

## WELCOME & ABOUT

Welcome to the College of Nursing (“CON”) at Washington State University (“WSU”)! We offer BSN, MN, DNP, and Ph.D. degrees in Nursing, as well as professional certificates in nursing education, leadership, and public health. Our goal is to train tomorrow’s nurses who are compassionate caregivers, excellent leaders, nurse scientists, and nurse educators who make valuable and lasting contributions in their communities. To achieve this goal, the College of Nursing programs are rigorous but student-focused, are technologically enhanced, and personalized. You will be challenged but also nurtured to develop professional nursing competencies expected for your degree level.

The policies and procedures in this handbook have been officially approved by our faculty and are consistent with WSU Graduate School regulations. This handbook was developed to be used in conjunction with WSU’s [Policies and Procedures](#) and WSU’s [Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual \(PPM\)](#). The [WSU Graduate Catalog](#) and [Graduate School Policies and Procedures](#) contain additional general policies on admissions and programs. Failure to follow these policies and observe the degree requirements inevitably results in complications and could delay or jeopardize completion of your degree. The [Important Forms](#) link is also commonly used by our graduate students.

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with and following the guidelines in all sources. The CON will aid students in understanding the rules and regulations in these documents but ultimately, responsibility for compliance rests with each student. If you have questions, feel free to reach out to your staff coordinator or advisor.

Specific forms, web sites, and other materials described herein or included are subject to modification. As forms are updated, they will be made available to students. While students should rely on this handbook in planning their program, in the unlikely event that language contained herein conflicts with WSU policies and procedures, the policies outlined in this handbook are subservient to those outlined by Washington State University or updated policies on the CON website.

Welcome to WSU!

Chris Sogge  
Director, Center for Student Excellence (“CSE”)

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## **Section I: Organization**

The WSU College of Nursing baccalaureate degree in nursing, master's degree in nursing, and doctor of nursing practice programs at Washington State University College of Nursing are accredited by the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education \(CCNE\)](#).

The College of Nursing PhD program is under the executive authority and oversight of the WSU Graduate School which is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities through Washington State University.

Students are encourage to review the College of Nursing [Mission, Vision, and Values](#) as well as the College's information on [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#).

### **Organization Acronyms**

#### **Graduate Academic Program Director (GAPD)**

GAPDs are College of Nursing (CON) faculty members overseeing a graduate program (MN/DNP/PhD). They may be referred to as Program Directors as well.

#### **Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC)**

Students are to report any changes to their program (setup or change of committees, etc.) to the GAC, who functions as the student's primary contact person within the CON. They provide valuable student support as non-faculty.

#### **Graduate Faculty Advisor (GFA)**

Each graduate student registered for classes is assigned a graduate faculty advisor. GFA assignments are made by the end of the first Fall semester by the Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC) in conjunction with the Graduate Academic Program Director (GAPD) relevant to each student's program of study. Upon admission, the PhD Program Director will act as an interim GFA for incoming PhD students.

Students are urged to maintain contact with their GFA and to consult with them regularly concerning matters related to the academic program and professional development.

It is required that students meet with their academic advisor or PhD committee chair each spring to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review document by the identified due date.

Once a MN thesis/Non-Thesis-Clinical- based project or PhD dissertation chair is chosen, that individual also assumes responsibility for academic advising.

The GFA's responsibilities in relation to each graduate advisee are to:

1. be acquainted with the student's interests/needs.
2. discuss the approved program of study plan for program completion.
  - a. Any changes to a program of study **must** come from the GAC. **GFA are not to recommend program of study changes.**
3. sign any change of status forms.
4. be informed about the student's progress in the program.
5. counsel regarding academic questions or problems of the student.
6. counsel regarding workload and course requirements to achieve a successful academic outcome.
7. conduct the annual review as required by the Graduate School.



## **Section II: Programs**

The College of Nursing at Washington State University offers the following graduate programs with a majority of coursework held online. All program outcomes are developed based on national standards for master and doctoral education. Information on program outcomes, requirements, and additional information can be found on each program's linked website.

### **RN-MN**

The [RN to Master of Nursing](#) degree program is for RNs with a bachelor's degree in any field. Master's-prepared nurses are in high demand in management, administration, education, research, policy, and consulting. Full- and part-time programs of study are available. This program is offered at all College of Nursing sites.

### **MN**

The [Master of Nursing program](#) is designed for licensed RNs who have a bachelor's degree in nursing or another field and wish to go on for a master's degree in nursing with an emphasis on population health. Full- and part-time programs of study are available and are offered at all WSU College of Nursing sites.

### **DNP**

The [Doctor of Nursing Practice](#) program is designed for licensed RNs with a bachelor's and/or master's degree in nursing who wish to earn a doctorate in nursing practice. Nurses with a DNP possess expertise in theory, practice and leadership. Students must choose one of three tracks of specialization: family nurse practitioner, psychiatric mental health practitioner, or population health. The program is considered "hybrid" with most of the instruction offered online, and some required attendance in scheduled classroom time on the student's campus of registration. In-person class sessions are typically block-scheduled so that students can attend each of their courses in a 1–2-day block (for example class sessions might be scheduled Aug. 21/22, though some courses require lab intensives that are scheduled separately from the typical block scheduling as well)

#### **DNP-Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) Track**

The DNP Family Nurse Practitioner program is designed to prepare the student for a career in primary care. In many states an FNP has full practice authority, including Washington, Oregon and Idaho. The FNP may assess, order and interpret diagnostic tests, diagnose and manage health problems which includes the prescribing of medication. FNP's promote health and wellness through patient education and empowerment.

Graduates of the DNP-FNP program may take the Family Nurse Practitioner certification examination offered by *either* the American Nurses' Credentialing Center or the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners Certification Board to become certified and then state licensed.

#### **DNP-Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) Track**

The DNP-PMHNP has full practice authority. The PMHNP may assess, order and interpret diagnostic tests within scope, and diagnose and manage psychiatric-mental health problems and disorders; management may include prescription of psychiatric medications and provision of psychotherapy. PMHNPs promote mental health and wellness through patient education and empowerment.

Graduates of the DNP-PMHNP program are eligible to take the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner examination offered by the American Nurses' Credentialing Center to become certified and then state-licensed.

#### **DNP-Population Health (PH) Track**

The DNP Population Health degree (DNP-PH) prepares students to work in community health or public health, improving health care systems and population health. Health policy, epidemiology, and health promotion are core concepts of the program. Students learn how to audit and analyze the effectiveness and scope of community health

programs in partnership with other professional disciplines and local organizations. Students will also enhance their skills in interprofessional collaboration, application of evidence-based practice, health information systems, organizational systems, and leadership.

There is no nursing specific certification option for public health, but graduates may meet qualifications for the Certification in Public Health (CPH) <https://www.nbphe.org/>.

#### DNP Post-Master's, General

Focused on evidence-based practice, leadership, and research, the post-master's general plan is for nurses wanting to advance their knowledge by earning their DNP.

#### **PhD**

The [PhD in Nursing](#) program prepares nursing scientists to conduct research aimed at enhancing effectiveness of nursing in specific populations and within various healthcare settings. Most course work is delivered online. Typically that coursework is 4-6 Zoom courses with asynchronous instruction for the remainder. However, students and course instructor may negotiate for additional Zoom courses as necessary. Course work focuses on core areas of nursing science, research, education, and methodology. All course work contributes to the development and completion of dissertation work. Flexible, individualized programs are available.

Students participating in the [Nurse Faculty Loan Program](#) will be required to obtain their [Nursing Education Graduate Certificate](#). If the NFLP recipient has had multiple education courses or a graduate nursing education certificate, this requirement will be waived after review by the NFLP project director and a suitable experience will be arranged in order to meet HRSA's requirement.

#### **Graduate Certificates**

The CON offers 3 certificates. Details are at <https://nursing.wsu.edu/graduate-certificates/>

- Nursing Education Graduate Certificate
- Nursing Leadership Graduate Certificate
- Public Health Graduate Certificate

### **Section III: Advisement & Progression**

#### **Academic Advisement and Career Advice**

It is required that students meet with their faculty advisor or PhD committee chair each spring to complete the Graduate Student Annual Review document by the identified due date. The Graduate Academic Coordinator (GAC) assists with pre-registration procedures, provides guidance in developing a plan of study.

The Graduate Faculty Advisor (GFA) monitors the student's progress and assists in the selection of a thesis/dissertation topic or project. Students should set up an initial appointment with the GFA before registration. Once a MN thesis/Non-Thesis-Clinical based project or PhD dissertation chair is chosen, that individual also assumes responsibility for academic advising. Upon admission, the PhD Program Director will act as advisor for incoming PhD students. Students will be assigned to a faculty advisor by the end of the first fall semester.

