



# **Master of Science in Nursing Student Handbook**

**Nurse Educator, Informatics,  
Leadership & Family Nurse  
Practitioner Programs**

**AY 2025-2026**

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## **Welcome Message**

The graduate faculty wishes to welcome you to the Master of Science in Nursing Program at Georgia Southwestern State University. We hope that your educational experience here will be enjoyable, as well as academically challenging and growth promoting. We are committed to promoting excellence in this program and seek to provide our graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively as nursing educators, nurse leaders, or nursing informaticist.

### **GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY**

#### **Description:**

Georgia Southwestern State University is a senior unit of the University System of Georgia. The University was founded in 1906 as the Third District Agricultural and Mechanical School. In 1926, it was granted a charter authorizing the school to offer two years of college work and to change the name to Third District Agricultural and Normal College. The name was changed to Georgia Southwestern College in 1932, at which time it was placed under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. In 1964, the College became a senior unit of the University System, conferring its first baccalaureate degrees in June of 1968. Graduate work was added to the curriculum in June of 1973. In July 1996, the Board of Regents authorized state university status, and the institution became Georgia Southwestern State University.

The University is located on 250 acres of improved wooded land plus a golf course in Americus, Georgia, 135 miles south of Atlanta. The attractive campus includes recreational areas, a spring-fed lake, and thirty-three buildings.

The programs and educational opportunities at Georgia Southwestern State University have many distinctive features. As a residential university with some online programs, Georgia Southwestern serves a diverse student body with programs leading to bachelors, master's, and education specialist degrees. While GSW primarily draws students from Southwest Georgia, the University's wide variety of programs has attracted students from across Georgia, as well as out-of-state and internationally.

Georgia Southwestern fulfills its commitment to research and public service through the individual efforts of an outstanding faculty and the focused activities of specific centers, which rely heavily on external funding. The Center for Business and Economic Development in collaboration with the College of Business and Computing conducts research on regional economic issues and facilitates development activities in the region. The university is home to the Association of Global South Studies, an international interdisciplinary organization devoted to the study of the Global South. Originally founded as the Association of Third World Studies in 1983 by former GSW emeritus professor, Dr. Harold Isaacs, the Association of Global South Studies eventually gained a "Consultative Status" as a non-governmental organization (NGO) to the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its journal, the Journal of Global South Studies, is published by the University Press of Florida and contributes to the university's international reputation."

This **MSN Handbook** is designed to guide your progression through the nursing curriculum and should be maintained throughout the program as a reference. The policies, guidelines and resources contained in this handbook serve to guide the practice of the School of Nursing. They are consistent with, and expand upon, those of Georgia Southwestern State University. Policies of Georgia Southwestern, as well as a list of student rights and responsibilities, are outlined in the ***Graduate Bulletin*** found on the GSW website. This handbook is divided into sections: first portion containing vital information related to mission/policies; second portion containing MSN information related to informatics/educator/leader; last portion containing information related to FNP program. Please make sure to read all the first portion and then the next section related to your specific track/program.

***All specific course policies and standards will accompany the course syllabus.***

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) & Nondiscrimination Notice**

GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences wishes to ensure that access to its facilities, programs and services is available to all students, including students with disabilities (as defined by Sections 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008) and all students can study and practice nursing with or without reasonable accommodation. GSW's School of Nursing provides reasonable accommodation for all students on a nondiscriminatory basis consistent with legal requirements as outlined in the above cited acts. To be eligible for accommodations, a student must have a documented disability of (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such impairment; or, (c) be regarded as having such a condition.

GSW does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, Veteran status, gender, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities, including admissions, employment, as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Titles VI and VII of Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and other applicable statutes, Regulations, and Georgia policies.

### **Statement on Disabilities and Accessibility**

Georgia Southwestern State University is committed to provide both physical accessibility and access to information resources and technologies to individuals with disabilities. To that end, the Office of Accommodations and Access, located in Sanford Hall, provides support and resource information for students with documented qualifying disabilities and operates under the guidelines of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act and its amendments (ADAAA). GSW strives to have a website that is accessible to all individuals. Report accessibility problems to Office of Accommodations and Access at 229.931.2661 or 229.931.2085.

If you have questions or concerns regarding matters not addressed by the contents of this handbook, please don't hesitate to contact us. We hope you have a wonderful experience!

## **HANDBOOK DISCLAIMER**

*Every effort has been made to verify the accuracy of information in this publication. Nevertheless, the GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences reserves the right to amend or add to the academic policies and scholastic regulations at any time, provided that such changes or additions are intended to improve the quality of education and are introduced in a fair and deliberate manner with appropriate notice provided to all students affected by the changes. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences reserves the right to change without prior notice: admission and degree requirements, curriculum, courses, teaching personnel, rules, regulations, fees, and any other matter described in this handbook. This handbook does not constitute a contract, expressed or implied, between any student or faculty member and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences. The College of Nursing and Health Sciences always retains the right to dismiss any student who does not attain and maintain adequate academic performance or who does not exhibit the personal and professional qualifications required for nursing professionals. Any of the policies contained within this Student Handbook related to student progress in a degree program or graduation may be waived (only if consistent with existing GSW policy) following review and written approval by the relevant College of Nursing and Health Sciences Associate Dean and Dean. It is the responsibility of each student enrolled in the College of Nursing and Health Sciences to know current academic policies of the University, general and specific requirements, and policies that apply to the graduate nursing program.*

### **GSW Mission Statement**

Georgia Southwestern State University is a state university serving a diverse population of students, offering a range of strong undergraduate and graduate programs in a vibrant learning environment. The University is a collegial community that values collaboration and community engagement with an emphasis on faculty, staff, and student interactions. An active student body and state of the art amenities enhance the learning experience on a visually appealing campus located in historic Americus, Georgia.

### **GSW Vision Statement**

GSW aspires to be an engaged, progressive, and inclusive university that serves as a vibrant center of learning, culture, and economic development for Southwestern Georgia and beyond. The core values of GSW are:

**People:** Build life-long connections between campus and community members who will promote mutual growth & development.

**Purpose:** Foster active personal exploration among students and support them as they develop into the people they want to become.

**Profession:** Provide academic and co-curricular opportunities to allow students to be competitive in the marketplace and graduate fields of study.

**Service:** Value giving back to the communities in which we live and work.

**Inclusiveness:** Committed to a campus that values diversity in a climate of mutual respect.

### **MSN Program Mission**

The mission of the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program is to prepare safe, competent, compassionate nurses, who in collaboration with others, provide or facilitate high quality and efficient competency-based, person-centered care in a global society. Students achieve academic excellence through a vibrant learning environment using evidence-based practice and creative inquiry. The mission aims to prepare nursing leaders as lifelong learners in their profession as they contribute to the health of the communities in which they live and work.

### **Mission Statement of GSW School of Nursing**

The mission of the School of Nursing is to prepare safe, competent, and compassionate professional nurses, who, in collaboration with others, provide or facilitate high quality and efficient competency-based, person-centered care in a global society. Students achieve academic excellence through a vibrant learning environment using evidence-based practice and creative inquiry. This mission aims to prepare nursing leaders as lifelong learners in their profession as they contribute to the health of the communities in which they live and work.

### **Philosophy/Organizing Framework**

The philosophy/organizing framework and learning outcomes of the graduate nursing program are consistent with the vision and mission of Georgia Southwestern State University, emphasizing academic excellence through learner centered teaching, evidence-based practice, creative inquiry, and student engagement. Professional success is promoted through lifelong

learning, leadership, collaborative partnerships and service. Our philosophy serves as a guiding foundation for the degree programs and articulates the faculty's beliefs related to the cultivation of excellence in learning and quality education. We believe all nursing care should be person-centered. Person-centered care recognizes the patient or designee as the source of control and full partner in providing compassionate and coordinated care based on respect for the person's preferences, values, and needs. The person's own values and preferences should be considered and reflected in the plan of care. We believe that to deliver person-centered care, nursing practice should be **evidence-based**. Evidence-based practice integrates the best research evidence, clinical expertise, and person/family preferences and values in making decisions about the care of individuals. We believe that the application of **quality improvement** methods and principles are essential in achieving desired health outcomes for individuals and populations. Quality improvement uses data to monitor the outcomes of care processes and uses improvement methods to design and test changes to continuously improve the quality and safety of health care systems.

We believe **safety** is an essential component of all nursing care. Safe nursing care minimizes the risk of harm to patients and providers through system effectiveness, and individual performance. Creating a culture of safety within the clinical environment is essential in providing quality patient care. We believe nurses deliver person-centered care as members of an interdisciplinary team. **Collaboration** involves functioning effectively within nursing and inter-professional teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making with patients and families to achieve quality patient care. We further believe **innovation** is a crucial component of nursing care. Innovation is the acceptance of change and is part of a dynamic and challenging nursing practice. Innovation includes informatics, which is the use of information and technology to communicate, manage knowledge, mitigate error, and support decision-making. We believe **compassion**, which is at the heart of the nursing profession, involves the development of a committed, nurturing relationship, characterized by responsiveness to others and respect for their dignity, values, and culture. We believe nursing practice must reflect an understanding of and respect for each individual and for human diversity. We believe nursing education promotes the intellectual, personal, and social growth of the learner. Knowledge is achieved through a collaborative process that involves a shared responsibility between the teacher and learner. The goal is to assist the learner towards the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to meet the challenges of a dynamic and evolving profession. Nursing education is designed to foster the development of professional nursing roles which includes provider of care, manager of care, and member of the profession. The learner will be prepared to practice comprehensive nursing care which includes health promotion, disease prevention, health restoration, and health teaching to individuals, families, and communities. Nursing education at Georgia Southwestern State University fosters an attitude which values lifelong learning to maintain high quality, person-centered care in a global society.

The graduate nursing programs are based upon based on the faculty's beliefs about PERSON-CENTERED CARE, EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE, QUALITY IMPROVEMENT, SAFETY, COLLABORATION, INNOVATION, COMPETENCY and COMPASSION. These concepts serve as the conceptual model for the curriculum of the MSN program.

The mission and core values of the university are congruent with the mission of the CONHS, the



mission of the School of Nursing, and the graduate nursing program's philosophy and conceptual framework.

### **GSW Mission Congruent with School of Nursing Mission**

<b>GSW Mission</b>	<b>CONHS Mission</b>	<b>GSW SON Mission</b>	<b>GSW Core Values</b>	<b>Graduate Nursing Philosophy</b>
... <i>serving a <b>diverse</b> population of students, offering a range of strong undergraduate and graduate programs in a vibrant learning environment.</i>	.... <i>serving a <b>diverse</b> population of students and offering undergraduate programs in nursing and health sciences, as well as graduate programs in nursing.</i>	...to prepare safe, competent, and compassionate professional nurses, who in collaboration with others, provide or facilitate high quality person-centered care in a <b>global society</b> . <i>Students achieve academic excellence through a <b>vibrant learning environment...</b></i>	<b>People:</b> We build lifelong connections between campus and community members that promote mutual growth and development well.  <b>Inclusiveness:</b> We are committed to a campus that values diversity in a climate of mutual respect.  <b>Profession:</b> We provide academic and co-curricular opportunities that allow students to be competitive in the marketplace and graduate fields of study.	... <i>nursing education promotes the intellectual, personal, and social growth of the learner; fosters an attitude that values lifelong learning to maintain high quality person-centered care in a <b>global society</b></i>  <b>Professional roles:</b> Person-centered care Evidence-based practice Quality Improvement Safety Collaboration Innovation Compassion
<i>An active student body and state-of-the-art amenities enhance the</i>		<i>To prepare <b>safe, competent, and compassionate</b></i>	<b>Purpose:</b> We foster active personal exploration among students and support them	<i>We believe that nursing education <b>promotes the</b></i>

<i>learning experience</i>		<i>professional nurses....</i>	<i>as they develop into the people they want to become.</i>	<b><i>intellectual, personal, and social growth of the learner.</i></b>
<i>The University is a collegial community that values collaboration and community engagement with an emphasis on faculty, staff, and student interactions.</i>	<i>.... values collaboration and community engagement among faculty, staff, and students".</i>	<i>...prepares nurses to lead in their profession as they contribute to the health of the communities in which they live and work</i>	<b><i>People:</i></b> We build lifelong <b><i>connections between campus and community members</i></b> that will promote mutual growth and development. <b><i>Service:</i></b> We value giving back to the communities in which we live and work.	<b><i>Professional Role: Collaboration...</i></b> <i>functioning effectively within nursing and inter-personal teams, fostering open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision-making with persons and families to achieve quality patient care.</i>

## Conceptual Framework

The mission, philosophy, and conceptual framework guide curriculum development to ensure that nursing education faculty can prepare students to become excellent nurses who are leaders and pioneers in their profession. Guidelines from professional practice organizations, including the American Nurses Association (ANA), Americans Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN) Essentials of Masters of Nursing Education (2021), National Organization of Nurse Practitioner Faculties (NONPF), Institute of Medicine (IOM), Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) web site, and Georgia Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations were used to develop the GSW's SON framework.

Georgia Southwestern State University's nursing curriculum is framed around the central construct of person-centered care, emphasizing the importance of educating students to tailor healthcare to each patient's needs and preferences. To provide person-centered care, GSW SON believes that education should focus on the following seven constructs: (1) competent, (2) evidence-based practice, (3) quality, (4) safety, (5) collaboration, (6) innovation, and (7) compassion. The model depicts that each construct has a bidirectional relationship with the central construct. The circular motion of the model illustrates that nursing education is a field of dynamic changes and is an ongoing process in which the constructs are constantly evolving and changing, meaning that nursing educators must constantly assess and evaluate their methods to ensure the knowledge and skills being taught foster excellence in students.



### **Program Accreditation**

Accreditation: The Georgia Southwestern State University Master of Science in nursing program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org> as well as by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) as an institution.

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Decatur, GA 30033-4097  
404-679-4500**

**Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education  
655 K Street NW  
Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20001  
202-887-6791**

## Administration / Faculty / Staff

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## **Information related to all MSN programs**

### **MSN Academic Policies and Progression**

The MSN program can be completed in two academic years, or four semesters of full-time study. All requirements, including transient credit course work, must be completed within five (5) calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in coursework, without regard to the initial admission status and without regard to credit hours earned.

### **MSN PROGRAM ADMISSION PROCEDURES AND CRITERIA**

PHASE I: APPLICATION: Students must first apply to GSW and the MSN Graduate School for admission, designating Nursing as their preferred major. Follow all the guidelines listed on the website.

PHASE II: REVIEWS & ACCEPTANCE: Notification of acceptance will occur after all candidates have been reviewed and a completed rubric will be utilized as the metric of evaluation using GPA, letters of references, and years of RN experience. All requirements for the graduate nursing program must be completed and verified prior to acceptance to programs. Following the admission committee selection decision, interviewees will receive a letter assigning one of the following categories: Acceptance, Conditional Acceptance, or Regret. Admission to the nursing program is competitive, and the number of students is limited by the number of faculty and clinical facilities available. Meeting minimal requirements does NOT guarantee acceptance. When faculty-to-student ratio limits the acceptance of all qualified students, students will be granted admission according to their qualifications and the completeness of their application packet.

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA: CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS In addition to the criteria listed above, students who are interested in our certification programs, please see website for information regarding admission criteria for each certification. GSW has certifications for nursing leadership, nursing informatics, healthcare informatics, nursing education, and Family Nurse Practitioner. The applicant must meet with the Graduate Nursing Programs Associate Dean/Family Nurse Practitioner Program Director/and/or our graduate student nursing coordinator to design a program of study to complete certification's requirements.

### **TRANSFER CREDIT POLICY**

Only nine (9) graduate credit hours may be transferred from another accredited institution to Georgia Southwestern State University for the purpose of partially fulfilling requirements for the master's degree. Transfer credits are subject to the following requirements:

- Transfer credits must be approved in advance by the MSN Program Associate Dean/FNP Director.
- Transfer credits are limited to courses in which a grade of "B" or better was awarded.
- The approved transfer credits cannot be older than (5) years
- Courses offered for transfer credit must have the approval of the Vice President for Academic Affairs following the recommendations of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School and the Dean of the College of Nursing & Health Sciences.
- A petition of acceptance of transfer credit must be filed with an official academic transcript and a copy of the catalog description of the transfer courses and or a copy of the course syllabus from the institution.
- The credit hours may not exceed the nine semester hours of graduate credit allowed by transfer credit.
- The course(s) must be taken in residence at an

accredited institution and not by correspondence. • The course(s) must be designated as graduate course(s) in an approved graduate program. • The course(s) must be equated with course(s) in the curriculum of the graduate program or considered as an acceptable elective. • The student should follow up on the application for transfer credits within one month of the application date, provided that no response has been received by the registrar to ensure approval prior to registering for courses.

### **ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION**

An academic student coordinator MSN advisor is assigned to each student at the time of acceptance into GSW MSN program. Students are expected to confer with their advisors on a regular basis. Each student is provided with access to DegreeWorks, GSW's course planning system. Students are encouraged to access DegreeWorks and develop their plan of study. This plan should be reviewed with your advisor during advisement and updated at each subsequent advising session. It is the student's responsibility to confirm with registrar's office on any previous transferred credits to the MSN program and to approve courses which are registered for the student by the MSN student coordinator. Students currently enrolled in GSW may refer to the current semester's Academic Calendar for information regarding Priority and Regular Registration periods. The academic calendar also contains important dates for advisement- and registration-related processes, such as the dates for Schedule Adjustments (Add/Drop), change of major deadline, fee payments (and the date on which classes are dropped for nonpayment), and the last day to withdraw without academic penalty. Students should review this information regularly, as dates are subject to change without notification. The add/drop period is a time in which a student can make scheduling adjustments to their courses for the semester. Please consult with the MSN student coordinator and the financial advisors before making any adjustments to schedules as this can have a negative impact to your MSN progression and financial obligations.

### **Candidates for the Master of Science in Nursing degree must meet the following standards.**

- A 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale is required in all courses attempted to satisfy degree requirements.
- To progress in the graduate nursing program, a grade of A or B must be earned in all courses. If a grade of C is earned, the course must be repeated. A student may petition to repeat a course one time. If a student makes a second C or a C in a repeated course, the student will be dismissed from the program.
- A grade of F will result in dismissal from the program.
- In any graduate degree program, all degree requirements must be completed within five (5) calendar years from the date of initial enrollment in course work, without regard to the initial admission status and without regard to credit hours earned.
- A grade of I may be given in extenuating circumstances. If a grade of I is not removed before the end of the following semester, it automatically becomes an F. Students will not be allowed to progress in clinical courses until the grade of I is removed.
- Students who do not enroll for the semester in which they were admitted must defer their admission if they desire to attend at a later date. A written formal letter from the student indicating the semester in which they plan to enroll will satisfy their deferment.

- Applicants denied admission to GSW's MSN program may appeal the decision but only on the grounds that the denial was based on an inaccurate evaluation of minimum program requirements. \*Meeting minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to graduate school. Appeals must be in writing, state specifically the grounds for the appeal, with supporting documentation, and be delivered to GSW's Graduate School of Nursing Associate Dean.
- A student who withdraws from the program may be readmitted to the program within one year of withdrawal. After one year, the student must reapply to the program. Acceptance is not guaranteed. All readmission requirements must be met.
- If a student is seeking readmission to the Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) program after dismissal due to academic integrity violations or professional behavior violations which are outlined in the handbook, the following steps must be taken to be considered. The eligibility for readmission is as follows: The applicant may request consideration for readmission under the following conditions:
  - A. The applicant must submit a formal, written letter to request a meeting with the Admission Committee to include the Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing and the Dean of CONHS. The letter must articulate the reasons for dismissal, steps taken for personal/professional development, and justification for readmission. The applicant must wait a year after dismissal before submitting a letter for readmission.
  - B. Upon receiving the applicant's letter, the committee members will convene to review the request, may request additional documentation/evidence of remediation efforts to assist with the decision-making process. Based on the decision, the committee will notify the student of their readmission consideration within 10 business days (excluding holidays/weekends). Approval for readmission is contingent upon the student demonstrating a clear understanding of program standards and values, evidence of behavior changes, commitment to upholding academic and professional expectations, and must follow same guidelines/policies on program completion and admission requirements.

### **GSW FACULTY AND STAFF APPLICANTS TO GRADUATE PROGRAM**

When a full-time employee desires to enter a graduate program, the immediate supervisor and the Dean of the College must be notified by the employee. The employee and administrators must reach a common written understanding about job requirements and academic responsibilities. Faculty, staff and administrative personnel are eligible to be enrolled in a graduate degree program of study either (1) within their own college or (2) in a college other than the one in which they are employed if there is neither conflict of interest nor a restriction established by the policies in this document. However, employees of Georgia Southwestern State University shall not be allowed to seek a graduate degree in a program in which they are in a position to alter graduate records.

## **GRADUATION CLEARANCE APPLICATION FOR DEGREE**

All students are required to apply for graduation. The graduation application signals the student's intent to graduate from Georgia Southwestern State University and begins the audit and commencement process for each student. An "Application for Graduation and Degree Evaluation" must be filed at least two (2) semesters prior to the term you expect to graduate. The application may be secured via the Office of the Registrar's webpage. On this application, students must indicate intended date of graduation and their degree program. The Office of the Registrar, in conjunction with the student's major department, will review the student's course of study and determine if the student has or will meet the requirements to graduate by the date requested. If approved, the student will be emailed a copy of the audit and will be directed to begin graduation clearance procedures. Any student who fails to graduate as indicated is required to complete another form. Students who complete all requirements for a degree at the close of the summer, fall, or spring semester will be given a statement, upon request, certifying requirements have been completed.

## **POST-GRADUATION ACTIVITIES**

Post-graduation, students are encouraged to participate in the following activities: 1. Become members of the Georgia Southwestern State University's Alumni Association. 2. Keep up-to-date name and address information on file with both GSW and the Department of Nursing 3. Report professional and educational advancement in the field of nursing or any other field directly (via email, telephone, or social media) or via our Alumni Survey submitted post-graduation 4. Complete alumni and employer surveys and send results of certifications to nursing division post-graduation.

## **STUDENT COMMUNICATION POLICIES FACULTY CONTACT**

The graduate nursing student is encouraged to maintain close contact with the Graduate Nursing Programs Director and/or their faculty. Communication with faculty members is facilitated by scheduling appointments to discuss concerns via email. The student should notify the individual at least 1 hour in advance if he/she is unable to keep the appointment. Other mechanisms for communicating with faculty include the use of the faculty member's physical mailbox, located within the Department of Nursing's main office. Please contact a member of the Department of Nursing's administrative staff for any mail deliveries or see faculty's primary source for communication on course syllabi.

## **STUDENT EMAIL ADDRESS POLICY**

All nursing students must have a student email address assigned by Georgia Southwestern State University. All communication from the Department of Nursing is sent to this email address or via GOVIEW email; other email accounts (e.g., @gmail.com, @yahoo.com, @hotmail.com, @bellsouth.net, etc.) will not be used by the Department. Setup of your GSW student email address is typically done automatically upon acceptance into the institution. Rationale behind the policy is based on compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), which can be fully reviewed in the GSW graduate bulletin.



