Sacramento State Student Health services can be found at https://www.csus.edu/student-life/health-counseling/health/immunizations-and-vaccines.html

Clearance Deadlines and Procedures

Clearances required before the start of the first semester of the MSN program include:

- COVID-19 vaccination
- Drug and alcohol screening
- Criminal background check

Clearances required before the beginning of any clinical practicum include:

- CPR certification – American Heart Level C
- Current California RN Licensure
- Professional liability insurance
- Personal health insurance
- Automobile insurance
- Immunizations/ infectious disease screening

The School of Nursing staff responsible for graduate student clearances will send an email notification to students with instructions oh now to complete the required clearances. It is the student's responsibility to complete the required clearances within the designated time frame. The School of Nursing administrative staff will input the clearance data into the clinical – clearance database. As a courtesy, students with missing or expired items will be sent an email notification. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their email on a regular basis for clearance notifications.

If a clearance item will expire during the semester, it is the student's responsibility to submit updated information at least one week prior to the expiration. MSN students failing to comply with required clearances will be dropped from their enrolled courses. A petition for re-instatement can be submitted to the Graduate Committee after the clearances have been submitted. Re-instatement into the program is at the discretion of the Graduate Committee and will be determined in part by the length of absence from the program.

Student Conduct

Students participating in the MSN program are expected to adhere to standards articulated in the School of Nursing Code of Ethics (adapted from the NSNA Code of Ethics), the University Standards for Student Conduct, and the ANA Code of Ethics for Nurses.

University Student Code of Conduct

MSN students at CSUS are expected to be familiar with and are required to abide by the University Student Code of Conduct found at: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/UMS16150.htm

ANA Code of Ethics

MSN students are expected to be familiar with and are required to abide by the American Nurses Association (ANA) Code of Ethics for Nurses found at: https://www.nursingworld.org/practice-policy/nursing-excellence/ethics/code-of-ethics-for-nurses/

Additional University Resources

Financial Aid Office: https://www.csus.edu/apply/financial-aid-scholarships/

On/Off Campus housing: https://www.csus.edu/student-life/housing/

University Policy Manual: http://csus.edu/umanual/

Sexual Harassment: https://www.csus.edu/title-ix/sexual-violence.html

Student Rights and Responsibilities: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-0119.htm

Student Conduct Procedures (Discipline): http://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/UMS16150.HTM

Discrimination Complaint: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/hr/ums16310.htm

Student Grievance Procedures: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/hr/hrs-0128.htm

Grade Appeal Procedures: http://www.csus.edu/umanual/acad%20affairs/grade_appeal_policy.htm

Information Practices: https://www.csus.edu/information-resources-technology/information-security/data-privacy-policies-standards.html

Leave of Absence and Withdrawal Forms: https://www.csus.edu/graduate-studies/current-students/forms.html

Academic Honesty: https://www.csus.edu/umanual/student/stu-100.htm

Students with Disabilities: https://www.csus.edu/student-affairs/centers-programs/services-students-disabilities/

Threats to Campus Community: https://www.csus.edu/campus-safety/

Organizations

CSUS Alumni Association, Nursing Chapter

The School of Nursing encourages all program graduates to join the Nursing Chapter of the Alumni Association. The Nursing Chapter organizes a variety of continuing education, social, and fund raising activities to benefit School of Nursing students, academic programs, and alumni. Membership information can be obtained from the School of Nursing office or the University Office of Alumni Affairs.

Sigma Theta Tau – Zeta Eta at-Large Chapter

Sacramento State School of Nursing and the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis have combined to form an at-large chapter of Sigma Theta Tau Nursing Society. All graduate students in good

academic standing are invited to join the chapter. Inductions into STTI are in December and May. The chapter sponsors research symposiums and leadership events. The purpose of the School of Nursing Zeta Eta at-Large Chapter is to recognize the achievement of superior scholarship, to recognize the development of leadership qualities, to foster high professional standards, to encourage and support research and other creative work in nursing, and to strengthen commitment on the part of individuals to the ideals and purposes of the profession of nursing.

Men in Nursing Chapter

A chapter exists within the School of Nursing. Reach out to the Graduate Program Coordinator if interested.

Associated Students, Inc (ASI)

MSN students are eligible to run for ASI Senator representing the College of Health and Human Services. If the College's Senator is not from Nursing, the School of Nursing Student Association elects a representative to function as a liaison with the ASI Senator.