Students are expected to follow all Graduate School timelines and requirements for their Thesis/Non-Thesis project. Details live in the [Graduate School policy and procedures](#) in Chapters 6 and 7. Questions can go to the relevant Program Director.

## Transferring Credits

Students who have graduate course credits from other graduate programs or institutions may request to transfer those credits to the WSU Graduate School. Those credits may be approved to meet the equivalency of required courses in the WSU Graduate nursing programs, though no more than 50% of the program can be transferred in.

To be considered, students must have earned a minimum grade of B, the course credit must be equivalent to the WSU course that would be waived or substituted, and the course must have been taken within 6-10 years, depending on program, of the date when the student will graduate from WSU.

For WSU College of Nursing Graduate Programs, students should contact the Graduate Program Coordinator to start, and must be prepared with a letter of request and the course syllabus. From there, a GAP Analysis form will be completed by the College of Nursing Grad Program Office, reviewed by the Director of the graduate program to which the student has been accepted, and then submitted to the WSU Graduate School for approval of course credit transfers. The Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) may also be involved to provide a secondary letter of support. Ultimately, the WSU Graduate School establishes standards for the total number of credits that can be transferred and makes the final decision on the acceptance of courses.

Note: Students from graduate programs that are online-only may have a limited number of credits accepted for transfer.

## Grading Policy

The College of Nursing applies a grading scale as outlined by [WSU Academic Regulations](#) and [WSU Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual \(PPM\), Ch.6](#).

Please peruse the above resources. Note that for incomplete grades, students receiving that grade will receive a copy of the [Instructor's Incomplete Grade Agreement](#). This document outlines the reasons for the Incomplete, the work which must be completed for the student to receive a grade, and the date by which the work must be submitted.

The Graduate School does not count S/F courses towards requirement total credits, except for NURS 700, 702, or 800: "Some 500-level courses may be graded as S/F. These can be listed on a Program of Study, but do not count toward the minimum graded (A-F) credits

## Minimum GPA

In order for graduate students to be considered in good academic standing, WSU Graduate School and the College of Nursing require students to maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA and a 3.0 GPA for all coursework in their Program of Study.

A graduate student who has completed the first semester of graduate study and earns a GPA between 2.75 and 2.99 is eligible for one additional semester of continued enrollment on a probationary status. Upon completion of the probationary semester, and thereafter until graduation, a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA is required to continue in Graduate School. Probationary status is only available to students immediately following their first semester of graduate study and is not available to students who have been provisionally admitted.

For most graduate students, the minimum grade that can be accepted for credit is a C (73%) and any student who obtains less than a C (<73%) in a course must repeat that course. Note the exception of DNP Project courses (NURS 557, NURS 558, and NURS 559) which require a minimum grade of B (83%).



No graded courses of B- or below may be dropped from a Program of Study for an advanced degree nor can a course be repeated for a higher grade if the student received a final grade of C or higher. Any course listed on the Program of Study for which a grade of C- or below is earned must be repeated for a letter grade, not on a Pass/Fail basis.

All grades earned by a graduate student in courses listed on the Program of Study, except for the first grade for a repeated course, will be averaged into the student's GPA. The repeated course does not replace the grade for the prior course on your transcript; however, only the "passing" grade is used in the GPA calculation. If a course is repeated, it may only be used once to fulfill graduation requirements.

Students are expected to earn an S (Satisfactory) grade for all research credits (700, 702 800). One U (Unsatisfactory) grade for research credits indicates that the student is not making satisfactory progress. The student will be subject to dismissal from the program if a U grade is earned for research credit for two terms (summer term included). Research credits for which a U has been earned will not count toward degree requirements.

Graduate students are eligible to take A through F graded courses for a pass/fail (P/F) grade with the approval of their committee chair or graduate advisor. See WSU [Academic Regulation 50](#).

- While there is no limit on the number of credits, courses taken pass/fail cannot count toward the required credits for graduation and cannot be used as part of the student's Program of Study.
- Pass/fail grades may not be used for removal of a specific undergraduate deficiency.
- Credits earned with pass/fail grades are counted toward assistantship minimum credit requirements.

### **Satisfactory Student Performance**

Students must maintain the minimum cumulative GPA as discussed in this handbook.

Additionally, please peruse [general requirements](#), [enrollment and leave requirements](#), and specific programmatic requirements below from the Graduate School:

- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Requirements](#)
- [DNP Requirements](#)
- [Graduate Student Writing Requirements](#)

### Time Limits & Considerations

Students are to refer to the Graduate School link pertinent to their program for specific details and other degree deadlines. Maximum time allowed for completion of graduate degrees begins from the earliest course listed that applies toward the degree. Generally that is as follows:

Master's Degree – 6 years

DNP Degree – Varies per specialty track:

- Nurse Practitioner (FNP & PMHNP) students must complete their degree within 5 years from time of admission
- Population Health & Post-Masters General students must complete their degree within 10 years from time of admission

PhD Degree – Overall, PhD students must complete their degree within 10 years.





- PhD students are required to complete all course work and successfully defend their dissertation proposal (i.e., the preliminary examination) by the end of the 4th year of the program. Additional time may be granted after a request made to, and approval by the PhD Advisory Committee.
- Defense of dissertation must be completed within three years of the date of satisfactorily completing the preliminary examination.
- A doctoral final exam cannot be scheduled in the same semester as the preliminary exam. At least four months must elapse between the successful completion of the preliminary and scheduling of the doctoral final exam

A student must register according to the required courses in the agreed upon Program of Study/CON Progression Plan and stay consecutively enrolled in each term (fall, spring, summer), unless on an approved leave of absence with Graduate School.

Graduate leave is available to those students who must be away from active enrollment for one or more semesters. Students who wish to request graduate leave must follow the procedures described in [Graduate School PPM, Ch. 5A](#). Per WSU policy, official leaves of absence, internship leave status, and absences not approved under this policy are included in the time limits to complete a degree.

Students who have resigned from the Graduate School, who fail to maintain continuous enrollment status, whose official leave of absence status has expired, or whose time limit for completing the degree has expired, must reapply for admission to the Graduate School using the online application. Such students must pay the non-refundable application fee. Readmission is not guaranteed.

#### Program of Study

Each student must submit a Program of Study. Important details regarding this requirement can be found in [Graduate School PPM, Ch. 6G](#) and the form to submit their request can be found online at [Graduate School Forms](#).

Yearly review of each student's progress will be accomplished early in each spring semester. Details about this process can be found in [Graduate School PPM, Ch. 6](#).

#### **Unsatisfactory Student Performance**

Students who receive a grade of I, 72% or less (C- or less), or a withdrawal for a course are not considered to have passed that course in a satisfactory manner. Note that some DNP courses require a minimum grade of B to pass, superseding the aforementioned C grade requirement. To be readmitted to a single course, please review the Graduate Academic Progression (GAP) Committee section below, as they are the governance body that reviews those requests.

Students who withdraw from more than one course with a "W" posted on their graduate transcript must submit justification for multiple course withdrawals, demonstrate good academic standing prior to withdrawals, and petition for permission to continue in their degree plan. This information should be submitted to the student's advisor and to the MN, DNP, or PhD Program Director who, in turn, will submit to GAP.

Unsatisfactory completion of two or more courses in one semester does not necessarily warrant removal from the nursing program since emergent circumstances (which subsequently resolve) may arise which may have contributed to poor academic performance during a semester. GAP will take that under consideration when determining their recommended course of action.

#### Unsatisfactory Performance in a Didactic/Theory Course

During the semester, if a student is doing unsatisfactory work, the instructor will complete a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) form. On the form, the instructor discusses the issue or concern, identifies the objective(s) the student is not achieving, and develops the recommended actions the student should take to resolve the issue. PIP copies may be





made for required documentation within a student file, and both the instructor and the student should keep a copy of the PIP for their own records. Students are required to discuss PIPs during their annual review with their GFA.

#### Unsatisfactory Performance in a Clinical Course

In a clinical course, if a student's performance is determined by a faculty member to be unsafe, the student may be removed from the clinical setting and given a failing grade for the evaluation, which may result in a failing grade in the course prior to the end of the term. A PIP will also be given.

Students may not register for future nursing courses until completion of GAP committee review and formal reinstatement in the program. Students who ultimately do not pass a course are required to complete additional steps to be approved to maintain their standing in the program.

Clinical activity deemed unsafe will result in the student completing a [Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission \(NCQAC\) Incident Report](#). This report is submitted to the academic program director and course faculty. Course faculty complete the incident evaluation tool. Students who ultimately do not pass a course are required to complete additional steps to be approved to maintain their standing in the program.

#### **Graduate Academic Progression (GAP) Committee**

The Graduate Academic Progression Committee (GAP) at the College of Nursing is tasked with acting on matters related to academic progression, academic problems, and reinstatement of graduate students. The Committee reviews each student who has an unsatisfactory course grade or cumulative GPA and makes recommendations to the academic program director and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs or their designee on recommendations for the student. Students must submit a "Student Plan for Progression/Retention" and statement from their GFA.