## **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHT AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

GSW is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, U.S. Public Law 93-380. FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of a student's educational records. This Act prohibits University Officials from disclosing any records, including grade reports, academic standing, transcripts of records, or any other records, files, documents, and materials, in whatever medium, which may contain information directly related to the student and from which the student can be individually identified. For more information, please visit the U.S. Department of Education's FERPA website or contact the Office of the Registrar. GSW must have a signed acknowledgement from the student before education information can be released to a person or entity other than the student. This written consent can be satisfied by completing the "Authorization to Release Information (FERPA Form)" (otherwise known as the "Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act [FERPA] Release Form") via the Office of the Registrar's Forms webpage and submitting it to the Department of Nursing (as well as the Office of the Registrar). This consent shall be valid through the student's enrollment at GSW and thereafter but may be modified or rescinded by the student by written request or updated FERPA form.

## **NOTICE OF CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS, OR PHONE NUMBER**

To ensure communication with students is not affected by changes of name or contact information (e.g., mailing address, email address, phone numbers), students should ensure that this information is current and accurate. While some information can be changed by logging into Banner and updating the appropriate information under the "Personal Information" tab, other changes can only be made by the Office of the Registrar. Students who wish to notify the University that their name, address, or phone is either displaying incorrectly or has recently changed is responsible completing and submitting the "Notice of Change of Name, Address, or Phone" to the Office of the Registrar as soon as possible.

## **ONLINE ATTENDANCE**

Attendance in online classes is verified in terms of participation, time spent in a particular unit or other part of online courseware, time spent in chats and online discussion, quality and quantity of chat and online discussion content, quality and quantity of e-mail, quality and quantity of course work, test participation, and other considerations. Distance learning courses at GSW are instructor-led classes, not independent study or correspondence courses. Students are expected to engage actively in the course content, participate in student-teacher and student-student communications, and complete assignments and tests according to the requirements and schedule of the course professor. The GOVIEW course homepage will host several facilitated activities for the students, including the syllabus, required activities and assignments, course calendar, and a gradebook to track individual progress. Students are expected to visit the course homepage daily to check for emails and announcements, download appropriate course material, and post required assignments. Your timely responses to the weekly assignments and discussions will be used to validate your attendance which will be within the course orientation module in every MSN course. Failure to respond on-time weekly will be considered a missed class. Failure to participate, communicate, or meet course requirements within the time frame required by the instructor may reduce the grade for the course or initiate faculty-withdrawal procedures as noted below (see course syllabi for specifics). Divisions or departments may have class attendance policies of a more specific nature within this general policy statement. Each instructor shall provide detailed policies

and procedures in writing to each student at the beginning of the course.

### **Academic Load**

Graduate students taking 9 or more semester credit hours are considered full time. Graduate students may take a maximum of 15 hours per term. Students taking less than 9 semester credit hours will be considered part time.

### **TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS**

As the graduate-level nursing programs available at GSW are fully online, students should be able to perform the following basic computer operations: • Downloading and installing new software; • Starting and closing various computer programs; • Copying, saving, moving, and deleting files on your computer; • Navigating web browsers, such as Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, and/or Safari; • Familiarity with word processing software such as Microsoft Word and • Utilizing email for communication and to exchange files. Students must have access to a reliable computer and stable internet access and should be comfortable using technology to perform tasks such as downloading, uploading, and emailing files; working with email; and joining webinar sessions (such as WebEx/Teams/Zoom), which may require access to a microphone, speakers, and webcam. Please be aware that computers (laptop and desktop setups) more than 3- to 4-years of age may not be able to satisfactorily run some software required by courses. Please make sure you have a webcam that is detachable for proper scanning of the room prior to testing. Please inform your instructor prior to the beginning of the semester if you suspect that your computer may not have the specifications/requirements necessary to run any specialized software required by the course. You must have a working camera for all testing required in coursework.

### **CURRICULUM CHANGES**

The faculty may change or alter the curriculum format or chronology, didactic or clinical course structure, and departmental policies as needed to improve the educational experiences of the students or meet the needs of the University.

## **Student Support and Resources**

Course faculty provide academic advice and support for specific course material and assignments. Each faculty member's scheduled office hours are posted within their syllabi. Students may also request an appointment with the faculty member via email outside their designated office hours. It is strongly recommended that any desired meetings with faculty, regardless of office hours, are scheduled in advance. Faculty will respond to emails promptly, but please allow up to 48 hours for a response, excluding weekends. \*See course syllabi for all specifics.

### **Student Representatives to Committees:**

Students are encouraged to participate in nursing faculty meetings through a representative elected/appointed by their peers. At the beginning of each cohort's first semester in the nursing

program, their peers will select one student representative and one alternate within each specific track. Representatives are encouraged to serve for one academic year. Student representatives are responsible for collecting and presenting general classmate concerns and program feedback during faculty meetings and participating in discussions of non-confidential topics.

**Tutoring:**

When available, tutoring services are provided through the tutoring center located in Canes Central. Any student who is interested in tutoring services should visit the following link: <https://www.gsw.edu/academic-resources/tutoring/>

**Writing Center:**

A writing center, staffed with consultants is available for students. Consultants assist students through all stages of the writing process. See the link below for more information or to schedule an appointment.

<https://www.gsw.edu/academic-resources/writing-center/>

**Office of Accommodations and Access:**

Accommodations are available to students who qualify. Please visit the link below for more information:

<https://www.gsw.edu/accommodations/>

**Scholarships and Financial Aid:**

The School of Nursing awards multiple scholarships each year. Information about scholarships may be found at the link below: <https://www.gsw.edu/college-of-nursing-and-health-sciences/scholarships>. The Student Services Coordinator can offer assistance with the application process. For more details on scholarships and financial aid, you can visit our website at

<https://gsw.edu/financial-aid/index>

**School of Nursing Advisor:**

When students enroll at GSW, they are assigned a Nursing Advisor who will work closely with them to plan their program progression. However, it is the student's responsibility to seek advisement and ensure program completion actively. It is important for the student to initiate meetings with the Advisor before term registration. Additionally, each student is personally responsible for meeting all academic requirements set by the University and the School of Nursing.

**Inclement Weather Guidelines and Emergency Alert System:**

Please note that closure of the GSW campus requires approval from the President (or designee). If the campus has been closed in the event of inclement weather, notification will first come from the GSW emergency alert system. Each person can be notified by six different communication methods. Students are urged to register for this alert system by using the link below:

<https://www.gsw.edu/campus-technology/emergency-notification-center>

To obtain additional information on the closing of campus, the following resources can be used: the GSW home page, official GSW social media accounts, and local radio and TV stations. \*If the campus HAS NOT been closed, there WILL NOT be a message on the GSW home page. If the student lives outside of the campus area, they can choose to use their best judgment when deciding whether to travel to campus or the clinical site. If unable to travel, the student must contact a course or clinical faculty member as soon as possible and before the classroom or clinical experiences are scheduled to begin. However, if a student chooses to miss a non-canceled clinical or class, please note that absence policies may be enforced.

#### **Student Health and Counseling Services:**

A student health and counseling center is available to all nursing students. More information regarding the center and services provided can be found by visiting the link below:

<https://www.gsw.edu/health-counseling/>

#### **Nursing Student Expenses:**

Nursing students will incur expenses above the fees identified in the Georgia Southwestern State University Graduate *Bulletin* throughout the nursing program. These additional expenses may include but are not limited to laptops, exam fees, specialty textbooks, computer software, medical supplies and equipment, student nursing organization membership dues, credentialing and documentation software (TYPHON/ACEMAPP), application fees for licensure and testing, and transportation to and from clinical agencies.

## **Withdrawals**

#### **COURSE WITHDRAWAL:**

A course withdrawal is a request by a student to cancel his or her enrollment in a particular CRN after the aforementioned schedule adjustment period for the term/semester. Students should review the current semester's Academic Calendar for the deadline to withdraw from courses without academic penalty. Upon submission and approval of the "Course Withdrawal Form" via the Office of the Registrar, the student is automatically assigned a grade of "W" to indicate a course withdrawal. The "W" will not be calculated in a student's GPA. Additionally, students should be aware that a course withdrawal may or may not include a refund, depending on when the withdrawal is requested. Students should reach out to financial services/student accounts prior to any withdrawal. Withdrawals from courses may affect housing, graduation, athletics, financial aid, and membership in organizations or other opportunities.

#### **SEMESTER WITHDRAWAL:**

A semester withdrawal is a request by a student to drop all classes and/or cease attendance in all classes for the term/semester. Failure to attend class is not equivalent to a withdrawal, and students will not receive an adjustment of charges or grades unless a formal withdrawal is filed with the Office of the

Registrar and approved prior to midterms. If a “Semester Withdrawal Form” is submitted to the Office of the Registrar prior to the end of the schedule adjustment period (as defined by the current semester’s Academic Calendar), all courses will be dropped from the student's schedule. Students must contact financial aid/student accounts prior to any withdrawal. However, if submitted and approved after this period, the student is automatically assigned a grade of “W” to indicate course withdrawal. The “W” will not be calculated in a student’s GPA. Additionally, students should be aware that a course withdrawal may or may not include a refund, depending on when the withdrawal is requested. Furthermore, withdrawals from courses may affect housing, graduation, athletics, financial aid, and membership in organizations or other opportunities.

### **HARDSHIP WITHDRAWAL**

Hardship withdrawals are designed for students who experience a non-academic emergency (e.g., medical, personal, financial) which prevents them from completing their coursework. Hardship withdrawals can help students focus on healing without harming their academic record. All hardship withdrawal requests received after final grades are entered will require a decision from the Provost. Generally, students are not eligible for hardship withdrawals in courses in which they have completed the course requirements (e.g., sat for the final exam or submitted the final project/paper/portfolio). If applicable, the standardized examinations required by certain nursing courses are considered to be a component of those courses’ final exam requirements. Consequently, students who sit for (or forfeit) the first attempt on the standardized examination will be ineligible to receive a hardship withdrawal after this point. It is imperative that students submit a hardship withdrawal request prior to taking any component of a course’s final exam requirement(s). Students may submit a “Hardship Withdrawal Request Form” through the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct. Submission of this form does not guarantee that the hardship withdrawal request will be approved. Reach out to the Graduate Associate Dean for assistance with any hardship withdrawal. As a general rule, the student will be required to submit appropriate documentation related to the hardship withdrawal request.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

GSW values a campus community that encourages personal growth and academic development in an atmosphere of positive influence. We affirm the necessity of academic standards of conduct that allow students, staff and faculty to study together. We value the fair and efficient administration of these standards of conduct. Violations of academic integrity include academic dishonesty; forgery, dishonesty, fraudulent acts, and/or misrepresentation; cooperative or collaborative effort in coursework; abuse of academic materials; submitting work for multiple purposes; and theft.

### **Intellectual Property**

All exams and assignments are considered the intellectual property of GSW. They may not be reproduced, photographed (including cell phone cameras), hand copied, or in any way transferred to any other person, program, or entity. You are on your honor as professional health care providers to do your own work.

### **Academic Integrity Policy**

The Online Master of Science in Nursing Program adheres to the GSW Policy on Academic Integrity. The

GSW Policy is found in the Graduate Bulletin on the GSW Website.

The MSN Program Policy on Academic Integrity sets for the behaviors expected of students in the academic setting. The policy defines student expectations, academic integrity & academic dishonesty and delineates the procedure for handling violations of academic standards.

### **Responsibility of the Student**

As partners in their own learning, students are responsible for making themselves aware of how the principles of academic integrity apply in each academic setting they enter. While the faculty member is responsible for setting expectations, it is the student's responsibility to seek guidance from the faculty member, especially when unsure of how to apply the principles in a particular situation. When in doubt, seek guidance from the instructor.

### **Principles of Academic Integrity**

Accurate Attribution of Ideas: While the free exchange of ideas does not demand that every idea a person expresses be her or his own original thought, it does demand that a person accurately represent the origin of the thoughts she or he expresses. The forms of attribution vary depending upon the formality of the setting in which ideas are exchanged. In conversation, attribution might be as simple referring to where you heard an idea while in a class presentation or a written assignment, a specific style of attribution or documentation will be required. The school of Nursing follows APA (7<sup>th</sup> edition Professional version) guidelines to accurately credit sources in academic writing.

### **Academic Dishonesty**

Violations of academic integrity will be subject to sanction by the MSN Academic Integrity Committee. The examples given below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic dishonesty may be judged. The intentional misrepresentation of one's work to deceive for personal gain, when in fact said work is not that person's or assisting another to do the same. When the instructor has sufficient evidence of cheating or plagiarism, he or she may impose disciplinary actions such as assigning a failing grade to the student's assignment, quiz, paper, or test. If plagiarism or cheating involves major course work such as plagiarizing a research paper or cheating on a final exam, the instructor may fail the student in the course. Academic Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication.

- Definition of cheating: Cheating can be, but is not limited to, a student using electronic technology, notes, or other written materials not permitted by the instructor; looking at other students' papers / computers without the instructor's permission; requesting answers from other students, alteration of grades or marks by the student in an effort to change the earned grade or credit; or working with other students when independent work is required. Situations where cheating may occur are during tests, exams, quizzes, or other similar methods of evaluation.
- Definition of plagiarism: Plagiarism is the appropriation of language, thoughts, or ideas of another author and claiming that as one's own. Plagiarism is work not produced by the student, or work that does not credit borrowings from the original source(s). Plagiarism can also be viewed as submitting substantially the same work to satisfy requirements for one course or academic requirement that has been submitted in satisfaction of requirements for another course or academic requirement, without permission of the instructor of the course for which the work is being submitted or supervising authority for the academic requirement or

the use of AI. • Definition of fabrication: Fabrication is the falsification of data, information, or citations in any formal academic exercise. This includes making up citations to back up arguments or inventing quotations. Some other examples of fabrication would include making up data, changing data to support your hypothesis, claiming to have consulted sources that one really did not use. University Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism Cheating and plagiarism are non-academic grounds for expulsion from GSW. No student shall give or receive any assistance not authorized by the professor in the preparation of any assignment, report, project, or examination to be submitted as a requirement for academic credit.

## **AI POLICY**

Recent technology innovations have made it possible to create academic work through AI. These systems take everyday language commands and rearrange words or images that were originally made by others into new forms to satisfy the user's request.

Although potentially useful, there are serious concerns about the impact of AI upon professional education.

The accuracy of AI is questionable.

The dishonesty problem: Using AI technology to generate college work is a form of plagiarism - misrepresenting someone else's work as your own. The original work of other authors is used to create the AI systems, yet it often goes unacknowledged in the AI outputs.

The personal growth problem: Using AI to do assignments may defeat self-improvement efforts.

AI-generated work is low effort, but developing higher-level thinking skills requires a high degree of effort.

AI-generated work does not meet competency standards.

Technologies that copy the work of others are contrary to the goal of developing our own opinions and reasoning skills.

Do **NOT** use Grammarly

For these reasons, all work submitted for MSN student assignments is expected to be original work, rather than generated by AI technology.

## **TURNITIN**

Online courses at GSW utilize plagiarism software tools such as Turnitin as a positive instructional tool and to promote academic integrity. In Turnitin, green indicates a similarity score of 1-24% which means the submitted work has a low level of matching text with other sources in various databases. All MSN assignments must be in green status. Any assignment with a Turnitin status other than green must be revised and resubmitted prior to the assignment due date. It is the responsibility of the student to submit the assignment early enough to review their Turnitin score and make revisions, if necessary, prior to the assignment due date. Turnitin originality reports may take 24-48 hours to populate. Please communicate with your faculty if you have questions or concerns and need guidance. Late penalties may apply if revisions are needed after the assignment due date. If the Turnitin score is in red after the due date, a zero will be given and students must meet with the course faculty. Plagiarism and/or resubmission policy

will apply. Please refer to the orientation module regarding Turnitin scores/colors.

#### **FORGERY, DISHONESTY, FRAUDULENT ACTS, AND/OR MISREPRESENTATION**

1. Forgery of names, signatures, documents (personal, public, and/or private) will not be tolerated. 2. Forgery, deceptive acts, misrepresentation and/or dishonest acts include, but are not limited to materials, alteration, misuse of University documents, records, or student identification cards, or documents and records belonging to another, cheating, plagiarism, or other forms of academic dishonesty; tampering with the election of any University recognized student organization; malfeasance of misuse of elective or appointive office student organization, its members, or the welfare of the University community.

- **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, asking someone to write part or all of an assignment, 13 copying someone else's work (published or unpublished), inadequately documenting research, downloading material from electronic sources without appropriate documentation, copying and pasting from sources or representing others' works or ideas as one's own. This includes giving or receiving work submitted by a student in a previous semester.
- **Self-Plagiarism (Multiple Submissions)** A student may not submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty to whom the work is submitted for additional credit. If a work product is to be substantially revised or updated, the student must contact the faculty member in advance to discuss necessary revisions. In cases where multiple submissions are approved, faculty members will require copies of the original documents for comparison.
- **Cheating on Examinations** Cheating on an exam includes, but is not limited to, giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an in-class or out-of-class exam. Examples of unauthorized help include using unauthorized notes in either hard copy or electronic form, viewing another student's exam, taking pictures of exams with cell phones or other electronic devices, allowing another student to view one's exam, and discussing an exam or sharing information on an exam's content with other students after the exam has occurred in one section but not in another.
- **Unauthorized Collaboration** Unauthorized collaboration includes giving or receiving unauthorized help for work that is required to be the effort of a single student, such as the receiving or giving of unauthorized assistance in the preparation of a laboratory or writing assignment, online



exams, etc. Unauthorized collaboration includes giving your Go VIEW login credentials to anyone; these credentials are for your use only (see also GSW Computer and Network Acceptable Use Policy section Sharing of Access).

- **Falsification:** Falsification includes but is not limited to the fabrication of citations or sources, of experimental or survey results, and of computer or other data. Falsification also includes falsifying or fabrication of clinical experiences or documentation.
- **Direct Quotes** No direct quotes can be used unless it would change the intent of the quote. Example: Dr. Martin Luther King stated “I have a dream” vs. Dr. Martin Luther King stated he had a dream.

### **Process for Resolving Academic Integrity Violations**

Instances of academic dishonesty are a serious violation of academic standards and may result in suspension or expulsion from the MSN program. While faculty members have the primary responsibility for establishing the parameters of academic integrity in the academic situations they supervise, it is the responsibility of all members of the GSW academic community to report suspected instances of academic dishonesty. Therefore, any MSN student may file a complaint to the MSN Faculty, Director of the FNP program or Associate Dean.

Any member of the academic community who has evidence of academic dishonesty should report his or her suspicion and evidence to the faculty member of the student(s) believed to be in violation of the policy. The faculty member is then responsible for responding, and if she or he has adequate evidence, may file an Academic Dishonesty Violation Report with the Academic Integrity Committee.

If an instructor discovers a case of academic dishonesty, he or she will contact the student to discuss the violation. If the student does not contest that a violation has occurred, the faculty member’s syllabus policies will establish how the violation will be handled in his or her course.

If the student does contest violation, the student will contact the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee and provide documentation related to the violation. The Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee will convene a meeting to review the documentation provided.

After review, the student charged with violation of academic integrity will be given the opportunity to meet with the committee, in person or virtually, to offer his or her input related to the violation. The Academic Integrity Committee will discuss the incident to determine if a violation did occur. If the Academic Integrity Committee confirms that a violation has occurred, the faculty member’s syllabus policies, GSW policies, and the MSN program policies will establish how the violation will be handled in the course. If the student does not agree with the decision of the MSN Academic Integrity Committee, an appeal may be filed according the GSW policy.

If there is substantiated evidence that a student has violated academic integrity on any exam or course assignment in the nursing program, they will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment (without the possibility of a retake), fail the course with a letter grade of “F,” and/or and be immediately dismissed

from the program. Additionally, students found violating academic integrity will be ineligible to pursue nursing at GSW in perpetuity, including all existing and future nursing program options at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

## **PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

### **MSN Professional Conduct Guidelines**

The nursing profession holds its members responsible, self-directed, and accountable, to uphold professional behaviors. The School of Nursing adheres to the professional and ethical behaviors set forth in the ANA Code of Ethics, ANA Standards of Nursing Practice, National Council of State Boards of Nursing, and the Rules and Regulations of the State Boards of Nursing. Professional behaviors are linked to positive outcomes and patient safety. MSN students must adhere to the expected professional behaviors and standards to be successful in this program.

MSN students are engaged in several professional relationships and therefore have obligations to different individuals and groups. These include patients and their families, health care personnel, fellow students, community partners, nursing faculty and staff, and other university personnel.

Professionalism and professional ethics are terms that signify certain scholastic, interpersonal and behavioral expectations. Among the characteristics included in this context are the knowledge, competence, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, integrity, and morals displayed by the student to faculty, peers, patients, and colleagues in other health care professions. Students are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional manner and to exhibit characteristics of a professional advanced practice student.

All students enrolled within GSW MSN programs must adhere to the conduct expectations outlined in the Georgia Board of Nursing's Standards of Practice for Registered Professional Nurses, the American Nurses Association's Code of Ethics for Nurses, GSW's Student Code of Conduct, and the behaviors outlined in this handbook. Nursing students are expected to be responsible for their actions and behave in a professional manner toward all University and clinical administrators, faculty, staff, students, and clients while on-campus, online, and in clinical settings. Professional behavior is that which demonstrates respect for others, personal integrity, and responsibility. This includes courtesy, honesty, ethical actions, and responsible communication skills. Students should always be mindful that their conduct and behavior are a reflection of the Department of Nursing, GSW, and the nursing profession as a whole.

GSW's educational mission by enforcing regulations designed to promote an environment in which students can develop intellectually, morally and socially while exercising a balance of partnership and autonomy within the campus community. Academic Honor Pledge As a student of GSW:" I solemnly pledge to always uphold the Academic Honor Code. It is my responsibility to know and understand these rules of conduct. Lack of awareness is not a legitimate reason for failure to abide by the Student Code of Conduct. If I fail to uphold the principles of this Academic Honor Code, I will accept any penalty that may be imposed upon me following due process".

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY**

All students are responsible for reading, understanding, and complying with the Academic Honor Code

Policy. B. If a student sees, knows, or hears of an act of dishonesty, he or she is encouraged to report this suspected violation to the instructor concerned, the course division dean, the Vice President and Provost for Academic Affairs. C. A reminder to the student of their responsibility to uphold the Academic Honor Code: It is understood that all students are required to abide by the GSW Honor Code.

**Professional Behaviors:**

1. **Effective Communication:** The ability to exchange information between individuals with the use of verbal, non-verbal, and written strategies. Use of effective communication strategies enables students to facilitate professional and therapeutic communication with peers, faculty, patients/clients, families, groups, and other professionals. Nursing students are expected to interact with faculty and staff in a thoughtful and professional manner in all interactions involving faculty/staff, patients/clients and their families, other students, the public, and all members of the health care team. MSN students shall not condone or participate in incivility towards other professionals, students, or faculty/staff.
2. **Professional Care:** The MSN student has the responsibility to be prepared for the clinical environment and to deliver safe, quality nursing care. Failing to be prepared for clinical experiences, failing to assess and evaluate a patient/client/ status, and failing to act in the best interest of the patient. Nursing students shall provide care to patients/clients without discrimination based on race, creed, color, sex, age, nationality, sexual orientation, or disability. Students shall demonstrate respect of diverse beliefs held of patients/clients, faculty, staff, and health care professionals.
3. **Confidentiality:** Access to and sharing of information that identifies a specific client, their condition, and other information must be guarded with the best interests of the client in mind. MSN students shall be educated about and adhere to HIPAA policies and institutional policies and procedures, including the National Council of State Boards of Nursing guidelines for use of social media. students may not post, release, or otherwise disclose photos, identifiable case descriptions, images, or records related to the educational, clinical, or research activities of the school via social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), non-educational blogs, message boards, Internet websites, personal e-mail, or anything other than standard professional means of query and/or dissemination.
4. **Representation:** MSN students shall accurately represent themselves as being an advanced practice student to others including, but not limited to peers, faculty and staff members, representatives of the University, patient/client, nurses, and all

members of the health care team. Proper representation is essential for all student work regardless of how it is communicated (written or oral).

5. Assessment of personal competence: MSN students shall seek consultation and supervision whenever their ability to carry out patient/client care is inadequate because of lack of knowledge or experience. Failing to obtain instruction or supervision when implementing nursing care for which one lacks the educational preparation, ability, knowledge, or experiences is unethical.
6. Personal responsibility: MSN students must assume personal responsibility for their own actions and set a high standard of self-expectation. The student is responsible for using sound judgment in not going to clinical if doing so would put others at exposure risk. This is particularly important when working with individuals in certain high-risk categories (compromised immune systems, newborns, elderly, pregnant women). If the student has reason to believe they have been exposed to a contagious illness, have active symptoms, or diagnosed with an infectious disease, they must notify their clinical faculty member to determine the best action which may be staying home and arranging make-up of the clinical experience.
7. Professional demeanor: MSN students are representatives of GSW's School of Nursing and must realize that behavior positively or negatively affects the judgment of others about the School of Nursing and University. When acting as GSW advanced practice students, professional behavior is required both on and off campus and in "virtual sites" (i.e. online activities).

### **Professional Misconduct**

Violation of professional conduct expectations is subject to sanctions up to and including program dismissal.

MSN students as future advanced practice nurses are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and uphold high standards of honesty and ethical behavior in study and clinical practice.

Unethical or unprofessional behavior in the clinical setting demonstrates the lack of integrity needed for advanced practice nursing.

When a faculty member determines a student's behavior reflects unsafe or unethical nursing practice, lack of adherence to established policies and procedures, and/or unprofessional conduct, the MSN faculty reserves the right to immediately assign a course grade of "F" and the student will be administratively withdrawn from the course at that point.

Such behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Committing fraud or deceit while enrolled in the MSN program, including falsifying, plagiarizing, or in a negligent manner making

incorrect entries on records or any other written work, including falsification of Typhoon entries.

- Committing a HIPAA violation including engaging in activities that breach client confidentiality, such as unauthorized access to clients' charts, photocopying documents from the clients' chart, verbally communicating with unauthorized individuals, and communicating to others about client information in public places or posting on social media.
- Participating in disorderly conduct or breach of the peace, such as obstruction or disruption of teaching, physical or verbal abuse, or detention of any person while engaged in any MSN activity. This includes unprofessional and/or inappropriate communication with faculty, staff, clients, or peers.
- Negligently or willfully implementing nursing care in a manner that fails to meet generally accepted standards for the students' level of preparation, such as recommendation for or administration of inappropriate or dangerous medication or performance of procedures without supervision or outside the scope of practice.
- Negligently or willfully violating any rule, regulation, or policy of the MSN program such as testing policies, clinical policies or academic integrity policies.
- Exhibiting a physical, mental, or emotional behavior which renders the student unable to provide nursing care with appropriate skill and safety in accordance with course objectives and clinical facility policies and procedures.
- Any behavior leading to dismissal from a clinical site or experience will result in automatic dismissal from the MSN program.

## **VIOLATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Depending on the nature and severity of the unprofessional conduct, the clinical/course instructor(s) reserves the right to immediately dismiss the student from the classroom or clinical setting for the remainder of the course meeting, which will automatically result in an unexcused absence and, if the violation occurred during clinical experiences, an "Unsatisfactory" in all areas for the clinical day. Students should refer to the appropriate attendance policies detailed within this handbook for more information. Unless the nature and severity of unprofessional conduct constitutes gross professional misconduct, violations of professional conduct will follow the process detailed below:

### **Sanctions for Professional Conduct Violations**

Any professional misconduct violation will result in one of the following sanctions:

- Reprimand – official warning in writing that continuation or repetition of conduct will result in further discipline

- Suspension – exclusion from enrollment in classes for a minimum of 1 year.
- Expulsion – permanent dismissal from the MSN program
- All second offenses will result in expulsion.

**All disciplinary actions will be included in the student's permanent academic record.**

### **Process for Resolving Professional Conduct Violations**

If an instructor discovers a case of professional misconduct, he or she will contact the student to discuss the violation. Penalties may include an administrative withdrawal, failure of the course, and in some cases, expulsion from the program.

After meeting with the instructor, the student may accept the penalty or request a review by the faculty – Academic Integrity & Professional Behavior Committee. If a review is requested, the instructor will contact the Chair of the Academic Integrity & Professional Behavior Committee to schedule a meeting. The instructor and student will provide any related documentation to the Committee. The Committee will convene a meeting to review the documentation provided.

The student charged with violation of professional misconduct will be given the opportunity to meet with the committee, in person or virtually, to offer his or her input related to the violation. The Committee will discuss the incident to determine if a violation did occur. The student will be notified of the decision of the Committee within 24 hours.

If the student does not agree with the decision of the MSN Committee, an appeal may be filed according to the MSN Chain of Command and GSW policy as follows: Associate Dean, Dean, and then the Director of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

### **UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT IN CLINICAL PRACTICE**

Per the Georgia Board of Nursing's Rule 410-10-.03, unprofessional conduct includes "conduct failing to meet the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing nursing practice, which could jeopardize the health, safety, and welfare of the public." This includes, but is not limited to, the following: 1. using inappropriate or unsafe judgment, technical skill or interpersonal behaviors in providing nursing care; 2. performing any nursing technique or procedure for which the nursing student is unprepared by education or experience; 3. disregarding a patient/client's dignity, right to privacy or right to confidentiality; 4. failing to provide nursing care because of diagnosis, age, sex, race, creed or color; 5. abusing a patient/client verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually; 6. falsifying, omitting or destroying documentation of nursing actions on the official patient/client record; 7. abandoning or knowingly neglecting patients/clients requiring nursing care; 8. delegating nursing care, functions, tasks or responsibility to others when the nursing student knows or should know that such delegation is to the detriment of patient safety; 9. providing one's license/temporary permit to another individual for any reason (if applicable); 10. failing to practice nursing in accordance with prevailing nursing standards due to physical or psychological impairment; 11. diverting prescription drugs for own or another person's use; 12. misappropriating money or property from a patient/client or employee; 13. failing to notify the

appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct which may jeopardize patient/client safety

**PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: GEORGIA BOARD OF NURSING STANDARDS OF REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSING PRACTICE**

1. For purposes of O.C.G.A. Secs. 43-26-4 (a)(6)(B)(v) and 43-1-29(6), the Georgia Board of Nursing defines the minimal standards of acceptable and prevailing nursing practice as including, but not limited to the following enumerated standards of competent practice.

2. The Georgia Board of Nursing recognizes that assessment, nursing diagnosis, planning, intervention, evaluation, teaching, and supervision are the major responsibilities of the registered nurse in the practice of nursing. The Standards of Registered Professional Nursing Practice delineate the quality of nursing care which a patient/client should receive regardless of whether it is provided solely by a registered nurse or by a registered nurse in collaboration with other licensed or unlicensed personnel. The Standards are based on the premise that the registered nurse is responsible for and accountable to the patient/client for the quality of nursing care rendered. The Standards of Registered Professional Nursing Practice shall establish a baseline for quality nursing care; be derived from the law governing nursing; apply to the registered nurse practicing in any setting; govern the practice of the licensee at all levels of competency.

**A. Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibility to apply the nursing process** (adapted from American Nurses' Association Code for Nurses and Standards of Practice, 1994). The registered nurse shall:

1. assess the patient/client in a systematic, organized manner;
2. formulate a nursing diagnosis based on accessible, communicable and recorded data (which is collected in a systematic and continuous manner);
3. plan care which includes goals and prioritized nursing approaches or measures derived from the nursing diagnoses;
4. implement strategies to provide for patient/client participation in health promotion, maintenance and restoration;
5. initiate nursing actions to assist the patient/client to maximize her/his health capabilities;
6. evaluate with the patient/client the status of goal achievement as a basis for reassessment, reordering of priorities, new goal-setting and revision of the plan of nursing care;
7. seek educational resources and create learning experiences to enhance and maintain current knowledge and skills appropriate to her/his area of practice.

**B. Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibilities as a member of the nursing profession.** The registered nurse shall:

1. function within the legal boundaries of nursing practice based upon knowledge of statutes and regulations governing nursing;
2. accept responsibility for individual nursing actions and continued competence;
3. communicate, collaborate and function with other members of the health team to provide optimum care;
4. seek education and supervision as necessary when implementing nursing practice techniques;
5. respect the dignity and rights of the patient/client regardless of socioeconomic status, personal attributes or nature of health problems;
6. maintain each patient/client's right to privacy by protecting confidential information unless obligated, by law, to disclose the information;
7. provide nursing care without discrimination on the basis of diagnosis, age, sex, race, creed or color;
8. delegate and supervise only those nursing measures which the nurse knows, or should know, that another person is prepared, qualified, or licensed to perform;
9. retain professional accountability for nursing care when delegating nursing intervention;
10. respect and safeguard the property of clients, family, significant others and the employer;
11. notify the appropriate party of any unprofessional conduct which may jeopardize patient/client safety;
12. Participate in the periodic review and evaluation of the quality and appropriateness of nursing care.

**C. Standards related to the registered nurse's responsibilities in the assignment of patient activities to unlicensed assistive personnel (UAP).** The registered nurse shall:

1. Determine that the care and/or activity to be performed would be based upon orders or directions of a

licensed physician, licensed dentist, licensed podiatrist or person licensed to practice nursing as a registered professional nurse. 2. Assign only care and activities that do not require the skills and knowledge of a person practicing nursing as a registered professional nurse or licensure of another health care professional. The care and activities to be assigned must meet all the following criteria: a. The care and/or activities do not require complex observations or critical decisions. b. The care and/or activities can be safely performed according to exact, unchanging directions. c. The outcome and/or results of the activities are reasonably predictable. 3. Verify that the UAP has the necessary knowledge and skills to accept the assignment. 4. Periodically evaluate and review the quality and appropriateness of the care provided by the UAP. 5. Not assign activities which require licensure to an unlicensed assistive personnel.

### **ETHICAL STANDARDS**

The student who is preparing to enter the profession of nursing is expected to follow the Code of Ethics for Nurses. Each person, upon entering the profession, inherits a measure of responsibility and trust of the profession and the corresponding obligation to adhere to standards of ethical practice and conduct set by the profession. The Code was adopted by the American Nurses' Association (ANA). ANA CODE OF ETHICS 1. The nurse provides services with respect for human dignity and the uniqueness of the client, unrestricted by considerations of social or economic status, personal attributes, or the nature of health problems. 2. The nurse safeguards the clients' right to privacy by judiciously protecting information of a confidential nature. 3. The nurse acts to safeguard the client and the public when health care and safety are affected by the incompetent, unethical, or illegal practice of any person. 4. The nurse assumes responsibility and accountability for individual nursing judgments and actions. 5. The nurse maintains competence in nursing. 6. The nurse exercises informed judgment and uses individual competence and qualifications as criteria in seeking consultation, accepting responsibilities, and delegating nursing activities to others. 7. The nurse participates in activities that contribute to the on-going development of the profession's body of knowledge. 8. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to implement and improve standards of nursing. 9. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to establish and maintain conditions of employment conducive to high quality nursing care. 10. The nurse participates in the profession's efforts to protect the public from misinformation and misrepresentation and to maintain the integrity of nursing. 11. The nurse collaborates with members of the health professions and other citizens in promoting community and national efforts to meet the health needs of the public. (1999, American Nurses Association)

## **ASSIGNMENTS/DISCUSSIONS**

### **LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICIES/ LATE WORK AND INCOMPLETES**

The only other time assignments will be accepted after a course ends is if an Incomplete is approved. Under certain circumstances, students may be assigned a letter grade of "I," indicating an "Incomplete" grade for the course. Per the University's definition, assignment of an "I" grade requires that the student (1) "has completed the majority of work in the course and is making satisfactory progress towards passing the course (i.e., the student can reasonable make a passing grade in the course if missing



assignment(s) are completed)”; (2) “due to reasons judged by the instructor to be legitimate, and/or circumstances beyond their control where the student is unable to complete their coursework” (e.g., medical, personal, or financial reasons); and (3) the student’s coursework can be completed within a prescribed timeframe.” All of the criteria noted here must be applicable and documented in order for the Department to award an “Incomplete” grade. The Department cannot provide exceptions to this policy without first receiving documented approval from the Dean and the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs. Consequently, any student requesting an “Incomplete” who does not satisfy these criteria must first request approval from the Office of Academic Affairs (after notifying the course instructor of their intent). Per the University’s policies, an “Incomplete” grade must be removed no later than “prior to the end of the following semester for which the incomplete was awarded.” The “I” may be changed by completing the incomplete work as prescribed by the instructor. Any “I” grade that is not satisfactorily removed prior to this deadline will automatically be changed to a letter grade of “F” by the Office of the Registrar and will be computed in the student’s GPA. To initiate the “Incomplete” grade process, the student must first secure and complete the “Permit to Remove an Incomplete Grade” written email to the course lead instructor and the course lead instructor will then complete the Change of Grade form to send for signatures from the AD, Dean, and Office of Registrar.

### **LATE DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS**

Participation in the threaded discussions is a core aspect of GSW’s MSN learning environment. It is critical to the success of the classroom environment that students contribute to the threaded discussions in a timely manner. Therefore, make sure to read every syllabus for course work within the MSN program to understand the penalties for late discussions/assignments.

### **GUIDELINES FOR WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**

All written work should adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) 7<sup>th</sup> edition PROFESSIONAL style unless otherwise indicated by the course instructor. Material should be presented concisely but completely and should be grammatically and editorially correct. All papers are expected on the designated due date; however, requests for extensions made in advance of the due date may be granted for extenuating circumstances. Please follow all course syllabi instructions and guidelines for assignments.

### **REVISION & RESUBMISSION OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**

Revision and resubmission of course assignments are at the discretion of the course faculty. Students should follow the course syllabi for specific course process for resubmission of assignments. For courses which allow resubmission/revisions of assignments, the following policy will be followed: For scores less than 70, students will be provided with an opportunity to revise and resubmit the assignment. The original grade and the revised submission grade will be averaged together to earn a max score of 80 in the gradebook for the assignment. The revised submission will be accepted up to 7 days after the original grade is posted to the gradebook. Please note: NOT ALL COURSES ALLOW REVISIONS; PAY ATTENTION TO COURSE SYLLABUS.

### **NETIQUETTE POLICY**

It is important to recognize that the online classroom is still, in fact, a classroom, and certain behaviors

are expected when you communicate with both your peers and your instructors. These guidelines for online behavior and interaction are known as netiquette.

1. Security Remember that your password is the only thing protecting you from pranks or more serious harm. Don't share your password with anyone and change your password if you think someone else might know it. Always log out when you are finished using the system.

2. General Guidelines: When communicating online, you should always: Treat instructor/peers with respect, even in email or in any other online communication. Always use your professor's proper title: Dr. or Prof., or if you are in doubt use Mr. or Ms. Unless specifically invited, don't refer to them by first name. Use clear and concise language. Remember that all college level communication should have correct spelling and grammar. Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you. Use standard fonts such as Times New Roman and use a size 12 or 14 pt. font. Avoid using the caps lock feature AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETTED AS YELLING. Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons like :) or – . Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and your message might be taken seriously, or offensive. Be careful with personal information (both yours and other's). Do not send confidential patient information via e-mail

3. Email Netiquette: When you send an email to your instructor, teaching assistant, or classmates, you should: Use a descriptive subject line; Be brief; Avoid attachments unless you are sure your recipients can open them; Avoid HTML in favor of plain text; Sign your message with your name and student GSW ID number; Think before you send the e-mail to more than one person. Does everyone really need to see your message? Be sure you REALLY want everyone to receive your response when you click, "reply all"; Be sure that the message author intended for the information to be passed along before you click the "forward" button.

4. Message Board Netiquette and Guidelines: When posting on the Discussion Board in your online class, you should: Make posts that are on topic and within the scope of the course material; Take your posts seriously and review and edit your posts before sending; Be as brief as possible while still making a thorough comment; Always give proper credit when referencing or quoting another source; Be sure to read all messages in a thread before replying; Don't repeat someone else's post without adding something of your own to it; Avoid short, generic replies such as, "I agree." You should include why you agree or add to the previous point; Always be respectful of others' opinions even when they differ from your own; When you disagree with someone, you should express your differing opinion in a respectful, non-critical way; Do not make personal or insulting remarks; Be open-minded.

### **SUBMITTING WORK FOR MULTIPLE PURPOSES**

Submitting without prior permission, any work submitted to fulfill another academic requirement. This includes work first produced in connection with classes at either GSW or other institutions attended by the student. THEFT Stealing, taking or obtaining in any unauthorized manner information related to any academic work. Examples include, but are not limited to: stealing exams, grade books, books, papers, computer equipment and data, and laboratory materials.

# TESTING

## TESTING POLICIES

Graduate nursing students are required to take their examinations as a proctored exam, defined here as an exam monitored by an approved third party (Respondus Lockdown in GoVIEW). At the beginning of your first class within the graduate program in a course in which an exam will be required, we recommend you contact GSW Information Technology Services (ITS) HelpDesk at [techsupp@gsu.edu](mailto:techsupp@gsu.edu) to determine whether your computer meets the requirements for testing. Once you have done this, you will not need to do it again for every class. Prior to beginning an exam, students must check their browser to confirm minimum requirements are met. It is recommended that a student access the internet using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Do not use Internet Explorer. Additionally, it is recommended that students clear their browser cache/cookies prior to beginning an assessment. Avoid taking an assessment at work, unless you have checked the firewalls and can take the assignment in a private area with no distractions. Please remember that testing is an individual activity. Do not open the assessment until you are ready to test as, once it has been opened, you are unable to close the quiz/exam and then reopen it. Students who have not assessed whether their computers meet the minimum testing requirements either through contacting IT or the self-check may have issues during the exam. Should an issue arise during the administration of the assessment (e.g., the quiz/exam freezes or the "Submit" button appears before the assessment has been completed), the student must contact the ITS HelpDesk immediately in order to troubleshoot the issue in real-time and the course faculty. In addition to the name of the course and the assessment they are attempting to take, ITS may ask questions such as the following:

- What type of computer or device are you using? (e.g., a laptop running Windows 7)
- What browser are you using? (e.g., Google Chrome)
- Have you tried a different browser? (e.g., Mozilla Firefox over Google Chrome)
- What kind of internet connection are you running? (e.g., Wi-Fi, DSL, cable, dial-up)
- Can you navigate to other websites? (e.g., Google, YouTube)
- On what question did this issue begin?
- Have you done any troubleshooting such as clearing cache/cookies?

ITS will document the above information in a HelpDesk ticket, copy the instructor on the ticket, and detail the outcome of the situation, such as if the issue was resolved via their troubleshooting or if the student needs to follow-up with their instructor. The student must contact the instructor after encountering the testing issue and request a review of the impacted assessment via email. Requests presented later than 24 hours after the testing date will not be accepted. Each request for resetting a quiz/final exam will be evaluated by the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention committee on a case-by-case basis, and the course instructor will be notified of the decision by nursing administration.

## TESTING BEHAVIOR

All assessment questions (and associated answer keys) are the property of GSW and, by extension, its Department of Nursing. Within this context, "assessment" refers to any assignment completed by a student that impacts the calculation of their course grade. As a general rule, students should avoid any actions or behaviors that may be reasonably construed as a violation academic integrity or an attempt to compromise the security of the assessment. Consequently, in addition to this handbook, it is imperative that students also review and understand the policies detailed within the Student Code of

Conduct. To ensure the security of the Department of Nursing's testing materials, the following policies and procedures related to testing behaviors have been implemented:

- Throughout the duration of the test administration, students must keep their eyes on their own testing materials, regardless of whether the assessment is being administered in physical or electronic format.
- Students are not allowed to communicate with any other individual during the assessment by verbal (written/oral) or nonverbal (body language/gestures) means, and the consequences for violating this action may be extended to all involved parties based on the witnessed interaction(s).
- If a student has a question or encounters an issue to problem during the test administration, they must raise their hand to alert the proctor and should avoid looking around the testing area while their hand is raised.
- No student should have any unauthorized materials on or around their desk/testing area. Examples of approved testing materials include the testing device (and related hardware), physical exam copies, answer forms (e.g., Scantrons), writing utensils, and separate erasers. If scratch paper is allowed, students may only use the scratch paper providing by the proctor, and the scratch paper must be turned in to the proctor before leaving.
- If remote proctoring is being utilized for an assessment, the student must clearly show all materials in their testing area in their entirety in-frame of their approved webcam, being mindful of potential framerate drops or decreases in video quality.
- During computerized testing (including test review), students are not allowed to have any other screen open besides the assessment screen and/or the test review screen. Accessing or attempting to access other websites (included other screens within GOVIEW) or program software is strictly prohibited.
- Use of unauthorized electronic/photographic devices is strictly prohibited. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: desktop computers; mobile computers (e.g., laptops, tablets, netbooks, handheld PCs, mobile Internet devices/MIDs, personal digital assistants/PDAs); mobile phones (e.g., smartphones, camera phones, phablets); intelligent virtual assistants (e.g., Alexa, Bixby, Cortana, Google Assistant/Now, Siri, Viv); wearable computers (e.g., smartwatches, calculator watches); headsets (e.g., telephone, computer, mobile, wireless); scientific or graphing calculators; digital cameras; pagers; and other devices with internet, mobile broadband, WiFi, or Bluetooth connectivity.
- Unauthorized use of textbooks, study guides, flash cards, course notes, cheat/crib sheets, and other supplementary course materials (including, but not limited to, case studies, articles, brochures/pamphlets) is strictly prohibited. Attempting to copy or plagiarize another student's assessment is strictly prohibited, and the consequences for violating this action may be extended to all involved parties based on the witnessed interaction(s).
- Attempting to take an assessment for another student is strictly prohibited, and the consequences for violating this action will be extended to all involved parties.
- Obtaining unauthorized or improper access to an assessment, in whole or in part, or information about an assessment is strictly prohibited.
- Removing or attempting to remove questions or other assessment material from the testing site is strictly prohibited.