Students needing progression review (including all students asking to repeat a course) are required to submit a letter to the GAP outlining their preferred plan for progression/retention. Students should seek assistance from their academic coordinator to assist with this process. This letter should be submitted to the College of Nursing Graduate Academic Coordinator by the day prior to the scheduled GAP meeting. GAP is tasked with determining an outcome to this review, including the potential for dismissal. This determination is based on policy, PIPs, the student letter, and other potential documentation.

#### **Dismissal from Program**

The College of Nursing may request a student's dismissal from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to maintain satisfactory academic progression
- Multiple clinical failures for a clinical course
- Engaging in unsafe practice (patient safety concerns or violations)
- Engaging in illegal or unethical conduct as outlined by the university's Standards of Conduct, the ANA's Code of Ethics, and all relevant clinical site-specific policies (including HIPAA)

Any student at risk of dismissal from the program will have received a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) form outlining the concerns. If applicable, a Standards of Conduct violation from WSU's [Center for Community Standards](#) will also be included in the student's file. The Program Director will meet with the student to review the concerns and documentation prior to requesting dismissal. If dismissal is not recommended, the Program Director will provide the student with a written warning via email that will be included in the student's file. The student may also be required to complete mandatory remediation prior to returning to the classroom or clinical site which could include (but is not limited to) additional skills assessment, writing a paper, giving a presentation on an assigned topic, etc.

Please note - DNP students have a separate dismissal section. Please check under DNP-specific policies near the end of this handbook.

### Readmission to the College of Nursing Program

All nursing students who have left the program (did not complete their courses) whether for personal, medical, academic, or non-academic reasons, must follow the process for readmission. Students who have not been disqualified upon departure from the College of Nursing and Washington State University are eligible for readmission to their program. Students may not participate in any classroom or clinical learning activities while waiting for readmission or pending a grade appeal.

Students who have been dismissed from the program due to patient safety concerns or unsafe or threatening behavior are not eligible for readmission to the program.

Readmission to the program will be determined by the availability of seats in that semester. A student will be readmitted when a seat becomes available, with notification going to their WSU email. Priority for seats will be given to students in the following order:

1. Current students who are progressing in good academic standing.
2. Students returning from approved medical leave of absence.
  - a. Students who seek a medical withdrawal from the university should work with their advisor on the process. Please note that under no circumstances should the student submit medical documentation to the college unprompted.
3. All other students, including those who are returning for readmission or from a non-medical leave of absence

If there are multiple students with the same priority level for withdrawal, priority will be given to the student who has been absent from the program for the longer period of time.

Additional remediation requirements will be determined by the program director, including consideration of the length of absence from the program.

- If the student is gone for more than one semester (including absence from a summer semester), then the default expectation is for the student to enroll into NURS 599 concurrently with the return term. The College of Nursing Program Director will communicate the instruction and structure for that class, with the understanding that it is designed to entail 45 hours of work and must be completed prior to clinical engagement.
- All students who step out of a program with clinical components will be required to re-affirm *prior to re-enrolling* that they meet the college's Technical Standards.

### Graduate School Termination of Enrollment

The enrollment of a graduate student will be terminated under any one of the following conditions:

- The student has been provisionally admitted and has a cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the end of the first semester of study.
- The student fails to establish and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 after more than one semester of study.
- The student has failed a preliminary or final exam for the second time.
- The student has failed a preliminary or final exam for the first time with a Graduate School representative present, and a second examination is not recommended by the advisory committee, program chair, or representative; in such cases, the dean of the WSU Graduate School will review the case and make the final determination.
- The student has earned a U (Unsatisfactory) grade for research credits (700, 701, 702, 800) for two semesters (including summer terms).

- Other reasons for termination might include failure to make normal progress toward degree completion (such as failure to complete coursework on time or multiple incompletes), failure to maintain continuous enrollment, failure to assemble and maintain an approved advisory committee, issues related to academic integrity or student conduct, policy violations, etc.

Only the Dean of the WSU Graduate School or the University Conduct Board have authority to terminate a student's enrollment.

#### Graduate School Reinstatement

Reinstatement of a provisionally admitted graduate student who falls below a 3.0 GPA following completion of one semester or one summer session, or of a graduate student who falls below 2.75 GPA following completion of one semester or one summer session will be considered only through a petition from the graduate student to the academic program director. Following a meeting between the graduate student and the academic program director, the academic program director may favorably recommend reinstatement for that student by submitting a memo, via the Graduate Research Management (GRM), to the dean of the Graduate School, who has final approval.

Reinstatement procedure for a graduate student who has completed two semesters, one semester and one summer session, or two summer sessions and whose GPA is below 3.0 follows the same procedure. The student must meet with the academic program director who, upon favorable recommendation, may petition the dean of the Graduate School (routed through the GRM) for approval to reinstate the student. If approval to continue is granted, the student will have one semester or summer session to increase the cumulative GPA to 3.0. Failure to do so requires termination of enrollment in the program and in the Graduate School.

If the student becomes academically deficient because of two U (Unsatisfactory) grades for research credits, the student must meet with the academic program director, who upon favorable recommendation, may petition the dean of the Graduate School (routed through the GRM) for approval to reinstate the student. The academic program director must identify the conditions for continuation of study in the petition request. If approval to continue is granted, the student will have one semester or summer session to improve research progress.

Further policies regarding general requirements, including incomplete grades, pass/fail, and auditing can be found in WSU [Graduate School PPM, Ch. 6C](#).

#### **Section IV: Academic Policies & Procedures**

This section describes the policies, procedures, and professional standards governing students' progress through the graduate nursing curriculum across all College of Nursing campuses at Washington State University. Academic progress policies apply to all campuses, affiliated sites, and curricular activities related to graduate nursing education.

Students are strongly advised to seek guidance from their campus academic advisor, or the Director of the Center for Student Excellence, regarding any circumstances that impact their ability to participate in the nursing curriculum, and to do so before their academic performance is impacted. Each student has the responsibility to know these policies and use them in their decisions.

#### **University Policies**

It is important to distinguish University-wide policies and those specific to the CON. Students must abide by all policies in the [WSU Student Handbook for Community Standards](#) and the [Center for Community Standards](#) website as well as those pertaining to students in the [Executive Policy Manual](#).

#### Academic & Professional Integrity



All members of the WSU community share responsibility for maintaining and promoting the principles of integrity in all activities, including academic integrity and honest scholarship. [The Academic Integrity policy](#) will be strongly enforced in all WSU College of Nursing programs.

The [Center for Community Standards](#), in conjunction with the academic department and faculty member(s), oversees the academic integrity process. A violation of academic integrity includes (but is not limited to) cheating, use of unauthorized materials or sources, unauthorized collaboration on projects, plagiarism, and multiple submissions of the same work. More detailed descriptions of cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication can be found in the following codes: [Acts of Dishonesty WAC 504-26-202](#) and [Cheating WAC 504-26-010](#).

Students need to read and understand all definitions of cheating. If a student has any questions about what is and is not allowed in a course, the student is encouraged to seek clarification from the course instructor.

Students who violate WSU's Academic Integrity policy may receive any of the following sanctions as deemed appropriate by course faculty: re-write the assignment, fail the assignment, and/or fail the course. Students will not have the option to withdraw from the course pending an appeal and may be reported to the Center for Community Standards. In some cases, the violation may lead to the student's dismissal from WSU College of Nursing.

Refer to the [Violations and Possible Sanctions](#) section of the Student Handbook for Community Standards for other potential sanctions to Academic Integrity Violations.

### **College of Nursing Policies**

College of Nursing students must also abide by the college-specific policies below.

#### Waiving / Substituting a Nursing Course

Per [Academic Regulation 108](#), colleges and departments may substitute or waive college-level requirements for individual students. Students may request permission to waive a course if they can document successful completion of a similar course, including providing a course syllabus or course description if syllabus is unavailable. The instructor of the potentially waived course will review the syllabus to be assured student learning outcomes were adequately covered in the completed course. The Center for Student Excellence (CSE) will also confirm that waiving the course will not affect graduation nor academic requirements. Next, the Program Director or Associate Dean of Academic Affairs may/may not approve the waiver request based on course instructor recommendation.

Programs in the Graduate School require a final step where the College of Nursing approval is sent to the Graduate School for a final approval. Waiving a course may still result in an outcome where a course of equal credit is required, to ensure that overall program credit total minimums are met.

#### Attendance Policy

Attendance is determined by the faculty of the course. *Unless otherwise stated by the course faculty in the individual course syllabus*, the CON has a mandatory attendance policy regarding all course, clinical, practicum, laboratory, simulation, and their respective orientations.