It is forbidden to copy, reproduce, record, distribute, or disclose these assessment questions by any means, in whole or in part. Students found violating the policies and procedures detailed above are subject to the following actions:

- Inability to complete the assessment;
- Immediate removal from the testing site;
- Invalidation of scores received on the assessment, resulting in an automatic grade of zero (0);
- Inability to make-up the impacted assessment;
- A mandatory academic integrity review meeting with the course instructor(s), program director, and Associate Dean;
- Disciplinary actions sanctioned by the Department of Nursing and commensurate with the nature of the violation, including failure of the course (with a letter grade of "F") and dismissal from the nursing program in perpetuity; and
- At the

discretion of nursing administration, referral to the Office of Student Support and Student Conduct to initiate a formal student conduct investigation and disciplinary proceeding. **PLEASE FOLLOW ALL COURSE TESTING POLICIES.**

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The social media Policy provides students of GSW's Department of Nursing with rules to participate in social media, including GSW's Department of Nursing social media. Definition: "Social media" is a conventional term of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, email, or video hosting sites. First and foremost, all nursing students must recognize their ethical and legal obligation to always maintain patient privacy and confidentiality. As a nursing student it is important to represent GSW and its Department of Nursing in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the University's reputation. 1. Students may be held personally liable for proprietary, defamatory or libelous material posted on any form of social media. 2. Students will face sanctions for posting materials that is defamatory, profane, threatening, harassing, hateful or humiliating to patients, students, hospital staff, preceptors, nurses, GSW faculty and staff, employers and coworkers included. Sanction will be determined by the University Office of Academic Affairs, the Department of Nursing's Admission, Progression, and Retention Committee, and/or the Associate Dean. 3. Improper use of social media may result in being sued for defamation, invasion of privacy or harassment. 4. Occurrences of inappropriate use of social and electronic media may be submitted to the State Board of Nursing, which may affect licensure or eligibility for licensure. 5. The use of pseudonymous email addresses or online identities can be investigated and traced, so their use does not protect the student from responsibility and any liabilities related to posting online materials and social media. 6. Students must promptly report any identifiable breach of confidentiality of privacy in regard to self, other nurses, and /or other nursing students. 7. Students must be knowledgeable of hospital and healthcare institution policies, relevant state and federal laws, and professional standards regarding patient privacy and confidentiality, as well as their application to social and electronic media. 8. The Department of Nursing may take action to dismiss any student from the nursing program who violates the social media statement. 9. Students may not transmit any electronic media of any patient-related information or image that violates patient rights to confidentiality or privacy or to otherwise degrade or embarrass the patient and/or families. 10. Students must not share, post, or otherwise disseminate any information (including images) about a patient or information gained in the nurse-patient relationship with anyone, unless there is care related need to disclose the information or other legal obligation to do so. 11. Students must not use social media during clinical hours or at any time on the clinical agency's equipment or property. 12. Do not share photographs, comments, personal identifiers of patient data on social media. Be cognizant of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

### **MISUSE OF ELECTRONICS OR SOCIAL MEDIA**

Engaging in inappropriate or irresponsible conduct using any GSW affiliated webpage, email, and/or social media resource is strictly prohibited. The use of social media sites (Facebook, MySpace, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, Snapchat, etc.) to harass, cause bodily and/or

mental harm or used to violate the law is also prohibited. Students who are alleged to be in violation of misuse of electronic or social media sites will be subject to criminal or civil penalties, as well as university disciplinary actions. Some examples include but are not limited to the following: • Derogatory language or demeaning statements about or threats to any third party; • Inappropriate or incriminating images depicting hazing, sexual harassment or sexual misconduct, vandalism, fighting, stalking, underage drinking, illegal drug use, pornography or any other inappropriate behavior; or inappropriate language; • Content that violates state or federal law; • Information or images that could be considered obscene or untrue; • Content that harasses third parties.

## **APPEAL PROCESS**

### **APPEAL PROCESS: STUDENT COMPLAINT PROCEDURES FOR ACADEMIC ISSUES**

#### **STUDENT APPEAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES CHAIN OF COMMAND**

Students seeking an appeal of any nature should always utilize the following chain of command:

1. Course Faculty/Instructor. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the Program FNP Director/Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the Department Committee and then to the Dean. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the Provost for Academic Affairs/Vice President for Student Affairs. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the President of the University. If unresolved, the student may appeal to the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. Students are expected to adhere to the published chain of command. Rare exceptions to this chain of command can be made but must be determined on a case-by-case basis. It is the responsibility of both the student and the members within each level to ensure compliance with the chain of command.

An academic complaint is defined as a problem with a course that is related to a student's program of study. Grounds for Academic Complaints include:

1. The grade for an assignment or for a course was recorded incorrectly.
2. The faculty member did not provide clear criteria upon which a grade would be evaluated.
3. The assignment of a final grade lower than that earned by another student enrolled in the same class whose recorded academic performance (all grades for course requirements and assignments) was the exact same as the student receiving the lower grade.
4. The assignment of a final grade in a course by a faculty member based upon performance measure(s) other than the criteria provided by the faculty member on the course syllabus for calculating the final grade in the course.
5. The number of absences recorded by the faculty member was incorrect, and based upon the number of recorded absences the student received a failing grade as stipulated in the course syllabus.
6. A student believes that he or she received a prejudiced academic evaluation for expressing a reasoned opinion or idea different from that of the instructor.

**INFORMAL PROCEDURE:**

A student who has a complaint is first expected to try resolving the complaint informally. The student should discuss their problem with the faculty member involved and try to reach a mutually agreeable solution within the first (30) thirty days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods after the problem occurred. If the student is not comfortable talking with the faculty member involved, the student may skip to the Mediation Process, or the Formal Procedure as described below. Complaints submitted more than forty (40) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods after the problem occurred will not be considered. Upon notification of a complaint by the student, the faculty member must meet with the student to discuss the complaint within (10) ten days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods. Should the issue not be mutually resolved, the student will have the option to seek mediation (Step 2 below) or advance to the formal procedure (Step 3 below) within ten (10) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods. A complaint resolved through the Informal procedure is not considered an official written complaint for the purpose of federal complaint tracking requirements. Should the student elect to advance to the Formal Procedure, they will waive the option to seek mediation at a later date.

**MEDIATION (INFORMAL):**

If all reasonable informal efforts to resolve the complaint fail, the student is encouraged but not required to choose the mediation process. Mediation is an informal process that involves a neutral third party who will assist in resolving the problem. The objective of this process is to come to an agreement that is fair and meets the needs of the parties involved. This process is confidential and private. Mediation does not waive the rights of any aggrieved party to seek resolution of their complaint through GSW complaint procedure.

Steps for Mediation:

1. The student chooses one mediator from a list of certified mediators available from the Director of Human Resources. Both parties must be agreeable to mediating the complaint.
2. The mediator will set up a time for the student and faculty member to meet. This meeting will take place within ten (10) days after the mediator is chosen, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods.
3. At the time of the meeting, the mediator will assist the two parties in finding a mutually agreeable and fair solution to the conflict. The mediator may offer suggestions but cannot impose a solution.
4. If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of mediation, they can file a complaint through the Formal Procedure.
5. Both parties involved in the complaint would sign the statement acknowledging their understanding of what processes occurred during Step 2.
6. The mediator has the option to request written materials from all parties involved in the issue for the purpose of clarifying the issue.
7. A complaint resolved through Mediation is not considered an official written

complaint for the purpose of federal complaint tracking requirements.

**FORMAL PROCEDURE:**

1. A formal complaint must be filed within ten (10) days from the time of the conclusion of the Informal Procedure, if Mediation is not pursued, or the conclusion of Mediation, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods. Waiver of time limits (or extension) may be approved by mutual consent of the student and faculty member involved.
2. The student must submit a formal letter of complaint in hard copy to the appropriate Associate Dean. The formal letter can be emailed to the Associate Dean as an attachment of the hard copy, delivered by hand, by campus mail, by fax, or by US Mail. A waiver of time limits may be approved by mutual consent of the student and faculty or staff member involved. For the purposes of this procedure, an email message is not considered a formal letter of complaint. The formal letter of complaint should include a return address to which the Associate Dean will direct their written decision.
3. The Associate Dean will investigate the complaint and may interview the student for clarification. After the investigation, they may either grant or deny the redress sought or provide alternate remedies. The written decision of the Associate Dean will be issued no later than ten (10) days following the receipt of the formal letter of complaint, excluding weekends, university holidays, or break periods.
4. If the Associate Dean's decision is not satisfactory to the student, the student has ten (10) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods to appeal the decision by submitting a formal letter of complaint in hardcopy to the dean of the school. The formal letter of complaint should include a return address to which the dean will direct their written decision. Upon receipt of the formal letter of complaint, the Dean will review the facts of the complaint and may conduct further inquiry. The Dean has ten (10) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods after receipt of the formal letter of complaint to notify the student of their decision.
5. If the Dean does not render a decision satisfactory to the student, the student may file a formal letter of complaint to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA) within ten (10) days of the Dean's decision, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods. The formal letter of complaint should include a return address to which the VPAA will direct their written decision. The VPAA will review the facts of the complaint and may conduct a further inquiry. The VPAA has ten (10) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods after receipt of the formal letter of complaint to notify the student in writing of their decision.
6. If the VPAA does not render a decision satisfactory to the student, the student may submit a formal letter of complaint in hard copy to the President of the University within ten (10) days of the VPAA's decision, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods. The formal letter of complaint should include a return address to which the President will direct their written decision.
7. The President, upon receipt of the formal appeal, will submit the complaint to the



Committee of Academic Complaints within ten (10) days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods for consideration.

8. The following rules will apply:
  - The committee shall hear the case and forward its recommendations to the President.
  - The hearing will be conducted by the Committee on Academic Complaints in an informal and expeditious manner.
  - The Committee will be provided with all prior relevant documents from both sides and may request additional information or seek further witnesses.
  - Only committee members, parties to the action and their advisors (drawn from among the student, faculty, and staff of the University) and witnesses testifying before the Committee shall be permitted in the hearing.
  - At the hearing, the complainant, the faculty member, and witnesses for each party may testify, and may be questioned by committee members and the student's advisor.
  - The Committee is empowered to rule on procedural matters and relevance of witnesses or evidence.
  - All hearings will begin within ten (10) days from the time the Committee receives the complaint from the President, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods.
  - A tape recording or other record of the hearing shall be preserved for reference and review until the case has been finally resolved.
9. The Committee shall arrive at a decision after all evidence has been heard and the parties have been dismissed. Only committee members who have been present for the entire hearing may vote on the case.
10. A majority vote of qualified members shall constitute a judgment.
11. Upon receipt of the Committee's recommendations, the President of the University shall render a final decision within ten (10) class days, excluding weekends, university holidays, and break periods, and may amend a recommendation according to their best judgment. As stipulated in Georgia Board of Regents Policy 4.7.1, the President's decision on academic complaints involving grades is final.
12. For other types of academic appeals, students may request review by the Georgia Board of Regents. Requests for reviews must be made in writing to Board's Office of Legal Affairs within twenty calendar days of the President's decision. See Board of Regents Policy Manual section 8.6 for further information on requesting discretionary reviews.

## **CLINICAL**

### **CLINICAL POLICIES**

All students in the nursing program will be required to complete clinical learning experiences to fulfill the requirements of the appropriate degree. Please be advised that the following policies are applicable to all students, and failure to meet any clinical requirements will impact progression and timely

completion of the program. Policies may represent the requirements of the clinical facilities, the Department of Nursing and/or the University. 1. Students are required to attend all laboratory/clinical experiences. If a student is ill and unable to attend clinical, they must notify their preceptor. 2. Students are expected to arrive to clinical well rested. Therefore, students are not allowed to work for at least 8 hours immediately preceding their clinical shift. 3. If a student appears to be impaired during clinical, the student will be dismissed from clinical and be required to be tested at the student's expense. Students must obtain drug screening immediately after the request. Failure to complete testing immediately may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program.

### **STUDENTS PRECLUDED FROM CLINICAL INSTITUTION**

All students will be expected to comply with all requirements set forth by the clinical institution, including their code of conduct. The institution reserves the right to prevent entry or request withdrawal from the clinical site any student the institution believes constitutes a risk of harm to patients, visitors, or employees or who fails to follow the institution's policies and procedures. If students are precluded from a clinical site by an institution, the Department of Nursing has no obligation to find an alternative clinical site for the student, and this may prevent the student from progressing in the nursing program. If, in the judgment of the preceptor in a clinical facility, there is reason to question the emotional or physical condition of a student or the safety or the quality of nursing care provided, the preceptor has the responsibility to dismiss the student from the clinical. The plan for dismissal is as follows: • When an incident first occurs, the preceptor will request the student to leave the clinical site immediately. • The preceptor will communicate to appropriate course professor regarding the problem. • The faculty will refer the student for appropriate professional for follow-up. • The faculty will provide written documentation of the incident to the Associate Dean of Graduate Nursing/Director of FNP program within 24 hours of the incident. The student has the right to appeal in writing if the decision is unacceptable to him/her, in accordance with university policy. Upon receipt of written appeal, the Associate Dean/Dean/FNP Director will notify the student in writing of subsequent steps to take for redress of the decision, according to university policy. A clinical failure earns a grade of "F."

### **PROFESSIONAL DRESS GUIDELINES**

The uniform for our graduate nursing students is "business casual" with a white lab coat, dark trousers or slacks (jeans are not permitted), and either the university-assigned student identification. The uniform must be clean, neat, and properly fitted. Additional requirements may be mandated by the clinical agency and will be adhered to by GSW nursing students. Students may also wear scrubs. Please refer to clinical agency's policies on guidelines related to uniform attire.

### **TYPHON**

Initially, all students will receive a username and password for Typhon prior to any clinical courses. Typhon is clinical software that is utilized by GSW Graduate Program for tracking of students' clinical documentation and students' clinical experiences and hours. The students are required to submit/upload all "mandatory" clinical documents to Typhon. In addition, the student will input data of patient encounters in the Typhon system each clinical day. The student will maintain a record of patient encounters on patients seen in the clinical setting. At the end of each month, students will download their clinical experience summaries to the Typhon site. The course lead instructor/professor will follow

students' clinical progress in Typhon and observe for delinquent clinical documents/hours. Graduate Student Coordinator will send out emails to notify students on purchasing the software and also to create an account prior to clinical courses.

### **Preceptorship for Clinical Courses**

Preceptors participate in student clinical evaluations and provide ongoing clinical evaluation throughout each clinical course during the semester, as well as a summative evaluation at the completion of the clinical rotation. However, faculty members determine the student's clinical standing throughout the semester as well as the final clinical and course grade. Students are evaluated on a regular basis throughout their clinical rotations by their clinical faculty and must receive a satisfactory evaluation from the faculty to successfully pass all clinical courses, independent of the students' overall didactic grade.

Students may receive a failing course grade or be administratively and permanently removed from the MSN program without first being placed on probation for offenses including, but not limited to:

- Practicing in an unethical or unprofessional manner
- Being dismissed from the clinical site
- Compromising patient safety
- Committing a felony
- Testing positive on a drug screen
- Providing false or inaccurate information related to a clinical preceptor or site.
- Misrepresenting his/her clinical hours or providing any false documentation or other written or verbal inaccuracy related to clinical rotations and/or clinical hours.
- Misrepresenting the role in which the student is functioning.
- Performing or participating in any other action the faculty deem as an infraction or breach of program policy.

### **PLANNING FOR CLINICAL/PRACTICUM:**

Planning for the clinical semester is a complex process. The following topics must be addressed in the preparation for the clinical semester: 1. Complete student credentials in ACEMAPP; 2. Preceptor credentials 3. Facility contractual agreements: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Concerning Affiliation of Students for Clinical Training; and 4. All clinical forms submitted to [msnclinical@gsw.edu](mailto:msnclinical@gsw.edu). Any clinical-related forms must be submitted by clinical form deadlines before the semester in which the clinical experience will be completed, and late clinical packets will not be accepted. Failure to complete any required form accurately and in its entirety can slow the involved processes and may prevent the student from beginning the clinical experience. If the student does not have an approved clinical site and preceptor in place by the first day of his/her clinical course, the student may not be allowed to take the clinical course for that semester. If these deadlines are not met, the student will be administratively dropped from the clinical course(s) in which he/she is currently enrolled.

Suggestion for securing a Clinical Site and Preceptor • Start early! Clinical-related forms are due at

specific dates to ensure students time for completion prior to their semester in which clinical will start. • Determine if a facility with which GSW already has an affiliation agreement would be a suitable site for the student's needs and course requirements (Reach out to Associate Dean for questions and also to Mrs. Pinckard related to specific clinical sites) • Other avenues for identifying potential clinical sites and preceptors: o Network through a local nurse practitioner association/ other MSN prepared nurses who accepts students as members; Ask friends or colleagues for suggestions/ Search the internet for local practice sites. • When contacting the preceptor or clinical site manager, students should present themselves in a professional manner both in dress and speech.

## **CLINICAL PLACEMENT**

Students enrolled in graduate coursework requiring the completion of clinical experiences must be self-motivated and an active learner. Individuality, self-expression, self-reflection, evaluation, and critical thinking are all essential skills for a student in a preceptorship. These traits are also essential features to the role of an advanced practice registered nurse. Students are responsible for finding an acceptable site and preceptor for their clinical experience. The Department of Nursing's Graduate Clinical Coordinator (Mrs. Pinckard) has a list of clinical facilities with which GSW already has an existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which may be utilized by graduate nursing students for reference. However, the student is responsible for initiating the local contact with a potential preceptor and completing the required forms, made available by the Graduate Clinical Coordinator. Clinical experiences must be completed with a preceptor at a clinical site, both of which must be approved by the Department of Nursing's graduate nursing program. The learning objectives for the students enrolled in graduate-level clinical coursework are found in the syllabi of each applicable course and are also to be individualized by the student in collaboration with the approved preceptor and the faculty member. Final verification of clinical clearance (i.e., approval that a student may begin clinical work) must come from the course lead instructor and Associate Dean/FNP Director prior to the initiation of any clinical experiences. Any clinical hours completed prior to formal approval will not count towards the required semester clinical hours and may result in disciplinary action from the Department of Nursing. Once all clinical-related documentation has been submitted, accepted, and approved and the student has been cleared to begin their clinical experiences, the student will provide his/her preceptor(s) with a preceptor packet, available from the Graduate Clinical Coordinator.

## **MEMORANDA OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a legally binding agreement between GSW and the clinical site and must formally processed and approved by both the University's Office of Legal Affairs and the clinical site before the student can begin any clinical experiences. The student should verify with the Graduate Clinical Coordinator whether an affiliation agreement already exists between the requested clinical site and the University. Students must have an established, approved MOU in place for every site at which the student has requested to perform clinical rotation. For example, if a student is working with a preceptor at one site and the preceptor requests that the student accompany them to another site (e.g., office or hospital), the student will need a different Clinical Site Placement Request Form and MOU in place for all locations where the preceptor will be working, if the location is a different entity from that which the requested affiliation agreement covers. (Please see orientation PPT/meeting recording

discussing this topic.) While the Department of Nursing does have a list of existing MOUs between GSW and various clinical sites across the state of Georgia, students are permitted (and, in some instances, required) to request a site without an established MOU. Students electing for this option should be aware that the establishment of a new MOU is a time-consuming process and does not necessarily guarantee that an agreement can/will be reached prior to the beginning of the semester. In this instance, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site. The student may not be able to complete the nursing program at GSW. Therefore, it is important that the students have potential backup options available. If a student is requesting a new affiliation agreement with a new clinical site, he/she will need to contact the Graduate Clinical Coordinator to initiate this process EARLY! The Department of Nursing will then provide the documents to the Office of Legal Affairs, where the Chief Legal Affairs Officer will review, sign, and approve the MOU.

### **GENERAL CRITERIA FOR PRECEPTORSHIPS**

The Department of Nursing sets criteria, coordinates and evaluates preceptorship experiences in relationship to selected courses and program objectives for selected student experience in clinical nursing courses for students.

#### **Criteria for Participating Agencies**

The participating agency must 1. Be exemplary of the policies and philosophy necessary to achieve the optimal goals of the Department of Nursing. 2. Assume an active role in providing realistic learning experiences and supportive supervision of students.

#### **Criteria for Preceptor Selection**

The clinical preceptor must 1. Be selected by the participating clinical agency as qualifying to serve as a clinical preceptor, if applicable. 2. Be a registered nurse holding a current license according to the Law of Georgia or state preceptorship will be held in (for MSN programs and an FNP/PA/DO/MD for FNP program). 3. When a preceptor does not have a master's degree in nursing, clinical expertise may be considered in making the selection (ex. For informatic students; however, must have an MSN nurse to oversee the preceptor and sign an additional preceptor form). 4. Have at least one (1) year of experience in their current position or in a position commensurate with the goals and objectives of the student. 5. Have prior experience in supervising professional nursing staff and/or nursing students in higher educational programs. 6. Provide evidence of continuing professional education in the area of clinical practice and/or in the area of an "expanded nursing role." 7. Complete the Georgia Board of Nursing's Preceptor Qualification Record. 8. Complete the Department of Nursing's Preceptor Agreement Form. 9. Complete the Department of Nursing's Preceptor Orientation Packet for the purpose of reviewing the Department of Nursing's philosophy, conceptual framework, program objectives and evaluation process.

#### **Student Selection of a Preceptor**

When participating in an approved clinical preceptorship, students must 1. Receive approval from the clinical preceptor to participate in an approved preceptorship. 2. Discuss the course requirements, objectives, and clinical goals with the clinical preceptor. 3. Notify the clinical preceptor of the

documentation required by the Department of Nursing, as listed above. 4. Request the clinical preceptor to notify their course instructor(s) and Clinical Coordinator of their agreement to serve as a preceptor. Following this, the course instructor(s) will 1. Provide the student with the documentation required of the clinical preceptor for completion and submission to the Department of Nursing. 2. Upon return of the necessary document, receive final approval for the clinical preceptor via the Clinical Coordinator. 3. Collaborate with the Clinical Coordinator and the participating clinical agency's nursing administration regarding the terms of the preceptorship agreement. Student **MUST** ensure a MOU agreement exists with the location AND have completed **all** requirements in ACEMAPP system.

### **Preceptorship Roles and Responsibilities**

The student will 1. Coordinate with the assigned clinical preceptor to determine the day(s), hours, and clinical environment in which the preceptor experience is set to occur. 2. Submit a copy of the clinical objectives for the learning experience. 3. Produce written plans for the implementation of clinical objectives. 4. Maintain an accurate log detailing the learning activities and/or nursing practice. 5. Conduct selective pre- and post-experience conferences with the clinical preceptor. 6. Submit a summary of clinical experiences. 7. Maintain all clinical documentation required for attainment of full rotational clearance throughout the entirety of their clinical preceptorship.

The course instructor(s) will 1. Review course and clinical objectives as they relate to the expected learning experiences with student and clinical preceptor. 2. Approve the student's clinical objectives and implementation plan. 3. Review the student's log on a weekly basis and provide feedback. 4. Be available via telephone during clinical hours for student and preceptor consultations and to review the progress of the preceptorship. 5. Meet with the clinical preceptor at selected times during the semester to discuss the student's progress. 6. At the conclusion of the preceptorship, collaborate with the clinical preceptor for the final clinical evaluation. 7. Review TYPHON system for all documentation during rotation.

The preceptor will 1. Enter into a written agreement with the Department of Nursing and the participating clinical agency to serve as a clinical preceptor. 2. Be assigned to no more than two (2) students at any given time. 3. Provide supervision for the student in the selected clinical. 4. Meet with the students and faculty virtually or via phone call at selected times during the semester to discuss the student's progress. 5. Collaborate with the faculty for final evaluation of the student's performance, using the clinical evaluation tool of GSW. 6. Submit a short summary of strengths and summary of the preceptor's role and offer suggestions for improvements. 7. Review the clinical objectives.

### **CLINICAL CALENDARS AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

At the beginning of each semester, the student will develop individual clinical objectives for self-directed learning, which should be based around the learning experiences the student plans to attain and experience throughout the semester. These objectives must be in alignment with both the course objectives listed on the syllabus and the AACN's Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing. These objectives must be typed and submitted to the course instructor and the student's preceptor by the first week of classes. During the initial meeting with the preceptor, the student and preceptor should develop a tentative clinical rotation schedule. By the first week of class, the student will submit a clinical calendar for the semester, which will provide the date and time for the completion

of clinical hours. For example, “Monday, June 21, 2021: 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM.” Lunch times must be noted, if applicable. Additionally, the preceptor’s name and the name, address, and telephone number of the clinical site should also be noted on the calendar. Please be aware that students cannot begin their clinical rotation until both the clinical objectives and the clinical calendar have been approved by both the course instructor. Any clinical hours completed prior to formal approval will not count towards the required semester clinical hours and may result in disciplinary action from the Department of Nursing.

### **CLINICAL ROTATION REQUIREMENTS**

Students must arrange for the completion of clinical hours to take place during the academic semester; these hours cannot be completed prior to the beginning of the semester or between semesters. Clinical experiences are designed to be distributed throughout the entirety of the semester in order to coincide with didactic instruction. Students may utilize the same preceptor for a maximum of two (2) semesters during their matriculation through the program, and the same clinical site may be utilized up to three (2) times during the program. Exception to this policy may be granted on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by the course instructor, the Graduate Nursing Programs Associate Dean/FNP Director.

### **CLINICAL SITE VISITS**

During the semesters in which clinical experiences are being completed, a clinical faculty member will arrange a clinical site visit/phone call to ensure the graduate nursing student is demonstrating competency. Specific behaviors/attitudes that demonstrate student competency:

- Performs at an appropriate level (with increasing independence and level of complexity)
- Organized approach to patient assessment
- Evidence of reasoned clinical decision-making process
- Formulates sound evidence-based management plan
- Utilizes resources appropriately
- Articulates oral presentation skills
- Is professionally attired.

### **HIPPA:**

Students enrolled in the School of Nursing must hold in confidence all person-related information. Failure to protect any person’s right to confidential treatment may result in a failing grade in the course and dismissal from the School of Nursing. Students must abide by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) policies of the clinical facility. Students are prohibited from photocopying any part of a client’s medical chart or other facility documents that pertain to the client. Any student who goes to medical records to retrieve information, who photocopies a chart, who leaves the facility with any part of a client’s record, or who violates HIPAA policies will be dismissed from the School of Nursing.

### **Student Accident/Injury Policy:**

The student understands that there are medical risks associated with providing care to patients during the nursing program, even when correct procedures are followed. By entering the nursing program, students agree to do so at their own risk and will not hold the University or the clinical facility/agency responsible for any illnesses or medical expenses that may result from their clinical experiences. **All students are required to carry personal health and medical**

**insurance according to the University policy. Any medical costs associated with the injury/accident are incurred by the student**

**Blood-Borne Pathogen Exposure:**

Needle sticks, blood splashes, and sharps injuries require immediate attention. If you have an injury which may have exposed you to blood or body fluids, take the following steps:

1. Immediately wash the area with soap and water. If the water splashes into the eyes, remove the contact lens (if worn) and flush with copious amounts of water.
2. IMMEDIATELY notify the faculty member or clinical preceptor responsible for the clinical learning experience. The student should then notify the appropriate faculty member of the didactic portion of the course in which the clinical satisfies.
3. The policies of the occupational or employee health division of the clinical facility should then be followed. The student should receive the same kind of assessment and care that an employee of the agency would receive. If the student has sustained a serious injury or has been exposed to blood, body fluids, or hazardous materials, then time is of the utmost importance, and the student should receive prompt treatment through the qualified healthcare provider or the emergency department of his/her choice. Students exposed to blood or body fluids should receive treatment within 2 hours. The clinical faculty member will notify the Associate Dean, and/or the Dean of the School of Nursing as soon as possible.
4. The student and faculty member will complete a written report describing the incident and any tests/treatment provided. The clinical faculty will report the incident to the course lead.
5. Any test results related to the incident must be forwarded to the Associate Dean and/or the Dean of the School of Nursing, and testing is at the student's expense.
6. The clinical agency may request that an incident report be completed.
7. The School of Nursing and University assumes no responsibility for the risks of exposure.

**HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR NURSING STUDENTS**

The student is required to submit evidence of a physical examination to the Director of Student Health Services upon admission to the University. A tuberculosis screening is also required and must be performed after program acceptance but before the first clinical experience. Should there be special requirements (such as throat cultures) for specialized areas, students must comply before clinical assignments begin. Hepatitis B vaccine is available for purchase through Student Health Services. Affiliating hospitals strongly recommend that students have the Hepatitis B series. The student is responsible for ensuring that Student Health Services receive immunization records. Students who do not have immunizations on file will be dropped from their classes. Failure to have current immunizations on file may also result in denial of clinical experiences and result in a failing grade for a clinical course. The student is responsible for securing and submitting copies of any/all Student Health Services records to the Department of Nursing.

**NOTIFICATION OF RESTRICTIONS (POLICE RECORDS/BACKGROUND CHECKS)**

The nursing student should be eligible to receive approval for taking the graduate program's



certification exam at the time of admission to the program. The Georgia Board of Nursing asks the following questions of students at the time of application for nursing licensure: 1. Have you ever been arrested, convicted, sentenced, plead guilty, plead nolo contendere or given first offender status which is (a) a misdemeanor, (b) a felony; (c) a crime involving moral turpitude; (d) a crime violating a federal law involving controlled substances, dangerous drugs or a DUI or DWI, or (e) any offense other than a minor traffic violation? Note: Even if probation completed or first offender status granted. 2. Has any licensing board or agency in Georgia or any other state ever: (a) denied your license application, renewal or reinstatement? (b) revoked, suspended, restricted, or probated your license? (c) requested or accepted surrender of your license? (d) reprimanded, fined or disciplined you? The authority of licensure rests with the Georgia Board of Nursing. For further information, contact the Georgia Board of Nursing or visit their website. Given this requirement and these questions by the Georgia Board of Nursing, GSW Nursing requires that students undergo a personal (criminal) background check during the first semester of enrollment in the nursing program using the company designated by the Department of Nursing. Additionally, a student who is not enrolled in a nursing course for 1 or more non-summer semester must undergo another criminal background check. While the Department of Nursing cannot legally ascertain the results of this background check, a clean check increases the chance that the student will not be prohibited from writing the National Licensing Examination because of serious judicial violations. Additionally, students may be subjected to background checks for agency clinical requirements, which are compulsory. If the agency refuses to allow a student to attend clinical experiences at the designated site, the nursing program is not obligated to find another clinical site. The student may not be able to complete the nursing program at GSW. Therefore, it is important to conduct personal record checks prior to admission to the nursing program.

### **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY (MALPRACTICE) INSURANCE**

The student is required to carry professional liability (malpractice) insurance at a minimum coverage amount of \$1,000,000 each claim and \$6,000,000 aggregate. Explicit reference to coverage as a “student” within your current program of study must be present on documentation. The student must carry health insurance prior to attending clinical rotations in clinical agencies, and it must be maintained throughout the student’s duration in the program.

### **MANDATORY STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE**

Beginning Fall Semester 2014, all new students accepted into any GSW nursing programs will be required to show proof of active Medical Insurance coverage. This is a new Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia mandate and not an GSW mandate. Proof of coverage must be submitted during the fall and spring semesters (as coverage for the Spring semester extends through the Summer. Health insurance coverage must be maintained by the student throughout the entire time that they remain enrolled and is actively progressing through their respective Health Sciences or Nursing Program. If a student fails to maintain Health Insurance coverage, then they will be immediately dismissed from their respective Health Sciences or Nursing Program for failure to maintain the mandatory coverage as required by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. If you have any questions regarding this requirement, please contact the Nursing Division Office.

## **TUBERCULOSIS SCREENINGS**

(Information provided by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention) Tuberculosis (TB) screening and testing of health care personnel is recommended as part of a TB Infection Control Plan and might be required by state regulations. For TB regulations in your area, please contact your state or local TB control program. TB screening programs should include anyone working or volunteering in healthcare settings, including: • inpatient settings, • outpatient settings, • laboratories, • emergency medical services, • medical settings in correctional facilities, • home-based health care and outreach settings, • long-term care facilities, and • clinics in homeless shelters.

**FREQUENCY OF TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING AND TESTING** Baseline Screening and Testing All U.S. health care personnel should be screened for TB upon hire (i.e., preplacement). TB screening is a process that includes: • A baseline individual TB risk assessment, • TB symptom evaluation, • A TB test (e.g., TB blood test or a TB skin test), and • Additional evaluation for TB disease as needed. Information from the baseline individual TB risk assessment should be used to interpret the results of a TB blood test or TB skin test given upon hire (i.e., preplacement). Health care personnel with a positive TB test result should receive a symptom evaluation and a chest x-ray to rule out TB disease. Additional workup may be needed based on those results. Health care personnel with a documented history of a prior positive TB test should receive a baseline individual TB risk assessment and TB symptom screen upon hire (i.e., preplacement). A repeat TB test (e.g., TB blood test or a TB skin test) is not required. Annual Screening, Testing, and Education Annual TB testing of health care personnel is not recommended unless there is a known exposure or ongoing transmission at a healthcare facility. Health care personnel with untreated latent TB infection should receive an annual TB symptom screen. Symptoms for TB disease include any of the following: a cough lasting longer than three weeks, unexplained weight loss, night sweats or a fever, and loss of appetite. Healthcare facilities might consider using annual TB screening for certain groups at increased occupational risk for TB exposure (e.g., pulmonologists or respiratory therapists) or in certain settings if transmission has occurred in the past (e.g., emergency departments). Facilities should work with their state and local health departments to help make these decisions. All health care personnel should receive TB education annually. TB education should include information on TB risk factors, the signs and symptoms of TB disease, and TB infection control policies and procedures. TB education materials can be found through CDC, the TB Centers of Excellence for Training, Education, and Medical Consultation, NTCA, State TB Programs, and the Find TB Resources website. Post-Exposure Screening and Testing All health care personnel with a known exposure to TB disease should receive a TB symptom screen and timely testing, if indicated. • Health care personnel with a previous negative TB test result should be tested immediately and re-tested 8 to 10 weeks after the last known exposure. For consistency, the same type of TB test (e.g., TB blood test or TB skin test) should be used upon hire (i.e., preplacement) and for any follow-up testing. • Health care personnel with a documented history of a positive TB test result do not need to be retested after exposure to TB. They should receive a TB symptom screen and if they have symptoms of TB, they should be evaluated for TB disease.

**TUBERCULOSIS BLOOD TEST** Baseline Testing The process for baseline testing using a TB blood test is as follows: 1. Administer TB blood test following proper protocol 2. Review result o Negative — consider not infected o Positive — consider TB infected and evaluate for TB disease1 3. Document result 4. Using a TB blood test for baseline testing does not require two-step testing. Additionally, TB blood tests are

not affected by the BCG vaccine. 1Note: An individual TB risk assessment should be used to help interpret test results and determine whether health care personnel are at increased risk for TB. Low-risk health care personnel who test positive for TB infection should have a second TB test to confirm the result. For example, health care personnel who do not have any TB symptoms, are unlikely to be infected, and are at low risk for progression to TB disease should receive a second TB test if their first test is positive. If the second test is also positive, the health care personnel is considered to have TB infection and they should be evaluated with a chest x-ray and TB symptom screen. TUBERCULOSIS SKIN TEST: TWO-STEP TESTING Baseline Testing: Two-Step Test If the Mantoux tuberculin skin test (TST) is used to test health care personnel upon hire (preplacement), two-step testing should be used. This is because some people with latent TB infection have a negative reaction when tested years after being infected. The first TST may stimulate or boost a reaction. Positive reactions to subsequent TSTs could be misinterpreted as a recent infection. Step 1 1. Administer first TST following proper protocol 2. Review result o Positive — consider TB infected, no second TST needed; evaluate for TB disease.1 o Negative — a second TST is needed. Retest in 1 to 3 weeks after first TST result is read. 3. Document result Step 2 1. Administer second TST 1 to 3 weeks after first test 2. Review results o Positive — consider TB infected and evaluate for TB disease. o Negative — consider person not infected. 3. Document result 1Note: An individual TB risk assessment should be used to help interpret test results and determine whether health care personnel are at increased risk for TB. Low-risk health care personnel who test positive for TB infection should have a second TB test to confirm the result. For example, health care personnel who do not have any TB symptoms, are unlikely to be infected, and are at low risk for progression to TB disease should receive a second TB test if their first test is positive. If the second test is also positive, the health care personnel is considered to have TB infection and they should be evaluated with a chest x-ray and TB symptom screen.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

### **Professional Nursing Organizations:**

#### **Georgia Nurses Association/American Nurses Association**

The GNA/ANA serves the diverse needs of nursing professionals while strengthening the standing of nurses in the health care community. Membership in the GNA/ANA allows for all nurses to have an active role in the decisions made in practice, reform, legislation, and economic arenas. The Georgia Southwestern State University nursing faculty support membership in this organization. All registered nurses are eligible for membership. Membership costs per year is \$20.00.

#### **Mu Pi Chapter/Sigma Theta Tau, International**

Sigma Theta Tau, International, is committed to fostering excellence, scholarship, and leadership in nursing to improve health care worldwide. The Society promotes the use of nursing research in health care delivery and makes its resources available to all

people and institutions interested in the latest knowledge in nursing care. Membership is by invitation only.

**\* Membership Criteria:**

- have completed ½ of the nursing curriculum;
- have at least a GPA of 3.0 (based on a 4.0 grading scale based on all college courses taken);
- rank in the upper 35th percentile of the graduating class;
- meet the expectation of academic & professional integrity.

***\*NOTE: For additional information regarding graduate policies, please refer to the graduate bulletin on the Georgia Southwestern State University website at [gsw.edu](http://gsw.edu).***

***\*NOTE:***

***The next section is for MSN students enrolled in the MSN Nursing Leadership/Nursing Informatics/Nursing Educator tracks. \****



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**GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN**  
**SCHOOL OF NURSING**

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## **Master of Science in Nursing**

- **Nurse Educator**
- **Nurse Leader**
- **Nurse Informaticist**

**The next section is focused for students who are enrolled in nursing leadership, nursing education, and/or nursing informatics tracks.**

### **Program Overview**

The MSN curriculum is designed to prepare professional registered nurses for advanced practice (APN) roles as they are defined by the *AACN Master's Essentials*. All MSN students, regardless of their declared specialty track, are required to take the advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, and advanced pharmacology courses to be consistent with the AACN guidelines.

### **MSN Program Outcomes**

At completion of the MSN program, the MSN graduates will:

1. Implement the selected advanced nurse role-leader, educator, informaticist, within health care.
2. Develop and nurture interprofessional collaborations by communicating and consulting with other health care professionals, including administrators, community leaders and regulators.
3. Evaluate the influence of ethical principles on personal and organizational decision- making.
4. Utilize nursing research for the promotion of quality nursing education, safe person-centered health care, and evidence-based practice.
5. Employ critical thinking in the application of nursing and multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to foster optimal client health outcomes.
6. Exemplify cultural competence and sensitivity to diversity in dynamic academic and health care environments.
7. Demonstrate competence in leadership roles and a commitment to ongoing professional development for the provision of quality, cost-effective person-centered health care and the advancement of nursing practice.
8. Utilize informatics to improve healthcare outcomes and to promote the health and safety of individuals, groups and communities.

## **Curriculum Overview**

The MSN program for nurse leader, nurse educator, and nurse informaticist, consists of a total of 41 semester credit hours. Fifteen of the hours are required core courses taken by all students in the program. The required courses include content related to nursing theory, research, advanced pathophysiology, advanced health assessment, and pharmacology. An additional course, Information Technology in Health Care, will be taken by students in the education and leadership tracks. The Nurse Educator track prepares nurses to facilitate learning in various environments through the application of knowledge. Course content in this track includes the principles of education, teaching strategies, evaluation of learning, and curriculum development. The Nurse Leadership track focuses on preparing nurses to function as leaders to provide safe evidence-based care within various healthcare organizations, analyze different healthcare delivery systems, and develop skills in human resources and healthcare financial management. The Nurse Informatics track prepares students to assume the role of the nurse informaticist. Courses in this track focus on data analytics, project management, clinical decision support, electronic health exchanges, and process improvement.

**Core Courses (15 Credit Hours)**

Course Number	Title	Credits	Lab/Practicum Hours
NURS 6104	Theory for Graduate Nursing Practice	3-0-3	
NURS 6105	Research for Evidence-Based Nursing Practice	3-0-3	
NURS 6106	Advanced Pharmacology	3-0-3	
NURS 6107	Advanced Pathophysiology	3-0-3	
NURS 6421	Advanced Health Assessment	2-3-3	<b>45 hours</b>

**Education (26 Credit Hours)**

Course Number	Title	Credits	Lab/Practicum Hours
NURS 6110	Principles of Education in Nursing	3-0-3	
NURS 6119	Information Technology in Health Care	3-0-3	
NURS 6220	Effective Teaching/Learning Strategies	3-0-3	
NURS 6330	Evaluation of Learning	3-0-3	
NURS 6440	Curriculum Development	3-0-3	
<b>Practicum/Project</b>			
NURS 6910	Practicum I	0-15-5	<b>225 hours</b>
NURS 6920	Practicum II	0-18-6	<b>270 hours</b>



### Leadership (26 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credits	Lab/Practicum Hours
NURS 6100	Principles of Leadership & Management within Health Care Organizations	3-0-3	
NURS 6119	Information Technology in Health Care	3-0-3	
NURS 6210	Management of Human Resources in Health Care	3-0-3	
NURS 6230	Health Care Delivery Systems	3-0-3	
NURS 6240	Health Care Finance	3-0-3	
<b>Practicum/Project</b>			
NURS 6910	Practicum I	0-15-5	<b>225 hours</b>
NURS 6920	Practicum II	0-18-6	<b>270 hours</b>

### Informatics (26 Credit Hours)

Course Number	Title	Credits	Lab/Practicum Hours
NURS 6700	Principles of Clinical Informatics	3-0-3	
NURS 6710	Concepts of Clinical Informatics I	3-0-3	
NURS 6711	Concepts of Clinical Informatics II	3-0-3	
NURS 6731	NURS 6731 Process Improvement & Quality in Healthcare	3-0-3	
NURS 6750	NURS 6750 Health Systems Project Management	3-0-3	
<b>Practicum/Project</b>			
NURS 6910	Practicum I	0-15-5	<b>225 hours</b>
NURS 6920	Practicum II	0-18-6	<b>270 hours</b>

### Post- BSN/MSN Educator Certificate Program (18 credit hours)

Course Number	Course Title	Credit
NURS 6110	Principles of Education in Nursing	3-0-3
NURS 6119	Information Technology in Health Care	3-0-3
NURS 6220	Effective Teaching/Learning Strategies	3-0-3
NURS 6330	Evaluation of Learning	3-0-3
NURS 6440	Curriculum Development	3-0-3
NURS 6407	Practicum	0-9-3

**Post- BSN/MSN Informatics Certificate Program (18 credit hours)**

Course Number	Course Title	Credit
NURS 6100	Principles of Informatics	3-0-3
NURS 6170	Concepts of Informatics I	3-0-3
NURS 6711	NURS 6711 Concepts of Informatics II	3-0-3
NURS 6750	NURS 6750 Health Systems Project Management	3-0-3
NURS 6730	Process Improvement for Health Care	3-0-3
NURS 6407	Practicum	0-9-3

**Post – BSN/MSN Leadership Certificate Program (18 credit hours)**

Course Number	Course Title	Credit
NURS 6100	Principles of Leadership & Management within Health Care Organizations	3-0-3
NURS 6119	Information Technology in Health Care	3-0-3
NURS 6210	Management of Human Resources	3-0-3
NURS 6230	Health Care Delivery Systems	3-0-3
NURS 6240	Health Care Finance	3-0-3

**Post- Baccalaureate Healthcare Informatics Certificate Program (18 credit hours)**

Course Number	Course Title	Credit
NURS 6100	Principles of Informatics	3-0-3
NURS 6170	Concepts of Informatics I	3-0-3
NURS 6711	NURS 6711 Concepts of Informatics II	3-0-3
NURS 6750	NURS 6750 Health Systems Project Management	3-0-3
NURS 6730	Process Improvement for Health Care	3-0-3
NURS 6407	Practicum	0-9-3

Course descriptions of the courses shown above may be found on the GSW Website at <https://www.gsw.edu/registrar/>

### **Clinical Requirements for Health Assessment /Practicum**

***\*Note: Previous section details more information regarding clinical requirements.\****

NURS 6421, Advanced Health Assessment requires 45 hours of virtual clinical assignments. Students are required to purchase a clinical simulation program along with all other course materials required in NURS 6421. The required simulation program will be noted on the MSN booklist document.

Prior to enrolling NURS 6910, Practicum I, students are required to purchase a package from a School of Nursing authorized vendor containing an annual background check, annual drug/alcohol test, and immunization tracker consisting of specific requirements necessary for clinical site placement. Students will also purchase a clinical documentation program to track clinical hours with preceptor.

**Clinical Approval** - Every clinical site and preceptor must have a current, signed agreement in place with Georgia Southwestern State University BEFORE the student begins any clinical experience. If the student has not received approval from Georgia Southwestern State University for a site and/or preceptor, the student may not begin the clinical rotation. The approval process for preceptors and clinical sites is described in detail in this manual.

**Contact Persons** for questions regarding clinical requirements are Mrs. Andrea Pinckard.

Email: [andrea.pinckard@gsw.edu](mailto:andrea.pinckard@gsw.edu) for general questions;

And Dr. Laura Kim Gosa [laura.gosa@gsw.edu](mailto:laura.gosa@gsw.edu) (for Educator/Informatics/Leadership specific questions)

**Criminal Background Check & Drug Screen** - Clinical facilities require that every student pass a criminal background and urine drug screen prior to being allowed to enter the facility for clinical experiences. This background check must be performed by a vendor designated and approved by all involved healthcare facilities. Because all GSW nursing students rotate through all major clinical facilities in order to gain required learning experiences, a student not accepted by one of the major facilities based on the review of their criminal background or urine drug screen will be unable to complete clinical requirements and will thus be excluded from the nursing program.

A **drug screen** and **background check** are required for all students **prior to** beginning any clinical rotation in the program and action will be taken for non-negative findings. A repeat drug screen or background check may be required depending upon facility requirements or just cause. The Substance Abuse Policy and Procedure, as defined in the Georgia Southwestern State University MSN student handbook, will be followed for all drug testing. **Disclosure of legal convictions and arrests is required.**

Due to the nature of the clinical experiences in the nursing program, students may be required to submit to drug testing if there is reason to believe, from a reliable source, that the student is under the influence of a substance that has impaired judgment and/or ability to care for patients. Any substance, whether prescribed or not, that impairs the student's ability to fully function in the care of vulnerable populations should not be used prior to or during clinical experiences.