Students are expected to be prompt and regular in attending all scheduled learning activities, including face-to-face classes, laboratory, simulation, and clinical/practicum experiences as well as all online discussions or meetings. Any unexcused absence may result in a failing grade and/or the student placed on Academic or Professional Probation.

Unless otherwise stated, students are expected to be prompt and regular in attending classes, turning in assignments on time and in taking exams when scheduled. Instructors may establish additional rules for attendance and make-up

exams and must articulate these clearly in writing

### Electronic Communication and Social Media

Use of [ITS](#) and systems is governed by the [Electronic Communication Policy \(EP4\)](#) in the WSU [Executive Policy Manual](#). All policies indicate that equipment and services will be used only for carrying out university business and may not be used for private use.

As future professional nurses with a unique obligation and responsibility, nursing students must be cognizant of the public nature of social media and other electronic communication and the permanent nature of communicating therein. These technologies may give the impression of privacy, but postings and other data should be considered in the public realm and freely visible by many people. State and Federal regulations related to confidentiality along with HIPAA require that no patient information be made available to the public. These regulations apply to comments made on social networking sites, and violators are subject to the same disciplinary action as with other HIPAA violations.

All Students are expected to comply with the [WSU College of Nursing Social Media Guidelines](#) including:

- Protect confidential and proprietary information
- Do not post anything that could reflect poorly on the College
- Use WSU College of Nursing intellectual properties only with permission
- Disseminating official information

### Nursing Buildings & Classrooms

Food and non-alcoholic beverages may be brought into classrooms, offices, and lounges if strict controls on cleanliness and sanitation are observed. Food and beverages may NOT be taken into other learning areas of the buildings such as the Computer Laboratory, the Multimedia Laboratory, or any of the Center for Experimental Learning spaces. If a building or room has a non-food/beverage policy that will supersede this policy.

Children are not permitted in the nursing buildings or classrooms. Under WAC 504-36-020, pets are not allowed in university buildings. [Refer to the legislation here](#) for exceptions, which includes trained service animals.

### Alcohol and Drug Policy

Students are to adhere to the [WSU Alcohol and Drug Policy](#) as outlined in the Executive Policy Manual (EP20).

### **Section V: Standards of Conduct for Students**

Throughout the admission process and while progressing through the nursing programs to graduation, all CON students must conform to reasonable standards of performance and behavior related to communication, behavior and emotions, professional conduct, and technical skills. Students who fail to conform to reasonable standards of performance and behavior in the classroom, online, in clinical agencies, as well as on campus and within the community, may be removed from the program.

Students will generally be provided an opportunity to achieve professional behavior and learn from an error unless one or more of these apply:

- the behavior continues after previous opportunities to achieve professional behavior
- the behavior presents a threat to the health or safety of others
- the CON determines that the behavior is sufficiently severe or egregious that the student should not be permitted to continue in the program

Students enrolled in the College of Nursing are subject to the standards of performance and ethics developed by the American Nurses Association (ANA) and known as [The Code of Ethics for Nurses with Interpretive Statements](#), as well as subject to the standards summarized in this document.

Students are also held to the general rules and regulations of the Standards of Conduct for Students as set forth in [Washington Administrative Code \(WAC\) 504-26](#). Students are responsible for knowing these standards and may be subject to disciplinary action under the procedures outlined in this document and the procedures outlined in the [Violations and Possible Sanctions](#) section of WSU's Student Handbook for Community Standards.

Additionally, while in clinical or practice situations, students' primary responsibility is the care of their patients. Students must recognize that the patient's welfare has precedence of a student's personal educational objectives. Students must respect every patient's privacy and dignity and must maintain confidentiality with regard to all patient information. Students must never compromise patient safety, which can occur through impairment, lack of diligence, or by providing care for which they lack skills, knowledge, or by completing activities that are not approved by a preceptor or appropriately supervised. Students will be held to the same standards of conduct and safety outlined in the Washington State law regarding health professions as defined in the Uniform Disciplinary Act ([RCW 18.130](#)) expected of employees in the patient care areas of the health care facilities that are participating in the teaching programs of the CON.

Further and/or in addition to RCW 18.130.180, the CON Code of Professionalism prohibits:

- Failure to cooperate with the Nursing Quality Assurance Commission or similar out-of-state regulatory body
- Disruption or obstruction of teaching, research or administration
- Unprofessional, inappropriate or threatening behavior or comments made toward faculty, staff, other university employees, rotation preceptors, others involved with teaching, or other students
- Attending class or patient care settings while impaired (e.g., under the influence of alcohol, drugs or altered mental status)
- Repeated late arrival or early departures from rotational sites without notifying the primary preceptor
- Failure to meet professional expectations set forth by the college or a practice site (such as timely completion of co-curricular and Graduate Passport requirements, advising, required on-boarding activities, trainings, arrival and departure time, dress code, or similar requirements)
- Non-compliance with initial evaluation and/or recommendations of any Washington Recovery Assistance Program
- Non-compliance with the Procedures for Supporting Students with a Potential Impairment
- Non-compliance with the Drug Screening Policy
- Lapse of a student's Washington State Nursing License or other state License when engaging in the practice of nursing
- Violation of the Standards of Conduct (WAC 504-26)

### Academic Integrity

The [Academic Integrity](#) policy will be strongly enforced in all WSU College of Nursing programs. The [Center for Community Standards](#), in conjunction with the academic department and faculty member(s), oversees the academic integrity process. A violation of academic integrity includes (but is not limited to) cheating, use of unauthorized materials or sources, unauthorized collaboration on projects, plagiarism, and multiple submissions of the same work. More detailed descriptions of cheating, plagiarism, and fabrication can be found in the following codes: [Acts of Dishonesty WAC 504-26-202](#) and [Cheating WAC 504-26-010](#).



### Non-Integrity Academic Grievance Procedure

The graduate student complaint and formal grievance processes can involve several steps depending on the nature of the issue. There are many avenues available to Washington State University graduate students to resolve differences that might arise during the pursuit of an advanced degree. If a graduate program has its own grievance procedures, these procedures should be followed before utilizing the Graduate School's grievance procedures. The CON grievance procedure is below:

Differences of opinion between students and their instructor may arise. Students and their instructors are encouraged to communicate regularly and directly to resolve such differences. An attempt should first be made to resolve the complaint by an open discussion between the student and the faculty member(s) involved.

Students must follow typical "chain of command" when attempting to resolve concerns. Students should always attempt to resolve concerns with their course faculty first, then Level Lead, then Program Director, then Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, then the Dean of the College.

- If the concern is related to clinical placements, the Level Lead will include the Director of Clinical Affairs in that concern chain.
- If the concern is from a student at a campus other than Spokane, the concern will also be brought to the Campus Academic Director alongside the Program Director. A visual guide is below to assist with this process.

If a student has questions on who is next in the line of communication or wants a review of readability of their communication, they can connect with the college's Director of the Center for Student Excellence. While the Director cannot make decisions to resolve the issues, they are available for process explanation and readability review of the concern. Additionally, the University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.

If that line of communication does not resolve a concern, the student can pursue a formal grievance process. WSU College of Nursing follows the established timeframe and line of communication outlined in [Academic Regulation 104 - Academic Complaint Procedures](#). At each stage of the grievance process, the individual addressed will be given 20 business days in which to respond to the grievance via official WSU email and come to a resolution. Should the response be unsatisfactory, the student can then take the grievance and response(s) to the next individual on the list.

A copy of all written complaints and a written record of all subsequent actions will be filed in a confidential Academic Grievance File in the College of Nursing Academic Affairs Office as well as in the student's official student file.

Though chairs and college deans (and program leaders and campus chancellors) may resolve complaints about instruction and grading, they may not change a final grade without the consent of the instructor, except as provided by [Rule 105](#).