Each requirement must be valid from the first day of the semester and remain current through the last day of the semester. Failure to complete this requirement may result in a delay in clinical placement approval or slower progression through program.

Students who do not complete requirements by the deadline established by the Clinical Support Specialist will be removed from all clinical courses in which they are registered for the semester. The student will not be permitted to enroll in any clinical course the following semester. This will negatively impact students' progress in the program. Students who become non-compliant with any clinical requirement during the course of a term will not be able to attend clinical and thus will be required to withdraw immediately from all clinical courses. If this occurs prior to the last day to withdraw without academic penalty the student may withdraw from the course without academic penalty. If this occurs after the last day to withdraw without academic penalty it will result in a clinical unsatisfactory and failure of the course.

**Unencumbered RN License** - The student must maintain an active unencumbered RN license in all states in which clinical rotations will be performed. A faculty member must be notified immediately if the RN licensure status changes in any way.

Maintenance of **Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification** is required throughout the program. Advanced life support is also highly recommended. A copy of the BLS/ALS certification card and all RN licensures must be provided.

**HIPAA/OSHA** - Student compliance with HIPAA (health insurance portability and accountability act) and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) guidelines is required.

**Personal Liability Insurance** for clinical practice is required for all graduate students (see prior section).

**Physical Exam**- documented by MD, NP, or PA. All nursing students enrolled in clinical courses are required to have annual proof of good health on file. Results of a TB skin test must be documented. **Physical exam must be valid from the first day of the semester of registration through the last day of the semester.**

#### **Serum Titers**

It is the student's responsibility to **provide original documentation** that he/she has met all health and immunization requirements prior to registration for the first clinical course.

All students registering for their first clinical course must have present in their School of Nursing

files satisfactory of:

1. vaccination for Hepatitis B within the preceding 5 years **OR** a conformed prior illness with Hepatitis B **OR** receipt of at least the first does of the vaccine for Hepatitis B; proof that all three doses of the vaccine have been given must be submitted within 6 months of the first dose.

**AND**

2. documentation of titer for Hepatitis B antibody level.
3. documentation of titers for measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella zoster.

#### **Immunizations:**

The School of Nursing recommends that all immunization be kept-up-to-date for safety of each student, including the tetanus vaccination.

**NOTE: PRECLINICAL REQUIREMENTS MAY BE ADDED AT ANY TIME DUE TO NEW HEALTH FACILITY REQUIREMENTS.**

**IT IS STRONGLY RECOMMENDED THAT THE STUDENT KEEP A COPY OF ALL DOCUMENTATION SUBMITTED.**

#### **Guidelines for MSN Practicum Clinical Site and Preceptor Selection**

**The Practicum course in the Master of Science in Nursing Education, Leadership, and Informatics Program includes clinical hours** with a qualified preceptor in an approved clinical setting. In general, preceptors are expected to be prepared at a graduate level and hold an MSN degree.

#### **Procedure for Securing a Clinical Site and Preceptor**

1. Students contact prospective preceptors to ask them to serve in that capacity. Faculty can assist students by suggesting potential preceptors.
2. Nurses who serve as preceptors must be licensed as a nurse by the state in which they practice.
3. The Student must submit a completed *Preceptor Information Form*. This form should be submitted by **midterm** of the semester preceding the anticipated clinical experience. If the form is incomplete on submission it may delay or prolong the processing of the preceptorship agreement.
4. The preceptor and clinical setting must be approved by the course faculty prior to any written agency agreements being finalized for a course.
5. The preceptor and agency agreement must be signed and returned to the School of Nursing prior to the student's beginning a clinical experience.
6. The student has the responsibility to confirm receipt of these documents by the School of Nursing prior to beginning clinical.
7. Clinical experiences are not allowed during semester breaks.
8. Students may not participate in clinical at their place of employment. The student must work with the MSN Faculty to identify and appropriate placement.

**In the event of an accident or injury during a clinical experience, the student should seek**

**appropriate care. Follow agency procedure and notify the clinical faculty.**

#### **Clinical Site Selection:**

The table below depicts clinical site selection options:

<b>SPECIALTY</b>	<b>POTENTIAL SITES</b>	<b>PRECEPTORS</b>	<b>REQUIRED HOURS</b>	<b>DIRECT CARE HOURS</b>
<b>EDUCATOR</b>	University, Community College, Technical College, Hospitals	MSN Prepared Currently in an Educator Role	495 in Educator Role Over two semesters	60 of 495 must be Direct Care Hours Over two semesters
<b>INFORMATICS</b>	Hospital Setting	MSN Prepared Currently in an Informaticist Role	495 in an Informatics Role Over two semesters	N/A
<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	Hospital or Possible Community Setting.	MSN Prepared Currently in a Leadership Role	495 in a Leadership Role Over two semesters	N/A

#### **Completion of Hours:**

All clinical hours are to be completed during the semester in which students are enrolled. No clinical hours may be completed after the last day of the semester.

#### **Clinical Credentialing Tracker Compliance**

The student services coordinator/student advisor will email the information needed to purchase the approved clinical credentialing tracker. Please do not purchase any program until you receive the email. If you have any questions, please contact the student services coordinator/student advisor prior to your purchase. The credentialing tracker is a mandatory requirement for all students in clinical courses:

- Part-Time Students: Package must be purchased and completed the semester prior to clinical rotations.
- Full Time Students: Package must be purchased upon acceptance to the FNP program.

Some items in the tracker will require annual or biannual renewal, which may incur an additional cost. Each requirement must be valid from the first day of the semester and remain current through the last day of the semester. Failure to complete this requirement may result in a delay in clinical placement approval or slower progression through the program. Students who do not complete requirements by the deadline established by the The Clinical Services Manager will not be registered for clinical courses for the semester. This will negatively impact the students' progress in the program. Students who become non-compliant with any clinical requirement during a term will not be able to attend clinical until they are

#### **Student Responsibilities for Preceptor/Clinical Site:**

1. Students must identify and contact qualified preceptors in approved clinical settings.
2. The student must submit the "Preceptor Information Form" to faculty for approval. A written preceptor and agency agreement is sent to the clinical setting after faculty approval.

3. Each student is responsible for arranging with the preceptor a schedule to indicate the exact times and dates of the required number of clinical hours to complete the preceptorship.
4. Students are required to inform the preceptor and faculty member of any changes in the schedule or any absence. Preceptors should be contacted at least a day before the absence when possible.
5. Students are required to review with the preceptor the objectives of the preceptorship.
6. Collaborates appropriately with other health care professionals.
7. Students must complete all clinical hours with their preceptor, or an approved, qualified person assigned by the preceptor.
8. Any problems that arise during preceptorship must be reported to the preceptor and the faculty member immediately.
9. Meets with preceptor to discuss objectives and give overview of past experiences.
10. The student seeks ongoing feedback from preceptor.
11. The student should adhere to all policies and procedures specific to the practice settings during the clinical experience at the institution.
12. Students must report every accident or injury immediately after its occurrence to the preceptor and the faculty member.
13. Always demonstrates professionalism in behavior and dress.
14. No clinical hours can be done by the student during semester breaks.
15. Students will evaluate preceptors upon completion of each practicum experience.

## **Preceptor Responsibilities for Preceptorship**

1. Qualified persons may accept the request of a student to be a preceptor.
2. Preceptors should orient the student to organizational policies and procedures specific to the setting.
3. Preceptors are to report to the faculty member if the student does not complete the clinical hours or does not notify the preceptor of an absence.
4. Preceptors must approve all schedule revisions.
5. Preceptors should review course objectives with the student and contact the program faculty member if any questions arise.
6. Preceptors report to nursing faculty any problems encountered with the student during the experience as soon as they occur.
7. Evaluates the performance of the student using the provided practicum evaluation tool.
8. Preceptors must approve any clinical activity by the student in the clinical setting.
9. Preceptors may assign students to work with other qualified personnel during the clinical experience when necessary or appropriate.
10. Preceptors are urged to contact faculty at any time during the clinical experience with questions, concerns, or problems.
11. Preceptors will be required to evaluate students in verbal and written format.
12. The preceptor will notify the student and designated faculty member immediately prior to termination of the agreed upon contract.



### **Faculty Responsibilities for Preceptorship**

1. Faculty can assist students by suggesting potential preceptors.
2. Faculty must approve selection of preceptors by students and submit the information for processing by the School of Nursing.
3. Faculty must maintain current student records of the following: RN licensure, liability insurance, BCLS certification, Drug Screen, Immunization status, Physical examination, TB screening, disclosure of legal convictions or arrest.
4. Faculty is available to preceptors as needed.

### **Practicum Clinical Planning Forms Deadlines:**

**NURS 6910 Practicum I (Fall) – July 5**

**NURS 6920 Practicum II (Spring)-November 5**

***All planning forms must be submitted by the assigned due dates. If a student fails to submit the forms by the deadline, they will not be allowed to continue and will have to wait till the course is offered again.***

# APPENDICES

**SEMESTER CONTRACT AGREEMENT WITH PRECEPTOR CLINICAL SITE AND GSW FORM**

**PRECEPTOR AGREEMENT FORM**

**PRECEPTOR QUALIFICATION RECORD**

**MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT: Information and Directions**

**MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT: I. Student Learning Outcomes Table**

**MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT: II. Signature Section (week 1) and III. Verification at Conclusion of Practicum (week 15)**

**MSN STUDENT ACTIVITIES LOG: Instructions and Due Dates**

**MSN STUDENT ACTIVITIES LOG TABLES: Weeks 1-15**

*A copy of this handbook and all Clinical Evaluation Forms are found on the nursing webpage at [gsw.edu](http://gsw.edu).*

## Contract Agreement

This form will serve as a Semester Contract Agreement between:

\_\_\_\_\_ and  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Clinical site name

\_\_\_\_\_  
City state, zip

and with the School of Nursing at Georgia Southwestern State University, located in Americus, Georgia, when appropriate signatures have been affixed below by Dr. Courtney Ross, Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the authorized agency representative for the clinical site.

The agreement will grant permission to \_\_\_\_\_  
as a student enrolled in the MSN program at GSW to obtain part of his/her clinical nursing experience through your institution.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preceptor Name & Title

The term of the agreement will be:

\_\_\_\_\_ Spring semester: January 1, through April 30

\_\_\_\_\_ Fall semester: August 1, through December 15

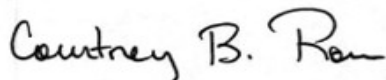
If the terms of this agreement are acceptable to you and your agency, please sign below and keep a copy for your records.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Agency/Institution

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, Agency Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name



Dr. Courtney B. Ross, RN, CNL, NE-BC  
Dean, College of Nursing & Health Sciences

*Please return this form via email to Dr. Gosa or Andrea Pinckard: [msnclinical@gsw.edu](mailto:msnclinical@gsw.edu)*

## PRECEPTOR AGREEMENT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ agree to serve as a clinical preceptor for Georgia Southwestern State University (GSW) Master of Science in nursing students. By agreeing to serve as a clinical preceptor, I accept the responsibility of providing instruction and guidance for the assigned students(s). I will aid in the provision of clinical learning opportunities necessary for the student to meet clinical laboratory objectives and the MSN program objectives. I will also assist the student in applying classroom theory to the clinical situation.

I understand there is no monetary compensation for serving as a preceptor for GSW Master of Science Nursing Students. I also understand that I may engage a substitute preceptor, from among the approved preceptors, if I am absent from the clinical area.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preceptor Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Preceptor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nursing Unit Administrator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Course Title

\_\_\_\_\_ There are no changes to my Preceptor Qualification Record. It has been updated within the past year and is on file at GSW.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Course Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form via email to Dr. Gosa or Andrea Pinckard: [msnclinical@gsw.edu](mailto:msnclinical@gsw.edu)**



## PRECEPTOR QUALIFICATION RECORD

Name

GA License# \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Last

First

Middle

Preceptor's Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor's Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor's Telephone Number: (Home or cell) \_\_\_\_\_ (Work) \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor's Email: \_\_\_\_\_

List professional education/national certification in chronological order:

Name of Institution	Location	Diploma, Degree, National Certification	Year Granted	Major Field

Current Employment:

Health care setting in which you are employed: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you been employed as an RN at least one year in the above setting? \_\_\_\_\_

Name of affiliating nursing education program:

Georgia Southwestern State University — Master of Nursing Program

Please describe how the student's learning goals will be/are enabled by your education and/or expertise:

Preceptor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

***Please return this form via email to Dr. Gosa or Andrea Pinckard: msnclinical@gsw.edu***

## **GSW School of Nursing MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT**

***Student Information:***

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID# \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

***Preceptor Information:***

Preceptor \_\_\_\_\_ Preceptor's Credentials \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Work Address  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:**

For Week 1, complete the Learning Agreement with program outcomes and self-identified goals and initial plans to meet those self-identified goals. Review these goals and plans with your preceptor. The agreement should be revised each week to reflect completed goals, additional goals and changes to the plan dictated by the actual experience or revisions suggested by faculty and/or preceptor. At the end of the practicum experience, evaluate success with your preceptor and obtain the preceptor's signature at the bottom of the agreement. Save this form as a Microsoft Word document and enter the required information directly into it; submit the completed Learning Agreement in Week 15 or before. Learning Agreement Consists of 4 Sections:

1. Cover sheet with student and preceptor information.
2. Student Learning Outcomes Table (see next page)
3. Signatures approving plan (Week 1)
4. Signatures and preceptor verification (Week 15)

Due Dates: Initial Learning Agreement by 11:59 PM Sunday at end of Week 1.

Completed Learning Agreement by 11:59 PM at end of Week 15.

Minimum of 500 hours practicum experience required.





## MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT

### Student Learning Outcomes

Program Outcomes	Student-Identified Practicum Goals to Meet Course Outcomes	Plan to Meet Student-Identified Practicum Goals & Program Outcomes
1. Implement the selected advanced nurse role- leader, educator, informaticist, within health care.		
2. Develop and nurture interprofessional collaborations by communicating and consulting with other health care professionals, including administrators, community leaders and regulators.		
3. Evaluate the influence of ethical principles on personal and organizational decision-making.		
4. Utilize nursing research for the promotion of quality nursing education, safe client centered healthcare, and evidence-based practice.		
5. Employ critical thinking in the application of nursing and multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to foster optimal client health outcomes.		
6. Exemplify cultural competence and sensitivity to diversity in dynamic academic and healthcare environments.		
7. Demonstrate competence in leadership roles and a commitment to ongoing professional development for the provision of quality, cost- effective client centered healthcare and the advancement of nursing practice.		
8. Utilize informatics to improve client outcomes and to promote the health and safety of individuals, groups and communities.		

# MSN LEARNING AGREEMENT

## II. Signature Section (Week 1)

Submitted by (Student) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Accepted by (Faculty) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Verification at Conclusion of Practicum (Week 15)

At conclusion of practicum experience, verify achievement of student-identified goals.

Please explain if goals were not met.

Submitted by (Student) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# GSW School of Nursing

## Practicum Student Activity Log

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Term: \_\_\_\_\_ Student ID# \_\_\_\_\_

Preceptor \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty \_\_\_\_\_

### Instructions:

Complete information for each week, adding new rows as needed for additional activities.

### Required Hours:

Practicum consists of 500 hours. For the Nurse Educator track, at least 60 hours of practicum must evidence a clinical focus with a specific patient population.

### Up to 25% (35 hours) of student activities in the practicum course may consist of:

- Meeting with preceptor and/or site orientation
- Completing research associated with the practicum experience.
- Completing research requested by preceptor or agency that supports practicum goals.
- Attending a conference or educational offering on a topic related to nursing leadership, nursing education, or nursing informatics.
- Participation in professional meetings, advisory councils, or other professional events related to nursing leadership, nursing education, or nursing informatics.

**All hours must be documented on the *MSN Activity Log* and signed off by the preceptor. Travel time to and from the practicum site cannot be included in the 500 hours. Students must enter time in TYPHON for practicum professor to sign off. All forms must be uploaded into GO View in the dropbox.**

### Due Dates:

Submitted each week (Weeks 1-15) by 11:59 Sunday.

Signed *Students Activities Log* due by 11:59 PM on announced deadline.

The student and preceptor must sign to verify completion of hours before final submission.

## Weekly Activities

Date	Description of Practicum Activity	Time
<b>Week 1</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 1:</b>		
<b>Week 2</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 2:</b>		
<b>Week 3</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 3:</b>		
<b>Week 4</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 4:</b>		
<b>Week 5</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 5:</b>		

Date	Description of Practicum Activity	Time
<b>Week 6</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 6:</b>		
<b>Week 7</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 7:</b>		
<b>Week 8</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 8:</b>		
<b>Week 9</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 9:</b>		
<b>Week 10</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 10:</b>		

Date	Description of Practicum Activity	Time
<b>Week 11</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 11:</b>		
<b>Week 12</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 12:</b>		
<b>Week 13</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 13:</b>		
<b>Week 14</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 14:</b>		
<b>Week 15</b>		
<b>Total Hours for Week 15:</b>		



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**GEORGIA SOUTHWESTERN  
SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**Master of Science in Nursing**

# **FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER PROGRAM**



## **Family Nurse Practitioner Program (FNP)**

### **Program Overview**

Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) graduates are ready to lead in the advanced practice nurse roles in health-related service to diverse populations. The focus of the FNP is the management of common acute and chronic healthcare problems across the lifespan in a variety of primary care settings. The FNP provides care to people across the lifespan that specializes in health promotion and disease prevention.

### **Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies**

At completion of the FNP program, the FNP graduate possesses the ten (10) core competencies regardless of population focus.

1. Knowledge of Practice
2. Person Centered Care
3. Population Health
4. Practice Scholarship and Translational Science
5. Quality and Safety
6. Interprofessional Collaboration in Practice
7. Health Systems
8. Technology and Information Literacy
9. Professional Acumen
10. Personal and Professional Leadership

Nurse Practitioner Core Competencies Content: A delineation of suggested content specific to the NP core competencies can be found at <https://nonpf.org>

### **MSN Program Outcomes**

Graduates will be able to:

1. Implement the selected advanced nurse role: leader, educator, informaticist, and family nurse practitioner within health care.
2. Develop and nurture interprofessional collaborations by communicating and consulting with other health care professionals and community leaders.
3. Evaluate the influence of ethical principles on personal and organizational decision-making.
4. Utilize nursing research for the promotion of quality nursing education, safe person-centered health care, and evidence-based practice.
5. Employ critical thinking in the application of nursing and multidisciplinary theoretical frameworks to foster optimal health outcomes.
6. Exemplify cultural competence and sensitivity to diversity in dynamic academic and health care environments.

7. Demonstrate competence in leadership roles and a commitment to ongoing professional development for the provision of quality, cost-effective person-centered health care and the advancement of nursing practice.
8. Utilize informatics to improve health outcomes and to promote the health and safety of individuals, groups, and communities.

### **FNP Curriculum Overview**

#### **Core Courses (15 credit hours):**

NURS 6105	Research for Evidence Based Practice (3 credit hours)
NURS 6107	Advanced Pathophysiology (3 credit hours)
NURS 6127	Scientific Underpinnings for the APN Role (3 credit hours)
NURS 6106	Advanced Pharmacology (3 credit hours)
NURS 6421	Health Assessment for APN (3 credit hours) (45 hours virtual simulation)

#### **Specialty Courses (23 credit hours):**

NURS 6129	Health Care Delivery Models, Economics, and Policy (2 credit hours)
NURS 6226	Diagnostic & Clinical Reasoning for APNs (2 credit hours)
NURS 6422	Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan I (6 credit hours) (150 hours clinical rotation)
NURS 6423	Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II (6 credit hours) (150 hours clinical rotation)
NURS 6424	Primary Care of Pediatric Populations (7 credit hours) (180 hours-)
NURS 6425	Nurse Practitioner Practicum (6 credit hours) (300 hours clinical rotation)

Course descriptions can also be found on gsw.edu website.

***Most clinical classes are offered only once a year and are required to be completed successfully in sequence prior to student being allowed to continue in the program. Non-clinical courses can be taught different semesters.***

### **Proctored Exams**

Proctored exams/quizzes are required in some FNP courses. There are two options for proctoring.

1. You can contact your course faculty and decide to come to the GSW campus on the day of the exam.
2. It is required that all exams are proctored. Your faculty and syllabi will provide the information related to proctoring services.

Requests for alternate exams dates will be considered at the discretion of the faculty on a case-by-case basis. The faculty reserves the right to change the format of the exam such as providing a written test.

New for Fall 2023

**Georgia Southwestern State University School of  
Nursing**  
Family Nurse Practitioner Part Time Program  
Fall Entry

YEAR ONE		
Fall Semester	Spring Semester	
NURS 6129 Health Care Delivery Models and Economics and Policy (2-0-2)	NURS 6106 Advanced Pharmacology (3-0-3)	
NURS 6107 Advanced Pathophysiology (3-0-3)	NURS 6127 Scientific Underpinnings of the APN Role (3-0-3)	
Total Semester Credits/Cumulative: 5		Total Credits: 6
YEAR TWO		
Summer Semester	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
NURS 6105 Research for EvidenceBased Practice (3-0-3)	NURS 6226 Diagnostic & Clinical Reasoning for Advanced Practice Nurses (2-0-2)	NURS 6422 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan I (clinical required- 150 hrs) (3-9-6)
	NURS 6421 Advanced Health Assessment (virtual simulation – 45 hrs) (2-3-3)	
Total Semester Credits 3	Total Semester Credits 5	Total Semester Credits 6
YEAR THREE		
Summer Semester	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
NURS 6423 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II (clinical required – 150 hrs) (3-9-6)	NURS 6424 Primary Care of the Pediatric Populations (clinical required-180 hrs) (3-12-7)	NURS 6425 Nurse Practitioner Practicum (clinical required-300 hrs) (0-18-6)
Total Semester Credits 6	Total Semester Credits 7	Total Semester Credits/Cumulative: 6

revised 4.13.2022/PB

**Georgia Southwestern State University School of  
Nursing  
Family Nurse Practitioner Program PART TIME SPRING ENTRY**

YEAR ONE					
Spring Semester			Summer Semester		
NURS 6106	Advanced Pharmacology	(3-0-3)	NURS 6105	Research for Evidence Based Practice	(3-0-3)
NURS 6127	Scientific Underpinnings of the APN Role	(3-0-3)	NURS 6107	Advanced Pathophysiology	(3-0-3)
Total Semester Credits/Cumulative: 6			Total Credits: 6		
YEAR TWO					
Fall Semester		Spring Semester		Summer Semester	
NURS 6226	Diagnostic &Clinical Reasoning for Advanced Practice Nurses (2-0-2)	NURS 6422	Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan I (clinical required-150 hrs) (3-9-6)	NURS 6423	Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II (clinical required-150 hrs) (3-9-6)
NURS 6421	Advanced Health Assessment (virtual simulation-45 hrs) (2-3-3)				
NURS 6129	Health Care Delivery Models (2-0-2)				
Total Semester Credits 7		Total Semester Credits 6		Total Semester Credits 6	
YEAR THREE					
Fall Semester		Spring Semester			
NURS 6424	Primary Care of Pediatric Populations (clinical required-180 hrs) (3-12-7)	NURS 6425	Nurse Practitioner Practicum (clinical required-300 hrs) (0-18-6)		
Total Semester Credits 7		Total Semester Credits/Cumulative: 6			

NEW for 23- 24

**Georgia Southwestern State University**  
**Family Nurse Practitioner**  
**Full Time Schema**

YEAR ONE		
Fall Semester		Spring Semester
NURS 6107 Advanced Pathophysiology (3-0-3)		NURS 6422 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan I (clinical required-150 hours) (3-9-6)
NURS 6226 Diagnostic & Clinical Reasoning for Advanced Practice Nurses (2-0-2)		NURS 6106 Advanced Pharmacology (3-0-3)
NURS 6421 Advanced Health Assessment (virtual simulation required- 45 hrs) (2-3-3)		
Total Semester Credits 8		Total Semester Credits 9
YEAR TWO		
Summer Semester	Fall Semester	Spring Semester
NURS 6423 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II (clinical required-150 hrs) (3-9-6)	NURS 6424 Primary Care of the Pediatric Populations (Total 180 clinical hours: 3- 12-7)	NURS 6425 Nurse Practitioner Practicum (clinical required-300 hours) (0-18-6)
NURS 6127 Scientific Underpinnings Of the APN Role (3-0-3)	NURS 6105 Research for Evidence Based Practice (3-0-3)	NURS 6129 Health Care Delivery Models, Economics and Policy (2-0-2)
Total Semester Credits 9	Total Semester Credits 10	Total Semester Credits 8

Total Program Hours 44

Revised 4.13.2022/PB

## **FNP STUDENT CLINICAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

### **General Clinical Information**

GSW requires family nurse practitioner students to complete **780 direct patient care clinical hours and 45 hours of virtual simulation** in their program of study. Clinical hours must be spent with an approved preceptor, at an approved site. **Students are responsible for finding an acceptable site and preceptor for their clinical experiences.**

Clinical hours are defined by the National Task Force (NTF) Criteria (2021) as " Direct patient care clinical hours may include student provision of care delivered to the patient through telehealth and global health experiences. Simulation is not direct patient care, and these hours may not be included in the direct patient care total".

Competencies are higher level skills that represent the ability to demonstrate mastery over care management and that provide a foundation for decision-making skills under a variety of clinical situations across all care settings. Courses are designed to meet the core competencies identified by the NONPF and MSN Essentials.

**FNP Certification** - Each state has its own approval processes for out-of-state institutions offering distance education. While Georgia Southwestern State University endeavors to offer all programs to as wide an audience as possible, all Georgia Southwestern State University distance education programs may not be available in all states. States in which GSW is authorized to offer online programs may be found at [gsw.edu](http://gsw.edu).

Completion of the FNP program does not guarantee eligibility for certification in some states. It is the student's responsibility to contact State Boards of Nursing regarding requirements of certification.

## **FNP Student Behavior and Expectations at Clinical Sites**

It is appropriate for students to ask for a brief orientation on the first day of clinical and learn the names of the staff. The clinical staff can make the student experience easier or more difficult. Staff should always be treated with respect and courtesy! Students should always show respect and gratitude for the preceptor's efforts in giving of their time and inviting students into their practices. Demonstrations of gratitude during and after the clinical rotation are appropriate and typically well-received.

### **Professional Etiquette:**

Student should provide the preceptor with:

- Schedule of planned clinical dates.
- Student's personal clinical and course objectives.
- Student's contact information as well as contact information for the student's clinical instructor and/or course coordinator.
- Communicate with preceptor for all schedule changes.

Additional consideration:

- Do NOT arrive on days that have not been pre-scheduled.
- Do NOT attend clinical unless the preceptor is physically present.
- Do NOT report to the clinical area for rotations when ill, experiencing an elevated temperature, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, or any other symptoms of illness.

### **Student Use of Cell Phones:**

- Cell phones should be off preferably, or on vibrate, but should NOT make any noise in the clinic or exam rooms.
- Cell phone use during clinic hours is prohibited, except for use as a medical resource if site allows.
- Cell phones may be used for personal calls during lunch or established breaks but should be in a private area away from patients and staff.

### **Student Interest in Each Patient and/or Procedure:**

It is understood that students will have varying interests, but each experience produces valuable information.

- A student will NOT be just an observer, or appear disinterested, but voluntarily participate to the greatest extent that they are allowed.
- Students will not go to another area of the clinic to work on non-clinical assignments.
- Students will introduce themselves as a family nurse practitioner student to patients and everyone in the clinical setting.

### **Appropriate Dress:**

The student is to be professionally and appropriately dressed for all clinical experiences.

- Students may wear business casual, or clean, pressed scrubs if appropriate, but should not wear jeans, leggings or short skirts.
- Pressed lab coat with the student's name tag is required. Credentials other than RN, or **FNP Student** may not be displayed on a lab coat or name tag at clinical sites; Lab coats may be purchased at Scrubin Uniforms. Enter the Access Code: gswgpgm229. Login and Shop \*If you do not have a login, one will be created for you during your first purchase. The size lab coat required is a 33-inch lab coat. You may purchase a comparable lab coat from another vendor if you wish. Name badges can be purchased from Southwest Trophy by calling 229- 928-0660, the contact person is Stephanie Jones. When calling you should identify yourself as a GSW FNP Student and name tags must include:  
YOUR NAME  
FNP Student  
Georgia Southwestern State University
- FNP student name badge is to always be clearly visible.
- Students should bring a stethoscope, resources, and other essential equipment to clinicals.

### **Active Learning:**

As active learners, students do not just "follow" preceptors. Students are not allowed to observe for more than one day. Students are expected to actively participate in assessing, diagnosing, and managing the care of the assigned patients seen in collaboration with the preceptor. As an active learner, communication is imperative.

### **Communication:**

Students will have a designated clinical faculty member who is responsible for the evaluation of the student's performance in the clinical course. It is essential that students keep their designated clinical faculty members informed of any change in their clinical site, preceptor, or schedule, as well as any unanticipated events or problems that occur during the clinical experience. Students should notify the clinical instructor immediately of any problem during the clinical rotation.



**Clinical Role:**

Students are learning the role and scope of practice of the FNP. Students are to adhere to the Nurse Practice Act associated with the Board of Nursing in the state in which they have an approved clinical site. It is the student's responsibility to read the applicable nurse practice act(s), understand the content, and abide by the act(s). Information can be found at National Council of State Board of Nursing website.

The student is expected to consult with the preceptor regarding each patient and to record the visits in the format appropriate to the clinic's standards. At all times, the student will function under the supervision of the preceptor.

**Clinical Area Illness or Injury:**

Students who are injured or become ill while providing patient care MUST:

- notify assigned clinical faculty via GSW email immediately
- follow the agency's policy and procedure for injury or illness.

Clinical agencies will not provide medical care free of charge for students who are injured or become ill during the clinical experience. Students are responsible for any expense incurred. Each student is required to carry personal health care coverage.

**Billing of Services**

The clinical site provider/preceptor is responsible for billing all patient services. FNP students need to participate in the identification and designation of ICD-10 and CPT codes; however, students do not receive personal compensation for any patient services rendered.

**Maintain Satisfactory Clinical Standing:**

Preceptors participate in the ongoing clinical evaluation of students through contact with FNP faculty members and evaluations. However, FNP faculty members determine the student's clinical standing throughout the semester and the final clinical and course grade. Expectations are outlined in the FNP clinical manual, as well as course outcomes provided in each course syllabus and will serve as the standards for student evaluation. FNP faculty members evaluate student performance in a variety of ways, such as clinically related assignments, site visits, evaluation of students by preceptors, consultation with preceptors, and clinical documentation software.

### **Clinical Documentation System:**

Students are required to use the designated software management system for documenting clinical time and patient encounters. Data entered into the system is stored in a secure and HIPAA compliant server. The software allows students to keep track of clinical hours, type of patients, type of visit, ICD-10 codes, and E/M (CPT) codes.

Students are expected to see a variety of patient acuities in a clinical day to receive the minimum of 8-hour credit towards completion of clinical hours. Clinical credit is based on the complexity of the documentation in the software management system and is based on the feedback from the clinical instructor.

### **Completion of Clinical Hours**

All clinical hours are to be completed during the semester in which students are enrolled. No clinical hours will be counted if they are completed before or after the semester starts or ends. Any request for extension of clinical time that will not be completed by the established due date within the course, must be submitted in writing to the clinical faculty and lead faculty for the course. All requests for extensions, will be brought before the FNP faculty for decision. The student will have the opportunity to speak with the clinical faculty regarding their request. All clinical hours must be verified by the preceptor in order to be applied to graduation.

***Clinical experiences are not allowed during breaks between semesters.***

## **FNP Student Preparedness for Clinical**

### **Pre-Clinical Requirements**

The student will submit all pre-clinical requirements to the vendor designated by GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences. This package is purchased by the student the semester prior to starting clinical rotations and must be completed and approved by the Clinical Services Manager before rotations can begin. Students are responsible for keeping current all requirements updated as stated in the contract with clinical agencies. The student should keep original documentation for their personal records for future use. Some facilities require additional immunizations and/or testing. Students must comply with facility contract requirements.

### **Clinical Credentialing Tracker Compliance**

**The student services coordinator/student advisor will email the information needed to purchase the approved clinical credentialing tracker. Please do not purchase any**

**program until you receive the email. If you have any questions, please contact the student services coordinator/student advisor prior to your purchase.**

The credentialing tracker is a mandatory requirement for all students in clinical courses:

- **Part-Time Students:** Package must be purchased and completed the semester prior to clinical rotations.
- **Full Time Students:** Package must be purchased upon acceptance to the FNP program.
- Some items in the tracker will require annual or bi-annual renewal, which may incur an additional cost.

Each requirement must be valid from the first day of the semester and remain current through the last day of the semester. Failure to complete this requirement may result in a delay in clinical placement approval or slower progression through the program.

Students who do not complete requirements by the deadline established by the Clinical Services Manager will not be registered for clinical courses for the semester. This will negatively impact the students' progress in the program. Students who become non-compliant with any clinical requirement during a term will not be able to attend clinical until they are compliant with all requirements.

**Unencumbered RN License:**

The student must maintain an active unencumbered RN license in all states in which clinical rotations will be performed. An FNP faculty member must be notified immediately if the RN licensure status changes in any way.

**Basic Life Support (BLS) Certification:**

This must be maintained throughout the program. A copy of the BLS certification card is required.

**HIPAA/OSHA:**

Student compliance with HIPAA (health insurance portability and accountability act) and OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) courses are required to be obtained through the vendor designated by GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences.

**Professional Liability Insurance:**

Students must provide their own liability insurance for student nurse practitioners. Workplace coverage cannot be used by students unless a purchased rider identifying student nurse practitioner coverage is included. Professional liability insurance, minimum coverage \$1,000,000/\$6,000,000.

### **Health Data and Immunization Requirements:**

While GSW requires a health and immunization record upon acceptance, FNP Program requires a record be kept on specific forms and uploaded to the vendor designated by GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences. Immunizations and physical exam check-ups performed by place of work must be transferred to these forms.

- An initial Physical Exam (must be documented by MD, NP, or PA. The form can be found here: <https://www.gsw.edu/college-of-nursing-and-health-sciences/school-of-health-sciences/files/Student-Physical-Form.pdf>)
- of a TB skin test must be documented)
- Completed Hepatitis B Vaccination series OR titer.
- Varicella immunization (either year of disease or evidence of vaccination series OR titer)
- MMR (2) OR titer
- Tdap within last 10 years
- Current (yearly) flu immunization

### **Criminal Background Check & Drug Screen:**

These are required for all students *prior* to beginning any clinical rotation in the FNP program, and annually thereafter. The background check and drug test are required to be obtained through the vendor designated by GSW College of Nursing and Health Sciences. A repeat drug screen or background check may be required depending upon facility requirements or just cause.

Current Vendor order instructions and forms can be found on the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, Online MSN programs at the following link under “Current Student Information:” <https://www.gsw.edu/academics/schools-and-departments/college-of-nursing-and-health-sciences/school-of-nursing/nursing-programs/graduate>

#### **Information for FNP students**

- Current Vendor Order Instructions
- FNP Immunization Form
- FNP TB Questionnaire Form
- FNP Physical Exam Form

### **Additional Information on Background Check & Drug Screen:**

Clinical facilities require that every student pass a criminal background and urine drug screen prior to being allowed to enter the facility for clinical experiences. This background check must be performed by a vendor designated and approved by all involved healthcare facilities. Because FNP nursing students may rotate through multiple clinical facilities in order to gain required learning experiences, a student not accepted by one of the major facilities based on the review of their criminal

background or urine drug screen will be unable to complete clinical requirements and will thus be excluded from the nursing program.

Students may be required to submit to drug testing if there is reason to believe, from a reliable source, that the student is under the influence of a substance that has impaired judgment and/or ability to care for patients. Any substance, whether prescribed or not, that impairs the student's ability to fully function in the care of vulnerable populations should not be used prior to or during clinical experiences.

Appropriate actions will be taken for positive findings by respective clinical sites.

***NOTE: Pre-clinical requirements may be added at any time due to new health facility requirements. It is strongly recommended that the student keep a copy of all documentation submitted.***

### **Clinical Site Selection**

Throughout the FNP program, students are expected to spend time in clinical sites managing patients across the lifespan, from newborn to geriatrics. Clinical site selection is critical to the student's success in this program. The diagnoses, task-based proficiencies, and population focus of each clinical course should direct site selection.

Clinical sites chosen should follow the NONPF statement on Primary Care Nurse Practitioner. The clinical site should help the FNP student to focus on comprehensive, continuous care that is characterized by a long-term relationship between the patient and FNP. The clinical site should assist the FNP student in understanding the regulatory control according to the services they perform, and the population served. The clinical site scope of practice must be tied to formal APRN education and not pre-APRN education or on-the-job training.

**Students should begin working on clinical site placement as soon as possible. Students must have a clinical site in place and approved before starting semester of clinical rotation.**

### **Preceptor Selection**

Students should focus their experience across the lifespan in a primary care setting. Preceptors must have at least one year of clinical experience and a current unencumbered license in their area of practice. It is in the best interest of the student to have an experienced preceptor to guide the learning process in the clinical setting.

#### **Minimal Qualifications for NP Preceptor:**

- Interested in assisting with the student and enhancing the student's education.

- Willing and desirous to serve as a preceptor.
- Preparation at the appropriate level of current practice and preferably with a minimum of one year's experience in the advanced practice role.
- Licensed by the state of practice as an MD (medical doctor), DO (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine), NP (nurse practitioner, FNP, PNP, AGPCNP, WHNP), CNM (certified nurse midwife), or PA (physician assistant/associate).
- May not be an immediate family member or a direct supervisor.

#### **Suggestions for Securing a Clinical Site and Preceptor**

- Start early!!
- The selected clinical location must be appropriate for the upcoming clinical course.
- Clinical planning forms will be reviewed and approved by designated faculty.
- Questions about the appropriateness of a selected preceptor should be directed to the contact person noted on the Clinical Planning Forms.
- Other avenues of identifying potential clinical sites and preceptors:
  - Network through a local nurse practitioner association which accepts students as members.
  - Inquire with Human Resources at place of employment.
  - Contact Clinical Match Me, a preferred clinical matching service.
  - Ask friends or colleagues for suggestions.

#### **CLINICAL PLANNING FORM DEADLINES**

SEMESTER	COURSE	DEADLINE
FALL	NURS 6424	JULY 5
SPRING	NURS 6422	NOVEMBER 5
	NURS 6425	NOVEMBER 5
SUMMER	NURS 6423	APRIL 5

***All planning forms must be submitted by the assigned due dates. If a student fails to submit the forms by the deadline, they will not be allowed to continue and will have to wait till the course is offered again.***

Clinical experiences and time spent in each experience **must be varied** and distributed in a way that prepares the student to provide care to the populations served. Clinical placement must be approved by faculty.

Students are responsible for obtaining and maintaining registered nurse licensure in the state in which clinical practice hours will be performed. Failure to do so will result in loss of credit for those clinical hours and an administrative withdrawal from the course involved.

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

A two-year Memorandum of Understanding with an Applied Learning Experience is available should clinical site prefer to the PART D Semester Contract Agreement. Please allow extra time for processing. If clinical site already has a MOU/ALE, please indicate on PART D with the expiration date.

### **Clinical Planning Forms**

All parts must be filled out and properly signed for each preceptor/site student uses for each clinical course each semester by the published deadlines. Return information is on the forms.

- **PART A - Student Information**
- **PART B - Preceptor Information**
- **PART C – Preceptor’s Practice Information**
- **PART D – Semester Contract with GSW and Clinical Site** (if applicable MOU/ALE identification)

**Forms are available online in PDF format at the following link under “Current Student Information:”**

**<https://www.gsw.edu/college-of-nursing-and-health-sciences/school-of-nursing/msn-fnp>**

### **Student Responsibilities Shared with Preceptor/Clinical Site:**

The student should initially meet with the preceptor to discuss objectives and give an overview of past experiences.

1. Each student is responsible for arranging with the preceptor a schedule to indicate the exact times and dates to complete the required number of clinical hours to be precepted.
2. Students are required to inform the preceptor and FNP faculty member of any changes in the schedule or any absence. Preceptors should be contacted at least a day before the absence when possible.
3. Students are required to review with the preceptor the course objectives.
4. Students should collaborate appropriately with other health care professionals.
5. Students must complete all clinical hours with their preceptor. **The preceptor may allow an approved, qualified person to be assigned for the student to observe a single unique experience.**

6. All alternate Preceptors require an additional clinical planning form and prior approval by FNP faculty.
7. Any problems that arise during preceptorship must be reported to the preceptor and the FNP faculty member immediately.
8. The student should seek ongoing feedback from the preceptor.
9. The student should adhere to all policies and procedures specific to the practice settings during the clinical experience at the clinical site.
10. Students must report every accident or injury immediately after its occurrence to the preceptor and the FNP faculty member.
11. The student should demonstrate professionalism in behavior and dress always.
12. Students will evaluate preceptors upon completion of each practicum experience.



# **APPENDIX**

## **THE FNP PRECEPTOR HANDBOOK**

### **FNP PRECEPTOR AND CLINICAL SITE GUIDELINES**

#### **Recognition of Preceptor Role**

Your participation as a preceptor for the nurse practitioner program is an essential component of the curriculum. Clinical practice rotations offer a unique opportunity for the graduate nursing student to observe and practice the management of patient care. Students develop their ability to safely perform clinical problem-solving through their participation in the clinical decision-making process and learn the value of collaboration among health care providers.

Minimal Qualifications for NP Preceptor:

- Interested in assisting with the student and enhancing the student's education.
- Willing and desirous to serve as a preceptor.
- Preparation at the appropriate level of current practice and preferably with a minimum of one year's full-time experience in advanced practice role.
- Licensed by the state of practice as a MD (medical doctor), DO (Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine), APRN (advanced practice nurse FNP, PNP, AGPCNP, WHNP), or PA (physician assistant/associate).

#### **Additional Considerations in Decision to Precept:**

- A. Generally, the development of a learning environment for the student would include:
  1. Sufficient exam rooms so the student may function at a novice pace.
  2. Opportunities to do histories and physical examinations, make a tentative assessment, present orally to you, propose appropriate diagnoses and therapeutic plans, and write up the encounter as part of the permanent chart/record.
  3. The preceptor follows up with the patient in order to critique the proposed assessment and plan of care.

4. Opportunity for the student to observe or participate in the management of any patient who presents with a problem of general education interest.
  5. Guidance in the performance of clinical procedures that are consistent with the student's learning objectives while under supervision of the preceptor.
  6. A telephone conversation with the academic faculty overseeing the student's work sometime during the semester for the purposes of determining student progress.
- B. The clinic staff should understand that the nurse practitioner Student will function as a health care provider.
  - C. Opportunity to participate in: 1) health assessment of patients, 2) counseling and guidance in accordance with identified needs, and 3) management of the care of patients in consultation with the preceptor.
  - D. The student is expected to consult with the preceptor regarding each patient and to record the visits in the format appropriate to the clinic's standards. At all times, the student will function under the supervision of the preceptor.
  - E. The FNP faculty member for this student will telephone your clinic during the time the student is with you. The faculty will need a few minutes to confidentially discuss the student's progress.
  - F. At the conclusion of the rotation, the preceptor will complete an evaluation form providing feedback on the student's progress.

Should any problems arise concerning the student's conduct in the clinic, please notify the faculty member so that prompt action can be taken. You may ask the student to leave the clinical site if at any time you determine there is inappropriate or unsafe behavior.

If at any time you have questions or determine that the student is not a safe health care provider, please contact Dr. Ramona Mulleins-Foreman, FNP Program Director (229) 931-4467

In order for the student to meet the clinical outcomes as noted in the clinical syllabus, the following activities need to be performed by the student for them to be successful.

- 1 Gather a comprehensive/focused history, perform physical examinations, and develop a rudimentary problem list (including differential diagnoses for the chief complaint) for stable patients.
- 2 Write comprehensive/focused visit notes, histories, and physicals.
- 3 Write prescriptions and orders (for preceptor signature).
- 4 Present patients to preceptor verbally and propose appropriate diagnostic studies and treatment options.
- 5 Perform selected diagnostic and therapeutic skills and procedures under direct preceptor supervision.
- 6 Demonstrate the ability to address clinical problems and triage them appropriately, recognizing what requires immediate intervention, what can be deferred, and what must be referred to another clinician.

### **Preceptor Responsibilities for Preceptorship**

1. Qualified people may accept the request of a student to be a preceptor.
2. Preceptors should orient the student to organizational policies and procedures specific to the setting.
3. Preceptors are to report to the FNP faculty member if the student does not complete the clinical hours or does not notify the preceptor of an absence.
4. Preceptors must approve all schedule revisions.
5. Preceptors should review course objectives with the student and contact the clinical faculty member if any questions arise.
6. Preceptors report to nursing faculty any problems encountered with the student during the experience as soon as they occur.
7. Preceptors will evaluate the performance of the student using the provided evaluation tool.
8. Preceptors must approve any clinical activity by the student in the clinical setting. The preceptor may allow an approved, qualified person be assigned in order for the student to observe a single unique experience.
9. Preceptors are urged to contact faculty at any time during the clinical experience with, concerns, or problems.
10. The preceptor will notify the student and designated faculty member immediately prior to termination of the agreed upon contract.

### **FNP Student Readiness for Clinical Rotation Verified:**

GSW verifies that nurse practitioner students have the following:

- Unencumbered RN license
- Basic Life Support (BLS) certification

- HIPAA/OSHA certification
- Professional liability insurance:
- Health Data and Immunization Requirements:
- Annual Physical Exam
- Annual TB Screening
- Completed Hepatitis B Vaccination series OR titer.
- Varicella immunization (either year of disease or evidence of vaccination series OR titer
- MMR (2) OR titer
- Tdap within last 10 years
- Current (yearly) flu immunization, drug screen and background check
- All are required for students *prior to* beginning clinical rotations and annually.