#### *Additional Grievance Resources*

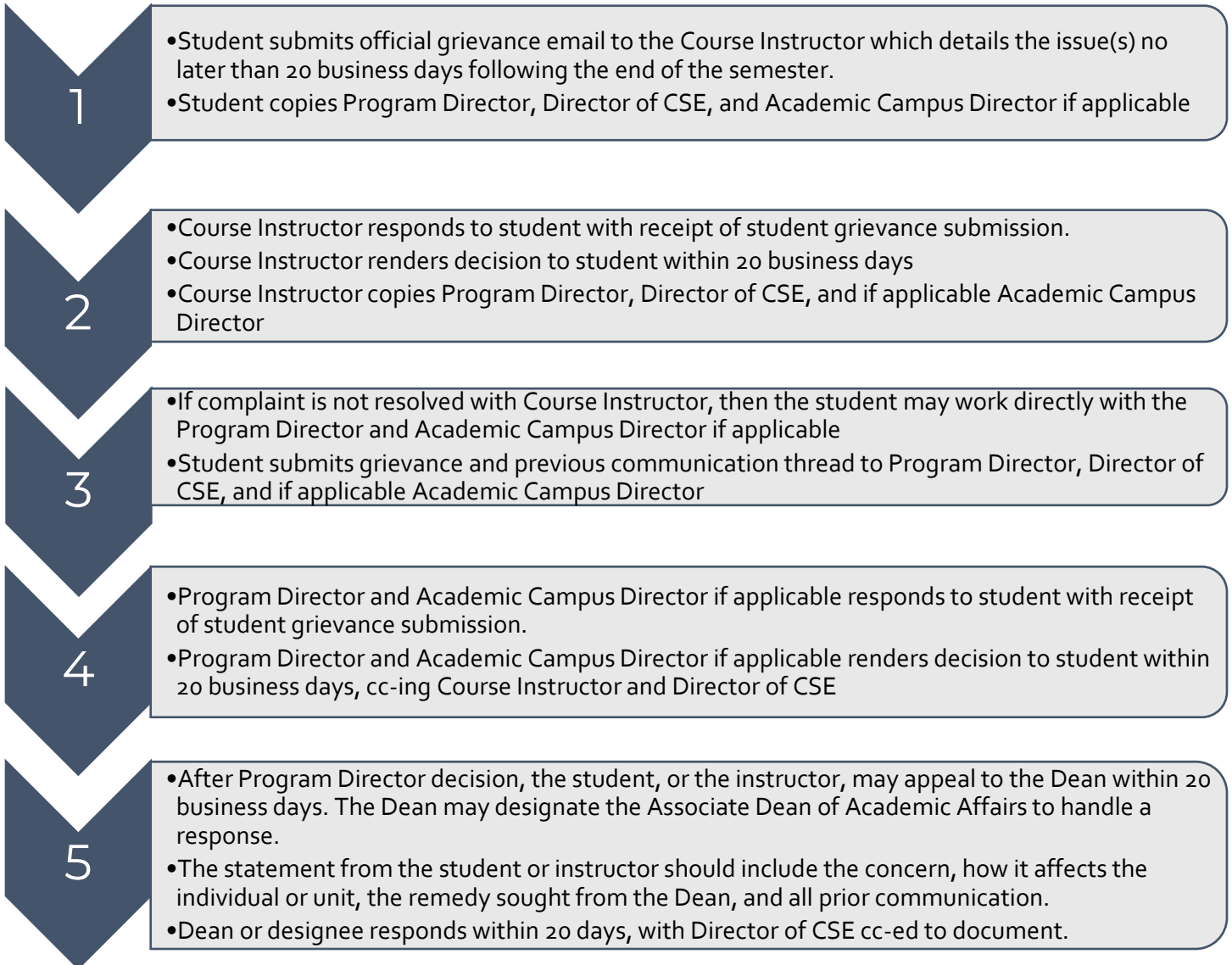
- Students who have exhausted avenues provided by WSU and still have unresolved complaints may contact the [Washington Student Achievement Council](#) (WSAC) who has authority to investigate student complaints regarding the University not following published policy or state law.
- WSU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU), whose complaint process is [here](#).
- The University Ombudsman is available at any stage for advice or assistance in resolving academic complaints.







## Grievance Process



The formal [Graduate School Grievance procedure](#) is below:

In some instances, such as those related to academic and employment issues (e.g. failed examinations, termination of assistantship, dismissal from program, etc.), the student may wish to appeal a specific decision made by the departmental or program faculty.

- The student must make a formal grievance request to the Dean of the Graduate School in writing, with signature (email is not sufficient). The student must submit documentation describing his/her grounds for a formal grievance to the Dean. Formal grievances must be filed within 15 (fifteen) calendar days following a notice of decision. The original decision will be held in abeyance until the university has rendered a final decision.
- The Dean will assign these formal grievances to one of the Associate Deans for full consideration and recommendation.



- If the Associate Dean deems it appropriate, the matter will be referred to an independent Committee on Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (CGSRR) for consideration and formulating recommendations of action to the Dean of the Graduate School. The CGSRR will operate with due respect to the rights of graduate students, faculty, and administrators including the conduct of interviews, the right of all parties to review and address allegations, and the right to a fair hearing. The CGSRR will deliberate and render a recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School or the Dean's designee within 60 days of being formed.
- Recommendations for resolution of formal grievances will be acted upon by the Dean or the Dean's designee. The Dean of the Graduate School will make a final decision. The decision made by the Dean on academic matters is final.

An Appeal of the decision made by the Dean of the Graduate School can be made to the Provost if the graduate student believes there was a procedural error or failure to follow WSU or Graduate School policy during the complaint or grievance process. The written appeal to the Provost regarding procedural irregularities must be filed within fifteen (15) calendar days following the notice of the decision from the Dean of the Graduate School in response to the formal grievance. The appeal must be copied to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the Dean of the Graduate School does not receive a copy of the appeal within fifteen (15) calendar days, the student's right to appeal will be waived and the Dean's decision will be final. The Provost will not reopen cases for the purpose of re-investigating the grievance

## **Section VI: Clinical Policies**

Practicum/clinical experiences are an important aspect of education as a Graduate student in the College of Nursing at WSU. It is in the practicum/clinical settings that provide students an opportunity to apply theoretical and evidence-based knowledge gained in other courses, adding hands-on patient care experiences to develop and advance nursing practice. The emphasis in the Graduate Practicum/Clinical experiences is on the development of clinical and professional expertise necessary for comprehensive primary care practice or population practice in a variety of settings as an FNP, PMHNP, Population Health specialist; in organizational/leadership acumen as a DNP; and as a nurse scientist in the PhD program.

### **Clinical Expectations**

It is your responsibility to stay in contact with your academic advisor and with both the course lead faculty and your clinical/site evaluator faculty. Contact the clinical/site evaluator faculty immediately if there is any problem during clinical/practicum experiences. Your success in communicating appropriately will be mirrored in your success in your course work.

You must maintain current licensure as a Registered Nurse throughout your enrollment in the Graduate program. Further, you must hold a current, active, unencumbered Registered Nursing license in all states in which you complete any clinical activities. Students who live along the Oregon and/or Idaho borders may want to consider obtaining a license in Idaho or in Oregon to allow for additional opportunities for clinical rotations.

Practicum/clinical experiences are assigned according to the learning needs of the student, individual course requirements and availability of clinical sites with appropriately trained, licensed, and available preceptors. Clinical placements are considered across Washington with some placements in Idaho and Oregon and includes outlying rural areas which is a major pillar of the College of Nursing mission. All students should accept that travel to clinical placements may include some significant distance:

- Most clinical experiences require motor vehicle transportation, and some require overnight accommodations.
- Students are responsible for their own housing, transportation and expenses associated with clinical experience.

## **Nurse Practitioner (NP) Track Additional Expectations**

For those students in a nurse practitioner (NP) track, the Graduate curricula and these clinical/practicum experiences will meet the eligibility requirements for national certification. The progression of the nurse practitioner courses is defined by developmental prerequisites. NP students may not take courses out of the order identified by the specialty track.

To obtain clinical placement appropriate for the specialty track, students must work closely with the Clinical Placement Coordinator at their campus of registration. Students are asked to make clinical placement requests to the Placement Coordinators but ultimately will be assigned to an agency that 1) provides the appropriate learning environment; 2) has acceptable preceptor availability; and 3) is within reasonable distance for site visitation by a hired evaluator or faculty member. While the Clinical Placement Coordinator works diligently to place students in their preferred or requested sites, this is not always possible, and the programs priority is to place students where the best available learning experience and preceptor availability is offered. Students who decline an available placement may have to withdraw from the clinical course, halt their program progression and resume the program at a later time when the clinical course is available again. Expectations and guidance will be provided by the faculty in the student's specialization for requesting clinical placements.

All Nurse Practitioner students should expect that some travel to clinical agencies in other communities will be required during their program as meeting rural and underserved needs is a hallmark of the WSU College of Nursing mission.

Qualification for national certification as an FNP or PMHNP includes the requirement that you have completed a minimum of 600 clinical hours supervised by qualified preceptors in settings providing direct clinical care to patients and families within the scope of the specialty. WSU faculty members who are certified and licensed as nurse practitioners teach all courses that include clinical or practicum content in the nurse practitioner tracks to meet this qualification. See the section below about Preceptors to learn more about who may be qualified to serve as your preceptor.

In addition to specialty certification as a nurse practitioner, to qualify as a DNP graduate, you must complete a total of 1000 clinical/practicum hours which include your NP Clinical hours. As a DNP Population Health graduate, you will also need to complete 1000 hours of clinical practice, as with NP students, some of this time is completed in your DNP Project courses.