### **Preceptor Knowledge of Student Responsibilities**

1. The student should initially meet with the preceptor to discuss objectives and give an overview of past experiences.
2. Each student is responsible for arranging with the preceptor a schedule to indicate the exact times and dates to complete the required number of clinical hours to be precepted.
3. Students are required to inform the preceptor and FNP faculty member of any changes in the schedule or any absence. Preceptors should be contacted at least a day before the absence when possible.
4. Students should collaborate appropriately with other health care professionals.
5. Students must complete all clinical hours with their approved preceptor.
6. The student should seek ongoing feedback from the preceptor.
7. The student should adhere to all policies and procedures specific to the practice settings during the clinical experience at the clinical site.
8. Students must report every accident or injury immediately after its occurrence to the preceptor and the FNP faculty member.
9. The student should demonstrate professionalism in behavior and dress at all times.
10. Students will evaluate preceptors upon completion of each practicum experience.
11. No clinical hours can be done by the student during semester breaks.

### **FNP Faculty Responsibilities to Preceptor**

1. Faculty will conduct site telephone calls to evaluate the preceptorship experience of each student.
2. Faculty are available to support preceptors as needed.

### **Courses Requiring Clinical Site with Preceptor**

Clinical courses are offered only once a year and are required to be completed in sequence. ***Model Plan of Study showing sequence of clinical courses***

<b>Spring Semester 1</b>	<b>Summer Semester 1</b>	<b>Fall Semester 2</b>
<b>NURS 6422</b> Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan I (clinical required-150 hrs.)	<b>NURS 6423</b> Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II (clinical required-150 hrs.)	<b>NURS 6424</b> Primary Care of Pediatric Populations (Clinical required-180 pediatrics)
<b>Spring Semester 2</b>		
<b>NURS 6425</b> Nurse Practitioner Practicum (clinical required-300 hrs.)		

### **NURS 6422 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan 1**

This is the first of two courses that focuses on the primary care health concerns of young adults, adults and older adults and facilitates student development in the nurse practitioner role. The course prepares students to assume entry level responsibility diagnosis and management of common acute and chronic health problems. Students demonstrate clinical competency and skills in precepted clinical experiences. Using evidenced based guidelines, students assess health behaviors, plan, and implement culturally appropriate strategies for health promotion and disease prevention, and evaluate health outcomes. Health maintenance and health restoration are explored in light of contemporary health care environments, including underserved and vulnerable populations.

### **Course Outcomes**

By the completion of the course/clinical, the student should be able to:

- 1) Synthesize and apply current best evidence for clinical decision-making management, consultation, and referral for individuals across the lifespan with acute and common health conditions and their families {Domain 2} (PO5)  
Competency: SOAP Notes
- 2) Recognize epidemiology, pathophysiology, and management plans of common presenting diseases in primary care {Domain 2} (PO5)  
Competency: SOAP Notes
- 3) Demonstrate the role of the NP as a member of the interdisciplinary healthcare team in the provision of safe, quality care based on population foci. (Adults across the Lifespan). {Domain 2}, {Domain 6} (PO1)  
Competency: Preceptor Evaluations.
- 4) Synthesize health assessment data (including subjective, objective, and diagnostic findings) to formulate evidenced based differential diagnosis and individualized, holistic management plans (including pharmacological and non-pharmacological management). {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP notes, Typhon entries, Preceptor evaluations
- 5) Acknowledges cultural, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual differences, and influence on perception of health promotion and participation in providing care to patients and their families. {Domain 9} (PO3)  
Competency: Preceptor Evaluations
- 6) Uses health information systems and patient care technologies in an effective and secure manner when assessing, monitoring patients, and delivering care. {Domain 8} (PO8) Competency: On-Call Assignment, Typhon entries

**Clinical focus:**

The population of focus for this semester is adults, ages 19 and up. The expectation for this semester is that you will continue to improve on assessment skills, verbally reporting exam findings, and establishing and prioritizing a differential diagnosis list. You will build on previous semester's knowledge to incorporate the plan of treatment and management of the patient. Laboratory, diagnostics, procedures, education, and referrals will be included.

This semester you will be moving toward a more focused exam. It is expected that a minimum of one patient per hour will be seen and documented on in Typhon. As the course

progresses, it is expected that the acuity and the number of patients seen and documented on will increase.

It is your responsibility to seek a variety of patients as far as age, gender, social economics, culture, and presenting complaint. This gives you the best clinical experience to apply the didactic learning in preparation for the certification exam and for practice.

### **NURS 6423 Primary Care of Adults Across the Lifespan II**

This is the second of two courses that prepare family nurse practitioner students to assume the entry level responsibility of diagnosis and management of common acute and chronic health concerns of young adults, adults, and older adults in a primary care setting. Students demonstrate clinical competency and skills in precepted clinical experiences. Using evidenced based guidelines, students assess health behaviors, plan, and implement culturally and ethically appropriate strategies for health promotion and disease prevention, and evaluate health outcomes. Health maintenance and health restoration are explored in light of contemporary health care environments, including underserved and vulnerable populations.

#### **Course Outcomes:**

By the completion of the course/clinical, the student should be able to:

- 1) Synthesize and apply current best evidence for clinical decision-making management, consultation, and referral for individuals across the lifespan with acute and common health conditions and their families {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 2) Recognize epidemiology, pathophysiology, and management plans of common presenting diseases in primary care {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 3) Demonstrate the role of the NP as a member of the interdisciplinary healthcare team in the provision of safe, quality care based on population foci. (Adults across the Lifespan). {Domain 2}, {Domain 6} (PO1) Competency: Preceptor Evaluations.
- 4) Synthesize health assessment data (including subjective, objective, and diagnostic findings) to formulate evidenced based differential diagnosis and individualized, holistic management plans (including pharmacological and non-pharmacological management). {Domain 2} (PO5)

Competency: SOAP notes, Typhon entries, Preceptor evaluations

- 5) Acknowledges cultural, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual differences, and influence on perception of health promotion and participation in providing care to patients and their families.  
{Domain 9} (PO3)  
Competency: Preceptor Evaluations
- 6) Uses health information systems and patient care technologies in an effective and secure manner when assessing, monitoring patients, and delivering care. {Domain 8} (PO8) Competency: On-Call Assignment, Typhon entries

**Clinical focus:**

The population of focus for this semester is adults, ages 19 and up. The expectation for this semester is that you will continue to improve on assessment skills, verbally reporting exam findings, and establishing and prioritizing a differential diagnosis list. You will build on previous semester's knowledge to incorporate the plan of treatment and management of the patient. Laboratory, diagnostics, procedures, education, and referrals will be included.

This semester you will be moving toward a more focused exam. This means that the number of patients you encounter should increase from last semester. It is expected that a minimum of one patient per hour will be seen and documented on in Typhon. As the course progresses, it is expected that the acuity and the number of patients seen and documented on will increase.

It is your responsibility to seek a variety of patients as far as age, gender, social economics, culture, and presenting complaint. This gives you the best clinical experience to apply the didactic learning in preparation for the certification exam and for practice.

**NURS 6424 Primary Care of Pediatric Populations**

This course is designed to prepare Family Nurse Practitioners to assume responsibility for health promotion, maintenance, and management of the common acute and chronic health problems, infants, children, and adolescents in health care settings. Emphasis is on the description of the



condition or disease, etiology and incidence, clinical findings, differential diagnosis, management, complications, and preventive and education measures.

Consideration is given to cultural and ethical issues that affect health care delivery and client adherence to the management plan. Established protocols for patients are used to indicate the need for consultation, referral, and community resources. Pediatrics (180 clinical hours).

### **Course Outcomes:**

By the completion of the course/clinical, the student should be able to:

- 1) Synthesize and apply current best evidence for clinical decision-making management, consultation, and referral for individuals across the lifespan with acute and common health conditions and their families {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 2) Recognize epidemiology, pathophysiology, and management plans of common presenting diseases in primary care {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 3) Demonstrate the role of the NP as a member of the interdisciplinary healthcare team in the provision of safe, quality care based on population foci. (OB & Pediatrics). {Domain 2}, {Domain 6} (PO1) Competency: Preceptor Evaluations.
- 4) Synthesize health assessment data (including subjective, objective, and diagnostic findings) to formulate evidenced based differential diagnosis and individualized, holistic management plans. (including pharmacological and non-pharmacological management). {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP notes, Typhon entries, Preceptor evaluations, web-based videos
- 5) Acknowledges cultural, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual differences, and influence on perception of health promotion and participation in providing care to patients and their families. {Domain 9} (PO3) Competency: Preceptor Evaluations, web-based videos
- 6) Uses health information systems and patient care technologies in an effective and secure manner when assessing, monitoring patients, and delivering care. {Domain 8} (PO8) Competency: On-Call Assignment, Typhon entries

### **Clinical focus:**

The clinical Pediatric focus should be done in a pediatric setting that allows students to see children from infancy to late adolescence managing common acute and chronic stable problems. Students will identify normal psychological and physical growth and development patterns. Students should see 8-10 patients per day. The acuity of the patients should increase as clinical and diagnostic skills progress.

### **NURS 6425 Nurse Practitioner Practicum**

**The clinical** experience provides an opportunity for the student to assume responsibility for the primary healthcare services of individuals and families under the supervision of an established nurse practitioner and/or physician preceptor. Students are expected to practice as a Nurse Practitioner, assuming increasing responsibility for planning and implementing therapeutic processes and for documenting and evaluating outcomes of care. This intensive practice experience allows the student to apply theories through the investigation and management of health problems in primary healthcare settings.

By the completion of the course/clinical, the student should be able to:

- 1) Synthesize and apply current best evidence for clinical decision-making management, consultation, and referral for individuals across the lifespan with acute and common health conditions and their families {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 2) Recognize epidemiology, pathophysiology, and management plans of common presenting diseases in primary care {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP Notes
- 3) Demonstrate the role of the NP as a member of the interdisciplinary healthcare team in the provision of safe, quality care based on population foci. (Across the Lifespan). {Domain 2}, {Domain 6} (PO1) Competency: Preceptor Evaluations.
- 4) Synthesize health assessment data (including subjective, objective, and diagnostic findings) to formulate evidenced based differential diagnosis and individualized, holistic management plans (including pharmacological and non-pharmacological management). {Domain 2} (PO5) Competency: SOAP notes, Typhon entries, Preceptor evaluations
- 5) Acknowledges cultural, psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual differences, and influence on perception of health promotion and participation in providing care to patients and their families. {Domain 9} (PO3)

### Competency: Preceptor Evaluations

- 6) Use health information systems and patient care technologies in an effective and secure manner when assessing, monitoring patients, and delivering care. {Domain 8} (PO8) Competency: On-Call Assignment, Typhon entries
- 7) Integrate the above outcomes and culminate into practice as a Nurse Practitioner leader. {Domain 10} (PO1)  
Competency: Case Presentation

### **Clinical focus**

The ideal practicum experience will afford the student the opportunity to strengthen their clinical practice across the lifespan. Focus may be in specific population groups such as pediatrics and explore opportunities in clinical areas that they have expressed an interest in. Students must complete 270 faculty and preceptor approved clinical practice hours during the semester; a minimum of 200 hours must be completed in a primary care agency/practice and must be completed first. The balance (70 hours) may be used to reinforce clinical learning in pediatrics, geriatrics, women's health, or an approved specialty setting. Approximately one-half of the hours should be completed by midterm. A satisfactory faculty evaluation of student performance must be obtained to successfully complete the course. Faculty and preceptors will conduct a Midterm and Final evaluation of student performance.

**FAMILY NURSE PRACTITIONER**  
College of Nursing & Health Sciences

**\*\*\* Clinical Placement Planning Forms\*\*\***

*The packet consists of 4 pages.* Students are responsible for the completion of these forms. **Only completed forms will be accepted.** **NOTE: YOUR PRECEPTOR SHOULD ONLY BE ASKED TO REVIEW and SIGN forms.**

Scan and email complete forms to [msnclinical@gsw.edu](mailto:msnclinical@gsw.edu)

**PART A – STUDENT INFORMATION**

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Complete Permanent Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or PO Box)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (County)

Contact Information with area codes: Cell Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Email** or Other contact information \_\_\_\_\_  
(print if handwritten)

GSW Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Current RN licensure: State(s) \_\_\_\_\_ #s) \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_

**COURSE INFORMATION**

–Please mark–

Course Number: Number of clinical hours *required* in parenthesis

\_\_\_\_\_ NURS 6422 Pri Care of Adults I (150)

\_\_\_\_\_ NURS 6423 Pri Care of Adults II (150)

\_\_\_\_\_ NURS 6424 Pri Care of Pediatric Population (180)

\_\_\_\_\_ NURS 6425 Practicum (300)

**Term & Year:** \_\_\_\_\_ SPRING 20 \_\_\_\_\_ SUMMER 20 \_\_\_\_\_ FALL 20 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**FNP Student Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



\_\_\_\_ Medical-Surgical    \_\_\_\_ Midwifery  
\_\_\_\_ Peds Primary    \_\_\_\_ Women's Health    Other \_\_\_\_\_

## PART C – PRECEPTOR'S PRACTICE INFORMATION

(Must be completed in full)

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

### Clinic/Agency Preceptor's Information

Clinic/Agency Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic/Agency Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
(clinic location – number and street)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (County)

Office Manager: \_\_\_\_\_  
(print if handwritten)

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(print if handwritten)

Telephone with area code \_\_\_\_\_ Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Patients seen by Preceptor per day: # \_\_\_\_\_

Age Range of Patients seen by Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinic/Agency Mailing Address (if different from street address): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (County)

The **Legal Name** of the clinic, group or physician who owns the practice: \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: Legal name and clinic name may or may not be the same)

### Person Legally Authorized to Sign Contracts:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Complete Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street or P.O. Box)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(City) (State) (Zip Code) (County)

Telephone Number with area code \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_  
(print if handwritten)

## PART D – CONTRACT WITH GSW & CLINICAL SITE

This clinical site has an existing MOU with GSW under the name of:

\_\_\_\_\_ expiration date \_\_\_\_\_.

If your clinical site does not have an existing MOU with GSW, please complete the semester contract below:

Clinical site name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

state \_\_\_\_\_

zip \_\_\_\_\_

and the College of Nursing and Health Sciences at the Georgia Southwestern State University, Americus, Georgia, when appropriate signatures have been affixed below by Dr. Courtney Ross, Dean of the College of Nursing and Health Sciences, and the authorized agency representative for the clinical site.

The agreement will grant permission to \_\_\_\_\_

Student name

a student enrolled in the Family Nurse Practitioner program at GSW to obtain part of his/her clinical experience through this facility.

The student will work with \_\_\_\_\_ as preceptor.

Preceptor name and title

The term of the agreement will be:

\_\_\_\_\_ Spring semester: January 1, \_\_\_\_\_ through April 30, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Summer semester: May 1, \_\_\_\_\_ through July 15, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Fall semester: August 1, \_\_\_\_\_ through December 15, \_\_\_\_\_

If the terms of this agreement are acceptable to you and your agency, please sign below and keep a copy for your records.

SIGNATURE of Person Legally Authorized to Sign Contracts

Date \_\_\_\_\_

*Courtney B. Ross*

Dr. Courtney B. Ross, RN, CNL, NE-BC  
 Dean, College of Nursing & Health Sciences



## **AANP Certification**

**Support Options:** For questions, email [certification@aanpcert.org](mailto:certification@aanpcert.org) or call/text (512) 637-0500. AANPCB phone lines will be unavailable between 1:00-2:00 PM CT.

There are videos provided of the certification process: “How to Videos”.  
The cost is \$240 for Members and \$315 for non-members.

The FNP certification examination is an entry-level competency-based examination that tests clinical knowledge in family/individuals across the life span.

### **How many questions are on the examination?**

- There are 150 questions on each examination. A candidate's score is based solely on the 135 scored questions. Of the 150 questions, 15 are pretest questions.
- Pretest questions are used on the examinations to obtain statistical information for determining how well they perform prior to vetting them for use on the scored portion of the examination. The pretest questions cannot be distinguished from those that are scored. A test-taker's score on pretest questions does not affect a candidate's final score.
- Multiple choice, objective format: The exams are limited to content that can be tested in an objective format, competency-based focused solely on requirements for safe clinical practice.
- Candidates receive a 120-day window to test: This window allows applicants the flexibility of scheduling the exam around one's personal schedule, employment schedule, or religious needs without requiring the need for additional accommodation or forms.

The web site gives information on the process, a candidate handbook, exam blueprint and test taking tips.

An official or unofficial transcript showing academic coursework completed to date or final official transcript showing degree awarded and date conferred is required to begin an application. Mail official transcripts in a sealed envelope directly from the school registrar to AANPCB or email secure, electronic academic transcripts directly from the school to [ranscripts@aanpcert.org](mailto:ranscripts@aanpcert.org)

## **How To Apply for AANP Certification**

### **Online Profile**

Visit [www.aanpcert.org](http://www.aanpcert.org) to create an Online Profile account. Once an account is established:

- Apply for the certification exam.
- Upload a copy of your current professional nursing license with expiration date.
- View application status updates.
- Make changes to name, address, or contact information.
- Order verifications to be sent to state boards of nursing and employers.
- Access a printable wallet card when certified.
- Apply for recertification.

### **How To Videos**

- View the How-to Apply Video available on the AANPCB website for information on how to complete the application process.

### **Application Process**

- Apply Online
  - Online applications are recommended. Online applications must be completed within 30 days to avoid loss of data, check your browser's cookie settings for additional information.
- Apply by Paper Application
  - A fillable PDF paper application is available on the website for downloading under Forms on the navigation

bar.

- Paper application processing is longer than the online method. A paper processing fee is assessed.

#### How early can I apply?

- MSN or Post-Graduate Certificate applicants may begin the application process 6 months prior to completion of their program.
- Candidates may sit for an examination after they have completed all didactic courses and clinical practice hours required for their NP program. Some candidates may complete their NP program several weeks before their scheduled graduation and degree conferral date.
- Program Completion Date is the date all didactic courses and clinical hours are completed. Degree Conferred Date is the date the graduate degree or post-graduate certificate is awarded. Some candidates may complete their NP program several weeks before their scheduled graduation and degree conferral date.

#### Required Documents

- Current professional nursing license with expiration date and fee payment are required to initiate processing of an application. A copy may be obtained from the state board of nursing.
- For graduate or post-graduate academic nurse practitioner program applicants, an official or unofficial transcript showing academic coursework completed to date or final official transcript showing degree awarded and date conferred is required to begin an application. A final official transcript showing program completion is required for the release of a certification after passing the examination.
- Documents can be uploaded to the online application, or sent via fax, email, or mail after the application has been submitted.
- Documents sent to AANPCB become the property of AANPCB. Individuals should retain copies of their records for personal use and for their professional portfolio. AANPCB is under no obligation to return documents or issue copies of these documents for future use by a certificate.

#### Signature and Attestation

The applicant's signature (electronic or written) on the application is required for processing. This signature confirms that the information provided by the candidate on their application is accurate and true to the best of their ability. This signature also confirms that the applicant has read, agrees to adhere to, and understands the AANPCB policies.

#### Processing Time

- Typical processing time for applications is 3-6 weeks depending upon receipt of a complete application, required documents, and applicable fees. Applications are processed in a timely manner in the order received. AANPCB does not expedite processing of applications or charge an expediting fee.
- Applications are screened using eligibility criteria before forwarding to qualified advanced practice nurses for professional review

DOMAIN I - Domains	# items	% items	DOMAIN II - Patient Age *	# items	% items
01 - Assess	43	32%	Newborn	3	2%
02 - Diagnose	36	26.5%	Infant	4	3%
03 - Plan	36	26.5%	Toddler	5	4%
04 - Evaluate	20	15%	Child	6	4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100%</b>	Adolescent*	12	9%
			Young Adult*	30	22%
			Middle Adult*	35	26%
			Older Adult	40	30%
*Includes Prenatal					
			<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>100%</b>

# **ANCC Certification**

## **Initial Certification Application**

You may apply for this computer-based test year-round and test during a 120-day window at a time and location convenient to you. The exam allows 3.5 hours to answer 175 questions (150 scored plus 25 pretest questions that are not scored)

The web site gives information on the process, a candidate handbook, exam blueprint and test taking tips.

The price is \$395 for non-members and \$295 for ANA members.

## **How To Apply for ANCC Certification**

### Online Application

#### Validation of Education (VOE)

- Form available online

#### Clinical hour documentation

- Clinical hour documentation must be submitted and must minimally include student/applicant name, total number of faculty-supervised clinical hours, and role/population specific areas.

#### Transcripts

- ANCC accepts varying levels of transcripts for APRN applicants. Submission of official transcripts without degree conferral and unofficial transcripts may result in Authorization to Test (ATT) status. ANCC strongly recommends the submission of e-transcripts.
- ATT status means that APRN candidates have met all eligibility criteria except for receipt of the final degree conferred transcript(s). Candidates may be authorized to sit for the examination after all coursework and faculty-supervised clinical practice hours for the degree are complete, prior to degree conferral and graduation, provided that all other eligibility requirements are met. The Validation of Education (VOE) form, clinical hour documentation, and official/unofficial transcript(s) detailing planning coursework and faculty-supervised clinical hour completion must be submitted before ATT status will be issued.
- With ATT status, even if you pass the exam, you are not considered CERTIFIED until a final, official transcript(s) with degree conferral are received and reviewed. ANCC will retain exam results and issue certification only after all eligibility requirements are met, a passing exam result is on file, and a final, official transcript showing degree-conferral is received. Candidates are responsible for ensuring ANCC receives final, official transcript(s) to reflect completion of program directly from the school.
- Incomplete applications will be considered abandoned if a final official transcript showing degree conferral is not received within two (2) years after taking the national certification examination for candidates regardless of degree type. Abandoned applications will be closed, certification will not be awarded, and applicants must reapply at a later time for consideration.

#### When should I apply for APRN certification?

- ANCC recommends APRN applicants apply one month prior to graduation. For fastest services, applicants should create an online account prior to submitting application documents. APRN applicants can apply for certification prior to graduation given DNP applicants may complete role/population specific courses prior to completion of university degree requirements and official graduation. For other types of APRN applicants, degree conferral time length varies by university.
- If applying for certification prior to final degree conferral, all coursework and faculty-supervised clinical hours must be completed and reflected on application documents. The applicant's completion status will be verified through completed Validation of Education (VOE) form, clinical hour documentation, and transcript(s).

- The new VOE form, updated March 2025 is available on the website.
- Applicants applying ahead of graduation may be granted Authorized to Test (ATT) candidate status. Review ATT FAQ for more information.

Applicants may review ANCC Study Aids found at the bottom of each Certification information webpage. Preparation recommendations include review of Test Content Outline and Test Reference List for development of a personal study plan. In addition, Readiness Tests may be available for use.

After you receive an Authorization to Test Notice, you will have 120 days to make an appointment with Prometric to take the test at a test center. You cannot schedule an appointment prior to receiving your Authorization to Test Notice or after the expiration date on your Authorization to Test Notice. Schedule as soon as possible for your preferred date and time, which provides you with the flexibility to schedule your examination based on your religious, personal, or other needs. If you wait until near the end of the eligibility period, you may have to accept any appointment available.

As with the current exam format, the new ANCC FNP exam has 175 questions. 150 of these questions are scored, and the remaining 25 are pretest questions that do not count towards your score. The question breakdown is as follows:

- Assessment: 29 questions (19% of the exam)
- Diagnosis: 26 questions (17% of the exam)
- Planning: 29 questions (19% of the exam)
- Implementation: 43 questions (29% of the exam)
- Evaluation: 23 questions (15% of the exam)