## **Clinical/Graduate Passport**

At WSU, we call the combination of proof of licensure, immunization and certifications (e.g., CPR, BBP, HIPAA etc.) the "Clinical Passport." This combination of requirements is part of our contractual agreement with agencies and therefore is a clinical requirement for every student.

### PhD Students

PhD students do not automatically need to adhere to the Passport requirements. However, a clinical passport may be needed if they are doing a study in a clinical facility and if they are required to have one. The chair of the student will inform the PhD program director, who will then initiate the clinical passport process.

### MN & DNP Students

The passport information is maintained in the appropriate clinical systems management system. Students admitted prior to Fall 2022 use the system eValue for tracking. Students admitted after Fall 2022 will use a system called CastleBranch.

All students must keep their passport documents up to date at all times while in the program. While we understand your RN employer may provide some of these renewals or immunization updates, you may be required to obtain updates outside of what is offered by your employer to ensure your passport is always up to date.

It is the responsibility of the student to respond to any verification/credentialing questions by either Clinical Affairs or the appropriate system. All updates for immunizations, tests, and other requirements must be completed by the date given. A delinquent immunization may affect your clinical attendance.

Personal record-keeping of your documents and dates will help you remember when an immunization needs to be updated before the expiration date. If vaccination status is not current or there is not a response in enough time, **the student risks losing their spot in the clinical agency and/or a revoke of an offer of admission to the program.** To assist in preventing this, Clinical Affairs staff are available to answer proactive questions about vaccination and compliance requirements.

Any student who has a clinical passport out of compliance will be removed from the clinical placement. Hours completed while out of compliance will not count towards the total hours required for the course. Registration for the following semester will be blocked or cancelled if students do not provide required documentation (for all except RN licensure and influenza immunization which fall under varied schedules).

Please note that the [WSU Health Sciences Vaccination and Health Screening Admission Policy](#) applies to MN and DNP students. This policy mandates that the College of Nursing will require - as a condition of admission - certain immunizations and health screenings. The only exemption to these required vaccinations is students that have a legitimate medical condition that make vaccination medically contraindicated. See details in the policy linked above.

#### Alcohol and Drug Policy

Students are to adhere to the [WSU Alcohol and Drug Policy](#) as outlined in the Executive Policy Manual (EP20) as well as any policies related to drug/alcohol screening on the College of Nursing [policy page](#).

The College of Nursing will engage in a drug screening processes for site requirements or for cause.

#### **Student Appearance Standards**

The faculty of the College, our partner clinical agencies, and the clients we serve expect that students present a professional, well-groomed, and non-revealing appearance that reflects the nature of the program, profession, and facility. Safety and cultural awareness are also vitally important to consider in standards of appearance.

Students are to follow both the College of Nursing standards and any additional standards of the research settings or clinical agencies to which they are assigned, which may be more stringent. Students are to wear appropriate clothing if in didactic courses. Students must also wear required attire if in clinical/simulation/laboratory settings, which may include scrubs.

Students must comply with course directives regarding appropriate clothing for clinical settings, which may include WSU uniforms, lab coats, and/or professional work attire.

Professional students are expected to maintain personal hygiene and grooming appropriate to the academic or professional environment. Students shall follow established guidelines regarding personal hygiene and grooming as recommended by practice sites, and/or the direction of faculty. Students shall consider health implications for others with regard to personal hygiene (e.g., handwashing, cologne, tobacco products). Students shall value the importance of personal hygiene and grooming for effective interpersonal interactions.

Students should wear their Nursing Clinical ID Badge (not to be confused with their student Cougar Card).

- **Spokane and Yakima:** Clinical Nursing ID Badges for Spokane and Yakima nursing students are billed directly to the student's account. Details are provided during onboarding.



- **Vancouver:** Vancouver nursing students purchase their Clinical Nursing ID Badge online for \$10.00 through the Vancouver campus [Cougar Center](#) using the [WSU Vancouver Nursing Badge Payment Form](#).

### Confidentiality of Patient Records

The following policy on use of patient records has been developed to comply with federal guidelines outlined in the HIPAA regulations. The information below identifies what information is protected under Federal HIPAA requirements:

- Protected health information includes individually identifiable health information (with limited exceptions) in any form, including information transmitted orally, or in written or electronic form.
- “Individually identifiable health information” to mean health information created or received by a healthcare provider, health plan, employer, or healthcare clearinghouse, that could be used directly or indirectly to identify the individual who is the subject of the information.
- Health information must have all of the following removed prior to use outside of a healthcare setting: name; address, including street address, city, county, ZIP code, or equivalent geocodes; names of relatives and employers; birth date; telephone and fax numbers; e-mail addresses; social security number; medical record number; health plan beneficiary number; account number; certificate/license number; any vehicle or other device serial number; web URL; Internet Protocol (IP) address; finger or voice prints; photographic images; and any other unique identifying number, characteristic, or code (whether generally available in the public realm or not) that the covered entity has reason to believe may be available to an anticipated recipient of the information, and the covered entity has no reason to believe that any reasonably anticipated recipient of such information could use the information alone, or in combination with other information, to identify an individual. Thus, to create de-identified information, entities that had removed the listed identifiers would still have to remove additional data elements if they had reason to believe that a recipient could use the remaining information, alone or in combination with other information, to identify an individual. For example, if the “occupation” field is left intact and the entity knows that a person’s occupation is sufficiently unique to allow identification, that field would have to be removed from the relevant record.

### Patient Record Handling

- Students may not make copies (photocopies, computer printouts, etc.) of any material from a patient record. If students are required to generate a SOAP note or comprehensive assessment note as part of their course requirements, the student must take HIPAA-compliant handwritten notes in the clinical setting to reference later to complete the course requirement. Making a copy of the patient’s record is a HIPAA violation and may result in a course failure and/or removal from the program.
- The student must follow any special regulations for the use of patient records per agency protocol.

### Medication Administration

It is the standard of the Washington State University College of Nursing that students enrolled in all clinical courses will practice within the scope of the clinical curriculum and under the direct supervision of their assigned clinical faculty, supervising nurse, or practicum preceptor.

The policy guidelines in [the policy](#) refer only to those student activities which are completed during scheduled clinical hours and experiences for which they are receiving course credit. These policy restrictions and guidelines are not all-inclusive. Rather, they are intended to provide guidance to students, clinical faculty, supervising registered nurses (RN) or licensed practical nurses (LPN), mentors, and contracted clinical sites. Site-specific medication policies must be included in student orientations. Contracted clinical facility restrictions or limitations, which are more restrictive than these guidelines, will supersede any aspect of this policy.



### Clinical Incident and NCOAC Incident Report

To report injury, harm, or near miss to a patient or client, students must complete the [Nursing Care Quality Assurance Commission \(NCOAC\) Incident Report](#).

This critical incident report documents "... events involving a student or faculty member that the program has reason to believe resulted in patient harm, an unreasonable risk of patient harm, or diversion of legend drugs or controlled substances" ([WAC 246-840-513](#)).

1. The incident report must be completed by the student involved **within 24 hours of the incident**.
2. The faculty and preceptors at the CON then have 24 hours to report to the NCOAC, on forms provided by the commission, on the events involving that student or faculty member that the program has reason to believe resulted in patient harm, an unreasonable risk of patient harm, or diversion of legend drugs or controlled substances.

When submitted via the online system, this report is delivered directly to the NCOAC as well as to the designated College of Nursing program director indicated on the form. Program directors review the reports and develop action plans with faculty case-by-case and annually.

### **Section VII: Additional DNP Information & Policies**

DNP students graduating from the College of Nursing will be held to certain expectations and requirements in addition to those of the University and Graduate School.

#### **DNP Dismissal**

The principal conditions for continued registration/enrollment of a DNP student are the timely and satisfactory completion of the university and degree program requirements, continuing to meet the technical standards of the program, fulfillment of minimum progress requirements, and meeting standards of professional behavior. The guidelines that follow specify procedures for dismissal of DNP students who are not meeting these conditions.

A student will be recommended for dismissal **from WSU Graduate School** should they fail to adhere to the regulations and policies set forth in the most current and revised [WSU Graduate School Policies and Procedures Manual](#) (PPM). In particular, but not limited to:

- a. failing to maintain minimum GPA requirements [PPM Ch.6-C1](#).
- b. failing to maintain continuous enrollment [PPM Ch.6-C3](#) and [PPM Ch.13-D4](#).
- c. not adhering to WSU policies as mentioned in [PPM Ch.13](#) and detailed in the [Student Handbook for Community Standards](#).
  - i. COVID Compliance
  - ii. Alcohol and Drugs
  - iii. Harm (or potential harm) to Others
  - iv. Sex & Gender-Based Violence or Harassment
  - v. Academic Integrity (cheating, plagiarism, fraud, etc.)
  - vi. Other Violations (theft, trespassing, hazing ,etc.)
- d. unsatisfactory progress in the DNP program [PPM Ch.13](#).

In addition, a student who receives two failing grades in any courses, or two failing grades in the same course will no longer be eligible to continue in the nursing program and will be recommended for academic dismissal from the graduate program and Graduate School

Further, a student will be recommended for dismissal **from the College of Nursing** (and potentially from WSU Graduate School) should they fail to adhere to CON-specific policies and procedures such as, but not limited to:

1. The student receives two failing grades in any course, or two failing grades in the same course (see above)
2. The student engages in a pattern of professional misconduct or a single serious incident of misconduct.





3. The student fails to meet the [technical standards](#) of the program
4. The student on Academic Probation or Professional Probation does not meet probationary requirements, such as not completing the probationary plan.

Dismissal without Probation: Students will be dismissed from the program without a probationary period should they be:

1. found guilty of unprofessional conduct, negligent habits, or other causes as specified in the Board of Nursing Rules and Regulations of Registered Nurses.
2. found in violation of the American Nurses Association (ANA) code of ethics policy.

Administrative Dismissal: The College may administratively dismiss a student if the student:

1. receives two failing grades in any course, or two failing grades in the same course (see above)
2. does not comply with the enrollment/attendance requirements

Recommendations for Dismissal: Recommendations to dismiss a student from the College can be made under, but is not limited to, any of these conditions:

1. If the student receives two failing grades in any course, or two failing grades in the same course (see above)
2. If the student engages in a pattern of professional misconduct or a single serious incident of misconduct
3. If the student fails to meet the technical functions/technical standards of the program
4. If a student on Academic or Professional Probation does not meet probationary requirements

### **DNP Professionalism**

Professionalism is an expectation of doctoral-level professional nursing students. Professional behavior guidelines are intended to ensure safe, ethical, respectful, professional conduct by DNP nursing students. The following additional guidelines will apply to the educational preparation, experience, knowledge, and conduct of the professional DNP nursing student enrolled at Washington State University College of Nursing.

Any significant or consistent issues with professionalism will result in a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) and the student being put on Professional Probation. Continued failure to adhere to any component of this policy or student handbooks will result in academic counseling, review by the GAP Committee, and possible failure of the course and/or dismissal from the DNP program.

In addition to the general graduate student expectations aforementioned in this handbook, the following behavior standards are expected of WSU DNP students. Failure to meet these standards may be grounds for dismissal:

Presence Standards:

- Be present on campus to meet the academic and research expectations of the degree program.
- Keep appointments with CON staff and faculty, or reach out in advance if you have to reschedule. Keep rescheduling to a minimum.
- Maintain mature, sensitive, effective and professional relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff, other professionals, and clinical training site personnel under all circumstances, including highly stressful situations.
- Appear focused and engaged in class meetings as evidenced by: video on when possible (if sharing space with others who can't/don't consent then leave video off), not distracted by other tasks, phone calls, texts, or work

Emotional Standards:

- Continually perform self-assessment and seek out additional supervision whenever their role in the care for a patient is inadequate because of lack of knowledge or experience.



- Be able to function effectively under stress and adapt to environments that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways as relevant to the program or coursework.
- Be able to demonstrate empathy for the situations and circumstances of others and appropriately communicate that empathy.
- Acknowledge that values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect perceptions and relationships with others.
- Be able and willing to examine and change behaviors when they interfere with productive individual, team or patient care relationships. Take personal responsibility for learning without deflecting or blaming.
- Demonstrate an eagerness to learn - be proactive and seek clarification regarding challenges or confusion in a timely manner.

#### Academic Standards:

- Successfully complete suggested action plans or interventions to correct knowledge or skill deficit areas. These are created to prevent harm to patients or jeopardized relationships with clinical training site partners.
- Meet professional expectations set forth by the college or a practice site (such as timely completion of co-curricular and Program of Study requirements, advising, required on-boarding activities, trainings, arrival and departure time, dress code, or similar requirements)
- Meet DNP program's Technical Standards, with or without accommodations
- Do not abuse or excessively use course Withdrawals or Leave of Absences

#### Communication Standards:

- Have a courteous, respectful, timely, and non-disruptive communication and demeanor to all members of the CON community and beyond. Respect boundaries around the timing and mode of communication. This includes contacting only during normal business hours, contacting CON staff and faculty only through their WSU information (unless otherwise permitted), and being reasonably patient when waiting for replies.
  - Contacting outside of WSU modalities (via texting or with a personal phone) is only to be done with permission, and permission may change at any time. Such contact should also only be done if there is an educational need in order to adhere to FERPA.

#### Clinical Site Requirements

Securing clinical site placement is a collaborative process. Success occurs as the result of a partnership between students, the administrative staff, and faculty. The college needs the student's help to identify sites where each would like to be placed and the students need to stay in close contact with the Clinical Placement Coordinators throughout the placement process. The Clinical Placement Coordinators work closely with course and clinical faculty (also known as clinical evaluators) in helping students to find appropriate sites to request. Clinical faculty/clinical evaluators must approve all clinical placements. In doing so they will consider the program outcomes, course outcomes, and the student's overall performance in course work and in previous clinical experiences.

Under some circumstances, faculty may direct students to complete a clinical experience at a specific site or within a specific time frame based on assessment of their progress in the program. When selecting an NP practice site to request, students must ensure that there will be opportunities for direct, "hands-on" care of patients of all ages and healthcare needs (for PMHNP students this means direct, interactive care settings). As an NP student, students must be able to perform assessments, develop diagnoses, formulate treatment plans, and communicate with patients and families about those activities (in collaboration with the preceptor).



Student site(s) should be a setting that will offer the population and scope of care consistent with the practicum course requirements. Clinical faculty, placement coordinators and/or program leads can assist students in determining this. In general, family practice primary care sites and any internship experiences should have relevance to family practice (no OR, transplant unit, trauma nursing, flight/transport nursing; limited if any ER, acute care management units). Psychiatric mental health NP students should identify settings with psychiatric nurse practitioners or psychiatrists performing the full scope of psychiatric care (except for NURS 547, which allows students to be placed with master's level therapists or clinical psychologists).

It is important that students prepare early to ensure that clinical/practicum experiences will be successful. Students should identify clinical site possibilities *4-6 months* before planning to enroll in a particular clinical course. It may be especially difficult to locate preceptors who can provide internship experiences in pediatric (psychiatric or primary care) and obstetrical settings (for primary care) – the CON may need more than 6 months to arrange these. Students will receive site request instructions from the Clinical Placement Coordinators to assist you in identifying appropriate clinical sites.

Students may be required travel and/or stay in outlying communities in order to secure appropriate clinical placement. We recognize that, while these sites provide excellent learning opportunities, leaving home and family may be difficult for the student; thus, we try to limit the number of times we require students to accept placement at a distant site. No student should be recruiting a site or a preceptor unless the student has been given permission to do so by the Clinical Placement Coordinator at the campus where the student is registered. In the past, clinical agencies have denied programs access to preceptors or the entire agency when students have done this on their own.

Most hospitals and large healthcare organizations and many other health care systems and private practices require that students complete a "Provider Staff" Privileging and/or Credentialing process before beginning any clinical rotation, which may require completion of additional items beyond those required as part of the Graduate Student Passport. For example, some sites require that you complete specialized HIPAA training, computerized charting training, and/or urine drug screening. Completion of these requirements is entirely your responsibility as a student. This process can take weeks to months and should be initiated as soon as a clinical site is obtained. If WSU has been able to obtain the information from the clinical site, specific site requirements and accompanying documents will be communicated to the student.

A preceptor may invite the student to participate in patient care at a secondary site such as a hospital, urgent care center or other agency the provider contracts with (rounds, surgery, treatments, obstetrics, etc.) as part of a clinical experience. If students are providing direct care at the secondary site, they must inform the WSU Clinical Placement Coordinator and complete the credentialing process with that facility as well as the primary site – before students can provide any patient care. If students are accompanying the preceptor to the second site for observation only, students do not need to complete the credentialing process, unless the site requires students do so, and these hours will be above and beyond the total number of hours required for the course.

### **Clinical/Practicum Hours**

In general, each specific course requires that students complete a minimum number of hours of clinical/practicum experience. The DNP program director, Track Coordinators for the Family and Psychiatric Mental Health NP and Population Health, and any individual employed by WSU to perform clinical supervision of NP students may assign additional practicum/clinical hours beyond those described in the syllabus to ensure students are meeting expected competency levels.

The list below describes the minimum requirements for each clinical/practicum course that requires the completion of clinical/practicum hours. If appropriate, the list also includes descriptions of additional specific requirements for types of setting, patients, or experiences.



### Definition of Clinical Hours

WSU and the organizations that offer certification examinations for graduates of NP and Population Health programs define clinical hours as: "hands-on assessment, diagnosis and treatment (including client health management and education)." Students cannot count hours in "observation", "operating room experiences", "continuing education activities", or other types of experience that do not involve care in keeping with this definition towards certification exam hours.

### Oregon and Idaho Practice Sites

Students may request to complete clinical rotations in Oregon and/or Idaho. Obtaining a license in the state closest to your home will greatly increase clinical placement opportunities and is encouraged. The Oregon State Board of Nursing (OSBN) requires that students who are enrolled in out-of-state programs petition for approval to complete any clinical/practicum rotation in the state.

Students MUST submit the petition to the appropriate Clinical Placement Coordinator at their campus of registration in a timely way; the Clinical Placement Coordinator will finalize the document and forward it to the OSBN. Petitions to complete clinical/practicum rotations in Oregon must be approved by the OSBN before students can begin the clinical/practicum experience (PMHNP students may NOT request Oregon placement for NURS 547). This process will take a minimum of two months, thus students should plan accordingly. If a student will complete a clinical rotation in Oregon, the student must review all information at the OSBN website. After reviewing the information and the forms, the student is to contact the appropriate Clinical Placement Coordinator who will help with submitting the forms. Information for each state board of nursing is below:

[Oregon State Board of Nursing](#)

[Idaho Board of Nursing](#)

### Agency Contracts

WSU is required to have a contract (affiliation agreement) with all clinical sites before a student can begin a clinical rotation (whether this is NP clinical, Population health, DNP project or PhD research). When a student requests clinical site placement, the Clinical Placement Coordinators will review the status of the contract. The Contract Specialist will make every effort to ensure that a contract is in place.

However, if there is no contract in place when a student requests the site, they may not be able to complete a rotation at that site in a timely manner or within the semester parameters, as the process of negotiating a contract may take several months to finalize.

### Clinical at Student's Place of Employment

Clinical hours in the workplace follow strict requirements. Students may complete clinical hours within the organization where they are employed but not within the same unit or under the same supervisory area, and no reimbursement will be given for practicum hours. DNP Projects may be arranged in the student's employment setting under strict guidelines from faculty. None of the hours associated with the project can be reimbursed by the employer. The Project Team must include others who do not normally supervise a student as an employee.

The unit where the student works or the individual in charge of their usual work performance cannot be used as a clinical site or clinical preceptor. Students may, however, work in a different area/unit of their employment site in a non-paid position.

For example, if the student is an ICU nurse at Hospital X and wants to complete a clinical practicum at a clinic associated with that hospital, then the student can complete the total required program hours at that site. A student cannot complete a clinical rotation in a site where a family member or close friends work. Further, no family member, close friend or peer WSU DNP student can be an approved preceptor. No exceptions are made to this policy.

## Clinical Systems Management

Washington State University students enrolled in a variety of health professions' education programs use online database software systems to document clinical experiences and hours. Students admitted prior to Fall 2022 use the system eValue for tracking. Students admitted after Fall 2022 will use a system called EXAAT.

Administrative staff members use clinical tracking systems to manage student site requests and other information that supports student placement. Students will receive information about the use of their appropriate system along with a username and initial password shortly after enrolling at WSU.

## Clinical Faculty and NP Clinical Evaluator

Once a student's clinical site and preceptor is identified, the student will be assigned to be supervised by a College of Nursing faculty member or community-based Nurse Practitioner who is hired by WSU to be a Clinical Evaluator. Information about that evaluator and additional details [can be found here](#).

Additional information related to DNP clinical experiences include:

[Preparation for Clinical Experiences](#)

[Performance Evaluation](#)

## Required Documentation and Progression

Before you can receive a grade for the clinical/practicum course work, you must: document all patient contact time and clinical experiences before the last date noted in the Course Syllabus. For accuracy, it is best practice to document clinical hours and client encounters within one week of rotation day.

Ensure the completion and submission of an evaluation by each of your preceptors is in your clinical systems tracker.

To be eligible for the national licensing and certification exams as well as state licensure, a graduate must have evidence of recent courses in advanced pathophysiology, advanced assessment, and advanced pharmacology as well as the specialty clinical courses within 5 years of sitting for testing. Once you begin clinical/practicum course work in any track, on the way to your DNP, you must remain continuously enrolled in clinical/practicum course credits each semester until you complete your degree requirements (FNP students enroll in NURS 540 credits, PMHNP students enroll in NURS 599 credits, Population Health students enroll in NURS 583 credits).

## Family Nurse Practitioner Program Chart Note Review

You will prepare a minimum number of chart notes each semester for evaluation by the clinical course faculty. These notes should represent your clinical experience at each site.

Please follow syllabus guidelines and due dates to submit your first chart note. Contact your clinical faculty to arrange the schedule for submission of additional notes and to determine whether it will be possible for you to submit the notes electronically for grading.

It is essential that you strictly adhere to all appropriate regulations about patient privacy including those mandated by HIPAA. This requires that ALL patient identifiers be removed including name, birth date, clinic name, provider name(s) and chart number. If you refer to the patient by name in the note itself that should be deleted as well.

The format provided guides you in preparing the clinical notes you submit for grading. The notes you submit for grading may be longer and more detailed than those you prepare for the patient's chart while you are in the clinical setting. This longer, more complete document will allow the clinical faculty member to evaluate your learning, clinical progress, and documentation abilities.

As an additional resource to help you develop strong documentation skills, consult the [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Evaluation & Management Guidelines](#).

Failure to submit chart notes on a regular basis and in a timely manner may result in a failing grade. If you encounter problems, please contact your clinical faculty to create an acceptable plan for submission of notes.

## **Section VIII: Additional Information**

### **Technical Standards**

Nursing students must meet the appropriate Technical Standards for their program independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, to support successful progress through and graduation from their respective curricula. These requirements pertain to all student conduct regardless of setting (e.g., classroom/didactic, office, on-campus simulation, or off-campus clinical, email communication, etc.).

Students are encouraged to review these Technical Standards to become familiar with the skills, abilities, and behavioral characteristics required to complete the programs. Students who have questions about these Technical Standards or who may require reasonable accommodation should contact [WSU Student Campus Accommodations](#) department at the campus in which they are registered.

- MN Technical Standards for Spring 2023 may be found on the [CON Policies page](#) in January 2023
- DNP Technical Standards [may be found here](#)
- PhD Technical Standards [may be found here](#)

### **General Information**

#### Directory for College of Nursing Faculty and Staff

Contact information for all College of Nursing faculty and staff is located at [College of Nursing Faculty & Staff Directory](#).

#### Academic Calendar

The [Academic Calendar](#) located on the WSU Registrar website provides relevant deadlines for registration, fees, applications, enrollment, exams, holidays, and other important information.

#### Library Services

[WSU Libraries](#) is dedicated to supporting the research needs of students. Washington State University Libraries have more than two million books and over 30,000 journal and magazine subscriptions. Media, maps, microforms, government publications, eBooks, electronic journals, manuscripts, archives, and special collections additionally support WSU's teaching and research programs. Approximately 35,000 volumes are added to the collection annually. WSU Libraries are a member of a consortium of 37 other libraries in Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, with access to an additional 28 million items. The libraries also offer access to the full text of over 25,800 digital resources, including current journals, books, documents, and more.

Refer to the [College of Nursing Library Services](#) for campus-specific information.

#### Online Course Access

Nursing courses use Canvas, an online Learning Management System (LMS), to deliver course content. Students will receive access to courses after they have a WSU Network ID and have registered for courses. Access the site to find course syllabi, communications from faculty, and other important information.



### Licensure

To obtain a license as an Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP) or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) after graduation, follow your state's application process. In general, you will need to be licensed as a Registered Nurse in any state where you wish to obtain an ARNP/APRN license.

- In Washington, you can access information and materials about the nurse licensing process at the [WA Department of Health](#) website.
- In Oregon, you can access information and materials about the process on the [OR State Board of Nursing](#) website.
- In Idaho, you can access information and materials about advanced practice licensure at the [ID Board of Nursing](#) website.
- If you plan to practice in a different state after graduation, contact the Board for Nursing in that state for details and forms. All state boards of nursing are listed on the [National Council of State Boards of Nursing](#) website.

### National Provider Enumeration System

The Administrative Simplification provisions of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) mandated the adoption of standard unique identifiers for health care providers and health plans. The purpose of these provisions is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the electronic transmission of health information. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) has developed the National Plan and Provider Enumeration System (NPPES) to assign these unique identifiers. After a student has received their license to practice as a Nurse Practitioner, they are to visit the website to apply.

### Other Student Resources and Information

It is HIGHLY recommended that students retain a copy of all reports on clinical experiences. Most employers will request documentation of a range of data points (such as number of clinical hours, number of patients in each age group, list of procedures etc.) from your supervised clinical time.

Other student resources and information can be found on the CON [website under Students](#).